

Request for Proposals
Property Inspection System
Database Application Development and Consultant Services

Issuance Date: July 5, 2017

Proposals must be submitted no later than 5:00pm (EDT)
August 16, 2017

Submit to:
Database Application Development and Consultant Services RFP

InspectionRFP@ohiohome.org

57 E. Main Street | Columbus, OH 43215

Proposals must be submitted no later than 5:00p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

August 16, 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose. This is a Request for Proposal ("RFP") to solicit competitive proposals for Database Application Development and Consultant Services to develop a Property Inspection System for the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA). If a suitable qualified contractor is identified in response to this RFP, OHFA may enter into a contract to have the selected contractor perform all or part of the work outlined in this RFP. This RFP provides details on what is required to submit a proposal, how OHFA will evaluate the proposals, and what will be required of the qualified contractor.

Background. The Agency is responsible for general compliance monitoring and on-site physical inspections of affordable housing properties that are funded with various federal and state resources. Each inspection includes the physical (i.e. on-site) portion as well as a file review. The file review focuses on a review certifying if the tenant living in the unit meets qualifications which include, but are not limited to, income and rent restrictions. The inspections are conducted by analysts employed by OHFA and are for properties that are funded with Low Income Housing Credits (Housing Tax Credits), other state or federal funding, or a combination of funding sources. The physical inspections must be conducted based on all applicable regulations and policies.

- Objectives. It will be the contractor's obligation to ensure that the application meets these objectives:
    - Implementation of a system for use by analysts in performing physical inspections and file reviews;
    - Provide analysts capability to record inspection findings electronically on a tablet-based device, including photos;
    - Allows input of data when no wireless or cellular network is present;
    - Allows the recording of electronic signatures and printing of hardcopy reports on site following the inspection;
    - Supports configurability of inspection parameters and structure;
    - Implementation of a scoring algorithm that quantifies results from the inspections for later review and prioritization; and
    - Implementation of a centralized database application that collects the results of the inspections and makes it available for analysis, reporting, and program administration.

Overview of the System's Scope. The Database Application Development and Consultant Services RFP is being issued by OHFA to select a qualified contractor who can provide or develop an easy-to-use, tablet-based software solution for analysts to use in performing property inspections and file reviews. The software will include an algorithm for scoring the inspection results, and have functionality to conduct analysis and reporting.

Responses to this RFP must include the following products and services to the Agency with regard to the Database Application Development and Consulting Services:

1. Project Management;
2. Property Inspection System, including the software tools and applications and databases to meet the functional, technical and security requirements identified in this RFP and supporting documents at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx;
3. Provide requirements affirmation, design and customization services as proposed to meet the property inspection system solution requirements identified in this RFP and supporting documents at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx;
4. User training and documentation;
5. Provide an application that is compliant with federal and State of Ohio laws regarding data confidentiality;
6. Provide system functionality testing and assistance with user acceptance testing; and
7. Software maintenance, and upgrades, including ongoing technical support and assistance.

Section 1 – Guidelines for Request for Proposals

1.1 Introduction

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency ("OHFA") is seeking proposals from qualified contractors to provide database application development and consultant services to electronically capture physical inspection results based on Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS) and develop a housing portfolio status tool for OHFA as specified in this Request for Proposal ("RFP"). The database application development and consultant services provided will be in accordance with all applicable program rules, regulations, and policies.

OHFA intends to select a firm to supply database application development and consultant services who will work with OHFA staff to develop an affordable housing physical inspection application and reporting capacity based on UPCS and all other services more specifically listed and set forth in section 2.

1.2 Schedule of Events

OHFA has established the following schedule for selection of the qualified contractor:

Event	Date
Issue notice	July 5, 2017
RFP issuance date	July 5, 2017
Written questions from applicants	July 19, 2017
Responses to applicant questions	July 26 , 2017
Proposals due	August 16, 2017
Completion of evaluations	August 30, 2017
Confirmed selection by OHFA Board	September 20, 2017
Start date of services	October 1, 2017

The above schedule is subject to change upon written notice from OHFA to all firms to which OHFA has provided these materials.

