



# *City of Barre, Vermont*

*“Granite Center of the World”*

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Consultant Services sought for the preparation of proposed amendments to Unified Development Ordinance for the City of Barre, VT**

Date Issued: **August 30, 2023**

Responses Due: **September 14, 2023 by 4:30 pm**

#### **I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The City of Barre seeks the services of a planning consultant or team to assist the Planning Commission in analyzing and drafting amendments to our current Unified Development Ordinance and Official Zoning Map. The work will include an examination of our community's preferences and needs and will identify ways to reduce barriers to creating additional, as well as other flexible types of housing and housing development, to confront the State of Vermont's housing crisis, while ensuring any revisions comply with Fair Housing Laws, the recent changes from S.100 and most recently the July 2023 Flood that impaired our city from floodwaters and landslides.

The City was awarded a Bylaw Modernization Grant from the DHCD (Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development) to assist with the funding of this project. All work and finished product must comply with the Program Requirements, the City's Grant Agreement with the Department of Housing and Community Development, and with Fair Housing Laws.

#### **II. BACKGROUND**

The political boundary of Barre City is 4 square miles with an updated population of 8,491 (2020). Our Unified Development Ordinance defines 3 urban core districts that surround our downtown, 3 mixed use districts and 4 residential zoning districts. We have a State Designated Downtown, two Historic Districts (the Downtown Historic District and the Currier Park Historic District), with multiple designated Historic Structures within the City.

Growth needs to be balanced with the availability of our public utilities and housing needs, to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups so that housing choice and affordability are at the forefront. In reviewing our zoning districts for revisions to parking, density and setbacks, it will also look at our development patterns for reduction in any non-conformities.

A Community Visit by the Vermont Council on Rural Development in 2021 identified that there is a crucial need for more affordable, safe and quality housing for people of all ages

and income levels. Being able to expand housing options by looking at models and solutions such as co-housing and new development would benefit the City greatly. The consultant shall assist with the review and propose changes to zoning ordinance provisions that may hinder new building projects (i.e., setbacks, density requirements, percent of greenspace, etc.). Updating our zoning in ways that continue to benefit great neighborhoods will assist with meeting goals of our Municipal Plan and achieve results of housing goals.

Existing zoning as well as location of public water and sewer infrastructure are shown as layers on the Town's mapping application here: [https://next.axisgis.com/Barre\\_CityVT/](https://next.axisgis.com/Barre_CityVT/) . And as follows is a link to the Barre City Unified Development Ordinance and Official Zoning Map: <https://www.barrecity.org/land-use-and-other-ordinances.html> .

There are a number of projects underway in the City, including renovations to a historic building that is converting the third floor of vacant former office into market rate apartments, and a newly formed corporation in the process of purchasing 34 acres with an existing subdivision plan and finding funds to make that development occur. These projects and any others that may materialize in the near future should be considered when crafting amendments to the bylaws and updating our Zoning Map. The July 2023 flood that devastated our north end, as well as 15+ landslides in the City have made the need for housing that much more critical.

### **III. SCOPE, WORK PLAN AND DELIVERABLES**

In accordance with the work plan approved by the State DHCD, the project should encompass the following items, although the consultant may suggest modifications:

- a. Project Kickoff Meetings with Planning Commission, and Staff
- b. Review sections of unified bylaws related to housing development
- c. Review existing conditions analysis of planning areas (massing, density, setbacks, etc.)
- d. Outreach to commercial housing developers and document findings
- e. Meet with Planning Commission to work through findings and draft revisions
- f. Create a Project Website, or assist staff with a dedicated page on the City website
- g. Public outreach (press releases, post-card mailers, surveys, etc.) \*
- h. Prepare a public survey or form a Focus Group and document findings
- i. Prepare for, and moderate 2 Community interactive meetings/presentations
- j. Prepare draft revisions to unified bylaw and Zoning Map for review by Planning Commission
- k. Prepare redline version of proposed bylaw revisions for Planning Commission public hearing
- l. Prepare final draft and provide guidance on adoption, attending 2 City Council public hearings.

*\* The grant agreement covers the cost of mailing postcards created and printed by the consultant.*

#### IV. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All responses to the RFP shall include the following information:

- a. Letter of Interest (limit 1 page).
- b. A statement of your qualifications as a consultant to carry out the project. If a sub-consultant is involved, describe the qualifications of that person or firm.
- c. Resumes of all key individuals that will be involved in our project.
- d. An example, or examples of relevant projects that you and any sub-consultants have accomplished.
- e. A minimum of three (3) references with contact information.
- f. A cost proposal with hourly rates and total hours for all individuals/consultants involved, and a not-to-exceed total for the entire project.
- g. The proposal, encompassing items a-e above, excluding item d, shall not exceed fifteen (15) double-sided pages (30 total pages).

All information submitted becomes property of the City of Barre upon submission. The City of Barre 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.

