



**HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**Regional Transportation Planning Agency**  
**Humboldt County Local Transportation Authority**  
**Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies**  
611 I Street, Suite B  
Eureka, CA 95501  
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www.hcaog.net

**Request for Proposals for the**  
**Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods**  
**Planning Project**  
(2023/2024)

**RFP released: February 22, 2024**  
**Proposals due: 4 p.m., April 5, 2024**

**Invitation:** The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is inviting interested parties to submit proposals for providing services to complete the **Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning** project. HCAOG would like to retain the professional services of a qualified professional and/or firm, or combination of professionals and/or firms, to assist in project work related to this Caltrans' Sustainable Communities grant project.

HCAOG is seeking those with expertise in one or more of the following areas of expertise: walkability; bikeability; equity outcomes in land use and transportation planning; equity outcomes in public engagement; level of traffic stress (LTS) analysis; spatial analysis, mapping and database management; Safe Routes to School community engagement; smart growth principles and best practices; conducting professional training/charrettes; and other applicable consulting services related to transportation planning. Interested parties can submit proposals for providing services for one or more, or all, of the following activities.

- ◆ **Activity 1. Level-of-traffic-stress (LTS):** Assist in refining methodology for level-of-traffic-stress (LTS) for pedestrians & bicyclists; set-up and prepare spatial analysis/visual information for LTS results (GIS and graphic design).
- ◆ **Activity 2. Planning for Sustainable Communities:** Assist outreach and engagement for jurisdictions to identify areas where investment and infill will support growth where residents can get around without relying on driving their private cars for most trips.
- ◆ **Activity 3. Safe Routes To School Pilot:** Conduct community engagement for a Safe Routes To School self-assessment pilot and demonstration.
- ◆ **Activity 4. Training Series** Deliver training series on smart growth and smart mobility (expert speakers).

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# Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning Project

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## I. BACKGROUND

The *Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning Project* is funded by a grant from Caltrans’ Fiscal Year 2023-24 Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program–Sustainable Communities. The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is the lead applicants; our subapplicant partners are the City of Arcata and the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities.

### HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

HCAOG conducts work for the benefit of the entire Humboldt County region. The region now known as Humboldt County includes the unceded traditional territories and current homelands of several indigenous nations including the Karuk, Hupa, Wiyot, Yurok, Tsugwe, Chilula, Chimariko, Lassik, Mattole, Nongatl, Sinkyone, Wailaki, and Whilkut people.

HCAOG is the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), which has transportation planning responsibilities under federal and state law. As the RTPA, HCAOG is responsible for developing regional transportation plans and programs in a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning process. This process is carried out with federal, state, regional, local, and tribal agencies, and the public. The HCAOG Board of Directors is comprised of eight members: the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and the Mayors of Humboldt’s seven cities (Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and Trinidad), or an alternate designate from that governing body. HCAOG has three standing advisory committees: the Policy Advisory Committee, Social Service Transportation Advisory Council, and Technical Advisory Committee.

### CITY OF ARCATA

The City of Arcata is located on part of the ancestral territory of the Wiyot peoples; in their language it is Goudi'ni. The city is adjacent to the Arcata Bay portion of Humboldt Bay, or Wigi. The city's population is 18,857 (2020 census). Goudi'ni was first colonized in 1850 as Union; the incorporated city was officially established in 1858, and was renamed Arcata in 1860. Cal Polytechnic Humboldt is located in Goudi'ni/Arcata.

### **COALITION FOR RESPONSIBLE TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES (CRTP)**

CRTP is a community-based organization in Humboldt County. The purpose of CRTP is to promote transportation solutions that protect and support a healthy environment, healthy people, healthy communities and a healthy economy on the North Coast. CRTP envisions a North Coast region with vibrant local communities where walking, biking, public transit, and other socially and environmentally positive modes of transportation are the norm, and envisions a world where these modes are equitable, safe and comfortable for people of all races, ethnicities, cultures, income levels, genders, ages and abilities.

