

Request for Proposals



City of Chillicothe Planning & Zoning Codes

35 S. Paint Street
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601

Issued: November 15, 2023
Submittal Deadline: December 18, 2023, by 4:30 p.m.

planning@chillicotheoh.gov

I. Introduction

The City of Chillicothe (Chillicothe) is soliciting proposals for professional services to perform a comprehensive update to the Planning and Zoning Code, [Part 11](#) (the Code) of Chillicothe's Codified Ordinances. Chillicothe adopted its first [Comprehensive Plan "Choose Chillicothe"](#) (the Comprehensive Plan) in 70 years in spring of 2023 and among its recommendations was Priority Action Item 1.1 Update and Modernize the City's Zoning and Land Use Codes. The Code was last updated in 2012 with several many positive additions and revisions, but parts remain that are no longer consistent with Chillicothe's development goals and the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan adopted in early 2023.

II. Background

Chillicothe is a city of about 22,000 in southern Ohio; it was the State's first capital and is the county seat of Ross County. The city strives to balance economic development and tourism opportunities with historic preservation and excellent quality of life for its residents. Chillicothe serves as the core of a growing regional economy, which is strong in the manufacturing, healthcare, tourism, and retail sectors and consequently, the City's daily population expands dramatically during the day. Major interstate and state highways converge in Chillicothe making it ideal for transport and access to major metropolitan markets. The downtown core is one of the most attractive, vibrant, and historic downtowns in the state and is poised for continued development. Chillicothe is central to regional and global cultural and historic amenities such as the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks, which was officially inscribed on the World Heritage list on September 19, 2023.

III. Planning Focus and Approach | Project Goal

The Comprehensive Plan identified a need to look at the future of land use within and around the city limits. The Consultant will use modern planning techniques to create a code that incorporates strategies to capitalize on opportunities while minimizing challenges identified in the planning process. Further, the City of Chillicothe is interested in developing healthy and desirable neighborhoods through the modeling of guiding factors from policies such as Vision Zero, Complete Streets, Aging in Place, Smart Growth policies and sustainability initiatives. At a minimum, the goals of this rewrite are:

1. To build on the vision and recommendations put forth in the 2023 Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to incorporating the Future Character Maps and Area Plans proposed by the Plan into the code.
2. To develop a code that is easy to navigate, understandable to the public and enforceable by the City of Chillicothe.
3. To provide a final product that eliminates the inconsistencies in the current code.
4. To modernize and incorporate planning and zoning code best practices.

IV. Scope of Service

The following represents a preliminary outline of the types of services that may be requested from the selected consultant. Chillicothe is open to new and innovative ideas, such as form-based code, that will improve the quality of life of its residents and economy that may not be included in the list below.

1. **Initial Outreach:** Work with city staff to assess the existing code including [Titles One through Five and Appendix A](#) and identify its strengths and weaknesses.
2. **Diagnostic Review:** Conduct a comprehensive review of the current Planning and Zoning Code and prepare an executive summary of deficiencies identified. Review these regulations against the following measures:
 - a. Consistency with the City of Chillicothe's existing plans relevant to the project, which can be found here, [Planning and Development Department](#).
 - b. Compliance with state and federal laws.
 - c. Overall cohesiveness and consistency.
 - d. Enforceability.
3. **Recommendations and Outline:** Develop recommendations and outline of an updated and modern code which addresses issues identified in Steps 1 and 2 above as well as:
 - a. Staffing competencies and skill sets necessary to realistically enforce updated code.
 - b. Design a project completion schedule that balances a detail-oriented process with the city's need to position itself for mixed-use development in the immediate future.
 - c. Identify existing uses that may be phased out and develop appropriate processes for how the city handles the transfer and permitting of these uses for future occupants, including right of way usages (E.g., advertising structures, etc.).
4. **Develop Draft Code/Amendments:** Complete an initial draft of the new code for the administration and city council to review, revise, and approve.
 - a. The code should be user-friendly, easy to understand, administer, enforce, and interpret by both the public and staff.
 - b. Incorporate diagrams, tables, graphics, and illustrations that clarify and enhance understanding of relevant code sections and modern updates.
 - c. Integrate existing City Plans and desired forms of use when relevant. Found here: [Planning and Development Department](#).
 - d. Incorporate any Action Items outlined within the Comprehensive Plan on pages 127-137, which involve planning and zoning initiatives (E.g., actions 3.5, 6.10, 1.3, and 3.3).
 - e. Facilitate a presentation of the draft to the Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission and City Council; revise the draft based on the feedback received and track all changes. Identify any changes needed to the zoning map.
 - f. Develop an implementation plan for short and long-term actions. Prepare priorities, goals, objectives, and strategies for plan implementation. Make feasible

and fiscally responsible recommendations as determined by the process and feedback received. Include action items, with timelines, responsible parties, and financial needs.

5. **Checklist:** Create checklists for building and zoning project reviews for both internal and external use (E.g., site design, subdivisions, etc.)
6. **Maps:** Provide maps identifying parcels and/or zones with uses and structures inconsistent with proposed standards and zoning regulations as well as updated mapping showing solutions for such areas. Assist city staff in distributing information to the community about the final product as the need arises (including graphic representations).
7. **Legal Consultation:** Provide legal opinions regarding specific questions that arise during the process, as well as a full legal review of the final draft.
8. **Adoption:** Assist with presentation to the City's Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission, and any additional amendments requested from these meetings until final adoption of the revised ordinances by City Council.

V. Submission Criteria

Proposal evaluations will be conducted in accordance with the criteria and procedure defined herein. Consultants selected for interviews will be chosen based on their ability to articulate how they can meet the city's overall expectations. The City reserves the right to reject all submittals. The following parameters will be used to evaluate the submittals (in no order of priority):

1. Letter of Interest.
2. Qualifications of firm/project team.
3. Strategy and implementation plan with timeline.
4. Services provided.
5. Examples of work and references from at least three similar projects.
6. Minimum of one (1) hard copy of project proposal in addition to electronic version.
7. Detailed fee proposal including a complete list of costs by phase and identifying estimated costs of proposed deliverables.

VI. Timeline

1. Question deadline: December 8, 2023.
 - a. Questions must be submitted to planning@chillicotheoh.gov; this is the only acceptable method of inquiry during this RFP.
2. Question response sheet posted on www.chillicotheoh.gov: December 11, 2023.
3. Deadline for Submission: End of Business (4:30pm EST) December 18, 2023.
4. Scoring and interviews will take place December 21-28, 2023.

- a. Multiple interviews with a firm may be required.
 - b. Submitted to planning@chillicotheoh.gov
 - c. Physical copies should be mailed to City of Chillicothe, Planning and Development Office, 35 S. Paint St Chillicothe, Ohio 45601.
5. Anticipated Award Date: December 29, 2023.
 6. Anticipated Project Start Date: January 22, 2024.

VII. Miscellaneous

1. At the project's completion, the selected consultant team will provide electronic files with all text, images, presentations, research material, GIS and related data used or created during the planning process.
2. The Consultant shall provide three hard copies of the final code draft and implementation/action steps, including color maps to Chillicothe upon adoption of the code.