

**STATE OF MAINE**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**



**RFA# 202306123**

**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**

<b>Grant Coordinator</b>	<p><i>All communication regarding the RFA <u>must</u> be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.</i></p> <p><b>Name:</b> Hilary Gove <b>Title:</b> Housing Opportunity Program Coordinator  <b>Contact Information:</b> <a href="mailto:housing.decd@maine.gov">housing.decd@maine.gov</a></p>
<b>Information Session</b>	<p><b>Date:</b> July 10, 2023 <b>Time:</b> 10 a.m., local time</p> <p><b>Location:</b> virtual webinar (Zoom)  <i>Please use the link below to join the webinar:</i>  <a href="https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/84123964612">https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/84123964612</a></p>
<b>Submitted Questions Due</b>	<p><i>All questions <u>must</u> be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:</i></p> <p><b>Date:</b> July 17, 2023, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time</p>
<b>Application Submission</b>	<p><i>Proposals <u>must</u> be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:</i></p> <p><b>Submission Deadline:</b> August 8, 2023, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. <i>Proposals <u>must</u> be submitted electronically to the following address:</i></p> <p><b>Electronic (e-mail) Submission Address:</b> <a href="mailto:Proposals@maine.gov">Proposals@maine.gov</a></p>

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## RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, shall have the meanings indicated below:

<u>Term/Acronym</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>Department</b>	Department of Economic and Community Development
<b>Municipal Grants</b>	Grants to municipalities to support municipal ordinance development, technical assistance, and community housing planning services to increase housing opportunities
<b>Municipality</b>	A city or a town, excluding all unorganized and deorganized townships, plantations, townships, and towns that have delegated administration of land use controls to the Maine Land Use Planning Commission pursuant to 12 M.R.S. § 682(1)
<b>RFA</b>	Request for Application
<b>Service Provider</b>	Regional planning organizations (councils of governments, regional planning commissions) and regional economic development organizations as referenced in Title 30-A, Chapter 119, county governments, non-profit organizations, academic institutions and cooperative extension programs, and for-profit enterprises. Municipalities are also eligible to apply as a service provider.
<b>Service Provider Grants</b>	Grants to service providers to provide support to municipalities with municipal ordinance development and technical assistance to increase housing opportunities
<b>State</b>	State of Maine

**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**  
**APPLICATION DETAILS AND INSTRUCTIONS**

**A. Purpose and Background**

The State of Maine, Department of Economic and Community Development (Department) is seeking applications for service provider grants as defined in this Request for Application (RFA). Service provider grants are grants to service providers to provide support to municipalities with municipal ordinance development and technical assistance to increase housing opportunities.

This document provides instructions for submitting applications, the procedure, and criteria by which the awarded Applicant(s) will be selected.

The Housing Opportunity Program, as described in [5 M.R.S. § 13056-J](#), provides grants and assistance to municipalities to encourage and support the development of additional housing units in the State, including housing units that are affordable for low-income and moderate-income individuals, and targeted to community workforce housing needs. The program focuses on technical and financial assistance to municipalities implementing zoning and land use-related policies necessary to support increased housing development.

Service Provider organizations may include regional planning organizations (councils of governments, regional planning commissions) and regional economic development organizations as referenced in [Title 30-A, Chapter 119](#), county governments, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, cooperative extension programs, and for-profit enterprises. Municipalities are also eligible to apply as a service provider to provide relevant services to smaller towns. Municipalities and Service Provider organizations must demonstrate experience in providing technical assistance and support to municipalities in the areas of ordinance development and community housing planning services.

**B. General Provisions**

1. From the time the RFA is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding the RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator. No other person/ State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding the RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the bidding process, at the State's discretion.
2. Issuance of the RFA does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to the RFA. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings and software or system demonstrations, where applicable.
3. All proposals must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFA and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Proposals are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified below in the

“Proposal Submission Requirements” section of the RFA.