1.3 Submission of Written Questions

It is the policy of OHFA to accept questions and inquiries from all potential applicants. All questions and inquiries shall be in writing; no verbal requests will be honored. Potential applicants may submit their questions or inquiries via e-mail to: **InspectionRFP@ohiohome.org** with the subject: Property Inspection System RFP

All written questions or inquiries are due by 5:00pm (EDT) on Wednesday, July 19, 2017. OHFA expects to respond to all questions and inquires by 5:00pm (EDT) on Wednesday, July 26, 2017.

OHFA reserves the right to decline to respond to any question or inquiry that will cause an undue burden or expense for OHFA or which OHFA deems unnecessary for purposes of responding to this RFP. OHFA will post all questions or inquires with answers on the State of Ohio Procurement website at https://procure.ohio.gov.

1.4 Verbal Communication regarding RFP prohibited

Verbal communication from any potential applicant regarding this RFP to OHFA staff and/or OHFA Board members during the RFP process is prohibited.

1.5 Submission of Proposals

Proposals must be submitted electronically as one .pdf attachment. Multiple attachments will not be accepted. All proposals must be received by 5:00pm (EDT), Wednesday, August 16, 2017.

Proposals received after the specified date and time will not be eligible for consideration. Any applicant who wishes to confirm receipt of their proposal may contact OHFA by email to InspectionRFP@ohiohome.org (Subject: Property Inspection System RFP). OHFA will respond by e-mail with confirmation of receipt of the proposal.

1.6 Right to Request Additional Information

OHFA reserves the right to request any additional information to assist in the review process, including requiring oral presentations of proposals to OHFA staff members and/or an OHFA Internal Evaluation Committee.

1.7 Right to Reject Proposals and Cancel RFP

OHFA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals at any time. OHFA reserves the right to cancel, withdraw, modify or reissue this RFP at any time for any reason.

1.8 Award of RFP

The RFP will be awarded to the firm that gives OHFA the most effective combination of qualifications, services to be provided, understanding of the database application development and consultant services needed for a state housing finance agency, demonstration of the ability to identify and analyze key issues, assurances and availability of key personnel, and costs. OHFA will post on its website the firm selected to be awarded the contract after formal approval by the OHFA Board on September 20, 2017.

1.9 Agreement for Services

The firm selected to provide the database application development and consultant services described in this RFP would be expected to complete and submit an agreed upon Agreement for Services covering the Scope and Terms of this RFP. The

Agreement for Services will begin on October 1, 2017. The work is expected to be completed and fully implemented no later than August 31, 2018.

Section 2 – Scope of Services

OHFA is seeking a qualified contractor to provide database application development and consultation services. The qualified contractor will have extensive experience providing the required services specifically for state housing finance agencies or similar entities.

In your response, describe your firm's ability and experience to provide each of these services. Provide examples of prior experience, where applicable.

- **PC-based application:** Develop a PC-based application in compliance with all federal and state laws and rules for preparing physical inspections on the tablet devices, retrieving completed inspections from the devices, viewing the results of the inspections and generating reports using the inspection data. The PC-based application must provide a bridge between an existing SQL Server database and the tablet-based application. Information on the properties such as development name, address, buildings, units, etc. will be selected from an existing database and transferred to the tablets prior to the inspections. After the inspections are conducted, inspection results from the tablets should be transferred back to the PC-based application for review and reporting. The transfer of data to and from the tablets should be accomplished when the tablets are in range of a wireless system. Users will determine how often to load data onto the tablets and transfer results back to the PC-based application.
- **Tablet-based application**: Develop a tablet-based physical inspection application specifically designed to assess the degree to which affordable housing projects are in compliance with all federal and state laws. The application must provide a way to modify pre-selected units and buildings from the existing database while on-site during an inspection.

