

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH

RFQ #12-15

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL PLANNING SERVICES

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PORTSMOUTH'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

Sealed statements of qualifications, plainly marked “RFQ 12-15, Professional Planning Services for “Design Guidelines for Portsmouth’s Historic District” on the outside of the mailing envelope, addressed to the Finance/Purchasing Department, City Hall, 1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801 will be accepted until 2 p.m. on September 30th, 2014.

SCOPE OF WORK: The City of Portsmouth’s Planning Department is requesting statements of qualifications from qualified firms to develop Design Guidelines for Portsmouth’s Historic District.

Specifications may be obtained by visiting the Finance/Purchasing Department section of the City of Portsmouth website at www.cityofportsmouth.com. Addenda to the specifications, if any, including written answers to questions, will be posted on the City of Portsmouth website under the project heading.

The City of Portsmouth reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, to waive technical or legal deficiencies, and to accept any submittal that it may deem to be in the best interest of the City.

Requests for additional information should be directed to Mr. Nicholas J. Cracknell, Principal Planner, in the City of Portsmouth Planning Department (603) 610-7328 or by e-mail at njcracknell@cityofportsmouth.com. The deadline for questions and requests for additional information is September 18th, 2014 at 2 p.m.

If you have administrative questions, please contact the Finance/Purchasing Department at the following number: (603) 610-7227.

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The City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire (the "City") invites interested and qualified consultants specializing in historic preservation or a related field to submit a proposal (the "Proposal" or "Proposals") to work with the Historic District Commission to develop design guidelines that will assist property owners of the City regarding appropriate design for rehabilitation, renovation, reconstruction, or additions to existing buildings as well as for new construction within the City's Historic District. The Historic District includes residential properties as well as commercial and civic buildings and structures.

PORTSMOUTH'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

The City of Portsmouth is a small, historic New Hampshire city settled in 1623. It is a compact community (16 square miles) of 21,000 residents situated directly off of Interstate 95 on the Maine / NH border. Portsmouth's central business district is widely recognized as the heart of the community, and its continued success in urban design and preservation is essential to the City's future livelihood. Much of the downtown is unique for its outstanding and unusually complete Colonial and Federal architecture, and within the community there is broad recognition of the downtown's architectural, historical, and archeological importance. The downtown reflects the rebuilding after its 19th century fires which formed a central core of Federal commercial buildings and established the three-story building height that continued to the late 20th century. The use of local red brick in the commercial core established its unique architectural character including excellent examples of master builders and architects from the Federal through the Victorian period.

The Portsmouth Historic District ("District") comprises the urban land area of the colonial port-capital of New Hampshire as it evolved by the mid-nineteenth century. It contains approximately 1,400 buildings and structures as well as some seven tested or excavated archaeological sites. With the exception of several large, modern intrusions since the mid-twentieth century, the District is densely built either by original land division or through the process of later subdivision and infill. Bounded on the east by the Piscataqua River, the district follows an irregular pattern, extending along the principal land transportation routes radiating from the urban core (see Exhibit 1).

The District encompasses four distinct, yet historically related components of the old town: the South End; the Downtown; the North End (or Christian Shore); and the Haymarket Square/ Middle Street areas. The South End is a tightly built residential area of wooden houses, ranging from the later 17th though the early 20th century, surrounding the South Mill Pond along streets interlacing the spine of South, Marcy and Pleasant Streets. The commercial core is largely brick, three story blocks and rows

along streets radiating from Market Square and built during the 19th century after a series of fires. At Haymarket Square and adjoining Court, State and Middle Streets are a series of 3-Story Federal mansions on large lots intermixed in later years with some of the most important mid-19th century Italianate and Mansard wooden and brick homes in Portsmouth. The North End and Christian Shore surround the North Mill Pond and are linked to the downtown by Maplewood Ave. While the southern portion has been heavily-impacted by urban renewal, recent redevelopment within this area has sought to diminish the harsh contrast of the more modern and highly-differentiated buildings and parking areas that were constructed during the later half of the 20th century.