## **II. PROJECT SUMMARY**

The proposed project will complete work that will help achieve Caltrans' objectives for sustainability, preservation, accessibility, safety, health, and social equity. HCAOG and our local partners and residents share these objectives, which are identified also in HCAOG's Regional Transportation Plan, *Variety in Rural Options of Mobility (VROOM) 2022-2042*. This integrated planning endeavor is a means for HCAOG and local, tribal, and regional partners to advance the sustainable community goals adopted in the RTP. *VROOM 2022-2042* makes a greater push to align transportation and land use more sustainably and equitably throughout the region, and sets ambitious targets to decrease car VMT and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The project integrates assessing multimodal infrastructure and the land use landscape in order to identify the best places where transportation investments and/or infill development investments or incentives would maximize active-travel connectivity and accessibility to housing, jobs, regional transit, essential services, plus social and recreational destinations. The project helps inform and facilitate these community decisions. The training series will open opportunities for different agencies and residents to work together hands-on in designing or visioning walkable, bikeable, vibrant communities. The project's main objective is to facilitate data-informed dialogue and decision-making in support of housing and infill development that does not perpetuate car-dependent land use. The project will pilot a methodology to assess LTS in city, county, and tribal lands, and use LTS results to highlight opportune areas where low-stress, active-travel routes and infill and job/housing development can create vibrant neighborhoods with vibrant people. The project includes an interactive, community-based Safe Routes to School project with a school in the City of Arcata.

## **III. SCOPE OF WORK**

This RFP contains four major activities; respondents may elect to propose services for one, some, or all activities. HCAOG considers the activities listed in the Scope of Work, attached as Attachment B, to be the minimum requirements expected for conducting the Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning project. Proposals should describe xxxincluding tasks, time frames, staffing, and approaches to accessibility, diversity, inclusion, and equity

A final scope of work will be developed by HCAOG and the Successful Proposer. All proposers will be held to the applicable requirements, standards and protocols set forth in this RFP, and the sample Consultant Services Agreement, attached as Attachment A. If subconsultants are proposed, the Subconsultant List form (attached as Attachment D) must be included with the proposal. Such requirements and standards will be incorporated into the final Consultant Services Agreement subject to negotiation between HCAOG and the Successful Proposer.

Quarterly (or monthly) progress reports will be required as deliverables for this project. Proposals should detail any assistance the respondent will require from HCAOG staff and/or committee members.

#### **IV. PROJECT TIMETABLE**

The following dates represent HCAOG’s best estimate of the schedule that will be followed with regard to this RFP process. HCAOG hereby reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to modify this tentative schedule as it deems necessary, including, without limitation, extending the deadline for submission of Proposals.

- February 22, 2024 (Thurs.)....Request for Proposals (RFP) released
- March 7, 2024 (Thurs.).....Deadline to submit questions regarding RFP
- March 15, 2024 (Fri.).....HCAOG deadline for responding to questions regarding RFP
- April 5, 2024 (4 p.m. Fri.)....Closing date for receipt of proposals**
- April 22-26, 2024.....HCAOG completes review and evaluation process
- May 3, 2024 .....Finalize consultant services agreement
- May 16, 2024 (Thur.).....Staff recommends award to HCAOG Board
- May 20–28, 2024 .....Project commences
- February/March 2026.....Consultant work is completed (end dates vary for different activities)

#### **Closing Date**

Complete proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) on Friday, April 5, 2024. Proposals must be received by, not postmarked by, the closing date and time. Proposals may be submitted in person or by delivery service. Respondents use mail or courier service is done so at their own risk. HCAOG will not be liable or responsible for any proposals delivered late (see address below, under “Cover Letter”). Proposals received after the closing time will not be accepted and will be returned to applicants unopened. By submitting a proposal, the Proposer certifies that his or her name or the consultant firm's name, as well as the name of Proposer’s subcontractors, does not appear on the Comptroller General's list of ineligible contractors for federally assisted projects.

All proposals received *prior to* the closing date and time specified above may be withdrawn or modified by respondent’s written request. Any modification, to be considered, must be received in writing, and in the same number of copies as the original proposal, prior to the closing date for receipt of proposals. Any modifications received late shall not be considered. Proposals will become HCAOG’s property after the submission deadline has passed.

