



CITY OF BANGOR

# Request for Proposals for Economic Development Strategic Plan

Request for Proposals  
Economic Development Strategic Plan  
Proposal No. P22-03

Purchasing Department  
73 Harlow Street  
Bangor, Maine 04401  
207-992-4282

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## I. Introduction

The City of Bangor (“City”) seeks proposals from qualified and experienced firms to develop a comprehensive city-wide Economic Development Strategic Plan (strategic plan). The strategic plan will provide a road map for the City in determining where to allocate resources and identify priorities for business attraction, retention, and expansion over a five-year period.

The Economic Development Strategy process should answer the following main questions:

1. Who and where are we? What is our community? What is our current economic base?
2. Which direction should we go? What opportunities exist to expand the economic base, and how do we ensure all segments of our population benefit from economic growth in the City?
3. How do we get there?

The selected firm will work closely with the City to carry out a concise work plan to develop strategies and establish metrics with which to measure the outcomes. The selected firm will be one that has demonstrated experience in preparation and implementation of economic development strategic plans.

Simultaneously and closely coordinated with this project is the development of an update to the City’s Comprehensive Plan. This is a separate project and RFP; however, it is expected that care will be taken for these projects to be harmonized with each other.

## II. General Information

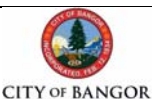
General information is available on the City’s website at the following web address: [www.bangormaine.gov/proposals](http://www.bangormaine.gov/proposals). By submitting a response to this solicitation, the Proposer accepts the responsibility for downloading, reading, and bidding by the terms and conditions set forth in the City’s “General Information for Vendors.”

## III. Submission

To be considered, please submit one (1) original and one (1) digital copy of the Proposal in an envelope clearly marked “**Proposal No. P22-03: Bangor Economic Development Strategic Plan**” by **2:00 PM, Wednesday, September 15, 2021** to the Purchasing Department, City Hall, 73 Harlow Street, Bangor, Maine 04401.

The digital copy may be submitted by flash drive or by emailing to: [bids@bangormaine.gov](mailto:bids@bangormaine.gov). If emailing Proposal, please reference “**Proposal No. P22-03: Bangor Economic Development Strategic Plan**” in the subject line. Proposals will be publicly opened at the time stated above.

Please indicate in or with your proposal whether you have or are working on a policy regarding domestic violence. If you do not have a domestic violence policy, please indicate whether you would like the City of Bangor to provide you a copy of its policy as an example.



A tabulation of all Proposals received will be available after 4:00 PM on the date of opening. Proposal results may be viewed on the City's website at [www.bangormaine.gov/bidtabs](http://www.bangormaine.gov/bidtabs).

#### **IV. Questions**

Any questions must be directed in writing to [bids@bangormaine.gov](mailto:bids@bangormaine.gov) no later than **4:30 PM, Wednesday, August 25, 2021**.

The City will issue a response on or before **4:30 PM, Wednesday, September 1, 2021**. The response will be in the form of an addendum, which will be available on the City's website. Notifications will be sent out at the time of release of all addendum to the appropriate Registered Vendor List.

#### **V. Late Proposals**

It is the responsibility of the Proposer(s) to see that their Proposals have sufficient time to be received by the Purchasing Department before the submittal deadline.

Any Proposal, portion of a Proposal, or unrequested Proposal revision received at the City of Bangor Purchasing Department after the time and date specified, will be returned to the Proposer unopened.

#### **VI. Withdrawal of Proposals**

No Proposer may withdraw their Proposal for a period of ninety (90) days from the date of opening. All Proposals shall be subject to acceptance by the City during this period.

To withdraw a Proposal prior to the opening, the Proposer shall request the withdrawal in writing. All costs associated with the withdrawal (i.e., mailing fees) will be borne by the Proposer.

#### **VII. Rejection**

The City of Bangor reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals, to waive any informalities or defects in Proposals or to accept a higher cost Proposal if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Bangor. The City also reserves the right to negotiate with the successful Proposer.

