

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
PLANNING CONSULTING SERVICES  
NEW ZONING ORDINANCE  
CITY OF MT. PLEASANT**

The City of Mt. Pleasant is seeking a qualified professional planning firm to produce a city-wide form-based code to replace the current zoning ordinance.

Mt. Pleasant is located near the geographic center of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The 2010 census population of Mt. Pleasant was 26,016. The land area of the City is 7.83 square miles, much of which is developed or set aside as park land. The campus of [Central Michigan University](#) (2015 enrollment: 26,968) is located entirely within the City limits and [Mid Michigan Community College](#) (2015 enrollment: 5,177) has a campus located just outside the City. The reservation of the [Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan](#) includes all areas of the City north of High Street. The City is located within [Isabella County](#) and is the service, shopping, and recreation hub of the region. The City is also wholly surrounded by the [Charter Township of Union](#), which is routinely one of the fastest growing municipalities in Michigan.

The City adopted its current [zoning ordinance](#) in 1984. The zoning ordinance has been amended from time to time since adoption but has received no significant updates. The zoning ordinance is characteristic of the time during which it was developed in that it promotes and encourages an auto-oriented, single-use development pattern at relatively low densities.

The City adopted an updated [Master Plan](#) in 2014. The Master Plan includes goals related to the preservation and strengthening of the historic downtown and urban neighborhoods; the redevelopment of auto-oriented, single-use corridors into multi-modal, mixed use areas; and the development of nearly 300 acres owned by the City that was formerly a state hospital site. In conjunction with the Master Plan, the City adopted a regional [non-motorized transportation plan](#) that has also been adopted by the Charter Township of Union.

The City has significant existing assets. These include a compact urban core with desirable neighborhoods and a historic downtown district; an extensive park system and trail network including significant natural area along the Chippewa River; abundant cultural assets; McLaren Central Michigan, a 118-bed acute care facility; the county government; and other regional attractors.

The City is currently engaged in the [Redevelopment Ready Communities](#) program administered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation in order to improve our regulatory standards and processes. The City is also partnering in a regional housing market analysis with results expected in late 2016.

Interested firms are invited to submit qualifications to assist the City in creating a city-wide form-based code. The services required are described in the following sections of this Request for Qualifications.

### **Scope of Work**

The selected consulting firm will work with the Planning Commission and key staff to develop a new zoning ordinance (hereafter *ordinance*) and new zoning map/regulating plan (hereafter *map*) that supports the goals of the City of Mt. Pleasant. The Planning Commission is the entity responsible for overseeing development and review of the ordinance and map and will recommend the adoption to the City Commission.

1. Establish a comprehensive participation, communication and information strategy to ensure appropriate involvement of residents, business and property owners, boards and commissions, community partners and staff. The City views public engagement as paramount to both a successful process and a successful final product. The proposal should identify recommended methods of engagement including traditional methods such as web sites, social media, open houses, charrettes, and the like. Innovative methods of public engagement are strongly encouraged.
2. Propose a new organizational structure to the code, including but not limited to the general areas listed below. The code should be easy to use as evidenced by the use of clear, concise and consistent language, tables and illustrations.
  - Definitions
  - Building Form Standards
  - Public Space/Street Standards
  - Use Classifications
  - Parking Standards
  - Signage Standards
  - Lighting Standards
  - Non-conformities
  - Evaluation Criteria
  - Review Procedures
  - Administration
  - Monitoring and Revisions
  - Zoning Map/Regulating Plan
3. Drafting and redrafting the new ordinance after receiving input from stakeholders. The ordinance should be consistent with the principles of Smart Growth and form-based codes as well as the best practices of the Redevelopment Ready Communities program. The proposed ordinance must be compliant with all applicable federal, state and local statutes and shall address consistency with the zoning and future land use plans of the Charter Township of Union and the Master Plan of Central Michigan University.