Taken together, these four areas contain the majority of the architecturally and historically significant landmarks within the city. Their traditional settings and streetscapes, open parks and other public spaces provide a distinct sense of time and place. In summary, Portsmouth is the only colonial seaport in New Hampshire, being the capital of the Province until the American Revolution and the state's only major port throughout the 19th century. The District encompasses the whole street plan of the city from its urban inception in the 1690s to its height as the shipbuilding and commercial center. Its early recognition for outstanding Colonial and Federal architecture helped to preserve a large number of individual landmark structures during the first half of the 20th century. However, it was largely due to attempts to alter its cohesive and archeological importance in the later half of the 20th century - with a series of demolition projects and replacement with new modern building designs - that heightened public concern for the loss of the city's historic character and resulted in the establishment of the local historic district. More recently, the issue of compatibility and contextual design has evolved as the core issue confronting the quality and character of new buildings within the District. Exhibit 2 provides an overview of the recent development trends as well as some of the design-related issues the HDC hopes to address with the development of these Design Guidelines.

RELATED PLANNING & DESIGN REVIEW TOOLS

As part of an effort to address a variety of design issues relating to the scale, volume, massing and design of new infill buildings within the city's core downtown commercial area, in April 2014, the City adopted Character-Based Zoning (CBZ). The new zoning places an emphasis on contextual design and used an extensive inventory of the 400 buildings and spaces within the CBZ districts to develop dimensional and design requirements that were calibrated for each street and block.

Integral to the design review process, in November 2013, the HDC adopted a set of *Interim Architectural Design Guidelines*. As a temporary set of regulations, these guidelines function like the Secretary of the Interior's Standards but are locally-tailored for compatible infill development. Although, many of the recommended guidelines are different from the Secretary's Standards and some preservation theories, they are intended to chart a less-differentiated building style for new construction within the core downtown area of Portsmouth's Historic District until such time as more detailed design guidelines can be developed.

As a supplement design review tool, the HDC has also developed a 3D Massing Model for over 600 buildings in the larger downtown area (see Exhibit 3). The 3D Model is used for evaluating the placement, scale (coverage, height and volume) of new buildings within each block or street. The 3D Massing Model will help the public, the HDC, other local land use boards and commissions better understand the infill implications of massing, light and shadow affects, as well as the scaling differences between and among the surrounding buildings.

PROJECT GOALS

There are two main goals for this project. First, the HDC is seeking to bring together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, with a wide variety of backgrounds in architecture, historic preservation, economic development, city planning and urban design to work together in developing a set of regulatory guidelines that developers, property owners, realtors, and the HDC alike will use to provide more clarity and consistency for the review of new construction projects within the city's Historic District. Over the past ten years, the HDC has witnessed a steady increase in the volume of applications for new infill construction. Absent any detailed design guidelines, the project review process HDC has become increasingly complex, subjective, lengthy, expensive, and many design recommendations are perceived as being unclear or inconsistent over time. This issue is particularly emblematic for larger infill redevelopment of construction projects. Thus, this project seeks to develop simple and clear guidelines that can be understood and applied by professional and public alike. The design guidelines must define and describe their purpose, be illustrative, and the language must be directive in a manner that is also legally defensible.

The second major goal of this project is to address the need for establishing a locally-calibrated set of architectural design principles and associated guidelines for new infill construction that ensures that new infill buildings will fill empty spaces (often replacing surface parking lots or intrusive buildings) in a way that protects their historic integrity of the abutting structures and surrounding context, promotes good land use, and enhances the economic vitality of the city. Such principles should encourage stakeholders to think critically about the future of the Historic District and provide clarity and consistency for developers, designers and regulators to make it easier to design, permit and construct new projects. The principles for new infill development should address issues such as massing, scale, and placement of new buildings as well as the core issue of defining an appropriate level of differentiation for new building design across a wide variety of contexts.

PROJECT STUDY AREA

The Portsmouth Historic District includes approximately 1,200 properties as shown in Exhibit 1.

CITY STAFF SUPPORT

City staff in the Planning Department will assist the consultant with any data requests and will also assist with review of initial drafts of the design guidelines. Member(s) of the HDC will assist staff with project oversight. The city will also provide complete and current copy of the Historic Inventory of buildings that was prepared by the Portsmouth Advocates in 1982.

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for the project includes the following:

A. Meetings & Site Visit:

1. Staff Meeting - The City will schedule a meeting with the consultant before work begins to discuss the scope of work, methodology, schedule, data formatting issues, and other necessary or relevant matters. Once the project has commenced, it is expected that the consultant will attend a monthly meeting with staff and members of the HDC's. Such meetings may be simultaneous to the two required public meetings listed below.

