



Request for Proposals:

## **HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENTS TO SPUR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT**

April 15, 2021

### **PURPOSE**

Housing development is a priority for mill towns emerging from economic restructuring for the purposes of retaining and attracting an available workforce. FOR/Maine is seeking a construction services consultancy to assist designated communities in spurring private-sector housing development in their towns.

### **BACKGROUND**

In the wake of six major paper mills rapidly closing in the state of Maine by 2016, a public-private partnership formed to address the economic aftermath and set a course for Maine's forestry sector to forward position itself in the global marketplace. The Forest Opportunity Roadmap, known as FOR/Maine (<https://formaine.org>), comprises industry leaders, sector representatives, university researchers, market-attraction specialists, and public officials. FOR/Maine committees are advancing the coalition's mission.

One of those FOR/Maine committees is focused on community development in mill towns. Among the top priorities identified by communities is housing development. In many mill towns, the housing stock is tired and outmoded, relics of the high-water mark of paper-making prosperity from decades ago. Recent mill closures depressed current real estate prices. However, recovery efforts are taking effect in many towns, and the need to attract and retain working families with quality housing is a priority.

### **SCOPE**

Each participating client community will designate a local steering committee. Client communities in Maine include\*:

- Ashland
- Millinocket
- East Millinocket
- Old Town
- Bucksport

- Baileyville (Woodland)
- Madison

\*The specific towns or number of towns could change by one or two, but the final client list will be solidified in time to formalize the contract.

The successful consultant will work directly with each steering committee and:

- produce a market study of housing potential in that community by unit type, pricing, and consumer availability,
- advise each steering committee on the highest potential for new-construction housing in their community, including any impediments or incentives they could address to spur private-sector development,
- **OR** conduct a conditions assessment of, and pre-development work on, a buildable parcel (as identified by the steering committee), preparing it as closely as possible to “construction ready.”

Anticipated awards could range from \$60,000 to \$90,000 inclusive of all communities served. This project will start June 7, 2021 and conclude by December 31. The timeline is negotiable based on a successful proposal.

## **PROCESS**

FOR/Maine will be accepting proposals through 11:59pm on May 14, 2021. Formal proposals should be sent electronically to program director Robert O’Brien at [robrien@mdf.org](mailto:robrien@mdf.org).

Proposals will be scored by a small selection committee based on:

(1) Qualifications. Please submit the names and qualifications of the project team. Do not include members who will not be working directly on the project. Maximum one (1) page per project lead. Experience related to the housing sector need only be referenced here and may be embellished in the next section. The selection committee will weigh that experience in both sections without needing to repeat it. [25 points]

(2) Familiarity with the Housing Sector. Please describe on one (1) page total the experience of the project lead(s) in real estate development, site assessments, or data aggregation. Past project materials may be included for the purposes of illustration in an addendum, but a summary of such projects should be complete in the one-page description of experience. [25 points]

→ Note: the selection committee is aware that some housing models can produce short-term profits for a builder but long-term service obligations for the municipality that are not supported by the property taxes that the development generates. The selection committee further seeks housing models that promote community and connectivity, rather than social detachment. Pointing to projects, training, or familiarity with practices that are fiscally responsible for the town and socially connected for the community will be received positively.

(3) Capacity to Perform. Please include on three (3) pages maximum:

1. A summary narrative on how the work will be initiated and concluded.
  - a. Note: Part of the requirements of this contract is to participate in local steering committees' conversations on objectives and to provide consultation on the best product within the scope of work that fits their goals.
2. A List of Activities to perform a local housing market study.\*
3. A separate List of Activities to perform a site assessment of and pre-development work on a parcel.\*
  - a. Note: Part of the requirements of this contract is to identify supplemental financing sources beyond conventional lending that will make a development feasible.
4. A timetable to carry out the cumulative work and how client services may overlap. Please indicate a target percentage of project completion in monthly increments.

\* The selection committee understands these activities will be repeated based on the number of client communities. [25 points]

(4) Feasible Budget. Please provide on one (1) page a list of delineated costs (time, materials, expenses, and travel) to successfully complete the deliverables in section three (3) above. Please estimate the contract cost per community participant should the number of participants change during the contract. [25 points]

The successful contract recipient will be notified by Friday, June 4, 2021. All applicants will be notified by Friday, June 11.

#### **CONTRACT TYPE**

This is a fixed-price contract, inclusive of all services rendered to client communities. Contracts will be paid monthly based on the percentage of the workplan that is complete.

#### **ADDITIONAL DETAILS**

FOR/Maine is staffed and administered by the Maine Development Foundation. This contract is generously funded from a grant by the US Economic Development Administration. Contract awards are subject to federal procurement standards.

#### **CONTACT PERSON**

Questions or clarifications may be directed to the contact below until May 11. After May 11, the contact may not comment on the substance of the proposals until directed to by the selection committee. Questions and responses will be posted at [www.mdf.org/program-partnerships/for-maine/rfp-for-maine/](http://www.mdf.org/program-partnerships/for-maine/rfp-for-maine/)

Robert O'Brien, Program Director  
Maine Development Foundation  
[robrien@mdf.org](mailto:robrien@mdf.org)  
(207) 939-7703

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