



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PLANNING & ZONING CODE UPDATE

ISSUED: April 23, 2021

PROPOSAL DEADLINE DATE: May 21, 2021

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 PM on Friday, May 21, 2021. Late proposals will not be accepted.

Proposals are to be submitted to:

Development Services Department
Attention: Erin Donovan Lynn
City of Fairfield
5350 Pleasant Avenue
Fairfield, OH 45014

Contact Information:

Erin Donovan Lynn, Planning Manager
(513) 867-5345
elynn@fairfieldoh.gov
www.fairfield-city.org

The City of Fairfield is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants (herein referred to as “consultant”) to perform a comprehensive update to the Planning and Zoning Code (Part 11 of the City of Fairfield Codified Ordinances). This includes both subdivision and zoning regulations.

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to provide guidelines for the submission of proposals. Proposals must reflect the ability to provide a full range of expertise in all areas required to develop a complete and comprehensive planning & zoning code update. Proposals must identify experience with public outreach, facilitation of public meetings, and the development of various types of codes and design guidelines.

This update is not anticipated as a complete rewrite of the existing code. The city believes the current document provides a solid foundation. Nevertheless, significant updates and enhancements clearly are necessary to correct errors, eliminate inconsistencies, incorporate zoning code best practices, and make it easier to navigate. The process to update the Planning and Zoning Code will be critical to its success and must ensure that the final document reflects the desired outcome of the city.

II. Background

A. Planning and Zoning Code

The existing Planning and Zoning Code for the city was adopted in the early 1980s, and has undergone numerous updates to address new issues that arise in the city as well as deficiencies in the existing code. A copy of the current Planning and Zoning Code can be found on the city’s website at [Fairfield Planning and Zoning Code](#).

B. Fairfield Forward Comprehensive Plan

The City recently completed a major update to its comprehensive plan in 2019. A copy of Fairfield Forward can be found on the [Development Services Department home page](#). An implementation strategy from the plan states, “Conduct a comprehensive overhaul of the city zoning code to implement the future land use plan and other policies of this plan”. There are over 40 goals, policies and implementation strategies recommended in the plan related to the zoning code.

Fairfield Forward included four small area plans that focused on areas in the city containing vacant land for new development and key areas for redevelopment. It is anticipated that this proposal will include design standards and/or guidelines for these areas.

C. Community Profile

Located in southwestern Ohio, about 20 miles north of Cincinnati, the City of Fairfield is home to just over 42,000 residents. Incorporated in 1955, Fairfield saw strong residential growth in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1980s, the explosive population growth began to slow as less land

was available for new development. During this time the commercial areas in the city developed with minimal regulations that have led to uncoordinated architecture, large expanses of underutilized parking lots, and lack of landscaping. As a result, the city is experiencing pockets of disinvestment, which is populated with mostly aging commercial and industrial buildings that are in need of renovation and redevelopment. Today, the city is a maturing community that is largely built out, which brings about new challenges and opportunities.

Maintenance of a high quality of life has become a primary focus of both city officials and residents. In addition, because of the limited undeveloped land remaining, the type of development on that land is paramount and proper redevelopment of existing properties is key to the success of the city.

III. Current Planning and Zoning Code

The current zoning code is a typical Euclidean Code with emphasis on land use separation and density control. The update to the planning and zoning code would take an in-depth analysis of the code and modernize it to fit the goals, policies and implementation strategies of the city's comprehensive plan.

Issues with current code:

- Can be difficult to navigate due to its lack of organization
- Sections of the code are outdated and reference items that are no longer relevant
- Due to numerous amendments made over the years some sections are not consistent with other sections of the code
- The code can be difficult to interpret and contain standards that are difficult to administer
- The zoning districts range from the most restrictive to the least restrictive, which requires the user to go back to more restrictive sections of the code to determine what may or may not be allowable

The following are overarching goals of the update to the planning and zoning code:

- Design the code to be user friendly - easy to understand, administer, and interpret
- Update terminology used throughout the code
- Improve overall organization, and ease of use by clarifying references and cross references to other sections of the code
- Incorporate diagrams, tables, graphics and illustrations that clarify and enhance understanding of relevant code sections
- Address where the code is silent and where regulations are lacking
- Utilize innovative zoning approaches (i.e. form-based, overlay, floating districts) and design guidelines where appropriate, at a minimum the four (4) small areas outlined in the Fairfield Forward Comprehensive Plan
- Investigate if a mixed use zoning district is appropriate for the city

- Evaluate the use of flexible types of housing styles in subdivisions to accommodate consumer interest and housing trends
- Ensure compliance with federal and state laws

IV. Scope of Work

The following section describes the minimum components which should be included in the scope of work. City staff will finalize the scope of work with the selected consultant prior to contract authorization. The city is open to suggestions other than those items listed which the consultant believes will be of value in producing a viable planning and zoning code that will have practical applications for day to day implementation.

