



Sonoma County Community Development Commission
Sonoma County Housing Authority
1440 Guerneville Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95403-4107

*Members of the
Commission*

James Gore
Chair

Chris Coursey
Vice Chair

Susan Gorin
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David Rabbitt

Dave Kiff
Interim Executive
Director

Request for Proposals

Housing Location Software

The Sonoma County Community Development Commission (Commission) is requesting qualifications from software developers to provide Housing Location Software. The selected developer (Developer) will provide the Commission a software platform to assist local service providers and recipients of rental assistance to easily identify available units that meet their needs.

Background

Sonoma County Housing Authority (SCHA), a Division of the Commission, administers Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rental assistance funds for more than 3,000 households. Searching for housing is a time consuming and challenging task often done by households who are distressed, facing homelessness, and may have disabilities. The challenge of finding a unit in a low vacancy housing market can increase when you are receiving rental assistance which requires additional information be given to prospective properties and additional steps to lease a unit.

Property Owner and Manager engagement is essential to the success of the rental assistance programs. Though there are additional steps to lease a unit to a recipient of rental assistance many landlords enjoy working with the Housing Authority. There are many benefits for Property Owners including timely rental payments, tenants whose rent portion will be affordable even if they have a change in their income, unit inspections, and help in filling vacant units.

The Commission and SCHA are committed to improving our Property Owner/Manager engagement and retention strategies as well as providing resources to rental assistance recipients linking them to available properties. The SCHA has a current system of providing an email list of vacant properties currently accepting our rental assistance to interested parties. This system requires landlords to contact the Housing Authority to supply information about the unit and does not provide options such as photo inclusion. We are currently seeking a system level web-based software that can enhance our Property Owner engagement and quickly link home seekers to available units.

In addition, our community has multiple organizations to provide Housing Location Services and Navigation Services in the same rental market. These services are currently disjointed which



can lead to confusion for property owners. A centralized database that is accessible to multiple community partners will improve efficiency and outcomes for all stakeholders.

Scope of Services

Development of new software or licensing of existing software that can be used by multiple stakeholders to ease the burden of locating a rental unit in a tight rental market.

Our ideal software will offer the following features:

Proactive Landlord Engagement:

- Enable Property Owners to easily list units with images and amenities
- Allows Property Owners to edit and remove listings
- Collect and maintain landlord information
- Automates follow up communications to Property Owners about listings
- Automates follow up inquires to Property Owners to encourage future listings

Housing Search Features:

- Search and view property features for active voucher holders
- Intuitive, easy to use navigation with focus on disabled and senior users
- User friendly features such as:
 - Map search
 - Filters for location, unit size, price, pets, senior community, etc
- Pro-active notifications of saved search criteria

Stake Holder Collaboration:

- Allow tiered access for partnering community agencies to participate in specialized features
- Allow access to hold units for prioritization

Analytics:

- Track Landlord Outreach and Recruitment efforts
- Housing Search Data Collection
- Lease up Data Collection

Submission Requirements

Responses to this RFP shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

Cover Letter and Introduction

A letter of introduction, which includes the name, address, telephone number, and email address of the contact person(s) authorized to represent your firm. This letter should be signed by an officer of the firm authorized to bind the firm to all commitments made in the response.

Project Overview

Provide a brief narrative description of the Scope of Work outlined above. Include any issues you believe may require special consideration. Discuss any alternatives to the Scope of Work you might recommend. Commission staff will assess your understanding of the objectives based on this overview.

Qualifications and Experience

Provide descriptions of your firm's role, experience, and capability in developing or licensing an existing housing location software program. Provide the name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address of principal representatives of those clients. Include qualifications and experience of sub-consultants, if any. Briefly describe your firm's general business capabilities and your ability to meet the required timelines.

Cost Basis

Respondent should provide cost for software development, licensing, set-up fee, annual service fee, and any other costs associated with implementation and use of the web-based software.

Authorization

The response must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the firm and shall contain a statement to the effect that the response is valid for at least 90 days.

Due Date

Written and electronic responses both must be received by the Commission in its office at 1440 Guerneville Road, Santa Rosa, no later than 5pm, 7/25/2022. The due date is subject to change. If the due date is changed, all known recipients of the original RFP will be notified of the new date, and any such changes will also be posted on the Commission's website.