## V. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Proposals should be limited to specifically discuss the elements outlined in this RFP and must be submitted in accordance with the standards and specifications set forth in this RFP and contain all required attachments. To be considered to perform the services requested by this RFP, a respondent must meet the following criteria and submit all the following information outlined below. Submittals failing to meet any of these criteria shall be considered to be non-responsive and will not be evaluated further.

Complete proposals submitted in response to this RFP shall be delivered or mailed to HCAOG via electronic mail, US post, parcel carrier, or hand delivery. Complete proposals may be mailed in electronic or hard-copy (paper) form. If submitting hard copies, respondents must provide one copy of the cover letter, and four (4) unbound, double-sided copies of the proposal. Complete proposals must be submitted to:

HCAOG  
Attention: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner  
611 "P" Street, Suite B  
Eureka, CA 95501  
or  
oona.smith@hcaog.net, with subject line: MVN proposal submittal

### A) Cover Letter

The proposal shall be transmitted with a cover letter that describes the respondent's interest and commitment to the proposed project. The cover letter should include the name, title, address and telephone number of the individual to whom correspondence and other contacts should be directed during the consultant selection process and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for at least a sixty (60) day period. The person authorized to negotiate a contract with HCAOG shall sign the cover letter.

Only one cover letter need be prepared to accompany the technical and cost proposals (i.e., whether proposals are submitted in electronic form or hard-copy form). Proposals that are unsigned, or signed by an individual not authorized to bind the Proposer, will be considered nonresponsive and rejected.

### B) Proposal Formatting (Sections 1 through 7)

Each responsive proposal shall have a technical proposal (sections 1-5), cost proposal (section 6), and required attachments (section 7). Failure to follow this format may result in the rejection of the proposal. Each Proposal shall consist of the following items:

1) **Table of Contents**

Proposals shall include a table of contents that identifies submitted material by sections 1 through 7 with sequential page numbers.

2) **Understanding of Project**

This section shall clearly convey how the respondent understands the nature of the work, and issues related to HCAOG's RFP project.

3) **Consultant Qualifications and Experience**

Discuss overall qualifications of the firm and/or project team (key staff and subconsultants,

as applicable).

(a) Firm

Briefly describe the respondent's firm (the lead firm if you are proposing a multi-firm project team), including the year the firm was established, type of organization (partnership, corporation, etc.), and any variation in size over the last five years.

Include a detailed description of any litigation regarding the provision of services equivalent to those set forth in this RFP that have been brought by or against the Proposer, including the nature and result of such litigation, if applicable.

Include a detailed description of any fraud convictions related to public contracts, if applicable.

Include a detailed description of any current or prior debarments, suspensions or other ineligibility to participate in public contracts, if applicable.

Include a detailed description of any violations of local, state and/or federal industry or regulatory requirements, if applicable.

Include a detailed description of any controlling or financial interest the Proposer has in any other firms or organizations, or whether the Proposer's firm is owned or controlled by any other firm or organization. If the Proposer does not hold a controlling or financial interest in any other firms or organizations, that must be stated.

State the firm's qualifications for performing the consulting services requested in this RFP. Briefly describe the firm's experience with similar organizations. Briefly describe the firm's recent experience in projects and/or programs related and relevant to the services and scope of work sought for this project.

If subconsultants are proposed as part of the project team, a Subconsultant List, provided as Attachment D of this RFP, must be submitted as an attachment with the proposal (section 7).

(b) Key Personnel

Describe the qualifications and experience of each professional who will participate in the project. Include, as an attachment (section 7), a résumé for each key staff member of the project team. Include a detailed summary of how each team member's qualifications and experience will help meet the objectives of the project.

Include an organizational chart which identifies all team members, and subconsultants if proposed, that will be responsible for providing services set forth in this RFP.

Include a detailed description of the expected communication channels between the project team and HCAOG to ensure that the services set forth in this RFP will be performed to HCAOG's satisfaction, including, without limitation, how potential problems will be solved.

(c) References

Provide a list of at least three references. Include references from clients of similar type agencies (governmental) and projects, as applicable. References must include client name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. For each reference, describe the nature of the work you performed, approximate dates your firm performed the work, and your firm's professional staff who performed the work. Provide qualifications and at least two references for each subconsultant, if proposed.

