Administered by Community Action of Allegan County

Request for Proposal (RFP)
Community Needs Assessment

RFP #2026-001

Issued Date: March 2, 2026

Response Deadline Date/Time: Monday March 30, 2026 by 12:00PM

Deadline for Written Inquiries/Questions: March 18, 2026

Response Submission Information:
Submitted electronically to info@communityactionallegan.org

Email Subject Line – Gap Analysis/CNA – 2026

Community Action of Allegan County
Request for Proposal
Early Childhood Education Gap Analysis & Community Needs Assessment
&
Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)
National Community Action Partnership (NCAP) Organizational Standards
Community Needs Assessment

OVERVIEW:

Community Action of Allegan County (CAAC) announces a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment from qualified Vendors to collect appropriate and relevant data, evaluate the needs in the community as well as within CAAC, analyze any reasons for identified gaps in services including opportunities for improvement, disparities and suggest possible interventions in a manner that will allow CAAC to measure sustained advances and outcomes in the future.

A. Deadline

The deadline for submission of this proposal is **Monday March 30, 2026 by 12:00PM**.

Proposals received after this date and time will not be considered.

B. Disclosure

Bidders must acknowledge any relationship between the bidder's principal officers and Board members and any members of CAAC (to include staff employees, board members, and principal directors).

C. Rejection of Proposals

CAAC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of the RFP, or to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of CAAC. This RFP is made for information and planning purposes only. CAAC does not intend to award a contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request, or otherwise pay for the information solicited or obtained.

D. Incurring Costs

CAAC is not liable for any cost incurred by contractors prior to issuance of a contract.

F. Acceptance of Proposal Content

The contents of the proposals of the successful bidder may become contractual obligations if a contract ensures. Failure of the successful bidder to accept these obligations may result in cancellation of the aware.

Purpose: The Gap Analysis and Community Needs Assessments (CNA) will identify the strengths and resources available in Allegan County to meet the needs of low-income children, youth, older adults, individuals and families.

The Gap Analysis should identify and define current early childhood education issues in Allegan County; analyze and clarify the discrepancy between the current reality and the desired or optimal condition of early childhood in the community; identifying opportunities that may be addressed by Community Action of Allegan County (CAAC) programs and services.

The Community Needs Assessment for early childhood education should focus on the capacity of the community, including its citizens, agencies, and organizations to meet the educational needs of children 0-3 and 4-5 years of age. It should provide a framework for developing and identifying educational services and solutions; building community engagement to support and nurture low-income children and families in Allegan County.

The Community Needs Assessment for early childhood education and CAAC as an agency may include, but is not limited to, a compilation of demographic data from census records, results of surveys conducted by the agency and others, and formal/informal feedback from community partners. The assessment may also include focus group discussions, town meetings, interviews with stakeholders, and telephone or mailed surveys.

Final report(s) should detail the methodology used for conducting the Gap Analysis and Community Needs Assessment(s) to include; specific research conducted, and measurement tools used to garner consumer, family, and stakeholder input.

Community Action of Allegan County requests a Gap Analysis and Community Needs Assessment (CNA) specific to the area of early childhood education; documenting the number of young children and families currently being served, at what cost, who is not being served currently, and costs necessary to fulfill the unmet need for early childhood education (0 – 3 years) in Allegan County. A report developed by Turner-Thole Consulting for Kent County in 2017 (*Refocus: Analyzing Gaps in Early Childhood Services and Funding in Kent County*) serves as an expectation of what Community Action of Allegan County desires as a deliverable. This sample report is a useful tool in identifying gaps and potential efficiencies in the local early childhood system; establishing funding priorities and advocating for sufficient funding and effective policies and practices.

In 2012, the National Community Action Partnership (NCAP) launched the Organizational Standards Center of Excellence, with support from the Office of Community Service, at the Department of Health and Human Services as a part of a broad effort to enhance the accountability and organizational performance of CSBG funded programs. The National Community Action Partnership adopted Organizational Standards in 2016. The purpose of these standards is to ensure all agencies have appropriate organizational capacity, in both critical financial and administrative areas, as well as areas of unique importance to the mission of the Community Action network. Community Action of Allegan County requests the production of a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) documenting current data and projected trends throughout

the community to include multiple poverty and Asset Limited Income Constrained and Employed (ALICE) household indicators to meet NCAP required standards. These indicators should include and not be limited to the following issues: housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, primary education (K-12), post-secondary education, financial literacy and access to broadband technology.

Contract Period: April 2026 – July 2026

Note: Please send via email or post to:

Email: info@communityactionallegan.org **Subject:** Gap Analysis/CNA - 202

Mail: ATTN: Gap Analysis/CNA - 2026
Community Action Allegan County
323 Water St.
Allegan, MI 49001

Community Action of Allegan County (CAAC) Background:

Community Action of Allegan County (CAAC) is a private, non-profit 501(c)3 corporation conducting business in Allegan County, Michigan. The agency administers federal, state, and local government funded anti-poverty programs.

