

# Seattle Social Housing Developer

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**Solicitation 26-1**

**2026-2028 On-Call Architectural & Engineering Services for  
Small and Medium Social Housing Projects**

**Published:** 27 March 2026

**Responses Due:** 24 April 2026, by 5:00 p.m.

The Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD) is a new, innovative public development authority created through the passage of I-135 in 2023. Our mission is to develop, own, lease, and operate mixed-income Social Housing meeting the Passive House standard. Our housing will be climate-forward permanently affordable housing, owned as a public asset in perpetuity.

SSHD is excited to announce that we are seeking qualifications from qualified Consultant teams to assist SSHD with architectural and engineering services on a project-by-project basis. Services are to be provided on various projects within the City of Seattle. Services may include pre-design, feasibility, schematic design, and construction documents. These multifamily projects will be from roughly **12 to approximately 40 homes**. SSHD is looking for firms with a variety of experience in housing – prioritizing Point Access Blocks (single stair buildings), and single loaded corridors. SSHD is mandated to achieve Passive House certification for new construction, and Submitters are encouraged to have trained staff with experience designing and certifying Passive House housing.

**Pre-Submission Conference:** Those interested in responding to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) are strongly encouraged to attend the Pre-Submission Conference. The Seattle Social Housing Developer will hold one pre-submittal conference via Teams on:

**Wednesday, 8 April at 3 p.m.**

**Obtaining the RFQ:** Visit our website at <https://www.socialhousingseattle.org/> to obtain a copy of the RFQ. Any addenda issued for this RFQ will be published at the above-referenced website and submitters are responsible for checking the website prior to submission of Submittals for any addenda. If you are unable to download the RFQ or addenda, you may contact the Director of Design and Policy, Michael Eliason, at [solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org](mailto:solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org).

**Questions:** Any questions or requests for further information must be submitted in writing no later than **Friday 17 April, by 5 p.m.**, to the Director of Design and Policy noted above by e-mail.

**Submission Deadline:** Submittals must be received not later than **Friday April 24th, by 5 pm**, at the email below. **Please note that late, or hard copy submissions will not be accepted and will not be reviewed.**

**Diversity:** SSHD strongly encourages minority-owned and women-owned businesses, socially and economically disadvantaged businesses, and small businesses to submit or to participate in a subcontracting capacity on SSHD contracts.

**Rights Reserved:** SSHD reserves the right to waive as an informality any irregularities in submittals, and/or to reject any and all Submittals.

# RFQ solicitation 26-1

## 2026-2028 On-Call Architectural & Engineering Services for Small and Medium Social Housing Projects

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**RFQ Issued On:** 25 March 2026

**RFQ Submittal Due:** 24 April 2026, by 5 PM

### 1. Introduction

The Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD) is seeking qualified professional firms (hereafter “Consultant”) to provide architecture and engineering services for various Seattle Social Housing projects within the City of Seattle.

SSHD is tasked with delivering publicly-owned, mixed income affordable housing in Seattle. Thanks to Seattle voters, SSHD will have funds delivered quarterly from I-137. These funds, and others, will be used to finance the acquisition and development of new Social Housing throughout the city.

The initial scope of services for this RFQ will include: On-call architecture firm roster running from 2026-2028 for small and medium sized social housing, and new construction projects, meeting the Passive House standard; and building assessments; and renovations for similarly sized multifamily projects.

Depending on the project needs, the scope may be extended to include full design and construction administration services for redevelopment of one or more sites, which may include new construction and/or rehabilitation.

Firms interested in being considered for new construction projects must meet certain threshold criteria, relative to experience in the design of Passive House housing, in order to have their qualifications further evaluated for selection.

## Seattle Social Housing Developer Background:

The Seattle Social Housing Developer is a public development authority, codified under Initiative 135, passed by Seattle voters in February 2023. SSHD is responsible for developing, owning, and operating Social Housing in Seattle. Social housing is publicly owned mixed-income housing, removed from market forces and speculation, and built with the express aim of housing people equitably and affordably.

In 2025, Seattle residents again delivered on a vision of social housing by passing Initiative 137, providing funding for SSHD with an excess compensation tax. SSHD also has the capacity for bonding and receiving grants to further increase housing delivery.

## 2. Submittal Requirements

### Schedule:

Activity	Location	Day	Date	Time
Pre-Submittal Meeting	via Teams	Wednesday	8 April	3:00 PM
Deadline for Questions	n/a	Friday	17 April	5:00 PM

### Submittal Deadline Information

Email Submittal to:

[solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org](mailto:solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org): Friday 24 April 5:00 PM

**Questions:** Questions must be in writing and sent prior to the Deadline for Questions date and time shown above. Submit questions to Michael Eliason, Director of Design & Policy, at [solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org](mailto:solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org).

