

**GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO. 227007**

LOW-BARRIER SHELTER

The City of Augusta is seeking proposals from qualified nonprofit organizations, governmental agencies, or public-private partnerships (“Providers”) to develop and operate a 24-hour, seven-day-per-week, 50 to 70 bed, low-barrier homeless shelter that provides safe housing together with comprehensive supportive services designed to move guests towards stable housing (a “Low-Barrier Shelter”).

The City's goal is to reduce unsheltered homelessness by providing immediate shelter while connecting guests with housing, healthcare, behavioral health services, employment assistance, and other supportive services necessary to achieve permanent housing stability.

The City is willing to partner with the selected Provider in one or more of the following ways:

- Financial operating or capital assistance;
- Assistance securing State of Maine and/or federal funding;
- Donation or lease of municipal property;
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding; and
- Tax Increment Financing assistance, where applicable.
- Financial assistance to the winning bidder to help prepare workable proposals to the City and Planning Board.

The City encourages innovative proposals that maximize community partnerships while maintaining a compassionate, safe, and accountable shelter environment.

I. BACKGROUND

Like many communities throughout Maine, Augusta has seen an increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness.

The City recognizes emergency shelter alone is insufficient. Successful programs combine shelter with intensive case management and coordinated access to housing and supportive services.

The City desires proposals for a Low-Barrier Shelter that emphasize permanent housing while recognizing the need to address behavioral health, substance use disorders, employment barriers, and other challenges.

II. PROJECT GOALS

The City expects that the selected Provider will:

- Operate a safe, 50 to 70 bed, low-barrier shelter;
- Reduce unsheltered homelessness;

- Increase permanent housing placements;
- Improve community health and safety;
- Coordinate services among local agencies;
- Reduce unnecessary emergency room utilization;
- Reduce interactions with law enforcement;
- Assist clients in obtaining income and benefits; and
- Improve quality of life for shelter guests and surrounding neighborhoods.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and/or to waive any deviation from the requirements of this RFP or any other informality or irregularity in any proposal when in the interest of the City. Any proposal may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of proposals or authorized postponement thereof. Any proposal received after the time and date specified shall not be considered. No Provider may withdraw a proposal within 30 (30) days after the actual date of the opening thereof. The acceptance of any proposal submitted pursuant to this RFP shall not constitute any implied acceptance of or offer to enter into a contract with any Provider.

III. PREPARATION OF PROPOSAL

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with the Format of Proposal attached hereto and all required information must be provided before the proposal can be considered for award.

All proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes bearing on the outside the name of the Provider, its address, the bid number 227007, and the name of the project for which the proposal is being submitted, as required by the Request for Proposal. If forwarded by mail, the sealed envelope containing the proposal and marked as directed above, must be enclosed in another envelope addressed as specified in the RFP and preferably by “registered mail.”

At the time of the opening of proposals, each Provider will be presumed to be thoroughly familiar with the General Specifications, Proposal Specifications and Format of Proposal, including all addenda. The failure or omission of any Provider to examine the site or to receive any form, instrument, or document shall in no way relieve any Provider from any obligation in respect to its proposal.

Any item of material, equipment or labor not mentioned in these specifications, but which is required to complete the specified project, must be included in the proposal by the Provider.

IV. QUALIFICATION OF BIDDERS

The City may make such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the ability of the Provider to operate a Low-Barrier Shelter and the Provider shall furnish to the City all such information and data for this purpose as the City may request. The City reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such Provider fails to satisfy the City that such Provider is properly qualified to carry out the specifications or operate a Low-Barrier Shelter. Conditional proposals will not be accepted. The City may require pre-qualification data from Providers unknown to it.

