

CITY OF HOMER

PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS



REQUEST FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO PERFORM AN OPERATIONAL AUDIT OF THE HOMER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PREPARED BY:

CITY OF HOMER – CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

491 E PIONEER AVENUE

HOMER ALASKA, 99603

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
By the City of Homer, Alaska
Professional Services to Perform
An Operational Audit of the Homer Volunteer Fire Department

The City of Homer, Alaska is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to conduct an independent, comprehensive operational audit of the Homer Volunteer Fire Department which consists of both volunteer and paid personnel. The goal of this evaluation is to assess current operations, identify areas for improvement, and provide actionable recommendations to ensure continued excellence in emergency services delivery.

It is the intent of this Request for Proposals (RFP) to have the successful consultant enter into a Professional Services Contract with the City of Homer to provide the services outlined herein.

The following subjects are discussed in this RFP to assist in preparing a proposal.

- I. Introduction
- II. Project Overview
- III. Scope of Work
- IV. RFP General Requirements & Submittal Instructions
- V. Proposal Format & Content Requirements
- VI. Evaluation Criteria & Selection Process
- VII. Schedule

I. INTRODUCTION

The Homer Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) has a history spanning over 60 years starting with the formation of a fire company in 1952. The department officially incorporated as Homer Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. in 1954 and the HVFD Auxiliary was founded in 1960 to support the department through various fundraising activities. The current fire hall was built through a city sales tax and constructed at its current location in 1980s. In the 1980s the first paid staff were hired and in 1990, the HVFD entered into an agreement to transfer operations to the City.

The City of Homer recognizes the critical role the HVFD plays in ensuring the safety and well-being of our community. As a blended department comprised of both volunteer and paid staff, the organization has long benefited from the dedication and service of its members. However, like many fire and EMS service agencies across the nation, the department is facing evolving challenges—most notably, changes in leadership, an increase in the number of paid staff, a steady decline in volunteerism, increasing service demands, and the growing complexity of emergency response.

In light of these challenges, the City is seeking an independent, comprehensive operational audit of the fire department to assess department culture, current operations, internal policies and procedures, and overall service delivery. The intent is to ensure that the department is well-positioned to meet both present and future demands with a clear, sustainable model that reflects best practices in volunteer and staff hiring and retention, improved volunteer engagement, and emergency services management.

This operational audit will also seek to align departmental capabilities with the actual needs of the community, identify opportunities for improvement, and support the development of clear, modernized internal policies and procedures that strengthen organizational consistency, accountability, volunteer engagement and performance.

The HVFD scope of services include:

- Fire Services -Structural Fire Suppression, Motor Vehicle Firefighting, Wildland Firefighting, Marine Firefighting, Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) –Basic, Advanced Life Support, and Advanced Cardiac Life Support Ambulance Services
- Rescue Services -Vehicle Extrication, Rope Rescue, Water Rescue, Confined Space Rescue
- Hazardous Materials Operations
- Disaster Response and Management
- Public Education, Prevention and Preparedness
- Plan Reviews and Code Consultations
- Participation with Kachemak Emergency Services and Western Emergency Services through Automatic Aid Agreements.

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The expectation of this operational audit is to give city leaders a clear, data-driven picture of how effectively the fire department serves the community and where it can improve. The review will analyze response trends, Fire and EMS deployment, and training outcomes. It will also benchmark policies, procedures, and practices against industry standards, and scrutinize volunteer and career staffing models to propose an implementation roadmap if changes are warranted. It will also evaluate culture, recruitment, retention, promotions, discipline, and regulatory compliance; examine budgets, revenue streams, reserves, and equipment apparatus and facility needs; and conclude with a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that distills strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the department. The audit will pinpoint operational gaps, cultural needs, fiscal challenges, and strategic opportunities, providing actionable recommendations to enhance service delivery, volunteer and staff retention, and long-term sustainability.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant will be expected to provide the following deliverables as part of the project:

1. Project Kickoff Meeting

An initial meeting with the City Manager and fire department representatives to confirm project scope, timeline, key contacts, and expectations.

2. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

A plan outlining how the consultant will gather input from key stakeholders, including fire department personnel (volunteer and career), City Council, City Manager, and community members.

3. Departmental Operational Audit

The operational audit will include:

- A review of current operations by conducting a data analysis of the past five years to identify trends, review the current deployment strategy for emergency calls, evaluate emergency medical service delivery and make recommendations on the level of Fire and EMS response appropriate for the community.

