



Community Services / Housing Services

**Expression of Interest for
Non-Profit Affordable Housing Development
Project Readiness Information and Support for Funding
Program Submissions**

Expression of Interest No.: **NRHS-EOI-24-02**

Issued: **Wednesday, October 23, 2024, at 3pm**

Submission Deadline: **Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 3pm**

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1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Expression of Interest (EOI) is being issued by Niagara Region Housing Services (the Region) to gather information on non-profit affordable housing development projects in Niagara. Specifically, this EOI is tailored towards non-profit and cooperative housing providers, or any other charities or non-profit agencies that are near or have achieved shovel-readiness to construct affordable rental units. Eligible entities must be able to provide detailed capital and operating budgets, including any identified gaps and funding needs that impact financial viability.

This EOI will support the Region in its role as Housing Service Manager to:

- i. Identify non-profit affordable housing projects in Niagara that are nearing construction phase and are in need support (such as project funding and/or financing) to proceed with construction.
- ii. Maintain its existing Project List of shovel-ready non-profit affordable housing projects and to ensure its accuracy in regards project progress and needs.
- iii. Provide support to Project List entities by identifying relevant Federal, Provincial, or other funding programs and opportunities, and supporting with applications when possible.

The Region intends to issue a similar EOI on an annual basis to maintain an up-to-date Project List and to improve its ability to support non-profit affordable housing development projects as they near construction. Potential information and support being offered by the Region through this EOI process will be dependent on the status of projects submitted for review and on current and future funding program opportunities and requirements.

The Region is aware that Federal and Provincial funding program timelines for application submission and deliverables are often challenging and of short notice. A major goal of this EOI process is for the Region to be able to help local projects prepare for and access future opportunities as they become available. This will be achieved through ongoing information gathering and knowledge sharing.

2. RELATIONSHIP TO NRHS-EOI-24-01

The subject EOI (NRHS-EOI-24-02) is separate and independent to “*NRHS-EOI-24-01: Expression of Interest for Non-Profit Affordable Housing Development Preliminary Project Visioning*”. NRHS-EOI-24-01 is not a pre-requisite to this EOI.

The EOI Contact(s) will review each submission under both respective EOI streams on a case-by-case basis and hold the discretion to coordinate matters as deemed appropriate.

3. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are offered to establish a common understanding and interpretation of the following terms:

"Affordable" housing or units

In the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:

- a) housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
- b) housing for which the purchase price is at least 10% below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the municipality;

In the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:

- c) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
- d) a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the municipality (Provincial Planning Statement, 2024).

"Attainable" housing or units

Rental or ownership housing provided by the market for moderate income households that are generally within the fifth and sixth income decile of the regional market area. Attainable housing can include dwelling types of various sizes, densities, and built forms, and is intended to provide individuals with the opportunity to access housing more suitable to their needs.

"Low and moderate income households"

- a) In the case of ownership housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution for the municipality; or
- b) In the case of rental housing, household with incomes in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution for renter households for the municipality (Provincial Planning Statement, 2024).

"Municipality" or "Regional market area"

An area that has a high degree of social and economic interaction. The boundaries of the Niagara Region will serve as the regional market area for the purposes of assessing housing market conditions for this expression of interest.

"Shovel-readiness"

For purposes of this EOI, shovel-readiness is defined as a development project that has obtained all regulatory approvals necessary for construction to commence. Such approvals include, but are not limited to, Site Plan Approval and a Building Permit.

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1 Eligibility Requirements

- Proponent must be a non-profit.
- Primary focus of project must be on the development of new affordable rental units, with a minimum of 5 net new units. 'Net new' means new units that are developed in addition to any existing units, if applicable. Other non-residential uses such as commercial, supportive, or other components/uses may be included in the project; however, the overall project focus must be on the delivery of affordable rental units.
- Construction delivery method resulting in net new affordable rental units can include:
 - New detached building(s)
 - Addition, extension, or rehabilitation to an existing residential building(s)
 - Conversion or retrofit of non-residential building(s) or units
- An anticipated 25% of new units in the project must be at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) average market rent (AMR) and dedicated to tenants from the Niagara Region's Centralized Waitlist.
- Project must have an overall average rent at or below 130% of Median Market Rent (MMR). For current MMR, see CMHC Rent Data Portal:
<https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#TableMapChart/1160/3/St.%20Catharines%20-%20Niagara>

4.2 Ineligible Projects

This EOI does not apply to following types of projects:

- New construction projects that do not create 5 or more net new units.
- Owner-occupied housing, including secondary suites.
- Long-term care and retirement homes.
- Shelters and crisis care facilities.
- Student residences.