4. Bidders will take careful note that in evaluating a proposal submitted in response to the RFA, the Department will consider materials provided in the proposal, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Applicant (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating an Applicant’s experience and capabilities.
5. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Applicant and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFA and the awarded Applicant’s proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.
7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](#) et seq.).
8. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to the RFA.
9. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, are included by this reference. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

### **C. Eligibility to Submit Applications**

In order to be considered for grant funding under this process, applicants must be a Service Provider organization. Service Providers include:

1. Regional planning organizations (councils of governments, regional planning commissions);
2. Regional economic development organizations as referenced in Title 30-A, Chapter 119;
3. County governments;
4. Non-profit organizations;
5. Academic institutions;
6. Cooperative extension programs;
7. For-profit enterprises; and
8. Municipalities

### **D. Awards**

The Department anticipates making multiple awards as a result of the RFA process. The number and size of awards will depend on the number of proposals received and available funds.

Service providers, as defined above on page 3, are eligible for an award up to \$75,000.

### **E. Contract Terms**

Applicants awarded through this RFA process will be awarded a contract for up to a 3-year period. Applicants will initially be awarded funding for twelve (12) months, with an option to extend for the remainder of the grant period.

### **F. Title and Chapter**

The Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants are governed by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development's rules, [19-100 C.M.R. Ch. 4](#), Rules Regarding Housing Opportunity Program Grants.

### **G. Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from this Request for Applications may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in 5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120 (found here: [Chapter 120](#)). The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of contract award.

**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**  
**ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

**A. Desired Outcomes**

The Department intends the service provider grants to provide municipalities with the following services:

1. Municipal ordinance development designed to increase housing opportunities and further the purposes of the [Fair Housing Act](#) and [Maine Human Rights Act](#);
2. Mapping or other spatial analysis tools to visualize zoning ordinances or housing needs by region;
3. Educational materials for planning boards, elected officials, municipal boards and housing committees focusing on increasing housing opportunities; and
4. Technical assistance related to:
  - i. Comprehensive planning review and master planning, focusing on identifying housing and land use priorities;
  - ii. Assessing infrastructure upgrades;
  - iii. Assessing the housing market and future housing needs;
  - iv. Assessing feasibility of potential sites;
  - v. Developing housing prototypes; and
  - vi. Facilitating regional housing needs assessments

A Service Provider may request funding for multiple projects in its application as long as the Service Provider can demonstrate experience in providing technical assistance and support to municipalities in the areas of ordinance development and community housing planning services..

All funded projects must prioritize the above outcomes, but may have additional goals such as supporting climate, transportation, diversity, and broadband.

All funded Service Providers will be required to provide semiannual updates and project deliverables.

**B. Prohibition on Funds**

Awarded grant funds may not be used for acquisition of property or equipment.

**C. Application Components**

A complete and scoreable application for funding will include the following components. Specific descriptions of each component are included in this application. Applicants must complete the following documents as part of their application.

**1. General Information/Service Provider and Group Eligibility:**

- a. Application Cover Page
- b. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification

- c. General Information and Service Provider Eligibility
  - i. Applicants must be an eligible entity as described in section C under Application Details and Instructions.

## **2. Capacity, Expertise, and Previous Experience**

Applications must demonstrate expertise and relevant previous experience in community planning services, ordinance development, and housing policy.

## **3. Scope of Work**

- a. Applicants must provide a scope of work that identifies and describes the tasks necessary to achieve the RFA's desired outcomes.
- b. Proposed Project(s): Describe the proposed project(s), including deliverables, project timeline(s), roles and responsibilities of project managers and partners, and the expected outcomes.
- c. Need for the Project(s): Describe the need for the project(s). Why is this project needed?
- d. Approach to Community Engagement and Regional Approaches: Applicants must include examples of community engagement activities, including inclusive planning processes so that diverse communities participate.

