



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Community Engagement Capacity Building, Training and Acquisition Readiness

Solicitation No. 91426

Seattle Social Housing Developer

Anticipated RFP Issue Date: Friday, September 14, 2026

I. Background

Seattle Social Housing Developer (SSHD) is an independent Public Development Authority created through Seattle Initiative 135 to develop, acquire, own and steward permanently affordable, publicly owned social housing. SSHD's model pairs long-term financial sustainability with meaningful resident participation, public accountability, and mixed-income communities.

SSHD is preparing for a potential residential property acquisition expected to close in December 2026 and may pursue additional acquisitions in March 2027. These transactions require a repeatable approach for educating current residents and surrounding communities about social housing, creating meaningful opportunities for input, and preparing trusted community representatives and SSHD staff to lead engagement.

Some prospective acquisition communities may have histories shaped by HOPE VI redevelopment, displacement, disinvestment, or distrust of public institutions. SSHD therefore intends to center people and organizations with deep community roots and relevant lived experience. The selected consultant will build SSHD's engagement capacity and provide strategic and technical support; the consultant will not replace community leadership or serve as the sole public face of outreach.

II. Purpose and Procurement Intent

SSHD seeks a qualified consultant or consultant team to design a reusable, equity-centered community engagement system; develop practical tools and training materials; deliver and record a train-the-trainer program; facilitate readiness sessions with SSHD and designated stakeholders; and provide technical support as SSHD activates engagement for upcoming acquisitions.

This engagement is a Personal Services contract under Section V.B of SSHD's Procurement Policy and is being conducted through a competitive RFP. No firm, individual, methodology, or proprietary tool is preselected or preferred. Proposers may recommend their own methods, provided that the resulting approach is practical, culturally responsive, transferable to SSHD, and capable of being used by SSHD staff and community partners across future acquisitions and new-construction projects.

The CEO or designee will appoint the evaluation committee and administer the selection. The committee will apply the published criteria uniformly, including the consultant's qualifications and competence and the unfair-business-practices review required by SMC 20.46.020.E. Contract amount not to exceed \$71,000. Contract execution is also subject to budget availability and all approval authority in effect at the time of award.

III. Engagement Model and Guiding Principles

The work must reflect the following division of roles and principles:

Community-led delivery. Public-facing outreach is expected to be led primarily by SSHD staff, trusted community members, resident workgroup consultants, and community-based partners. SSHD will contract separately with House Our Neighbors and resident workgroup consultants. They are not subcontractors to the selected consultant, and their compensation must not be included in proposals submitted under this RFP.

Capacity transfer. The consultant must leave SSHD with editable tools, trained facilitators, recorded training and a repeatable system that can be used without ongoing dependence on the consultant.

Community specificity. Each acquisition plan must reflect neighborhood history, resident needs, language access, accessibility, cultural context, past voter support for I-135 and Prop 1A based on precinct level data, and existing relationships rather than apply a generic outreach formula.

Transparency and closed feedback loops. Engagement materials must explain what is known, what is undecided, what input can influence, and how SSHD will report back on what it heard and decided.

Trauma-informed and anti-displacement practice. Engagement must avoid extractive participation, recognize histories of displacement and institutional harm, and establish clear practices for conflict, de-escalation and referral.

Transaction confidentiality. No property identity, transaction detail or non-public information may be disclosed until SSHD provides written authorization and confirms coordination with the seller or current owner.

Anti-growth and density sentiment. Several community groups are skeptical and/or critical of growth. Some concerns come from private developer profit seeking, whereas other concerns come from wanting to maintain "neighborhood character". The materials for engagement must directly engage with this spectrum of opposition and be able to inoculate neighbors against these blanket concerns.

IV. Scope of Services

Phase 1 - Rapid Initiation and Acquisition Readiness

The consultant shall begin immediately upon contract execution and complete the following:

Facilitate a kickoff with SSHD leadership, acquisitions, resident engagement, communications, legal, property management and other designated participants.