#### **VIII. Information for Proposers**

All materials requested in **Section X. Proposal Content** of this RFP must be included in the Proposal submission in order to be considered.

All Federal and State taxes must be excluded from the price. A tax exemption certificate for the City of Bangor shall be furnished to the successful Proposer upon request.

## **IX. Scope of Services**

### **A. Background**

The City of Bangor, which occupies approximately 35 square miles on the western shore of the Penobscot River, was first settled in 1656, incorporated as a town on February 25, 1791 and as a city on February 12, 1834. The City of Bangor is the third largest City in Maine and serves as the County Seat for Penobscot County. As a result, Bangor serves as the major trade, distribution, service, and commercial center for the central, eastern, and northern portions of the State.

Bangor has operated under a Council-Manager Charter since 1931. The City Council is composed of nine members, elected at large, for three-year staggered terms. The School Department is governed by a seven-member School Committee, elected at large, for three-year staggered terms.

The City provides a full range of municipal services including police and fire, highways, sanitation, health and welfare, parks and recreation, education, public transportation, planning, business and economic development, code enforcement, and general administrative services which are accounted for in the City's General Fund. Additionally, the City of Bangor owns and operates the Bangor International Airport, sanitary sewer, storm water, the Bass Park Complex (Cross Insurance Center), parking facilities, golf course, and economic development (properties), which are accounted for in the City's enterprise funds.

The City of Bangor serves as the major service center in central, northern, and eastern Maine for a variety of services including communications, banking, retail, industrial, transportation, and healthcare. Additionally, the City serves as the center for federal, state, and county governments. Bangor also serves as northern New England's economic link to the Canadian Maritimes and eastern Quebec.

Bangor has a stable and varied economic base. Major employers include a diversified mix of health care, educational, professional, retail, manufacturing, and governmental entities. To date, the City has recorded little change in its economic base due to the impacts of COVID 19.

Bangor serves as one of the largest retail markets in Maine. The Bangor Mall, Airport Mall, Broadway commercial center, Union Street commercial corridor, and the Bangor Center Development District (downtown) have long established Bangor as the hub of the six-county eastern Maine retail market. Bangor's retail sector serves an extensive geographic area ranging from eastern Maine to the Canadian Maritimes, with a population exceeding 3.1 million. With less than three percent of the State's population in the City proper, Bangor's share of the State's retail sales is proportionally higher. In FY 2020, Bangor's retail taxable sales were \$1.84 billion and represent 7.27% of total State retail taxable sales.

Bangor maintains its position as the cultural and economic center of Northern, Central, and Eastern Maine. Sporting events, cultural activities, education, recreation, and shopping draw visitors from across Maine and beyond to the Bangor that has developed out of its vibrant history. The City is home to the Cross Insurance Center, Hollywood Casino, and Waterfront Concerts, three of the largest event/activity destinations in the region, in addition to myriad arts and culture events and festivals. These generate significant direct and indirect economic impacts for the community.

Shifts in the retail market have created challenges in some of our large retail centers. Specifically, the Bangor Mall is facing the same challenges that are being faced by retail centers around the country. The pandemic has created an additional challenge as more retail is being conducted online versus at brick and mortar stores. This is further exacerbated in our community by the pandemic related closure of the Canadian border. The implications of all factors are being monitored closely.

The City has recently made significant investments in its operating and capital infrastructure to support its economic base. Major areas of investment include:

- \$1.1 million invested in streets, sidewalks, traffic control, and other infrastructure;
- \$3.2 million invested in upgrades to Community Connector vehicles;
- \$10.8 million invested in the plant and pump station upgrades, sewer replacements and separation projects;
- \$3.1 million invested in airport equipment and infrastructure; and
- \$923 thousand invested in school facilities.

The City is proactively addressing quality of life issues and housing opportunities. Key initiatives to date include:

- Participation in the AARP age-friendly community initiative;
- Proactive approach to blighted properties;
- Aided homeowners and designated neighborhoods through CDBG funding;
- Leadership in the Community Health Leadership Board to address community health issues including substance abuse, hunger, and mental health;
- Development of housing work group to focus on the issue of quality, affordable housing;
- Sustained commitment to academic excellence for all;
- Enhanced awareness of diversity, equity and inclusion for all;
- Energy efficiency initiatives for residential and City properties; and
- Continued support of arts and culture.

