

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
***Planning Consultant for "Addressing Growth and Guiding
Development in the Next Decade"***
Fairfax, Vermont
January 8, 2020
Proposal Due on *February 3, 2020*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Overview

The Town of Fairfax will engage a consultant to assess the recent trajectory of residential development to ensure zoning standards and district boundaries are in accordance with the 2018 Town Plan and coherent with the overall long-term community vision. This effort will evaluate growth across the entire municipality with priority given to areas showing an accelerated pattern of growth.

Context and Background

There is concern that Fairfax's existent Development Regulations are being outpaced by its rapid growth.

Fairfax is the fastest growing municipality in Franklin County with the 3rd highest rate of growth in Vermont in 2018. Based on population projections for 2030, Fairfax will continue to grow and is expected to account for 10% of county-wide growth. During our recent Town Plan update, several critical realities were noted. Fairfax has seen a significant loss of working farms in the past decade, and growth within the designated village center has largely been sidestepped over development on former agricultural lands. The lack of municipal water and sewer capacity within the village center has also been identified as one of the contributing factors in how new growth has manifested itself in Fairfax.

Each of these realities are described below:

1. Loss of Farmland: Few working farms remain in what was a completely agricultural community just a few decades ago. What has not been determined, and the project could help illuminate, is how this transition has affected land use patterns.
2. Conversion of Farmland: Recent growth in Fairfax has been in areas within the Rural District. It is important that Fairfax direct its planning and development to encourage thoughtful, diverse, and comprehensive growth while mitigating the potentially negative impacts that accelerated expansion can have on resources, the natural environment, and the distinct character of an established community. We'd like to discover how much of this growth has come as a result of farmland conversion, how current land use policies have affected this dynamic, and how this has encouraged growth outside of the village center.
3. Lack of Infrastructure: A major challenge faced by Fairfax is the lack of water and wastewater resources serving our Village Center, hindering development in the heart of our designated Growth Center District. Therefore, residential development is occurring in the form of single residential units on large parcels and Planned Unit Development in our rural areas.

We'd like to explore how we can reach the density desired by the Town Plan and reduce the risk of strip development in traditionally rural areas. The town wants to better understand how the development regulations are being utilized and the current system of permit records does not allow for trends and comparisons to be identified. This proposal will provide guidance on how to prepare for continued growth.

Funding

A total of \$18,618 is available for consultant services from the Municipal Planning Grant Program administered by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development and *Town Match Contributions*.

Work Plan

Please see attached

Timeframe

April 15, 2020 to May 15, 2021. Can start earlier depending on selection process.

Deliverables

The Town Plan states the goal for housing as "Guide the Town in achieving well managed residential growth that includes a diversity of housing opportunities". The Town faces a lack of diversity in its housing options and recognizes the growing need for affordable housing for seniors and for low - and moderate-income households. It is necessary to evaluate the impact of increased density outside of the village and how it will align with the preservation goals of the Town Plan.

This project will provide long-term value by supporting a process that makes the connection between town policy and regulation to on-the-ground housing units in terms of cost, density and configuration. The information provided by this project will aid the evaluation of current regulation and provide clarity on the type of housing our policies have created. As noted earlier in this application, Fairfax is projected to have continued growth and the town wants to ensure the enabled policies and regulation can achieve the community's vision for the future and ability to accommodate the desired density, a variety of housing options and affordability of units.

Another outcome of the project will be an enhanced map of land held as open space in the community that incorporates land preserved as open space from subdivision and PUD permit decisions. Aside from gaining an understanding of how much open space is being created by these developments this information will have long-range planning implications when considering habitat connectivity and land availability near the Growth Center and Residential Districts. The final technical report will contain recommendations to inform future town planning actions. This project and its outcomes are consistent with the regional plan and Vermont's statewide goals to provide safe and affordable housing as well as to focus development in and around village centers.

Specific deliverables desired are:

- Proposed Zoning District Map based on future growth potential

- Regulation review to ensure regulations aren't in competition with sustainable development
- Options for growth if the village does not increase public utilities
- How can we incentivize affordable housing?
- Assess usage/pros/cons of PUD's.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Submission Requirements

All responses to the RFP shall include the following information:

1. **Cover Letter** – A letter of interest and a summary of qualifications, recommended approaches, scope of work, processes and deliverables for the project.
2. **Scope of Work** – Provide a detailed scope of work based on the work plan provided above, broken down by task. Describe the approach to the project and proposed methodology including:
 - a. a detailed scope of work with associated list of tasks broken down by task and team member
 - b. description of the proposed deliverables.

