

Town of Great Barrington, MA

Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund Request for Proposals for an Affordable Housing Opportunities

October 2023

I. INTRODUCTION AND IMPORTANT DATES

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund's mission is to create, preserve and support affordable housing in Great Barrington, and for the funding of community housing, as defined in and in accordance with the provisions of G.L. Chapter 44, §55C. Affordable housing is defined as being affordable to those persons and households whose annual income is less than 100 percent of the area median income (AMI), as determined by HUD. Since its inception in 2017, the Trust's projects have included emergency rental assistance programs, down payment assistance programs, acquisition of land on which to create new homes, and grants for the renovation of homes and buildings to create or preserve affordable housing. The Trust's projects are funded by municipal appropriations from the Town's general fund and the Community Preservation Act (CPA), and may also be funded from donations of money, land, and/or buildings.

With this Request for Proposals the Trust seeks proposals for new affordable housing, and for renovation and redevelopment projects that will produce new or preserve existing affordable housing.

- RFP Issuance: October 2, 2023
- This RFP will remain open until June 30, 2024
- Inquiries Deadline: Up to two weeks prior to the submission
- Proposal Submission Deadline: By the 1st of each month, 2:00 PM
- Proposal Presentations: At the next regular meeting of the Trust
- Selection: To the greatest extent possible selection will be made at the time of the presentations but may be continued to additional meetings at the discretion of the Trust.

II. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Town of Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund (the "Trust"), through the Town Manager, is seeking proposals from persons and/or developers who have the experience, capacity, and proven ability to build, create, operate, and manage affordable housing opportunities on small, medium and large scales, and by using a variety of financing techniques. The intent of this RFP is to identify projects and collaborators that will provide affordable housing for Great Barrington in keeping with the Trust's mission, the Town's housing strategies, and the Trust's financial obligations. With this RFP the Trust seeks proposals for the following:

- For an applicant to acquire developable land for new affordable housing
- Renovation and redevelopment projects that will produce new or preserve existing affordable housing.

The Trust is open to considering the development, rehabilitation and/or future ownership scenarios on projects that respond to the above. For land acquisition projects, the affordable housing deed restriction must be in perpetuity, using deed restrictions whose form and content are agreeable to the Trust and any

project lenders. For other projects, the Trust is open to considering shorter deed restrictions; larger grant amounts from the Trust will require longer deed restrictions.

Any type of entity may submit a response to this RFP. Respondents could include nonprofit housing and community development partners, for profit housing developers, and even private landowners or homeowners who are seeking to help fulfill the Trust's mission.

All proposals and any subsequent grant award agreement will become a public records.

III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

Applicants should submit one (1) original response, three (3) hard copies of the response, and one (1) electronic version **on or before 2:00 pm of the first business day of each month, to.**

Town of Great Barrington
Affordable Housing Trust Fund
c/o Christopher Rembold, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Planning
334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Proposals received after the monthly deadline time will be held until the subsequent submission period.

All inquiries regarding this RFP should be submitted via e-mail and directed to the Assistant Town Manager/Director of Planning & Community Development (crembold@townofgb.org), no later than 2:00 PM fourteen calendar days before the submission date. All inquiries and responses to inquiries pertaining to this RFP will be shared with all registered proposers. The Trust is not responsible for the reliability of electronic communications.

Responses must be marked "2023 Proposal to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund" and must include all required documents, completed and signed per this RFP, and all required forms per this RFP. The Trust reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to cancel this Request for Proposals if it is deemed in the best interest of the Trust.

This RFP is subject to the Massachusetts Uniform Procurement Act, MGL Ch. 30B as applicable.

The Trust makes no representations or warranties, express or implied, as to the accuracy and/or or completeness of the information provided in this RFP. This RFP (including all attachments and supplements) is made subject to errors, omissions, prior sale, lease or financing and withdrawal without prior notice, and changes to, additional, and different interpretations of applicable laws and regulations.

Proposers should undertake their own review and analyses concerning physical conditions, environmental conditions, applicable zoning, required permits and approvals, and other developments and legal considerations for their subject sites relevant to the terms and elements of their proposals.

IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. A cover letter of interest signed by the principal(s), with their contact information, indicating their understanding of the Trust's mission, their willingness to enter into contracts with the Town and the Trust including any required affordable housing deed restrictions.

Also, all responses shall include numbered sections that correspond to the requirements below.

2. **Narrative Description and Timeline:** The response shall include a description of the concept for the subject property, including its location, the feasibility of development or redevelopment, the types of uses to be located on the property including the number of affordable housing units, their types, sizes and their proposed future sale prices or rents, level of affordability (expressed as a percentage of Area Median Income), marketing plan, and management plan and management entity (if any). Include a timeline for acquisition, permitting, financing, construction, reconstruction or rehabilitation, and occupancy. Describe whether significant structural changes or additions, including removal or replacement of potential historically significant exterior features, are anticipated, and whether any significant site changes, e.g. parking or landscaping. Fully describe all zoning requirements or limitations, describe other local permits that may be required, and describe the timeline for achieving any needed approvals.
3. **Experience:** The response shall include a description of the relevant experience of the Proposer, whether an individual or a team. Describe the experience of the individuals and organizations to be involved, including the developer, architect and code professionals, engineers and consultants, and may include the contractor, property manager, lenders and investors if any. Background information, including firm resumes and resumes for principals and employees expected to be assigned to the project, shall be provided.
4. **Organization:** The response shall include an organizational chart of the Proposer, along with: The name, address and telephone number of the Proposer, the name of any representative authorized to act on his/her behalf, the name of the contact to which all correspondence should be addressed, and the names and primary responsibilities of each individual on the development team.
5. **Projects:** List of relevant projects that have been completed by the proposer in the past ten years.
6. **References:** Five (5) relevant references, including contact information.
7. **Budget:** Fully describe the development budget including the amount and source of all proposed funds, and a 10-year operating pro-forma that reflects typical income (sales or rents) and expenses including but not limited to debt service costs and capital or operating reserves. Provide a development financing plan, including:
 - a. The amount of grant funds the Proposer is seeking from the Trust, when those funds would be expected (month/year) and whether those funds would be needed in one lump sum or over a period of time.
 - b. A proposed pre-development budget, if applicable, including all projected sources to be used to secure necessary permits and approvals for the rehabilitation and any construction.
 - c. A development budget that includes a list of sources and uses.
 - d. Operating budgets with income and expenses over a minimum 10-year period.
 - e. Assumptions used in making the above determinations, for example, utility costs, taxes or exemptions, price escalations, etc.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Minimum Threshold Criteria

1. A letter of interest signed by the proposal principal(s).
2. Timely submission of the proposal.
3. Submission of required, standard forms: the Certifications of Tax Compliance, Non-collusion, and

Authority (see Appendix A).

4. A rehabilitation and occupancy timeline of no longer than two (2) years.
5. All units must be affordable for households earning up to a maximum of 100% of the Area Median Income.

Comparative Evaluation Criteria

Proposals meeting the minimum criteria will then be judged on the following additional comparative evaluation criteria, with assignment of a rating not advantageous, advantageous or highly advantageous.

1. Overall quality of proposal

Not Advantageous: proposal complete and responsive to some, but not all items in RFP.

Advantageous: proposal well written with a clear visual and graphic format and responsive to all items in RFP.

Highly Advantageous: proposal is of outstanding visual and written quality, responsive to all items in RFP and introduces innovative and creative concepts with evidence demonstrating that they will result in affordable homes in Great Barrington in a timely manner.

2. Experience

Experience of Proposer's principal person and any primary development team members in successfully rehabilitation homes and/or developing affordable housing.

Not Advantageous: The proposer has never produced an affordable home.

Advantageous: The proposer has produced an affordable home in the last 5 years.

Highly Advantageous: The proposer has produced multiple affordable homes in the Berkshires in the last 5 years.

3. Community and Outreach

Not Advantageous: The proposer has little or no experience with community engagement.

Advantageous: The proposal demonstrates a clear plan to market the project and experience with community engagement.

Highly Advantageous: The proposal includes broad community outreach and engagement designed to reach underserved community members. The proposer has extensive experience in Berkshire County with community engagement.

4. Financial feasibility

Financial feasibility of development proposal based on projected funding sources for predevelopment, development, operating costs and financial strength of developer.