CAAC is soliciting proposals for a Contractor/Proposer to conduct a Gap Analysis and Community Needs Assessment specific to early childhood education, as well as, a broader Community Needs Assessment to meet national Community Action standards. The needs assessment should identify strengths/weaknesses of Allegan County to meet the needs of low-income and Asset Limited Income Constrained and Employed (ALICE) households. This assessment shall be used to educate and inform CAAC's Board of Directors, Head Start Policy Council, executive management team, direct service staff, programmatic partners and community stakeholders regarding the demographics of CAAC's service area, as well as, the organization's influence and ability to impact and develop policies, practices and programs the meet community needs.

Community Action of Allegan County Mission:

Community Action's mission is to provide individuals and families in crisis, or those struggling above the poverty line, with essential services to meet basic needs for food, housing, mobility, and quality education services; while supporting paths to self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Our services focus on lifting families out of poverty and poverty prevention. This work includes increasing accessibility and coordination of early childhood services and is guided by the principles of ensuring equity, improving quality, and responsive to families.

Scope of Services:

The qualified Contractor/Proposer will be responsible for the coordination, research, and writing of a fully completed and comprehensive Gap Analysis and Community Needs Assessment (CNA) with a focus on data gathering and analysis in the area of early childhood education. It is expected the Proposer shall have access to resources to gather and manipulate data like GIS (Geographic Information System) and any other technology to assist in obtaining relevant, up-to-date community data by census tract and block, zip code, Ward, neighborhood cluster, and other geographic data deemed appropriate. In addition, the Contractor/Proposer shall complete the following:

1. **Write and perform data analyses to be easily understood by multiple audiences including lay audiences.**

2. **Collect quantitative, demographic data from multiple, relevant sources; cited in APA format.**

3. **Coordinate with CAAC leadership to retrieve quantitative and qualitative data resulting from surveys, client feedback, and focus groups, and incorporate data into the CNA.**

4. **Convey an in-depth executive summary of research findings and data demonstrating the impact of poverty and its effect on residents, especially children and families in Allegan County.**

5. **Provide collection of relevant research and data relative to Early Head Start and Head Start standards, disaggregated by ages 0-3- and 4-5-year-old children with a focus on the following:**
    a. Demographic make-up of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children and families, including estimated number, geographic location, and racial and ethnic composition;
    b. Child development and childcare programs serving Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children, including publicly funded and local preschool programs, and the approximate number of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children served by each;
    c. Estimated number of children with disabilities (ages 0-3 and 4-5), including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies;
    d. Data regarding the education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children and their families (Access to Primary Health and Mental Health Care);

e. Education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children and their families as defined by families of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children, and by institutions in the community that serve young children;
f. Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility;
g. In addition to the above, and to the extent possible, provide the following:
A poverty analysis in Allegan County at various geographical levels;
    i. Basic needs trends (i.e. food, nutrition, housing, food, childcare, health costs, transportation);
    ii. Population trends;
    iii. Location of low-income households to include potential client demographics: children 0-3 and 4-5 years; low-income seniors 60+; veterans, etc.:
    iv. Substance use/abuse and type trends;
    v. Birth and death trends;
    vi. Health (including pre-natal care, health insurance, immunizations, oral health, mental health, etc.)
    vii. Nutrition trends (including overweight and underweight children, nutrition education offerings and free/reduced lunch counts, etc.);
    viii. Aging trends;
    ix. Household composition;
    x. Education attainment (including school rankings, school dropout, etc.);
    xi. Supply and demand of child development and childcare programs;
    xii. Children ages 0-3 and 4-5 with disabilities;
    xiii. Type of disabilities;
    xiv. Service providers for children with disabilities;
    xv. Foster care trends;
    xvi. Social services (i.e. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Women, Infant and Children Food and Nutrition Services (WIC);
    xvii. Race/ethnicity;
    xviii. Languages spoken;
    xix. Income trends/asset development;
    xx. Labor force/employment/unemployment trends/job opportunities;
    xxi. Trends in teen parents;
    xxii. Housing data: rent vs. ownership, and affordable housing availability;
    xxiii. Transportation; and
    xxiv. Data on homelessness.

6. **Contractor/Proposer shall provide collection of relevant research and data relative to Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and National Community Action Partnership (NCAP) Organizational Standards to include:**
    a. Standard 1.1 and 1.2: An analysis of information collected directly from low income individuals to assess needs and resources (data provided by CAAC);
    b. Standard 2.2: Collection of information from key sectors of the community to assess needs and resources. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions;
    c. Standard 3.2: Collection of current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age and race/ethnicity;
    d. Standard 3.3: Collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data for the county at various levels; and
    e. Standard 3.4: Description of key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of county residents.