Review Initiative 135, SSHD's social housing model, resident governance materials, existing communications, acquisition timelines, confidentiality restrictions, and available demographic, precinct level voter data and neighborhood information.

Develop a detailed work plan, decision calendar, review protocol, risk register, communications cadence and responsibility matrix.

Create a stakeholder map that distinguishes current residents, surrounding communities, community-based organizations, culturally specific organizations, former public housing residents, neighborhood institutions, businesses, labor, elected officials and other affected groups.

Recommend transparent criteria and a process for SSHD to select and separately contract with community representatives and trainers who have deep roots in each acquisition community.

Phase 2 - Community Engagement Framework and Reusable Toolkit

The consultant shall co-design, test and finalize an editable portfolio-wide toolkit. At minimum, the toolkit must include:

A pre-purchase and transition community engagement playbook covering planning, authorization, outreach, facilitation, documentation, escalation, report-back and after-action review.

An adaptable engagement plan template for acquisitions and new construction projects, including objectives, audiences, methods, timeline, staffing, budget, accessibility, language access, risk controls and success measures.

Plain-language social housing education materials, including a presentation deck, facilitator guide, one-page overview, frequently asked questions, talking points, myth-and-fact content and meeting scripts.

Outreach and meeting tools, including stakeholder tracker, outreach log, invitation templates, sign-in and consent materials, event run-of-show, discussion guides, feedback forms, note-taking templates and a community feedback synthesis template.

Protocols for confidentiality, media inquiries, public records, personal information, photography and recording, accessibility, language access, conflict, de-escalation, urgent issues and referral to appropriate SSHD or property management staff.

A feedback-to-decision crosswalk that records what SSHD heard, what can be acted upon, who owns follow-up, and how outcomes will be communicated back to participants.

Editable source files and print-ready/digital-ready versions that are accessible, translation-ready, and usable by non-specialists.

Phase 3 - Train-the-Trainer Program

The consultant shall create and deliver a practical train-the-trainer program for SSHD staff and designated community partners. The program must:

Include a facilitator manual, participant workbook, lesson plans, slides, exercises, scenarios, checklists, observation rubric and coaching guide.

Prepare participants to explain SSHD's social housing model, facilitate individual and group conversations, listen actively, document feedback, manage difficult dynamics, respond within role boundaries, and escalate legal, operational or resident-specific issues.

Use adult-learning methods and hands-on practice, including role-play and a simulated acquisition engagement session.

Include at least one initial cohort, one observed pilot or practicum, and one follow-up coaching or refresher session before the December acquisition engagement is activated.

Produce captioned recordings of core training modules, together with editable materials and instructions for onboarding future trainers.

Establish objective readiness criteria and provide SSHD with a trainer-readiness assessment and recommendations for additional coaching.

Phase 4 - Site-Specific Acquisition Activation and Technical Support

For the anticipated December 2026 acquisition, and for any optional March 2027 acquisitions authorized by SSHD, the consultant shall:

Prepare a site-specific engagement launch package within five business days after SSHD authorizes use of property-specific information.

Adapt the portfolio toolkit to the site's resident population, neighborhood history, cultural and language needs, transaction schedule, ownership transition and known areas of concern.

Facilitate planning sessions and dry runs with SSHD staff, House Our Neighbors, resident workgroup consultants, community representatives and designated partners, each participating under its separate relationship with SSHD.

Provide behind-the-scenes technical assistance and, when requested, co-facilitation support while preserving the leadership role of SSHD and trusted community representatives.

Coordinate timing and protocols with SSHD's acquisition team and, as directed by SSHD, the current owner, seller, property manager and legal counsel.

Support rapid revision of materials based on transaction developments, stakeholder feedback and lessons learned.

Phase 5 - Evaluation, Handoff and Continuous Improvement

Develop a practical engagement measurement framework addressing reach, representation, accessibility, participant understanding, trust, issue resolution, follow-through and trainer readiness.

Facilitate an after-action review following the December acquisition engagement and update the toolkit before any March 2027 activation.