Not Advantageous: The project budget has significant gaps.

Advantageous: The project budget meets industry standards for financial feasibility.

Highly Advantageous: Financial feasibility is more than adequate to address the projected funding needs.

5. Affordability

Income requirements for households to qualify for affordable units:

Not Responsive: There project will not yield any affordable housing units.

Not Advantageous: One affordable unit will be preserved or created for a household with incomes of 100% of AMI or less.

Advantageous: More than one affordable unit will be preserved or created for households with incomes of 100% of AMI or less.

Highly Advantageous: More than three affordable units will be preserved or created for households with incomes of 80% of AMI or less. All units will be affordable to those with incomes of 100% of AMI or less.

6. Quality of Housing

Not Advantageous: Meets minimum code and sanitation standards. Limited useable square foot area.

Advantageous: Exceeds minimum standards and provides more useable area. May include a full kitchen, full bath, washer/dryer, and high speed internet. Rented on a month to month basis.

Highly Advantageous: Provides spacious living areas, strong natural light, full kitchen, washer/dryer, and high speed internet. Rented on a long term lease.

7. Interview

The Trust may require an interview with Proposers, and any interview presentations will be considered as part of the overall evaluation process to determine the successful proposer.

Not Advantageous: interview does not show a full understanding of the concerns of the Trust and the Town as described in the RFP.

Advantageous: responsive to the concerns of the Trust and the Town as described in the RFP.

Highly Advantageous: very responsive to the concerns of the Trust and the Town as described in the RFP, and fully engaged in the interview process in a dynamic and constructive manner.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS

All proposals submitted by the deadline will be opened in public. All information contained in the proposals is public including the requested grant amount. The Trust will review and evaluate all proposals received by the submission deadline, based on the criteria outlined herein. Evaluation of the proposals will be based on information provided in the proposer's submission as described the submission requirements of this RFP and any interviews, references, and additional information requested by the Trust. The successful proposer will be the responsive and responsible proposer who submits the most advantageous proposal, taking into consideration the grant amount requested from the Trust and all other evaluation criteria set forth in the RFP. The Trust will notify all proposers in writing of its decision.

The Trust will select proposals to fund that it deems likely to create affordable housing consistent with the Trust's mission. The Trust will take into consideration all evaluation criteria and the request grant amount. More than one proposed may be selected, and the Trust reserves the right to offer grant amounts that are lower or higher than requested. All grants may be subject to appropriation.

VIII. EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT

The successful proposer will be required to execute a Grant Agreement, which will be negotiated after the selection process, committing to the elements of the proposal and a timeline for implementation of the project, and prerequisites, if any, to be fulfilled.

Appendix A

Required Forms:

- Certification of Tax Compliance
- Certificate of Non-collusion
- Certificate of Vote/Authority

CERTIFICATE AS TO PAYMENT OF STATE TAXES

Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 62C, Section 49A, I certify under the penalties of perjury that the proposer named below has complied with all laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relating to taxes, reporting of employees and contractors, and withholding and remitting of child support.

Social Security Number
or Federal Identification Number

Corporate Name

Signature of Individual

by: _____

CERTIFICATE OF NON-COLLUSION

The undersigned certifies under penalties of perjury that this proposal is in all respects bona fide, fair and made without collusion or fraud with any other person. As used in this certification, the word "person" shall mean any natural person, joint venture, partnership, corporation, or other business or legal entity.

Signature/Title

Company/Firm Name

CERTIFICATE OF VOTE / AUTHORITY
(Corporations Only)

At a duly authorized meeting of the Board of Directors of _____
(firm name)

held on _____, it was voted, that
Date

Name Officer _____

of this company, be and hereby is authorized to execute contracts and bonds in the name and on behalf of said company, and affix its corporate seal hereto; and such execution of any contract or obligation in this company's name on its behalf by such officer under seal of the company, shall be valid and binding upon this company.

I hereby certify that I am the Clerk of the above named corporation and that

_____ is the duly elected officer as above of said company, and that the above vote has not been amended or rescinded and remains in full force and effect as of the date of this certificate.

Date Clerk of Corporation _____

Affix Corporate Seal here