**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFA #202312254, Housing Opportunity Municipal Grants |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Economic and Community Development |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | February 20, 2024  |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | February 28, 2024  |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | March 7, 2024  |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov  |

**The recording of the Informational Session held on February 13, 2024 is linked below.**

<https://mainestate.zoom.us/rec/share/y4hwl2NvlpHVlI0FsCdhxxFhWfUwcveorTjMTrrZR89IpI3w4FA4DzUyh-wUc0oO.oVmBt1lXqdZTSrev>

Passcode: =5wL.g5Q

**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answer.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| RFA Terms/ Acronyms, Page 3 | Is there anyway to propose a resource that would be available and supportive of all municipalities, perhaps partnering with a regional COG? Or do you have to partner with a specific municipality? |
| **Answer** |
| Municipal applicants are not required to partner with any entity or other municipality, but may do so. Applicants for this grant must meet the definition of municipality as defined on page 3 of the RFA. |

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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Is there any competitive advantage or requirement to be a part of the Community Resilience Partnership? The grant amounts seem to be similar but didn't see it mentioned in the written materials. |
| **Answer** |
| There is no requirement for a municipality to be engaged in another grant process or strategic partnership with any state agency. Desired outcomes of the RFA are listed on pages 7-8 and can include supporting additional goals in tandem with other state strategic processes.  |

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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section B, Page 8 | The RFA says "acquisition of property or construction costs,", which I thought referred to real property. We are hoping to apply for both hardware (perhaps a tablet) and software to expedite the permitting process. Are those costs eligible? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, acquisition of equipment in support of a desired outcome is an eligible expense.   |

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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Page 7-8 | Is there a match requirement? |
| **Answer** |
| There is no match requirement.  |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  | Do you anticipate having a second competitive round? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department of Economic and Community Development reserves the right to hold an additional grant round, however currently it is anticipated that this would be the only competitive grant round.  |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section B, Page 4-5 | Will this presentation be added to the website when it has concluded? |
| **Answer** |
| The recording of the information session can be found at the link included at the beginning of this Q&A Summary document. |

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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section B, Page 5 | Where will the final grantee municipalities and their project summaries be published? |
| **Answer** |
| The final awardee municipalities and their project summaries will be published on the Housing Opportunity Program Website: <https://www.maine.gov/decd/housingopportunityprogram>  |

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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section D-E, Page 5 | Is there an estimated timeline for when the funds would be awarded and/or when they need to be expended by? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department is intending to contract with municipalities in late spring or early summer with funds expended by June 30, 2025. |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Could the funds be used to cover the cost of an Ordinance update for which an RFP has already been issued? |
| **Answer** |
| Grant awards through this RFA can be utilized for a project that meets the requirements of the grant and includes project(s) that focus on the desired outcomes listed on pages 7-8 of the RFA. Grant awards can be used to supplement existing projects if a detailed budget is included with the application and if the project is not currently receiving funding through another Housing Opportunity Program grant.  |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section C, Page 5 | We plan on submitting a joint application with one municipality taking the lead as far as serving as the financial agent and crafting the application. Do we list all participating municipalities as the applicant? Or only the lead municipality? |
| **Answer** |
| For a joint municipality application, list only the lead municipality as the Applicant (pages 14 and 15 of the RFA). Please list additional municipalities under Criteria 2, 3, and 4 of the application as applicable (pages 16-18 of the RFA). |

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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section B, Page 4 | Is there any State requirement for any form of competitive selection process for any services procured by the municipality with these grant funds? If so, please describe? |
| **Answer** |
| There is no requirement for a competitive selection process for services provided by a grantee under this grant. |

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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section B, Page 4 | Will there be any opportunity to adjust budgeted amounts as presented in the grant application based upon more detailed pricing information becoming available either: Before any contract is finalized, or During the contract period? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, a grantee can request an adjustment to budgeted amounts before a contract is finalized as long as the amount does not exceed the maximum as set forth in the RFA. The Department will review the request based on current funding and will notify the grantee if an adjustment can be made.  |

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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Could the funds be used to off-set the cost of a Comprehensive Plan Update already underway?  |
| **Answer** |
| Grant awards through this RFA can be utilized for a project that meets the requirements of the grant and includes project(s) that focus on the desired outcomes listed on pages 7-8 of the RFA. Grant awards can be used to supplement existing projects if a detailed budget is included with the application and the included scope of work details the relevant desired outcomes.  |