Deliver a final handoff session, file index, version-control protocol and recommendations for the incoming or future Community Engagement Manager.

Identify which functions should be institutionalized internally, maintained through community partner agreements, or procured periodically as specialized support.

V. Required Deliverables and Schedule

Deliverable	Required Timing
Contract kickoff and confirmed work plan	Within 2 business days of contract execution
Document review, stakeholder map, RACI and risk register	October 2, 2026
Draft engagement framework and core education materials	October 16, 2026
Draft train-the-trainer curriculum and facilitator manual	October 23, 2026
Initial training cohort and simulated engagement	October 26-30, 2026
Pilot feedback and revised toolkit	November 6, 2026
Recorded modules, coaching session and trainer-readiness assessment	November 13, 2026
December acquisition readiness workshop and dry run	November 16-20, 2026
Final acquisition-ready toolkit and launch package	No later than November 30, 2026
December acquisition technical support	As authorized by SSHD through transition
After-action review and toolkit update	Within 15 business days after initial engagement
Optional March acquisition activation(s)	Schedule established by task authorization

The dates above are mandatory target dates intended to support a December 2026 closing. Proposers must identify any timing assumptions or dependencies and demonstrate sufficient capacity to meet an accelerated schedule. SSHD may adjust dates through written agreement or solicitation addendum.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

Party	Primary Responsibilities
SSHD	Set policy and final decisions; authorize disclosure; approve materials; coordinate transaction parties; identify participants; lead or designate public-facing outreach; provide timely review.
Consultant	Build the system and tools; train and coach; facilitate planning and readiness; provide technical support; document learning; transfer capacity and work product.
HON, resident consultants and other community representatives	Participate under separate SSHD contracts or agreements; co-design site-specific approaches; contribute local knowledge; build trust; conduct or co-lead outreach; facilitate conversations; identify concerns and report back.
Current owner/property manager	When authorized by SSHD, coordinate access, resident communications, operational information and transaction-sensitive timing.

VII. Consultant Qualifications

Competitive proposers will demonstrate:

- Successful experience designing and implementing equitable, community-led engagement for affordable housing, public agencies, community development, real estate, neighborhood planning or similarly complex public-facing work.
- Demonstrated work with communities affected by displacement, public-housing redevelopment, institutional harm, language barriers or exclusion from decision-making.
- Demonstrated experience leading engagement in communities where proposed affordable housing or permanent supportive housing developments faced significant organized opposition or NIMBY-related pushback. This should include experience developing effective public narratives, addressing misinformation and stigmatizing assumptions, responding constructively to community concerns, and building broader understanding and support without compromising the rights, dignity, or voices of current and future residents.
- Experience developing reusable toolkits, manuals, curricula, recorded training and train-the-trainer programs that non-specialists can apply.
- Skill in trauma-informed facilitation, active listening, conflict navigation, accessibility, language access and culturally responsive engagement.
- Ability to work effectively with resident leaders, community-based organizations, government, housing operators, real-estate teams, legal counsel and communications staff.
- Capacity to begin immediately and meet the required November 30, 2026 acquisition-readiness deadline.
- A credible plan to include and compensate Seattle-based or neighborhood-rooted partners where the prime consultant does not independently possess those relationships.

VIII. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should not exceed 10 pages, excluding resumes, references, work samples and required forms.

Submit one searchable PDF containing:

- Cover letter and authorized contact information.
- Understanding of SSHD's objectives, the community-led delivery model, transaction confidentiality and the accelerated acquisition schedule.
- Detailed approach and work plan for each phase, including decision points, SSHD inputs and quality-control methods.

