**Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo**

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**HOUSING INSPECTION SERVICES**

Issued: February 9, 2023

*Responses must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 9, 2023*

**PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE AND TIME**

***Note regarding the Public Records Act:***

Government Code Sections 6250 *et seq.*, the California Public Records Act, defines a public record as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public business. The Public Records Act provides that public records shall be disclosed upon written request and that any citizen has a right to inspect any public record unless the document is exempted from disclosure.

Be advised that any contract that eventually arises from this Request for Proposals is a public record in its entirety. Also, all information submitted in response to this Request for Proposals is itself a public record **without exception**. Submission of any materials in response to this Request for Proposals constitutes a waiver by the submitting party of any claim that the information is protected from disclosure.

By submitting materials, (1) you are consenting to release of such materials by the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo if requested under the Public Records Act without further notice to you and (2) you agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo for release of such information.

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**Section I: General Information**

**A. Statement of Intent**

The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (HACSM) is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection services.

The proposed contract term is up to three years, with an option to extend for an additional two years. The successful Provider will enter into an agreement with HACSM using a standard contract template. The estimated timeline for this solicitation is as follows:

| **Action** | **Date** |
| --- | --- |
| RFP Issue Date | Thursday, February 9, 2023 |
| Deadline to submit questions/requests for clarifications | Friday, February 24, 2023 |
| HACSM response to questions posted on DOH website and email to proposers (if applicable) | Wednesday, March 1, 2023 |
| Submittal deadline | Thursday, March 9, 2023 |
| Notification of award | No later than week of March 27, 2023 |

This RFP seeks the submission of proposals to provide services from all interested and qualified proposers. The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo seeks by way of this RFP to obtain the listed services in a manner that maximizes the quality of services while also maximizing value to the Housing Authority. Proposers must be able to show that they can perform the services requested. Such evidence includes, but is not limited to, the respondent's demonstrated competency and experience in delivering services of a similar scope and type and local availability of the proposer's personnel and resources.

**B. Background**

HACSM provides rental subsidy for low-income households in San Mateo County through the administration of the Moving To Work (MTW) Voucher program, special purpose Voucher programs, such as Family Unification (FUP), Mainstream, Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV), and Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs. Our current portfolio includes over 5500 vouchers, and we continue to apply for new and renewal grant opportunities as they become available.

The mission of HACSM is to:

* Preserve and increase the availability of decent, safe and affordable housing;
* Ensure equal opportunity in housing for all;
* Promote self-sufficiency and asset development of families and individuals; and
* Improve community quality of life and economic viability.

HACSM is also a component of the San Mateo County Department of Housing (DOH) whose mission is to serve as a catalyst for increasing access to affordable housing, increasing the supply

of workforce housing and supporting related community development so that housing permanently exists for people of all income levels and generations in San Mateo County.

HACSM receives funding for its programs from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HACSM is not a federal department or agency; it is a governmental or public body, created and authorized by state law to develop and operate housing and housing programs for low-income families. To administer its programs, HACSM enters into a contractual relationship with HUD; HACSM also enters into a contractual relationship with the assisted family through a Voucher and with the owner or landlord of the housing unit through a Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract. With rental subsidy, these programs allow eligible families to rent housing in the private market by subsidizing a portion of each family’s monthly rent.

The County of San Mateo Board of Supervisors has the oversight responsibility for HACSM and, in a separate capacity, is its Housing Board of Commissioners. As a legally separate agency, HACSM has its own employees and maintains separate accounting, payroll, and benefits from those of San Mateo County.

HACSM has been a participant in HUD’s Moving To Work (MTW) demonstration program since May 2000. Under the MTW Agreement, HACSM is given the authorization to develop policies that are outside the limitations of certain HUD regulations and provisions of the Housing Act of 1937, including regulations related to HQS inspections. The three major goals for the MTW program are to increase cost effectiveness, promote self-sufficiency, and expand housing options for program participants. The additional flexibility offered by MTW allows HACSM to achieve its mission and program goals more successfully. HACSM conducts HQS inspections before tenants move into units and annually or biennially, depending on the specific program administered.