**Submissions are due either by U.S. Mail at the address above, delivered to the City of Barre Municipal Offices located at 6 N. Main Street, Suite 7, Barre, VT 05641, or by email to [PPADirector@barrecity.org](mailto:PPADirector@barrecity.org) no later than Thursday, September 14, 2023 by 4:30 P.M. Electronic submissions will receive a confirmation upon receipt of the submittal.**

#### V. SELECTION PROCESS & CRITERIA

The selection process will take place by a subcommittee of the Barre City Planning Commission. Prior to making a decision, an interview may be requested in-person or via conference call. Based on the subcommittee's selection, recommendations and approval will be sent to the City Council for final approval at the earliest opportunity, and the consultant may begin as soon as the contract is signed by the City Manager. The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate the qualifications of the consultant:

1. Experience with writing and revising zoning regulations.
2. Experience with floodplain regulations and utilizing that standalone Ordinance to facilitate housing needs and outcomes in a floodplain.
3. Experience with online mapping tools and websites for disseminating geospatial information (ARCGIS Online web maps and/or ArcGIS StoryMaps™, or similar)
4. Experience with developing and processing the results for public opinion surveys including the use of on-line electronic tools, such as SurveyMonkey® or similar.
5. Experience with organizing and facilitating public meetings.
6. Visualization and graphic design materials demonstrating clear, accessible and easily understandable by the public.
7. Proven ability to work with a Planning Commission and any other local boards and committees.
8. Availability to begin work upon completion of a contract for the services and to

- complete work within the envisioned timeline as outlined in the RFP.
9. Quality, completeness and clarity of submission.
  10. Must be able to complete the project by December 31, 2024.

## **VI. SCHEDULE**

- The proposals with all attachments are due on Thursday, September 14, 2023 by 4:30 pm
- Consultant selected and under contract will take place no later than October 12, 2023
- Work to begin by October 19, 2023, or as soon as a contract is signed by both parties
- Complete project by December 31, 2024

## **VII. FUNDING**

Up to **\$27,500** will be available for consultant services, to include all of consultant's related expenses for the project. The City will cover the cost of publication of required public hearing notices in the paper of record, and any duplications of draft regulations and maps and distributing it to the citizenry, businesses and other interested parties in Barre for comment.

## **VIII. CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS**

The following requirements will be explicitly included in in the consultant contract:

- a. The consultant will maintain all books, documents, payrolls, papers, accounting records and other evidence pertaining to costs incurred under this Agreement and make them available at reasonable times to the Grantee and the State during the period of this contract and for three years thereafter for inspection by any authorized representatives of the State. The official records, however, will be maintained by the Grantee. If any litigation claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the three-year period, the records shall be retained until all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records have been resolved, including any period for filing an appeal. The Grantee and the State, by any authorized representative, shall have the right at all reasonable times to inspect or otherwise evaluate the work performed or being performed under this contract.
- b. The consultant certifies under the pains and penalties of perjury that he or she is in good standing with respect to, or in full compliance with a plan to pay, any and all taxes due the State of Vermont as of the date the consultant signs this contract.
- c. The consultant shall not assign or subcontract the performance of this agreement or any portion thereof to any other consultant without the prior written approval of the State. The consultant also agrees to include in all subcontract agreements a tax certification in form substantially identical to paragraph 2 above.
- d. The consultant agrees to comply with the requirements of Title 21 of the Vermont Statutes, sections 495-496, relating to fair employment practices, to the extent applicable. Consultant shall also ensure, to the full extent required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, that qualified individuals with disabilities receive equitable access to the services, programs, and activities provided by the consultant. Consultant further agrees to include this provision in all subcontracts.

- e. The consultant states that as of the date the contract is signed, he/she:
  - i. is not under any obligation to pay child support; or
  - ii. is under such an obligation and is in good standing with respect to that obligation; or
  - iii. as agreed to a payment plan with the Vermont Office of Child Support and is in full compliance with that plan. Consultant makes this statement with regard to support owed to any and all children residing in Vermont. In addition, if the consultant is a resident of Vermont, consultant makes this statement with regard to support owed to any and all, children residing in any other state, territory, or possession of the United States.

## **IX. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

The City Council Housing Working Group authored a document called the "Keys to Barre City", which identifies obstacles as well as potential outcomes to meet our housing needs and sustainably grow our Grand List; and the Housing Task Force authored a document called the "Housing Needs Assessment for the City of Barre". Both are available for reference. VCRD's report entitled "All in for Barre" can be found by clicking on <https://www.vtrural.org/sites/default/files/TheBarreCVReport-web.pdf>.

## **X. INFORMATION**

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Janet Shatney, Planning, Permitting & Assessing Director at (802) 477-1465, or by email at [PPADirector@barrecity.org](mailto:PPADirector@barrecity.org).