- A milestone schedule showing how all core deliverables will be completed by November 30, 2026.
- Qualifications of the firm, project lead, trainers, facilitators, subcontractors and community partners, with clear roles and availability.
- Demonstrated experience leading engagement in communities where proposed affordable housing or permanent supportive housing developments faced significant organized opposition or NIMBY-related pushback. This should include experience developing effective public narratives, addressing misinformation and stigmatizing assumptions, responding constructively to community concerns, and building broader understanding and support without compromising the rights, dignity, or voices of current and future residents.
- Three comparable projects completed within the past seven years, including at least one capacity-building or train-the-trainer engagement and at least one housing, community development or public-sector engagement.
- Two work samples, preferably including a toolkit/manual and a curriculum, training deck or recorded-training outline. Proposers may redact confidential information.
- Three client references, including name, title, organization, email, telephone number, project description and dates of service.
- A fixed-fee price for the Core Scope through the December 2026 after-action review, with fees by phase and milestone; hourly rates; reimbursable expense assumptions; and separate not-to-exceed pricing for each optional March 2027 acquisition activation.
- A statement describing which materials are pre-existing proprietary tools and the license proposed for SSHD's ongoing use, adaptation, reproduction and training.
- Disclosure of actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. Disclosure will not, by itself, disqualify a proposer.
- Identification of any requested exceptions to the RFP or anticipated contract terms.
- Acknowledgment that House Our Neighbors and SSHD's resident workgroup consultants will be separately contracted by SSHD and must not be included as proposer subcontractors or in the proposed fee.

IX. Fee Structure

SSHD intends to negotiate a milestone-based fixed fee for the Core Scope and separate task authorizations for optional acquisition activations. The price proposal must distinguish:

- Core framework, toolkit and project management.
- Train-the-trainer curriculum, live delivery, recordings and coaching.
- December acquisition readiness and technical support.
- Optional per-acquisition activation for March 2027 or later transactions.
- Compensation for any proposer-selected subcontractors or community partners other than House Our Neighbors and SSHD's resident workgroup consultants; translation/interpretation; accessibility services; travel; printing; and other reimbursable expenses, whether included or separately priced.

Do not include compensation for House Our Neighbors or SSHD's resident workgroup consultants. SSHD will contract with and pay those parties separately. The selected consultant must coordinate with and train them as directed by SSHD.

Selection will not be based solely on cost. SSHD will evaluate overall value, feasibility, capacity transfer, community credibility and the proposer's ability to meet the required schedule.

X. Evaluation and Selection

Evaluation Criterion	Points
Approach to community-led engagement, capacity transfer and SSHD's social housing model	20
Quality and practicality of toolkit and train-the-trainer methodology	25
Relevant experience, including housing, displacement-impacted communities and public-sector work	20

Evaluation Criterion	Points
Project team, Seattle/community-rooted partnerships and demonstrated availability	15
Schedule, implementation plan and ability to meet November 30 deadline	10
Cost and overall value	10
Total	100

SSHD may evaluate written proposals, conduct interviews, request clarifications, review references and work samples, and negotiate with one or more highest-ranked proposers. The CEO or designee may select any qualified proposer, but must document a selection other than the committee's most highly qualified proposer. Equally qualified and capable proposers are subject to SSHD's good-faith rotation requirement. SSHD intends to select the best overall value.

XI. Tentative Procurement and Performance Schedule

Milestone	Date
RFP issued	Monday, September 14, 2026
Written questions due	Friday, September 18, 2026, 4:30 p.m. Pacific
Answers/addendum posted	Wednesday, September 23, 2026
Proposals due	Friday, September 25, 2026, 4:30 p.m. Pacific
Interviews, if conducted	September 28-29, 2026
Notice of intended selection	Friday, September 30, 2026
Target contract execution	Friday, October 2, 2026
Project kickoff	Monday, October 5, 2026
Core acquisition-ready package complete	Monday, November 30, 2026
Anticipated contract end	April 30, 2027, unless extended

SSHD reserves the right to modify this schedule by written addendum. Proposers are responsible for identifying any schedule risk in their proposals.

XII. Submission Instructions and Communications

Submit proposals in PDF format by the deadline above to solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org with the subject line: Community Engagement Capacity Building RFP - [Firm Name]. Late proposals may be rejected. All questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing to solicitations@seattlesocialhousing.org. To preserve a fair competitive process, proposers should not contact SSHD Board members, employees, consultants, community partners or transaction counterparties regarding this solicitation outside the designated process. SSHD may issue written addenda and will make material answers available to all known prospective proposers.