**Section II: Scope of Services**

HACSM is soliciting proposals from interested and qualified agencies to provide inspections for residential rental properties subsidized through Section 8, MTW, PSH, or other such units as designated by HACSM.

The terms Provider and/or Contractor may be used interchangeably throughout this RFP to reference the agency or organization selected to provide the work requested.

The following information identifies the primary detailed services to be provided based on the program design or policy but may be expanded based on HACSM need and in consultation with the selected Provider(s).

 **Services to be performed by Provider/Contractor:**

1. Follow HUD’s Housing Quality Standards (HQS) guidelines and any HACSM criteria identified in its Administrative Plan policies.
	1. HUD is preparing to implement new inspection guidelines (called NSPIRE) for the Voucher programs and the Contractor will be expected to adhere to those guidelines, when available.
2. Conduct initial, annual, biennial and special inspections based on program design and policy to determine if the unit is in compliance with the Housing Quality Standards (HQS). The Contractor will complete an inspection report, provided by HACSM, for each unit inspected and identify units with a “Pass” or “Fail”. In the event a unit fails its inspection, the Contractor will identify the failed items on the report.
	1. HACSM currently uses paper inspection reports; however, we are researching the use of mobile devices to supplement the inspection process. We will work closely with the Contractor to assist with testing and use of mobile devices at the time of the transition.
	2. HACSM’s expectation is for the Contractor to conduct a minimum of 15 inspections per day and up to a maximum of 20 inspections per day (the maximum is generally reserved for complexes or units in close proximity). These numbers may vary and can be negotiated.
3. Conduct recheck inspections on units to verify correction of failed items, at the request of HACSM. Confirm the completion of any outstanding repair work and update inspection record/report, if applicable.
4. Return all completed inspection reports and forms, handheld device (if applicable) and work schedule to HACSM at the end of each business day. A report of the day’s inspection activities, including identification of shows and no shows will be submitted by the Contractor to HACSM at the end of each business day.
5. Provide information in compliance with HACSM’s quality assurance requirements.
6. Report any suspected fraudulent activities related to program rules and regulations to HACSM.
7. Ensure compliance with all state, federal and local laws or rules applicable to performance of the work required under this contract.
8. Repair or replace HACSM-provided equipment damaged, lost or stolen due to negligence of the Contractor.

Required Certification and/or Training

HACSM requires the Contractor and applicable staff complete the following training and certification:

* Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Certification for Voucher programs from a recognized resource in the housing industry (i.e., Nan McKay & Associates, NAHRO, etc.)

Additional Services

The Department of Housing encompasses both the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo and (HACSM) the Housing and Community Development (HCD) division.

HCD is responsible for monitoring and inspecting units under HOME, Farm Labor Housing and various other programs they administer. They’ve requested assistance with inspections of units under some of their programs, and this scope is separate from the above scope of services with HACSM. These services/inspections would be quoted and billed separately than the services provided to HACSM.

**HACSM Obligations**

1. Provide daily inspection schedule assigned to Contractor. Prior to the day of schedule inspections, HACSM will provide the Contractor with the addresses of the units to be inspected.
2. When applicable, issue HACSM-owned handheld inspection device to Contractor personnel daily.
3. Communicate regularly with Contractor personnel of any changes in daily schedules, if known.

**Contractor Daily Deliverables**

1. Return completed inspection forms and handheld device, if applicable.
2. Return field schedule and inspection appointment letters.
3. Return any other forms, as requested by HACSM, if applicable.

The selected Contractor will sign an agreement with HACSM that details its responsibilities based on the scope of services in this section. HACSM will be responsible for monitoring the requirements established in the Agreement and the Contractor will be responsible for giving information, as required, or requested, to HACSM.

**PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE**

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| --- | --- |
| **Inspection Type** | **Proposed Fee per Inspection Type** |
| PBV New Construction Initial Inspection | $      |
| Annual/Biennial HQS Inspection | $      |
| Re-inspection or re-check | $      |
| Special, or Interim, Inspection  | $      |
| Inconclusive or No Show | $      |

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| The above fees must include all labor, equipment, administrative and associated expenses in providing the services, including mileage. HACSM will not pay an additional fee for mileage or any other fee. Assuming an initial three-year term of contract, provide percentage of fee increase for:Second Year of Contact Term:      % |
| Third Year of Contract Term:      %Assuming an additional two-year extension is approved, provide percentage of fee increase for:Fourth Year of Contact Term:      %Fifth Year of Contact Term:      %Print Name:      Signature:      Date:       |

**Section III: Proposal Submission and Processing**

The proposals in response to this RFP are due no later than **5:00 PM (Pacific Time) on Thursday, March 9, 2023**.

All proposals should be prepared on a computer and have consecutively numbered pages, including any exhibits, charts, or other attachments.

All proposals should adhere to the specified content and sequence of information described by this RFP.

Submit one copy in electronic format, preferably PDF, on a USB to:

Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo

264 Harbor Boulevard, Building A

Belmont, CA 94002

Attn: Debbie McIntyre

HACSM will date and time stamp the envelope containing the USB upon receipt. Proposals received after the deadline indicated above will not be considered. Proposals will not be accepted via facsimile, e-mail, or based on the date of the mail postmark. Delays in mail service or other methods of delivery will not excuse late proposal delivery. Proposers may not submit additional materials after the submittal deadline and incomplete applications will not be considered.

All proposals submitted in response to this solicitation must conform to the requirements and specifications outlined within this document in its entirety.

HACSM proposes to enter a contract with a qualified and experienced agency to perform services based on the specifications in this RFP. Interested parties must submit the required information as listed below. All documents that are submitted as part of the RFP will become property of HACSM. Requests for specific material to be returned will be considered. Any material submitted that is confidential must be clearly marked as such.

It shall be the responsibility of each proposer to be aware of and to abide by all dates, times, conditions, requirements, and specifications set forth within all applicable documents issued by HACSM, including the RFP document and any addenda and required attachments submitted by the proposer. By virtue of completing, signing and submitting the completed documents, the proposer is stating his/her agreement to comply with all conditions and requirements set forth within those documents.

By submitting a proposal, each proposer certifies that its submission is not the result of collusion or any other activity which would tend to influence the selection process directly or indirectly. The proposal will be used to determine the proposer's capability of rendering the services to be provided. The failure of a proposer to comply fully with the instructions in this RFP may eliminate its proposal from further evaluation as determined in the sole discretion of the HACSM. HACSM reserves the sole right to evaluate the contents of proposals submitted in response to this RFP and to select a Provider, if any.

HACSM reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any informality or technical defect in the proposal or to award the Contract in whole or in part, if deemed to be in the best interests of HACSM to do so. HACSM will award the Contract to the firm, institution or agency determined by HACSM to have submitted the most responsive and responsible offer, based upon the criteria specified in this RFP.

HACSM may cancel this solicitation at any time. Proposals may be withdrawn before and after the RFP submittal deadline by submitting a written request to the contact person. Re-submittal before the RFP submittal deadline can be made; however, the proposals may not be re-submitted after the deadline.

**Questions and Responses Process**

Submit all questions relating to this RFP in writing to Debbie McIntyre via e-mail at dmcintyre@smchousing.org.

All questions must be received no later than 5:00 PM (Pacific Time) on Friday, February 24, 2023.

HACSM may, at its option, email prospective proposers with the questions and answers in addition to posting them on the website listed above. If you wish to receive such notice, you may email Debbie McIntyre at the email address above before you submit a proposal.

If changes to the RFP are warranted, they will be made in writing, clearly marked as addenda to the RFP, and posted to the website. It is the responsibility of each proposer to check the website listed above for changes and/or clarifications to the RFP prior to submitting a response, and a proposer’s failure to do so will not provide a ground for protest.

