

# PROJECT APPLICATION FORM – 2016

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**Applicant:** Town of Acton

**Submission due date:** November 16, 2013

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**Applicant's Address:**

Acton Town Hall  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

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**Purpose: (Please select all that apply)**

- Open Space
- Community Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Recreation

**Town Committee (if applicable):** Town of Acton - Planning Department/Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC)

**Project Name:** Housing Services

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**Project Location/Address:** N/A

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**Amount Requested:** \$47,000.00

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**Project Summary:** In the space below, provide a brief summary of the project.

The Town of Acton and the Acton Community Housing Corporation request funding to continue participation in the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO). The Town is currently a member of the RHSO with the Towns of Bedford, Burlington, Concord, Lexington, Sudbury, and Weston. This service is authorized through Inter-Municipal Agreements among the member towns. Acton's current membership in the RHSO was originally funded for two years through a Community Preservation Act (CPA) appropriation in 2012 and renewed again with CPA funds for membership during FY2015 and FY2016. The RHSO has proven to fill a much needed gap in housing services for the Town of Acton by providing approximately 350 hours of service each year. The Town and the ACHC submit this request to continue CPA funding for the following core community housing support services for the Town over the next two years:

**Fulfill State and agency reporting and requirements (approximately 53% of hours):**

- Monitor database of all deed restricted units;
- Monitor regulatory agreements;
- Send and compile self-declaration reports for ownership units;
- Maintain RHSO public website and provide members only portal
- Prepare and submit certification reports to DHCD;
- Prepare and submit subsidized housing inventory reports to DHCD.

**Carry out local responsibilities (approximately 47% of hours):**

- Share information with lottery agents;
- Assist with Capital Improvement Grants program;
- Update the Town's assessed value of deed restricted properties;
- Provide educational workshops for affordable owners;
- General local support and housing program administration to the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) and the Planning Department.
  - Give technical assistance to ACHC when reviewing 40B developments

Prior to the Town receiving CPA funds to join the Regional Housing Services Office, members of the ACHC tried their best to do what they could on their own volunteer time. As the volume of work and statutory responsibility increased and grew more complex over the years, several of the tasks listed above could not be completed due to both a lack of staffing and focused expertise in the field of affordable housing. In the past three + years the RHSO has helped Acton fulfill State and agency requirements as well as become more knowledgeable in determining local needs.

The RHSO has worked diligently to track regulatory agreements and deed restrictions. Homeownership and rental unit monitoring is a very time consuming charge that requires experience and expertise; but, is a requirement of the Regulatory Agreements between the state housing agencies and the Town. Prior to Acton's membership in the RHSO, this requirement along with other services were not being fulfilled on a regular basis. The Town and the ACHC believe it is in the Town's best interest to continue funding these services in order to keep the program strong.

Monitoring affordable units is extremely important in order for the Town to preserve its affordable housing stock on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory but more meaningfully, to provide diversity of housing options. The monitoring program also helps with identifying owners who have deed restriction violations such as an unapproved refinancing – leading to underwater mortgages which put affordable units at risk. This funding will continue to provide monitoring services to prevent the loss of affordable units.

In May, the Regional Housing Services Office went live with a new website (<http://www.rhsohousing.org/>). The website contains a variety of information designed to help local officials, current and prospective residents. The information on the website includes the affordable housing inventories for each town, a listing of affordable housing opportunities that are currently accepting applications, and a section on resident services with local resources and contact information. The next phase of the website will include a secure access section for RHSO and town staff for easy access to unit level data for ownership units with purchase information and contact history, and key project documents (Permits, Regulatory Agreements, Deeds) for projects and owners. This will give each participating town on-line access to the confidential information the RHSO staff maintains.

The Regional Housing Services Office continues to hold informational workshops. In September 2014 the RHSO held an "Income Certification Training" oriented towards rental property owners of LIP properties. They have recently teamed with the WestMetro HOME Consortium to host another workshop this November entitled, "Fair Housing Training – After Initial Leasing" to assist property managers of restricted affordable housing units.

