



August 20, 2024

To: All Potential Respondents

From: Katelyn Howells, Purchasing Agent

Subject: 005-RFP-1156-2025 Develop and/or Update Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans

Addendum Two

Revised Proposal Due Date:

Proposals shall be submitted no later than 2:00 PM on September 4, 2024.

Please amend the subject RFP to include answers to the following timely received questions. Headers have been added for reference purposes only:

Budget:

Q1. Can the Iowa DAS please specify what the NTE/Budget is for this project?

A1. Budgets may vary; there is no NTE amount. Iowa HSEMD's current policy is to fund projects costing up to \$30,000 federal per county (generally meaning up to \$40,000 total, with a cost share of 75% federal, 10% state, the rest local). Projects above \$40,000 per county are allowed, but project costs exceeding the limit would be covered by local funds. Some cost-savings would be expected on multi-county plans, but budgets do not require this.

Q2. Is the State able to share the source of the funding for this effort (IE-HMA Planning \$, BRIC Application, etc)?

A2. A variety of funding sources are expected for projects using services under this RFP, since Iowa's political subdivisions will be allowed to use the agreement. Iowa HSEMD has applied for FEMA BRIC 2023 funding as a sub-applicant, as have several counties. More counties are expected to apply for BRIC and various HMGP grants during the effective period of agreements under this RFP.

Q3. What is the budget for each plan creation? Again, please specify if there is a difference in budget between a single county plan and multiple county plan.

A3. Budgets may vary. Iowa HSEMD's current policy is to fund projects costing up to \$30,000 federal per county (generally meaning up to \$40,000 total, with a cost share of 75% federal, 10% state, the rest local). Projects above \$40,000 per county are allowed, and project costs exceeding the limit would be covered by local funds. Some cost-savings would be expected on multi-county plans, but budgets do not require this.

Q4. What is the budget for each HMP update? Please specify the difference in budget between the single county and multiple county plans.

A4. Budgets may vary. Iowa HSEMD's current policy is to fund projects costing up to \$30,000 federal per county (generally meaning up to \$40,000 total, with a cost share of 75% federal, 10% state, the rest local). Projects above \$40,000 per county are allowed, and project costs exceeding the limit would be covered by local funds. Some cost-savings would be expected on multi-county plans, but budgets do not require this.

Q5. Is there an approved budget for this project and funding approved? Can you provide the NTE dollar amount?

A5. Budgets may vary; there is no NTE amount. Funding has not yet been approved for any projects expected to use service agreements from this RFP.

Q6. Is this funded through a grant award? If so, what is the total amount of funding available for the development and maintenance of both single-county multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans and multi-county multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans?

A6. A variety of funding sources are expected for projects using services under this RFP, since Iowa's political subdivisions will be allowed to use the agreement. Iowa HSEMD has applied as a sub-applicant for FEMA BRIC 2023 funding to update HMPs, as have several counties. More counties are expected to apply for BRIC and various HMGP grants during the effective period of agreements under this contract.

Contract:

Q7. Will the Agency consider a limitation of liability as described under section 7.2.2 of the RFP? We have previously negotiated same under a separate state of Iowa agreement.

A7. Sections 7.2 and 7.2.2 of the RFP explain the State's position regarding negotiation of a limitation of liability clause in any contract resulting from this solicitation. Specifically, Section 7.2.2 provides citations to the relevant Iowa Code and Iowa Administrative Code sections that establish the circumstances in which the State can agree to a contractual limitation of vendor liability. As noted in Section 7.2.2, "[a]ny request by Respondent for the State to limit damages not in accordance with Iowa law or administrative rules is a request with which the State cannot agree."

Q8. Does this RFP and subsequent contract replace the current State of Iowa Master Services Agreement to update HMPs?

A8. Yes, but not immediately. Future services to update HMPs in Iowa using FEMA funds are expected to use this RFP and subsequent contracts, unless the county is procuring services separately. A political subdivision could conceivably use an existing MSA if they find the terms more favorable, but this RFP is meant to better align with current FEMA planning requirements and to account for an error in the expiration of a previous contract. The existing MSA may be allowed to expire.

Q9. When are the state and county plans anticipated to be supported by this contract set to expire?

A9. The expiration dates of the plans for the counties listed in the RFP range from 2018 to 2029. Counties may use the contract until it expires (as late as 2030) or is re-published. The multi-county plans mentioned in the RFP do not currently exist, except as single-county plans for their constituent counties. Note that the state will not use this RFP to update the state hazard mitigation plan.

Q10. Will the State be selecting more than one vendor from this procurement?

A10. Yes.

Q11. What is the anticipated term of the resulting contract?

A11. Iowa HSEMD intends to use contracts under this RFP as long as possible (3 years initially, with options for up to 3 additional years), and as long as the services align with FEMA planning requirements. See Section 6.3.2 for more details.

