

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH
Planning Department
RFP #17-24 MARKET SQUARE MASTER PLAN

Invitation

Sealed proposals **plainly marked “RFP #17-24, “Market Square Master Plan” on the outside of the mailing envelope**, addressed to the Finance/Purchasing Department, 3rd floor, City Hall, 1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801 will be accepted until **2:00 pm on Wednesday November 8, 2023**.

Specifications for this project may be obtained from the City’s web site: www.cityofportsmouth.com/finance/purchasing-bids-and-proposals under the project heading. Questions regarding this project shall be directed to purchasing@cityofportsmouth.com. The deadline for questions to be submitted is **October 30, 2023 @ 4:30 p.m.** Addenda to this RFP, including any written answers to questions, will be posted on the City of Portsmouth webpage under the project heading by **November 1, 2023 @ 4:30 p.m.** Addenda will not be provided directly to proposers.

Mandatory Pre-proposal meeting

Prior to submission, a site walk/**mandatory pre-proposal meeting** will be held at **Market Square in front of the North Church** to scope the area on **Wednesday October 25, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.** A representative from each team must be present in order to qualify for this selection.

The City of Portsmouth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive technical or legal deficiencies, and to accept and negotiate the terms of any proposal that may be in the best interest of the City.

PART I: Introduction

The City of Portsmouth is seeking an experienced and qualified firm or team of firms to work closely with the City, the general public, and stakeholders on a Master Plan for historic Market Square. The project area will include the public streets and sidewalks within Market Square as well as portions of intersecting streets of Market Street, Daniel Street, Pleasant Street, High Street, Church Street and Congress Street. Market Square lies at the heart of the City’s historic downtown.

Project Background and Purpose

In November of 2019 the City issued an RFQ to study Market Square. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a desire to expand the focus of the project, the RFQ was never contracted. This

RFP is being issued with an expanded focus to study the area previously identified in 2019 and to incorporate additional corridors with a limited scope of evaluating pedestrian access, outdoor dining on public streets and sidewalks, and accessibility.

Market Square has been recognized as one of the “Great Places in America” by the American Planning Association and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Portsmouth Downtown Historic District.

Market Square was paved in 1762. In the 250 years since, the square and three streets originating from it — Market Street, Pleasant Street, and Congress Street — have remained the hub of downtown commerce and community life year-round. Portsmouth today is a vibrant regional destination for the arts, dining, and heritage tourism, but the city's economy hasn't always been so robust. Faced with declining industry during the 1950s and '60s, the city cleared portions of the downtown through urban renewal. Beginning in the 1970s, creative developers began rehabilitating historic commercial and industrial buildings on Market Street for conversion to a mix of residential, office and retail uses.

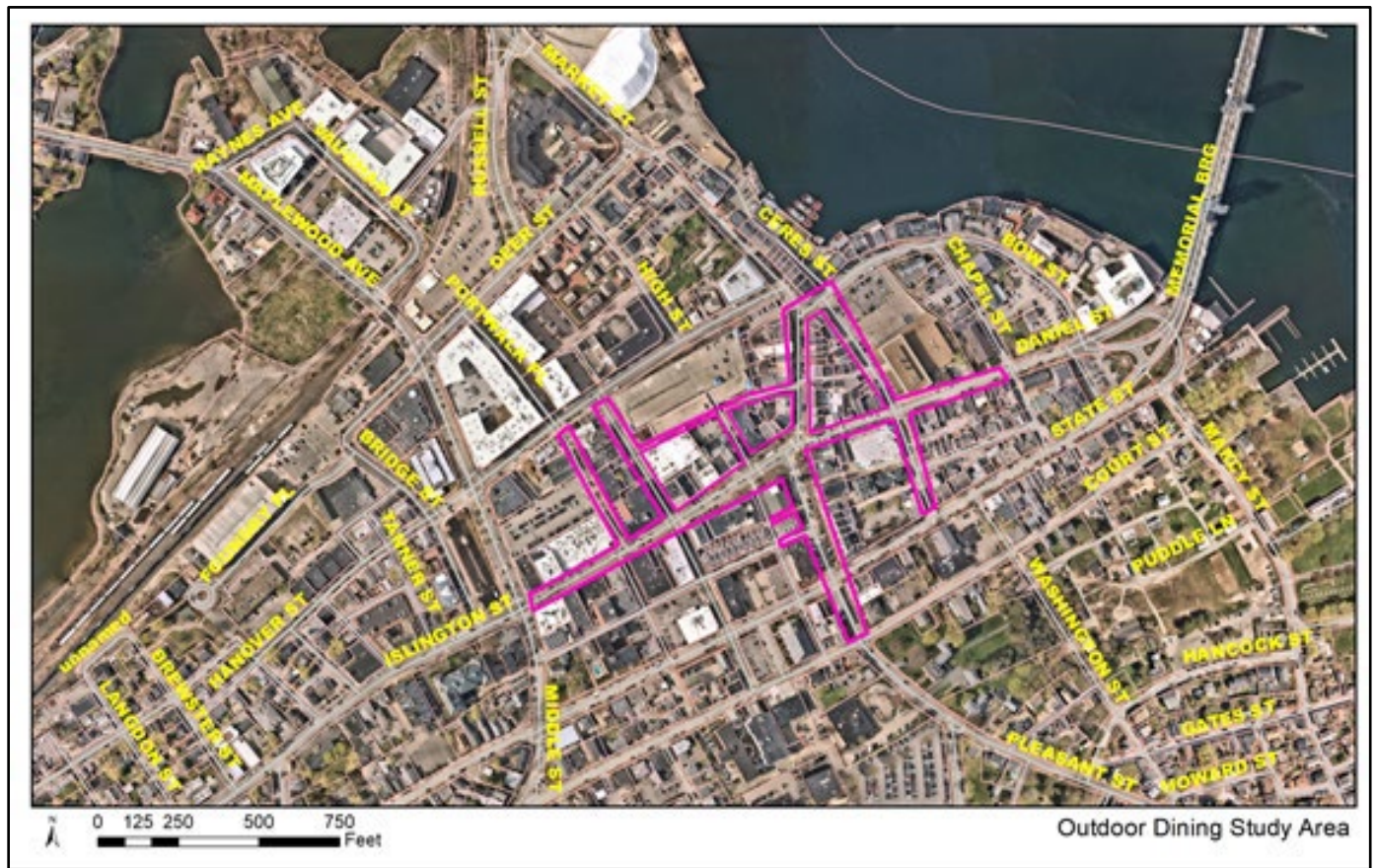
A key step in Portsmouth's recovery efforts was the revitalization of Market Square beginning in 1978. Once the site of a military training ground, a meeting house, and New Hampshire's colonial legislature, the renovated Square today features wide brick sidewalks, benches, trees and a fountain.