The Town and the ACHC envision the program to function similarly to the past three+ years; the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager would renew the established Inter-municipal agreement for FY17 and the subsequent term. The Selectmen would sign the agreement. During the term of the agreement, core housing services would be provided with an allocation of approximately 320 hours under the direct supervision of the ACHC and the Planning Department.

As a participating municipality, Acton will continue to proportionally share the total costs of operating regional housing services. The proportional share is determined based on the percentage of hours planned to support each municipality for core services as represented in the fee schedule. Supplemental services proposed throughout the year will be invoiced outside

of this agreement for payment for additional hours in excess of the allotted hours. If there are unused hours at the end of the second year they will be refunded to the community. The expected funds would be processed in the same manner as the past years, with expected funding to be held in the Community Housing Program Fund and payments made to the regional housing service provider by the Town on an annual basis. This method has proven to work well for the past two years.

**Estimated Date for Commencement of Project:** FY 2017

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**Estimated Date for Completion of Project:** This request will fund services through FY 2019.

**Regional Housing Services Office  
FY17 Budget Proposal**

Expected Budget as of 10/27/15

	FY15			FY16					FY17					Versus FY16	
	Budget Hours	Actual Hours	Difference	Amount	Refund for FY15	Net Amount	Hours	% of Total	Amount	Adjustments	Net Amount	Hours	% of Total	Hours	\$
Starting Balance				\$0					\$0						
<b>Income</b>															
Acton	370	319	(51)	\$25,319	(\$3,012)	\$22,307	370	14%	\$23,098	\$357	\$23,455	320	13%	(50)	(\$2,220)
Bedford	400	384	(16)	\$28,740	(\$945)	\$27,795	420	16%	\$30,317	\$357	\$30,674	420	17%	0	\$1,576
Burlington	175	175	0	\$17,791	\$0	\$17,791	260	10%	\$11,910	\$357	\$12,267	165	7%	(95)	(\$5,881)
Concord	425	410	(15)	\$31,477	(\$886)	\$30,591	460	17%	\$32,482	\$357	\$32,839	450	18%	(10)	\$1,005
Lexington	400	405	5	\$28,056	\$0	\$28,056	410	15%	\$29,595	\$357	\$29,952	410	16%	0	\$1,539
Sudbury	600	598	(2)	\$41,057	\$0	\$41,057	600	22%	\$43,309	\$357	\$43,666	600	24%	0	\$2,252
Weston	165	169	4	\$11,291	\$0	\$11,291	165	6%	\$11,910	\$357	\$12,267	165	7%	0	\$619
Contingency Amounts															
Adjustments/Refunds									\$0						
<b>Total</b>	2,535	2,460	(75)	<b>\$183,731</b>	<b>(\$4,843)</b>	<b>\$178,888</b>	2,685	100%	<b>\$182,621</b>	<b>\$2,499</b>	\$185,120	2,530	100%	(155)	(\$1,110)
<b>Expenses</b>															
Staffing				\$163,731			\$60.98		\$162,621			\$64.28			
Program expenses				\$5,000					\$5,000						
Administrative Cost				\$15,000					\$15,000						
<b>Total Expenses</b>				\$183,731		\$0			\$182,621						
Ending Balance				\$0					\$0						
Billing Rate				\$68.43					\$72.18						

	Rate	Annual Hrs	Annual\$	Weekly Hrs
Manager (BR)	\$70.00	1226	\$85,820	26
Specialist (DG)	\$65.00	480	\$31,200	10
Specialist (LP)	\$60.00	720	\$43,200	15
Assistant	\$23.00	104	\$2,401	2
	\$64.27	2530	\$162,621	53.0

Admin Budget	
Web Serv	\$2,000
IT Support	\$2,000
Moving?	\$5,000
Other	\$6,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>