

TOWN OF HOWLAND

Town of Howland, Maine
Request for Proposals



Real Property Revaluation
Equalization Project
April 1, 2028

Incorporated February 1826

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I. Purpose

The Town of Howland, Maine (the “Town”) is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified revaluation firms to conduct a complete revaluation of all taxable and tax- exempt real property and personal property within the Town, effective April 1, 2028, or as early as practicable. The resulting valuations will be used for the Town’s tax commitment in 2029.

II. About Howland Maine

Howland is a rural community located in Penobscot County, North of the City of Bangor, accessible via Interstate I95. The Town operates under a Select Board–Town Manager–Town Meeting form of government, with assessing operations carried out by a part-time Assessors’ Agent.

- a. Population 1168 (2025)
- b. Total Area: 22,389 acres (35.62 sq miles)

III. Accounts:

- a. 771+-Real Estate Accounts
- b. 23+- Personal Property Accounts
- c. 57+ -Current Use Accounts
- d. 575 Residences
- e. Software: TRIO Web
- f. Equalized State Valuation (2025): \$107,650,000

IV. Last Full Revaluation: 2010

Property types include residential, commercial, industrial, exempt, leased land developments. Seasonal dwellings number fewer than 100. There is one (1) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts.

V. Scope of Services:

The successful firm shall perform a complete revaluation, including but not limited to: Full Measure & List: Exterior and interior inspections where permitted, with digital photos and CAD sketches entered into the TRIO software.

- a. Real Property Valuation:** All land, buildings, and improvements, including wells and septic systems.
- b. Personal Property Valuation:** Tangible taxable and exempt accounts, including furniture, fixtures, machinery, and equipment.
- c. Land & Market Study:** Development of land pricing schedules, cost manuals, and analysis of sales, rents, expenses, and capitalization factors.

- d. **Assessment Notices:** Mailing of preliminary and final valuation notices to taxpayers, including updated property record cards.
- e. **Informal Hearings:** Conducting taxpayer review meetings (in person, by phone, or virtual).
- f. **Appeals & Defense of Values:** Support to the Town for abatements, Board of Assessment Review hearings, State Board of Property Tax Review, and courts (as needed within one year of project completion).
- g. **Deliverables:** Updated TRIO WEB database; Complete set of property record cards. Digital photos of all structures; Valuation manuals and schedules; Ratio studies before and after revaluation. All valuations shall reflect “just value” as defined in 36 M.R.S.A. §701-A.

VI. Town Responsibilities

The Town will provide:

- a. Tax maps (full size and reduced)
- b. Ownership, zoning, current use, and permit data
- c. Available sales data
- d. Office space for contractor staff and hearings
- e. Assistance during informal reviews to resolve discrepancies

VII. Project Schedule

- a. Proposal Deadline: Thursday, January 28, 2027, at 5:00 p.m.
- b. Interviews: TBD in 2027
- c. Firm Selected: TBD 2027
- d. Contract Execution: TBD 2027
- e. Completion Date: TBD 2029

VIII. Proposal Submission Requirements

Each proposal must include:

- a. **Cover Letter:** Signed by an authorized representative, valid through February 2028.
- b. **Firm Profile & Experience:** Years in business; list of municipal revaluations in Maine over the past 5 years, with references.
- c. **Project Team:** Names, qualifications, and certifications (must include at least one Certified Maine Assessor).
- d. **Understanding of Project:** Demonstrated familiarity with Maine Assessing Statutes, TRIO software, and waterfront/water view, seasonal property markets.
- e. **Proposed Approach:** Detailed work plan including data collection, valuation methods, public relations, and schedule.

- f. **Sample Materials:** Grading and pricing schedules with explanations of use.
- g. **Cost Proposal:** Total project cost (real and personal property separately identified) please include a daily rate for additional taxpayer meetings, and appeals support.
- h. **Evidence of Surety:** Bid bond or certified check equal to 10% of proposal amount.
- i. Submit five (5) sealed copies marked "Proposal for Revaluation Services" to:
Town of Howland Attn: Town Manager 10 Bridge Road Howland, ME 04448

IX. Insurance & Bonding The chosen firm shall carry:

- a. Workers' Compensation Insurance
- b. General Liability & Property Damage Insurance: \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 aggregate
- c. Automobile Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- d. Professional Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- e. Valuable Papers Insurance equal to or greater than contract value
- f. The Town shall be named as additional insured. Certificates must be filed prior to project commencement. A performance bond equal to 100% of contract value may be required.

X. Selection Criteria:

- g. Proposals will be evaluated based on:
- h. Firm qualifications and experience in Maine revaluations (25%)
- i. Certified staff credentials, including Maine Certified Assessors (25%)
- j. Technical approach and ability to meet a 2028 deadline (20%)
- k. Experience with TRIO software (10%)
- l. Cost of proposal (20%)

XI. Public Relations: The parties to this project recognize that a good public relations program is required. The Company shall support the Howland staff in conducting a public information program. All public information releases shall be approved by the Town Manager prior to release.

XII. The firm shall submit a

- a. A detailed public relations plan to the Town with its proposal including media release, bulk flyers, information for the town website and Facebook page.

XIII. The Property Equalization Project must include but is not limited to:

- a. Press releases
- b. Meetings with local officials
- c. Attendance at public meeting to explain the equalization project

XIV. Public meetings on the following topics:

- a. Laws concerning revaluation market value
- b. General outline of the equalization project
- c. Data Collection process
- d. Valuation procedures
- e. Review procedures
- f. Informal hearings
- g. Taxpayer formal appeal proceeding
- h. Pre-data collection leaflet/notice to property owners

XV. Data Ownership and Public Records

a. Property of the Town:

All materials, data, and information gathered, discovered, created, or developed by the successful firm (the "Contractor") in the performance of this project shall be the sole and exclusive property of the Town of Howland. This includes, but is not limited to, raw field notes, completed property record cards, sketch files, digital photographs, valuation manuals, pricing schedules, land tables, market studies, and database backups compiled during the revaluation process.

b. Final Delivery and Turn-Over:

Upon completion of the project, or in the event of premature contract termination, the Contractor shall immediately deliver all such data and materials to the Town Office in a cleanly organized, unencrypted format compatible with the Town's TRIO Web software system. The Contractor shall not retain, reuse, or distribute any portion of the proprietary town database, property owner details, or data analytics for commercial purposes without explicit, written authorization from the Town Manager.

c. Compliance with Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA):

The Contractor acknowledges that the Town of Howland is subject to the Maine Freedom of Access Act (1 M.R.S. § 401 et seq.). All records created or maintained by the

Contractor during this project that directly relate to municipal assessing operations may be considered public records under state law. The Contractor agrees to fully cooperate with the Town Manager or designated public records officer to provide copies of requested records within a reasonable timeframe to satisfy any statutory FOAA requests received by the Town.

The Town of Howland reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, and to accept the proposal deemed in the best interest of the Town.