# Request for Proposal

Street to Housing – Responding to Encampments

Proposal due date: January 6, 2022 prior to 2:00 p.m.

Pre-Proposal conference: December 8, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting will be hosted by Microsoft Teams:

* [Click here to join the meeting](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3Ameeting_ZjY3M2VkZWYtZWI5Zi00OTQ3LThkMGItZDEwMTFkYzM1MjY3%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%228aefdf9f-8780-46bf-8fb7-4c924653a8be%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2276bdbead-4bde-4a46-9a2c-a3d0982b3310%22%7d) at the designated time
* **Or call in (audio only)**  612-263-6117
* Phone Conference ID: 103 597 352#
* You will be able to ask questions of the presenters through chat

Closing date for all questions: December 13, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Project overview

The County of Hennepin, State of Minnesota (“County”) and the City of Minneapolis (“City”) are soliciting proposals for a ‘Street to Housing’ encampment response initiative with the Housing Stability Office within the Office to End Homelessness. This 2-year project will provide coordination for trauma-informed and housing-focused case management and housing navigation to the occupants of encampments across the County.

The County and City plan to work with community partners and people with lived experience; the encampment response team(s) will coordinate services to quickly assess the needs of people staying in encampments and bring resources and manage timelines to resolve their housing crisis and reduce the dangers of living in encampments.

The County is seeking to enter two contracts for this 2-year Encampment Response Project, including one that will specifically address the unique and complex needs of the urban indigenous unsheltered experience in the County.

### 1.2 Scope of services (Attachment 1)

The scope of services is included as Attachment 1.

### 1.3 Proposal format and content (Attachment 2)

When submitting a proposal, proposers must follow the specific format and contents detailed in Attachment 2. Failure to do so will likely prolong the evaluation process.

### 1.4 Pre-application conference December 8, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting will be hosted by Microsoft Teams:

* [Click here to join the meeting](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3Ameeting_ZjY3M2VkZWYtZWI5Zi00OTQ3LThkMGItZDEwMTFkYzM1MjY3%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%228aefdf9f-8780-46bf-8fb7-4c924653a8be%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2276bdbead-4bde-4a46-9a2c-a3d0982b3310%22%7d) at the designated time
* **Or call in (audio only)**  612-263-6117
* Phone Conference ID: 103 597 352#
* You will be able to ask questions of the presenters through chat

## 2 General rules

### 2.1 RFP overview

This Request for Proposals ("RFP") is an invitation for proposers to submit a proposal to the County. It is not to be construed as an official and customary request for bids, but as a means by which the County can facilitate the acquisition of information related to the purchase of services. Any proposal submitted is a suggestion to negotiate and **NOT A BID**.

### 2.2 Proposal submission

Proposals will be received in the [Hennepin County supplier portal](https://supplier.hennepin.us/psp/fprd/SUPPLIER/ERP/h/?tab=HC_SUPPLIER_PUBLIC). In order to submit a proposal, you must first register with the supplier portal. For more information on how to register, please go to the [supplier portal help page](https://www.hennepin.us/business/work-with-henn-co/supplier-portal). Proposers are strongly encouraged to make their submissions well in advance of the proposal due date as the process may take some time to complete.

Failure to submit a proposal on time may be grounds for rejection of the proposal; however, the County reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to accept proposals after the proposal due date.

### 2.3 Questions and communication restrictions

Questions concerning this RFP should be submitted in writing via e-mail to the following address: HSPH.Vendor.Selection@hennepin.us.

Proposers shall not communicate, verbally or otherwise, with any Hennepin County personnel or boards or relevant consultant(s) concerning this RFP, except for the persons listed in this section. This restriction may be suspended or removed by the authority and direction of the persons listed above. If any proposer attempts or completes any unauthorized communication, Hennepin County may, in its sole and absolute discretion, reject the proposer’s proposal.

