



**CITY OF CLEVELAND**  
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

## **Request for Qualifications:**

### **Innovative Housing Market Pilot Developers**

#### **Overview**

The City of Cleveland invites developer teams to express interest in participating in a groundbreaking housing initiative: the *Innovative Housing Market Pilot*, focused on advancing modular and panelized construction in Cleveland neighborhoods. Through this pilot, we aim to construct 20 high-quality, market-rate homes—10 in St. Clair Superior and 10 in Hough—beginning in late 2025. This RFQ is your opportunity to join us in creating a new model for housing delivery in Cleveland that is faster, more scalable, and rooted in neighborhood revitalization.

We are seeking developer teams that can deliver 10 market rate homes each using modular or panelized construction methods. The City will support this effort with land, site preparation funding, gap financing, a streamlined zoning and permitting process, and adjacent neighborhood investments that complement the new housing development.

In addition to identifying experienced development partners, this RFQ seeks to gather input from the builder community about key components of the pilot to refine our approach and maximize impact.

#### **The Opportunity**

Through this RFQ, we are seeking developer teams to take on the construction and sale of 10 single-family homes each. Each home will be approximately 1,200 to 1,400 square feet, some of which may be townhouse-style units. Designs will be pre-approved for zoning and permitting to expedite delivery. A model home may be constructed first to support pre-sales, and we welcome developer feedback on this strategy.

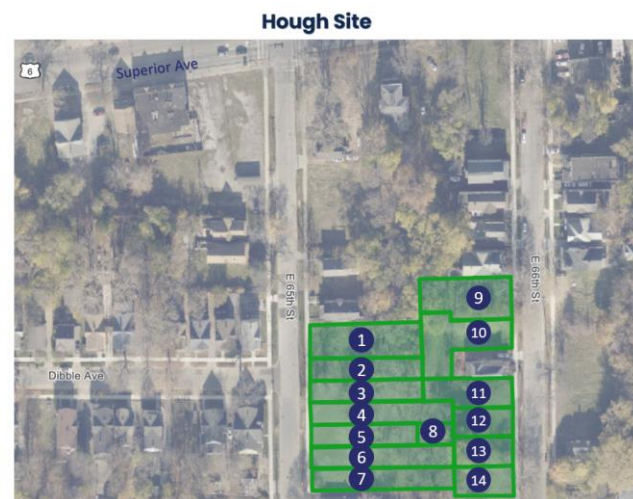
We are particularly interested in developer teams with experience in Cleveland, knowledge of off-site construction (though not required), and a demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with public, philanthropic, and community partners.

This pilot offers a unique and exciting opportunity for developers to be at the forefront of neighborhood revitalization in Cleveland. By participating, developers will help shape a new model for housing delivery in historically disinvested areas, bringing high-quality, market-rate homes to neighborhoods poised for transformation. St. Clair Superior and Hough are not only rich with history and community strength, but are also experiencing a wave of coordinated public, philanthropic, and private investment, with over \$500 million in recent and planned investment in these areas.

## Development Sites

The pilot homes will be developed on publicly owned land bank lots located in two East Side Cleveland neighborhoods: **St. Clair Superior** and **Hough**. These sites were selected for their proximity to recent public and philanthropic investment, strong community development partners, and their suitability for modular and/or panelized construction homes.

- **St. Clair Superior:** The City plans to facilitate the development of **10 new homes** on lots located along **East 67th Street near St. Clair Avenue**. This block features a mix of existing residential homes and vacant parcels, offering a strong opportunity for infill development. The area is walkable to neighborhood amenities including retail shops, community institutions, and the future Mandel Community Trail and redeveloped Gordon Park.
- **Hough:** Another **10 homes** will be constructed on lots situated between **East 65th and East 66th Streets near Superior Avenue**. These lots are similarly clustered to enable efficient construction and infrastructure coordination. Hough has seen increasing public and private investment in recent years and is poised for additional growth.