4) **Approach**

Describe your firm’s or team’s proposed approach and management plan for providing the scope of work. Respondents to this RFP should build on this general description by proposing a scope of work with specific subtasks as deemed appropriate. Some tasks may require additional information from respondents as called out under the description of each task. Additional tasks and work elements may be added or deleted during contract negotiations. Upon conclusion of the negotiation process, the selected consultant will be required to prepare a final work plan, schedule and budget for inclusion into a final contract

Discuss your views on the challenges that may arise from planning, mapping, and developing the Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning project and your intended approach and your capacity to solve such problems. Describe the practices you use to complete tasks and deliverables on time, and how you would assure that the quality of the contracted products will meet HCAOG’s requirements.

5) **Work Plan & Schedule**

HCAOG’s best estimate of the project timeframe, with regard to this RFP scope, is 22 months. The project is expected to commence in the week of May 20, 2024. Target completion dates vary by activity; no consultant work or deliverables can continue past March 2026. The proposal shall discuss the respondent’s view of the project schedule, and the team members’ workload and availability.

Include a detailed schedule identifying the timeframe for each major task and milestone of the activity, or each activity, to be undertaken. Include all internal project-team meetings, public meetings, progress reports, and deliverables. Provide estimated staff and hours to accomplish each activity and deliverables.

6) **Cost Proposal**

Respondents shall include a fee schedule for cost of services not to exceed the total activity budget(s). HCAOG has budgeted the following amount of grant funds for consultant work:

Activity 1. Level-of-traffic-stress .....	\$ 38,000
Activity 2. Planning for Sustainable Communities .....	\$ 7,500
Activity 3. Safe Routes To School Pilot.....	\$ 34,000
Activity 4. Training Series .....	\$ 72,000

The cost proposal for the proposed scope of work shall be detailed by cost per activity and shall describe:

- (a) both the hourly rate for all personnel, including subcontractors to be assigned to this contract;
- (b) a summary of any related costs that are to be billed directly, including costs for attending additional meetings; and
- (c) work to be completed by subconsultants should be clearly identified in both the proposal and cost proposal. Cost plus a percentage of cost for subcontractors is not allowed.

The *Humboldt Multimodal and Vibrant Neighborhoods Planning* project is a State-grant funded project; as such, consultants’ travel and per diem reimbursement costs must be

consistent with the California Department of Transportation's Travel Guide policies for consultants, contractors, and subcontractors (non-state employees). See Attachment F and/or refer to <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/accounting/travel-guide>.

If the Proposer and/or subcontractor does not have an approved government agency indirect cost rate agreement, a determination of how the rate was determined will be required during the negotiation. The audit recommendations of the Proposers certified public accountant or indirect cost information in the Proposer's annual statement to stockholders, shareholders, or owners, or examples of acceptance of the rates by other governmental agencies within the last six months may be accepted.

**7) Required Attachments**

Proposals that do not contain each of the following required attachments (if applicable), may be rejected by HCAOG.

- (a) If subconsultants are proposed, the Subconsultant List form, attached as Attachment D, must be included as an attachment to the proposal.
- (b) Staff résumés for key personnel.

**C) Conflict of Interest**

By submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP, Proposer warrants and covenants that no official or employee of HCAOG, nor any business entity in which an official of HCAOG has an interest, has been employed or retained to solicit or assist in procuring the final Consultant Services Agreement resulting from this RFP process, nor that any such person will be employed in the performance of such Consultant Services Agreement without immediate divulgence of such fact to HCAOG.

**VI. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

**A) Insurance**

The selected firm(s) or project team must be prepared to comply with HCAOG's standard Consultant Services Agreement (Attachment A) terms and must submit evidence of eligibility for all insurance required. Prior to executing a final Consultant Services Agreement, the successful proposer shall produce certificates of the required insurance, including a certified endorsement naming HCAOG as an additional insured. Additional insurance should not be purchased until a final Consultant Services Agreement has been awarded by the HCAOG Board.