2. Site Visit and Inventory of the Historic District – Accompanied by representatives from the City, the consultant will tour the District in order to understand the planning and design issues within the Historic District. The city will also provide an electronic copy of the 1982 Historic Survey records and GIS base maps of the district.
3. Public Meetings - The consultant, with support from the Planning Department staff, will facilitate, at minimum, two (2) public meetings with the HDC during the project: one (1) meeting to be held at the start of the project and one (1) meeting to be held upon project completion to make a formal presentation of the final manual to the City Council, HDC and public.

B. Design Guidelines:

The HDC desires to develop a set of well-crafted design guidelines for the District to ensure that the alternations to existing historic structures and new infill construction is compatible, respectful, and responsible with the historic buildings in the District.

- A. The Design Guidelines shall include the following:
 1. Introductory information including: table of contents, district identification information (including district location, district boundaries, listing on historic registries), an executive summary (including acknowledgements, explanation of the importance of protecting the historic district, why the guidelines manual was developed, and how to use the manual).
 2. Explanation and text of the Historic District Ordinance.
 3. Explanation of the HDC and the review process, including Certificate of Appropriateness application and review process, application forms, appeals process, and other related regulations, as applicable.
 4. Brief history of the District, including its historical development, significant properties and designated period of significance.
 5. Guidelines and identification of character-defining features of the District, including but not limited to: road patterns, lot configurations, building-to-building/building-to-site relationships, building types and styles, levels of differentiation, building materials, features and details, building uses, landscape features, and streetscape features. Identification should include photographs of representative examples taken from the district.
 6. Guidelines for the treatment of historic properties including but not limited to: maintenance, alterations, additions, and appropriate treatment of historic features. Recommendations should follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and should be based on the identified historic, character-defining features of the district. (General recommendations that have no application to the historic district should not be included; unique features and situations in the district should be addressed with customized recommendations.)
 7. Guidelines for the treatment of non-historic properties including but not limited to: maintenance, alterations, and additions. Recommendations should follow best available design principles and should be context-based and rely on the surrounding historic, character-defining features of the district.
 8. Guidelines for new construction (including infill) including but not limited to: acceptable locations, site setting and orientation, setbacks, size, height, styles, materials and design of various features such as windows, doors, roofs, etc... Guidelines for new

construction should be based on identified local preservation goals developed for distinct areas within the District through a public planning process.

9. Guidelines for exterior maintenance, roofing, exterior woodwork, masonry, windows, and doors.
10. Guidelines for landscape plans and other construction activities including but not limited to: streetscape improvements, utilities, tree preservation, fences, retaining walls, parking, paving materials, and lot size.
11. Guidelines for partial and full demolition, neglect of properties, and relocating buildings.
12. Guidelines for sustainability elements such as wind, solar and other related elements that impact the exterior building design.
13. Resources and references, including but not limited to: Glossary of Terms, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and associated guidance materials such as Preservation Briefs, local historic district regulations and other applicable laws and regulations, applicable forms and applications, lists of available resources with contact information and a Bibliography.
14. Photos from the District shall be used throughout the manual to illustrate building types and styles, character-defining features, landscape features, appropriate new construction, and other guidelines subjects.
15. The consultant will be expected to work closely with the HDC and Planning Department staff in the development of the guidelines.
16. A first draft of the design guidelines manual shall be submitted to the City on or before December 31st, 2014; while a final report shall be submitted to the City on or before March 31st, 2015.

C. Final Products

The consultant will provide the City with ten (10) bound copies of the Design Guidelines plus one (1) unbound copy. The Design Guidelines should also be provided in digital Microsoft Word format so that the City may make future additions or changes.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The selected consultant shall be expected to begin work within two weeks of contract signing and complete all tasks in their entirety by **March 31, 2015**. The schedule for the selection process and project timeline is as follows. Dates noted in bold type and shown with an asterisk must be met. A response to this RFQ shall indicate the Proposer's ability to comply with the projected project timeline.

SEPTEMBER 2014	SOLICIT REQUESTS FOR QUALIFICATIONS FROM CONSULTANTS
OCTOBER 2014	SELECT CONSULTANT AND NEGOTIATE CONTRACT / MEET WITH STAFF AND HDC / CONDUCT A SITE VISIT AND SCHEDULE THE 1 ST PUBLIC MEETING
NOVEMBER 2014	CONDUCT THE 1 ST PUBLIC MEETING
DECEMBER 2014	DEVELOPMENT OF 1 ST DRAFT OF DESIGN GUIDELINES
JANUARY 31ST, 2015	SUBMISSION OF 1ST DRAFT OF DESIGN GUIDELINES
FEBRUARY 2015	HDC REVIEW OF 1 ST DRAFT OF DESIGN GUIDELINES
MARCH 1ST, 2015	SUBMISSION OF FINAL DRAFT OF DESIGN GUIDELINES
MARCH, 2015	CONDUCT THE 2 ND PUBLIC MEETING
MARCH 31 ST , 2015	SUBMISSION OF FINAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