### 2.4 Addenda

The County reserves the right to modify the RFP at any time prior to the proposal due date. An addendum will be posted in the Supplier Portal if the RFP is modified. Addenda may be viewed by clicking on the ‘View Event Package’ on the Event Details page. It is the responsibility of each prospective proposer to assure receipt of all addenda.

The County will modify the RFP only by formal written addenda. Proposer’s proposal should be based on this RFP document and any formal written addenda. Proposers should not rely on oral statements, including those occurring at pre-proposal meetings or site visits.

### 2.5 County’s right to withdraw, cancel, suspend and/or modify RFP

The County reserves the right to withdraw, cancel, suspend, and/or modify this RFP for any reason and at any time with no liability to any prospective proposer for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with the RFP or otherwise.

### 2.6 Proposer’s right to edit or cancel proposal

A proposal may be edited or cancelled in the supplier portal prior to the proposal due date. For instructions, view the edit or cancel a response section of the [how-to-respond-to-an-event](https://www.hennepin.us/-/media/hennepinus/business/work-with-hennepin-county/docs-m-z/how-to-respond-to-an-event-v4.pdf) guide.

### 2.7 Proposals will not be returned

Upon submission, proposals will not be returned.

### 2.8 Public disclosure of proposal documents

Under Minnesota law, proposals are private or nonpublic until the proposals are opened on the proposal due date. Once the proposals are opened, the name of the Proposer becomes public. All other data in the proposal is private/nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process. The evaluation process is completed when the County enters into a contract with a Proposer. At that time, all remaining data submitted by all Proposers is public with the exception of data classified as private/non-public trade secret data under Minn. Stat. § 13.37 of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

**Proposers must not submit trade secret material, as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37, as part of their proposal.** The County does NOT consider cost or prices to be trade secret material, as defined by the statute. Proposers may present and discuss trade secret information during an interview or demonstration, if applicable.

The Proposer agrees, as a condition of submitting its proposal, that the County will not, as between the parties, be liable or accountable for any loss or damage which may result from a breach of confidentiality related to the proposal. The Proposer agrees to indemnify and hold the County, its officials, agents, and employees harmless from all claims arising out of, resulting from, or in any manner attributable to any violation of any provision of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, including legal fees and disbursements paid or incurred to enforce this provision. This indemnification survives the County’s award of a contract. In submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the Proposer agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the Proposal is in the County’s possession. The County is required to keep all the basic documents related to its contracts, including RFP proposals, for a minimum of seven years.

### 2.9 Proposer’s costs

The County shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by proposer in connection with this RFP. Proposer shall bear all costs associated with proposal preparation, submission, and attendance at interviews, or any other activity associated with this RFP or otherwise.

### 2.10 Proposer’s ideas

The County reserves the right to use any or all ideas, concepts, or other information provided in any proposals. Selection or rejection of the proposal does not affect this right.

### 2.11 Collusion

If the County determines that collusion has occurred among proposers, none of the proposals of the participants involved in the collusion shall be considered. The County’s determination shall be final.

### 2.12 Conflict of interest

The proposer affirms that to the best of its knowledge the submission of its proposal, or any resulting contract, does not present an actual or perceived conflict of interest. The proposer agrees that should any actual or perceived conflict of interest become known, it will immediately notify the County and will advise whether it will or will not avoid, mitigate, or neutralize the conflict of interest.

The County may make reasonable efforts to avoid, mitigate, or neutralize a conflict of interest by a proposer. To avoid a conflict of interest by a proposer, the County may utilize methods including disqualifying a proposer from eligibility for a contract award or cancelling the contract if the conflict is discovered after a contract has been issued. The County may, at its sole and absolute discretion, waive any conflict of interest.

## 3 Evaluation and selection

### 3.1 Proposal evaluation and recommendation for selection

This RFP does not commit the County to award a contract. Submission of a proposal shall neither obligate nor entitle a proposer to enter into a contract with the County. The County reserves the following rights, to be exercised in the County’s sole and absolute discretion: 1) to determine whether any aspect of a proposal satisfactorily meets the criteria established in this RFP; 2) to seek clarification or additional information from any proposer; 3) to negotiate, sequentially or simultaneously, pricing and/or terms with any proposer or vendor; 4) to reject any or all proposals with or without cause; 5) to waive any irregularities or informalities in a proposal; 6) to cancel or amend by addenda this RFP, in part or entirely; 6) to award multiple contracts to proposers; and/or 7) award a contract to a vendor that did not submit a proposal.