HCAOG's standard requirements for insurance coverage include:

- One million dollars (\$1,000,000) General Liability Insurance
- One million dollars (\$1,000,000) Automobile Insurance
- Twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for Document
- Five-hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for Errors and Omissions

**B) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Policy and Obligation**

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) that minority- and women-owned business enterprises (hereby referred to as DBEs) as defined in 49 CFR Part 23 shall have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts financed in whole or in part with Federal funds. The recipient or its subcontractor agrees to ensure that DBEs have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts and subcontracts financed in whole or in part with Federal funds provided under this contract. In this regard, all recipients or subcontractors shall take all necessary and reasonable steps in accordance with 49 CFR Part 23 to ensure that DBEs



have the maximum opportunity to compete for and perform contracts. Recipients and their subcontractors shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the award and performance of USDOT assisted contracts.

### **C) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

The contractor agrees to comply with all the requirements imposed by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (49 USC 2000d) and the regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation issued there under in 49 CFR Part 21.

### **D) Equal Employment Opportunity**

In connection with the performance of the contract, the contractor shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, age, creed, sex or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship.

Each proposal, to be considered responsive, must include the following:

- (1) A copy of the consultant's affirmative action policy (applicable for firms with 50 or more employees); and
- (2) Discussion of the consultant's program for use of DBEs in the performance of this work, including the following:
  - The names and addresses of DBE firms that will participate
  - The description of the work each named firm will perform
  - The dollar amount of participation by each DBE firm.

### **E) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Provisions**

To comply with the nondiscrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it is the policy of HCAOG to make every effort to ensure that its programs, activities and services are available to all persons, including persons with disabilities. For persons with a disability needing a reasonable modification to participate in the procurement process, or for persons having questions regarding reasonable modifications of the procurement process, you may contact the HCAOG representative listed in this RFP.

**IMPORTANT:** To ensure that we can meet your need for ADA accommodations, it is best that we receive your request for reasonable modification at least 10 working days before the scheduled event (e.g., meeting, conference, workshop, etc.) or deadlines due date for procurement documents. In order to ensure the proposal is in compliance with Federal ADA guidelines, Proposers should review the Federal ADA guidelines at <http://www.ada.gov/>.

### **F) Format and Copies of Proposal**

Complete proposals submitted in response to this RFP may be mailed in electronic or hard-copy (paper) form. If submitting hard copies, provide one copy of the cover letter, and four (4) unbound, double-sided copies of the proposal (section B 1-7). Deliver to the physical or electronic mail address stated above (section V).

### **G) Public Record**

Proposals will not be treated as confidential documents unless they are marked as such by the bidder

and the bidder is able to demonstrate that the documents contain the type of information protected by law as confidential or trade secret. Until award of the contract, the proposals shall be held in confidence and shall not be available for public review. Upon award of a contract to the Successful Proposer, all proposals shall be public records. No proposal shall be returned after the date and time set for opening thereof. All proposals, whether selected or rejected, shall become the property of the Humboldt County Association of Governments.

**H) Exceptions, Objections and Requested Changes**

Each proposer should carefully review the terms and conditions of this RFP and the sample Consultant Services Agreement. Any exceptions, objections or requested changes to this RFP or the sample Consultant Services Agreement shall be clearly identified and explained in the Proposal. Descriptions of any exceptions, objections or requested changes should include the page and paragraph number of the referenced portion of this RFP or the sample Consultant Services Agreement. Protests based on any exception, objection or requested change shall be considered waived and invalid by HCAOG, if the exception, objection or requested change is not clearly identified and explained in the proposal.

**VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND REVIEW PROCESS**

Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if it meets the minimum proposal requirements stipulated in this RFP. Failure to meet the requirements of the RFP may be cause for HCAOG to reject the proposal. HCAOG may reject any proposal if it is conditional, incomplete, or contains irregularities. HCAOG may waive an immaterial deviation in a proposal. Waiver of an immaterial deviation shall in no way modify the RFP documents or excuse the respondent from full compliance with the contract requirements if the respondent is awarded the contract. HCAOG reserves the right to award the contract to other than the low bidder.