All lots are owned by the City of Cleveland and will be transferred to developers at a nominal fee. Lots will likely need to be re-platted based on home design selection. The parcel numbers for each development site are listed below.

<b>St. Clair Superior Site</b>	<b>Hough Site</b>
105-24-052	106-01-050
105-24-053	106-01-051
105-24-054	106-01-052
105-24-055	106-01-053
105-24-056	106-01-054
105-24-058	106-01-055
105-24-059	106-01-056
105-24-065	106-01-069
105-24-066	106-01-070
105-24-072	106-01-072
105-24-073	106-01-073
	106-01-074
	106-01-075

### ***Layered Investment Strategy***

This pilot is part of a broader strategy to stabilize and grow Cleveland’s neighborhoods. In addition to new construction, the City and its partners will invest in:

- Exterior home repair and rehabilitation
- Demolition of condemned structures
- Focused residential and commercial code enforcement actions
- Sidewalk, curb, and streetlight repair
- Street resurfacing
- Tree trimming and planting
- Enhanced safety coordination with residents and police
- Storefront renovations and commercial corridor support

These “layered” investments will be focused on the blocks surrounding the pilot homes, creating a visible transformation and building confidence for future private development.

### ***Financial Framework***

The City, Cuyahoga Land Bank, and philanthropic partners are committed to ensuring the financial viability of this pilot, and are offering a robust package of financial incentives and supports. These tools are designed to reduce risk, offset costs, and fill cost gaps.

- **Land at a Reduced Cost:** Development lots will be transferred from the City Land Bank to developers for a reduced fee.
- **Lot Preparation Allowance:** Developers will be reimbursed for up to \$30,000 per lot, based on actual expenses, to cover site preparation and utility work. Eligible expenses include:
  - Grading, excavation, and haul-away of spoils

- Replacement or upgrade of utility connections, including street openings
- Reimbursements will be processed within 60 days upon submission of receipts to the designated fiscal agent (expected to be the Cuyahoga County Land Bank).
- **Gap Financing:** To close the gap between construction costs and attainable sale prices, the City and its partners will provide a combination of grant funding and soft second mortgages to homebuyers. These second mortgages will include deed restrictions and monitoring to ensure long-term owner occupancy and prevent speculative resale.
- **15-Year Property Tax Abatement:** All homes sold through the pilot will be eligible for a full 15-year tax abatement.
- **Below-Market Developer Financing:** Developers may access to low-interest construction financing through the Cleveland Housing Investment Fund.

To ensure accountability and timely delivery, the City plans to hold property deeds in escrow until agreed-upon construction benchmarks are met.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

Based on conversations with developers, community partners, and city staff, we have outlined the following roles and responsibilities for the City and the selected developers. We invite developer feedback in the RFQ responses to further refine this structure.

1. **Pre-Development:** The City will lead key pre-development activities to prepare the lots and reduce upfront risk to developers. Responsibilities include:
  - The City Land Bank will deed the selected lots to the developer at a reduced fee<sup>1</sup>.
  - The City will commission Phase I environmental assessments for all lots.
  - The City will manage and fund geotechnical assessments.
  - The City and project partners will lead an initial selection of modular or panelized housing designs, with final customization coordinated with the developer.
  - Developers will work with selected manufacturers and, where applicable, potential buyers to finalize finishes, materials, and other customizations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Per the Ohio Revised Code, land bank parcels must be sold at fair market value, unless disposition is part of a competitive process. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) serves as the competitive process to be utilized, aiming to incentivize development and provide greater flexibility. If your submission is selected, the Department of Community Development will reach out to discuss next steps related to pricing negotiations and the execution of a Developer Agreement. This price will only apply to the parcels specified for the innovative housing market pilot and held in the City's Land Bank.

