

Responses to questions in reference to the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery Disaster Recovery Housing Buyouts Program Management and Related Services Request for Proposal dated April 4, 2014

1. Q. Have all applications been received? Are you still taking applications?
  - A. The program is still accepting applications. The program has received approximately 1,000 applications and expects to receive 1,000 additional applications.
2. If there is duplicative information requested in multiple sections would you like for us to submit the information in duplication or can other sections of the proposal be referenced?
  - A. Please provide complete answers to each section. It is not necessary to repeat information, but all items must be addressed in each section.
3. Can current contractor in place that will be replaced on program bid on the work for this RFP?
  - A. Yes.
4. Can HTFC equipment be used for project? References pg 17 and page 13 that are conflicting. Need clarification on resources.
  - A. Yes. HTFC equipment will be used for the project. HTFC will provide facilities and equipment.
5. Provide clarification on section F on page 10
  - A. Contractor will assign inspections of properties to Property Maintenance Management Company as needed to maintain site security and maintenance. The contractor may need to inspect the property prior to purchase to ascertain condition of property, obtain executed documentation from owner, and obtain owners signatures.
6. In regards to Intelligrants, are you looking for developers or analysts? Clarification on Intelligrants expectations.
  - A. Intelligrants is the system of record for HTFC. The current vendor is currently utilizing a third party application to manage data for the Buyout Program. HTFC, under a separate contract is in the process of migrating Buyout data from the third party application into Intelligrants.  
  
The Contractor (responding to this RFP) is not required to have Intelligrants developers or programmers. However the Contractor is required to have necessary expertise within its staff to work in Intelligrants, to maintain and operate Intelligrants data and to support HTFC efforts to continually enhance the software so that it meets program requirements.
7. Is the procedure manual available? Page 4 references the procedure manual being available.
  - A. No, only the policy manual is available on the website.  
<http://www.stormrecovery.ny.gov/policy-manuals>

8. I can't find the attachment referenced in section 5.3.3 for job descriptions/roles. Where is this located?
  - A. This item is deleted. The program would like the successful bidder to suggest needed descriptions/roles.
  
9. Will the construction manager and construction supervisor be the same entity for environmental reviews and is that outside of the scope of this contract?
  - A. Yes, all of these items are outside the scope of this contract.
  
10. Would the vendors providing services under the environmental contract for DASNY or the property management demolition group would they be conflicted from pursuing a prime or sub role on this?
  - A. No.
  
11. Will the awardee be utilizing current intake centers or expanding and opening new intake centers?
  - A. Yes, we will be using current centers and may open 1 or 2 additional centers.
  
12. What has been the distribution at the current intake centers? Is it balanced or higher in certain areas and if so what areas?
  - A. There are currently 2 centers in Long Island which represent 50% of the applications to date and 1 center in Staten Island which represents the balance of applications to date.
  
13. Provide clarification on bonding requirements in paragraph 29 Appendix I
  - A. This is a professional services contract and does not require bonding. However if there is a construction component added to any contract bonding would be required as indicated in paragraph 29 of Appendix I.
  
14. Provide clarification on page limits of proposals submitted.
  - A. Page limit applies to the technical proposal only. Appendices including resumes are not included in the page count.
  
15. Provide clarification of language on Page 17 section 5.1
  - A. All successful bidders will be registered to do business in the State of New York as of the date of the submission of response to RFP. The proposal should include a certificate of good standing from the New York Secretary of State to evidence their good standing.
  
16. What is the anticipated timeline of performance?
  - A. The anticipated timeline of performance is estimated to be two years.

