



FERNDALE HOUSING COMMISSION

Request for Competitive Proposals for:
Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher
Housing Quality Standards (“HQS”)
Inspection Services

Issued: August 16, 2024

Deliver competitive proposals to:

amgawe@ferndalehousing.com

Clearly mark on the outside of the envelope:

HQS INSPECTION PROPOSAL

Closing Date and Time:

Monday, September 16, 2024, at 5:00 pm

A. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF WORK

The Ferndale Housing Commission's mission is to "assure high quality, affordable housing and access to social and community services, where those we serve feel secure and welcome within a diverse and inclusive community that is caring, participatory, and values each person."

The Ferndale Housing Commission ("FHC") is customer-focused and seeks to make our programs accessible and convenient to all our program participants and property owners. Inspection services are an important part of our Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher ("HCV") program.

We seek a partnership with a proven industry leader who can offer high-quality, professional inspection services using streamlined and efficient processes. We seek an Inspection Services Provider who can also offer subject matter expertise and technical advice related to HQS inspections, such as the proposed changes to inspection standards for the HCV Program with the upcoming HUD/REAC inspection protocol - NSPIRE.

The Ferndale Housing Commission requests competitive proposals from qualified offerors to conduct property inspections in accordance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Housing Quality Standards ("HQS") 24 CFR 982.401 regulations and the FHC's Administrative Plan, mission, and customer-service model.

FHC seeks an HQS Inspection Services contract for a two-year period, with one-year option to renew. Please provide a list of similar organizations and/or similar work performed, and a minimum of three references with organization name, contract name, email, and phone number.

The FHC administers 777 Housing Choice Vouchers in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties in Southeast Michigan. In addition to unit inspections, HQS inspection services will include property site, common areas, building exteriors and building systems in accordance with 24CFR 982.401 and all supporting regulations, and FHC policies pertaining to HQS.

FHC has around 749 vouchers currently under lease, and averages around 60 re-certifications per month. FHC currently conducts annual re-certification inspections. We plan to gradually expand our program throughout 2024 until we have reached our maximum of 975 vouchers.

- ✓ Wayne County is about 673 square miles, of which 143 square miles is the City of Detroit. About 50% of our vouchers are in Detroit/Wayne County.

- ✓ Macomb County is about 570 square miles. About 10% of our vouchers are in Macomb County.
- ✓ Oakland County is about 907 square miles. The remainder of our vouchers are in Oakland County.

Proposal should include a fee schedule for each type of inspectional service requested, including but not limited to initial, annual, special, and re-inspections of a previously failed inspection. Pricing should include the cost of all associated communication, correspondence and documents related to inspections, as described in more detail within this RFP. Pricing should also reflect the specifications related to scheduling and other administrative and customer service activities identified.

Submit bids for, or questions about this RFP in writing to: Aliyah Mgawe, Executive Director
amgawe@ferndalehousing.com

This proposal and all questions received, and answers issued will be included on the Ferndale Housing Commission website, www.ferndalehousing.com

B. SCHEDULING & CORRESPONDENCE

Inspections may be scheduled between 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday thru Friday. FHC will consider alternative service hours provided the needs of the program are met. FHC will follow the Inspection Service Provider's scheduling format/process.

At the annual re-certification meeting, or upon lease up of new program participants, FHC will schedule the first inspection and will provide written notice to the participant of their scheduled inspection date and time. Any subsequent correspondence or communication will be handled by the Inspection Service Provider, including appointment changes, rescheduling, re-inspection appointments, and inspection close-out. The Inspection Service Provider is expected to create and retain all appropriate documentation for the case file and submit all documents upon inspection close-out.

We seek a vendor that can provide a 2-hour window to program participants for inspection services. In addition, a "call ahead" telephone call or text notification for participants/landlords is desired. If a 2-hour window is not possible, or if the Inspection Service Provider has experience with other effective means of coordinating inspections, suggested alternatives are welcome.

Some inspections, such as emergency, complaint/special and initial inspections may be "on-demand" and not through the typical scheduling process. FHC is open to discuss the appropriate procedure to

communicate these types of inspections. We seek an Inspection Services Provider who can respond to emergencies on same day or next day, and other on-demand services within two to three business days.

C. METHODS

The Inspection Services Provider shall inspect approximately 1,200 Leased Housing units annually. The Inspection Services Provider will inspect only units as requested by the FHC. The Inspection Services Provider will coordinate their work with the Section 8/HCV Housing Specialist. FHC uses PHA-Web Software and is open to using the inspection company's proprietary software and/or website.

