



---

# Request for Proposal (RFP)

---

A Survey of Citizens Perceptions on Housing

# Request for Proposals: A Survey of Citizen Perceptions on Housing

## Purpose of RFP

MaineHousing is seeking an experienced and qualified research and analysis firm to conduct a survey of a representative sample of Maine citizens to explore their needs, preferences and experience relating to housing. The survey results will provide both quantitative and qualitative information that will assist MaineHousing in its efforts to address the housing needs of Maine residents as well as to inform the federally required consolidated planning process.

The results of the survey will provide MaineHousing a perspective on how Maine residents see housing in Maine in term of its physical and financial characteristics, affordability and need at the state and, depending upon the proposed design, the sub-state level.

MaineHousing is interested in learning what citizens' attitudes and perceptions are about:

- The physical condition of housing
- Financial characteristics of households
- Housing affordability for renters and owners
- Housing preferences
- Housing location preferences
- What prompts and/or influences mobility
- What they feel are solutions to housing problems

## About MaineHousing

MaineHousing is an independent quasi-state agency that also is one of the top mortgage and affordable housing development lenders in the state. The authority is a \$1.8 billion financial institution with a staff of 160+ whose mission is to assist Maine people in obtaining and maintaining quality affordable housing and services suitable to their housing needs.

On an annual basis the agency assists more than 90,000 Maine households and invests more than \$300 million in Maine's economy, most of it from the sale of tax-exempt revenue bonds, private capital generated by the low income housing tax credit and federal funds.

MaineHousing provides financing and administers programs to assist first-time homebuyers, to develop affordable rental housing, to create housing for people with special needs, to provide housing for people who are homeless, to provide low income households with rental assistance and heating assistance and to repair or weatherize homes of low-income homeowners.

The Communications and Planning Department (CPD) provides communication, marketing, research and analysis, professional development and strategic planning support to all MaineHousing program and administrative departments. Additionally, CPD works with external partners, customers, interested parties, and the public by providing policy analysis, housing needs assessments and market analysis.

## Selection Process

Each firm responding to this RFP will be evaluated using the following criteria with percent weights:

- The level of training and qualifications of the staff who will be conducting the survey - 20%
- Experience using modern quantitative and qualitative social science survey methods and history of conducting survey research as demonstrated in the three examples - 50%
- Responsiveness to the proposed scope of work and ability to meet MaineHousing's timeline - 20%
- Cost of proposed project - 10%

## Contract Duration

The duration of any contract resulting from this RFP will be six months.

## Information Contact

All questions and inquiries relating to this RFP must be submitted to MaineHousing by e-mail and include the name of the questioner and his/her telephone number, fax number and/or e-mail address. The MaineHousing contact for all questions about the RFP is:

Name: Richard Taylor  
Title: Communications and Research Manager  
Address: MaineHousing, 353 Water Street, Augusta, ME 04330-4633  
Telephone: 207-624-4644  
Fax: 207-624-0856  
E-mail: [rtaylor@mainehousing.org](mailto:rtaylor@mainehousing.org)

## Submission Timeline

**March 8, 2019** All questions regarding the RFP are due no later than 5:00 PM and should be e-mailed to [rtaylor@mainehousing.org](mailto:rtaylor@mainehousing.org)

**March 13, 2019** All questions and answers regarding this RFP will be posted on the MaineHousing website no later than 5:00PM.

**April 3, 2019** Proposals are due to MaineHousing, [rtaylor@mainehousing.org](mailto:rtaylor@mainehousing.org) by 5 PM.

## Submissions

If your organization is interested in working with MaineHousing, please provide the following:

- **General firm information**
  - Firm name and contact information (address, phone, email)
  - Name of principal(s) of the firm/organization
  - Name, telephone number and email address of a representative of the firm/organization authorized to discuss this proposal
  - Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policy
  - Current documentation regarding firm's liability insurance

- **Firm/Organization Capabilities**

- Resume and work samples from person specifically identified in your agency to manage the account, as well as contact information.
- Resume(s) of key staff who will work with MaineHousing
- Description of your capacity to perform the work.
- Specific examples (at least three) demonstrating the firms experience using modern quantitative and qualitative social science survey methods.

