

City of Portsmouth
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP #43-23

Invitation

The City of Portsmouth is seeking proposals for an experienced and qualified consultant, or consultant team, to help the City of Portsmouth develop an updated Cultural Plan. The City looks to update its Cultural Plan in advance of the City’s master planning process that will commence in 2024.

Sealed bid proposals, **plainly marked**, “**RFP#43-23 Cultural Plan**” **on the outside of the mailing envelope as well as the sealed bid envelope**, addressed to the Finance/Purchasing Department, 1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801 will be accepted until, **May 5, 2023 at 10:30 a.m.**

Specifications may be obtained from the City’s web site:

www.cityofportsmouth.com/finance/purchasing-bids-and-proposals under the project heading.

Questions shall be directed to purchasing@cityofportsmouth.com no later **April 27, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.** Addenda to this proposal document, if any, including written answers to questions, will be posted on the City of Portsmouth website under the project heading by **May 1, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.** Addenda will not be provided directly to proposers.

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.

City of Portsmouth, NH RFP # 43-23
Request for Proposals
Professional Planning Services- Cultural Plan

INTRODUCTION

The City of Portsmouth (“City”) is seeking proposals for an experienced and qualified consultant, or consultant team, to help the City of Portsmouth create a Cultural Plan that will serve as a blueprint for preservation and expansion of arts and cultural venues, activities, and initiatives for the foreseeable future. It is anticipated that the Cultural Plan will be integrated into the City’s master planning effort which will commence in 2024.

Sealed bid proposals, **plainly marked**, “**RFP#43-23 Cultural Plan**” **on the outside of the mailing envelope as well as the sealed bid envelope**, addressed to the Finance/Purchasing Department, 1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801 will be accepted until, **May 5, 2023 at 10:30 a.m.**

Consultant shall provide four (4) copies of the proposal.

This RFP includes the following sections:

- Background and Purpose
- Scope of Work
- Selection Criteria and Contracting Process
- Proposal Submission Requirements

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The City, through its Economic & Community Development Department, is seeking an experienced consultant or consultant team familiar with current best practices to help develop the City's next Cultural Plan. This consultant will help the community develop a comprehensive and multi-faceted strategy for building on the accomplishments of the City's 2002 Cultural Plan. The City's 2002 Cultural Plan can be found at www.cityofportsmouth.com/finance/purchasing-bids-and-proposals, under the project heading.

The project will include working with the community to identify goals and priorities that will inform short term, medium term, and long-term strategies. The vision for this plan is to have a step-by-step approach or series of recommendations to strengthen the arts and cultural identity of Portsmouth. This plan should focus first and foremost on understanding how our community interacts with arts and culture. The plan should consider existing conditions, existing challenges, community values, the natural environment, and the City's role as hub for a vibrant and diverse arts and culture scene. This plan should utilize a systems-thinking approach to empower and encourage residents, businesses, visitors, and City staff to take action to protect and grow arts and culture in the City of Portsmouth.

With an inclusive mindset, the selected consultant should develop a plan for achieving the City's Cultural Plan goals and recommend strategies:

- That informs and advance cultural goals in City decision-making.
- That increase public awareness and help inform and empower community members to make choices that advance community cultural goals; and
- That advance equity – particularly distributional equity to ensure that all community members experience the benefits of positive outcomes and that no community members are excluded from this process and resulting plan.

The selected consultant will collaborate with and provide updates to the City's Cultural Planning Subcommittee ("CPS") which is comprised of members from the arts and culture community. A list of the committee members can be found here: www.cityofportsmouth.com/finance/purchasing-bids-and-proposals under the project heading.

The City anticipates kicking off a city-wide master planning process in 2024 and the City desires to complete an updated Cultural Plan by end of 2023 or soon thereafter in order to integrate its findings and recommendations into that larger process.

This City has initially identified \$40,000 for this effort. If the proposals submitted suggest that the cost of work will be in excess of this amount, the City will evaluate whether to adjust the scope of work as part of contract negotiations are seek additional funding.