The new ordinance is expected to:

- Create a strong sense of place that respects both Mt. Pleasant's past and future.
- Result in development patterns and forms that support and encourage the full range of transportation options with an emphasis on walking and biking.
- Ensure compatibility of new development with surrounding uses with strong emphasis on form and function in order to create livable and desirable neighborhoods. Existing concerns include the compatibility of single-family uses and two-family, multi-family, and non-family residential uses and the compatibility of commercial and residential uses, especially along Mission Street.
- Provide tools to promote redevelopment. The redevelopment of Mission Street and Pickard Street from its current auto-centric form to a mixed-use, multi-modal form is a primary focus of the City's economic development efforts.
- Provide recommendations regarding how the City can address non-conforming structures and uses. These recommendations should address any current non-conformance issues as well as any new non-conformities created as a result of the new ordinance (particularly when more than 10% of existing properties in a particular district are made to be non-conforming in use or form). For instance, a downzoning in 1984 created a significant amount of non-conforming non-family housing in the central neighborhoods that remains largely in place today.

- Address where, how, and in what form different housing types are appropriate, with consideration of “missing middle” housing options.
  - Generate environmental and economic sustainability for the City and its residents.
  - Deliver a review process that is predictable, fair, and efficient.
4. Provide an implementation plan with specific dates and action steps required in accordance with state and local statutes.

### **Project Schedule**

It is anticipated that the contract for consulting services will be awarded in May 2016. The City expects the ordinance to be adopted within 12-18 months of the execution of that contract. The consultant should provide a schedule that identifies the timing of major tasks, beginning with the contract award and ending with adoption by the City Commission.

### **Submittal Summary**

Submittals should be provided in twenty (20) identical hard copies (unless otherwise noted below) and one electronic copy and include the following items, along with other material to demonstrate consultant’s expertise and capability:

1. A brief written description of the consultant’s approach to the project.
2. The expertise of the team assembled by consultant to carry out the work.
3. A list of comparable projects undertaken by consultant and/or team members.
4. A copy of at least one municipal form-based code previously created by the consultant and adopted into law (please submit one hard copy total).

### **Recommended Format for Submittals**

1. *Description of approach:* Up to two pages describing the consultant’s typical approach to projects similar to this one, including the nature of the public process and intended extent of public involvement.
2. *Team expertise:* Brief description of general qualifications, the multi-disciplinary nature of the team assembled for this project, specific evidence of relevant experience creating form-based codes, and a listing of key personnel that would be available to work on this project.
3. *Comparable projects:* Summary of form-based code projects in progress or completed, with the following information for each code:
  - a. Reference name, with current contact information
  - b. Current status of code (drafting in progress; drafting completed; adopted?)
  - c. Nature of public involvement in formulation of code
  - d. Client type (clarifying role of private sector client, if any)
  - e. Was the vision plan created as part of this process, or done separately?

- f. Size and scale of geographic area
  - g. Type of development (Greenfield, Infill/Redevelopment, or City-Wide Code)
  - h. Type of code (Mandatory (integrated into existing code or freestanding), Optional “parallel” code, or Floating-zone code)
4. *Sample code document*: Please include one or more sample code documents selected from the list of comparable projects. If this document is the code as originally proposed by consultant, please also include the code as formally adopted by the municipality and a brief explanation of differences between the two. Photos of designed or built results of the code are encouraged but must be accompanied by a description of their specific relationship to the form-based coding process.

### **Evaluation of Submittals:**

Consultants responding to this RFQ must demonstrate the following:

- Experience in preparing municipal form-based codes that regulate development and redevelopment in other communities.
- Experience in building community consensus to support innovative regulatory structures.
- Strong graphic skills.
- Strong skills in written and oral communication.
- Experience in identifying, evaluating, codifying, and explaining the essential qualities of community design and character.
- Experience in writing or implementing municipal land development regulations.

The City will evaluate all submittals to determine which consultants have the experience and qualifications that are most suited for this project. The City may request personal interviews with the highest-ranked consultants or may request one or more prospective consultants to submit detailed proposals, which may include the following:

1. Detailed description of the methodology being proposed.
2. Work program detailing:
  - a. Tasks to be performed.
  - b. When each will be completed (timeline).
  - c. Tentative allocation of person days by task.
  - d. Schedule of work products.
3. Methods the consultant proposes to use to manage the project and communicate with the City and the public as to project progress, reviews, and conduct of public meetings.
4. Identification of key personnel to be assigned to the project and their roles, with resumes of all key personnel.
5. Hourly rates (inclusive of overhead and profit) for personnel or personnel categories.
6. Data expected to be provided by the City.