Evaluation of proposals by a selection committee, evaluation panel, County staff, a technical advisory committee, or by another group, individual or entity is advisory only. The County Board or its designee may consider or reject such evaluation(s) for any or all proposals. Such evaluations are for the sole benefit of the County Board or its designee, and as such, they are not binding upon the County, nor may they be relied upon in any way by a proposer.

### 3.2 Evaluation of responsiveness

The County will consider all the material submitted by the proposer to determine whether the proposer’s offer is in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth in this RFP. Proposals that do not comply with the provisions in this RFP may be considered nonresponsive and may be rejected.

### 3.3 Evaluation of responsibility

To determine whether a proposer is responsible, the County will consider the proposer’s general qualifications to perform the requested services in a satisfactory manner; financial responsibility; integrity; skill; and ability.

Factors considered by the County may include, but are not limited to, proposer’s past performance on previous projects; the proposer’s technical capabilities; individual qualifications of proposer’s key personnel; and the proposer’s financial ability to perform on the contract. Proposals from proposers considered non-responsible will be rejected.

### 3.4 Evaluation panel and evaluation criteria

After review of each responsive proposal, the County may immediately award a contract to a successful proposer based on the evaluation criteria, or it may establish a short list of proposers for further consideration. The short list of proposers may be asked to provide additional information, including but not limited to two years of audited financial statements. The short list of proposers may also be asked to attend an in-person or telephone interview/presentation, as determined by the County in its sole discretion.

Selected proposers will be those that most successfully demonstrate the following.

1. Plan for performing services, including without limitation:
	* A clear description of how services and interventions will be provided to advance the desired outcomes of a reduction in unsheltered homelessness.
	* A detailed plan for how the proposer will track, monitor, and evaluate progress toward key outcome goals for a street to housing initiative.
	* Description of how proposer trains staff and implements best practices for working with unsheltered households who have co-occurring needs including traumatic brain injury, substance use, and who are living with symptoms of trauma and mental illness.
	* Because this is a two-year initiative, the proposal should include a description of how the applicant will utilize current staff or will need to increase capacity for this project.
2. Experience and qualifications, including without limitation:
	* Experience working with unsheltered households.
	* Organizational track record with supporting communities disproportionately impacted by housing instability and/or homelessness, including Indigenous, Black and African American residents.
	* A detailed explanation of how proposer is able to address the unique and complex needs of the urban indigenous unsheltered populations, if applicable.
	* Organizational history of partnering with Hennepin County, the City, and persons with lived experience in responding to unsheltered homelessness.
3. Complete timeline and budget that connects reasonable costs with proposed activities, services, or interventions.

The County will consider the trade-off between proposal price and the other evaluation criteria in determining the proposal which is most advantageous to the County.

### 3.5 Additional Information/virtual presentation

The County reserves the right to request additional information from proposers during any phase of the proposal evaluation process. During the evaluation process, the County may require the presence of a proposer to make a virtual presentation and/or answer specific questions regarding their proposal.

### 3.6 Execution of contract

Before a contract becomes effective between the County and any proposer, the contract award must be ratified and signed by the County Board or its designee. If for any reason the County Board or its designee does not ratify and sign the contract, then there are no binding obligations whatsoever between the County and the Proposer relative to the proposed contract.