FUNDING

This project is funded through an appropriation from the City and will be administered by the Planning Department. The total estimated budget available for this project is **\$50,000**. Project work must be completed in accordance with all applicable statutes, laws, and regulations.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Statements of Qualifications shall include the following:

- A. Project Understanding: Provide a statement (not to exceed 3 pages) summarizing how the consultant and/or project team is particularly qualified for this project. This statement should demonstrate familiarity and experience with the City's proposed scope of work.
- B. Tasks and Schedule – Provide a detailed description of work tasks associated with each phase of the work and a preliminary assignment of key personnel, time, and costs associated with each task. A schedule for the completion of work, including time for review by City staff.
- C. Estimated Expenses – Provide a detailed itemization of all proposed direct expenses for the project including travel, per diem expenses, printing, and the like. The consultant's proposed total project costs must be for a lump-sum amount.
- D. Firm Description: Provide a brief description of the firm including firm size and area of specialization, location of corporate headquarters, and potential satellite office proposed to

handle this project. If more than one firm, description of arrangements between firms for conducting the work, assignment of responsible individuals for each firm, and past experience of joint work by firms.

- E. Project Team: Provide names and resumes of key staff who will be assigned to the project. Each team member's education and qualifications shall be listed. The project manager shall be clearly identified. If different consultants will be teaming together, indicate the lead consultant.
- F. Comparable Projects: Summary of similar projects (up to 3) in progress or completed, with the following information for each code:
 - a. Reference name, with current contact information;
 - b. Current status of project (drafting in progress, drafting, completed);
 - c. Client type (clarifying role of private sector client, if any);
 - d. Size and scale of geographic area; and
 - e. Level of detail included other Design Guidelines.
 - f. Example Design Guidelines for new infill buildings within a historic context
- G. Sample Product: Please include one or more sample products.

Submittals shall be printed on two sides of the page and shall not have a plastic cover. Four (4) hard copies and a digital copy of the proposal in a PDF format shall be submitted.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA

Submittals will be evaluated according to the following:

A. Professional Qualifications (30%)

Proposals will be evaluated for the consultant's relevant educational background in history, architecture, architectural history, or historic preservation, as well as demonstrated experience creating design guidelines and experience working with local design review boards and commissions. Personnel involved with managing and directing the project should have one of the following: a graduate degree in architectural history, art history, historic preservation, urban design or closely related field; or, a bachelor's degree in architectural history, art history, historic preservation, urban design or closely related field plus at least two years of professional experience in historic preservation.

B. Proposed Methodology and Scope of Work (30%):

Proposals will be evaluated on the stated approach to the work, the detailed organization of tasks and schedules to implement the approach, and a demonstrated understanding of the requirements of the City.

C. Management Plan and Timetable (20%)

Proposals will be evaluated for the consultant's stated approach to managing the project, giving appropriate attention to project tasks, and the proposed timetable for the project.

D. Proposed Project Costs (20%)

The City will evaluate all submittals to determine which Consultants have the experience and qualifications that are most suited for this project. The City may request interviews with the highest-ranked Consultants and/or may request one or more prospective Consultants to submit detailed proposals, which may include the following:

1. Detailed description of the methodology being proposed.
2. Detailed work program.
3. Methods the Consultant proposes to use to manage the project and communicate with City Staff.
4. Hourly rates (inclusive of overhead and profit) for personnel or personnel categories.
5. Data and deliverables expected to be provided by the City.

CONTRACT DOCUMENT

Upon selection, the selected Consultant will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with the City. When the contract is executed by both parties, the Consultant will be instructed to commence providing the work outlined in the contract. All information, data, documents, photos, computer records, and other materials of any kind acquired or developed by the consultant pursuant to this project shall be the property of the City of Portsmouth. If the City is unable to reach agreement with the highest ranking firm, the City may enter into negotiations with the next highest ranking firm.

QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Requests for additional information should be directed to Mr. Nicholas J. Cracknell, Principal Planner, in the City of Portsmouth Planning Department (603) 610-7328 or by e-mail at njcracknell@cityofportsmouth.com. The deadline for questions and requests for additional information is September 18th, 2014 at 2 pm. Answers will not be sent directly to interested parties. Written answers questions will be posted on the City of Portsmouth website under the project heading in the form of an addendum.

INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Contract will require the Consultant to agree to pay on behalf of and hold harmless the City of Portsmouth for all claims arising in whole or in part from its work on behalf of the City.

Consultant will be required to maintain insurance in such form as will protect the Consultant from claims and liabilities for damages for bodily injury, including accidental death, and for property damage, which may arise from operations under this contract. Consultant shall also be required to maintain professional liability insurance. Amounts and coverages shall be subject to contract negotiations.

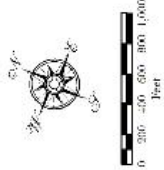

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

The City of Portsmouth reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, to waive technical or legal deficiencies, to proceed or not to proceed with any subsequent proposal process, or to negotiate without further process any contract as may be in the best interest of the City.

The City further reserves the right to undertake such investigation as it deems necessary to evaluate the qualifications of the Consultant and to evaluate its submittal. Firms may be asked to submit releases as part of the investigation and review of qualifications. Failure to provide a release if requested will result in disqualification. All concepts, designs, information and cost-savings ideas that may be generated during the selection process shall become the property of the City of Portsmouth.

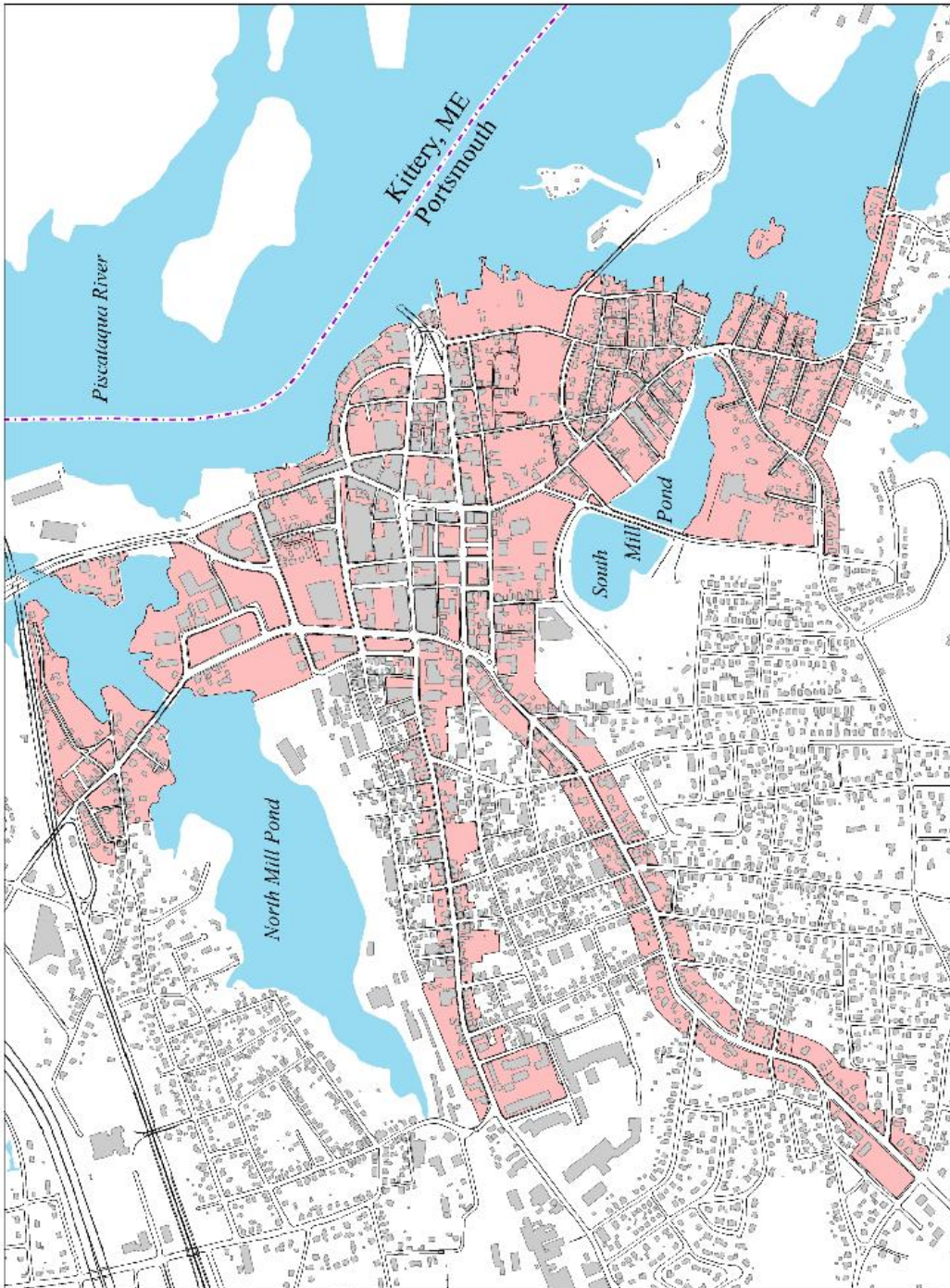
EXHIBIT 1

City Of
PORTSMOUTH
New Hampshire



0 200 400 600 800 1,000
Feet

Prepared by Portsmouth Planning Department



Portsmouth Historic District (2014)

EXHIBIT 2

RECENT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Since establishment of the District in the 1965, a wide variety of building designs have been used across a broad array of historic contexts within the District. Compared to many of the historic buildings within the commercial areas of the District, many recent buildings include significantly taller buildings with larger volumes and footprints. Moreover, many of the newer building designs often employ a highly-differentiated design from the surrounding historic buildings. This often includes using very different materials, glazing patterns, roof forms and patterns than many of the surrounding historic buildings.

Downtown Portsmouth, like many New England historic urban centers, has many good examples of historic infill buildings that were constructed out-of-scale with the surrounding context. Figure 1 shows three historic structures built in the mid to late 19th century. These landmark historic buildings are some of the tallest and largest buildings within the District. Moreover, these buildings represent a relatively low-level of differentiation from the surrounding buildings maintaining consistency with respect to materials, massing, rooflines, façade composition, projections, glazing and other architectural details that were commonly used on other historic buildings during the 18th and 19th centuries. As recently evidenced within the downtown form-based zoning project, citizens identified these large historic buildings among some of the most cherished historic structures in the city.