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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Could the funding be used for an outside review of some of our development review processes (for further streamlining and simplification of our site plan and subdivision ordinances).  |
| **Answer** |
| Desired Outcomes for this RFA are listed on pages 7-8 of the RFA.  |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section C, Page 8  | How long would the municipality have to use the funding? |
| **Answer** |
| Following notification of an award, grantee municipalities will enter into a one-year contract with the Department. Specific requirements will be established in the contract. A municipality awarded a grant award will have one year to access funding for the project. |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, D. Awards, Pg. 5  | What is the overall funding amount that is available for distribution through this opportunity? Does a portion of the total funding amount include left over funds from the Service Provider Grant opportunity?  |
| **Answer** |
| The Department currently expects to award approximately $1,000,000 for this grant round. |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, D. Awards, Pg. 5 |  Is there a determined date for when applicants will be notified regarding whether funding has or has not been granted to them? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department intends to notify applicants of the status of submitted applications within two months of the application due date. |

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, D. Awards, Pg. 5  | In the case when a municipality applies for multiple project proposals, is the total award amount $50,000 in total, or is it a maximum of $50,000 per project for one municipality?  |
| **Answer** |
| The total award for a single municipal application is $50,000. |

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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section C, Page 5 | Is it possible for a municipality to apply jointly with other municipalities for one proposal and submit a separate project proposal that is solely for that municipality?  |
| **Answer** |
| No, a municipality may only submit one application either as a sole applicant or as part of a joint application with other municipalities.  |

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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section C, Page 5 | What does it mean to apply as a “joint application?” Would the primary municipality solely need support letters from the other municipalities or is there additional information we need to apply jointly? |
| **Answer** |
| A joint application means that two or more municipalities are applying for this grant funding to support a single regional project. Including letters of support from affiliated municipalities in a joint application is not required, however that may assist the Department in reviewing the joint application. Please list the lead agency on the application.  |

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| **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Let’s say there’s an upcoming affordable housing project spearheaded by a private developer/nonprofit that would help meet the town and states’ housing goals. Could the town use this money as a reimbursement so the town could waive those developers’ permitting and/or application fees.  |
| **Answer** |
| Desired Outcomes for this RFA are listed on pages 7-8 of the RFA, which includes proposals to create or amend permitting procedures to streamline housing development.  |

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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Could the town allot these funds to create and start building a housing fund to support housing development projects that would help meet local housing goals?  |
| **Answer** |
| Desired Outcomes for this RFA are listed on pages 7-8 of the RFA.  |

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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section E, Page 5 | If a portion of the proposal is delayed due to unforeseeable changes, would there be a possibility to extent the contract time beyond June 2025? If so, what is the process to request more time? |
| **Answer** |
| At this time there is not an option to extend the contract past June 2025, as the Department’s funding is limited to the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year. |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 8 | Can we utilize this funding if we have received funding for a housing study under the initial Service Provider Housing Opportunity grant?  Is this the same program or considered something different?  We would not use the funds for the same project as the initial grant.  |
| **Answer** |
| Funding through this RFA can be combined with other grant sources. If combining a project with HOP service provider grant funds, the scope of the proposed project must differ from a project awarded a contract through a service provider grant. |

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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instruction, Section D, Page 5 | There is no mention of match in the RFA, but just want to confirm there is no match requirement.  |
| **Answer** |
| There is no match requirement for this RFA. |

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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instruction, Section D, Page 5 | Is the max award $175,000, even if you have more than three neighboring municipalities that are interested in collaborating on similar projects? |
| **Answer** |
| The maximum award amount for a joint application is $175,000. |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Activities and Requirements, Section A, Page 7-8 | Can these funds be used for temporary staff positions?  |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, the award from this RFA could be used for a temporary staff position if that position helps a municipality attain housing related goals as referred to in the Desired Outcomes section of the RFA on page 7-8 |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Application Details and Instructions, Section E, Page 5 | Can the contract be extended for longer than a year? |
| **Answer** |
| At this time there is not an option to extend the contract past June 2025, as the Department’s funding is limited to the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year. |