## 4 Attachments

**4.1 Attachment 1 – Scope of services**

**4.2 Attachment 2 – Proposal format and content**

**4.3 Attachment 3 – Hennepin County Terms and Conditions**

## Attachment 1 – Scope of services

### 4.10 Background

Like many communities across North America, the County has seen an increase in encampments over the past few years. While traditional street outreach does a good job of engaging with households and responding to immediate and emergent needs by connecting people to services and providing supplies for survival, many street outreach programs do not have the bandwidth to provide more comprehensive, holistic programming, like encampment needs assessments, housing-focused case management, and housing navigation for everyone who is occupying an encampment. In other cases, services are being provided to unsheltered households generically and the structure and organizational infrastructure of each camp and its composition isn’t taken into consideration in effort to rehouse and resolve the encampment. Thus, many of these households have the potential to be underserved or missed altogether.

There are many reasons why some households do not or cannot access shelter. There are also many unsheltered households who are unsheltered but not in an encampment. The County is seeking to have a more comprehensive understanding of the needs of its unsheltered residents who occupy encampments and develop a stronger response to households that are occupying encampments in the County. We believe that the solution to homelessness is housing, and that everyone is house-able. Every person’s situation is different, and every encampment is unique. Therefore, the need for a dedicated team to work through the complexity of each situation is crucial. By understanding the situation and coordinating the response to the specific needs of the encampment, the team can help reduce barriers and provide trauma informed, housing-focused services as well as system navigation to ensure that households are deeply supported to resolve their housing crises as quickly as possible.

4.11 Target Population

The target population served by this project will be households experiencing unsheltered homelessness in an encampment within Hennepin County. In addition to proving housing-focused case management and service coordination, the project team(s) will work in partnership with street outreach teams to ensure all unsheltered populations are connected to services that are assisting them with addressing immediate needs.

The County seeks to enter at least one contract that is specifically targeted to Indigenous households experiencing unsheltered homelessness and sleeping in encampments to respond to the disproportionate number of Indigenous people within our homelessness response system.

### 4.12 Project description

The contracted team(s) will work closely together with County staff, and City staff where applicable. They will identify and assess the needs of encampments across the County and respond to those needs of households occupying encampments across Hennepin County. In addition, they will assist them with identifying a safe, appropriate alternative to sleeping in a place unmeant for human habitation, including shelter and/or housing. The team(s) will also coordinate and organize services such as food and healthcare that are needed to support camp occupants throughout this process.

The Encampment Response Initiative will be a two-year only project (March 2022 through March 2024). The goal of the initiative is to reduce unsheltered homelessness within the County encampments by 50% through coordination of resources for encampment occupants and voluntary closure via case management and housing navigation, support with self-resolution, and/or connecting to mainstream resources. The contracted team(s) will work closely with the County and the City for a system-level analysis of the project impact. This initiative will be developed and evaluated by people with lived experience

This will be a phased initiative. The contracted team(s) will use data collected through the encampment and household assessment to inform the approach and coordination of services needed. The team(s) will track service outcomes related to shelter and housing, leverage technology/apps to coordinate mapping and tracking of encampments with the purpose of continuous engagement and service delivery, and use data to analyze inequities and disparitiesamong persons of color and historically disenfranchised backgrounds

**Phase One: Planning and Project Development**

Led by people with lived and living experience and in partnership with the County and the City, the contracted provider(s) will work to develop a Logic Model and Project Work Plan for an encampment response that outlines the project goals and anticipated impact. A logic model provides the overall framework for how the program will work. The Work Plan is a document that outlines exactly what the encampment response project seeks to accomplish and the steps to do so. It takes into consideration the organizational and environmental context in which the project will operate, including key partnerships and collaborations by clearly identifying specific roles for all involved in the project. The Work Plan establishes target performance measures and indicates what evaluation data needs to be collected to demonstrate what work was done for program evaluation.

**Phase Two: Implementation**

The contracted team(s) will be responsible for initial data collection on unsheltered households occupying encampments to establish a baseline for establishing goals and target performance measures. Then working with the City and the County’s Access and Homeless to Housing teams, Healthcare for the Homeless, and other community partners, the contracted team(s) will provide Case Management and Housing Navigation Support for persons occupying encampments to ensure a successful exit from an encampment into a permanent housing solution.