Q12. Will contractual planning services be with the state or with selecting county(ies)? (4.2.1 Tasks)

A12. Possibly both. Counties are expected to use the services agreements under this RFP. Iowa HSEMD has yet to determine whether plan updates funded under its pending BRIC 2023 subgrant should be invoiced to the state or the participating counties, but services will be provided to the counties in any event. The state does NOT intend to use contractual planning services to update the state hazard mitigation plan.

Q13. What role will the state have in this process once a county selects the awarded contractor?

A13. In most instances, Iowa HSEMD expects to be the pass-through entity (grantee) for FEMA sub-grants to update HMPs. As grantee, HSEMD will monitor grant compliance and process reimbursement requests. In some instances, counties may fund plan updates without state or federal assistance. The state will review the plan submitted for approval and offer technical assistance in completing any required revisions.

Q14. What exactly will the contract award be for? Is this for the “potential” to develop and/or update HMPs, if selected by county(ies)?

A14. Yes. The contract will essentially allow counties in Iowa to use selected contractors’ services to update HMPs without additional local procurement processes (where local policies allow this). When a county expresses interest in updating their HMP, Iowa HSEMD will reach out to all contractors for quotes (if not already on file). Counties will review quotes for their plan update and choose a contractor to work with.

Scope:

Q15. Under section 1.5 Objectives there is a reference to reviewing Hazard Mitigation Plans. Is the review of HMPs on behalf of the State a desired service under this contract?

A15. Review of existing plans is only desired insofar as it is necessary to conduct a plan update. The state itself will continue to review plan updates for the purpose of approving and submitting to FEMA.

Q16. Regarding the tasks outlined in Section 4 (Scope of Work) of the RFP, is it expected that these tasks be executed on-site at each respective County facility?

A16. Work on-site is not required. However, conducting planning committee meetings in person is encouraged.

Q17. Can you confirm that the vendor is only required to address required comments from Iowa HSEMD and FEMA for plan approval; the vendor will not be expected to address recommended comments.

A17. Yes. Only comments noted as “Required Revisions” in the Plan Review Tool will need to be addressed for plan approval. Addressing other recommendations and “opportunities for improvement” is not required.

Q18. Can Iowa HSEMD provide an example of the Mitigation Data Collection Worksheet for review?

A18. The current Mitigation Data Collection Worksheet can be found at the link below. The state intends to create a new worksheet within the next two years to align with the new SHMP and to simplify the process, and it should require no more effort than is needed for the existing worksheet.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Kg1paKAEON_tfmA4yGsfd3fFPjFNwRA9/

Q19. What is the preferred Hazus analysis to be performed? While hazards will be identified for each separate plan, is there a preference for all plans to have a Hazus analysis for flood, earthquake, etc.

A19. No HAZUS analysis is required, but where used, it is only preferred for flood risk. If using HAZUS, HSEMD also requests that data be presented in aggregate, such that personally identifiable information not be publicized. Planners are encouraged to explore HAZUS data and other tools such as Iowa DNR’s 2D BLE mapping, or USACE’s HEC FDA, and use the best available information.

Q20. Will the state and or local government be able to provide data? What data, if any, will the vendor be required to develop?

A20. State and local governments will be able to provide data, but not necessarily all data needed. They may be able to provide information on development, critical facilities, natural resources, hazard history, major industries, and flood risk. Federal sources may have additional data, such as demographics, employment and industry, climate projections, expected annual losses, locations of certain critical facilities, flood maps, hazard event history, and potential mitigation actions. Gathering new or raw data may not be required of the vendor except where lacking, but analysis of existing data and its applicability to local hazard risks is.

Q21. Is there a minimum number of public meetings that must be held for each plan?

A21. No. However, the plan must document how the public had an opportunity to be involved in the planning process and what that participation entailed, including how underserved and vulnerable populations were provided an opportunity to be involved. In-person attendance of vendors at public meetings is also not required, but may assist in reaching certain communities or populations.

Q22. There are currently 13 FEMA CRS communities in Iowa receiving credit under CRS Activity 510-Floodplain Management Plans. Is there an expectation for all plans to meet the CRS credit criteria, only plans with existing CRS communities, or is it the community's responsibility to develop/update an annex to meet the CRS credit criteria?

A22. Only plans with existing CRS communities would be expected to meet the CRS credit criteria, but vendors are welcome to provide communities with quotes that exclude CRS activities. Communities interested in joining CRS should discuss additional funding opportunities with Iowa HSEMD.

Q23. What grant close-out activities are expected to be completed by the vendor?

A23. Vendors would be expected to complete the Mitigation Data Collection Worksheet. Other grant closeout activities are primarily the responsibility of the county(s) and the state (final ledgers, closeout request, signatures, etc.).

Q24. Is the signed subaward grant agreement a deliverable that is the responsibility of the contractor? Is the contractor expected to acquire grant funds and report quarterly on grant funds? (Task 4.1 Deliverables)

A24. No. Executing the subaward grant agreement is the responsibility of the county(s), and they will be expected to acquire funding and provide information for quarterly reports. The contractor may be asked for information to inform a quarterly progress report, but it will not be required to complete or submit reports.

