



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN

ISSUED: Thursday, November 12, 2020

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 12:00pm EST

SUBMISSION CONTACT AND ADDRESS:

Linda Painter, AICP
Director of Planning and Development
Mansfield Department of Planning and Development
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, Connecticut 06268-2599
PainterLM@mansfieldct.org

Proposals will be accepted in electronic or print format.

Purpose and Project Description

The Town of Mansfield is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to assist the Town and its Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable and Workforce Housing in developing an Affordable Housing Plan pursuant to the requirements of [§8-30j, Connecticut General Statutes](#).

Qualification Requirements

Respondents to this RFP must demonstrate:

- Professional experience in evaluation and implementation of policies, plans and statutes governing affordable housing in Connecticut;
- Ability to analyze relevant data, policies and regulations;
- Ability to present analysis and recommendations in a way that is easy for a lay person to understand;
- Experience in facilitating public input and involvement and consensus building;
- Experience working with elected and appointed officials in the development of plans and policies; and
- Experience developing community plans and associated implementing regulations

Furthermore, Respondents must ensure that:

- Any appropriate licenses or certifications required by the State of Connecticut are maintained for the duration of the contract;
- All municipal, state and federal affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices are met; and
- All insurance requirements required by the Town of Mansfield are maintained for the duration of the contract. (See [Standard Professional Services Agreement](#) for additional information on insurance requirements).

Background

The Town of Mansfield, Connecticut has a population of approximately 26,600 (estimated $\pm 12,000$ year-round) and is located in the northeastern corner of the state, approximately 25 miles east of Hartford. As home to the main campus of the University of Connecticut, Mansfield's housing market is heavily influenced by the student population. According to the 2019 Connecticut Affordable Housing Appeals listing, 6.76% of Mansfield's housing stock is considered affordable. This is a significant change from 2015, when the Town's [Plan of Conservation and Development](#) was adopted. At that time, 10.82% of units in Mansfield were considered affordable. This change combined with the adoption of [§8-30j, C.G.S.](#) requires a re-evaluation of current strategies and the development of a new plan to increase affordable and workforce housing in Mansfield.

Project Timeline

The following is a tentative timeline for the project. The Town reserves the right to change these dates as needed provided the project is completed by June 2021.

- **December 1, 2020** – Proposals due from interested consultants
- **December 10, 2020** – Finalists Selected
- **Week of December 14, 2020** – Finalist Interviews
- **December 18, 2020** – Consultant Selection
- **December 18-January 8, 2020** – Finalize contract and scope of work
- **Mid-January 2021**– Project Kick-Off
- **February 2021**– Completion of Data/Regulatory Evaluation
- **March 2021**-Draft Affordable Housing Plan
- **April-May 2020** – Public Hearing and adoption of Affordable Housing Plan

Scope of Services

The anticipated Scope of Services is generally described below; however, respondent proposals will be evaluated to determine the best possible work program that will result in an Affordable Housing Plan that meets the needs of the Town in addition to attaining compliance with statutory requirements and best practice recommendations identified by the State Department of Housing.

1. **Review of Existing Plans and Regulations Governing Development in Mansfield.** Review of existing documents includes but is not limited to the [Mansfield Zoning Regulations](#), [Mansfield Plan of Conservation and Development](#), the [2013 Housing Strategy Report](#), [2017 Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Rental Housing Regulations and Enforcement](#), and work currently being undertaken by the [Planning and Zoning Commission's Regulatory Review Committee](#) on changes to the regulations related to residential zoning districts. Review of these documents should include an evaluation of barriers to affordable housing as well as identification of potential areas that could support introduction of new housing types based on available information related to infrastructure availability/capacity, natural resource protection, development constraints, and neighborhood compatibility/stability.
2. **Data Analysis and Evaluation.** Review and analysis of current demographic, housing and market data to identify trends, needs/demand, opportunities, and impediments to affordable housing development.
3. **Community Education/Outreach.** Due to continuing efforts to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus, it is anticipated that having traditional in-person community engagement sessions may not be possible. Accordingly, the consultant will be expected to develop and implement a community education and outreach plan that includes:
 - Strategies for soliciting and responding to community input from the general public and key stakeholders early in the planning process to better understand opportunities and concerns.
 - Creation of web content to provide information on the project to the public for its duration, including educational materials.
 - Strategies for presenting the draft plan to the public, soliciting, and responding to comments.
 - Presentation of the Affordable Housing Plan at the public hearing required by [§8-30j, C.G.S.](#)

4. **Development of Affordable Housing Plan.** The Plan must meet the needs of the Town of Mansfield and comply with [§8-30j, Connecticut General Statutes](#), inclusive of amendments that may occur during the contract period. This plan may be a stand-alone document or may be an update to [Chapter 7 of the Plan of Conservation and Development](#). The decision on the final approach shall be made by the Town in consultation with the selected consultant. This plan shall include:
 - Summary of existing conditions, opportunities and impediments to affordable and workforce housing in Mansfield.
 - Recommended goals to expand housing options and opportunities to achieve the vision for Mansfield identified in the Plan of Conservation and Development.
 - Recommended strategies and actions to accomplish the goals.
 - Visual examples of how affordable housing can be integrated into established neighborhoods without sacrificing aesthetics or compatibility with existing homes.