No change to the specifications or to the other terms and conditions of this solicitation will be made orally to any proposer.

**Confidentiality of Proposals**

California Government Code Sections 6250 et seq. (the “California Public Records Act” or the “Act”) defines a public record as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public business. The Act provides that public records shall be disclosed upon written request and that any citizen has a right to inspect any public record unless the document is exempted from disclosure. The materials submitted in response to this RFP are subject to the California Public Records Act.

Be advised that any contract that eventually arises from this RFP is a public record in its entirety. Also, all information submitted in response to this RFP is itself a public record without exception. Submission of any materials in response to this RFP constitutes a waiver by the submitting party of any claim that the information is protected from disclosure. By submitting materials, (1) you are consenting to release of such materials by HACSM if requested under the Public Records Act without further notice to you and (2) you agree to indemnify and hold harmless the HACSM for release of such information.

If HACSM receives a request for any portion of a document submitted in response to this RFP, HACSM will not assert any privileges that may exist on behalf of the person or entity submitting the

proposal, and HACSM reserves the right to disclose the requested materials without notice to the party who originally submitted the requested material. To the extent consistent with the Public Records Act and applicable case law interpreting those provisions, HACSM and/or its officers, agents, and employees retain discretion to release or withhold any information submitted in response to this RFP.

Submission of a proposal constitutes a complete waiver of any claims whatsoever against the HACSM and/or its officers, agents, or employees that the HACSM has violated a proposer's right to privacy, disclosed trade secrets, or caused any damage by allowing the proposal to be inspected.

**Section IV: Proposal Content**

The proposal should be submitted in the following format:

1. **Cover Letter**

Prepare a one-page cover letter on your letterhead which includes the name, address, and contact information for the Provider’s primary person or persons and an indication of who is authorized to represent the Provider in negotiations, if needed.

Unless the proposer is an individual, all proposals must be signed with an agency/company/partnership/entity name and by a responsible officer or employee indicating that officer or employee’s authorization to commit the Provider to the terms of the proposal. Obligations assumed by such signature must be fulfilled.

1. **Specified Content and Detailed Sequence of Information in the RFP**

Each proposal should include sections addressing the following information in the listed order. The proposer should be sure to include all information that will enable the HACSM Evaluation Committee to make a decision. Failure of the proposer to provide specific, detailed information may result in its proposal being rejected in favor of a sufficiently detailed proposal. Any necessary exhibits or other information, including information not specifically requested by this RFP but that you think would be helpful, should be attached to the end of the proposal. The party submitting the materials should keep in mind the limitations on confidential information earlier in this RFP.

1. **Tabbing of Sections**

Be sure your proposal is properly tabbed using the following sections:

**Tab 1 - Provider’s Qualifications and Experience**

1. Provide a statement of qualifications for your organization, including an organization chart, a statement of the size of your agency, a description of services provided by your organization, and a statement of the extent of experience/history providing the services requested by this RFP.
2. How many employees do you plan to assign to this project if you are selected?
3. How many people in total are employed by your company? Please delineate between employees and consultants (if applicable).
4. If applicable, list the professional qualifications for everyone that would be assigned to provide services requested by this RFP, including date and school of any applicable degrees, additional applicable training, and any professional certifications/licensing. In lieu of listing this information, you may submit a resume or curriculum vitae for each such individual if the resume/CV includes all the requested information

**Tab 2 – Proposed Approach**

 This section describes your proposed approach for meeting the services required by the Department, as listed in Section II – Scope of Services. Relevant considerations include the quality and feasibility of your approach to meeting these needs, the way you plan to provide adequate staffing (including planning for absences and back-up coverage, training, background checks, and monitoring, etc.), and equipment or other resources provided by you (if applicable). Keep these considerations in mind as you respond to the following:

1. Describe how you will fulfill the needs of HACSM included in this RFP. Please attach a project plan, if appropriate.
2. List your needs for physical space and/or equipment at HACSM during this engagement, if any. Keep in mind that the Department of Housing office space and/or equipment may be limited. Discussion can continue in this area once a Contractor is selected.
3. Identify how you will meet all other aspects of the scope of work and related requirements and list any items you cannot provide.
4. Describe the measurements/metrics/deliverables/assessments you will provide to allow HACSM to assess the services you will provide.

