

RHODE ISLAND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Consultants for Housing Development Technical Assistance

Posting Date: March 10, 2025

Response Submission Deadline: 3:00 EDT p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2025.

NOTE TO RESPONDENTS:

Please be advised that **all** submissions, including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request pursuant to the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act, Chapter 2 of Title 38 of the Rhode Island General Laws (the “APRA”) upon award of a contract(s). As a result, respondents are advised not to include information that they deem proprietary or confidential or that constitutes a trade secret.

INTRODUCTION

Through this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”), the Rhode Island Housing Development Corporation (“Development Corporation”), a non-profit affiliate of the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”), seeks responses from qualified firms to create a roster of consultants able to provide technical assistance to the Development Corporation, developers, and municipalities to evaluate the feasibility of developing housing on specific sites.

This effort is part of the Development Corporation’s Proactive Development Program (“Program”). The Program has been established pursuant to the FY 2024 Annual Budget passed by the General Assembly, which included an appropriation of \$1.4 million for these activities to be undertaken by the Development Corporation. Grants will be made competitively to developers and municipalities (“Grantees”) whose grant applications will have identified sites eligible for technical assistance.

The technical assistance will be to provide services to evaluate the feasibility of developing housing on sites identified by the Development Corporation or Grantees. Technical assistance may include but not be limited to the skills of civil engineers, structural engineers, architects, landscape architects, land use planners, attorneys, cost estimators, market analysts, housing consultants, economic analysts, and/or professionals with experience in brownfields remediation and other environmental and development concerns.

The Program has four focal areas: (1) helping to revive stalled projects; (2) facilitating development of public lands; (3) land banking and predevelopment risk abatement; and (4) providing assistance to developers that received Site Acquisition Program and Predevelopment funding from RIHousing sourced from the American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF), including public housing authorities, for-profit and nonprofit developers, and municipalities.

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This RFQ seeks to create a roster of firms capable of providing the technical assistance services outlined in Attachment B on an as-needed basis. Firms must be specific as to which of the services they can provide. Firms are not required to provide technical assistance in each area. Please note that firms carrying out activities financed through SFRF must comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements and guidelines as applicable.¹ Firms are required to possess a working knowledge of these requirements.

INSTRUCTIONS

Responses to this RFQ must be submitted via email to: **Ben Frost, President of Proactive Development** at bfrost@rihousing.com no later than the response submission deadline set forth above.

Responses that are not received by the response submission deadline or that do not adhere to the submission instructions described herein shall not be accepted or considered.

Responses should be concise and adhere to the word count applicable to each section of this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”). Responses should be presented on business letterhead and include all attachments, certifications (including the Submissions Certification at Attachment A), and work samples (as applicable). Please note that failure to provide any information, certification, or document requested in this RFQ may cause your submission not to be reviewed or considered.

The Development Corporation may invite firms to make presentations.

¹ See, e.g., U.S. Department of Treasury SFRF FAQ 13.15 and 2 CFR 200, Appendix II.

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SCOPE OF WORK

Please see the Scope of Work as provided on Attachment B.

ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR RESPONSE

**SUBMISSION
CHECK LIST**

Section A: General Firm Information (Total word limit: 500 words)

1. Provide a brief description of your firm, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Name of the principal(s) of the firm.
 - b. Name, business telephone number and business email address of a representative of the firm authorized to discuss your response.
 - c. Locations of all offices of the firm.
 - d. Number of employees of the firm.

The contact information provided in response to this subsection (1) should be strictly limited to business addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses to protect any personal information from being made available to the public pursuant to APRA.

Section B: Experience and Resources (Total word limit: 3500 words)

1. Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the Scope of Work. Please identify which technical assistance activities your firm is proposing to provide. Describe your experience and capacity to perform the Scope of Work.

2. Indicate which principals and associates from your firm would be involved in providing services to the Development Corporation or Grantees. Provide appropriate background information for each such person and identify their responsibilities.

3. If applicable, please indicate the name of any subcontractors that would be involved in providing services to your firm or to the Development Corporation or Grantees. Provide appropriate background information for each person or entity, identify the person's responsibilities and outline their capabilities.

4. Provide a detailed list of references, including a contact name and business telephone number for organizations or businesses for whom you have performed similar work.

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- 5. Identify individuals in your firm with multi-lingual skills, who are available to assist with communication in languages other than English. Please identify the language(s).
- 6. Describe your firm's information security systems and the steps that your firm takes to safeguard client communication, confidential information, and client data. Include in your response whether your firm performs penetration testing, your firm's encryption methods, and whether client data is stored onshore or offshore.

Section C: Fee Structure (Total word limit: 500 words)

The cost of services is one of the factors that will be considered in granting pre-approval status for rendering the services for eligible programs. The information requested in this section is required to support the reasonableness of your fees. A budget proposal will be required separately upon request by the Development Corporation or a Grantee for a specified scope of work.