Contracted team(s) will conduct needs assessments for both the encampment itself as well as the occupants within the encampment. Team(s) will refer and coordinate necessary services based on these assessments. Strong collaboration and partnership across the various service sectors will be necessary when assessing the needs of the household to support access to mental and physical health services and services that support people who use substances. Contracted agencies will provide a point of contact within the encampment. That contact will support individuals with system navigation and will broker additional services through referrals to the County’s Homeless to Housing, Hennepin County Healthcare for the Homeless, and other community partner agencies. Additional services will include housing-focused case management, assisting each household to successfully exit homelessness and connect them with mainstream resources needed to ensure they do not return to homelessness.

In addition to coordinating and/or providing the critical housing focused supportive services, contracted team(s) will coordinate with street outreach and other community agencies to ensure that encampment occupants have access to basic needs for survival and may act as the liaison for volunteers, mutual aid efforts, and the broader community for coordination of services and supports within the encampment.

Contracted team(s) will enter initial contacts in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and will use HMIS for ongoing case management documentation. Contracted team(s) will participate in weekly case conferencing sessions to track progress and support ongoing program needs and adjustments.

**Phase Three and Throughout: Evaluation**

Evaluation is a cyclical process of planning, collecting, and analyzing data, and using what is learned to inform future strategies. Evaluation also helps to adjust and make corrections midway through the project when something is not working and be accountable to the community. Finally, evaluation gives programs a better understanding of how to best serve their priority population and evidence to build future projects.

Contracted agencies will work closely with the County on an evaluation plan which will be developed throughout Phase One. An evaluation plan is a written document that describes how the project will be monitored and evaluated. Program performance and successes, as well as the opportunity to adjust the response based on data and analysis, will be tracked monthly to help clarify and streamline the evaluation process. Lessons learned from the evaluation phase will be used to inform process and procedure for how the County responds to the needs of people occupying encampments going forward.

### 4.13 Expected outcomes

### The County’s goal for this funding is a 50% reduction in unsheltered homelessness within the County and a 50% reduction in encampment occupancy across the County.

### 4.14 Vendor qualifications and experience

Engagement and support are anchored in the objective of helping the unsheltered person move from being unhoused to housed. Contracted team(s) must be conversant on options for resolving the housing crisis within and outside of the Coordinated Entry System (CES). This will include problem solving to support self-resolution, diversion, providing access to emergency shelter, as well as exhausting any range of housing options from family reunification, shared housing, independent living, board and lodge, housing supports and Section 8, or institutional settings. If there is a match within CES for supportive housing or a handoff to another organization, the team(s) will make immediate contact with that agency to ensure an action plan and supports are in place to help the individual move into that program until housing is obtained. When an unsheltered person does not desire or is ambivalent about housing, the contracted team(s) will use engagement strategies such as Motivational Interviewing and Assertive Engagement to support and assist the individual in considering housing, shelter, or a safe, appropriate alternative.

Contracted agencies should be able to provide evidence of the use of best practices for working with trauma survivors and people experiencing homelessness with a broad range of co-occurring needs:

*Trauma Informed*

A trauma informed, person-centered approach ensures that consumers are engaged in the process and do not feel like this support is being ‘done to’ them. It also ensures that all services and interventions intentionally resist processes that exacerbate homelessness, abuse, neglect, exploitation, or that may in any way retraumatize them. All processes related to responding to encampments will be viewed through a trauma-informed lens.

*Harm Reducing*

Harm reduction is about identifying strategies that reduce the harmful impacts of an activity or behavior. Commonly attributed to substance use, harm reduction is a strategy can be used to respond to any high risk, threatening, or potentially harmful activity or behavior. Aligned with best practices of social work and human services, the encampment response process will aim to ‘do no harm’ and street outreach and other identified partners will work with occupants to reduce the harmful impacts of any high-risk behavior occurring within the encampment.