V. ADDENDA AND INTERPRETATIONS

No interpretation of the meaning of the specifications, or other contract documents will be made to any Provider orally. Every request for such interpretation should be in writing, addressed to Earl Kingsbury, Community Service Department, City of Augusta, 16 Cony Street, Augusta, Maine 04330, or emailed to Earl.Kingsbury@augustamaine.gov, and to be given consideration, must be received at least ten (10) business days (October 6) prior to the date fixed for the opening of Proposals. Any and all such interpretations and any supplemental instructions will be in the form of written addenda to the specifications which, if issued, will be mailed or emailed to all prospective Providers, at the respective addresses furnished for such purposes, not later than five (5) business days prior to the date fixed for the opening of proposals. Failure of any Provider to receive any such addendum or interpretation shall not relieve any Provider from any obligation under its proposal as submitted. All addenda so issued shall become part of this RFP.

VI. AWARD OR REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsible Provider complying with the conditions of the RFP, provided its proposal is reasonable and it is in the interest of the City to accept it. The Provider to whom the award is made will be notified at the earliest possible date. The City, however, reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality in proposals received, and to accept any proposal whenever such rejection, waiver or acceptance is in the interest of the City. The City also reserves the right to reject the proposal of a Provider who has previously failed to perform properly or complete on time contracts of a similar nature, or a proposal of a Provider who is not in a position to perform the contract. To better ensure fair competition, and to permit a determination of the most qualified Provider, proposals obviously unbalanced may be rejected by the City at its discretion.

VII. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT

The selected Provider will be required to sign a standard City contract to be provided upon award of the Project and the award of the Project is expressly conditioned upon the execution of such contract.

VIII. PERMITS AND LICENSES

The selected Provider shall obtain all permits and licenses necessary for the performance of the specifications and operation of a Center shall be secured and paid by the Provider. The successful Provider shall also comply with the rules and guidelines of the City of Augusta Shelter Ordinance. (Attached as Addendum A)

**PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO. 227007**

LOW BARRIER SHELTER

BID OPENING: October 20, 2026 at 2:00pm

The City is requesting proposals for the operation of a Low Barrier Shelter meeting the following description:

I. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Low Barrier Shelter shall operate using the following low-barrier principles.

Admission to the Low Barrier Shelter shall not require:

- Sobriety;
- Participation in religious activities;
- Employment;
- Income;
- Criminal background checks (except where required by law); or
- Identification

Individuals shall not be denied admission solely because they:

- Have untreated mental illness;
- Have substance use disorders;
- Possess limited belongings;
- Lack identification; or
- Have poor credit or rental history.

Exclusions shall be limited to individuals who:

- Make or have made immediate threats of violence to themselves, staff or other guests;
- Possess of illegal weapons;
- Engage or have a documented history of engaging in behaviors creating imminent danger to themselves, staff or other guests; or
- Are subject to legal restrictions requiring separation from staff or guests.

II. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The Low Barrier Shelter shall operate 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, with exceptions only for emergency circumstances or intermittent construction or maintenance activities.

Guests shall have daytime access to:

- Restrooms and sanitary facilities;
- Showers;

- Laundry;
- Lockers or personal storage spaces, if provided;
- Case management and referral services (see Case Management, below);
- Medical referrals; and
- Warming and cooling space.

Guests shall have nighttime access to:

- Restrooms and sanitary facilities; and
- Sleeping areas.

III. REQUIRED SERVICES

At a minimum, the Provider shall provide the following at the Low Barrier Shelter:

Shelter Services

- Emergency overnight shelter;
- Daytime shelter;
- Intake and assessment;
- Coordinated Entry participation;
- Secure storage;
- Bedding;
- Laundry;
- Shower facilities; and
- Mail service (when possible).

Case Management (in-house or with partnering organizations)

Low Barrier Shelter staff or partnering organizations shall provide guests with the following services, upon request:

- Individual service plans;
- Housing assessment;
- Income assessment;
- Benefit enrollment assistance;
- Employment referrals;
- Identification replacement assistance; and
- Transportation coordination.