- 1. Please provide a generic cost proposal for providing the Scope of Work at Attachment B.
- 2. Provide an itemized breakdown of billing rates and hourly costs, list of key personnel and their hourly rates, reimbursable expenses, etc. for any services that may be requested in addition to those described in the Scope of Work. Describe any fee arrangements for work not readily susceptible to hourly billing.
- 3. Please provide any other fee information applicable to the engagement that has not been previously covered that you wish to bring to the attention of the Development Corporation.

Section D: Affirmative Action Plan and Minority Owned Business/Women Owned Business (Rhode Island State Purchases Act)

- 1. In compliance with state law, the Development Corporation encourages the participation of persons of color, women, persons with disabilities and members of other State-protected classes. Describe your firm's affirmative action program and activities. Include the number and percentage of members of State-protected classes who are either principals or senior managers in your firm, the number and percentage of members of State-protected classes in your firm who will work on the Development Corporation's engagement and, if applicable, a copy of your Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprise state certification. This information is being requested and will be reviewed in furtherance of Rhode Island state law.

Section E: Miscellaneous (Total word limit: 1000 words)

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1. Discuss any topics not covered in this RFQ that you would like to bring to the Development Corporation's attention.

Section F. Certifications

- All applicants must respond to and provide documentation as outlined in the RFQ Submission Certifications at Attachment A.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A selection committee consisting of RIHousing employees will review all responses that meet the requirements set forth in the "Instructions" section of this RFQ and make selections based on the following factors:

- Professional capacity to undertake the Scope of Work (as evaluated by reference in Section B: Experience and Resources);
- Proposed approach to providing the Scope of Work (as evaluated by reference to Section B: Experience and Resources);
- Proposed fee structure (as evaluated by reference in Section C: Fee Structure);
- Ability to perform within time and budget constraints (as evaluated by reference in Section B), which may be based on past project performance identified in the responses;
- Previous work experience and performance with the Development Corporation, RIHousing, the Rhode Island Department of Housing, and/or similar organizations (as provided in Section B: Experience and Resources, subsection 3);
- Recommendations by references (as provided in Section B: Experience and Resources, subsection 3);
- Firm minority status and affirmative action program or activities (as requested in Section D: Affirmative Action Plan and Minority Owned Business/Women Owned Business)
- Other pertinent information submitted.

DISCLAIMER: By posting this RFQ, the Development Corporation does not commit to undertake the work set forth herein. The Development Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all responses, republish the original or amended scope of services, and/or enter into negotiations with one or more respondents. The Development Corporation's decisions on these matters are final and not subject to appeal by respondents.

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For additional information contact Ben Frost at bfrost@rihousing.com. Any questions received will be answered on RIHousing.com/rfps-rfqs.

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Attachment A

Requests for Qualifications Submission Certifications

Please respond to **all** items below and include it in your response to this RFQ. Be sure to include any additional information in the space provided or as an attachment as needed. Please ensure that any attachments refer to the appropriate item by name (i.e., “Conflict of Interest,” “Major State Decision Maker,” etc.)

[Total word limit for Sections A and B: 500 words]

Section A: Conflicts of Interest

1. Identify any conflict of interest that may arise as a result of business activities or ventures by your firm and associates of your firm, employees, or subcontractors as a result of any individual’s status as a member of the board of directors of any organization likely to interact with the Development Corporation. **If none, check below.**

None

2. Describe how your firm will handle actual and or potential conflicts of interest (*please include in your response or attach a sheet with this information*).

Section B: Litigation, Proceedings, Investigations

1. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings, or investigations in which your firm is currently involved. **If none, check below.**

None

2. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings, or investigations to which your firm or any of its principals, partners, associates, subcontractors, or support staff was a party, that has been finally adjudicated or settled within the past ten (10) years. **If none, check below.**

None

Section C: Certifications

1. The Development Corporation, as a subsidiary of RIHousing, insists upon full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors. This law requires State Vendors entering into contracts to provide services to an agency such as the Development Corporation, for the aggregate sum of \$5,000 or more, to file an affidavit with the State Board of Elections concerning reportable

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political contributions. The affidavit must state whether the State Vendor (and any related parties as defined in the law) has, within 24 months preceding the date of the contract, contributed an aggregate amount in excess of \$250 within a calendar year to any general officer, any candidate for general office, or any political party. **Please acknowledge your understanding below.**

I have read and understand the requirements of Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors.

2. Does any Rhode Island “Major State Decision-maker,” as defined below, or the spouse or dependent child of such person, hold (i) a ten percent or greater equity interest, or (ii) a Five Thousand Dollar or greater cash interest in this business?

For purposes of this question, “Major State Decision-maker” means:

- (i) All general officers; and all executive or administrative head or heads of any state executive agency enumerated in § 42-6-1 as well as the executive or administrative head or heads of state quasi-public corporations, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, or chief of staff;
- (ii) All members of the general assembly and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state legislative agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, or chief of staff;
- (iii) All members of the state judiciary and all state magistrates and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state judicial agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase “executive or administrative head or heads” shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, chief of staff or state court administrator.

Please indicate your response below.

Yes

If your answer is “Yes,” please identify the Major State Decision-maker, specify the nature of their ownership interest, and provide a copy of the annual financial disclosure required to be filed with the Rhode Island Ethics Commission pursuant to R.I.G.L. §§36-14-16, 17 and 18.