17. Do condos and co-ops qualify for the program?  
A. No.
18. What date do bid prices expire?  
A. The correct date is June 1, 2014.
19. What amount of the homeowners that have applied for the buyout program has been through eligibility determinations?  
A. Almost all of the initial 1,000 current applications have had the initial vetting for eligibility.
20. At what point in eligibility is LMI or Urgent need determined?  
A. Prior to closing.
21. Relocation service URA for URA compliance part of anticipated scope? Provided by the contractor?  
A. Yes. Respondents should contemplate URA and URA compliance as a part of the anticipated scope of work.
22. Legal and title included in other scopes, clearing title and coordinating and facilitating funds to be available at closing. What steps this vendor will be involved in with case managers?  
A. Customer representatives will notify legal when a file is ready for offer, the legal will coordinate the request of title and any title defect clearance. The contractor will prepare a draw request for funds from HUD to the state. This is not a Customer Representative but a finance person within the contractor's staff. Customer Representatives will notify the homeowner when the State has received funds from HUD and can schedule the closing.
23. Does only the Prime contractor have to complete all attachments and appendices or must subcontractors as well?  
A. Yes. The prime must complete all attachments for specific members identified as part of the team in the proposal response.
24. How will GOSR include and address applications that do not result in buyouts? Does that count to the expected 2,000 applications?  
A. The contractor will be paid for all case management work, inclusive of those homeowners who ultimately decline to sell to the state. The contractor should include pricing structure for applications that do not result in buyouts.
25. Are acquisitions included or only buyouts?  
A. The program includes both buyouts and acquisitions.

26. What types of records are you requesting for financial records for the last 2 years? Do you want to see financials for subcontractors as well?
- A. Audited financial statements should be submitted if they exist. If audited financial statements do not exist unaudited financial statements should be submitted along with certification attesting to their accuracy.
27. Is there another way to submit financials other than electronic?
- A. Financial statements should be submitted electronically with proposal as outlined in the RFP.
28. Is there a size limit to the emails that can be received in the GOSR Procurement mailbox? (There is a limit we need to find out what it is. They are allowed to submit multiple emails if needed but should label properly. Ex. Part 1 of 3 etc.)
- A. The size limit of each email is 10MB. Zip files are not recognized by HTFC email system. DO NOT use Zip or other compression software. Unusually large graphic files are often removed or quarantined by HTFC email system. Respondents can send in multiple parts. The subject line must indicate multiple parts (e.g. Part 1 of 2, Part 2 of 2, etc.)
29. Upon the awarding of this proposal would the respondent have the option of keeping current case management personnel? Would the costs be available?
- A. The successful respondent must propose staff required to execute the program. The successful respondent has the option of recruiting current case management personnel however HTFC cannot guarantee which if any staff will elect to stay on the program.
30. Does GOSR anticipate any additional Enhanced Buyout Areas in addition to the current four located in:
- Ocean Breeze, Staten Island
  - Oakwood Beach, Staten Island
  - Graham Beach, Staten Island
  - Suffolk County, Long Island
- A. No. GOSR does not anticipate any additional enhanced buyout areas at this time.
31. Does the Suffolk County target area have more specific neighborhood geographic boundaries as they are defined in Staten Island? Are there more specific criteria to identify and obtain applications for this enhanced buyout target area beyond basic applicant eligibility and V-zone floodplain designation?
- A. The respondent is directed to maps located at:  
<http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG-DR/SuffolkCounty-BuyoutAreas.pdf>

32. Have direct letters of interest been sent to potentially eligible residential properties in the above target areas? What program design drives application outreach and processing? Are any targeted outreach services to enhanced buyout areas anticipated or needed as part of the scope for this RFP?
- A. Yes, letters of invitation to participate in the program have been sent to potentially eligible residential property owners in the target areas. The program design that drives application outreach and processing is the creation of the enhanced buyout area's and having that list of properties from that area. No targeted outreach services to enhanced buyout areas are anticipated or needed as part of the scope for this RFP
33. Based on the current applications and purchases processed for buyout, what areas of the program design need further development, clarification or enhancement?
- A. No areas of the program design need further development, clarification or enhancement.
34. After threshold income and ownership eligibility determination, are environmental reviews and verification of benefits occurring concurrently or in sequential phases as indicated in the Policy Manual and Exhibit 1 flow charts of this RFP?
- A. They occur concurrently.
35. Is there a more specific approved relocation policy and procedure with notification forms in place for 2-unit applications that may have had tenants prior to the storm or have tenants eligible for relocation benefits?
- A. Yes, the URA plan and process is in place with a separate contractor.
36. How are the purchase offers and sale agreements structured and sequenced to demonstrate purchase of an inspected and approved resettlement site concurrent with closing? The Buyout Program Policy manual mentions a Contract of Sale and Rider. What is to be included in the Rider? Is there a sample or draft document available for review in advance of this proposal?
- A. They are structured the same as regular NYS real estate transactions- can we give a sample?
37. Will a property walk-through be required day of settlement to collect utility meter readings (if necessary), coordinate securing the site and ensure no occupancy or moving is necessary at time of closing? Is this service anticipated as part of the RFP scope or does this scope only include coordination of scheduling and clearance by another contractor with the State?
- A. This is required the day of closing and is anticipated as part of the RFP scope.
38. How will GSOR facilitate having funds at closing so that taxes, liens, pro-ration and fully executed agreements can occur? What agency and with what system will funds be placed in escrow for the day of closing?
- A. The firm conducting the closing will order the funds from GOSR who will request the funding from HTFC. The process is in operation.