Partnering Organization Services

Partnerships shall be established to provide guests with the following services, upon request:

Behavioral Health

- Mental health services;
- Crisis intervention;

Medical Services

- Primary care
- Dental care

- Medication management referrals;
- Substance use treatment; and
- Recovery coaching.
- Vision care
- Preventive health
- Medication access

Employment Services

- Workforce development
- Job readiness
- Resume preparation
- Job placement
- Vocational rehabilitation

Housing Navigation

- Landlord engagement
- Housing applications
- Permanent Supportive Housing referrals
- Housing search assistance
- Security deposit assistance (if funding available)

IV. FACILITY

The Low Barrier Shelter shall be designed and equipped to include:

- ADA accessibility
- Fire suppression
- Emergency generator
- Security cameras
- Controlled access
- Reception area
- Intake office
- Case management office
- Medical consultation room
- Laundry facilities
- Commercial kitchen or meal service area
- Dining room
- Men's sleeping area
- Women's sleeping area
- Isolation room
- Pet accommodations (preferred)
- Outdoor smoking area

V. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Staff should receive training in:

- Trauma-informed care
- Harm reduction
- CPR/First Aid
- Mental Health First Aid
- Crisis intervention
- Cultural competency
- De-escalation

VI. DATA COLLECTION

The operator shall participate in HMIS and coordinated entry system and provide quarterly reports including:

- Demographics
- Housing outcomes
- Service utilization
- Length of stay
- Returns to homelessness
- Funding expenditures
- Number of open beds

VII. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The operator shall maintain:

- Good Neighbor Policy
- Neighborhood advisory meetings
- Complaint resolution process
- Litter control
- Exterior maintenance
- Coordination with public safety agencies

VIII. DESIRED OUTCOMES

The City seeks proposals that demonstrate the ability to:

- Reduce unsheltered homelessness.
- Reduce emergency service utilization.
- Reduce encampments.
- Increase permanent housing placements.
- Improve public health outcomes.
- Improve neighborhood quality of life.
- Increase collaboration among service providers.
- Leverage state, federal, and private funding.

FORMAT OF PROPOSAL

To facilitate the review of responses, all Providers are required to adhere to the following requirements with regard to their proposals. The Providers shall submit one (1) bound original signed proposal, four (4) bound proposal copies and one USB electronic copy of the proposal, in a single PDF format. The City strongly encourages Providers to ensure that RFP submissions are succinct and clearly organized. If the proposal is not in this format or does not include all of the information requested, it may be deemed non-responsive.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals shall include:

Organizational Information

- History
- Mission
- Experience
- Organizational chart

Experience

Describe experience operating:

- Emergency shelters
- Low-barrier shelters
- Housing First programs
- Case management and referral services
- Behavioral health partnerships

Program Narrative

Describe:

- Operating philosophy
- Shelter model
- Staffing plan
- Client flow
- Community Partnerships
- Housing strategy
- Security plan

Budget Requirements

Provide:

- Three-year operating budget
- Staffing costs
- Facility costs
- Insurance
- Utilities
- Food service (if any)
- Security
- Transportation
- Administrative expenses
- Funding sources

- Sustainability plan

Safety and Security Plan

The proposal shall include a comprehensive security plan addressing:

- Twenty-four-hour staffing.
- Staff-to-client ratios.
- Security personnel (if applicable).
- Visitor policies.
- Weapons policy.
- Emergency evacuation procedures.
- Medical emergencies.
- Overdose response procedures.
- Naloxone availability.
- Coordination with police, EMS, and fire departments.
- Incident reporting procedures.

References

- Provide at least three municipal or governmental references.

Stacking order for proposal submission

Cover Letter

Executive Summary

Organizational Qualifications

Experience Operating Shelters

Program Narrative

Budget Requirements

Safety and Security Plan

References

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria and point system:

Criteria	Points
Organizational Experience	20
Financial Capacity	20
Housing Outcomes Strategy	15
Program Design	15
Community Partnerships	10
Staffing Plan	10
Budget	10
Total	100