Q25. Are there optional services the state or counties are looking for? (Exhibit 11)

A25. Respondents are encouraged to use this exhibit to highlight any additional related services that are offered by their firm.

Q26. Does the state anticipate state staff assisting with HMP research, other than reviewing the final draft? (Exhibit 10)

A26. The state's hazard mitigation planner will be available to direct contractors to existing resources upon request, and to provide technical assistance pertaining to FEMA planning requirements.

Technical Proposal Preparation:

Q27. Is there a limit to the number of pages for the Technical Proposal?

A27. No.

Q28. Is there a limit to the number of pages for the Cost Proposal?

A28. No.

Q29. For Exhibit 13 where an example of a recent FEMA approved HMP must be provided, will a weblink in the proposal to view and download the HMP meet this requirement?

A29. Yes.

Q30. Exhibits 10 and 13 discuss research plan and process. Can the state provide an example of the research these sections are referring to?

A30. These sections refer to the research necessary to conduct a plan update, as described in the Scope of Work (Section 4). For example, stakeholder analysis, hazard event history, impacts of climate change on probability, development trends, vulnerability assessments, etc.

Q31. What does the State mean by “your state” in this requirement? “The Respondent shall provide the following general background information: -Does your state have a preference for instate Contractors? Yes or No. If yes, please include the details of the preference.”

A31. What state is your company incorporated in, and where is your primary place of business?

Q32. Would the submission of a work plan addressing the specifications of Section 4, be acceptable to address Exhibit 9 – Mandatory Specifications?

A32. Yes.

Cost Proposal Preparation:

Q33. When requests are made from specific counties to facilitate HMP or update, will the cost estimate in Section 3.3 be able to be revised should new information become available, or scope is adjusted?

A33. Yes. After contract award, if work has not started, cost estimates may be revised to most accurately reflect the expected project cost at the time, after which counties may again consider the quotes provided before choosing a vendor.

Q34. Section 3.3 requires both hourly rates and individual cost estimates for developing or updating HMPs for the counties listed. Can the state describe the level of detail requested for these cost estimates? Is a total estimated cost fine, or is more detail needed?

A34. A total estimated cost will suffice. More detail may help the state in understanding any anomalous prices. This may be as simple as providing the cost of the three overarching tasks in the scope of work, but cost estimates are not restricted to the format of the scope of work provided.

Q35. Can the State please note if the county pricing should be considered FFP since an all-inclusive price is requested or should it be T&M using the hourly rates requested in pricing?

A35. County cost estimates should be considered Fixed-Price. Hourly rates help the state understand the costs that comprise these estimates. When a county chooses a vendor under a FEMA grant, there will be a fixed price set.

Q36. Can the State please clarify the pricing for the individual plan updates? Is this being used for estimating and cost comparison purposes only or will vendors be tied to the provided cost should the counties desire to participate with the contract? If the Vendor is beholden to these costs, how should pricing for the county plans align with the required RFP exhibits?

A36. County cost estimates will be used for cost comparison, and they should accurately reflect the total cost that would be charged for that county’s plan update. After contract award, if work has not started, cost estimates may be revised to most accurately reflect the expected project cost at the time, after which counties may again consider the quotes provided before choosing a vendor.

Q37. If the approach for plan identified in the Cost Proposal section differs, is the vendor required to provide a separate proposal for each plan?

A37. While a separate cost proposal for each county is required, a separate approach for each county's plan update is not required. Where approaches differ, vendors are welcome to explain differences.

Review:

Q38. During which stage of the proposal process does the Agency plan to conduct background checks – before or after award?

A38. Background checks occur following the award of the RFP.

Q39. Does not having specific FEMA approved multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans disqualify our proposal? We have work examples/history of similar experience with multijurisdictional FEMA plans and related materials but not specifically FEMA approved multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans.

A39. Yes, it would be disqualified. Respondents must provide an example of a recent FEMA-approved Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan that they have prepared.

Q40. Will the State please identify when the addendum identifying the points assigned to the scoring criteria and identifying the minimum score for the Technical Proposal will be posted?

A40. Scoring criteria and weights will be announced via an Addendum posted to bidopportunities.iowa.gov approximately one (1) hour before proposals are due. Respondents are encouraged to submit proposals that respond to all exhibits requested.

Q41. Will the State please provide an estimated award date?

A41. The state intends to review and score proposals by the end of September, 2024 if possible. Awards should occur shortly thereafter.

Q42. What is the need to know a respondent's accounting firm?

A42. This may be used by the committee to confirm financial viability.

Q43. What is the importance of other states having preference for instate contractors? (Exhibit 4 Background Information)

A43. Per Iowa Code Chapter 8A and Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 117, the State of Iowa gives preference to Iowa businesses. This preference may be reciprocal to the preference given in a respondent's home state.

Please acknowledge receipt of this addendum by signing in the space provided below, and return this letter with your proposal (do not send back separately).

I hereby acknowledge receipt of this addendum.

Signature

Date

Typed or Printed Name