- A review of existing policies and procedures and evaluate them against industry best practices.
 - A volunteer and staffing analysis by evaluating the coverage program and its effectiveness in meeting the demands of the department and the City from 2010 to present. If changes are identified in the current volunteer and staffing model, a recommended roadmap for modifications and implementation plan will be provided.
 - A cultural assessment through an evaluation of the policies and practices applicable to the HVFD volunteers, staff, and leadership from 2010 to present will be included, along with an assessment of the volunteer and employees' record management system, recruiting and hiring practices, volunteer and employee retention programs, volunteer integration and support, the promotional process, the disciplinary process, and compliance with federal and state regulations.
 - An evaluation of the operational and capital budgets, and assessment of equipment, apparatus, and facility conditions and needs.
 - An evaluation of training over the past five years, training programs/curriculums, volunteer and staff certifications and professional development, and the training program, all while keeping in mind the size of the community and the department.
 - An evaluation of emergency services delivery structures and alternatives related to Automatic Aid Agreements and Operational Plans between the City and Kachemak Emergency Service Area (KESA) and the City and Western Emergency Service Area (WESA).
 - An evaluation of the Service Agreement with the City of Kachemak regarding equitability and/or shortfalls of service provided.
 - A SWOT Analysis, that documents an analysis of the department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
4. **Recommendations Report**
- The operational audit report should include clear, actionable recommendations prioritized by impact and feasibility from findings on:
- Operational improvements
 - Policy and procedural updates
 - Staffing models and recruitment strategies, both volunteer and paid
 - Culture of the department related to leadership, volunteers, and paid staff
 - Financial and budgetary practices, and equipment, apparatus and facility needs
 - Training programs
 - Long-term strategic planning and implementation
5. **Executive Summary**
- A concise, non-technical summary suitable for presentation to elected officials, stakeholders, and the general public.
6. **Presentation of Findings**
- At least one in-person or virtual presentation of key findings and recommendations to the City of Homer at a City Council work session public meeting.
7. **Final Report Submission**
- A complete final report, including appendices and supporting documentation, in both editable (e.g., Word) and print-ready (PDF) formats.

135 **IV. RFP GENERAL REQUIREMENTS & SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

136 To achieve a uniform review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparability, it is required
137 that the proposals be organized in the manner specified below. Proposals that do not address the items
138 listed in this request may be considered incomplete and may be deemed non-responsive by the City.

139 A. **There will be an optional Pre-Proposal meeting/teleconference held via Zoom Friday, July 25,**
140 **2025 at 11:00 a.m.** This will give all proposers involved the opportunity for questions/ answers with
141 City Staff to ensure all information is open and concise. Zoom meeting invitations will be sent to
142 all qualified entities listed on the Plan Holder's List.

143 B. **All proposers must submit a City of Homer Plan Holders Registration form to be on the Plan**
144 **Holders List and to be considered responsive.**

145 C. **Sealed proposals must be received by the City Clerk's Office at the address referenced below**
146 **no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 8, 2025.** The time of receipt will be determined by the City
147 Clerk's time stamp. Proposals received after that time shall not be considered.

148 D. Proposers must submit one original and five (5) copies of the completed proposal in an opaque
149 envelope marked as follows:

150 City of Homer 2025 RFP
151 Operational Audit of the Homer Volunteer Fire Department
152 **August 8, 2025**
153 Bidders Name and Address

154 E. Proposal submittals shall be delivered in person or mailed to:
155 City of Homer City Clerk's Office
156 491 E. Pioneer Avenue
157 Homer, Alaska 99603

158 F. Proposals may be withdrawn by written, email, or facsimile notice received prior to the deadline
159 for proposal submittal.

160 G. Inquiries must be received at least 10 days prior to the RFP submittal deadline. Copies of all written
161 requests and replies will be forwarded to each Proposer on the Official Plan Holders List. Only
162 formal, written responses to properly submitted questions will be binding.

163 H. Inquiries regarding the Scope of Work or clarification of the RFP must be directed in writing to:

164 Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager
165 491 E. Pioneer Avenue
166 Homer, Alaska 99603
167 Phone: (907) 299-9354
168 Email: citymanager@ci.homer.ak.us

169 I. General RFP and proposal submission inquiries must be directed in writing to:

170 City Clerk's Office
171 491 E. Pioneer Avenue
172 Homer, AK 99603
173 Phone: (907) 235-3130
174 Email: clerk@ci.homer.ak.us

V. PROPOSAL FORMAT & CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

For ease of evaluation, the proposal should be presented in a format that corresponds to and references/labels the sections outlined in this RFP. Proposals should be prepared in such a way as to provide a straightforward, concise delineation of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP.

To be considered responsive, each proposal must include (at a minimum) the following:

A. Letter of Transmittal (one-page maximum): The transmittal letter shall briefly state the consultant's understanding of the City's request, make a positive commitment to provide the professional services specified, and give the name, title, address, and phone number of the person(s) authorized to make representations for the consultant. The letter shall be signed by a corporate officer or other individual who has the authority to bind the consultant.