## **4. Budget Proposal & Cost Share**

- a. Applicants must provide a Budget Narrative and Budget Form detailing the cost of the grant and where specific funds will be allocated.
- b. Applicants must complete the cost-share table in the budget worksheet.
  - i. A 15% cost share is required of the Service Provider. In-kind match is permitted.
  - ii. In-kind match is counted only for the period of the grant award.
- c. Costs incurred prior to the grant award period are not eligible to be included in the budget nor as match.

## **5. Letters of Support**

- a. Applications must include letters of support from municipalities interested in receiving planning and housing services from the service provider. Letters of support for each municipality, and other project partners as appropriate, must be included with the application package. Do not send letters separately.



**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**  
**KEY PROCESS EVENTS**

**A. Informational Meeting**

The Department will sponsor an Informational Meeting concerning the RFA via Zoom. Time and a web link to the meeting are provided on the cover page of this RFA.

The purpose of the Informational Meeting is to provide information about the grant program, answer and/or field questions, clarify for potential Applicants any aspect of the RFA requirements that may be necessary and provide supplemental information to assist potential Applicants in submitting responses to the RFA. Although attendance at the Informational Meeting is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged that interested Applicants attend.

**B. Submitting Questions about Request for Applications**

Any questions must be submitted by e-mail to the Grant Coordinator identified on the [Grant RFPs and RFAs webpage](#) by July 17, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. local time. Submitted Questions must include the subject line: "RFA# 202306123 Questions". The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.

**C. Question & Answer Summary**

Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website: [Grant RFPs and RFAs](#). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

**D. Amendments to the Request for Applications**

All amendments (if any) released in regard to this Request for Applications will be posted on the following website: [Grant RFPs and RFAs](#). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

**E. Application Submission**

- 1. Applications Due:** Applications must be received by August 8, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. local time. Applications received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be ineligible for award consideration for that annual application enrollment period.

- 2. Submission Instructions:** Applications are to be submitted to the State of Maine Division of Procurement Services, via email, to [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov).
- a.** Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipts.
  - b.** E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail applications that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
  - c.** Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Please check with your organization's Information Technology team to ensure that your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.
  - d.** File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files separately across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
  - e.** Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their email submission: "RFA# 202306123 Application Submission – [Applicant's Name]"
  - f.** Applications are to be submitted as a single, typed, PDF or WORD file and must include pages **13-18** of this RFA document.

**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**  
**APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

**A. Scoring Weights and Process**

- 1. Scoring Weights:** The score will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each application meets the following criteria.

<b>Scoring Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points Available</b>
<b>Criteria 1:</b> General Information and Service Provider Eligibility	Pass/Fail
<b>Criteria 2:</b> Capacity, Expertise, and Previous Experience	35 points
<b>Criteria 3:</b> Scope of Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Description(s)</li> <li>• Need for the Project(s)</li> <li>• Approach to Community Engagement</li> </ul>	40 points
<b>Criteria 4:</b> Budget Proposal	25 points
<b>Criteria 5:</b> Letters of Support	Pass/Fail
<b>Total Points</b>	100 points

- 2. Scoring Process:** The grant review team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed above. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections.

Regarding the proposed funds requested and the proposed work, the grant review team will consider the degree to which the project represents a good return for the investment (money, time) as well as whether the project work and cost estimates (tasks & budget) are reasonable for the expected outcomes, along with the amount and quality of proposed matching funds or services.

**B. Selection of Award:**

- The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
- Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
- Issuance of the RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the

RFP, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.

4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to make multiple awards.

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**

**APPLICATION COVER PAGE**

*Handwritten applications will not be accepted.*

Applicant's Organization Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Tel:	Click or tap here to enter text.	E-mail:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Headquarters' Street Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Headquarters' City/State/Zip	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Point of Contact for Application (Name and Title)	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Tel:	Click or tap here to enter text.	E-mail:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Headquarters' Street Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Headquarters' City/State/Zip	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Dollar Amount of Application:	Click or tap here to enter text.		