39. Are there more detailed procedures for recapture of funds in the event of default? In the event a program violation is identified how long after the settlement does GOSR require the respondent to be available to assist with recapture procedures?

A. It is not known at this time if the respondent will be involved in the recapture process.

40. Is there an anticipated or estimated timeline from application intake to settlement?

A. Currently the process takes between 4 and 6 months from application to settlement.

41. What is the policy and procedure for unresponsive applications that are incomplete?

A. The policy is to follow up with the applicant by phone, email and US mail.

42. Is there a sample buyout package and procedure available for review prior to the RFP deadline based on the Oakwood Beach acquisitions?

A. For the purpose of this RFP, the program is not providing these documents.

43. How many buyout program applications are received and being processed to date?

A. 1,000 applications have been received and 700 have been processed to date.

44. Is current case management of applications being done manually with hard copy files, in the IntelliGrants system or another software system?

A. The current case management of applications are being done both manually and with a third party software system. Please see question #6.

45. Is there a subtotal of where each buyout application is at in the process as it relates to:

• Application submitted	1297
• Incomplete application	9
• Application complete, program eligibility in review (VOB pending)	54
• Environmental review ordered and completed	884
• Eligibility determined (Sent for Verification)	755
• Eligibility and DOB verified (VOB complete)	701
• Appraisal ordered	1297
• Offer made (offer sent)	556
• Offer accepted (Purchase Agreement Signed)	409
• Relocation assistance processed (as required)	
• Title ordered (Title Commitment Received)	796
• Title reviewed	
• DSS inspection of Replacement Dwelling (as required) (Number of Parcels with 5% Incentive Draws Submitted)	44
• Settlement scheduled (Closing Scheduled)	16

46. What functions does Intelligrants currently provide for the Buyout Program and the above steps mentioned?
- A. Intelligrants currently does not provide and functions for the Buyout Program. Intelligrants will be modified to support the buyout program. Please see question #6.
47. What data and information management functions need to be developed with the selected respondent(s)?
- A. All data and information management functions need to be developed. Please see question #6.
48. What are the existing call center and scheduling systems in place for homeowner applicants?
- A. Customer Representatives schedule meetings directly- we do not operate the call center.
49. Does GOSR envision the Buyout Manager to work with the existing call center vendor to schedule, reschedule and track meetings with applicants or does this RFP assume running a separate call center system? If so, will it have to report into the current call center system(s) or IntelliGrants?
- A. The program does not have a call center vendor. Scheduling is coordinated between the agency doing the closing and the Customer Representative.
50. What specific software and equipment (such as scanners and copiers) is to be provided, and/or supplied by GOSR at the Recovery Offices?
- A. HTFC will provide facilities and equipment. Detailed specifications will be provided during the selection of a vendor.
51. What is the type and capacity of phone and internet services provided at the Recovery Offices?
- B. GOSR will provide phone and internet services. Detailed specifications will be provided during the selection of a vendor.
52. Are there more specific procedures in place for receipt verification noted in the Duplication of Benefits analysis? If so, is a copy available prior to the RFP deadline?
- A. There are specific procedures in place for receipt verification noted in the Duplication of Benefits analysis. A copy will not be provided at this time.
53. The RFP notes that New York State (NYS) has already begun processing applicants through the initial stages of case management. What entity is providing the case manager role to process applications to date? Will this Respondent replace any of this work underway?
- A. The respondent will not replace any of the work currently underway by the existing contractor.
54. Going forward, is this scope to be shared or assumed under this RFP? If it is to be shared, based on applications and offers to date, how will the work be divided?
- A. The scope will not be shared. The successful bidder will take over program management and processing.

