



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
Services for Triennial Performance Audits for Fiscal
Years 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25**

**RFP released: 09/12/2025
Proposals due: 5:00 PM 10/17/2025**

Invitation: The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is inviting interested parties to submit proposals to conduct performance audits of HCAOG and the three transit operators under the HCAOG's jurisdiction. HCAOG is statutorily required by Section 99246 of the California Public Utilities Code to designate entities other than itself, a county transportation commission, a transit development board, or an operator to make a performance audit of its activities and the activities of each operator to whom it allocates Article 4 funds.

The intent of this RFP is to procure performance audits of Arcata & Mad River Transit System, Fortuna Transit, and Humboldt Transit Authority and HCAOG for Fiscal Years 2022/23 through 2024/25. The audits must be conducted during Fiscal Year 2025-26 and must be conducted in compliance with relevant sections of the Transportation Development Act. HCAOG further expects that the performance audits will be conducted consistent with the "Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities" issued by the California Department of Transportation located on the HCAOG website at <https://www.hcaog.net/funding-administration> under Triennial Performance Audits.

**A cover letter and proposal must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on
Friday, October 17, 2025, to be considered.**

Proposals must be delivered electronically to:

Humboldt County Association of Governments
info@hcaog.net

Questions regarding this RFP must be in writing and emailed to
info@hcaog.net
by September 26, 2025

Services for Triennial Performance Audits

I. BACKGROUND

Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) was established on May 7, 1968, through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) signed by the eight local governments in the region. In 1972, HCAOG was designated by the State of California as the Regional Transportation Planning Authority (RTPA) for the County of Humboldt. HCAOG's Board of Directors is comprised of eight (8) voting members represented by an elected official from Humboldt's seven (7) cities and from the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors.

The principal purposes of RTPAs in rural areas are to prepare and adopt planning and programming documents and to allocate funds and administer various funding programs that involve cities, counties and transit operators. HCAOG is statutorily required by Section 99246 of the California Public Utilities Code to designate entities other than itself, a county transportation commission, a transit development board, or an operator to make a performance audit of its activities and the activities of each operator to whom it allocates Article 4 funds.

HCAOG is soliciting proposals to prepare Triennial Performance Audits for the following agencies:

- HCAOG
- Arcata-Mad River Transit System
- Fortuna Transit
- Humboldt Transit Authority (Eureka Transit System, North State Express, Redwood Transit System, Southern Humboldt Transit Systems, Willow Creek Transit System, Humboldt Dial-A-Ride)

Arcata-Mad River Transit System (A&MRTS) was operated by the City of Arcata through FY 2024-25, at which time the service was taken over by Humboldt Transit Authority. It was established by the City of Arcata in 1975 as a means of providing alternative transportation to serve Cal Poly Humboldt (previously Humboldt State University) students, seniors, the disabled, and other residents lacking access to a vehicle. The Arcata-Mad River Transit System offers the following services:

- Fixed-route bus service
- Contribution of funds for the operation of a regional Dial-A-Ride service administered by HTA.
- Contribution of funds for the operation of the Redwood Transit System, a regional commuter service operated by Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) for general public use.

Fortuna Transit is administered and operated by the City's Parks and Recreation Department. Transit services have been operating in the city since June 1972 and were initially provided by the Senior Citizen Center. The city assumed direct operation of the transit service in April 1984.

Fortuna Transit is a demand-response transit within City limits for seniors aged 50 and older or disabled persons who are unable to drive. The service operates two buses per day Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. with medical appointments to Eureka on Tuesday's from 10:00am to 2:00 pm. The service does not operate on Sunday and major holidays observed by the city.

Humboldt Transit Authority was established in 1975 under a JPA between the Cities of Arcata, Eureka, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and Trinidad and the County of Humboldt. HTA is the primary intercity

public transit system in the county, providing regional commuter service along the US 101 Corridor from Benbow to Trinidad, in addition to an extension to Willow Creek along State Route (SR) 299. Effective July 1, 2016, HCAOG designated HTA as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for Humboldt County. HTA offers the following services:

- The Redwood Transit Service (RTS) is the mainline service operating between Scotia and Trinidad. Headways range from 30 minutes in the heaviest traveled route sectors (between Cal Poly Humboldt and College of the Redwoods) to 2 hours. The RTS mainline runs Monday through Friday with limited service on Saturday & selected Holidays.
- The Southern Humboldt Transit System provides intercity service connecting Eureka and Benbow/Garberville Monday through Saturday.
- Eureka Transit System (ETS) offers the following services: Fixed-route bus service, Contribution of funds for the operation of a regional Dial A Ride service administered by HTA, Contribution of funds for the operation of the Redwood Transit System, a regional commuter service operated by HTA for general public use. ETS operates four routes Monday through Friday and two routes on Saturdays. Most routes originate and/or terminate at the corner of H and 3rd Streets in downtown Eureka, with the exception of the Green Route, which originates and terminates at the corner of Harris and F Streets adjacent to Henderson Center.
- North State Express: 299 (Willow Creek Intercity) is a lifeline commuter service between the communities of Willow Creek, Blue Lake, and the Arcata Transit Center. The service runs Monday through Saturday.
- North State Express: 101 is a new intercity service connecting Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. This service was started in January 2024. The service runs Monday through Saturday.
- HTA administers the system-wide Dial-A-Ride contract, administers the DAR certification program, and coordinates with transit and social service transportation programs to eliminate duplications and cost of services.

