

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR COUNTY-WIDE HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM INSPECTIONS

The Worcester County Commissioners are requesting proposals from qualified residential building inspectors to provide inspections, work write-ups and cost estimates on single-family homes throughout the County that qualify for assistance under the Worcester County Housing Rehabilitation Program as an Independent Contractor. The Request for Proposals presents a list of duties that must be fulfilled by the contracted inspector. The inspector shall maintain a valid Maryland Home Inspector License by passing the National Home Inspector Examination or similar certification through the International Code Council (ICC) while providing these services.

Worcester County's review process, selection criteria, and award and proposal format guidelines are also described in this Request for Proposals (RFP).

BACKGROUND

The Worcester County Housing Rehabilitation Program was created in 1987 to provide low-to-moderate income homeowners with the means to rehabilitate their substandard housing structures throughout the County. The Program is designed to give priority consideration to disabled, extremely low income and/or over age 62 County residents as well as to those structures posing health or safety hazards. The Housing Rehabilitation Program is primarily funded by Community Development Block Grant monies, the State Special Loans Program and the Lead Hazard Reduction Grant and Loan Program. Additional information can be found on Worcester County's website: <https://www.co.worcester.md.us/departments/drp/housing-rehabilitation>

DUTIES AND STANDARDS

A. Initial Property Evaluation

1. Schedule and perform comprehensive inspections of all building components and systems, to include an overall structural evaluation. Utilize inspection and structural soundness forms provided by County. The inspection form shall be completed and submitted to the Program Coordinator.
2. Provide digital photos of the front, rear and side exterior views, and all interior rooms to demonstrate overall condition of property. Additionally, provide photos of any specific substandard conditions or code violations. Photos shall be emailed to the Program Coordinator.
3. Provide an initial rehabilitation cost estimate on the form provided by the County.

B. Work Write-Up & Cost Estimate

1. Provide a detailed write-up with line-item breakdown for work required to bring the property up to the Maryland Building Performance Standard (COMAR 05.02.07) or Worcester County code where more restrictive to meet minimum livability code. Write-up shall be submitted in an electronic form to Program Coordinator; revisions may be necessary to obtain homeowner approval.

2. Use estimating software to provide a cost estimate for each project. For Special Loans Program projects, the estimate must detail the cost on each line item and be printed on the inspector's company letterhead, signed and dated. Specify estimating software to be used on the Financial Proposal Form.

C. Housing Review Board Meeting

1. Attend scheduled meetings as needed. Typically, there are less than five meetings per year, held in-person at the Worcester County Government Center. As part of the presentation, you will provide a brief synopsis of the conditions at the applicant's property to assist Board members in prioritization of applications.

D. Contractor Recommendation

1. Assist Program Coordinator in evaluating contractor proposals for completeness and cost accuracy.

E. Pre-Construction Meeting

1. Meet with the selected contractor at the jobsite to address any questions or concerns before the commencement of construction. Work shall not commence until the Program Coordinator has issued a Notice to Proceed.

F. Progress Inspections and Payment Requests

1. Schedule and perform progress inspections upon request of contractor for payment. Inspector shall verify completion of each line item, and that completed work has been performed in a good workmanship-like manner. It is encouraged that multiple components be inspected at one time, and each component documented accordingly on the draw request.
2. Complete payment draw requests on provided forms and submit to the Program Coordinator, along with copies of permits required for the work and all documented county or municipal inspections performed on items requested for payment. It is the contractor's responsibility to provide all items to the Inspector. Draw inspection form to be provided by Program.

G. Change Orders

1. In accordance with the Worcester County Housing Rehabilitation Guidelines, visit the jobsite upon request of owner or contractor and evaluate the need for the requested change order.
2. If a change order is warranted, prepare a write-up of the requested changes on the Change Order Form provided by the Program Coordinator and obtain quote from the contractor.
3. Submit Change Order Form signed by owner, contractor and inspector to Program Coordinator for final approval. No work shall be performed under the change order without Program Coordinator approval.

H. Final Inspection

1. Schedule and perform the final inspection upon request of contractor for final payment. The homeowner must be present and must sign off on the final payment request.

2. Complete the final payment request form and provide it to the Program Coordinator along with all documented county or municipal inspections, Certificate of Use and Occupancy (CO) or its equivalent and the HUD 2516 form. It is the contractor's responsibility to provide copies of the HUD 2516, final inspection and CO to the inspector.
3. Complete and submit the Certificate of Completion form to the Program Coordinator.
4. Complete and submit the Code Certification & Compliance form to the Program Coordinator.
5. Take digital photos at final inspection of completed work. Photos to be emailed to Program Coordinator.

I. Warranty Visits

1. In accordance with the Worcester County Housing Rehabilitation Guidelines and at the request of the Program Coordinator, meet the contractor and the homeowner on site regarding the warranty work in question.
2. Provide a written evaluation as to whether the work is justified under the homeowner's contract and suggested remedies to the contractor and Program Coordinator.
3. Inspect property upon completion of warranty work and verify that the work has been satisfactorily completed.
4. Email photos of completed warranty items to Program Coordinator.

J. Other

1. Other duties may be required by evolving requirements from the County's State and Federal funding sources.

PROPOSALS FORMAT

Proposals shall consist of two separate parts comprised of a Financial Proposal Form and a Qualifications Statement.

The Qualifications Statement shall be submitted on company letterhead and the information presented therein must include, at a minimum:

1. A cover letter.
2. Listed qualifications of the firm and personnel, including copies of the inspector's license(s).
3. Specification of the estimating software to be utilized.
4. Information on similar services provided by the applicant.
5. A list of professional references, including contact information.

Proposals may also include any other information the applicant considers relevant to the request; of especial interest is any prior experience with municipal, county, state or federal housing rehabilitation programs and/or an example of a work write-up written by the inspector.

The Qualifications Statement should also include the same or similar information on any subcontractors that are part of the applicant's team.

The enclosed Financial Proposal Form must be completed in its entirety with the costs itemized for each category and a projected time of completion. Completion time is defined as an estimate of time lapse between service request by county and the delivery of the requested service.

Both the Financial Proposal Form and Qualifications Statement must include the firm's business address and telephone number and identify one or more individuals authorized to sign the contract and submitted with authorized signatures.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND AWARD

Basis of Award

The County Housing Program Coordinator and the Worcester County Commissioners will review the proposals. The award of any contract because of this request will be based on an assessment of each proposal against three evaluation factors: 1) Experience and Credentials 2) Completion Times 3) Price.

Award Without Discussions

The Worcester County Commissioners intend to evaluate proposals and award a contract without discussion with applicants. Therefore, the applicant's initial offer should contain the best terms from a price and completion time standpoint. However, the Worcester County Commissioners reserve the right to conduct discussions if during the review process this is deemed to be necessary.

Evaluation Factors

Worcester County will select the best offer based on Experience and Credentials, Completion Times and Price. These three factors are of equal importance.

Experience and Credentials: Experience and Credentials will be evaluated as a measure of Worcester County's confidence in the ability of the bidder to successfully perform the inspection functions based on comparable inspection and work write-up experience as well as any industry certifications or qualifications. To achieve this level of confidence, the County may employ the following approaches including: 1) Reviewing the past experience listed in the proposal; 2) Seeking additional performance information, including requests for sample rehabilitation work write-ups; and 3) Using data obtained from other relevant sources.

Completion Times: The satisfaction of this factor will be based upon the applicant's ability to provide initial inspections and final work write-ups in a timely manner. Completion time is defined as an estimate of time lapse between service request by County and delivery of requested service.

Price: Price will be assessed regarding affordability, fairness and reasonableness.