Massachusetts Development Finance Agency – Request for Expression of Interest – Surety Bond Providers

Issued by MassDevelopment – Finance Division

Respondents to this Request for Expression of Interest (RFI) are invited to respond to any or all of the questions in this document. Responses to this RFI shall serve solely to assist MassDevelopment in understanding the current state of the marketplace with regards to the solicited information or to inform the development of a possible solicitation for a Request for Responses (RFR) or Request for Quotes (RFQ) in the future. This RFI does not in any way obligate MassDevelopment to issue or amend a solicitation or to include any of the RFI provisions or responses in any solicitation. Responding to this RFI is entirely voluntary and will in no way affect MassDevelopment's consideration of any proposal submitted in response to any subsequent solicitation, nor will it serve as an advantage or disadvantage to the respondent in the course of any RFR or RFQ that may be subsequently issued or amended. MassDevelopment reserves the right to retract the RFI at any time in its sole discretion.

1. Introduction

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, pursuant to Section 147 of the Massachusetts Leads Act, has directed the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED) to establish a five-year pilot Surety Bond Assistance Program. This initiative aims to expand opportunities for economically and socially disadvantaged businesses to participate in, bid on, and secure contracts for capital projects across the Commonwealth. Although the program design is in development, it may include guarantees to the surety company or direct loans or grants to the borrower to support their working capital needs. This pilot program also intends to include technical assistance to the borrowers.

The purpose of this RFI is to elicit the interest of a select group of qualified surety bond companies ("Bond Providers") to participate in this pilot program. Selected Bond Providers will work will contractors who may not otherwise meet traditional underwriting requirements, helping expand access to bonding and promote inclusive economic participation.

2. Agency

MassDevelopment is the development finance agency and land bank for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MassDevelopment partners with businesses, nonprofits, financial institutions, and communities to help Massachusetts grow and thrive. MassDevelopment is committed to achieving three core goals: stimulating business, driving economic growth, and strengthening communities across the state.

3. Purpose of RFI

The purpose of the Surety Bond Assistance Program is to support small and medium sized economically and socially disadvantaged businesses to participate in, bid on, and secure contracts for capital projects across the Commonwealth. The program seeks to improve access to government contracts through a Surety Bond Loan/Guaranty Program and to provide technical assistance. This RFI solicitation seeks responses from surety bond companies interested in working with these contractors.

4. General Instructions

Please note that this is an RFI issued solely for the purpose of determining interest. Nothing in this RFI shall be interpreted as a commitment on the part of MassDevelopment to enter a contract with any respondent or to make any procurement.

- **a.** This RFI has been posted on August 24, 2026.

- **b.** Respondent Questions. Potential respondents who have questions regarding this RFI may e-mail them to Tricia Dandrow at pdandrow@massdevelopment.com by September 30, 2026. Respondents may only make inquiries and request clarification concerning this RFI by written questions via e-mail. Responses to inquiries and clarification questions will be provided via email.

- **c.** Response Submission. All responses to this RFI are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 15, 2026. Respondents should submit one (1) electronic copy via e-mail to pdandrow@massdevelopment.com.

- **d.** MassDevelopment Contact Information. Please direct all communications, questions, and responses to the following contact:

  Tricia Dandrow
  Vice President, Commercial Lending
  MassDevelopment
  99 High Street
  Boston, MA 02110
  774-312-0402

  E-mail: pdandrow@massdevelopment.com

e. Additional Information. MassDevelopment retains the right to request additional information from respondents. MassDevelopment may, at its sole discretion, elect to request formal presentations from certain vendors and/or create an RFR or RFQ which will include the detailed requirements and key success criteria for the procurement and be based, at least in part, on the responses received from this RFI. MassDevelopment may request further explanation or clarification from any and all respondents during the review process.

5. Costs.

By submitting a response, respondents agree that any cost incurred in responding to this RFI, or in support of activities associated with this RFI, shall be the sole responsibility of respondent. MassDevelopment shall not be held responsible for any costs incurred by respondents in preparing their respective responses to this RFI.

6. Review Rights.

Responses to this RFI may be reviewed and evaluated by any person(s) at the discretion of MassDevelopment, including independent consultants retained by MassDevelopment now or in the future.

7. Public Record.

MassDevelopment is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law. As such, materials submitted in response to this RFI may be subject to public disclosure. However, MassDevelopment is not obligated to disclose trade secrets or proprietary commercial or financial information submitted as part of an application for financial assistance.

8. Information Requested.

a. Company Name (please list parent company as well)
b. Company Address
c. Company Website
d. Contact name and information (e-mail address required)
e. Provide a description of your company, including years of experience, and the basis of your expertise in offering a response to this RFI, in particular serving economically and socially disadvantaged businesses.
f. Provide a description of the surety bond products that your company anticipates that it could provide under a Surety Bond Loan/Guaranty Program, including pricing models.
g. Please describe the most common reason(s) surety bond product applicants are declined in order of highest to lowest prevalence.
h. What intervention(s) would have the greatest impact on increasing bonding approvals?

i. Which underwriting factors are most flexible if additional credit enhancement is provided?
j. What historical loss/default rates have you experienced for:
    i. Contractors under $1M revenue
    ii. Contractors under $5M revenue
    iii. Emerging contractors
k. What guarantee structure would be most useful?
    i. Portfolio guarantee
    ii. Transaction-level guarantee
    iii. Reserve fund
    iv. Reinsurance-style arrangement
l. If MDFA provided a guarantee, how much additional bonding capacity could be generated?
m. How should contractors enter the program?
n. What intake and screening process would you recommend?
o. What information will be collected at intake?
p. What percentage of applicants would likely require TA before bonding?
q. At what stage should referrals occur?
r. Please provide any additional information you deem important.