



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
(707) 444-8208
www.hcaog.net

**Request for Proposals
for a
Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit
and Land-Use Network Planning**

RFP released: 08/12/2025

Proposals due: 5:00 p.m. PST 09/12/2025

Invitation: The Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is inviting interested parties to submit proposals for developing a **Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit and Land Use Network Planning** for the Humboldt County region. HCAOG would like to retain the professional services of a qualified professional and/or firm, or team of professionals and/or firms, to assist in this project. HCAOG seeks a qualified consultant team to provide technical, analytical, facilitation, and outreach work to make this project a success.

Developing a “Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit and Land-Use Network Planning” is the main part of HCAOG’s Partnering Assets and Authorities for Comprehensive Transit (PAACT) planning project. The project is federally funded by a Caltrans Strategic Partnerships-Transit grant (under the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program FY 2024-25). The grant has been awarded to HCAOG and Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) as primary and secondary project leads, respectively. Seven additional local agencies are sub-applicants, who will have active, working roles and responsibilities in achieving project objectives.

Qualified candidates will demonstrate technical, analytical, and comprehensive knowledge in public transit and land use planning, with expertise in all realms necessary for effectively and successfully integrating the two. Qualified candidates will additionally demonstrate skills and experience in engaging the public and stakeholder individuals and groups, conveying complex ideas and facilitating productive discussions with non-technical audiences, while employing best practices for access and equity. The over-arching goal is for vibrant, multimodal communities that offer safe and sustainable active transportation for all ages and abilities.

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Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit and Land-Use Network Planning for the PAACT Project

I. BACKGROUND

Humboldt's transit service is impressive for such a rural, remote, low-density region, but there are persistent unmet needs for more span and frequency which cannot be met without more housing and mixed uses developed in in-fill areas.

In order to facilitate planning transportation and land use together, the project will focus on building strong working relationships among HCAOG, Humboldt Transit Authority, other transit and mobility-service providers operating in Humboldt County, and agencies having local authority over planning and building in the County, including Caltrans, local tribes, cities, and county agencies. The project will build strong government-to-government partnerships, harnessing interagency leadership to shape the region's transit system into a more connected, efficient, and more user-focused multi-modal network that attracts significantly more users in upcoming years.

A transit network analysis will identify opportunities to coordinate or consolidate routes, services, and/or governance, and opportunities to leverage additional funding sources to expand transit service and multimodal options. Government partners will be guided to discuss, deliberate, and come to consensus on a defined problem/purpose/vision statement for regional transit service and active mobility. The statement should then help guide decision-makers when they are deciding on investment, development, fiscal, planning, or other interrelated choices. The project work will involve facilitating stakeholders to dialogue and set intentional actions for new and/or amended land use-transportation policy, processes, or procedures for pro-transit land use policies.

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, Tsunugwe, 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.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY

The project will focus on building strong working relationships among HCAOG, Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA), other transit and mobility-service providers operating in Humboldt County, and agencies having local authority over planning and building in the County including Caltrans, local tribes, cities, and county agencies. The purpose of building these relationships is to further integrate transit (and multi-modal mobility) planning and existing land use and development planning and processes, taking into account socio-economic and equity factors and funding mechanisms. Project-partner governments include the range of regional needs, from the coastal County seat (39' elevation) and biggest city, City of Eureka (Jaroujiji' in the Wiyot language), to the small governmental staff of the Karuk Tribe in Panamnik (Orleans), located along State Route 96, 85 miles northeast of Eureka, at 404' elevation. The project area covers the Humboldt County region, emphasizing areas with, along, and near both existing and historical major travel and transit routes. [See HPAACT Grant Application (Attachment F) for map of area and transit routes.]

Project partners will collaborate to find consensus on regional multimodal goals and priorities for planning, prioritizing, and funding transit and other active mobility investments. The consensus will help direct and respond to a comprehensive assessment of the transit network, including multimodal connections. Consultant will develop a transit network analysis, which will complement and expand on HCAOG's short-term Transit Development Plan (Dec. 2023). The assessment will also build upon recent feasibility studies on micro-transit, mobility-on-demand, and transit marketing and branding. In addition, this project will benefit from HCAOG's recently-awarded 2023-24 STPG-Sustainable Communities project, which is currently studying level-of-traffic-stress connectivity data with vacant parcel data, providing insights for jurisdictions to consider appropriate multimodal and infill development incentives.