Over the years, the City has taken meaningful planning steps and followed through with implementation through adoption of location ordinances that encouraged compatible development. Zoning regulations work to ensure the vitality of street-level businesses and to protect valuable historic properties including North Church, a beacon of Portsmouth visible from most city vantage points. Today Market Square is a busy intersection and a transportation nexus filled with pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, cars, mopeds, and motorcycles against a backdrop of architecturally distinctive buildings, each with its own history.

Within this context, much of the public infrastructure above and below Market Square and intersecting streets (including utilities, sidewalks, roadways, parking structures, street trees, street furniture, and solid waste) is due for an upgrade and the City is ready to consider how other aspects and its publicly accessible spaces might be improved or altered consistent with historic preservation objectives, urban design principles, and the City’s Complete Street, Walk-Friendly, and Bike-Friendly policies.

The first phase in this process will be the development of a shared public conceptual vision plan with preliminary cost projections. Future phases will include preliminary design plans and

A map of the Outdoor Dining Study area is provided below and shows the expanded areas to evaluate pedestrian access, outdoor dining on public streets and sidewalks, and accessibility. The exact extent of the project area may decrease or expand as an outcome of the conceptual planning process.



Concurrent Efforts

Below is a list of ongoing or recently completed initiatives in the City:

- State Street two-way study: A two-way study of State Street is currently underway to look at the feasibility of converting State Street to two-way traffic.
- Parking Study: The City of Portsmouth is studying the supply and demand for parking in downtown Portsmouth. The study will assess and identify current and alternative approaches to ensuring an adequate parking supply, inform future public investments and guide policy choices and zoning updates, including strategies that: Optimize utilization of public parking facilities and pricing structure; Cultivate mode shift and mitigate induced parking demand where possible, and make effective use of available and future technology.
- Fleet Street Area Study and Design: The project includes water, sewer, drainage, and streetscape modifications on Fleet Street from Court Street to Hanover Street. This project will include a larger study for combined sewer separation and utility corridor design for the area of Market Square to Maplewood Avenue.
- Electrical Upgrades and Undergrounding of Electrical Lines: The City is working with Eversource to make needed upgrades to electrical service downtown. This is anticipated to include the undergrounding of overhead electrical lines wherever possible.
- Climate Action Plan: As a coastal community with climate hazards becoming ever more present, the City of Portsmouth is engaging its community and other stakeholders in developing “Portsmouth’s Climate Future.” This effort will culminate in an Action Plan that will identify and phase targeted greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions, avoidance, and removals at the municipal and community levels, while simultaneously identifying effective adaptation measures to make the City more resilient against future climate change impacts. Much of the City’s most treasured resources and many infrastructure assets are located along its historic waterfront and directly vulnerable to sea level rise and storm surge.

- 1 Congress (High Street, Haven Court and Ladd Street): A private developer in coordination with the City and abutters is working to address public realm improvements along High Street, Haven Court and Ladd Street.

Anticipated Scope Items & Deliverables

The following outline is a list of anticipated scope items for the final contract and does not represent a final scope of work. This outline is not necessarily all-inclusive, and, in the proposal process, firms will be encouraged to include any tasks or alternatives and services deemed necessary to satisfactorily complete the project. Firms are encouraged to bring both industry expertise and creative ideas tested elsewhere and tailored to Portsmouth to help the community design the project approach that best suits this project.