- **Scope of Work Proposal**

A proposal that outlines the scope of work and a schedule for its accomplishment by the April 3, 2019 due date to include:

- Collaborate with MaineHousing to develop an effective survey methodology.
- The sampling plan for the survey with options to achieve a confidence interval of +/- 5% statewide, +/- 15% for 6 subsequent sub-regions and other possible breakouts.
- Preparation of a final version of the questionnaire based on the comments and input provided by the MaineHousing project team. A draft survey with the kind of information MaineHousing is looking for is appended. The consultant should feel free to further restructure the survey and sampling techniques, with the goal being to obtain this type of information MaineHousing is seeking. MaineHousing reserves the right to approve the final questionnaire.
- Timelines and Schedules: How you will meet the deadline of May 31, 2019 for producing the report.
- A report comprising introduction, survey background, methodology and analytical findings from the surveys conducted. This report will also reflect on identified trends in perception of specific thematic issues

All supporting databases, completed questionnaires and other relevant materials will be handed-over to MaineHousing.

- **Your Relationship to MaineHousing**

- **Conflict of Interest**

If the firm, any principal or affiliate of the firm or anyone who will be paid for work on any contract resulting from this RFP has business ties, familial relationships, or other close personal relationships with a current MaineHousing employee or commissioner or anyone who was a MaineHousing employee or commissioner within the past two years, describe such relationship and identify the parties.

- **Sample Work Products and References**

- Up to three samples of work products, qualitative and quantitative research or survey research
- Client list three references including government and nonprofit clients and contact information

- **Availability Timeframe**

Once a proposal has been accepted, MaineHousing will request an onsite or online meeting to discuss initial implementation of this project. This initial meeting will help define the scope and responsibilities of the successful vendor.

- An initial planning meeting within two weeks of the start of the contract to finalize a work plan, the formatting of data presented to MaineHousing, and an acceptable timeline for completing the survey.
- Subsequent consultation as agreed upon by both MaineHousing and the consultant.

- **Fee Structures**

Please provide a list of fees individually for each of the following:

- The three work samples provided above.
- Rates for staff members assigned to the project.
- Estimated cost range for a 1,000 person survey, 15 minutes long, no open-ended survey questions, statewide with a separate cost for additional geographic breakdowns.
- Conducting the survey/comping the results.
- Producing a report of the results.

### **Submission Due Date**

Proposals are due to Richard Taylor at [rtaylor@mainehousing.org](mailto:rtaylor@mainehousing.org) by April 3, 2019.

### **Total Funds Available**

MaineHousing has a reasonable budget for this project. Cost will be a scoring factor and the ability to deliver a quality and timely product will be weighed during scoring.

### **Additional Terms and Conditions**

This RFP is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- MaineHousing expressly reserves the right to modify or withdraw this RFP at any time, whether before or after any responses have been submitted or received.
- MaineHousing reserves the right to adjust the timetable for this RFP as MaineHousing deems necessary.
- In the event the vendor selected does not enter into the required contract to deliver the services described in this RFP, MaineHousing reserves the right to reject the vendor and to offer a contract to another vendor.
- In no event will any obligations of any kind be enforceable against MaineHousing unless and until a written agreement is entered into.

- MaineHousing reserves the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received.
- MaineHousing reserves the right to negotiate price or other factors included in any proposal submitted to MaineHousing. If MaineHousing is unable to negotiate a mutually satisfactory arrangement with the successful vendor under this RFP, MaineHousing may, in its sole discretion, negotiate with another vendor or cancel this RFP and not select any proposal or MaineHousing may select another proposal.
- Each vendor bears all costs and expenses of its response and there will be no reimbursement for any costs and expenses relating to the preparation of responses submitted or for any costs or expenses incurred during any negotiations.
- Information submitted in any proposal becomes public information, and is subject to disclosure in accordance with the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S.A. Section 401 et seq. ("FOAA").

*MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, age, familial status or receipt of public assistance in the admission or access to or treatment in its programs and activities. In employment, MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability or genetic information. MaineHousing will provide appropriate communication auxiliary aids and services upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing will also provide this document in alternative formats upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing has designated the following person responsible for coordinating compliance with applicable federal and state nondiscrimination requirements and addressing grievances: Louise Patenaude, Maine State Housing Authority, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine 04330-4633, Telephone Number 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only), (207) 626-4600 (voice) or Maine Relay 711.*

## Appendix: Draft Survey

Note: The questions below will be preceded with a set of demographic questions aimed at identifying some, all or more of the following attributes of the survey taker:

- What municipality they live in currently
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Level of education
  - Live alone, married, living with other non-family members
  - Work status
  - Household size
  - Household Income Level (range choices)
  - Sources of income
  - Disability status
  - Household savings, assets
1. In which type of housing do you currently live?
    - a. Owned Single Family unit attached
    - b. Owned single family unit detached
    - c. Rented unit in a multi-family building with more than two units
    - d. Rented duplex
    - e. Owned Mobile home
    - f. Rented Condominium
    - g. Rented single family unit (including a mobile home)
  2. Are currently living in a home you purchased through MaineHousing or the USDA Rural Development Program?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  3. Are you currently renting your home with financial assistance from the state or federal government?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  4. Are you satisfied with the affordability, location, condition and all other aspects of the home you live in now?
    - a. Yes -- **STOP!** Thank you for your time
    - b. No
  5. If you answered no to question 3, why? (Circle all that apply)
    - a. I can't afford it (**GO to SECTION 1: AFFORDABILITY ON PAGE 2**)
    - b. Home/Apartment needs repairs (**GO TO SECTION 2: REPAIRS ON PAGE 3**)

- c. Location (Too far from services/amenities, neighborhood isn't safe, other problems)  
**(GO TO THE LOCATION/MOVING PREFERENCE SECTION ON PAGE 3)**

### SECTION 1: AFFORDABILITY

- 6. In the past 6 months, have ever had to skip a mortgage or rent payment?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
- 7. In the past year, have you or another member of your household had to find additional employment to afford rent, mortgage, home repairs, heating bills or other housing related expenditures?
  - a. Yes
  - b. no
  
- 8. In the past 10 years, have you lost a home to foreclosure?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
- 9. What housing related expenditure takes most of your income?
  - a. Insurance
  - b. Mortgage or rent
  - c. General maintenance
  - d. Utilities
  - e. Taxes
  
- 10. Have you refinanced your home within the past 5 years?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  
- 11. If yes to question 10, why?
  - a. To lower the interest rate and pay down higher interest debt
  - b. To lower the interest rate and invest elsewhere
  - c. To use the equity of the home for other needs such as renovations/repairs to the home
  - d. Pay for school
  - e. To shorten the mortgage term
  
- 12. What can government do to make housing more affordable?
  - a. Provide incentives to builders to build more housing
  - b. Offer more financial assistance to renters
  - c. Offer more financial assistance to make home buying more affordable
  - d. Provide more financial assistance to pay for heat
  - e. Provide financial assistance to make needed repairs
  - f. Decrease property taxes
  - g. Require that a set percentage of new homes being built be affordable



- h. Change zoning requirements and codes
13. Have you ever been homeless?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

## SECTION 2: REPAIRS

14. In 2018, were you or any of your family member's cold in your home due to a primary heating system (electric, oil/kerosene, gas, etc.) breakdown or malfunction?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

15. In a typical year, how much do you spend on routine repairs and maintenance such as painting, plumbing, roofing, electrical work, other?
- a. \$0 – \$599
  - b. \$600 - \$999
  - c. \$1,000 - \$4,999
  - d. Over \$5,000

16. Do you need any of the following repairs or maintenance to your home or apartment?  
(Check all that need repair or replacement)
- a. Exterior repairs (siding, paint, windows, gutters, roof)
  - b. Landscaping
  - c. Heating system
  - d. Plumbing
  - e. Electrical system

17. How critical are the needed repairs or maintenance?
- a. Urgent, must be done immediately
  - b. Should be done within the month
  - c. Can be done within the next three months
  - d. Seasonal, needs to be done when the current season ends

18. Are you aware of home repair services offered through any of the following organizations?
- a. Local Housing Authority
  - b. State of Maine Housing Authority
  - c. Local Community Action Program (CAP)
  - d. Area Agency on Aging

## SECTION 3: LOCATION/MOVING PREFERENCES

19. Why would you like to move?
- a. I want to be closer to services and amenities I need (stores, medical services, transportation and recreation, friends, more)
  - b. I can't afford my home any longer
  - c. I want a smaller more affordable home
  - d. I can no longer adequately maintain my home

