



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** GOVERNING BOARD

**File #:** 19-973

Board Meeting Date: 10/8/2019

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors (Acting as the Governing Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo)

**From:** Ken Cole, Executive Director

**Subject:** Agreement with Exygy, Inc. for professional services

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Acting as the Governing Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo, adopt a resolution waiving the Request for Proposals process and authorizing the Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo or the Executive Director's Designee to execute an agreement with Exygy, Inc. for professional services in support of the affordable housing web portal pilot for San Mateo County, for a term of October 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020 in a total amount not to exceed \$375,000.

**BACKGROUND:**

Currently, there is no web portal that consolidates all affordable housing listings available in San Mateo County. Instead, affordable housing applicants must visit one housing development at a time, often in-person, and complete numerous unique housing applications that each require separate backup documentation. Applicants must then keep track of the status of each application by calling leasing agents and/or city staff multiple times per year.

The City and County of San Francisco ("San Francisco") experienced the same problem described above. In an effort to resolve the problem, San Francisco implemented an affordable housing web portal system called DAHLIA in 2017. San Francisco partnered with Exygy, Inc. ("Exygy") to design an intuitive, transparent online experience to find and apply for affordable housing. This web portal was the first of its kind and resulted in a reduced application time from several days to minutes, and an increase in the digital adoption rate for San Francisco.

On November 13, 2018, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Information Services Department ("ISD") to execute an agreement with Exygy in order to pilot a web portal similar to the one used in San Francisco, but tailored to the needs of San Mateo County (Resolution 076277).

The Department of Housing ("DOH") has worked closely with the ISD to project-manage the pilot. DOH has the housing expertise and knowledge of affordable housing listings required to successfully

partner with Exygy for the pilot.

On August 19, 2019, the web portal, called SMC DAHLIA, was successfully launched with two available affordable housing listings. In addition to the successful launch of the web portal, Exygy facilitated multiple convenings to engage with cities, affordable housing developers, market rate developers, and nonprofits in San Mateo County in order to better understand the housing listing needs of these stakeholders and build consensus around requirements for the web portal based on applicable city, county, state and federal regulations.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (“HACSM”) wishes to contract with Exygy in order to continue to build out the SMC DAHLIA pilot by adding more affordable housing listings to the site, build consensus with stakeholders around site requirements, including the required fields for a common housing application, and prepare for an online common application pilot to be launched at a future date.

HACSM will continue to engage with its city and nonprofit partners in San Mateo County to develop a fiscal plan for SMC DAHLIA which includes funding options for the long-term, ongoing maintenance of the web portal, including considerations for collecting fees from market-rate housing developers, partnering with cities for support, and leveraging state funding opportunities.

HACSM requests a waiver of the Request for Proposals process for several reasons. First, San Francisco selected Exygy through its Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s Request for Qualifications process. HACSM would realize cost savings by leveraging the existing design and development work that was created for San Francisco. Additionally, Exygy is uniquely positioned to respond to San Mateo County’s needs and requirements for the web portal based on prior engagement efforts with San Mateo County stakeholders.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the Resolution as to form and will review the Agreement prior to execution.

Approval of this Resolution contributes to the 2025 Shared Vision of a Collaborative Community by establishing an online database to assist County users to find affordable housing solutions.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no net County cost associated with this action. The total agreement amount of \$375,000 will be funded by the non-federal local fund of HACSM and appropriations have been included in HACSM’s FY 2019-20 budget.