**Addenda:** In the event there are changes or clarifications to this RFQ, SSHD will issue an addendum. Addenda will be published on SSHD's website at:  
<https://www.socialhousingseattle.org/Solicitations>

It is the responsibility of Consultants to check this website before submitting and downloading any addenda issued. If you are unable to download the addenda, contact Michael Eliason at [solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org](mailto:solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org) to have a copy of the addenda e-mailed to you.

**Pre-Submittal Meeting:** Firms interested in being on-call for SSHD projects (both as a prime consultant or as sub-consultants) are strongly encouraged to join the Pre-Submittal Meeting at the link below, and the date and time indicated above.

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/c8892de5-0356-4078-a684-af0ca41cbefa@7bd13a17-3065-4851-98e4-ac20eb1468bb>

**Submittal:** The deadlines given above as to date and time are firm. SSHD will not consider any Submittal received after the deadline.

All submittals should be clearly identified when e-mailed to avoid any confusion about recording arrival dates and times. Firms should take this practice into account and submit their materials early to avoid any risk of ineligibility caused by unanticipated delays or other delivery problems. *NOTE: A faxed, hand-delivered, or mailed submittal is not acceptable.*

Upon request, SSHD will provide the submitter with an acknowledgment of receipt. All Submittals received will become the property of the Seattle Social Housing Developer.

**Submittals** should be limited to a maximum of 10 pages single sided, or 5 pages double sided, in no smaller than 10-point font on 8 ½” by 11” sheets. The following are NOT INCLUDED in the page limit mentioned above: Submittal’s cover letter, and resumes. Your **cover letter** should express your interest in performing the Work, as well as experience in Passive House design and certification. A principal or officer of the firm authorized to execute contracts or other similar documents on the firm’s behalf must sign the letter.

**Proprietary Submittal Material:**

Seattle Social Housing Developer, as a Washington Public Development Authority, is subject to Washington Laws regulating governmental entities, including the Washington Public Records Act (“Public Records Act”), RCW 42.56, which provides that any writing (including handwriting, typewriting, printing, photographing, and every other means of recording any form of communication or representation) containing information relating to the conduct of government or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function prepared owned, used or retained by state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics, must be promptly disclosed upon request, unless specifically exempted under the Public Records Act. Exemptions are narrow and explicit and contained in RCW 42.56 and RCW 19.108.

Accordingly, SSHD cannot represent or guarantee that any information submitted by Consultant will be confidential. In the event SSHD receives a request under the Public Records Act, SSHD’s sole responsibility will be to follow the procedures set forth in the Public Records Act; provided that SSHD shall, in accordance with the Public Records Act, use reasonable efforts to provide prior notice to the Consultant when appropriate under the Public Records Act in order for Consultant to either promptly provide a redaction of such records to maintain confidentiality of its information, intellectual property rights, and trade secrets or for Consultant to file an injunction through the state or federal courts in King

County, Washington to block the release of the requested records. Regardless, Consultant agrees that SSHD will not be required to notify Consultant in connection with SSHD's compliance with the Public Records Act.

For more information, visit the Washington State Legislature's website at <http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56>.

**Cost of Preparing Submittals:** SSHD will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Submitter in the preparation and presentation of Submittals submitted in response to this RFQ including, but not limited to, costs incurred in connection with the Submitter's participation in demonstrations and the pre-submittal conference.

**Rights Reserved by SSHD:** SSHD reserves the right to waive as an informality any irregularities in Submittals and/or to reject any or all Submittals. SSHD requests that companies refrain from requesting public disclosure of selection information until a contract has been executed as a measure to best protect the solicitation process, particularly in the event of cancellation or re-solicitation. With this preference stated, SSHD shall continue to properly fulfill all public disclosure requests for such information as required by State Law.

### 3. Scope of Work

- a) The Consultant understands that this is an as-needed Contract, with no specific scope of work or payment authorized, and that there is no guarantee for any specific amount of work to be assigned under this On-Call Contract. Work shall be assigned by separately executed Work Orders. The Consultant shall provide timely response to completing the work assigned in Work Orders. Consultant shall perform their duties under this Contract with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence that a responsible, careful, skillful, prudent and diligent person would exercise in similar circumstances.
- b) The potential scope of services for Work Orders may include, but is not limited to the following:
  - i. Feasibility Studies;
  - ii. Building Assessments for acquisitions or renovations;
  - iii. All phases of Project Design and Disciplines;
  - iv. Bid Scoping Documents;
  - v. Permit drawings, assistance/coordination;
  - vi. Design Reviews;
  - vii. Constructability Reviews;
  - viii. Cost Estimating;
  - ix. Review of equipment and product specifications;
  - x. Construction Support Services



complete architectural services, from schematic design through construction administration and project closeout, for at least one qualifying project. A qualifying project is one having three of the following characteristics:

- i. A multifamily building (not townhomes) of at least 16 dwellings, which includes family-sized homes.
- ii. A multifamily building where at least half of the dwelling units were rent-restricted to households earning no more than 80% of Area Median Income for the locale of the project.
- iii. A multifamily building (not townhomes) of at least 12 dwellings, where at least half of the dwellings are 2-bedrooms or larger.
- iv. An affordable or mixed income multifamily building developed by a Public Housing Authority, non-profit developer, or cooperative.
- v. A multifamily building (not townhomes) meeting Passive House certification.