Proposals will not be publicly opened. All Proposals will be evaluated by an RFP Evaluation Committee made up of HCAOG, City of Arcata, CRTP, and potentially other local-jurisdiction agency staff members that have expertise or experience in the types of services set forth in this RFP. Their review and evaluation will consider the responsiveness to this RFP in order to determine whether the Proposer possesses the qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance on the services set forth in this RFP. The top-ranked firms may be interviewed, if deemed necessary. HCAOG reserves the right to select a consultant based solely on written proposals and not convene oral interviews.

HCAOG will employ a one-hundred (100) point competitive evaluation system with consideration given to the following criteria:

<b>Criteria –</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<p><b>Respondent’s Understanding of the Project Objectives and Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completeness and clarity of responses to the specific requirements of scope of work; demonstrated knowledge of the required work.</li> </ul>	30
<p><b>Approach to Services and Deliverables Requested</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed work plan and schedule by task. Practices to ensure clear communication and coordination between the</li> </ul>	10

consultant and HCAOG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approaches and practices for achieving accessibility, diversity, inclusion, and equity.</li> <li>Cost effectiveness and adherence to available budget providing the best value of services offered</li> </ul>	30
<b>Respondent’s Qualifications &amp; Experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firm’s or project team’s (including subconsultants) qualifications.</li> <li>Firm’s (or team’s) relevant current and overall experience with similar projects.</li> </ul>	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

The Evaluation Committee will make a recommendation to HCAOG’s Executive Director. The Executive Director will conditionally approve or reject the recommendation based on information provided by the Evaluation Committee and other factors as deemed appropriate, including, but not limited to, qualifications, ability to meet schedule, cost of work and meeting insurance requirements. The Executive Director also may interview one or more of the firms prior to making a selection.

Approval by the Executive Director of the recommendation shall be deemed approval to enter into negotiations with one or more firms in the competitive range. Once negotiations are complete, a contract incorporating the negotiated terms and conditions will be prepared for approval of award by the HCAOG Board.

## VIII. GENERAL CONDITIONS

### A) Limitations

This RFP does not commit HCAOG to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of the contract in response to this request, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. HCAOG expressly reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to waive any irregularity or information in any proposal or in the RFP procedure and to be the sole judge of the responsibility of any respondent and of the suitability of the materials and/or services to be rendered. HCAOG reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time without prior notice. Further, HCAOG reserves the right to modify the RFP schedule.

### B) Award

HCAOG may require RFP finalists to present oral presentations regarding their firms and any special expertise in the necessary areas. All finalists may be required to participate in negotiations and submit such price, technical, or other revisions of their proposals as may result from negotiations. HCAOG also reserves the right to award the contract without discussion, based upon the initial proposals. Accordingly, each initial proposal should be submitted on the most favorable terms from a cost and a technical viewpoint. The final award will be made by the HCAOG Board.

### C) RFP Addenda

Any changes to the RFP requirements will be accomplished by issuance of an addendum at least 72 hours before proposals are due. Distribution of the addenda will be via HCAOG’s website and sent to original RFP recipients. Before amending an RFP, the period of time remaining until the proposal deadline and the possible need to extend this period will be considered and, if necessary, confirmed

in the addendum.

Addenda issued by HCAOG interpreting or modifying any portion of this RFP shall be incorporated in the Proposal. An Addenda Cover sheet shall be signed and dated by the Proposer and submitted to HCAOG with the Proposal. Any oral communication concerning this RFP by HCAOG personnel are not binding on HCAOG, and shall in no way modify this RFP or the obligations of HCAOG or any Proposer.

#### **D) Verbal Agreement or Conversation**

No prior, current, or post award verbal conversations or agreement(s) with any officer, agent, or employee of HCAOG shall affect or modify any terms or obligations of the RFP, or any contract resulting from this RFP.

#### **E) Pre-contractual Expense**

Pre-contractual expenses are those expenses that respondents and selected consultant(s) incurred in relation to:

1. Preparing proposals in response to this RFP;
2. Submitting proposals to HCAOG;
3. Negotiating with HCAOG on any matter related to proposals; and
4. Other expenses incurred by a contractor or respondent prior to the date of award of any agreement.

