



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy

City of South Portland

RFP Questions Due: 4:00 PM, March 24, 2021

Applications Due: 4:00 PM, April 23, 2021



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I. INTRODUCTION

The City of South Portland seeks to cultivate a safe, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and vibrant community that reflects the goals set forth in the City's Comprehensive Plan, and other official plans and policies adopted by the City Council. The City recognizes that in order to succeed and grow in a healthy manner, it must understand its current and future housing conditions, as well as unmet housing opportunities and needs.

To that end, the City is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy (HNAS). The HNAS will document existing housing conditions in the community; identify market and other forces that affect housing supply and demand now and over the next 10 years; and identify gaps or deficiencies in maintaining equitable access to safe, resilient, and reliable housing to as many community members as possible. The HNAS will identify opportunities for improving and expanding housing options to meet the community's needs. An implementation strategy is a critical outcome of the HNAS and will chart the course for policy, procedural, and administrative changes that the City pursues to ensure housing equity and access that tracks with the city's ability to serve.

II. THE COMMUNITY

South Portland is a vibrant, diverse, and historic community located on the Fore River and Gulf of Maine. According to 2019 U.S. Census Bureau estimates the City is Maine's 4th largest, with roughly 26,000 residents, and 11,700 housing units serving nearly 11,000 households. The city's role as a port and its proximity to Portland has caused it to develop as a regional service center and economic engine: in 2018 the City reported holding 26,500 jobs, with 88% of employees commuting to the City for work; 79% of the City's labor force is employed outside of the community.

Community Profile: <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2371990-south-portland-me/>

The community was historically depended on industrial, warehousing, and distribution businesses but has become highly diversified. Beginning in the 1700s many shipyards, canneries, and trade ports were developed along the Fore River and the Casco Bay waterfront. During the 1800's and early 1900's, industrial and commercial development expanded across the City spurred by the construction of Rigby Rail Yard, which at the time was the largest rail yard in New England. During World War II, large shipbuilding complexes were constructed at Cushing's Point in the Ferry Village neighborhood to manufacture Liberty Ships, and thousands of housing units were built adjacent to industrial sites for wartime workers and their families. Current major employment sectors include: retail (16.5%), finance (15%), health care (15%), professional services and administration (15%), education (10%), accommodations (10%), and distribution/wholesale trade (9%).



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Due to the long history of development in South Portland, a third of the housing stock predates 1940, and more than half of all housing predates 1959 ([Census, 2019 ACS](#)). This presents certain challenges with aging in place, maintaining affordable monthly housing expenses, ensuring safe living accommodations due to hazards presents in older homes, and ensuring compatible infill development.

III. BACKGROUND AND EXISTING PLANS

The Comprehensive Plan (2012) establishes a vision for community development in South Portland that reflects multiple housing goals, including that: all people are comfortable living in South Portland, the city provides a wide range of housing options, neighborhoods are comprised of younger and older populations, and the city embraces diversity. Specific objectives and policies included in the Comprehensive Plan that achieve this vision include:

- Goal A, Policy 1: The City's land use regulations should allow the construction of infill housing in established residential neighborhoods at a density that is similar to the established pattern of the neighborhood as long as the new housing is compatible with the character of the neighborhood.
- Goal A, Policy 2: The City's land use regulations should continue to allow for the construction of both single-family and multi-family housing in a variety of locations at densities that are appropriate for the type of housing and the location.
- Goal A, Policy 3: "The City should allow more intense utilization of the land along the major traffic corridors while assuring that adjacent residential neighborhoods are protected and the ability of the streets to move traffic is maintained."
- Goal A, Policy 4: The City should support efforts by the South Portland Housing Authority and private developers to create additional affordable housing when there is a clear, demonstrated need for those units.
- Goal F, Policy 3: the City's land use regulations should treat small apartments as a fractional unit for density purposes to encourage and facilitate the development of this type of housing in those areas where the construction of multi-family housing is desired.
- Goal F, Policy 4: The City should review its land use and building regulations to identify and possibly revise any requirements that impose unnecessary obstacles to the construction of "small apartment units".
- Appendix F, Housing, outlines the community's baseline conditions for housing in 2012 when the Comprehensive Plan was adopted. These conditions drove current policies related to housing. Updates are needed for today's conditions and policies will need to be re-examined in light of new trends and conditions. Notable findings in 2012 included:
 - In the two decades between 1990 and 2010, 80% of new housing units were single-family homes, shifting the ratio of single-family to multi-family homes.
 - Mobile homes declined over the period to the point where there were none remaining in the City by 2008.
 - The production was split between larger and smaller unit; new mid-sized housing units were limited.