Firms not meeting the Threshold Criteria will not have their qualifications evaluated under Part II.

**b) Part II: Firm and staff experience with affordable housing**

Qualifications will be evaluated on the experience of the firm and the staff proposed, with respect to the following criteria.

- i. Experience with Type III, Type IV, and Type V construction.
  - ii. Experience with multifamily building assessment and renovations
  - iii. Work with Public Housing Authorities and/or non-profit housing developers
  - iv. Design of completed projects utilizing a Point Access Block (single stair buildings), and/or single loaded corridor configuration.
  - v. Land use and building permitting in the City of Seattle
  - vi. Passive House experience, with trained and certified staff.
- **Relating to Criterion 1:**
    - Related experience working with affordable and family-sized housing.
  - **Relating to Criterion 2:**
    - Related experience with Type III, Type IV, and Type V construction.
  - **Relating to Criterion 3:**
    - Related experience working with Public Housing Authorities and/or non-profit housing developers.
  - **Relating to Criterion 4:**
    - Related experience working on Point Access Block and single-loaded corridor housing typologies.
  - **Relating to Criterion 5:**
    - Related experience with land use and building permitting in the City of Seattle.

- **Relating to Criterion 6:**
  - Related experience with Passive House training, design process, and building certification.
- **Provide resumes for the key personnel and sub-consultants named in your response.**
  - Include a list of at least three references for whom the firm or team members have performed similar work in the last five years (including agency or business name of client, contact person, address, telephone number and e-mail address if available.)

## 5. Evaluation Criteria

Submittals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed in this section and further described in Section 4 above. In preparing the Submittal to SSHD, it is important for Submitters to clearly demonstrate their expertise in the areas described in this document. Because multiple areas of expertise are required for successfully performing this project, the Submitter, either through in-house staff or sub-consultants, must demonstrate expertise and have available adequate numbers of experienced personnel in all of the areas described.

Submitters are encouraged to identify and clearly label in their submittal how each criterion is being fully addressed. Evaluation of responses to this RFQ will be based only on the information provided in the submittal package, and if applicable, interviews, and reference responses. SSHD reserves the right to request additional information or documentation from the firm regarding its submittal documents, personnel, financial viability, or other items in order to complete the selection process. If a responding firm chooses to provide additional materials in their submittal beyond those requested, those materials should be identified as such and included in a separate section of the submittal.

Submissions will be evaluated on the following criteria:

## Base Criteria

- Consultant team have required Business & Professional Licenses
- Experience implementing similar projects on time and on-budget
- Consultant shall have under its employment or as a sub-contractor one Certified Passive House Designer, unless the submitter is only interested in performing building assessments and design services for renovations of existing multifamily housing
- Consultant shall have proven experience with permitting in City of Seattle
- MWBE Inclusion Plan

## Proposed Team Qualifications & Resumes

- Organizational Chart of Submitter provides a clear picture of key personnel on proposed team
- Proposed Team members have relevant technical expertise to provide architectural and engineering tasks listed in Scope of Work
- Some or all of team members have previously worked on similar projects
- Team experience with Construction Types III, IV, and V

## Project Experience

- Team experience designing for low- and middle-income populations, including the elderly and disabled, immigrants, families, and projects with populations comprising more than one of these populations.
- Example Projects description includes:
  - (1) Previous experience with projects of similar size and scope;
  - (2) Record of accomplishing Passive House design and certification;
  - (3) Record of accomplishing project on schedule and budget; and
  - (4) Most important role or all roles in project were performed by firm in proposed project.
- Team experience with public housing authorities, non-profit housing developers, and cooperative developers
- Experience with Point Access Blocks (single stair housing), or single-loaded corridor housing typologies

## Environmental & Inclusive Housing

### Passive House Experience

- Team experience with Passive House Design and Certification

### Mass Timber and Prefabrication experience

- Experience designing and administering construction documents for Type IV construction; and prefabricated structure or building envelopes

### Inclusive Design Experience

- Experience with Inclusive Design going beyond ADA requirements, such as the Kelsey Inclusive Design Standards, and Disability Justice

## 6. Selection Process

SSHD will evaluate all responses to this RFQ that are received on or before the stated deadline, according to the criteria listed above. Based on its initial evaluation, SSHD may:

- a) Accept the submission and place the selected firm on the roster of pre-approved vendors.
- b) Reject the submission and not include the Submitting firm on the roster.
- c) Request additional information from the Submitter or Submitters whose responses appear to have the greatest likelihood of success; and/or
- d) Invite one or more Submitter whose responses appear to have the greatest likelihood of success to attend an interview/presentation to discuss their Submittal; and then make a recommendation to SSHD's CEO & Chief Real Estate Development Officer, and request authority to negotiate a contract with one or more Submitters.