The Inspection Services Provider will be responsible for:

1. Attending appointments with landlords and/or tenants within the time specified, including call-or text-ahead notification as feasible.
2. Documenting missed appointments by photographing property address and including date/time stamp.
3. Inspecting units, common areas, exteriors, and basements to ascertain compliance with HQS, and the FHC's Administrative Plan policies on HQS.
4. Rescheduling missed appointments and scheduling re-inspections.
5. Preparing a complete inspection report on a form approved by the FHC and HUD (*HUD-52580*), and documenting information relating to the unit, any deficiencies, failures, and tenant-caused damage or deficiency.
6. Preparing an inspection checklist wherein each item must receive a pass, fail, or inconclusive rating.
7. Documenting the nature of all fail and inconclusive items and ensuring all units that receive a pass rating are free of fail or inconclusive items.
8. Informing owner/owner representative and/or participants within 10 business days in writing on an FHC approved correspondence of any non-life-threatening deficiencies and repairs.
9. Informing owner/owner representative and/or participants immediately in writing of any life-threatening deficiencies, including contacting the owner/owner representative by telephone, text, facsimile, and/or email to ensure that immediate notification of such deficiencies; preparing related correspondence and documentation of corrections and remediation.
10. Acquiring a certification signed by the participant and the landlord in lieu of completing a re-inspection (for annual and complaint/special inspections ONLY).
11. Providing a "remote re-inspection" for failed annual & special inspections in accordance with *HUD PIH 2012-15 (HA) Streamlining Administrative Practices in the Housing Choice Voucher Program*.
12. Informing FHC of any needed abatements to be effective the first of the month following the expiration of the Inspection Services Provider correction period (including any extension).
13. Re-inspecting abated units within 5 business days of the owner's notification that the work has been completed.
14. Submitting inspectional reports and all related correspondence and documentation to FHC Section 8/HCV Manager or appointee.

15. Maintaining confidentiality of records regarding HCV Program participants.

Ideally, the Inspection Services Provider will assign inspectors on a consistent basis to promote a strong working relationship with FHC. However, we understand there may be multiple inspectors assigned. In addition to the tasks and methods listed, the FHC seeks an Inspection Services Provider that can provide coverage in the event of absence of its regularly assigned inspector(s). Please indicate in the proposal how you will assign inspectors and ensure proper back-up coverage.

Ideally, the Inspection Services Provider will utilize modern technology and techniques, including computerized and automated forms, photography in the field, notification/communication with participants and property owners by call, email, or text, and other approaches.

D. TYPES OF INSPECTIONS:

The FHC will require the Inspection Services Provider to conduct the following types of inspections as needed:

- **Initial” Move-In” Inspections:** FHC is required to conduct the initial inspections in response from the family to approve a unit for participation into the HCV program. The unit must pass the HQS inspection before the effective date of the HAP Contract. Any failed initial inspections must be re-inspected.
- **Annual Inspections:** FHC currently inspects each unit under lease at least annually to confirm that the unit is still meets HQS. The inspection must be done 120 days prior to its last inspection date.
- **Complaint/Special inspections:** A special inspection may be requested by the owner, the family, or a third party when the FHC is notified of deficiencies that may be in violation of HQS.

E. REPORTS

There may be additional special reports required which are related to this contract, if deemed necessary by the FHC. The Inspection Services Provider shall use inspection report form *HUD-52580* and letters approved by the FHC, for purposes of inspection and related follow-up.

Submission of Inspection Results to FHC: The FHC prefers to work with an Inspection Services Provider that can submit inspection results electronically daily. If the Inspection Services Provider has experience with other effective means of coordinating inspection submission to PHAs, such suggestions are welcomed as an alternative.

Life Threatening Emergencies: If the Inspection Services Provider's personnel determine that the dwelling unit has failed the inspection due to a "life threatening emergency," the Inspection Services Provider must immediately report the existence of the emergency to the landlord by telephone, text, facsimile, and/or email to ensure that immediate notification of such deficiencies was attempted. In addition, a letter summarizing the deficiencies will also be sent to the owner/owner representative and the participant. The Inspection Services Provider will also notify the designated FHC staff daily if and when such deficiencies are found.

F. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND MEASURES

The Inspection Services Provider will repeat any inspection determined by the FHC to be incomplete or non-conforming with applicable inspection standard(s). Incomplete or non-conforming inspections will not be compensated by the FHC. FHC will conduct regular quality control inspections to monitor the quality and consistency of work completed.

The Inspection Services Provider is responsible for keeping appointments with the participant and/or owner/owner representatives for inspections. The Inspection Services Provider will receive payment for a completed inspection and submitted inspection report. The Inspection Services Provider may propose a fee for time spent at "no-show" appointments. However, only properly documented "no-show" appointments will be considered for payment.

Inspection Services personnel must be courteous, conduct themselves in a professional manner, and must be bondable. It is imperative that the Inspection Services Provider(s) demonstrates FHC standards of customer focused professionalism and integrity. FHC will conduct customer satisfaction surveys as needed to monitor the quality of work completed.

By undertaking this contract, Inspection Services Provider certifies to the FHC that the inspectors and any persons entering the participant family's units and/or prospective units have not been convicted of any crimes against persons or property and/or other criminal acts that would adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of participants, and that they are properly trained and certified to complete the work.

Inspection Services Providers shall be responsible for the actions and negligence of its inspectors and other personnel performing services on this contract and shall indemnify the FHC in the event any claims should arise from the acts or omissions of such inspectors or personnel.

G. GENERAL CONDITIONS

General: It is the intent of these Contract Documents to provide a uniform basis for selecting an Inspection Services Provider to provide the services as outlined in the RFP. The FHC, however, reserves the right to cancel the RFP at any time without cause upon written notice. This RFP and any submission by the Offeror shall become part of the contract documents.

1. HUD REQUIREMENTS: Contract conditions and forms required by HUD for contractors will be required and are incorporated by reference here.

Forms contain HUD-required clauses and certifications for purchases and are required to be accepted and followed by the successful bidder.

2. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: All resource materials and records reviewed or created by the Inspection Services Provider shall become the property of the FHC, unless they are already public records or owned by private interests in which case a copy should be furnished to the FHC.

3. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE: Time is of the essence of this contract; however, the Inspection Services Provider shall not be liable for delays or failures due to acts of God, war, fires, strikes, embargo, etc. PROVIDED THAT, within (5) days after such occurrence, the Inspection Services Provider gives written explanation for the cause to the FHC's Section 8/HCV Housing Specialist and the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall then ascertain the facts and extent of the delay and/or failure. His/her findings of the facts thereon shall be final and conclusive.

4. PAYMENT: The Inspection Services Provider will invoice FHC monthly and itemize each completed inspection performed with additional detail as determined by FHC. The Inspection Services Provider shall also provide reports that demonstrate inspection activities, metrics, and milestones, including any difficulties and recommended corrective action plans to be taken for inspections that have not been completed within 30 days of their last inspection date. The Inspection Services Provider may propose a fee for time spent at "no-show" appointments in response to this RFP. However, only properly documented "no-show" appointments will be considered for payment.

5. FIXED PRICE: The contract will be a firm fixed price for each type of inspection identified in this RFP. The Offeror shall be responsible for all other costs associated with said inspection services and shall NOT

receive additional reimbursement for such items as mileage allowance, gasoline, postage or other expenses.

6. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR: The Offeror shall be an independent Contractor of the FHC, and shall NOT be deemed an employee of the FHC for any purpose whatsoever, including withholding taxes, unemployment or workman's compensation, liability, health insurance, retirement benefits, or vacation or sick leave.

6. SUBSTITUTION OF PERSONNEL: For purposes of this RFP the term personnel shall mean any individual employed by the Inspection Services Provider, whether directly or indirectly. The Inspection Services Provider shall inform the FHC of any substitution of personnel prior to the substitution.

7: TERM: The contract is for a two-year period, with one-year option to renew. Contract may be terminated by either party with or without cause with written thirty day notice to terminate.

H. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

An evaluation committee will review and evaluate all proposals using a uniform format and consistent methodology. Criteria considered will include the following:

1. Responsiveness to RFP (25%)
 - a. The committee will assess how the proposed work plan reflects the requirements and priorities within the RFP.
2. Qualifications (25%)
 - a. The committee will assess related experience in performing similar work for similar organizations; and by reviewing the qualifications of staff proposed to work with FHC.
 - b. The committee will assess demonstrated past performance, including meeting cost and quality requirements, by checking references.
 - c. The committee will assess the capacity of Offeror to meet FHC needs as described in the management plan, technology, procedures, and processes proposed.
3. Price (50%)