The audits must meet requirements of California state law relating to performance audits of planning entities and operators, and the provisions of this request for proposal. Specifically, the contractor shall perform performance audits, which comply with all provisions of Sections 6662.5 and 6664.5 of the California Administrative Code. The performance audit shall evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the operation of the entity being audited and shall be conducted in accordance with the Performance audit prepared by Caltrans. Copies of HCAOG's previous audits and the Caltrans Performance Audit Guidebook, September 2008 (third edition), are located at <https://www.hcaog.net/funding-administration> under Triennial Performance Audits.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

Performance Audits for all agencies listed in Section I for fiscal years ending June 2023, 2024, and 2025.

A) Determine Compliance with Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

The consultant will be required to review and determine HCAOG's and each of the operator's compliance with the Transportation Development Act and related sections of the California Code of Regulations. At a minimum, the Code Sections for which compliance is to be verified are those specified within the "Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities" published by the California Department of Transportation (September 2008, 3rd Edition). Should the consultant identify instances of non-compliance, a

finding regarding the noncompliance should be made in the audit report.

B) Follow-Up on Prior Performance Audit Recommendations

The consultant will review the prior performance audits for HCAOG and each transit operator and assess implementation of audit recommendations. These audits are available on HCAOG's website: <https://www.hcaog.net/funding-administration> under Triennial Performance Audits.

The auditor will need to make determinations as to whether recommendations that have not been implemented are (a) no longer applicable, (b) infeasible, or (c) should still be implemented. If a prior audit recommendation has not been implemented but still has merit, the consultant should include the prior audit recommendation in the current audit report. The consultant will evaluate recommendations that have been implemented or are being implemented. For these recommendations, the consultant should assess the benefits provided (or likely to be provided) by the recommendation. Significant accomplishments in implementing prior recommendations should also be recognized.

C) Verify Performance Indicators for Transit Operators

As part of the performance audit, Section 99246 of the Public Utilities Code requires verification of five performance indicators: operating cost per passenger, operating cost per vehicle service hour, passengers per vehicle service hour, passengers per vehicle service mile, and vehicle service hours per employee (as defined in Section 99247 – Performance Measure Definitions). The consultant will review and validate the operator's collection of basic data needed to calculate these indicators for each fiscal year and transit mode (e.g., fixed route, demand response, commuter). The consultant will be expected to analyze performance indicators with the intent of identifying potential issues or concerns that may need further examination during the functional review.

As part of the functional review described below, the consultant will be expected to select, calculate, analyze and recommend performance indicators that are appropriate to identify, quantify, and/or resolve performance problems and potential areas for improvement.

D) Review Operator Functions

The consultant will review each operator function as part of an on-site visit, consistent with the "Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities" (September 2008, 3rd Edition). The functional review is expected to include interviews with the transit operator's management, staff, and governing board, as well as with selected HCAOG staff. Concerns over inefficient or ineffective operator performance may be raised by:

- Operator and HCAOG interviews concerning operator functions;
- Documents, such as user surveys or short-range transit plans;
- Review and analysis of TDA-required performance indicators;
- Follow up on prior performance audits; and,
- Review of operator compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Such concerns of inefficient performance should lead to further investigation, which may include the verification and calculation of additional performance indicators. The detailed investigation of functional concerns, problems, and potential improvements should make up the basis of most findings in the audit report.

E) Review HCAOG Functions

The consultant will review each HCAOG TDA-related function, consistent with "Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities"

(September 2008, 3rd Edition). The functional review is expected to include interviews with HCAOG's jurisdictions. Supplemental interviews with other regional agencies, and State or federal agencies may be appropriate to gather more detailed information about areas of concern. Concerns over inefficient or ineffective HCAOG performance may be raised by:

- HCAOG and operator interviews concerning HCAOG functions;
- Documents, such as the regional transportation plan, and adopted policies and procedures for evaluating TDA claims;
- Follow up on prior performance audits; and
- Review of HCAOG compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Such concerns of inefficient or ineffective performance should lead to further investigation. The detailed investigation of functional concerns, problems, and potential improvements should make up the basis of most findings in the audit report.

