

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Consultant Services Sought for Regional Housing Inventory
Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, Ascutney, Vermont
Issued March 3, 2023
Proposal Due On March 24, 2023

Overview

The Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) requests proposals from qualified consultants to conduct a regional housing study. This housing study will help to address our regional housing needs by identifying potential development and redevelopment sites well suited for housing that are located within community centers and are served by municipal water and sewer.

Context and Background

The MARC serves 10 member towns in southern Windsor County: Andover, Baltimore, Cavendish, Chester, Ludlow, Reading, Springfield, Weathersfield, West Windsor, and Windsor. This region is experiencing a housing crisis as described in more detail in the [Keys to the Valley initiative](#). Households in the region struggle to afford their homes, while others lack access to safe, supportive housing and housing services. Employers struggle to recruit new employees, who frequently cite a lack of housing in the area as a primary reason for declining a job offer.

The intent of this study is to address the need for homes across the MARC region by identifying potential sites for housing development. Potential sites include undeveloped lots, underutilized parcels, and vacant buildings.

Funding

The project budget is \$50,000. It is being funded by MARC through its regional planning funds grant agreement with the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). All consultants, and any sub-contractors, must comply with any and all applicable laws, statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations, and/or requirements of federal, state, and local governments and agencies thereof, which relate to or in any manner affect the performance of this agreement.

Work Plan

This project involves identifying potential development and redevelopment site in the following community centers served by municipal infrastructure: Chester, Ludlow, Windsor, Springfield, North Springfield, Brownsville, Cavendish and Proctorsville. The project should consider not only multi-unit dwellings, but also a range of missing middle housing types (e.g. single-detached

homes, duplexes, triplexes, tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, co-housing, manufactured and/or tiny house communities).

This project also involves conducting an internal audit of each Town's zoning rules as they relate to potential for housing development. This will help determine which sites would face local constraints to development.

The inventory of potential sites should include the location of site, size of site, approximate cost to purchase the site (if available), and other relevant details. The inventory should also include a "suitability ranking" for each location.

By identifying potential lots and examining them within the context of local zoning regulations, the inventory should prioritize which sites are best suited for residential development. Suitability may also be based on housing costs, utility costs, and whether the lot is serviced by municipal sewer and water. Suitability is also impacted by floodways, steep slopes, and other environmental constraints.

Firms submitting a proposal may suggest modifications to the scope based on the available funding level and/or their professional experience. MARC staff may be able to assist the firm with the work in order to complete the full scope of work envisioned.

Timeframe

Proposals due March 24, 2023 at 4:00 PM.

Questions about the RFP are due by March 17, 2023 at 1:00 PM.

MARC may schedule interviews if determined necessary.

Consultant selection by March 31, 2023.

Project Work to begin immediately thereafter.

Complete project on or by June 30, 2023. An extension beyond this date maybe considered.

Deliverables

The consultant will prepare a report that describes the project results and includes maps and tables that identify development and redevelopment opportunities for housing, such as vacant or underutilized properties. Mapping data will be provided to MARC in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Illustrator or similar file types.

The report will include criteria for prioritizing potential sites and as much available relevant information, such as assessed property value, real estate listings, available financial incentives, etc. This information may be found, in part, through coordination with the MARC, Windham and Windsor Housing Trust, Springfield Regional Development Corporation and other partner organizations.

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. detailed scope of work with associated list of tasks broken down by task and team member
 - b. description of the proposed deliverables
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 Mount Ascutney Regional Commission upon submission. The MARC 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 MARC. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the consultant.

The MARC 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 MARC. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the MARC to award a contract.

Submission Requirements

Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy (PDF) of the proposal by **March 24, 2023 at 4:00 PM** to:

Municipality/Local Project Manager Contact Information

Malia Cordero, Assistant Planner
Mount Ascutney Regional Commission
PO Box 320, Ascutney VT 05030
802-674-9201
mcordero@marcvt.org

Please expect a confirmation email upon receipt of the proposal by MARC.

If you have any questions about this project or the RFP, please address them in writing either via U.S. mail or email to Malia Cordero by March 17, 2023 at 1:00 PM. We will respond to all questions in writing by March 21, 2023. Both the question and response will be shared with the other consultants who have contacted Malia Cordero and provided their email address to receive RFP questions and answers.

Proposal Selection

Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from MARC and partner organizations. A short-list of consultants may be selected for interviews, if determined necessary.

Proposal Evaluation

Respondents will be evaluated according to the following factors:

1. Consultant Qualifications (experience with similar projects in Vermont, 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 [Optional]

The MARC 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 scheduled the week of March 27, 2023. 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 C of the Regional Planning Grant Agreement (Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants). A sample contract meeting these requirements is available [here](#).