The efforts from the comprehensive study will serve as a guide for agencies with land-use and development authority to increase consideration, and coordination, of multi-modal access in land use goals, policy, codes, and discretionary permitting. The project team and partners will also endeavor to reach consensus on adopting policy directives that will help the region meet goals and targets for reducing VMT, increasing multimodal access, and improving jobs-to-housing balances.

OVERALL PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project objectives include:

- Building a guided, active, working partnership forum to develop coordinated and structured decision-making on defined actions to improve the regional multimodal services network. The project will add capacity to agencies to go beyond status quo processes to formalize directives on regional transit coordination.
- Building technical capacity and inter-agency consultation processes for regional transit and multi-modal planning and delivery.
- Finding creative ways to resource (people, funds) meaningful projects through existing shared resources.
- Building regional decision processes that reflect organizations' functional and geographic mandates and an appropriate balance of regional and local interests.

PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

The governmental/agency partners will be the most active stakeholders through their commitment to work on the ad-hoc Project Steering Working Group. In addition to HCAOG, jurisdictions that are already committed to active representation on the Project Steering Working Group are: HTA, Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, City of Arcata, City of Blue Lake, City of Eureka, City of Trinidad, County of Humboldt–Planning & Building Dept., and Yurok Tribe. Stakeholders also include local advocate organizations, social service agencies involved with transportation, current and latent transit users, transit operations staff and boards, and land use authority staff and boards, schools, and other institutions involved with or providing mobility services and/or infrastructure.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

HCAOG considers the activities listed in the Consultant Scope of Work (Attachment B) to be the minimum requirements expected for conducting subject consultant services for the PAACT project’s “Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit and Land Use Network Planning” (Comprehensive Plan). Proposals should describe tasks, time frames, staffing, and approaches to project management and communicating with project stakeholders.

A final scope of work and schedule 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 (Attachment A). If subconsultants are proposed, the Subconsultant List form (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.

Regular 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.

August 12, 2025 (Tue.)	Request for Proposals (RFP) released
Aug 22 at 5 p.m. (Fri.)	Deadline to submit questions regarding RFP
Aug 29 (Fri.)	HCAOG deadline for responding to questions regarding RFP
Sept. 12-23 at 5 p.m. (Fri. <u>Tues.</u>)	Closing date for receipt of proposals
Sept. 15-22 <u>24 – Oct 1</u>	HCAOG evaluation process
By Oct. 8 (Wed.)	Prepare consultant services agreement
Oct. 16 (Thu.)	Staff recommends award to HCAOG Board
Oct. 17-24, 2025	Execute contract
Between Oct. 17-24 or thereafter	Project commences

Closing Date

Complete proposals must be received via electronic delivery (email) no later than **5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) on Friday, August 22, 2025**. 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 (via email), 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 submitted to HCAOG via electronic mail submitted to: ona.smith@hcaog.net and cc info@hcaog.net, with subject line: "HPAACT RFP 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 needs to 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.

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 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 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 developing or managing the "Comprehensive Plan for Regional Transit and Land-Use Network 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 approximately 18-20 months. The project is expected to commence in the work week of October 20 or October 27, 2025. The contract expenditure deadline will be not later than May 2027. 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 project budget of **\$318,000**.

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.

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) 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.

8) 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

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.

D) Federal-Aid Participation

HCAOG's Partnering Assets and Authorities for Comprehensive Transit (PAACT) project and this contract are funded in whole or in part with federal funds through the U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), under the FTA Section 5304 (49 USC §5304–Statewide Planning). Applicable federal laws and regulations, and guidance shall be binding upon the Consultant and any subcontractors. See “FTA-Funded Federal Requirements” (Attachment E).

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 (35) Completeness and clarity of responses to the specific requirements of scope of work; demonstrated knowledge of the required work.	35
Approach to Services and Deliverables Requested (35) - Proposed work plan and schedule by task. Practices to ensure clear communication and coordination between the consultant, HCAOG, HTA and other major partners (advisory or decision-making bodies). - Cost effectiveness and adherence to available budget providing the best value of services offered.	20 15
Respondent's Qualifications & Experience (30) - Firm's or project team's (including subconsultants) qualifications. - Firm's (or team's) relevant current and overall experience with similar projects.	15 15
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.

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. 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 May 2027.

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 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 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 at the following addresses:

info@hcaog.net and 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 Friday, August 22, 2025**. All responses for clarification or correction and written questions will be posted to the HCAOG website on or before August 29, 2025.

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.