  The application must run on handheld, Windows-compatible tablet devices and must be implemented as either a native Windows 10 application or an application compatible with Windows devices. Acceptable programming languages are C# or Visual Basic, using either .NET or MVC framework. The database backend must be SQL Server 2012. The tablet application must allow inspections to be recorded without Internet connectivity as many properties are located in poor coverage areas. Tablets must have wireless capability, but not cellular connectivity.
- **Reporting:** Develop reporting capacity for the applications. The reports must be capable of showing the results of the inspections in both detail and summary form. Review section 2.2 for additional details on purpose and requirements for the reports.

2.1 Background and Additional Information

The database and software will be used by OHFA to meet requirements in the IRS regulations for the Housing Tax Credit program and improve workflow for other funding programs (e.g. HOME) that OHFA administers. The inspections must be conducted based on all applicable regulations and policies. The IRS regulation 26 CFR Section 1.42-5 *Monitoring compliance with low-income housing credit requirements* outlines the specific requirements for compliance monitoring.

OHFA is the agency responsible for general compliance monitoring including on-site physical inspections of properties funded by the Housing Tax Credit program in Ohio. Each inspection includes the physical/on-site portion as well as a file review. The file review certifies if the tenant living in the unit meets qualifications which include, but are not limited to, income and rent restrictions.

Description of Physical Inspection Review Process

Prior to arriving at the property the lead OHFA analyst will determine the unit sample size (typically 20% of the low income units) to identify which units will be inspected based on the type of OHFA funding and the reporting stage of the property. The physical inspection will also include, as appropriate, building exteriors, site, common areas, and building systems. In some cases, multiple staff members assist on reviews. This typically occurs during the inspection of a large property with many units. Frequently, the sample size is divided up amongst multiple staff members based on the buildings that the units are located within. Each staff member assisting with the inspection is responsible for completing the physical inspection on units or other areas that need to be inspected (e.g. building exteriors) and that are assigned to them. The proposed application must allow data to be recorded by more than one inspector per property at the same time.

Recording and Reporting the Physical Inspection

OHFA uses UPCS as the basis for identifying common physical condition non-compliance. OHFA applies a zero tolerance standard. Essentially any aspect of the unit, including finishes (e.g. paint, molding, etc.), fixtures, appliances, or other components that are not in sufficient repair are to be noted in the inspection findings. However, the proposed tool must correctly document the severity and magnitude of the inspection finding. The current process requires the OHFA analyst to note any physical condition issue to ensure all potential problems are addressed. Property owners are expected to repair or replace all identified instances of non-compliance. All UPCS findings are reported on IRS Form 8823 and included in the compliance review report that is sent to the owner and/or property management company.

Although OHFA applies a zero tolerance approach to UPCS, some findings are elevated due to the nature of the issue including smoke detector violations and exigent health and safety violations (EHS). Due to the IRS regulations these elevated issues must be presented to property staff at the time of the review so they can be fixed either that day or within 24 hours of the inspection. A summary of these issues must be easily accessible (i.e. printer friendly or ability to send via email). In addition to the UPCS findings, OHFA has additional requirements that are not part of the IRS regulations and do not trigger IRS Form 8823 being issued, however, they must be noted for correction in the final Compliance Review Report. All findings including those identified in UPCS, smoke detector, EHS, or other item identified in OHFA policy must be included in the tablet and PC applications. Refer to the inspection outline for basic concept of layout and findings (see Physical Inspection Outline Excel file at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx). This outline should be used as a general guide, but is not prescriptive; however, functionality and flow should be similar.

The software interface on the tablet must be easy to use at a fast pace and in a variety of environments by the compliance analyst. The analyst will be walking through homes or apartment units, around the exteriors of buildings, through parking lots, across sidewalks or other paths, as well across grass. As the analyst walks through a unit or across the property they must be able easily identify a finding based on the area they are working on, the nature of the issue, and if applicable, additional detail on where the issue is occurring.