SCOPE OF WORK

Services are needed in the following 3 areas: Planning, Community Engagement and Analysis/Written Plan Generation

Planning:

- Work with CPS to develop effective goals and objectives with measurable and attainable outcomes.
- Work with CPS to assess and learn from the successes and shortcomings of the 2002 Portsmouth Cultural plan.
- Compare and comment on Portsmouth Cultural Plan objectives and goals with respect to other municipalities' goals and assist the sub-committee adjust where necessary.
- Establish a PR and communication plan aimed at generating participation from diverse segments of the Portsmouth community.
 - Goal 10% of Portsmouth residents
 - Ensure utilization of most effective forms/media for community engagement
- Develop survey questions.
- Train volunteers to conduct stakeholder surveys and to support the interview/engagement process.
- Suggested Timing: May-July 2023

Community Engagement

- Design and facilitate an appropriate number of live focus groups populated with a diverse cross-section of the Portsmouth community.
- Implement listening sessions using the full spectrum of live, remote, digital, and traditional methods to solicit input.
- Design and utilize engaging surveys and other communication materials to ensure strong participation rates.
- Suggested Timing: June-October 2023

Analysis/Written Plan Generation

- Collect responses from listening sessions/surveys and produce a summary report. Summary results from listening sessions and surveys should also be used to validate/confirm or adjust (as the basis for cultural) planning goals.
- Prepare a draft of the 2023 Portsmouth Cultural Plan and allow review/edits from Cultural Plan subcommittee.
 - Incorporate edits from preliminary draft.
 - Design the final version of the Cultural Plan for print and on-line distribution (consider using template from Portsmouth 2002 Cultural Plan to save on costs).
 - Prepare submission to Portsmouth City Council for November meeting.
- Document and identify stakeholder groups for alignment with implementation actions/responsibilities.
- Finalize implementation plan – (provide to CPS)
- Suggested Timing: October -December 2023

Further Detail on Community Engagement

The City expects the consultant to include a robust community engagement process that incorporates current efforts, priorities, and perceptions of the City, the community, and the many organizations already participating in the Arts and Culture segment of our community.

Expectations for this phase of the planning process are listed below:

- Engagement with community members through initial workshops, neighborhood meetings, and planning sessions.
- This outreach should be uplifting and supportive in nature when it comes to working alongside residents and providing them with an opportunity to share their needs and concerns for robust arts and culture within the City.
- Within these programmed events, the consultant should gain an understanding of which actions can be taken as compared to suggestions or recommendations.
- The goal of these meetings should be to target as many community members as possible.
- The consultant should expand upon how they achieve this while prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- These meetings will be organized and performed in conjunction with members of the community who are eager to volunteer for this Cultural Planning outreach effort.

Together, the consultant and volunteers will lead meetings/workshops/trainings that will:

- Educate the public on the Cultural Planning process and potential impacts it could have.
- Be innovative but thorough in their development and coordination.
- Employ innovative outreach concepts to most effectively engage a complete cross-section of the community.
- Consider the use of survey techniques to educate and solicit input.

The City has many involved non-profit and community groups and organizations that are actively working on related topics to Arts and Culture actions and initiatives. These groups and organizations have invaluable insight into the community, and many have a substantial background in the efforts on which they focus. The engagement of these organizations and groups is expected to be fully integrated and aligned. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Mayors Committee for Arts and Non-Profits
- Portsmouth Economic Development Commission
- Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth (Chamber of Commerce)

Community engagement efforts should be multi-pronged and designed to include all aspects of the community in a diverse and equitable manner. For example, diversity should consider race but also socioeconomic status, language, and comfort with local government (for example big, forum-style events that might exclude those who aren't familiar with local government processes/culture should not be the norm).

Further Detail on Analysis and Plan Development

From the data gathered during the community engagement process, consultant develop a Cultural (Action) Plan to adopt and use as a stand-alone guiding document as well as a vehicle to inform the City's Master Plan. This will be the guide for the City and community to use for implementing the best strategies for adopting a forward looking Cultural Plan.

In addition to updating the strategies to be more implementation-focused, the City seeks a prioritization analysis to determine which strategies should be focused on first. The City currently has limited staff and resources to implement the Cultural Plan so the City would like to keep an eye toward pragmatism and an emphasis on the attainable strategies that are the most impactful.