B. Proposal Narrative: The proposal narrative must provide the following information:

1. Specify in detail the consultant's ability to fulfill the Scope of Work that has been outlined in this RFP, including any additional contractual requirements the consultant chooses to propose. Other items that must be included in the proposal:
 - Standard, all-inclusive cost schedule that is to be used in this contract, including staff time per task, travel expenses, and incidentals. *Please include cost schedules with and without the optional site visit described in item 4 of the project scope.*
 - Schedule – An outline of the anticipated schedule for completing the Scope of Work beginning with issuance of a notice to proceed to submitting the final work product.
 - Insurance – Prior to commencement of work, the Consultant shall be required to provide proof of insurance and to keep it in full force and effect, with the City of Homer named as additional insured during the project's duration at the Consultant's own expense.
2. Proposed Project Manager and Team Members and Statement of Qualifications and Experience: This section shall introduce the project manager (Single Point of Contact) and members of the consultant that will be performing the work for this project. This section will cover the project team/consultant's qualifications for the proposed work and experience with similar projects. Full resumes are not required but can be included; 1-2 paragraphs on each member of the team will be sufficient.
3. Methods and Work Plan: Proposer will outline a work plan detailing the consultant's step-by-step procedures for accomplishing the Scope of Work and the City's objectives for this project.
4. References: List the names, titles, and phone numbers of at least three clients who obtained similar services from your consultant. Ideally, projects/contracts managed by the proposed project manager and completed by the proposed project team should be referenced.

VI. EVALUATION CRITERIA & SELECTION PROCESS

A. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals must meet the following minimum requirements.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria and scored according to the point scale:

Proposed Contract, Work Plan, and Cost	
• Consultant Overview and Qualifications	15 points
• Project Understanding and approach	20 points
• Work plan and timeline	10 points
• EITHER prior work of this nature OR first-hand familiarity with local dynamics	25 points
• Quality of 3 references.	10 points
• Conformance with RFP requirements, including compliance and timely submission of all documents requested.	5 points
• Cost	5 points
Total Possible Points 90	

B. Selection Process

A selection committee comprised of two City Councilmembers, one Homer Volunteer Fire Department Captain, one active Homer Volunteer Fire Department Volunteer, and one member of the public who will be confirmed by the Mayor to evaluate the proposals and make a recommendation to the City Manager and Homer City Council. If the Council approves, the City will offer the highest ranking Proposer an opportunity to negotiate a Contract.

Other Proposal selection terms, conditions, and exceptions:

1. Evaluators may discuss factual knowledge of, and may investigate proposer's prior work experience and performance. This includes projects referenced in the proposal, available written evaluations, and contacted references that were listed or other persons knowledgeable of a proposer's past performance. Factors such as overall experience relative to the proposed contract, quality of work, cost control, and the ability to meet schedules may be addressed during the evaluation.
2. This request for proposals is designed to be qualifications based, with cost playing a secondary role in the selection process. The City of Homer reserves the right to award a contract to the highest ranked consultant based solely on the written proposal or request oral interviews. The highest ranked proposer will be invited to enter into negotiations with the City of Homer for the purposes of contract award. If an agreement with any proposer cannot be reached, the next highest ranked proposer may be contacted for negotiations. The City of Homer reserves the right to terminate contract negotiations with any proposer should it be in the City of Homer's best interest.
3. The City reserves the right to alter, amend, or modify any provisions of this RFP, or to withdraw this RFP, at any time prior to the award of a contract pursuant hereto, if it is in the best interest of the City to do so.

- 240 4. The City reserves the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received.
241 Alterations, modifications or variations to a proposal may not be considered unless authorized
242 by the RFP or by addendum or amendment.
- 243 5. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted and shall not be liable for
244 any costs incurred by any proposer in response to this solicitation or for any work done prior to
245 the issuance of a notice to proceed or signed contract.
- 246 6. Proposals will be kept confidential until contract is awarded, subject to law.

247 **VII. RFP TIMELINE & AWARD SCHEDULE**

248 These dates represent a tentative schedule of events. The City reserves the right to modify these dates
249 at any time, with appropriate notice to applicable proposers on the Plan Holders List.

ACTIVITY	DATE/TIME
RFP Publish Dates	City of Homer Website Homer News July 3 and 10, 2025
Optional Pre-Proposal Meeting	Friday, July 25, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.
Submittal Deadline for Proposals	Friday, August 8, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
Evaluation Period and Proposal Selection	August 11-15, 2025
Authority to Proceed by Homer City Council	August 25, 2025
Contract Signing/Notice to Proceed	August 26-29, 2025
Project Kickoff Meeting	TBD – Tentatively planned for September 2-5, 2025