*Equity Focused*

Understanding that people of color, especially Black and Indigenous Minnesotans, are overrepresented in the unsheltered population, decision-making processes will be informed by data and perspectives that are specific to those overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness, disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and other historically marginalized communities. These processes will include steps to interpret and synthesize what the data indicates about the impact on people of color and strategies to gather qualitative data to clarify quantitative findings.

*Considerate of Cultural Needs*

If the encampment and/or encampment occupants have a specific cultural component (Indigenous, LGBTQ@+, etc.), the contracted team(s) will ensure through the coordination process that throughout any encampment resolution process, consumers have access to culturally competent and appropriate services and service providers. This process is, and will continue to be, informed by voices of people with lived experience. The Encampment Response Team will look to leadership and guidance from within those communities to inform on cultural considerations to the process.

### 4.15 Contracts

Contracts will be awarded to successful proposer(s) for a term anticipated to commence around March 1, 2022. Length of contract terms may vary at the discretion of the County, but it is anticipated that the one-time contract would be for two years.

Successful applicants will work with the County’s Health and Human Service Department’s contract management services in the development of a contract. Applicants must be willing to meet all standard contract requirements, including insurance requirements.

A portion of the funding for this project will be through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 funds; therefore, the awardee will be considered a subrecipient for federal reporting purposes.

Please refer to Attachment 3 for insurance and other standard contract requirements.

### 4.16 Reimbursement

Reimbursements are based on actual expenses incurred each month (cost reimbursement). Successful proposers must submit an itemized invoice to the County specifying the costs incurred within 30 days following the last day of each calendar month.

## Attachment 2 – Proposal format and content

### 4.21 Proposal format

Proposer should use the following format in preparing all proposals. Failure to do so may result in a reduced rating by the evaluation panel. In order to be evaluated, proposals must follow the format and instructions indicated above.

* Use the application in Attachment 4.
	+ Limit application response to **5 pages total** in length.
* Use a standard, 11-point font with one-inch margins on 8½ X 11-inch paper.
* Include all additional documentation as listed below.

### 4.22 Proposal content

Your responses in the application (exceptions to the County’s contractual terms) will make up the proposal narrative. The language that you draft to address sections count against the 5-page limit mentioned above. The documents requested in section 4.24 (additional documentation are required but do not count against the 5-page limit. Please use the section headings listed below to add structure to your proposal narrative.

### 4.23 Exceptions to the county’s contractual terms

Exceptions to any requirements of County’s terms and conditions (Attachment 3) must be clearly identified. The stated exceptions and any alternatives offered must be included in the proposer’s response. **If no exceptions are documented in the proposal, it shall be deemed by the county that the proposer has accepted all of the provisions of the contract, and that the proposer has waived the right and intent to take exceptions as of the proposal submission.** The county may decide to accept or reject any of the exceptions and/or alternatives, or the listed alternatives may be the subject of negotiations prior to drafting the final wording of the contract.

###  Additional documentation

The following documents have been requested to further illustrate the services being proposed. Please include these documents with each copy of your submission.

* [Staffing Pattern](https://hennepin-my.sharepoint.com/personal/jacqueline_gould_hennepin_us/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?guestaccesstoken=JImBLrY%2BNPHBEqLSPZ4qQS3zpbAOGufdm7xa7BauhyE%3D&docid=2_0be2514f0eea049bd9035167f56e718ff&rev=1&e=GGmNcZ)
* [Budget Template](https://hennepin-my.sharepoint.com/personal/jacqueline_gould_hennepin_us/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?guestaccesstoken=%2BTQr2p%2FukPObKSOrQpV4YdAmOa%2FcJuudZWcMceUvJqM%3D&docid=2_00053d295b79b4769b73f4fab4625fb25&rev=1&e=DN229N)

[Provider Fact Sheet](https://hennepin-my.sharepoint.com/personal/jacqueline_gould_hennepin_us/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?guestaccesstoken=1TBc6yDHB7BOJn9tWOTMZzfrCbW%2B4yM7xNl1c3bw930%3D&docid=2_05bfabcbab45c4e8087a2281f1179f883&rev=1&e=W7ifw2)