The scope of work should include at a minimum, the following:

1. Current Planning and Zoning Code Assessment. The consultant will work closely with staff in producing an assessment of the existing code and other related sections of the Codified Ordinances.
2. Comprehensive Plan. Review and identify the goals, policies and implementation strategies in the comprehensive plan to ensure the updated code will be consistent with the plan.
3. City plans. Review plans produced by the city that may impact the code update such as the Town Center Development Plan, Route 4 Plan, and Fairfield Connects.
4. Assist with the design and implementation of public outreach and engagement strategies.
 - See Section V for additional information
5. Draft the update.
 - It is expected that draft sections will be submitted for review and editing throughout the process.
6. Legal Review. Coordinate with the City Law Department to provide a legal opinion on the enforceability of the updated planning and zoning code.
7. Staff Training. Provide resources to assist staff with implementation of the updated code through a “start-up” period not to exceed 6 months.

V. Public Process Strategy and Public Outreach

The consultant will engage the community, including stakeholders, staff and elected/appointed officials, through various methods including presentations, workshops, and social media. Strong communication (oral and written) and presentation skills are required.

It is anticipated that the consultant will lead public meetings, steering committee meetings, and possible sub-steering committee meetings as well as attend/ present to City Council, Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals throughout the process.

VI. Qualifications

All statements of qualifications should include, at a minimum, the following information:

1. Project Team Composition.

It is encouraged that a team approach be utilized for the comprehensive update that includes the members with the following fields of expertise: planning, law, architecture or urban design, landscape architecture, and graphic design.

Provide a description of the team that will be assigned to the project including related work experience for all team members. Identify the capacity in which team members will be used and identify the Project Manager, who will be the point of contact during the update process. Any work intending to be subcontracted must be disclosed, including the name of the subcontractor(s) and specific tasks that will be subcontracted. The city expects that the principal staff person(s) listed will not change and will follow through the entirety of the project.

2. Firm Background.

Provide a brief description of the firm including the range of professional services, office locations and staff size. This shall apply to all sub-consultants.

3. Firm Experience.

Outline the experience of the firm and other credentials that illustrate qualifications to undertake this project. Provide at least three examples of zoning codes, including subdivision controls, that your firm has completed within the last five years. This can be provided by a link to a specific webpage, electronically on a flash drive, or other method determined by the consultant. In addition, provide at least one example that incorporates design standards and guidelines. Plans should be based on similar sized communities.

4. References.

Provide a minimum of three references for services comparable to this project. Include a contact person, title, address, telephone number and email address. In addition, provide the time period when the services were rendered and a description of services rendered.

VII. Submission Criteria

For evaluation purposes, each proposal submission shall include, at a minimum, the following items listed below.

1. Letter of Interest. This brief letter will summarize the consultant's understanding of the scope of work.

2. Qualifications as stated in Section VI.
3. Approach to the Project. Provide a description of the consultant's approach to accomplishing the project. This includes a proposed scope of work describing the approach to accomplishing the objectives stated in the RFP and identifying the methodology proposed. The consultant is encouraged to include suggestions or supplemental tasks which may enhance the project or streamline the scope of work and improve cost effectiveness. Clearly articulate all assumptions regarding date, information and the role that you expect from the city.
4. Public Outreach and Communication. Provide a description of the proposed public input process.
5. Project Schedule. Provide an outline of an expected timeline and major milestones for the scope of work. The estimated start date is August 1, 2021.
6. Project Budget. Provide a **detailed outline** of cost for completing the scope of work. This should include material costs and a not to exceed figure as well as all other costs that may be incurred for the delivery of services requested. The city has budgeted up to \$100,000 for consultant services and project expenses.
7. Any other information you would like to submit that you feel will assist us in the evaluation of your qualifications.
8. Please submit four (4) hard copies of the proposal and one electronic copy.

VIII. Selection Process

Award of this proposal will be to the consultant deemed best qualified to perform the services outlined in this RFP and other services deemed necessary by the city.

Proposals received for this RFP will be reviewed by an evaluation committee comprised of city staff and elected/appointed officials. The City of Fairfield will select a consultant based upon a thorough review of the merits of the proposals received. Consultant will be chosen on the basis of their ability to best meet the overall expectations of the city.

After evaluating the proposals, the city will select the top 2-3 consultants for follow-up interviews. Only key team members, including sub-consultants, who will be directly responsible for the work should participate. Based upon results of the interview, the city will select a consultant.

Upon selection, the consultant will be contacted to finalize a contract, which will include fee structure, project schedule and any additional scope of services that may result from the interview.

The city reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. The city reserves the right to waive any requirement or condition of the RFP upon finding that it is in the best interest of the public to do so.

IX. Miscellaneous

Questions and clarifications regarding the proposal must be submitted in writing via email to Erin Donovan Lynn, Planning Manager, at elynn@fairfieldoh.gov. All questions must be submitted no later than May 16. All questions and answers will be posted on the city's website (<http://www.fairfield-city.org/162/Development-Services>) within two (2) business days after receiving question.

Consultants will not be reimbursed for any cost associated with the preparation of the RFP.

Please Note: All material submitted is public property and is subject to Ohio Public Record laws. All Proposals submitted will become the property of the City of Fairfield.