The consultant may also propose additional supplemental items to the scope of work. While the work plan above conforms with the requirements of the Municipal Planning Grant, feel free to propose new/creative approaches to this project. (If chosen, alternative approaches may require approval from the state.)
3. **Proposed Schedule** – Provide a schedule that includes completion of work tasks and deliverables including key meetings and complies with the timeframe provided above.
4. **Project Budget** – Provide a detailed budget broken down by task and team member. Include your overhead and hourly rates for the individuals involved.
5. **Qualifications and Staffing** – Provide a qualifications profile of the lead consultant and sub-consultants, including indication of the lead consultant, the role of each consultant on the team with organizational staffing chart and percentage of time devoted to the project by each consultant. Also provide detailed information on each consultant, including contact information, the name of the firm, year established, including a description of relevant experience on similar projects for each firm and listing of their individual work experience in this role on similar projects
6. **References** – A minimum of three (3) professional references for whom a similar project has been completed within the last ten (10) years.

7. **Page Limit** – The proposal, encompassing items 1-6 above, shall not exceed 20 double-sided pages (40 total pages) including cover letter, table of contents, project lists and contacts.

All information submitted becomes property of the Town of *Fairfax* upon submission. The Town of Fairfax reserves the right to issue supplemental information or guidelines relating to the RFP as well as make modifications to the RFP or withdraw the RFP. Once submitted, the consultant team (including specific staff assigned to the project) may not be changed without written notice to and consent of *The Town of Fairfax*. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the consultant. The *Town of Fairfax* reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this solicitation, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities or to cancel the RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the *Town of Fairfax*. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates The Town of Fairfax to award a contract.

Submission Requirements

Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy (PDF) and 6 printed copies of the proposal by *February 3, 2020* to:

Municipality/Local Project Manager Contact Information

Town of Fairfax

Amber Soter, Zoning Administrator, PC Coordinator

12 Buckhollow Road

Fairfax, VT 05454

802-238-1893

zoning@fairfax-vt.gov

Please expect a confirmation email upon receipt of the proposal by *the Town of Fairfax Zoning Office*.

If you have any questions about this project or the RFP, please address them in writing either via U.S. mail or email to *Amber Soter*. *We will respond as soon as possible*. Both the question and response will be shared with the other consultants.

RFP Schedule Summary

Proposals due *February 3, 2020*

Consultant selection by *March 31, 2020*

Project Work to begin *April 15, 2020*

Complete project on or by *May 15, 2021*

Proposal Selection Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from *The Fairfax Planning Commission*. A short-list of consultants may be selected for interviews.

Proposal Evaluation

Respondents will be evaluated according to the following factors:

1. Consultant Qualifications (experience with similar projects, ability to work with municipalities to attain desired outcomes, and knowledge of the topic) - 40%
2. Scope of work, fees, methodology and schedule - 40%
3. Proposal quality, completeness and clarity - 20%

Interview Framework

The *Town of Fairfax* reserves the right to select the top two to three highly scored consultants and invite them for an interview prior to awarding the contract. In this process, the selection committee may ask the respondents to give an oral presentation of their respective proposals. The purpose of this oral presentation is to provide an in-depth analysis of certain qualifications, experience in performing similar services, and an opportunity for the consultant to clarify or elaborate on their qualifications without restating the proposal. The interview and presentation is merely to present facts and explanation to the review committee and allow the selection committee to ask targeted questions of the consultant team. The interview and presentation, if deemed necessary by the review committee, will be held at the *Town Office* in *Fairfax* Vermont. The day and time will be notified to the respondents at least 1 week prior to the meeting. All costs and expenses incurred in traveling for the purpose of interview and presentation shall be the responsibility of the consultant.

Final Consultant Selection

Following the selection process, one team will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of work with specified deliverables may be modified through negotiation of the final contract. The final project team may also be modified through negotiation of the final contract. Any expenses resulting from the interview and proposal process will be the sole responsibility of the consultant.

Contract Requirements

The consultant contract will be subject to the terms of the Attachment D of the Municipal Planning Grant Agreement (Procurement Procedures and Other Grant Requirements). A sample contract meeting these requirements is available [here](#).

WORK PLAN

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| Task Name | Description of Task | Paid Personnel |
|---|--|----------------|
| Project Kick-off | Meet with Town Staff and Planning Commission to review the scope of work and project schedule. | Consultant |
| Development Location, Suitability, and Affordability Analysis | Evaluate the type of development that has occurred in PUDs and traditional subdivisions. Metrics of interest include the gross amount of development, pattern and location of development as well as housing value/affordability. | Consultant |
| Assessment of zoning district boundaries and uses | Evaluate potential future development and make recommendations for the zoning district boundaries, allowed uses, and dimensional standards to ensure alignment with Town Plan goals and in consideration of sewer and water service areas. | Consultant |
| Technical Review of Planned Unit Development Regulations | Comprehensive review of development standards for PUD and subdivisions to determine if existing standards reflect the goals of the Plan with respect to density and preservation of open space. | Consultant |
| Planning Commission Working Sessions | Consultant will hold 3 meetings with the Planning Commission to review the results of the PUD and subdivision analysis and to make initial determinations about preferred regulatory approaches. | Consultant |
| Stakeholder Engagement | A series of engagement approaches to solicit ideas and feedback from the community to include a social media campaign, flyer, and stakeholder meetings. | Consultant |
| Final Report & Presentation | Compile summaries and analysis from earlier tasks and present to Town. | Consultant |