Upon completion of the inspection, while still at the property, the analyst must be able to communicate, in writing, certain issues that must be addressed immediately. Additionally, at the office, each analyst will prepare the Compliance Review Report and IRS Form 8823, if applicable. After the review has been completed, the inspection findings (physical and file) will be used in a composite measure (i.e. Property Status Report, PSR) to monitor the status of OHFA's entire portfolio of properties. The qualified contractor will work with OHFA to develop the measures to monitor portfolio status (i.e. PSR). This measure must show the overall condition and status of the property. The qualified contractor will develop a valid and reliable measure that can be used by OHFA staff to rate the property based on the information collected through the physical inspection, file review, and responsiveness of staff involved with the property. This tool must autopopulate information from existing databases to avoid the duplication of data entry. The final measure must be flexible in design since not every section or question is applicable for every property. The qualified contractor must

demonstrate the validity and reliability of such measure and provide for additional testing once the tool is implemented by OHFA.

2.2 Summary of Required Features

PC-based Application

The qualified contractor will develop a PC-based application in compliance with all federal and state laws and rules for preparing physical inspections on the tablet devices, retrieving completed inspections from the devices, viewing the results of the inspections and generating reports using the inspection data. The PC-based application will include the following:

- The application will be based on UPCS standards as well as other state funding, and OHFA policy requirements. OHFA has additional requirements that are not part of the IRS regulations; however, they must be noted for correction in the final inspection reports. All findings including those identified in UPCS, smoke detector, EHS, or other OHFA policy must be included in the tablet and PC applications.
- The proposed PC-based application must provide a bridge between an existing SQL Server database and the tablet application. Information on the properties such as development name, address, buildings, units, etc. will be selected from the existing database and transferred to the tablets prior to the inspections. After the inspections are conducted, inspection results from the tablets should be transferred back to the PC-based application for review and reporting. The transfer of data to the PC-based application and tablet application should be accomplished when the tablets are in range of a wireless network. Users will determine how often to load data onto the tablets and transfer results back to the PC-based application.
- Must have security features to prevent unauthorized access.

Tablet-based application

The qualified contractor will develop a tablet-based application in compliance with all federal and state laws and rules for preparing physical inspections on the tablet devices, retrieving completed inspections from the devices, viewing the results of the inspections and generating reports using the inspection data. The tablet-based application will include the following:

- A tablet-based application for recording the results of physical inspections and any additional information to develop the composite measure of the status of the portfolio (i.e. PSR).

- The tablet application will consist of a series of forms that allow results of an inspection to be recorded by the compliance analysts. One or more sections are included in an inspection including units, building systems, site, common areas, and building exteriors. A distinct list of areas corresponds to each section and any number of issues may be recorded for each area. Findings, locations, and features are optional, depending on how the issue is configured.
- Areas, issues, findings, location, and features must be configurable with the ability to add new options and make existing options inactive. Findings, locations, and features may or may not appear for a given issue and this must also be configurable. (see Configurable Capabilities)
- The tablet application must be lightweight, easy to use in a fast-paced environment.
- The tablet application must run on handheld, Windows-compatible tablet devices and must be implemented as either a native Windows 10 application or an application compatible with Windows devices. Acceptable programming languages are C# or Visual Basic, using either .NET or MVC framework. The database backend must be SQL Server 2012.
- The tablet application must allow inspections to be recorded without Internet connectivity as many properties are located in poor coverage areas. Tablets will have wireless capability, but not cellular connectivity.
- The tablet must have the ability to take photographs from the tablets and attach them to a particular question in the inspection record.
- The tablet application must have the ability to capture electronic signatures on the tablet (fingertip or stylus) for inclusion on the hardcopy reports.
- The information gathered on the tablet-based application must be uploaded into a PC-based system and automatically populate (and data will be used to calculate) the PSR.
- The system must generate reports for internal and external partners. (see reports section below).
- Must have security features to prevent unauthorized access.