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- The greatest needs for housing rehabilitation are in the Ferry Village and Redbank neighborhoods, which are older neighborhoods.
- Compared to the State, in 2010, lower-income South Portland residents who owned or rented housing paid a higher relative share of their household income toward shelter. Households earning more than \$35,000 per year fared better than the state average. The gap between what an acceptable household cost for shelter and the households that are paying above that rate is higher among renters.
- Given the state and other subsidy programs to address low income housing needs, the City was largely addressing its low income housing demand. Moderate income households experienced the widest divide between market availability and their ability to pay.

In 2020, the City adopted the One Climate Future plan to chart a path toward sustainable development and climate change adaptation/mitigation. Several housing goals were identified in the plan:

- Housing stock meets workforce demand within the cities by 2035;
- Supported by land use policy, we will cluster a mix of housing and businesses near transit, and increase housing in the cities to bring people closer to jobs;
- Identify and create policies that support Transit-Oriented Development within the Comprehensive Plan Update;
- TLU 1.7: Reevaluate development standards to remove inadvertent disincentives for building housing units;
- TLU 1.7: Adopt a housing strategy
- CR 2: Portland and South Portland will increase the quantity of affordable housing units while reducing barriers to and supporting the development of highly energy efficient, low carbon, and resilient affordable housing. Specific actions include:
 - Identify priority growth areas
 - Prioritize zoning decisions that support housing affordability in the cities.
 - Integrate resilience and energy efficiency goals by repositioning housing assets.
 - Revise development fee requirements

The City Council also seeks to improve housing as a key issue area in its 2018-2021 goal-setting. Specifically the Council is seeking to address affordability, availability, and geographic distribution. Interventions may include:

- Research affordable housing projects in the region and identify successes and barriers that should inform policy recommendations
- Draft policies that incentivize the creation of new affordable housing, whether new construction or conversions
- Explore best practices and options for creating various types of affordable housing
- Adopt measurable and aggressive housing goals to address housing shortages by type



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- Develop smart affordable housing policies in partnership with developers to ensure policies do not inadvertently stymie development
- Conduct a community-wide housing inventory and research/explore ideas and best practices to broadly meet the housing needs of the community, across all housing types and income levels

Key Housing Policies and Initiatives:

- Affordable Housing Trust Fund established July 2, 2019 ([Ordinance No. 3-19/20](#))
- [City Council Goals and Priorities 2019-2021](#)
- [Comprehensive Plan, 2012](#)
- [Resolve #3-19/20](#), Committing to achieve a regional goal of expanding the number of housing units in our region that are affordable to lower and middle income households by 10% no later than 2025. This goal was initiated by GPCOG and the Metro Coalition.
- [One Climate Future, 2020](#)
- [Affordable Housing Committee Report, 2016](#)

Quick Facts:

- Portland HMFA 80% AMI, family of four, effective 04/01/2020:
 - Median Income: \$78,500
 - Max Gross Rent, 2br: \$1,766
- South Portland Median Income, 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate:
 - All Households: \$69,290
 - 4-person families: \$116,114
- National Low Income Housing Coalition, FY2020 Out of Reach Study – Portland HMFA:
 - Hourly wage needed for 2-br FMR: \$29.15 or \$56,843
 - Estimated hourly mean renter wage: \$14.83

Additional Resources:

- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [Housing Market Analysis \(2015\)](#)
- HUD [Housing Market Profile \(2019\)](#)

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

The Community Development Office of Cumberland County has released a Request for Proposals to complete an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AIFHC). The County represents a 25-member Cumberland County Urban County Entitlement Jurisdiction, and therefore receives a direct allocation U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The HUD requires all entitlement grantees to certify that they will affirmatively further fair housing. To comply with this certification jurisdictions are required to undertake fair housing planning of which the Analysis to Impediments is an integral part. The AIFHC study must:



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- Analyze and eliminate housing discrimination in the jurisdiction;
- Promote fair housing choices for all persons;
- Provide opportunities for inclusive patterns of housing occupancy regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, familial status, or disability;
- Promote housing that is structurally accessible to and usable by all persons, particularly persons with disabilities; and
- Foster compliance with the non-discrimination provisions of the Fair Housing Act

The City anticipates that significant overlap will occur between—at least—the conditions analysis component of the City’s Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy, and the County’s AIFHC. The City also recognizes that housing is a regional issue, and there should be alignment in the understanding of housing conditions at the local (City) and regional (County Entitlement Jurisdiction) scale. To that end:

1. The City encourages potential respondents to apply for both RFPs;
2. Scopes of work should either:
 - a. **If applying for both RFPs:** be prepared to reallocate resources and time spent to avoid duplication of work on conditions/market assessment if the consultant is selected for both contracts. For example, if the applicant is also awarded the County AIFHC contract, conditions analysis tasks for the City should be replaced with enhancement to other elements of the scope, such as enhanced local engagement activities, or more detailed research into strategies and implementation actions for the City’s RFP;
 - b. **If applying for only the City’s RFP:** reference the County AIFHC and incorporate coordination with the County in the proposed tasks to ensure that all findings and conditions analyses from the City’s study are harmonized with the County’s study results.