Figure 1 – Examples of Large Historic Infill Buildings with a Relatively Low-Differentiated Design

In stark contrast with these low-differentiated buildings from the 19th century, Figure 2 shows three typical buildings that were constructed in the 1960s and early 1970s that represent a highly-differentiated building design that was popular at that time. Although these buildings were generally reflective of the period in which they were constructed, today they are commonly referenced by the public as buildings that adversely impact not only the abutting properties but the District as a whole.



Figure 2 – Examples of Large 20th Century Infill Buildings with a Relatively High-Differentiated Design

Partly as a response to the shortcomings of the infill buildings shown in Figure 2, more recent building developers have attempted to soften the contrast between new and historic buildings by responding more

carefully to the surrounding neighborhood land uses, setbacks, massing, materials, glazing patterns and other architectural details. Although a more nuanced design approach, these new buildings (shown in Figure 3) still use a wide variety of man-made materials and other contemporary design elements are usually present on the façade to help differentiate them from the abutting historic structures. Typically being larger in height and volume than the surrounding historic buildings, these moderately-differentiated buildings are often referenced as inappropriate due to their scale, volume, massing and often confusing architectural style.



Figure 3 – Examples of Large 21st Century Infill Buildings with a Moderate-Differentiated Design

In contrast to the moderately differentiated buildings shown in Figure 3, within the core areas of the District some developers have opted to design their buildings with a very low-differentiated building design. Shown in Figure 4, this approach uses traditional setbacks, massing, materials, glazing patterns, and other architectural details that are highly consistent with the surrounding neighborhood quality and character. Importantly, integration of contemporary building elements (such as forms, patterns, or material) is implemented with moderation and restraint in order to maintain continuity among buildings within the District. As a result, these buildings are often referenced by local residents as highly-appropriate due to their consistent architectural style and appearance with the historic buildings in surrounding District.



Figure 4 – Examples Large Buildings in the early 21st Century with a Low-Differentiated Design

In summary, after establishing the Historic District in 1965, the city has witnessed a wide variety of building and site design approaches for new construction within the District. Despite a broad range of outcomes, recent citizen feedback suggests that the design guidelines of the HDC need to employ a more context-based approach to the issue of building differentiation throughout the District. Moreover, in an effort to protect and strengthen the historic structures within the District, the guidelines need balance the issues of historic preservation with the need to encourage innovative building designs and elements in appropriate locations.

EXHIBIT 3

3D MASSING MODEL



3D Massing Model for Downtown Portsmouth