20. If you would like to move but can't, what are the barriers to you moving?
- The value of my home has declined so that I can't sell it without a loss
  - My home won't sell
  - Can't afford to buy where I'd prefer to move
  - Can't afford rents where I'd prefer to move
  - Can't afford costs associated with moving
  - Can't find the location that's right for me
  - Other family member(s) needs me
  - Don't have good credit to buy or rent
21. Would you prefer to rent or buy when you relocate
- Buy
  - Rent
22. If you are considering buying or renting a home in a new location, would you prefer that home be
- In the community in which you live now
  - In a community in the same county in which you live now
  - In another county in the state
  - Outside of Maine but in the US
  - In another country
23. In terms of the regions of Maine, where would you prefer to own or rent a home?
- Norther coastal region (Lincoln, Knox, or Waldo counties)
  - Southern coastal region (Sagadahoc, Cumberland or York counties)
  - Central Maine (Androscoggin or Kennebec counties)
  - Northern Maine (Aroostook, Washington, Hancock, Piscataquis, or Penobscot counties)
  - Western Maine (Franklin, Somerset or Oxford counties)
24. If you were to move to a new home, what factors would be most important to you when choosing your home or apartment? Select all that apply
- Ability to pay my rent or mortgage
  - Close to bus/transit
  - Close to place of worship
  - Close to grocery store
  - Close to pharmacy
  - Close to work
  - Close to family and friends
  - Close to schools
  - Close to doctor
  - Close to hospital
  - Housing is accessible for persons with disabilities
  - Safe with little to no crime
  - Size in terms of bedroom counts
  - Energy efficiency
  - Larger home

- p. Other
25. Are you considering moving when you retire?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
26. Would you like to move to a home you own or rent when you retire?
- a. Own
  - b. Rent
27. When you retire, where would you prefer to live?
- a. In the home where you live now
  - b. Within the town where I live now
  - c. Another county in this state
  - d. Outside the state but in the USA
  - e. Another country
  - f. Not sure, too far in the future
28. What kind of supports do you think you'll need if you decide to stay in the home you live in now when you retire?
- a. In home health care services
  - b. Physical therapy in home
  - c. Visits for the purpose of socializing
  - d. Volunteers to do maintenance on the home
  - e. other
29. Have you considered living in any of the following type of housing arrangement when you get older?
- a. Shared housing (two or more individuals sharing one single family home)
  - b. Communal (separate homes in a community with shared outdoor spaces/features)
  - c. Congregate (each individual has a private bed, bath or living quarters but shares common dining or recreation rooms along with other residents)
  - d. Accessory dwelling unit (a unit attached or detached from another unit in which the owner lives)
  - e. Assisted living
30. How did you find your home?
- a. Zillow/Trulia internet search
  - b. Social Media
  - c. Real Estate Agent
  - d. Lender/banker
  - e. Newspaper other publication
  - f. Sign on the building or out front of building
  - g. Family member or friend
31. If you owned previously, why would you prefer to rent if you relocate?
- a. Cost (it's less expensive)

- b. Don't have to worry about maintenance
- c. Fewer members in the household
- d. Location to services
- e. Other
- f. N/A

32. If you rented previously, why do you prefer to own if you relocate?

- a. Cost (it's less expensive)
- b. Build equity/investment
- c. Better location (safe, near services/schools)
- d. Tax related purposes
- e. N/A

33. If you are interested in buying a home but haven't, or you are not interested at all, why is that?

- a. Home prices are too high
- b. Interest rates are too high
- c. Insurance costs are too high
- d. I have poor credit
- e. I can't afford the closing and down payment costs
- f. I can't find a home in an area I like
- g. Other

34. If you could add or improve any of the following amenities or services in your community, which would you choose? Select up to three.

Amenities/Services	Reponses
Road improvements	
Local businesses	
Parks/Recreational opportunities	
Sidewalk improvements	
HealthCare services	
Affordable homes	
Affordable rental units	
Public transportation	
Grocery Stores	
Programs for children and youth	
Social services for low income residents	
Mental health services	
Programs for older adults	
Services for disabled residents	
Other (please specify)	

35. Does your community have housing choices that meet the accessibility needs of you or other people in the community?

- a. Yes

- b. No
36. Have local regulations such as zoning/codes prevented you from doing any of the following to your home?
- a. Adding an accessory dwelling unit (attached or detached to or from) my house to rent or house my parents/in-laws
  - b. Sharing my home with others not related to me
  - c. Working from my home
  - d. Turning it into supportive housing
37. Would you support changes to local regulations such as zoning/codes to allow for the following in your community?
- a. Setting aside areas exclusively for affordable housing
  - b. Construction of affordable multifamily housing of 20 or more units
  - c. Allowing people to add accessory dwelling units to their home
  - d. Allowing people to share their homes with others not related to them
  - e. Supportive housing for those with disabilities or substance abuse issues
  - f. Allowing small houses
  - g. None of the above, let market forces guide regulatory and zoning activity
  - h. Allow working from home
38. Have you experienced homelessness in the past 10 years?
- a. Yes
  - b. No