Finally, the City continues to implement significant technology and process improvements to increase the overall organizational efficiency and enhance citizen communication and engagement.

During a recent City Council visioning process, the City Council established the following goal: *To Improve Economic Vitality of the City and Promote Job Growth, Economic Development, Cultural Opportunities, and Housing Opportunities to Support Job Growth and the Expansion and Growth of Tax Base.*

Using this statement as a catalyst, the development of an Economic Development Strategic Plan is important to the future of Bangor. By putting a formal strategic plan in place, Bangor can take control of its economic progress, set clear and achievable economic development objectives, and design policies and programs to achieve those objectives.

## **B. General Requirements for Services**

Along with the Comprehensive Plan, the city is also actively working on the following plans that also need to be considered and reflected in the Economic Development Strategy process: Forest Management Plan, Airport Master Plan; Parks and Recreation Master Plan; Broadband Plan; Affordable Housing Work Group Recommendations; and Climate Change Action Plan. The Forest Management, Airport, and Parks and Recreation plans are in draft form and will be provided to Successful Proposer. The housing plan can be found here: [https://www.bangormaine.gov/filestorage/318/334/6880/Bangor\\_Housing\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.bangormaine.gov/filestorage/318/334/6880/Bangor_Housing_Report_Final.pdf) and the broadband plan can be found here: [https://bangormaine.gov/filestorage/318/334/22734/City\\_of\\_Bangor\\_Broadband\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_8\\_12\\_2020.pdf](https://bangormaine.gov/filestorage/318/334/22734/City_of_Bangor_Broadband_Strategic_Plan_8_12_2020.pdf)

Consistent with the priorities and goals of the Bangor City Council, the resulting Economic Development Strategy should be:

- Inclusive of all populations in Bangor including principles of environmental and social justice
- Resilient to market changes to support a resilient economic base for the community and region
- Resilient in terms of climate change and mitigation of impacts that affect climate

## **C. Public Outreach and Process**

The Business and Economic Development Committee of the Bangor City Council is the steering committee for this project, and the project manager is the Director of Community and Economic Development. City staff will be available to assist with some tasks, some administrative and clerical tasks, coordinating meeting spaces and invitation information including digital participation as allowable, providing City files, plans, and data, and providing connections to City staff or stakeholders as needed.

Public outreach includes meeting with other Boards, Committees, and Commissions, as well as general public meetings. These groups include:

- Bangor City Council and Associated Committees
- Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights
- Commission on Cultural Development
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Housing Authority Commission
- Parks, Recreation and Harbor Advisory Committee
- Penjajawoc Marsh/Mall Management Commission
- Water District Trustees

The City also intends to work with community partners such as the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce, Greater Bangor Association of Realtors, Bangor Area Comprehensive Transportation System, and Eastern Maine Development Corporation.

Digital ideas and other strategies for public outreach and engagement are also welcomed as part of the proposal in response to this RFP.

Department staff will be providing check ins throughout the process at each Planning Board and Business & Economic Development Meetings.

Working closely with City's Community & Economic Development staff, the selected successful Proposer shall provide professional services to perform the following task areas:

#### Task Area 1: General Consulting Services

- Facilitate all stages of the economic development strategic planning process.
- Develop and prepare an existing economic and community demographic profile.
- Develop and prepare an economic development strategy and objectives with input from stakeholders and community. Chapters/sections should include:
  - Vision Statement
  - Mission Statement
  - Core Values
  - Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis
  - Long-Term Goals
  - Yearly Objectives
  - Action Plans/Implementation
- 'Special Area' analysis (airport, mall, downtown, Main Street entertainment corridor, Broadway, State Street corridor, and neighborhood businesses).
- Research and provide data on existing tax base, market study on business clusters, and housing availability.
- Review existing regional and state economic development strategies, programs, incentives, and related documents.
- Identify economic development priorities.
- Identify targeted industries for job creation and expansion.
- Identify opportunities to implement neighborhood revitalization initiatives.
- Identify potential opportunities to leverage City-owned properties.
- Develop an implementation plan as part of the economic development strategy.
- Ensure coordination and integration with other City plans and planning processes underway.