**TAB 3 - Customer Service**

1. How will your services meet the needs of HACSM’s customers and/or the public?
2. In the event of a routine problem, who is to be contacted within your organization?
3. In the event of the identification of a problem by HACSM, its clients, and/or other applicable constituents, describe how you will address such problems and the timeframe for addressing them.

**TAB 4 - Claims and Violations Against Your Organization**

Please list any current violations or claims against you/your organization and those having occurred in the past five years, especially those resulting in claims or legal action against you.

**TAB 5 - Cost to HACSM for Primary Services**

1. Complete the enclosed Proposed Fee Schedule under Section II – Scope of Services.

**TAB 6 - References**

1. List at least three business references for which you have recently provided similar services. Include contact names and phone numbers for references provided.

**TAB 7 - Statement of Compliance with Contractual Requirements**

A sample of HACSM’s standard contract is attached to this RFP. Each proposal must include a statement of the proposer’s commitment and ability to comply with each of the terms of the standard contract.

 Proposals must advise HACSM of any objections to any terms in the contract template and provide an explanation for the inability to comply with the required term(s). If no objections are stated, HACSM will assume the proposer is prepared to sign the contract as-is.

 **The sample standard contract attached to this RFP is a template and does not constitute the final agreement to be prepared for the Contractor selected. Please do not attempt to insert missing information and complete the attached sample. Once a Contractor is selected, HACSM will work with the selected Contract to execute a contract. However, each proposal should address the general terms of the standard contract as outlined in this section.**

**Section V: General Terms and Conditions**

**Read all Instructions.** Please read the entire RFP and all enclosures before preparing your proposal.

**Proposal Costs.** Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the proposer and shall not be charged to HACSM or otherwise reimbursed by the HACSM.

**Proposal Becomes HACSM Property.** The RFP and all materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of HACSM.

**Alteration of Terms and Clarifications**. No alteration or variation of the terms of this RFP is valid unless made or confirmed in writing by HACSM. Likewise, oral understandings or agreements not incorporated into the final contract are not binding on the HACSM.

If a proposer discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in the RFP, the proposer must immediately notify HACSM of such error in writing and request modification or clarification of the document. If a proposer fails to notify the HACSM of an error in the RFP prior to the date fixed for submission, the proposer shall submit a response at his/her own risk, and if the proposer enters into a contract, the proposer shall not be entitled to additional compensation or time by reason of the error or its later correction.

Modifications or clarifications to the RFP will be posted to the [www.smchousing.org](http://www.smchousing.org) website as outlined above without divulging the source of the request for same. HACSM may, at its discretion, also give electronic notice by email to all parties who have notified HACSM of their electronic contact information in response to this RFP, but no party that fails to receive email notice has any basis for protest given that all clarifications will be available online. It is the obligation of all proposing parties to check the [www.smchousing.org](http://www.smchousing.org) website for updates regarding the RFP if they wish to be kept advised of clarifications prior to submitting a proposal.

**Selection of Provider**. The selection of a Contractor will be memorialized in the form of an Agreement and authorized by a Resolution of the Housing Board of Commissioners.

HACSM reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without penalty. HACSM’s waiver of any deviation in the proposal shall in no way modify the RFP documents or excuse the proposer from full compliance with any eventual contract.

**Equal Benefits**. Contractor shall comply with all laws relating to the provision of benefits to its employees and their spouses or domestic partners, including, but not limited to, such laws prohibiting discrimination in the provision of such benefits on the basis that the spouse or domestic partner of the Contractor’s employee is of the same or opposite sex as the employee.