55. Is there an organizational chart or list of the vendor roles and relationships GOSR has engaged to participate as part of the Buyout Program. Specifically who are the vendors that respondent(s) may need to interact with to complete tasks and deliverables:
- Conduct Tier I & II environmental reviews and related environmental reports,- DASNY/LIRO/AKRF
  - Conduct appraisals,- NYS DOT/ SVS
  - Provide construction management services including post acquisition demolition,- Frew Development, LVI, Moss Cape
  - Provide property management services for:
  - Resettlement site inspections- Customer Representatives/OR Colan
  - Day of settlement property stabilization- Frew Development
  - Other New York State Agencies and Vendors engaged to make the Buyout Program successful.- Golenbock, Eiseman, Assor, Bell & Peskoe LLP
56. Please confirm if any of the roles listed above must be included in the RFP response.
- A. None of the roles listed above must be included in the RFP response.
57. Section 1.3 :Description of Programs; Pg. 5: NY Rising Home Buyout; Program: bullet 4 is coordinating redevelopment part of this scope of work? If so, please explain in greater detail the respondent(s) role.
- A. Coordinating redevelopment is not a part of this scope of work.
58. Section 1.4: Scope of Services and Key Deliverables; GOSR RFP for CDBG-DR Buyout Program Management Page 4; Pg. 7: Project Phases: A. Start-up Operations Are there remote services or recovery offices needed to serve broader state counties impacted by storms and not as accessible at the current offices?
- A. There is potentially a limited universe to be determined. We will leverage other state recovery offices to address other geographies as needed, including upstate locations.
59. What are the specific categories to pay for ongoing maintenance of office equipment and systems (phone bills, internet, security, filing, storage, etc.)?
- A. HTFC is providing all of the above referenced items.
60. What software and specific equipment is to be provided/ supplied by the existing recovery offices? (scanner, copier, printer/fax, data file sharing software, internet browser and operating systems)
- A. GOSR will supply office space, supplies and equipment. Detailed specifications will be provided following the selection of a vendor.

61. Does “assume control and responsibility of current programming and procedures” mean all files processed to date for buyout are to be assumed at different stages in the eligibility, verification and offer or closing process?
- A. Yes, all files processed to date for buyout are to be assumed at different stages in the eligibility, verification and offer or closing process.
62. Please provide clarification on Pg. 8: Tasks Required: bullet 4 What existing methodologies and procedures for scheduling currently exist? What is the current means to service applicants off site with home visitation requirements?
- A. The contractor will service applicants off site who have home visitation requirements.
63. Who are the related parties currently coordinating the effort of scheduling, in-take appointments, assigning case workers to property owners and establishing waiting lists? Will selected respondents work with existing parties or take on the existing process?
- A. The selected respondents will take on existing processes.
64. Please provide clarification on Pg. 8: Tasks Required: bullet 6 What is the current type and volume of the existing paper file documentation that needs to be imported into Intelligrants?
- A. It is estimated that there are 400,000 pages of documents to be imported into the system.
65. Please provide clarification on Pg. 8: Tasks Required: bullet 5 Will financial transactions be tracked in the Intelligrants system or will financial transactions be reported through separate financial software?
- A. It will be tracked in the Intelligrants system.
66. What is the current status and capability of the Intelligrants system as far as:
- Application review and tracking
  - File completion status
  - Eligibility or DOB analysis and verification
  - Appraisal data with DOB deduction to generate offer letter
  - Financial tracking and escrow coordination for settlements
  - Reporting on above
- A. All functions are under development.
67. Can we view the current functionality of Intelligrants prior to the bid?
- A. All functions are under development
68. Please provide clarification on Pg. 8: Deliverables: bullet 1 Please define what you mean by fully staffed. How many case managers are anticipated to process current applications? What days and hours of operation are required or preferred?
- A. Offices should be open from 9 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday and occasional weekends as required. GOSR reserves the right to work with the selected vendor to make adjustments to the office hours.

