

**Request for Action
By
Board of Commissioners**

**Approval of Engagement of Consultant for the Update
of Design and Construction Guidelines (Utile, Inc.)**

A. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

This Request for Action (“RFA”) is for approval of the engagement of a consultant to assist with the evaluation of and update to the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) Design and Construction Guidelines (the “Guidelines”).

B. DISCUSSION

The Development Division underwrites and finances a wide variety of development projects. Integral to the process are the Guidelines which are used to (i) establish clear and consistent construction standards and (ii) establish a predictable process for proceeding from preliminary approval to construction completion. The Guidelines have not been substantially reviewed and updated for over 15 years, and as an outgrowth of the strategic planning process, it was determined there is a need to revise, reorganize and consolidate the Guidelines. The goal is to create Guidelines that are user-friendly, and address innovation, current construction systems, climate change, resiliency and energy efficiency goals to create smart, cost effective and durable housing.

In December 2022, RIHousing issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) from qualified vendors to (i) review and update the existing Guidelines, and (ii) conduct stakeholder engagement to inform the updated Guidelines. Notice of the RFP was posted on RIHousing’s website, and the website maintained by the Rhode Island Department of Administration’s Division of Purchases. RIHousing also sent the solicitation to architects and consultants in our current database.

Five (5) firms submitted proposals in response to the RFP. Three (3) proposals included both the Guideline update and the stakeholder engagement. Two (2) proposals were for the stakeholder engagement only. An internal selection committee reviewed the proposals and evaluated them in accordance with the criteria outlined in the RFP. The selection committee scored the responses based upon factors including the vendor’s professional capacity, fee structure, and ability to perform within time and budget constraints. Attachment B sets forth the scoring matrix for the vendors’ proposals.

Following review of the bid documents, interviews with the top two scoring respondents, and the selection committee’s evaluation of all proposals based on the selection criteria, Utile, Inc. (“Utile”) was selected to provide both stakeholder engagement and revisions to the Guidelines. The selection committee felt that based on Utile’s plan for stakeholder engagement, their approach to the Guideline revisions, expertise in current industry practices and energy efficiency issues, and their understanding

of the complexity of the assignment, they were the highest scored proposal. Utile was not the least expensive proposal; however, the committee determined that the proposed fee is commensurate with Utile's proposed scope of work. And equally important, the committee was concerned that the proposal with the lowest fee was not comprehensive enough given the proposed goal of the RFP.

The engagement is expected to last approximately six (6) months. RIHousing seeks to enter into a contract with Utile to (i) review and update the existing RIHousing Guidelines, and (ii) conduct stakeholder engagement to inform the updated Guidelines.

C. RECOMMENDATION

The attached resolution authorizing RIHousing to engage Utile, Inc. is recommended for approval.

D. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of RIHousing
- B. Scoring Matrix

Attachment A

Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of RIHousing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

- Whereas:** Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation’s (“RIHousing”) enabling act provides it with all the power and authority to make and execute contracts necessary to exercise the powers and functions provided to it under the act (R.I. Gen. Laws §42-55-5(6)); and
- Whereas:** Staff of RIHousing has identified a need to update the RIHousing Design and Construction Guidelines; and
- Whereas:** RIHousing has solicited proposals pursuant to an open competitive process for vendors to (i) review and update the existing RIHousing Guidelines, and (ii) conduct stakeholder engagement to inform the updated Guidelines, and who are able to substantially meet the requirements associated with this set of functions; and
- Whereas:** A selection committee comprised of RIHousing staff reviewed the proposals for these services, evaluated them pursuant to the criteria set forth in the Request for Proposals and determined that Utile, Inc. had submitted the highest-scoring proposal to RIHousing.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

- Resolved:** that RIHousing be, and hereby is, authorized to enter into a contract with Utile, Inc., to review and update the existing RIHousing Guidelines, and conduct stakeholder engagement to inform the updated Guidelines as set forth in the Request for Proposals and the proposal submitted in response thereto; and
- Resolved:** that such engagement shall be for approximately six months at a cost not to exceed \$145,240; and
- Resolved:** that the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, and Director of Real Estate Development, each acting singly, be and hereby is authorized and empowered to take any and all actions necessary or desirable to carry out the foregoing resolutions, including without limitation the authority to negotiate the terms and fees of the engagement as he or she may determine are in the best interests of RIHousing, and to execute any and all agreements or documents as he or she deems necessary to carry out the foregoing and to take such further actions as he or she deems necessary to carry out the foregoing resolutions.

Attachment B

Updates to D&C Guidelines and Stakeholder Engagement

Name	G = D&C Guidelines S = Stakeholder Engagement B = Both	Professional capacity	Proposed fee structure	Ability to perform within time & budget	Evaluation of proposed project approach	Previous work experience RIH/similar organizations	Recommendations by reference	Firm minority status/affirmative action program or activities	Comments	Total Score	Ranking by score
Response value	Max Points	20	10	15	25	15	5	5		95	
KITE Architects	B	17.6	8.3	14.4	23.7	14.3	4.9	5.0	Interviewed 3/27	88.1	2
Phase 2	S	13.4	8.0	11.4	20.1	7.3	2.9	4.1		67.3	5
RGB Architects & Advocacy Solutions	B	19.1	4.1	13.3	21.1	12.2	3.9	3.4		77.2	4
Utile	B	19.6	7.3	13.6	24.6	13.4	4.9	5.0	Interviewed 3/27	88.3	1
Advocacy Solutions	S	17.9	8.4	14.3	22.0	14.3	3.7	3.7		84.3	3