- A designated point person from the City will assist developers in navigating a newly streamlined permitting and zoning process, including pre-approvals for selected designs.
  - Where necessary, the City will complete tree removal to ensure site readiness.
2. **Site Preparation:** The City intends to financially support site preparation activities, while the developer will be responsible for completing the physical work. Developers will:
- Prepare civil site plans for each lot in accordance with modular/panelized product specifications and City guidelines.
  - Grade and prepare each lot to ensure readiness for foundation work and product delivery.
  - Replace or upgrade utility connections, if needed.
3. **Construction:** Developers will be fully responsible for the physical construction of the homes. This includes:
- Foundation and basement work, if applicable.
  - Ordering the modular or panelized housing units, coordinating closely with the pre-approved manufacturers.
  - Setting and installing the units once delivered to the site, including necessary equipment and labor for safe and efficient placement.
  - Completing all on-site work, including garages, porches, stairways, finish carpentry, utility connections, landscaping, driveways, and other finish items.
4. **Marketing and Sales:** While the City and its partners will provide neighborhood-level marketing support, the developer will lead the marketing and sales of individual homes. This includes:
- Marketing the neighborhood and project in collaboration with realtors, with strategic support from the City, CDCs, and nonprofit partners to build confidence with prospective buyers.
  - Marketing individual homes through traditional and digital real estate channels.
  - Managing realtor coordination, including listing, showings, and buyer engagement.
  - Overseeing the sales transaction.

The City will provide developers with a marketing toolkit and support a coordinated advertising campaign to raise awareness and generate interest. Developers are encouraged to incorporate these tools into their own sales strategy.



## Timeline

- **RFQ Issued:** May 2025
- **Developer Selection:** Summer 2025
- **Site Prep Begins:** Fall 2025
- **Model Home Construction:** Winter 2025–26
- **Full Construction Launch:** Spring 2026
- **Home Completions:** Summer 2026

## What We're Looking For

Through this RFQ, we are looking to identify:

- Developer teams interested in constructing 5–10 modular/panelized homes in Hough or St. Clair Superior
- Partners who can finance construction (with City and philanthropic support) and lead home sales
- Builders with a strong track record, a commitment to equity, and interest in shaping Cleveland's next housing chapter

## Join Us

This is a unique opportunity to help shape the future of housing in Cleveland and to be at the forefront of an approach that blends innovation with community-rooted investment. We look forward to receiving your qualifications and working together to bring new energy, new homes, and new possibilities to Cleveland neighborhoods.

## RFQ Schedule

City of Cleveland Releases RFQ	May 30, 2025
Virtual Information Session (Optional)	June 9, 2025 from 1:00-2:00 PM EST
Responses Due Submit via <a href="#">online form</a> and e-mail.	June 30, 2025 by 5 PM EST
Evaluation Period	July 1-July 31, 2025
Finalist Interviews/Presentations (if necessary)	July 16-July 25, 2025
Selection	August 1, 2025

## Submission Process

Project teams are invited to submit qualifications for the Innovative Housing Market Pilot opportunity.

Teams should complete the form found at [this link](#) **no later than June 30, 2025 by 5 PM EST.**

Additionally, teams should submit background on their company by sending an e-mail to [IntegratedDevelopment@clevelandohio.gov](mailto:IntegratedDevelopment@clevelandohio.gov) with “Innovative Housing Market Pilot” in the subject line. A PDF should be attached which includes the following information:

- Number of houses built in the City of Cleveland over the last 10 years
- Number of houses built in Northeast Ohio over the last 10 years
- Photos of completed homes
- Liquidity on hand
- Lines of credit
- Typical construction timeline for single-family homes
- Experience working on projects with Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs)
- Background on key team members

This e-mail should be sent **no later than June 30, 2025 at 5 PM EST.**

Please reach out to Kate Warren ([kwarren@clevelandohio.gov](mailto:kwarren@clevelandohio.gov)) and Lucas Reeve ([lreeve@clevelandohio.gov](mailto:lreeve@clevelandohio.gov)) with questions on the RFQ or for login details for the virtual information session.