Configuration Capabilities

The following features must be configurable by the end user:

- Information on properties to be inspected and the inspection date;
- Compliance analyst to lead the inspection and list of assisting analysts;
- Sections to be chosen for a particular property inspection, including units, building systems, site, common areas, building exterior and the capability to assign them to one or more compliance analysts;

- Areas to be chosen for each section with the capability to add new areas or make existing areas inactive;
- Whether finding, location, and/or feature combo-boxes are to appear for a particular issue;
- Combo-box option values for all combo-box types: areas, issues, findings, features, and locations; and
- User roles including compliance analyst and administrator with different levels of access and capabilities.

Reports

All reports must follow all OHFA Branding Guidelines and have the ability to be exported as a Microsoft word and PDF files. Reports should be developed for external and internal use. The following list provides information about required reporting functions.

Reports from tablet application include:

1. A **Smoke Detector Violation report** that indicates which units were determined to be in violation of this requirement. The report would include property management and OHFA staff acknowledgement blocks within the application. The resulting report should create a PDF with captured signatures that will be emailed to OHFA staff and the property management company. (See Smoke Detector Violation pdf at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx.)
2. An **Exigent Health and Safety (EHS) Violation report** that indicates which units were found to have EHS violations. This report would include property management and OHFA staff acknowledgement blocks within the application. The resulting form should create a PDF with captured signatures that will be emailed to OHFA staff and the property management company. (See EHS Violation pdf at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx.)

Reports from PC application include:

3. A **Compliance Review Report** that would present the entire results of the physical and file inspection. Preference will be given to a report that includes the fields and similar structure to the existing OHFA Compliance Report. (See Compliance Review Report pdf at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx.)
4. A **Property Status Report** that provides information on the entire OHFA portfolio and select housing projects. This report must use the composite measure developed by the qualified contractor to monitor the status of OHFA's entire portfolio or a select group of properties. This report must use the information gathered from existing OHFA data systems and the tablet/PC-based application. (See Property Status Report pdf at http://www.ohiohome.org/news/rfp.aspx for example)

5. A **customizable summary report** that OHFA management can use to monitor staff workloads including, but not limited to, reviews conducted, staff participations, and other relevant fields.
6. A **customizable, ad hoc reporting function to track the frequency and status of inspections** and types of projects across all properties with inspections.

2.3 Other Information

Project Stakeholders

- Director of Program Compliance
- Policy & Technology Manager
- Director of Affordable Housing Research and Strategic Planning
- Compliance Analysts (Primary Users)
- Compliance Managers (Primary Users)
- Chief Information Officer (IT Support)

Client Supplied Resources

Work may be performed at OHFA or remotely. Meetings with project stakeholders must take place at OHFA. Vendor must supply developer resources such as PC or laptop and programming software, e.g. Visual Studio.

Documentation Requirements

- User manual describing in detail the system and how to use the system with OHFA compliance analysts and administrative staff as the audience.
- Documentation for OHFA IT developers consisting of:
    - commenting within the software code,
    - diagrams describing the database structure, and
    - data dictionary describing all fields in the database.

Training and Testing

Selected Contractor will provide the following:

- Training for compliance analysts and administrative staff on how to use final the system. The duration of the training will be negotiated at the time of the contract negotiation.
- A testing phase of up to three months for staff to determine if the Application is compatible with existing systems, meets all OHFA requirements, and functionality in the field.

Project Status Reporting

Weekly written status reports shall be submitted to OHFA in accordance with the project schedule. These status reports should outline:

- Overall summarization of the project progress;
- Deliverables achieved;
- Deliverables remaining, progress, and expected delivery on each; and
- Issues and concerns affecting specific deliverables and the project schedule or any other aspect of the project.

Section 3 – Required Information to be provided in Response to Proposal

3.1 Description of Firm

Please describe your firm's experience serving as database developer and consultant to state housing finance agencies or similar entity. The description of your firm should include, but is not limited to, the following:

a) Location and size;
b) Number of years of operation;
c) Organizational structure;
d) Number of years experience serving as developing database application systems;
e) List of current clients; and
f) Number of years experience developing and testing scoring methodologies.

3.2 Firm References

Attach references with particular attention to state housing finance agencies or similar entities.