5. **Steering Committee.** The Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable and Workforce Housing shall serve as the steering committee for the project. It is anticipated that the consultant will need to attend four (4) meetings with the Ad Hoc Committee:
 - **Meeting 1:** Project Kick-Off (January 2021)
 - **Meeting 2:** Data Analysis/Evaluation, Community Input and Initial Recommendations (February 2021)
 - **Meeting 3:** Draft Affordable Housing Plan (March 2021)
Review of draft plan prior to public distribution
 - **Meeting 4:** Affordable Housing Plan-Public Hearing Draft (April 2021)
Review of input received and recommended changes to draft plan

The Town of Mansfield reserves the right to modify or expand the Scope of Services in a manner that best services the interest of the Town. Respondents may also offer alternate proposals or additional services.

Fee

The funding for this project is provided through a \$15,000 grant from the Connecticut Department of Housing. If the selected consultant is unable to complete the project within the amount of the grant award, the Town may select another consultant.

Submission Requirements

Interested firms shall submit a proposal containing the following information to Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development, not later than **Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 12:00 pm local time**. Proposals may be submitted by email or hard copy.

- **Letter of Interest.** Submit a letter of interest signed by an officer of the firm containing the following information:
 - Project Manager. Identify the staff person that will be assigned to manage services under this contract.
 - Experience. Briefly summarize relevant experience and the potential for conflicts of interest due to other clients/projects in Mansfield.
 - Contact. Provide the name, title and contact information for the person who should be contacted with questions on the proposal.

- **Experience.** Please provide a detailed written summary of the firm's history, experience and capability in providing the requested services in the State of Connecticut. Examples of similar work performed, including a detailed description of the work performed by your firm and contact information for the sponsoring organization/municipality should also be provided.

- **Staffing Plan.** Please identify key personnel whom the firm has designated to work on projects under this contract, their state certifications, their background and experience and their areas and levels of responsibility. Please provide the resumes of all key personnel and a copy of their current professional licenses issued by the State of Connecticut, if any.

- *Approach and Management Plan.* Describe the firm's proposed approach to the requested services and the management plan that will be used to ensure timely completion of the services.
- *Scope of Services.* Provide a detailed scope of services proposed in response to the RFP.
- *Fee Proposal.* Submit a detailed, itemized fee proposal as well as a schedule of hourly rates for all project personnel.
- *References.* Please provide six (6) references with a brief written summary of the scope of work, contract amount, name, telephone number and timing of service.
- *Certification of Non-Collusion.* Execute the attached Certificate of Non-Collusion.

Selection Criteria and Award Process

The Town will evaluate and select the firm based on qualifications; experience and performance with similar projects; responsiveness of the approach to the scope of work and project objectives; ability to work with staff and lay committees; references; ability to provide timely services; awareness of project issues, opportunities and constraints; and overall cost. The selected firm must be able to meet all municipal, state and federal affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices and guidelines.

Responses to this RFP will be reviewed against the criteria listed above. As part of the selection/award process, the Town reserves the right to:

- Short-list and interview finalists
- Request clarification of any submitted information
- Accept or reject all proposals or options therein
- Select a firm or firms in a manner that is advantageous to the Town
- Disaggregate teams if needed to ensure that the firm for each project component is the most qualified in accordance with the selection criteria
- Award more than one contract if it is in the best interest of the Town and/or issue similar RFQs in the future
- Amend or cancel this process at any time
- Change the scope of services to be provided
- Waive any or all formalities in bidding

The Town does not expressly state or imply any obligation to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing submissions in response to this request. All responses submitted will be considered to be the property of the Town. All business confidential information protected from disclosure under the State of Connecticut Freedom of Information Act must be clearly identified as such.

Questions

- Please address any questions related to this RFP to Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development, in writing, via email at PainterLM@mansfieldct.org. Telephone questions will not be accepted.
- Questions concerning this RFP must be submitted by **Friday, November 20, 2020 at 10 a.m.**
- Addenda will be issued by **4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 24, 2020** and will be posted on the Town's website: <http://www.mansfieldct.gov/bids.aspx>.

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer, Section 3 Contractors and Minority/Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to apply.