Questions/Answers

Respondent Questions and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Respondent to address all communications pertaining to this RFP **in writing** to Dot Iriks (dorothy.iriaks@sonoma-county.org), the Agency Contact, only. Any party responding to this RFP or a party representing a Respondent shall not influence or attempt to influence any member of the selection committee, any member of the Board of Commissioners, or any employee of the Sonoma County Community Development Commission or the County of Sonoma, with regard to the acceptance of a response to this RFP. Any party attempting to influence the RFP process through ex-parte contact may be subject to rejection of their response.

Written questions must be submitted **via e-mail** to Dot Iriks at dorothy.iriaks@sonoma-county.org by the due date included within the schedule below. E-mails should include "RFP for Housing Search Software" in the subject line. Questions will not be accepted via telephone. Written responses to all questions received will be posted on the Commission's website at

<http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Community-Development-Commission/cdc> in accordance with the schedule below.

Timeline

RFP issued	6/27/2022
Questions in writing due	7/6/2022
Responses to questions and addendum issued and posted to Commission website	7/12/2022
Proposals due	7/25/2022
Proposal evaluation	7/27/2022
Consultant notified of preliminary selection (pending Board of Commissioners approval if applicable)	8/1/2022

Instructions for Submission of Response

1. Form:

- Respondents must do **all** of the following:
Upload an electronic copy of their proposal. All proposals should be combined into one pdf document and clearly labeled with the project name. Complete pdf application document must be uploaded to this link:
<https://share.sonoma-county.org/link/f1RmyE9vZzo/>
- Note: The link will state “There are no files in this directory.” Click on the button that says “Click here to Upload” and then select “Browse for files.” You may then select files and click upload. Confirmation of successful upload will **not** be received by respondent after upload is complete; and
- Submit one (1) original signed by an individual authorized to enter into Contracts to the address below. Proposals must be enclosed in a sealed envelope or package and clearly marked **RFP for HOUSING SEARCH SOFTWARE**. Proposals shall be submitted to:

Dorothy Iriks
Sonoma County Community Development Commission
1440 Guerneville Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

2. Due Date: Proposals must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. on July 25th, 2022.**

The proposal due date is subject to change. If the proposal due date is changed, all known recipients of the original RFP will be notified of the new date. The amendment modifying the due date will also be posted on the Commission’s website.

3. General Instructions: To receive consideration, proposals shall be made in accordance with the following general instructions:

- a) The completed proposal shall be without alterations or erasures.
- b) No oral or telephonic proposals will be considered.
- c) The submission of a proposal shall be an indication that the Respondent has

investigated and satisfied him/herself as to the conditions to be encountered, the character, quality and scope of the work to be performed, and the requirements of the Commission, including all terms and conditions contained within this RFP.

Evaluation Criteria

Selection of the most qualified consultant will determine the final contract award and be based upon:

- Understanding of the scope of work as evidenced by the approach outlined
- Competence, technical ability, and related experience
- Estimated cost projections
- Responsiveness to the Request for
- References

Rules and Regulations

The issuance of this RFP does not constitute an agreement by the Commission that any contract will actually be entered into by the Commission. The Commission expressly reserves the right at any time to:

- a. Waive or correct any defect or informality in any response, submittal, or submittal procedure.
- b. Reject any or all responses.
- c. Re-issue this RFP or change deadline dates.
- d. Modify all or any portion of the selection procedures, prior to the submission deadline, including deadlines for accepting responses, the specifications or requirements for any materials, equipment, or services to be provided under this RFP, or the requirements for contents or format of the responses.

All responses shall be deemed public records. In the event that a respondent desires to claim portions of its response exempt from disclosure, it is incumbent upon the respondent to clearly identify those portions with the word "Confidential" printed on the lower right-hand corner of the page. The Commission will consider a respondent's request for exemption from disclosure; however, the Commission will make a decision based upon applicable laws. Assertions by a respondent that the entire submittal or large portions are exempt from disclosure will not be honored. All responses to this RFP shall become the property of the Commission and will be retained or disposed of accordingly.

The Commission shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by any respondent. The Commission shall be held harmless and free from any and all liability, claims, or expenses whatsoever incurred by, or on behalf of, any person or organization responding to this RFP.

All data and information furnished by Commission or referred to in this RFP are furnished for the respondent's convenience. The Commission does not guarantee that such data and

information are accurate and assumes no responsibility whatsoever as to its accuracy or interpretation. Respondents shall satisfy themselves as to the accuracy or interpretation of all such information and data.