1. Existing Conditions Plan

Using existing GIS information available from the City, the Consultant shall prepare a plan of existing conditions showing existing limits of right-of-way (ROW), available elevations, areas of previously approved outdoor dining, structures, easements, edge of road, driveways, sidewalks, street trees and landscaping, street furniture, parking, pavement markings, public utilities, and signage.

2. Public Engagement and Input

In collaboration with the City, the Consultant shall organize and lead an interactive and intensive public outreach and input process meeting as well as other public participation activities that may include online collaborative whiteboard platforms, social media, interviews, and surveys for the purpose of identifying and assessing current uses as well as determining desired uses, features, and amenities. Such information will be used to identify community goals and objectives for Market Square as well as for the Consultant to develop up to three alternative concept plans for the Square.

3. Shared Vision Plan

Through an interactive public outreach and input process, the Consultant shall refine the three alternative plans into a final Shared Vision Plan. Such Plan shall have both a written narrative with color graphics and illustrations of a final Shared Vision Plan and an annotated Shared Vision Plan of the proposed improvements for the Market Square area. This plan will be used for the development of preliminary engineering plans for the project as well as for reference by the City when working with private property owners and utility companies regarding private work or improvements in the public way.

4. Expanded Outdoor Dining Study

Given the enhanced focus on outdoor dining since Covid 19 the expanded outdoor dining study area should provide a rationale for expanding the areas of outdoor dining in a more visually appealing and integrated way while also acknowledging and enhancing accessibility to these locations.

PART II: Required Contents of the Proposal

Please note the following in preparing submittals to this RFP:

- a. Proposals should appear in the order they are requested below.
- b. Three (3) hard copy submittals of the Proposal are required. A digital version shall also be submitted.
- c. Pages shall be no larger than letter-size (8 1/2 x 11 inches) or, if folded to that dimension, twice letter size (11 x 17 inches).

Required contents:

1. Cover letter:

Provide a cover letter (up to two pages), which clearly identifies the project manager, briefly explains relevant past work, and includes a statement of project understanding.

2. Firm Experience (for each firm in the team, if applicable):

Describe relevant experience of the firm or firms, with particular focus on the following areas:

- a. site specific vision or master planning in urbanized settings.
- b. historic preservation and cultural resource planning.
- c. downtown multi-modal transportation planning.
- d. landscape architecture; and
- e. experience leading effective public engagement processes.

3. Project Team:

List each member of the proposed Project Team along with their:

- a. Team Member Name and Firm affiliation
- b. Area of specialty
- c. Specific involvement/role in projects used as references
- d. Office location
- e. Total years of experience
- f. Years with current firm

One member of the Project Team must be identified as the Project Manager. Resumes shall also be included.

4. Past Projects and References

Provide information, including narrative and depictions, of relevant past projects. Clearly indicate the role the proposed team members played in each project. The project descriptions shall include client references with up-to-date contact information (name, title, organization, phone, cell, and email).

5. Summary of Project Understanding and Approach

Provide a detailed statement summarizing the project understanding and professional approach to the project, including a detailed outline of the proposed services for executing the requirements of this RFP.

6. Cost Proposal and Budget

Submit a cost estimate and typical billing rates.

7. Additional Information

Firms are encouraged to include one sample work product from a similar engagement. Sample work products may be provided in electronic and/or hard copy format.

PART III: Process, Schedule, and Selection

Mandatory Pre-proposal Meeting

*Prior to submission, a site walk/pre-proposal meeting will be held at Market Square in front of the North Church on **Wednesday October 25, 2023 @ 2:00 p.m.** to the scope area.*

A representative from each team must be present in order to qualify for this selection.

Ranking of Qualifications

Each Proposal will be reviewed and ranked according to the following criteria:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| a. Responsiveness to Submission Requirements | Up to 10 points |
| b. Firm experience & relevance of past work | Up to 35 points |
| c. Overall Project Team experience and approach | Up to 35 points |
| d. Project Manager experience | Up to 20 points |

Selection and Contract

Upon review of all responsive RFPs using the criteria outlined above, the City may select up to three (3) firms to interview. Upon completion of the interviews (if required), the City anticipates negotiating a final Scope of Services and fee with the highest-ranking firm.

Schedule

Work is anticipated to begin immediately after contract signature. A final schedule will be negotiated with the successful firm.

City Role

City's Planning Department staff will be responsible for administering the initial phase of this project and overseeing the firm's work in collaboration with the Department of Public Works and other City departments and in coordination with the City Council.

Reservation of Rights

The City of Portsmouth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, 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 also reserves the right to negotiate directly with the selected firm for additional project work including but not limited to studies, design, and construction administration.

The City reserves the right to make such inquiries regarding the firm's qualifications and reputation as it deems necessary to evaluate the firm. The firm may be requested to execute releases to obtain information from third parties. Failure to execute a release upon request may result in disqualification.

Contract Document

Upon selection, the successful firm will be sent a contract for execution. 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.