7. **Contractor/Proposer will be responsible for the content layout, design, and research integrity of all sources of data and will include at least the following content areas, among others to be determined by Contractor/Proposer:**
    a. Comparisons to similar communities including, but not limited to, targeted populations and current customers;
    b. Needs by demographics (age, gender, race, etc.) under subject areas including, but not limited to, the following: poverty, education, employment, health (maternal, smoking, drug and alcohol use and abuse, etc.), food security, transportation, and childcare accessibility;
    c. Strengths and assets including family resiliency, Community Based Organizations (CBO) support, case management/bundled service providers and referral agencies, and CAAC service linkages/partnerships;
    d. Barriers including service accessibility (hours of operation), psychological barriers, and other barriers identified throughout the research process;
    e. Identification of CAAC priorities for consideration; to include a list of the top three (3) priorities identified by qualitative and quantitative data; and
    f. Recommendations and possible programmatic solutions.

8. **Contractor/Proposer's responsibilities and duties:**
    a. Attend all meetings either face-to-face, or by telephone, or other electronic means with designated CAAC staff as necessary in a timely manner;
    b. Be available during standard business hours and beyond those hours to ensure timely production of Gap Analysis and CNA(s);
    c. Prepare documented requests for additional information or data, assigning tasks to CAAC staff as necessary;
    d. Provide weekly updates on the progress of the development of the Gap Analysis and CNA(s);

e. Conduct research using methods and materials that ensure accurate, up-to-date, and ethical use of sources;
f. Write and submit multiple drafts from which to produce a final version of the Gap Analysis and CNA(s);
g. Review, edit and recommend enhancements of all written sections including sections authored by others;
h. Maintain the confidentiality and security of any and all information obtained from and related to CAAC, the Gap Analysis and the CNA(s), not sharing it with anyone, except with whom express written permission has been granted by the CAAC Executive Director;
i. Convey to CAAC any and all documentation related to production of Gap Analysis and CNA(s) with the understanding that CAAC is the sole owner of the Gap Analysis and CNA(s);
j. Presentation of findings and review by agency management and Board of Directors, for final approval.

CONTENT OF PROPOSAL

A. Title Page

Please identify the RFP subject, name of your organization, address, and lead contact individual at your organization along with their contact information.

B. Table of Contents

Include a clear identification of the material by section and page number.

C. Description of Scope of Work

The proposal should describe a work plan indicating the bidder's approach that will accomplish the specific tasks outlined in the RFP. The bidder should describe the philosophy that will be utilized, along with the interest and capacity to meet the requirements outlined in this RFP.

Within the scope of work, the bidder(s) should develop and outline statements and/or objectives which will clearly identify the goals and expectations of the project. Please describe, in detail, the methodology, tools, and/or techniques that would be utilized to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment for CAAC. This description should minimally include, but not be limited to:

• A description of relevant sampling techniques that you would propose utilizing to complete this assessment.

• Clarify types of techniques, proposed quantities, proposed timelines, target audiences, recruitment strategies to engage target audience, and staffing resources to accomplish tasks.

• The proposed methodology for clarifying the research objectives, data collection requirements, sampling strategy and timetables.

- The level of granularity of the data.
- A description of how data will be compiled.
- A description of identified trends.
- A description of end report that will be produced - including sample reports that your firm has produced for similar projects.

D. Organization's Qualifications and Experience

Overview of the bidder's organization, the number and nature of the staff to be employed for this project, and the type of technology systems the organization has in place. The bidder should describe any qualifications and/or experience and/or demonstrated competency specifically related to community needs assessments executed for populations, communities, and/or municipalities outlined in this RFP.

E. Identification of Anticipated Problems

The proposal should identify and describe any anticipated or potential problems, the approach to resolving these problems and any special assistance that will be requested from CAAC.

F. Selected Vendor's Assurances

The selected Vendor(s) will be required to assume responsibility for all services offered in their proposal. The Vendor must agree not to discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin or handicap.

G. Costing of Execution of the Project

The bidder(s) must provide their rate for carrying out and reporting on a Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment for the demographics outlined above, living in, and served by CAAC. Detailed fee-related information should be included in the proposal as well; this should include a total project cost with an itemized breakdown for review.

H. Letter of Reference

The bidder(s) must provide a reference list of your firm's relevant clients, especially any for which you have conducted a community health needs assessment in the past.

Report Required Date(s):

Tuesday – June 30, 2026, by COB (4 p.m. EST)

Confidentiality:

All information presented in this project, including information disclosed by CAAC during the project timeframe, shall be considered confidential and should not be released to outside parties. This document represents a scope of work and should not be considered a contract or letter of intent.

Project Deliverables:

All deliverables produced during this engagement are for the sole use of CAAC management. All work papers, analyses and final reports will remain the property of CAAC.

Proposal Evaluation:

Submitted proposals will be evaluated in the following areas by the CAAC's Procurement Review Committee.

Each Proposal will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

1. Expertise
2. The bidder agency's experience and performance on comparable engagements.
3. The quality of the firm's professional personnel to be assigned to the engagement and the quality of the firm's management support personnel to be available for technical consultation.
4. Engagement approach
5. Adequacy of proposed staffing plan for the engagement.
6. Adequacy of sampling techniques.
7. Rationale/value of cost.
8. Price bid for the project.
9. Quality/thoroughness of Proposal

In addition, the CAAC's Procurement Review Committee will also review the following:

- The number and scope of conditions, if any, attached to the bid
- Whether the bidder is presently in default to CAAC for any reason