

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH
School Department

RFP #17-21

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Strategic Planning Services - PSD

Addendum #2

“Questions and Answers”

This Addendum forms part of the original document marked “RFP #17-21 Strategic Planning Services - PSD.”

The following questions have been received concerning RFP #17-21 Strategic Planning Services – PSD. Some questions have been combined by relevance. Answers from the School Department are provided for each.

Questions and Answers

Question 1: Does the City intend to involve School Department staff in the development of the strategic plan? As this is a City generated RFP, what is the role of the School Department in the planning process? To what extent will City staff and resources be available to help support the consulting team in the scheduling of stakeholder engagement activities?

Answer 1: This strategic planning endeavor is an initiative of the Portsmouth School Board. The procurement process is that of the City and, as a department of the City, the School Department follows its policies. The School Board and Superintendent believe that engaging a consulting partner will help them to shape, organize, and execute the best process. School Department staff, administrative and support, will certainly play a large role in completing tasks in this process. The balance of work between the staff and the consultant will be determined by available resources and expertise required. It is very reasonable to expect that tasks like scheduling will be completed by staff.

Question 2: Does the school department have an existing strategic plan? If so, what improvements are you hoping to make during the upcoming planning cycle?

Answer 2: No current strategic plan exists.

Question 3: What level of ownership has the School Board had in the department's 2019-2020 strategic goals? Were they highly engaged in their development and do they routinely participate in monitoring progress?

Answer 3: The School Board has been highly engaged in the development, review, and update of annual departmental goals in recent years, including the most recently published goals on the web at <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/portsmouth-school-board-goals-2019-2020>. They discuss the goals regularly and retreat for further review on an annual basis.

Question 4: Is there, or will there be, a standing committee to facilitate outreach and engagement?

Answer 4: It is expected that the strategic planning endeavor will be led by a steering committee with School Board representation. That group would likely contribute to the challenge of outreach and engagement to drive interest and participation in the process.

Question 5: Could the City provide an estimate of how many community stakeholders and stakeholder groups it would want to participate? Is there a list of groups and individuals expected to be involved in the planning process?

Answer 5: There is an expectation that stakeholder participation should number well beyond 100 individuals, although the nature and timing of opportunities for participation during a pandemic may certainly have a measurable impact on numbers. Stakeholder groups will likely include parents, students, staff, community members, neighborhood groups, and school leaders. Subsets of any or all of these groups may be appropriate (ex. elementary, middle, high) to optimally reach numbers or perspectives.

Question 6: What is the expected timeline? Does the City have a desired timeline for the process steps outlined in the Scope of Work, or generally for the project as a whole?

Answer 6: Generally, the strategic planning process is expected to begin within the next six (6) months and would be expected to be completed in the six to twelve (6 to 12) months that follow. Consider the following: 1) responses reviewed, finalists interviewed, contract negotiated – January-February; 2) consultant meets with School Board and Superintendent to finalize details of project approach, timeline, deliverables, coordination with staff – March-April; 3) project launch dependent upon pandemic, consultant, approach – April-October; 4) project completion to be determined.

Question 7: Does the City expect all of the work to be conducted virtually or is there an expectation that some portion of the work would be conducted on-site? If there is an expectation of on-site work, please describe when and where that work is requested. In light of the pandemic, what ought vendors anticipate regarding in-person meeting availability, virtual meeting capabilities and related preferences?

Answer 7: Validating that we are living in a global pandemic, the ultimate timeline of this project may reflect changing conditions in the community and region, availability of a vaccine, and anticipated levels of participation. The preference is to address this project essentially as if pre-pandemic, including expected high touch with School Board and steering committee, and then contemplate exceptions and alternatives as necessary given pandemic conditions. This planning initiative was imagined outside of the pandemic. We hope to achieve an approach that retains the best of more traditional efforts and optimizes the benefit of this new order. The School Department has become a capable user of Zoom and similar tools for virtual meeting and work as necessary.

Question 8: Does the City have a budget for this project? Can you share the amount budgeted? The scope of work, as it is, could result in a range of price proposals. In order to receive technical approaches that fit with the City's budget, would the City provide a budget range?

Answer 8: There is not a specific budget identified for this project. The RFP did anticipate that applicants would offer a base proposal of essential services for strategic planning that provided expertise and support to the School Board along with an a la carte offering of additional services, the inclusion of which would depend on the ultimate approach taken for the process as well as price and staff availability.

Question 9: How many copies of the proposal need to be submitted? Is there a preferred binding for the proposal (i.e. three-ring binder, stapled, etc.)?

Answer 9: Three (3) copies of the proposal need to be submitted. Only one (1) master copy will require the original notarization of the Statement of Qualifications from the RFP. There is no clear preference for binding, although one "loosely bound" copy would allow for ease of duplication given the potential for a number of reviewers.

End of Addendum #2