Consistent with Section V.B of SSHD's Procurement Policy, SSHD will publicly advertise this need for Personal Services and identify the responsible SSHD representative in the notice. If the anticipated contract value exceeds \$71,000, the notice will be advertised in an official newspaper for at least two days. Procurement decisions and the supporting solicitation, award and contract-performance records will be documented and retained in SSHD's files under Section VIII of the policy and applicable public-records law.

XIII. Work Product and Intellectual Property

All project-specific work product created and paid for under the contract, including manuals, templates, scripts, presentations, recordings, reports and editable source files, will become SSHD property upon payment, subject to negotiated contract terms. A consultant may retain ownership of clearly identified pre-existing tools or methods, but must grant SSHD a perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free license to use, reproduce, adapt, translate, record, distribute internally, and provide to SSHD contractors and community partners for SSHD-related work.

Training recordings must be captioned and delivered in commonly usable formats. The consultant must secure any necessary permissions and avoid recording participants who have not consented.

XIV. Other Terms and Conditions

Public records. Proposals and contract records may be subject to disclosure under the Washington Public Records Act. Proposers should clearly identify material they believe is exempt and state the legal basis. SSHD does not guarantee that material will be withheld.

Conflicts and ethics. Proposers must disclose actual, potential or perceived conflicts, including lobbying, political, campaign, financial or professional relationships that could affect—or appear to affect— independent performance.

Confidentiality. The selected consultant must protect nonpublic acquisition, resident, personnel and operational information and comply with SSHD's instructions regarding disclosure, retention and secure disposal.

Insurance and contracting. Before contract execution, the selected consultant must provide evidence of insurance and complete SSHD's required contracting documents. Final scope, fees and terms are subject to negotiation.

No guarantee of award. SSHD may reject any or all proposals, waive immaterial irregularities, request clarification, negotiate scope or price, cancel or reissue the RFP, or take other action in SSHD's best interest.

Equal opportunity. SSHD encourages proposals from firms of all sizes and ownership structures, including minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned and disadvantaged business enterprises, as well as teams that meaningfully compensate community-based partners.

Debarment. By submitting a proposal, the proposer certifies that neither the firm nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from public contracting.

Appendix A - Proposal Checklist

- ☐ Cover letter and contact information
- ☐ Understanding of the work, Seattle Social Housing model, and community-led model
- ☐ Approach and phased work plan
- ☐ Milestone schedule through November 30, 2026
- ☐ Project team, roles, availability and community-rooted partners
- ☐ Comparable projects and two work samples
- ☐ Three references
- ☐ Core fixed fee and optional acquisition pricing
- ☐ Intellectual-property and reuse statement
- ☐ Conflict and prior-communications disclosure
- ☐ Requested exceptions
- ☐ Acknowledgment of separate HON and resident-consultant contracting

Appendix B - Price Proposal Format

Item	Description	Fixed/NTE Fee
Phase 1	Rapid initiation and acquisition readiness	\$_____
Phase 2	Framework and reusable toolkit	\$_____
Phase 3	Train-the-trainer program and recordings	\$_____

Item	Description	Fixed/NTE Fee
Phase 4	December acquisition activation and support	\$_____
Phase 5	Evaluation, handoff and after-action revision	\$_____
Core Scope Total	Through December after-action review	\$_____
Option 1	Each March 2027 acquisition activation	\$_____
Reimbursables	State assumptions and not-to-exceed amount	\$_____

Attach a detailed cost narrative showing labor categories, hourly rates, estimated hours, proposer-selected subcontractor/community-partner compensation, translation/interpretation, accessibility services, travel, printing, taxes and other anticipated costs. Exclude all compensation for House Our Neighbors and SSHD's resident workgroup consultants; SSHD will contract with and pay them separately.