#### Task Area 2: Meetings and Outreach Efforts

- Facilitate biweekly project meetings with City staff.
- Engage key stakeholders and members of the community including business, nonprofit, and institutional leaders; developers; state and regional development or industry representatives; students; and intentionally including diverse populations as part of this work (including engagement of the City's Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights).
- Facilitate City Council workshop(s) and Community meetings, as needed.



### Task Area 3: Strategy Recommendations

- Develop and prepare strategies that:
  - Support business attraction, retention, and expansion;
  - Support the City’s competitive advantages;
  - Plan for resiliency – climate and economic;
  - Implement identified changing trends in retail;
  - Ensure the shopping and dining experience remains relevant in a changing retail world;
  - Identify targeted uses for the downtown;
  - Support entrepreneurship and innovation;
  - Support public transit utilization;
  - Promote walkability;
  - Support collaboration with educational institutions for job creation and advancement of economic development priorities;
  - Are mindful of the context of the cross-cutting impacts of housing, broadband, and workforce challenges; and
  - Are coordinated and integrated with existing City plans including broadband, housing, airport master plan, etc.

### Task Area 4: Project Work Plans and Deliverables

- Develop, prepare, and present a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan that incorporates elements and process components of Tasks 1, 2, and 3.

**The City seeks to have these tasks completed by December 31, 2021 if at all possible.**

#### **Statement of Purpose:**

- The City is soliciting proposals to develop a city-wide Economic Development Strategic Plan (strategic plan). The strategic plan will provide a road map for the City in determining where to allocate resources and identify priorities for business attraction, retention, and expansion over a five-year period.
- The strategic plan is to include specific action plans geared towards creating new job opportunities, encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation, enhancing fiscal sustainability, investing in key development areas, increasing the tax base, and increasing private investment throughout the City.

#### **X. Proposal Content**

- A. State Proposer’s name, address, principal office, and type of entity. State the date of incorporation/organization and the state in which the Proposer is incorporated or organized.
- B. The education, training, experience, licensing, and qualifications of key employees assigned to this project.
- C. The experience, qualifications, and expertise with this type of project.

- D. Provide a breakdown showing hourly rates for personnel who will be assigned to the project.
- E. A description of the methodology, including potential strategies and techniques, that may be employed by the Proposer to ensure a comprehensive economic development strategy is developed that provides provide a road map for the City in determining where to allocate resources and identify priorities for business attraction, retention, and expansion over a five-year period. The strategic plan is to include specific action plans geared towards creating new job opportunities, encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation, enhancing fiscal sustainability, investing in key development areas, increasing the tax base, and increasing private investment throughout the City.
- F. A list of the three most recent projects Proposer has performed of similar services. List should include the name, contact person, address, and other contact information for a representative of each project.
- G. A performance schedule containing typical timelines necessary to perform the Scope of Services and a completed plan.
- H. Total proposed “Not to Exceed” cost of services should be provided and include a fee schedule describing all charges and hourly rates for additional services not included in the Scope of Services with a description.

## **XI. Selection Procedure**

The City intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair and impartial evaluation of Proposals received as a response to this RFP. The selection of the successful Proposer will be made using evaluation criteria established by the City.

- A. A selection team from the City will review and evaluate all written submissions properly made in response to this RFP in accordance with the submittal requirements set forth in Section X. Proposal Content, based on such other information and matters as they deem necessary or desirable to determine the qualifications, responsibility, and suitability of each firm submitting a Proposal in response.
- B. The Selection Team may conduct interviews at their discretion.
- C. Final decision on this proposal will be made by the Bangor City Council or a committee of the Bangor City Council.