The consultant should prepare to present the final Cultural Plan report to the community and help start conversations revolving around how each goal will be attained in the coming years. The strategies themselves should be based on best practices seen in other communities, not just "copied and pasted" from prior plans the vendor has drafted. The City anticipates the development of a portfolio of cultural planning strategies that are well-aligned with the City's community interests and the City Council strategic vision.

Tools for Monitoring and Communicating Cultural Plan progress post-plan

To the extent the budget allows, the City would like to have the Consultant work with CPS and City staff to workshop the most effective way to utilize the updated Cultural Plan data for civic engagement. It is the City's hope that by having an interactive tool that can showcase progress on the plan, members of the public will become more energized and committed to the Cultural Plan goals. This communication tool would not only inform the public of Cultural Planning task updates but should also serve as a meeting place for inter-community collaboration. With this type of platform, the Consultant and staff could engage with residents by answering questions, sharing resources and providing guidance to the community about the Cultural Plan initiatives.

Schedule

The City has proposed an aggressive schedule for completion of the scope of work outlined above. As part of the consultant's proposal, consultant will be expected to commit to the proposed schedule or to advise on any adjustments to the proposed schedule and any impact on pricing. Contract award and execution is expected to be within thirty days of proposal

submission. The selected consultant shall be prepared to begin work within two weeks of contract execution.

City Role

Economic & Community Development staff will be responsible for administering the project, overseeing the consultant's work on this project and coordinating work with the CPS. The City does have certain resources with regard to the ability to conduct surveys and other engagement tools to assist the consultant. The City's Director of Communications will also be available for consultation and coordination.

Selection Criteria and Contracting Process

Proposals will be evaluated by a team of City staff and a work group of the CPS. The following criteria will be used:

1. Qualifications of firm and project team members including any proposed sub consultants
2. Previous related work
3. Understanding of and approach to work
4. Schedule
5. Proposal price
6. Responsiveness to submission requirements

The City, at its discretion, may select a firm outright or select a finalist(s) for in-person and/or video conference interviews. The highest-ranking consultant firm will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with the City. In the event that the City cannot reach agreement on a contract, the City will end negotiations and may proceed to the next highest rank qualified firm.

Reservation of Rights - 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 and conditions of any proposal that may be in the best interest of the City. The City reserves the right to undertake such investigation as it deems necessary to verify qualifications. The City reserves the right to negotiate directly with the firm(s) selected for additional project work.

Nondiscrimination in City Contracts-Any entity that enters into a contract for goods or services with the City of Portsmouth or any of its boards, agencies and departments and any recipient of city funds shall:

Implement an employment nondiscrimination policy prohibiting discrimination in hiring, discharging, promoting, or demoting, matters of compensation, or any other employment-related decision or benefit on account of actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, religion, national

origin, gender, disability, age, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or marital or familial status.

Not discriminate in the performance of the contract on account of actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, age, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or marital or familial status.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals shall include the following and shall be organized using each of the required elements as section headings in the order in which they appear below:

- A. Firm Description – provide a brief description of the firm including firm size and area of specialization.
- B. Project Team – Provide names and resumes of key professionals who would be assigned to the project. Resumes shall be included for key project personnel only. Each team member’s education and experience shall be listed. The project manager shall be designated and a description of relevant previous projects, and the project staff that have played a central role in those projects shall be provided. Identify with specificity the cultural and like plans that have been developed by the project team members by providing a copy of such plans or a link to the plans.
- C. Statement of project understanding – State in succinct terms the consultant’s understanding of what is required to update the City’s Cultural Plan and describe the consultant’s approach and technical plan for accomplishing the work listed broken out by task. The consultant is encouraged to elaborate on or suggest improvements to the scope of work.
- D. Submit a detailed schedule by task and subtask and indicate clearly whether the consultant can commit to perform the work within the time frame desired by the City. If there are elements of the schedule that the consultant believes should be adjusted to provide a better final product or to be more cost effective, please clearly identify such opportunities or suggested adjustments.
- E. A lump sum proposal price itemized by task, and hourly rates for project personnel.
- F. Three (3) references, including current contact name and phone number for similar projects which the project manager has managed.

The proposal shall be printed on two sides of the page and shall not have a plastic cover. Four (4) hard copies shall be submitted at the time and date described above.