



Request for Contracted Service Proposals

*Analysis of Fiscal Impact
of Property Tax Policies*

Issued
October 25, 2022

Proposal Requested By
December 2, 2022

St. Louis City Senior Fund (Senior Fund) is requesting brief proposals with estimated costs from qualified contractors to assess potential outcomes of property tax assistance policies.

Background

The Senior Fund was created by a voter supported ballot initiative in November 2016. The approved legislation allows the City of St. Louis to levy and collect a property tax of five cents per hundred dollars of valuation, “for the purpose of providing services to persons sixty years of age or older.”¹

Our vision is for the City of St. Louis to be an aging-friendly city where older residents can age in place.

We support this vision by providing grants to local nonprofits and government entities to help support the health, well-being, and ability of residents to continue living in their homes and communities. All grants from the Senior Fund are directed to serve residents in the City of St. Louis who are 60 years or older. The Senior Fund supports grants that address a variety of needs, including home repair, financial assistance, dental care, transportation, homemaker chore services, and resource and care navigation.

The majority of older adults prefer to continue living in their current homes and communities for as long as possible. Many older adults have invested significant time, energy, and finances into their homes; may have a long history of their family living in their home and neighborhood; and often contribute significantly to neighborhood resources and leadership. Housing and economic security are two focus areas for which the Senior Fund prioritizes grants. We know that many older St. Louis City residents struggle with affording day to day housing expenses—let alone any unexpected housing costs that may arise—and current resources are not sufficient to fully support what is needed. Through a portion of the Senior Fund’s program investments, we aim to support programs and services that reduce the burden of housing costs and provide support to enable older residents to remain living in their home and community.

Purpose of this Request

Property taxes are a significant funding source for local governments. The revenue from these taxes is used to fund schools, parks, and other services for residents. In

¹ City of St. Louis Ordinance Number 70314

nearly half of Missouri counties, property taxes also support much needed services for older residents. Many Missourians have consistently supported local tax increases in the past to support these and other services for themselves and their neighbors. However, for some homeowners, increasing home values and associated increases in property taxes can significantly affect their ability to afford their home. In some cases, homeowners living on low, fixed incomes find it harder to afford a home they have lived in for decades when their property taxes significantly increase. This is a scenario that some St. Louisans have experienced or are worried they will experience as assessed values for homes increase in their neighborhoods.

Property tax assistance can give a break for homeowners living on fixed incomes. It's important that tax assistance is highly targeted and effective to ensure that homeowners at highest risk of housing insecurity receive assistance without undermining local services that also provide support. There are a variety of ways to delivery property tax assistance for those who need it, including existing programs such as Missouri's "Circuit Breaker" tax credit program and emergency assistance through St. Louis City's Real Estate Tax Assistance Fund. Each year, state-level legislation to restrict property tax assessments and provide tax exemptions, credits, and freezes for property owners has been proposed. Thirty property tax related bills were proposed in the 2022 legislation session, including 20 focused on tax exemptions, freezes, or credits for homeowners based on specific eligibility criteria. Limited property tax-related legislation has passed in recent years, but there were several bills in the 2022 legislative session that advanced in the legislative process.

As an advocate for older residents and programs that reduce housing costs, the Senior Fund is seeking to be better informed about the scope of fiscal impact of different tax assistance policies for individual residents, as well as revenue managed by the Senior Fund. We are seeking an individual or group to assist us with:

- Assessing the fiscal impact of potential local property tax exemption, freeze, or credit policies for senior homeowners and levy funds with a focus on St. Louis City.
 - Evaluate several scenarios (3-4) based on legislation proposed in Missouri during recent legislative sessions. The Contractor will work with the Senior Fund to define these scenarios.
 - Determine the extent of costs and benefits of different assistance approaches on levy funds and homeowners.

Ultimately, we hope this work will help us be better advocates for tax assistance policies that can be the most mutually beneficial for St. Louis City—and Missouri—residents and tax levy funds.

General Requirements

We are currently seeking brief proposals to determine qualified contractors and estimated costs of an analytical project and whether it will fit within our current budget. Interested contractors should have the following qualifications:

- Missouri-based (preferred) or familiarity with Missouri.
- Knowledge and experience in fiscal assessments for policies.
- Knowledge and experience with accessing and analyzing data related to age and income of homeowners and assessed values of properties.
- Availability to begin work in early 2023; end date can be negotiated.

Requested Information for Proposal

Approach to Services - Provide a brief description of your approach to the project and address each of the following:

- Persons Involved – Who would be responsible for the work and their experience relevant to proposed work.
- Intended deliverables and anticipated timeline.
- Key requirements from Senior Fund to ensure success.

Costs – Estimated cost for professional services (including hourly rates and number of hours or % of salary) and other direct costs that can be tracked specifically for the project. The Senior Fund allows an indirect/administrative rate up to 12%.

Send proposal via email to info@stlseniorfund.org. We are seeking proposals through December 2.

We do not have a set start date for this work, but if estimates for work fit within our current fiscal year's budget, we would likely initiate a contract—after review and board approval—around the beginning of 2023. A final scope of work and budget would be negotiated at that time.

Project Contact

Email or call any time if you would like to discuss the project before submitting a proposal. The primary contact for this project: *Stephanie Herbers*, sherbers@stlseniorfund.org or 314.535.6964, Ext 24.

Reservation of Rights

The Senior Fund reserves the right to reject proposals submitted, to request additional information or clarification from any or all applicants, and/or negotiate changes with applicants at any time before, during, or after the procurement process. A respondent's submission of a proposal in no way guarantees procurement; No entitlement to funding for any individual or organization at any level is expressed or implied.

Each individual or organization in submitting proposals does release, indemnify, and hold the Senior Fund and its various employees, representatives, and agents harmless from and against all claims and demands of any and all loss, cost, damage, or liability of whatever nature, which may be asserted against or imposed against the Senior Fund as a result of issuing requests for bids, making any revisions thereto, conducting a selection process and subsequent negotiations, and making a final recommendation and/or entering into a contract agreement. The Senior Fund will not be responsible for any expenses incurred in the preparation or presentation of any proposal.