IV. SCOPE OF REQUESTED SERVICES

The following sample scope of services has been prepared to outline minimum expectations for deliverables for the Study.

Task 1. Management and Coordination

This task should cover all administration and management costs associated with completing the project. The consultant shall anticipate a minimum of bi-weekly check-ins with City staff to provide updates on progress toward key deliverables.

The consultant shall anticipate the following meetings at a minimum:

- Public meeting with City Council in a workshop to present results.
- Public meeting with Planning Board to review and evaluate proposed recommendations for land use policy.



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- At least two (2) meetings with the Affordable Housing Committee to gather information and present interim reports.
- One (1) meeting with the South Portland Housing Development Corporation Board

City Role and Responsibilities

The consultant will be overseen by the Planning Director and Assistant City Manager, with guidance provided by the Affordable Housing Committee, Planning Board, and City Council. The City will provide the following services as part of the project:

- Access to present and historic relevant records;
- Provide existing City plans and research
- GIS support and data for the project
- Staff will assist in project management and administration. Staff will attend all meetings with the Consultant and assist the Consultant as a liaison with the Public as needed
- Staff will administer and coordinate and public meeting/hearing meeting agendas, minutes and meeting information packets.

Task 2. Housing Conditions Assessment

The consultant shall complete a comprehensive housing conditions, needs, trends, and opportunities assessment. This assessment must be informed by a **robust and meaningful engagement process** that addresses (a) public sentiment on housing issues; (b) stakeholder (e.g. developer, housing advocate, housing service provider, and elected official) input on conditions and opportunities; and (c) provider input on service gaps and needs. At a minimum, the assessment shall document the following:

A. Socio-Economic Profile of City and Region

- Population Count and Demographics
- Employment and Income
- Population Mobility
- Population with Unique Needs (disabilities, family-size, elderly, etc.)
- Households

B. Housing Inventory and Characteristics:

- Housing Supply and New Housing Pipeline/Trends
- Vacancy Rates
- Housing Types and their Availability (rental, owner, single-family, 2+ family, transitional housing, short-term housing, single-room occupancies, supportive housing, co-housing, subsidized housing, family-sized housing, workforce housing, etc.).



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- Age of the Housing Stock
- Housing Condition and Quality
- Affordable Housing Waitlist and Demand Statistics

C. Housing Market Conditions

- Affordability by Tenure
- Housing Real Estate Activity
- Housing Construction Rates and Demand
- [Gentrification](#) and [Displacement](#) Trends/Forces
- Housing Development Opportunities
- South Portland Housing “Brand” and Quality of Life
- South Portland’s Competitive Position in the Market

D. Housing Resilience

- Housing at Risk due to Climate Change
- Future housing development constraints
- Areas or neighborhoods amenable to sustainable development patterns (e.g. transit-oriented development, infill mixed-use)

Engagement Strategy:

As an initial step in conducting Task 2, the consultant shall prepare an **Engagement Strategy** for review and approval by the City. The Engagement Strategy should be diversified so that multiple opportunities for engagement are provided to suit all comfort levels and to attain maximum “reach” in the community. This includes considering small and (COVID-friendly) large meetings, online engagement/surveying, community outreach, interaction with City committees, and leveraging stakeholders and representative groups to connect with hard to reach populations. The City encourages consideration of a community forum discussion involving the City Council, as well as State legislative delegates, City committee representatives, the public, development community, and housing providers. The City anticipates forming an advisory group to serve the City staff and consultant team, comprised of local housing representatives that can facilitate idea exchange and information-vetting throughout the process.

Task 3. **Housing Gaps**

This task involves identifying:

- Housing opportunities for new market rate development that is in keeping with the City’s goals;
- Housing needs that are not being met; and
- Associated community impacts related to unmet housing needs.

The consultant shall determine where South Portland’s housing “gaps” are now and how they may change over the next 10 years given existing and future conditions, as well as existing and anticipated demand. The Housing Needs assessment will address both market rate housing “opportunities” and affordable



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housing “needs”. The consultant shall identify impacts to the community, or pressures on public services, that result directly or indirectly from the unmet housing needs.

Task 4. Housing Strategy

Given the housing “gaps” identified in Task 3, the consultant shall develop an actionable list of local interventions that the City should develop or implement to capture local housing development opportunities and address local housing needs. The Strategy shall organize interventions according to immediate, medium-range, and long-range actions, and incorporate relevant analysis to support each intervention outcome. This task may include developing scenarios and modeling the anticipated outcome of each intervention to demonstrate which interventions would be most impactful to addressing identified housing “gaps”.