3.3 Staff Qualifications

a) Identify the key individuals who would be assigned to work with OHFA. Describe the level of staffing and service that OHFA would receive, including the nature of the work that each person would perform and their related professional experience.
b) These individuals must have a minimum of five years of experience working in the database development field. Experience with the affordable housing industry or similar experience is preferred.
c) Specify which person would be designated the primary contact person for OHFA.

3.4 Staff Resumes

Furnish resumes for each individual identified in item 3.3. Include references and phone numbers.

3.5 Locations

Identify the location of the office(s) in which the staffs in 3.3 are located.

3.6 Cost Proposal

Include an itemized budget using the format detailed below. For each item listed in the budget template, a detailed narrative should be provided explaining each cost.

Personnel					
Name	Role	% time	Salary	Fringe	
				Total	$
Consultant Costs					
				Total	$
Technical, Application, and Infrastructure Leads					
				Total	$
Support/Change Management					
				Total	$
Supplies					
				Total	$
Travel					
				Total	$
Other expenses					
				Total	$
Total direct costs					$
Indirect cost					$
Total Project Cost					**$**

3.7 Litigation, Administrative Proceedings, Investigations

Please describe any pending or resolved material litigation, administrative proceedings or investigations in which your institution has been involved in the previous five-year period.

3.8 Campaign Contributions

Identify any instances where the firm and/or any of its principals or parties listed or their spouses have contributed more than $1,000 per individual from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2016 to the Governor of Ohio's campaign.

3.9 Other Information

Provide your firm's financial statements for the last two years.

3.10 Other Qualifications

Provide any other qualifications that should be considered.

Section 4 – Evaluation Process

4.1 Minimum Evaluation Requirements

An OHFA Internal Evaluation Committee will evaluate the responses to this RFP. Each proposal will be evaluated to ensure that the applicant has complied with each section of this RFP and followed the formatting, organizational and submission requirements as described in this RFP.

Section 5 – Preparing and Submitting the Proposal

5.1 Proposal Organization and Format

OHFA requires the applicant to follow the formatting described below when submitting their proposal:

a) Proposals will be typed on standard 8.5x11 inch paper, single-spaced with one-inch margins and a 12-point font.
b) Proposals will be organized and presented in order outlined below (see 5.1 c). Each heading will be clearly labeled.
c) Organization of proposal:
    1. Cover page that includes the name and contact information (address, telephone, and email address of the primary contact) of the firm.
    2. Description of proposed work for the PC-based application, tablet-based application, scoring methodology, reporting functions, and configuration capabilities of proposed software
    3. Required information (see Section 3 for detail)
d) Each response to this RFP will include as the second page a Table of Contents.

5.2 Submitting the Proposal

Proposals must be submitted electronically as one .pdf attachment. Multiple attachments will not be accepted. By submitting a proposal, the applicant agrees to the following:

a) All materials submitted become the property of OHFA and shall be public information unless a statutory exception exists which would thereby determine that such information cannot be released to the public. If you have information in your proposal that you believe is an exemption to the public records laws you must identify each and every occurrence of the information in the proposal on a separate page titled “Exemptions to the Public Records Law”.
b) Applicants will respond to all requirements in this RFP and comply with any terms and conditions outlined in the RFP. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of the proposal.
c) All costs incurred in preparation of a proposal shall be borne by the applicant. Proposal preparation costs are not recoverable under the Agreement for Services. OHFA shall not contribute in any way to recovering the cost of proposal preparation.
d) If during the evaluation process it becomes necessary to make further distinctions between certain applicants, OHFA may be permitted to request certain applicants make oral presentations of proposals to OHFA staff members, and/or an OHFA Internal Evaluation Committee.
e) Proposals received after the deadline will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that there will be no opportunity to correct mistakes or deficiencies in their proposal after the submission deadline. Proposals that are missing required

forms and or information may not be evaluated. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure its proposal is complete, accurate, responsive to the requirements, and received on time. Proposals not complying with the requirements of the RFP may not be reviewed.