HCAOG shall not be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by any respondent or selected contractor. Respondents shall not include any such expenses as part of the price proposed in response to this RFP. HCAOG 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.

#### **F) Signature**

The proposal must include name, title, address and telephone number of the individual with authority to bind the company and also who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation. The proposal must be signed by an official authorized to bind the consultant and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for at least a sixty (60)- day period. This signature should be included in the cover letter to the proposal.

#### **G) Contract**

The successful consultant will be required to enter into a standard contract with HCAOG that specifies the scope of service, completion schedule, and a mutually agreed upon schedule of payment. The consultant will be required to prepare a scope of work (See Section III) to be inserted into the contract as an Attachment A. A sample copy of the HCAOG's standard agreement is included as Attachment A (HCAOG will send a print copy upon request). Consultants are responsible for reviewing the terms of the contract.

Upon notification of award the consultant will be sent two copies of the contract for signature. Both copies are to be returned to HCAOG within five (5) business days. Once the contract is fully executed, one original will be forwarded to the Consultant.

## **H) Contract Term**

The period of the contract will be from May 2024 to no later than March 2026.

## **I) Conflict of Interest**

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the prospective contractor warrants: Consultants and consultant firms submitting proposals in response to this RFP must disclose to HCAOG any actual, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest that may exist relative to the services to be provided under Contract for consultant services to be awarded pursuant to this RFP. If the consultant or firm has no conflict of interest, a statement to that effect shall be included in the proposal.

The selected consultant shall refrain from and disclose subsequent potential conflicts during this contract. Consultant shall at all time avoid conflicts of interest, or the appearance of conflicts of interest, in the performance of this contract. Consultant shall file statements of financial interest on forms provided by AMBAG to the extent and at all times required by AMBAG's Conflict of Interest Code and applicable law.

In the event that the prospective contractor has no prior knowledge of a conflict of interest as set forth above and hereafter acquires information that indicates there may be an actual or apparent violation of any of the above, the prospective contractor shall promptly bring such information to the attention of the HCAOG Executive Director. The prospective contractor shall thereafter cooperate with HCAOG review and investigation of such information, and comply with any instruction it receives from HCAOG in regard to remedying the situation.

## **J) Lobbying**

With the exception of contacting HCAOG to ask questions regarding this RFP, any party submitting a proposal shall not contact or lobby any appointed or elected official, member, or other officer or employee of HCAOG. Any party attempting to influence any part of the proposal, submittal, or review process through ex parte contact of any HCAOG officials may have their proposal rejected.

## **K) Payment Schedule**

The contracted consultant will be paid based on work actually performed during the preceding month. The consultant should forward a copy of all invoices for payment for work performed, and associated expenses, by the 10th day of the following month. Invoices shall be mailed to the attention of the Fiscal Administrative Officer. Invoices shall include the following information.

1. Date work was performed.
2. Personnel performing the work (all staff billed for must be identified in proposal or must have been approved by HCAOG).
3. Number of hours worked.
4. Hourly rate (must correspond to cost proposal).
5. Brief description of work completed.
6. Related task/scope of work.

The contracted consultant may bill no more than once monthly after submittal of completed deliverable(s). Quarterly progress reports will be required as deliverables for this project.

## **L) Questions**

Proposers shall be responsible for meeting all of the requirements and specifications set forth in this RFP and the sample Consultant Services Agreement attached hereto. If a Proposer discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission or other error in this RFP, a written request for clarification or correction should be submitted to HCAOG at the following address:

HCAOG  
Attention: Oona Smith, Senior Regional Planner  
611 "I" Street, Suite B  
Eureka, CA 95501  
or  
oona.smith@hcaog.net

Requests for clarification or correction and any other question pertaining to this RFP must be received by HCAOG before 5:00 p.m. PST on Thursday, March 7, 2024. All responses for clarification or correction and written questions will be delivered on or before March 15, 2024.

## **IX. PROTEST PROCEDURES AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

HCAOG's Protest and Procedures and Dispute Resolution Process (Attachment C) shall be utilized to resolve any protests or disputes to this procurement process.