Deliverables:

All draft reports shall be submitted to the City for review and comment in a recent version of Microsoft Word and retained in the file record. Final report shall be delivered to the City of as PDF file and Microsoft Word copies; one (1) hard copy shall be printed and bound.

V. BUDGET AND SCHEDULE

Budget

The scope of services must be prepared for a not to exceed amount of \$27,500. All proposals must include an unassigned **10% contingency** budget within the not-to-exceed budget. Proposers must also indicate **fixed-cost rates for additional meetings** to account for unanticipated hearings, stakeholder meetings, or staff meetings that may be necessary for the successful completion of an effective report. The City anticipates that **optional tasks** may be listed for consideration, and that these optional tasks may exceed the not-to-exceed budget.

Schedule

The City expects that the study will be complete within nine (9) months of contract commencement. The City reserves the right to revise the following tentative schedule:

Milestone	Deadline
RFP Released	March 12, 2021
RFP Questions Due	March 24, 2021
RFP Questions Distributed	March 29, 2021
RFP Proposals Due	April 23, 2021
Consultant Recruitment and Contract Completed	By June 23, 2021
Milestone Dates as Determined by Consultant Proposal	TBD
Report Completion	March 25, 2022



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VI. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Firm Overview and Statement of Understanding

A statement of consultants understanding that demonstrates knowledge of the project requirements, as well as an overview of the firm and its ability to service the project needs.

Relevant Experience

A description of similar project experience involving key staff to be involved in the project.

Project Team Credentials

A brief summary, with resumes attached, of key staff on the project team who will be directly involved in the project, including designation of a single point of contact for coordination of the project. Staff resumes should focus on individuals who will have primary responsibility for performance of the work with less emphasis on firm principals.

Proposed Work Plan

A description of the consultant's technical approach to the project, including an outline of the sequence of tasks, major benchmarks and milestone dates. Ensure that all proposed use of City staff, office staff, as well as any equipment, materials or additional data that will be expected from the City are identified. This must include, at a minimum:

- The required scope items listed in Section IV, Scope and Requested Services;
- A draft engagement strategy to be refined through Task 2 as shown in Section IV;
- A statement regarding coordination between the scope of work and the County's AIFHC study; and
- List of specific deliverables organized by task.

Proposed Budget and Schedule

Proposed cost of the services to be provided under this proposal as well as an overall project schedule, with milestones identified. Optional tasks shall be clearly identified. The fee schedule must identify hours worked by personnel as well as overall task budgets.

References

At least three (3) recent references for similar work and with familiarity with the proposed consultant personnel.

Declarations:

Project Team Workload and Timeline Commitment

Statement indicating the proposed team's capacity and availability to deliver on the proposed scope of services, as well as a written agreement to accomplish the project within the time frame contained in this RFP.



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Award of General Contract

Statement indicating whether the consultant agrees to the City’s general contract terms (attached) or if revised or additional terms or conditions are necessary for entering into a contract with the City.

Insurance Requirement

The applicant shall agree to keep in full force and effect during the term of the agreement at their sole expense, Worker’s Compensation, Business Automobile Liability, and General Liability Insurance. Liability insurance must be a combined single limit of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Equity and Minority Representation

The applicant shall indicate and provide documentation if the firm is a designated Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.

Indemnification

The applicant shall agree to indemnify the City from and against liability caused by applicant’s negligent performance of services.

Statement Confirming Receipt of RFP Responses to Comments Addendum

The submission must include a statement that the firm has received and reviewed the Responses to Comments Addendum issued by the City following the RFP Questions period. The Responses to Comments shall be posted, with the RFP on the City’s website and is accessible at:

<https://www.southportland.org/departments/purchasingbids/2013-bids/>

VII. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Proposals shall be submitted as electronic documents and emailed to the City of South Portland, Planning Director at mnevajda@southportland.org **no later than 4:00 PM, April 23, 2021**. All firms are required to submit any questions regarding the RFP to the Planning Director by 4:00 PM, March 24, 2021. Questions will be consolidated and responses to the questions will be posted as an addendum to the RFP by 4:00 PM, March 29, 2021.

All proposals will be evaluated by the Project Review Team with a recommendation for a specific firm submitted to the City Manager for their consideration. Selection will be based on the following criteria:

Selection Criteria

- Relevant Experience: 20%
- Team Qualifications and Assignments: 25%
- Proposed Work Plan: 30%
- Schedule and Fee: 20%
- Local and Minority Representation: 5%



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VIII. DISCLOSURE

All proposals become the property of the City and will not be returned. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive technicalities, or to negotiate further with a responder who appears to most nearly meet the City's desires. Note that all documents submitted to the City are public records and subject to public access laws.