**Jury Duty**. The contractor must comply with the San Mateo County Ordinance requiring that the contractor have and adhere to a written policy that provides its full-time employees who live in San Mateo County with no fewer than five days of regular pay for actual jury service in San Mateo County. This policy may provide that employees deposit any fees received for such jury service with the contractor or that the contractor deducts from the employee’s regular pay the fees received for jury service. If the proposer has no employees that qualify for jury duty in San Mateo County, the proposer may satisfy this requirement by providing HACSM with written

confirmation of the fact that (1) it has no such employees and (2) it will comply with the jury service pay ordinance with respect to any future qualifying employees.

**Living Wage**. Unless subject to a specific exemption under the Ordinance, contractors providing services or goods with services must comply with Chapter 2.88 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, which is the County of San Mateo Living Wage Ordinance. Such compliance includes, but is not limited to, paying all Covered Employees the current Living Wage and providing notice to all Covered Employees and Subcontractors as required under the Ordinance. The Ordinance requires a specific Living Wage be paid to employees working on certain contracts. Please see Chapter 2.88 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, to determine whether your contract is covered by the Ordinance or is exempt.

If the contract is exempt from the Ordinance OR if the proposer has no covered employees under the Ordinance, the proposer may satisfy this requirement by providing HACSM with written confirmation of the fact that (1) the contract is exempt from the Ordinance or it has no covered employees and (2) it will comply with the Ordinance with respect to any future qualifying employees.

**Insurance**. HACSM has certain insurance requirements that must be met. In most situations those requirements include the following: the Provider must carry $1,000,000 or more in comprehensive general liability insurance; the contractor must carry motor vehicle liability insurance, and if travel by car is a part of the services being requested, the amount of such coverage must be at least $1,000,000; if the contractor has two or more employees, the contractor must carry the statutory limit for workers’ compensation insurance; if the contractor or its employees maintain a license to perform professional services (e.g., architectural, legal, medical, psychological, etc.), the contractor must carry professional liability insurance; and generally the contractor must name HACSM and its officers, agents, employees, and servants as additional insured on any such policies (except workers compensation). Depending on the nature of the work being performed, additional requirements may need to be met.

**Incomplete Proposals May be Rejected**. If a proposer fails to satisfy any of the requirements identified in this RFP, the proposer may be considered non-responsive, and the proposal may be rejected.

**Contact with HACSM Employees**. As of the issuance date of this RFP and continuing until the final date for submission of proposals, all proposers are specifically directed not to hold meetings, conferences, or technical discussions with any HACSM employee for purposes of responding to this RFP except as otherwise permitted by this RFP. Any proposer found to be acting in any way contrary to this directive may be disqualified from entering into any contract that may result from this RFP.

Proposers should submit questions or concerns about the process as stated above. The proposer should not otherwise ask any HACSM employees questions about the RFP or related issues, either orally or by written communication, unless invited to do so.

**Travel Costs**. If the services requested will require you or your employees to travel to the Bay Area, and if HACSM opts to permit travel expenses to be reimbursed, there are some general guidelines regarding reimbursement rates that will apply. In general, the following restrictions should be kept in mind: reimbursement for the actual cost of lodging, meals, and incidental expenses (“LM&I Expenses”) is limited to the then-current Continental United States (“CONUS”) rate for the location of the work being done (San Mateo/Foster City/Belmont, California), as set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations and as listed by the website of the U.S. General Services Administration (available online by searching www.gsa.gov for the term ‘CONUS’);

airline and car rental travel expenses (“Air & Car Expenses”) are limited to reasonable rates obtained through a cost-competitive travel service (for example, a travel or car-rental website), with air travel restricted to coach fares and car rental rates restricted to the mid-level size range or below; and certain other reasonable travel expenses (“Other Expenses”) such as taxi fares, parking costs, train or subway costs, etc. may be reimbursable on an actual-cost basis. You should not assume that HACSM will permit travel from the Bay Area to be reimbursed, and your proposal should include such travel costs if applicable. Travel costs should be minimized or eliminated for a proposal to be competitive.