- No personnel currently employed by the Department or any other State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Applicant's application.
- No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Applicant to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit an application.
- The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting agreement with the Department should they be awarded a contract.
- The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

*To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed application, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.*

<b>Name (Print):</b> Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Title:</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Authorized Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b> Click or tap here to enter text.

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**

**DEBARMENT, PERFORMANCE and NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION**

<b>Applicant's Organization Name:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
---------------------------------------	----------------------------------

*By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:*

- a. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
- b. Have not within three years of submitting the proposal for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:
 
  - i. Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state, or local government transaction or contract.*
  - ii. Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property.**
- c. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification.*
- d. Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state, or local government transactions terminated for cause or default.*
- e. Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above-mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*

Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Applicant's application, at the discretion of the Department.

<b>Name (Print):</b> Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Title:</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Authorized Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b> Click or tap here to enter text.

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**RFA# 202306123**  
**Housing Opportunity Program Service Provider Grants**

In responding to each Criteria below, Applicants should refer to the information provided in the corresponding areas of the Activities and Requirements section in the RFA. Applicants must use this application to respond to all desired information outlined here and in the RFA.

**Criteria 1: General Information and Service Provider Eligibility**

<b>Applicant's Organization Name:</b>	
<b>Applicant's Organization is a:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Planning Organization (council of governments, regional planning commission) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Economic Development Organization <input type="checkbox"/> County Government <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Extension Program <input type="checkbox"/> For-profit enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> Municipality

**Criteria 2: Capacity, Expertise, and Previous Experience**

Describe how your organization (and any partners, if applicable) will provide sufficient capacity and expertise to municipalities to increase housing opportunities. Describe recent relevant experience and housing work.

### **Criteria 3: Scope of Work**

The Department intends the service provider grants to provide municipalities with the following services:

- Municipal ordinance development designed to increase housing opportunities and further the purposes of the Fair Housing Act and Maine Human Rights Act;
- Mapping or other spatial analysis tools to visualize zoning ordinances or housing needs by region;
- Educational materials for planning boards, elected officials, municipal boards and housing committees focusing on increasing housing opportunities; and
- Technical assistance related to:
  - Comprehensive planning review and master planning, focusing on identifying housing and land use priorities;
  - Assessing infrastructure upgrades;
  - Assessing the housing market and future housing needs;
  - Assessing feasibility of potential sites;
  - Developing housing prototypes; and
  - Facilitating regional housing needs assessments

Describe the tasks that will be undertaken to achieve the desired outcomes and meet the requirements stated in the RFA including:

- Proposed Project(s): Describe the proposed project(s), including deliverables, project timeline(s), roles and responsibilities of project managers and partners, and the expected outcomes.
- Need for the Project(s): Describe the need for the project(s). Why is this project needed?
- Approach to Community Engagement and Regional Approaches: Applicants must include examples of community engagement activities, including inclusive planning processes so that diverse communities participate.



**Criteria 4: Budget Proposal**

<b>Budget Narrative</b>
Provide a detailed narrative of your proposed expenses. Applicants may request up to \$75,000. For additional information, please see the Activities and Requirements section of this RFA.

<b>Budget Worksheet</b>			
A 15% cost share is required of the Applicant. In-kind match is permitted. For additional information, please see the Activities and Requirements section of this RFA.			
<b>Project Task</b>	<b>Funds Requested</b>	<b>Cost Share and Other Funds</b>	<b>Total Project Budget</b>
Task 1			
Task 2			
Task 3			
Task 4			
<i>(insert lines for additional tasks, as necessary)</i>			
<b>Total</b>			

### **Criteria 5: Letters of Support**

Applications must include letters of support from municipalities interested in receiving planning and housing services from the service provider. Letters of support for each municipality, and other project partners as appropriate, must be included with the application package. Do not send letters separately.