SSHD reserves the right to conduct reference checks.

In the event that information obtained from the reference checks reveals concerns about any submitter's past performance and their ability to successfully perform the contract to be executed based on this RFQ, SSHD may, at its sole discretion, determine that the Submitter is not a responsible submitter and may select the next highest-ranked Submitter whose reference checks validate the ability of the Submitter to successfully perform the contract to be executed based on this RFQ. In conducting reference checks, SSHD may include itself as a reference if the Submitter has performed work for SSHD, even if the Submitter did not identify SSHD as a reference.

By submitting in response to this RFQ, the submitter accepts the procurement method used and acknowledges and accepts that the evaluation process will require subjective judgments by SSHD and the evaluation panel.

Any protest of the selection process shall be resolved in accordance with SSHD's Procurement Policies, which may be reviewed at the following web site address:

[Governance Documents | SSH-Site2025](#)

## 7. Contract Negotiations

SSHD shall negotiate with the most qualified Submitter or Submitters, as determined by evaluation of the responses and, if applicable, interviews. If SSHD is unable to reach agreement with any of the highest ranked firms, it may negotiate with the next highest ranked firm or firms, proceeding in turn to each firm that SSHD has determined to be qualified, in order of rank. If agreement cannot be reached with any qualified firm, SSHD reserves the right to cancel the solicitation

## 8. Administrative Information

### a) **Small and/or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Requirements**

SSHD strongly encourages minority-owned and women-owned businesses, socially and economically disadvantaged business enterprises, small businesses and veteran-owned businesses to submit submittals, to participate as partners, or to participate in other business activity in response to this RFQ. Consequently, in responding to the solicitation, submitters should provide an Inclusion Plan demonstrating good faith efforts in seeking meaningful opportunities for WMBEs in the work of the Contract.

### b) **Basic Eligibility:**

By submitting for this Solicitation:

- i. Submitter represents that it is licensed to do business in the State of Washington and it has a state Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number.

### c) **Women and Minority Owned Businesses:**

SSHD follows the City's ordinance requiring the maximum practicable opportunity for successful participation of minority and women-owned Consultants and sub-consultants. All Submitters must agree to SMC Chapter 20.42, and seek meaningful subconsultant opportunities with WMBE firms. SSHD requires a plan for including minority- and women-owned firms, which becomes a material part of the contract. The Plan must be responsive in the opinion of SSHD, which means a meaningful and successful search and commitments to include WMBE firms for work. SSHD reserves the right to improve the Plan with the winning Consultant before contract execution. Consultants should use selection methods and strategies sufficiently effective for successful WMBE participation. At SSHD request, Consultants must furnish evidence such as copies of agreements with WMBE subconsultants either before contract execution or during contract performance. The winning Consultant must request written approval for changes to the Inclusion Plan once it is agreed upon. This includes changes to goals, subconsultant awards and efforts.

WMBE firms need not be state certified to meet SSHD's WMBE definition. SSHD uses the City's definition of WMBE firms as at least 51% (percent) owned by women and/or minority. To be recognized as a WMBE, register on the City's Procurement Portal.

### d) **Approval of Sub-Consultants:**

SSHD retains the right of final approval of any sub-consultant of the selected

Submitter who must inform all sub-consultants of this provision.

**e) Documents Produced:**

All construction drawings, reports, specifications, and other documents produced under contract to SSHD must be submitted to SSHD in a digital format that meets SSHD's requirements, using Microsoft Office or PDF products. All documents and products created by the Consultant and their sub-consultants shall become the exclusive property of SSHD.

**f) Other Contracts:**

During the original term and all subsequent renewal terms of the contract resulting from this RFQ, SSHD expressly reserves the right, through any other sources available, to pursue and implement alternative means of soliciting and awarding similar or related services as described in this RFQ.

**g) Deletion From a Roster:**

SSHD may formally remove a Consultant from this on-call roster at its discretion before the current cycle ends.

**h) Reapplying to the Roster:**

Consultants who have been notified of their denial of application to be added to a roster have the right to reapply after 4 months. Consultants are strongly encouraged to ensure staff receive adequate Passive House education and training.