5. EOI SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions must not be longer than 10 pages (excluding attachments). If a Proponent has multiple projects, please submit each project individually. Submissions must confirm the Eligibility Requirements listed above, and must also provide as much of the following information as possible (in the order shown):

5.1 Proponent Information and Experience

- a) Name, contact information, experience in affordable housing operating and development
- b) Project Details: location, scope, energy and accessibility features, and any other features
- c) Project Business Plan: core need, operations, staff, property management
- d) Project Team: key personnel (own staff, consultants, legal, financial, project manager, any other critical members)
- e) Partnerships: financial, development/construction, operational, other support from Municipal and/or other levels of government

5.2 Target Demographic(s) for Tenants

- a) Who are the target tenants for the project?
- b) Does the project align with priority areas of Niagara's Core Housing Need (such as bachelor or 1-bedroom units)? Please see Niagara Region Community Housing's 2023 Wait Times Chart: <https://niagararegion.ca/housing-homelessness/nrh/find-a-unit/>. More information on Niagara's Core Housing Need can be made available upon request to the EOI Contact.
- c) Will the project target clients on the Region's Centralized Waitlist?

5.3 Depth of Affordability

- a) Unit breakdown – types and sizes
- b) Proposed rent rates for all units (affordable / attainable / market)

5.4 Financial Information

- a) Preliminary Financial Feasibility Study – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- b) Capital and Operating Budgets (mandatory requirement)
- c) Long-Term Budget Forecast (e.g., 40- or 50-year outlook) – completed: Yes / No
- d) Funding Source(s) – list all applicable with status details
- e) Government Incentives or Supports – list all applicable with status details
- f) Capital Financing Source(s) – list all applicable sources with status details
- g) Previous 3 years Financial Statements of Non-Profit Organization available upon request – completed: Yes / No
- h) Current Cost Consultant Report / Constructor Pricing – completed: Yes / No

5.5 Shovel-Readiness

a) Land Status:

- i. Do you have land available for the development concept – Yes / No
- ii. Land ownership – acquisition pending or to be acquired fee simple?
- iii. Mortgage status – current and/or anticipated
 - Include info on shared mortgage agreements, and/or existing government lending agreements on title (if applicable)
- iv. Status of pre-consultation meeting with the local municipality
- v. Status of all zoning approvals, official plan approvals, minor variance(s), and any other agreements required with other authorities
- vi. Archaeological Study – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- vii. Environmental Impact Study – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- viii. Environmental Site Assessment(s) – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- ix. Functional Services Report – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- x. Geotechnical Study – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- xi. Land Appraisal – completed: Yes / No
- xii. Land Surveys – completed: Yes / No
- xiii. Record of Site Condition – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- xiv. Site Feasibility Study – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- xv. Traffic Impact Study – completed: Yes / No / Not Applicable
- xvi. Other completed or required studies to support viability – provide details

b) Design:

- i. Level of design / drawings completed to date: conceptual; schematic; site plan approval; construction drawings and specifications?
- ii. Pre-Consultation – completed: Yes / No
- iii. Site Plan Approval – anticipated completion date?
- iv. Building Permit – anticipated date of permit(s)?
- v. Accessibility Features – provide details
- vi. Energy Efficiency Features – provide details

c) Construction:

- i. Project Delivery Method or Contract Type: design-build / design-bid-build / construction management / other?
- ii. Constructor Procurement: constructor selected / bids pending / to be tendered – when is the anticipated selection of the constructor?

5.6 Project Schedule

Provide schedule details including key milestones.

6. EOI REVIEW AND FUTURE REGION SUPPORT FOR PROPONENTS

EOI submissions will be reviewed by Region staff, who will develop and maintain the Project List described above. The Region intends to update the Project List through similar EOI calls on an annual basis. Proponents may receive feedback from the Region on their EOI submissions to advance project planning, improve project viability, and prepare for funding applications.

Based on the requirements of current and future funding programs, the Region intends to inform Proponents of funding opportunities that may align with their respective projects. The Region may also provide support to Proponents during funding application phase, taking into account project viability and likelihood of application success. The Region will review specific scoring criteria of future funding programs to help identify opportunities that are suitable for its Project List. Actual eligibility criteria for Federal, Provincial, or other funding opportunities will be program-specific, and may differ from the criteria included in this EOI.