By submitting a response to this RFP, the respondent waives all rights to seek any legal remedies regarding any aspect of this RFP, the Commission's selection of a consultant, and the Commission's rejection of any and all responses.

The Commission also reserves the right to negotiate any price or provisions and accept any part, or all parts of any or all responses, whichever is in the best interest of the Commission. The Commission may, during the evaluation process, request from any respondent additional information which the Commission deems necessary to determine the respondent's ability to perform the required services. If such information is requested, the respondent shall be permitted three (3) working days to submit this information.

All respondents submit their statements to the Commission with the understanding that the final approval of any agreement is contingent upon and subject to review and final approval by the Board of Commissioners.

Non-Liability of Commission

The Commission shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by the respondent or selected consultant or consultants. The Commission shall be held harmless and free from any and all liability, claims, or expenses whatsoever incurred by, or on behalf of, any person or organization responding to this RFP.

Lobbying

Any party responding to this RFP or a party representing a respondent shall not influence or attempt to influence any member of the selection committee, any member of the Board of Commissioners, or any employee of the Sonoma County Community Development Commission or the County of Sonoma, with regard to the acceptance of a response to this RFP. Any party attempting to influence the RFP process through ex-parte contact may be subject to rejection of their response.

Form of Agreement

The selected consultant will be expected to execute the Commission's standard form of professional services agreement, a sample copy of which is attached. The consultant's response must specify, in writing, any objections consultant has to the Commission's standard form of agreement, and contain proposed alternatives to the standard language for consideration by the Commission. Matters not objected to by Consultant in its response will not be subject to later negotiation.

- a) No agreement with the Commission shall have any effect until a contract has been signed by both parties.
- b) A sample of the agreement is included as Attachment A hereto. Respondents must be willing to provide the required insurance and accept the terms of this sample agreement. With few exceptions, the terms of the Commission's standard agreement will not be negotiated. *Indemnification language will not be negotiated.*

- c) Responses shall include a statement that (i) the respondent has reviewed the sample agreement and will agree to the terms contained therein if selected, or (ii) all terms and conditions are acceptable to the respondent except as noted specifically in the response to this RFQ. A respondent taking exception to the Commission's sample agreement must also provide alternative language for those provisions considered objectionable to the respondent. Please note that any exceptions or changes requested to the Agreement may constitute grounds to reject the response.
- d) Failure to address exceptions to the sample agreement in the response will be construed as acceptance of all terms and conditions contained therein.
- e) Submission of additional contract exceptions after the submission deadline may result in rejection of the consultant's response.

Duration of Proposal; Cancellation of Awards; Time of the Essence

All proposals will remain in effect and shall be legally binding for at least ninety (90) days. Unless otherwise authorized by Commission, the selected consultant will be required to execute an agreement with the Commission for the services requested within sixty (60) days of the Commission notice of intent to award. If agreement on terms and conditions acceptable to the Commission cannot be achieved within that timeframe, or if, after reasonable attempts to negotiate such terms and conditions, it appears that an agreement will not be possible, as determined at the sole discretion of the Commission, the Commission reserves the right to retract any notice of intent to award and proceed with awards to other consultants, or not award at all.

Withdrawal and Submission of Modified Proposal

A proposer may withdraw a proposal at any time prior to the submission deadline by submitting a written notification of withdrawal signed by the proposer or his/her authorized agent. Another proposal may be submitted prior to the deadline. A proposal may not be changed after the designated deadline for submission of proposals.

Protest Process

Any and all protests must be in writing and must comply with the timelines and procedures set forth below. Any directly affected party who is aggrieved in connection with the solicitation or award of a contract may file a protest regarding the procurement action. Such protest must be filed in writing with:

Sonoma County Community Development Commission
Executive Director/Purchasing Agent
1440 Guerneville Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Protests must be filed within seven (7) calendar days from the date notice of intent to award is issued by the Commission. Failure to timely file a protest shall constitute a waiver of any right to protest. Untimely protests will not be accepted or considered. Any protest shall:

- State in detail each and every ground asserted for the protest, citing to the law, rule, local ordinance, procedure or bid provision on which the protest is based; and

- Identify the remedy sought.

Attachments

Attachment A: Draft Professional Services Agreement