REQUIRED DELIVERABLES

The consultant must provide one (1) electronic (pdf) copy of the draft reports to HCAOG and all transit agencies for review and comment prior to finalization. After HCAOG and the operators review and comment on the draft reports, the consultant must provide a final pdf copy to HCAOG. The report must address each of the performance audit project requirements outlined above. Also, the consultant should be prepared to make an oral presentation to the HCAOG Board of Directors.

III. 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.

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|---------------------------|---|
| • September 12, 2025 | Request for Proposals Released |
| • September 26, 2025 | Closing date for questions |
| • October 3, 2025 | HCAOG response to questions |
| • October 17, 2025 | Closing date for receipt of proposals |
| • November 20, 2025 | Contract award (at HCAOG Board meeting) |
| • May 15, 2026 | Fiscal & Compliance Audit Draft Reports Delivered |
| • June 12, 2026 | Fiscal & Compliance Audit Final Report Delivered |
| • June 18, 2026 | Presentation to HCAOG Board of Directors |

Closing Date

Complete proposals must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) on Friday October 17, 2025**. Proposals must be received by the closing date and time. Proposals may only be submitted electronically.

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.

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 HCAOG.

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 submitted to HCAOG via electronic mail to: info@hcaog.net, with the subject line: *Services for Triennial Performance Auditor proposal submittal*.

Proposal Formatting

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

Table of Contents

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

1) 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, telephone number, and email address 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 proposal and cost proposal. Proposals that are unsigned or signed by an individual not authorized to bind the Proposer, will be considered non-responsive and rejected.

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 and type of organization (partnership, corporation, etc.).

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, and current 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 meeting the requirements required in 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. The proposer should describe the practices that would be used to assure that required services are completed on time and that the quality of the required products meet state and federal requirements. Additional tasks and work elements may be added or deleted during contract negotiations.

5) Work Plan & Schedule

The final audits are due to the state by June 30, 2026. Draft audits are due to HCAOG and claimants by May 15, 2026. The proposal shall discuss the respondents' view of the project schedule and the team members' workload and availability. The proposal shall contain a schedule of major tasks and milestones. The schedule shall also identify all internal meetings, public meetings, progress reports, and deliverables, and the estimated staff and hours to accomplish each task and deliverable.

6) Cost Proposal

Respondents shall include a fee schedule for cost of services and provide a total "not-to-exceed" amount for this proposal. 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 to be assigned to this contract; and
- b) a summary of any related costs that are to be billed directly, including costs for attending meetings. Presentation at the HCAOG Board is required at a minimum.

Any consultant 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). Policies can be found at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/accounting/travel-guide>.

7) Required Attachments

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

- (a) Scope of Work (Attachment A)
- (b) Staff résumés for key personnel (Attachment B).
- (c) If subconsultants are proposed, the Subconsultant List form, attached as Exhibit C, must be included as Attachment C to the proposal.

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 (Exhibit 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

Exceptions to the standard insurance amounts may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any proposer seeking any exception, must include that request as part of the proposal, listing a justification for the exception and proposed insurance coverage.

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 will only be accepted in electronic form via email. Printed hard copies are not accepted.

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 and 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:

Criteria –	Weight
Respondent's Understanding of the Project Objectives and Requirements	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completeness and clarity of responses to the specific requirements of scope of work 	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated knowledge of requirements of The Performance Audit Guidebook 	15
Approach to Services and Deliverables Requested	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed work plan and schedule, including timeline for delivery of reports 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of requirements (documentation) needed from agencies prior to field visits 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effectiveness and proposed budget providing the best value of services offered 	20
Respondent's Qualifications & Experience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of resumes of all persons assigned to work on the project 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience with projects of similar scope and complexity 	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm's record of performance with other government agencies 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm's references 	5
Total	100

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. Once the Consultant has been selected, the recommendation will be brought to the HCAOG Board at which time the Executive Director will obtain authorization to execute a contract incorporating the negotiated terms and conditions.

Approval by the Executive Director of the recommendation shall be deemed appropriate 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 Attachment A. A sample copy of the HCAOG's standard agreement is included as Exhibit A. Consultants are responsible for reviewing the terms of the contract.

Upon notification of award the consultant will be sent an electronic copy of the contract for signature.

H) Contract Term

The period of the contract will be from October 2025 to no later than June 30, 2026, unless an extension is approved.

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 times 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 HCAOG to the extent and at all times required by HCAOG'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 or emailed to the attention of the Executive Director. 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 via email to info@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 Friday, September 26, 2025**. All responses for clarification or correction and written questions will be posted to the HCAOG website on or before October 3, 2025.

IX. PROTEST PROCEDURES AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

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