69. Please provide clarification on Pg. 8: Deliverables: bullet 7 How does GOSR intend to review and approve standard operating procedures as part of the operations plan due May 16 and become operational by June 1?
- A. GOSR will have documented the process as we see and can measure the respondent's proposal against those expectations for performance.
70. What standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to the buyout program tasks are in place and are they available for review prior to this proposal?
- A. The successful bidder will develop SOPs based on existing processes. It is hoped that the successful bidder can provide efficiencies to existing processes.
71. Please provide clarification on Pg. 8: Deliverables: bullet 12 Regarding the signed checklist confirming key topics discussed at initial applicant meeting- are certain key topics already identified? If so, what are they?
- A. Existing processes will be provided to the successful bidder.
72. Please provide clarification on Tasks Required: bullet 16 On the top of page 9 it mentions, "...providing rehabilitation or reconstruction and notice to proceed." Who is the vendor facilitating and what is the program design to cover properties for construction?
- A. This item is hereby deleted.
73. Who will be the entity that acquires these properties?
- A. The title to these properties will be in the name of Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC).
74. Please provide clarification on Tasks Required: bullet 17 Is there a list of the requirements for settlement and delivery of the property that needs to be communicated to the homeowner? If so, please provide a copy prior to RFP deadline.
- A. All items should be collected prior to closing except final executed closing documents and keys to the property.
75. Please provide clarification on Pg. 9: Tasks: C. Benefit review and award finalization: bullet 4 Does the budget item C indicate a review of Tier II environmental and SHPO is necessary or that it is already complete and materials are to be forwarded?
- A. It is already complete and materials are to be forwarded.
76. Please provide clarification on Pg. 10: D. Payment Processing, closing and file closeout: bullet 2 Relocation of applicants where required. Please provide more detail of this perceived need. Is this referring to tenants or assisting primary homeowner residents with coordinating move out prior to settlement?-
- A. GOSR has URA obligations to rental tenants only. We have a URA contractor performing this work.

77. What are the anticipated triggers besides fraudulent application information for a default prior to buyout?

A. Aside from fraud, an example could be an issue with homeowner readiness, and/or mortgage issues preventing the sale. This is only an example and should be construed to encompass all potential triggers for a default prior to buyout.

78. Please provide clarification on Pg. 10: D. Payment Processing, closing and file closeout What is the intended distinction between payment processing, closing and file closeouts in part D and part E on Page 10?

A. The heading should have been split- D should be payment processing- and E closing and file close out.

79. Please provide clarification on Section 3.1: Proposal Instructions Pg. 13 Is there a PDF file size limit that GOSR can receive through email?

A. The size limit of each email is 10MB. Zip files are not recognized by HTFC email system. DO NOT use Zip or other compression software. Unusually large graphic files are often removed or quarantined by HTFC email system. Respondents can send in multiple parts. The subject line must indicate multiple parts (e.g. Part 1 of 2, Part 2 of 2, etc.)

80. What is the process for getting subcontractors approved? Is the RFP review and approval sufficient?

A. Yes

81. What are the insurance and professional liability requirements for the selected firm(s)?

- Commercial General Liability Insurance – Providing both bodily injury (including death) and property damage insurance in a limit not than Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) aggregate and One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence. Such insurance is to be written on an occurrence basis. The Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) shall be need as an additional insured.
- Automobile Liability and Property Damage Insurance – In an amount not less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) combined single limit for both Bodily Injury and Property Damage.
- Worker’s Compensation – Covering employers’ liability and disability benefits as required by the State of New York.
- Excess Liability Insurance – Not less than Eight Million Dollars (\$8,000,000)
- Certificates of Insurance shall be provided to HTFC prior to the commencement of work.

82. Do you require certificate of good standing from the subcontractors working with the RFP respondent(s)?

A. Not at this time, however, they cannot be suspended or debarred by the federal government