7. EOI TIMELINE

EOI Milestones	Date
Issuance	Wednesday, October 23, 2024
Deadline for Proponent Questions	Thursday, November 7, 2024, at 3pm
Region to Issue Addenda	Friday, November 8, 2024
Proponent Submission Deadline	Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 3pm
Follow-up with Proponents	December 2024

8. EOI SUBMISSION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

This EOI document has been made available electronically through Biddingo and the Niagara Construction Association. A link to the EOI is available on Niagara Regional Housing's website. Proponents shall provide all questions and submissions electronically by email to the EOI Contact below. In all email communication, please indicate "NRHS-EOI-24-02" in the subject line. Proponents may edit or withdraw a submission prior to the Submission Deadline. Proponents may accept or reject any of Niagara Region's offers of support resulting from their submission to this EOI.

EOI Contact:

Gordon Szaszi

Project Manager Housing Development, Niagara Region

Email: gordon.szaszi@niagararegion.ca

Phone: (905) 650-6072

9. NOTIFICATION AND FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

Proponents will receive notice from Niagara Region of any pending feedback after a review of the submissions. A follow-up meeting may be arranged to discuss projects further. There is no timeline for Niagara Region to provide information on relevant funding opportunities. Proponents may be contacted if/when funding program details become available.

10. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PROPONENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), Niagara Region will accommodate for a disability, ensuring full and equitable participation throughout the EOI process.

If a Proponent requires this EOI in a different format to accommodate a disability, the Proponent must contact the EOI Contact as soon as possible and in any event prior to the submission deadline. The EOI in the different format will be issued only to the requesting Proponent and all addenda will be issued in such different format only to the requesting Proponent.

11. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Niagara Region:

- Is not liable for any costs incurred by Proponents in the acquisition, review, or response to this EOI.
- Shall not be responsible for any liabilities, costs, expenses, loss or damage occurred, sustained, or suffered by any Proponent, prior to, or subsequent to this EOI.
- Reserves the right to request Proponents clarify any information relating to this EOI.
- Reserves the right to take no further action relating to this EOI or the Proponent submissions.
- All information provided by or obtained from Niagara Region in any form in connection with this EOI either before or after the issuance of this EOI:
 - Is the sole property of Niagara Region and must be treated as confidential.
 - Is not to be used for any purpose other than replying to this EOI.
 - Must not be disclosed without prior written authorization from Niagara Region.
 - Must be returned by the Proponent to Niagara Region immediately upon the request of Niagara Region.

Confidential Information of Proponent:

Proponents are advised that the disclosure of information received in proposals or otherwise relevant to the EOI process will be in accordance with the provisions of all relevant access to information and privacy legislation including primarily the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended (MFIPPA). Proponents should identify any confidential information in their proposals. Niagara Region will make reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of such information, subject to its disclosure requirements under MFIPPA or any disclosure requirements imposed by law or by order of a court or tribunal. Proponents are advised that their proposals will, as necessary, be disclosed, on a confidential basis, to advisers retained by Niagara Region to advise or assist with the EOI process. If a Proponent has any questions about the collection and use of personal information pursuant to this EOI, questions are to be submitted to the Niagara Region Contact.

Proponents must not at any time directly or indirectly communicate with the media in relation to this EOI or any agreement entered pursuant to this EOI without first obtaining the written permission of the EOI Contact.

Proponents must not engage in any illegal business practices, including activities such as bid-rigging, price-fixing, bribery, fraud, coercion, or collusion. Proponents must not engage in any unethical conduct, including lobbying, as described above, or other inappropriate communications; offering gifts to any employees, officers, agents, elected or appointed officials or other representatives of Niagara Region; deceitfulness; submitting proposals containing misrepresentations or other misleading or inaccurate information; or any other conduct that compromises or may be seen to compromise the competitive process provided for in this EOI.

This EOI process is intended to collect information and identify prospective non-profit affordable housing projects for the purposes of the Region's role as Housing Service Manager. No legal relationship or obligation will be created between the Proponent and Niagara Region by this EOI process. Support and partnership may or may not be successfully negotiated and executed in the future through formal written agreement between Niagara Region and the Proponent.

Niagara Region may cancel or amend the EOI process without liability at any time.