**Miscellaneous**. This RFP is not a commitment or contract of any kind. HACSM reserves the right to pursue any and/or all ideas generated by this RFP. HACSM reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and/or terminate the RFP process if deemed in the best interest of HACSM. Further, while every effort has been made to ensure the information presented in this RFP is accurate and thorough, the HACSM assumes no liability for any unintentional errors or omissions in this document. HACSM reserves the right to waive or modify any requirements of this RFP when it determines that doing so is in the best interest of HACSM. Finally, HACSM may revise or clarify aspects of the required services after proposals are submitted by communicating directly to some or all of the providers that submitted proposals

**Section VI: Proposal Evaluation**

All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated by an HACSM-RFP Evaluation Committee. During the evaluation process, HACSM may require a proposer's representative to answer specific questions orally and/or in writing. Once a finalist or group of finalists is selected, additional interactions or information may be required. The most qualified individual or firm will be recommended by the HACSM-RFP Evaluation Committee based on the overall strength of each proposal, and the evaluation is not restricted to considerations of any single factor such as cost.

Responses to this RFP must adhere to the format for proposals detailed in Section IV – Proposal Content. The criteria used as a guideline in the evaluation will include, but not be limited to, the following:

* Qualifications and experience of the entity, including capability and experience of key personnel and experience with other public or private agencies to provide these services
* Proposed approach, including clarity of understanding of the scope of services to be provided and appropriateness of the proposed solution/services
* Customer service
* History of successfully performing services for public or private agencies
* Ability to meet any required timelines or other requirements
* Claims and violations against you or your organization
* Cost to HACSM for the primary services described by this RFP
* References
* Compliance with RFP and contractual requirements

HACSM may consider any other criteria it deems relevant, and the Evaluation Committee is free to make any recommendations it deems to be in the best interest of the HACSM. Inaccuracy of any information supplied within a proposal or other errors constitute grounds for rejection of the

proposal. However, HACSM may, in its sole discretion, correct errors or contact a proposer for clarification.

Note that the HACSM reserves the right to evaluate proposals solely based on each provider's written submission. In relation to written materials, evaluation will be performed only on the material included directly in the proposal itself unless otherwise indicated or requested by HACSM. Your proposal must be complete without relying on external websites, sales brochures, marketing materials or white papers.

HACSM reserves the right to accept proposals other than those with the lowest costs.

**Contract Award**

Upon completion of the proposal evaluation process, the evaluation committee will submit its conclusions and recommendation to the Executive Director. If the recommendation is approved, the successful Contractor will receive a Notice of Award; and thereafter, contract negotiations will begin, if required.

**NOTICE TO PROPOSERS**

HACSM is not required to give notice to proposers in any specific format or on any particular timeline. At some point prior to execution of a final agreement for the requested services, HACSM will notify those who submitted proposals of their non-selection. Proposers may be notified at different times depending on the needs of HACSM.

**PROTEST PROCESS**

If a proposer desires to protest the selection decision, the proposer must submit by facsimile or email a written protest within five (5) business days after the delivery of the notice about the decision. The written protest should be submitted to the Executive Director as outlined below. Protests received after the deadline will not be accepted. Protests must be in writing, must include the name and address of the proposer and the RFP number, and must state all the specific grounds for the protest. A protest that merely addresses a single aspect of the selected proposal (for example, comparing the cost of the selected proposal in relation to the non-selected proposal) is not sufficient to support a protest. A successful protest will include sufficient evidence and analysis to support a conclusion that the selected proposal, taken as a whole, is an inferior proposal.

HACSM will respond to a protest within 10 business days of receiving it, and HACSM may, at its election, set up a meeting with the proposer to discuss the concerns raised by the protest. The decision of the HACSM will be final. The protest letter must be sent as follows:

Raymond Hodges, Executive Director

Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo

264 Harbor Blvd., Bldg A

Belmont, CA 94002

OR

Facsimile: 650-802-3373

OR

rhodges@smchousing.org