No

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3. In the course of providing goods or services to RIHousing, the selected respondent may receive certain personal information specific to RIHousing customer(s) including, without limitation, customer names and addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, dates of birth, loan numbers, account numbers, social security numbers, driver's license or identification card numbers, employment and income information, photographic likenesses, tax returns, or other personal or financial information (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Personal Information"). The maintenance of the Personal Information in strict confidence and the confinement of its use to RIHousing are of vital importance to RIHousing.

Please certify below that in the event your firm is selected:

(i) any Personal Information disclosed to your firm by RIHousing or the Department or which your firm acquires as a result of its services hereunder will be regarded by your firm as confidential, and shall not be copied or disclosed to any third party, unless RIHousing or the Department has given its prior written consent thereto; and

(ii) your firm agrees to take all reasonable measures to (a) ensure the security and confidentiality of the Personal Information, (b) protect against any anticipated threats or hazards to the security or integrity of the Personal Information, and (c) maintain reasonable security procedures and practices appropriate to your firm's size, the nature of the Personal Information, and the purpose for which the Personal Information was collected in order to protect the Personal Information from unauthorized access, use, modification, destruction or disclosure; and

(iii) when discarding the Personal Information, destroying it in a commercially reasonable manner such that no third party can view or recreate the information, electronically or otherwise.

These provisions, which implement the requirements of the Rhode Island Identity Theft Protection Act, R.I.G.L. § 11-49.2 et seq., will also be incorporated into the final contract with the selected respondent(s). In addition, if selected, your firm may be requested to provide a copy of its information security plan and implement and maintain security measures deemed necessary by RIHousing to protect personal information and any other confidential information.

I certify that in the event our firm is selected, we will comply with the Personal Information and Security guidelines noted above.

4. Your firm's president, chairman or CEO must certify below that (i) no member of your firm has made inquiries or contacts with respect to this RFQ other than in an email or written communication to Ben Frost, bfrost@rihousing.com, seeking clarification on the Scope of Work set forth in this RFQ, from the date of this RFQ through the date of your response, (ii) no member of your firm will make any such inquiry or contact until after March 31, 2025, (iii)

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all information in the response is true and correct to the best of your knowledge, (iv) no member of your firm gave anything of monetary value or promise of future employment to a Development Corporation or RIHousing employee or Commissioner, or a relative of the same, based on any understanding that such person's action or judgment will be influenced, and (v) your firm is in full compliance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Reporting of Political Contributions by State Vendors.

I certify that no member of our firm has made or will make any such inquiries or contacts; all information supplied is true and correct; no member of our firm has provided anything of value to influence the Development Corporation or RIHousing; and our firm is in compliance with applicable political contribution reporting.

President, Chairman or CEO (*print*): _____

Signature: _____

Firm Name: _____

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Attachment B

Scope of Work

I. Services to be Provided

Even as Rhode Island faces a crisis of housing affordability resulting from a lack of sufficient supply, there are substantial opportunities for new development. Many of these opportunities are in properties that have already received some level of financial support (site acquisition and predevelopment funding) and others are being presented on a regular basis. Although each property is unique, there are common needs for additional assistance. This RFQ intends to create a pool of consultants to provide tailored technical assistance to help projects proceed expeditiously. The time commitment for each activity will vary depending on a project's needs. We are seeking firms to provide the following technical assistance directly to the Development Corporation and Grantees on an as needed basis:

- **Predevelopment activities including, but not limited to:** Environmental assessments, surveys, title work, soil testing, architectural work, infrastructure assessment and design, site plan preparation, and cost estimation.
- **Permitting strategy development and implementation activities including, but not limited to:** Assessment of current zoning and permitting requirements, assistance submitting and obtaining required federal, state, or municipal approvals.
- **Financial Feasibility Analysis activities including, but not limited to:** Conducting market analysis, developing project proformas, exploring financing options.
- **Other project development activities (please specify) that you deem to be relevant and appropriate, but are not included above.**

II. Project Schedule

Firms are anticipated to be engaged for a two-year contract, with the Development Corporation's option to renew annually for up to an additional two years subject to availability of funding. Please note that current funds are budgeted through December 31, 2026; this may

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be extended, based on the rate of funds utilization and the identification of additional funding sources.

III. Project Approach

Once a roster of firms is created, the Development Corporation anticipates posting a Request for Proposals for developers and municipalities to apply for Proactive Development Grants. Grant applicants may identify consultants from the approved roster; they may also choose consultants from the approved roster after initial notification of a grant award (the grant agreement must identify the awardee's contracts). Grant awardees may also identify consultants not on the approved roster, but such consultants will require separate independent approval by the consultant selection team, subject to the same standards as those already on the roster. Subsequently approved consultants will be required to enter into a contract with the Development Corporation and will be added to the roster. Firms selected by a Grantee to provide technical assistance under Proactive Development Grants will do so under contract with the Grantee.

The Development Corporation may also directly utilize a portion of the funds available for projects and in such cases it will select a consultant from the approved roster to perform the work.