## **Project Cost and Contract**

The submittal should include the following cost information: the lump sum project cost with a breakdown illustrating the costs of various deliverables; an estimate of the amount of staff time required to complete the project, including the approximate time expected to be allocated to each staff member; the number of meetings/site visits included in the project cost; and the firm's fee schedule for additional work.

The City desires a professional services contract with a not-to-exceed fee for the required services. The contract will provide for monthly billing on a time and materials basis for the services provided. In addition, the contract will include language to allow the project to be terminated by joint agreement of the parties with full compensation being made to the consultant for expenses incurred and work completed to termination date.

## **Deliverables**

All items delivered as part of this project shall be the sole property of the City of Mt. Pleasant. The consultant shall be responsible for the submittal and execution of the following:

1. Progress Reports and Research. The consultant shall be responsible for submitting monthly progress reports and research information relative to the project. The consultant shall clearly communicate how the regulatory effects of the proposed ordinance may differ from the effects of the current ordinance. Background information regarding subjects addressed in the new ordinance which are not addressed in the current ordinance shall also be submitted.
2. Draft Ordinances/Maps. Fifteen (15) copies of draft documents are required during the development stages of the project for review and use by the Planning Commission and staff.
3. Meetings. The consultant will be responsible for meeting with the Planning Commission and staff on a regular basis. The number and frequency of the meetings will be determined in consultation with all parties before the project begins. The purpose of the meetings will be to establish objectives, discuss alternatives, provide direction and review progress. In addition, the consultant will be expected to attend periodic meetings of the Planning Commission and City Commission.
4. Final Work Products. The ordinance and map must be provided in both print and electronic format that are compatible with the City's software. The consultant shall provide the following specific ordinance products:
  - Twenty-five (25) bound hardcopies of the final ordinance developed with Microsoft Word in a 8-1/2" x 11" format
  - The electronic Microsoft Word version of the ordinances in both ordinance and code formats shall be provided to the City on a flash drive

The final map shall be included as part of the ordinance document. The City shall be provided with the following map products:

- Twenty-five (25) copies of the final map folded and inserted into the bound hardcopies of the ordinance with approximate size 11" x 17"
- Six (6) display-sized maps with approximate size of 48" x 96" (two of which shall be mounted on an acceptable rigid backing for display and/or wall mounting)
- Two (2) digital versions of the map with approximate size 11" x 17" and 24" x 36" in PDF format
- A digital file of the map (.shp, projection: NAD 83) at the individual parcel level for use in and compatible with the City's Geographic Information System.

Specific details regarding the final deliverable document and map products will be discussed during the interview stage and will be detailed in the final contract.

### **Submittal Instructions**

To be considered, twenty (20) copies of the completed submittal must be submitted in a sealed envelope, clearly marked: REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS – NEW ZONING ORDINANCE and received by 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> by mail or hand delivery to:

City Clerk's Office  
City of Mt. Pleasant  
320 W. Broadway  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Submittals arriving after the date and time will remain unopened and will be disqualified. Any submittal may be withdrawn by giving written notice to the City Clerk before the stated opening time.

Questions regarding the proposal may be directed by email to:

Jacob Kain  
City Planner  
City of Mt. Pleasant  
[jkain@mt-pleasant.org](mailto:jkain@mt-pleasant.org)

Questions must be received by March 11, 2016. Answers will be posted as they are received in the Bids and Quotes section of the City's website at [www.mt-pleasant.org](http://www.mt-pleasant.org) for the benefit of all interested firms. It is the responsibility of the interested firms to check the website for new questions and answers prior to submittal. The names of firms and individuals submitting questions will not be disclosed.

### **Reservations**

The City reserves the right to accept any submittal, to reject any or all submittals, to waive defects in submittals in response to this request, and to select the submittal deemed to be in the best interests of the City. Issuance of this request for qualifications does not obligate the City to award a contract. The City accepts no responsibility for reimbursing consultants for expenses incurred in responding to this Request for Qualifications.