

Town of Durham, NH



**Request for Proposals for Consultant
Review of the Central Business
District Zoning,
Strategic Planning for Commercial
Core,
and Specialized Planning Services as
Needed**

April 21, 2009

Contents

I. Introduction	1
II. Background	1
III. Scope of Service	2
IV. Materials	4
V. Town of Durham Staff Involvement	
4	
VI. Public Participation	4
VII. Proposal Submission	
4	
VIII. Revisions to the Request for Proposal	5
IX. Limitations of Liability	
5	
X. Proposal Preparation	5
XI. Format for Proposals	5
XII. Signature/Certification	6
XIII. Nature of Proposal and Eligibility	
6	
XIV. Right to Reject Proposals and Waive Informalities	6
XV. Proposal Evaluation and Selection	6

I. INTRODUCTION

The Town of Durham, New Hampshire is soliciting proposals for professional services (Consultant) for the review of the zoning in the Central Business District (CBD) and recommendations for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

The Town seeks a Consultant to assist with strategic planning in the CBD and downtown commercial core.

The Town seeks a Consultant for specialized planning services on an as needed basis to potentially include an upcoming Master Plan update process.

It is anticipated that work will begin as soon as possible after the proposal is accepted. Proposals, with time and materials pricing, must be received by James B. Campbell, Director of Planning & Community Development, at 15 Newmarket Road, Durham, New Hampshire 03824, no later than 4:00 pm on May 29, 2009. The proposals will be opened at this time.

II. BACKGROUND

The Town of Durham is host to the main campus of the University of New Hampshire. Both the Town and the University have made efforts to increase the amount of available housing in town. In response to the Master Plan adopted in 2000, amendments to the Zoning Ordinance were made over the past few years in an effort to create mixed-use buildings within the Central Business District (CBD) and to help increase the tax base. Further amendments have been made to the CBD zoning to allow more density as well. These amendments also include changes to the Parking section of the ordinance in the CBD. However, the Town of Durham would like a more comprehensive review of the zoning in the CBD so the Town can continue to allow for the greater density and increase the tax base but also keep the built and natural environment in line with the desire of the businesses and residents. In addition, the health, safety, and welfare of the residents within the CBD, and the surrounding areas, are of concern to the Town, as is a desire to promote sustainability, energy efficiency, and the use of expanded public transportation opportunities. We need a review of the current regulations (such as Table of Uses, Table of Dimensional Requirements, Development Standards, Definitions) to ensure more density without overcrowding individual dwelling units, keep a vibrant and healthy downtown economy, and possibly create green space or create other improvements to the public domain.

The Consultant will also work to develop a strategic planning process to help the community move forward with efforts to increase taxable value and social capital in the Central Business District and downtown commercial core while maintaining our small Town character and sense of history through the encouragement of thoughtful new development or reinvestment that serves the year-round

population, better integrates the presence of the University, and is potentially inclusive of workforce housing opportunities, all intended to foster a critical mass of residential, commercial, and retail activity to revitalize Durham's downtown.

The Town also seeks a Consultant for specialized planning services on an as needed basis to potentially include an upcoming Master Plan update process.

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following outline is offered to describe the general extent of services to be provided by the Consultant. This outline is not necessarily all-inclusive and the Consultant shall include in the proposal any tasks and services deemed necessary to satisfactorily complete the project.

Task 1 – Review Current Zoning Ordinance, 2000 Master Plan, 1995 Community Development Plan, 2009-2010 Town Council Goals, and 2008 Mill Plaza Study Committee Report

1. The Consultant will review these planning documents to: a) Familiarize himself/herself with the zoning that is in place and how it relates to the Master Plan, Community Development Plan, and the desire for further growth downtown; and b) Move forward with the development of a strategic planning process within the broader commercial core.

Task 2 – Meet with Director of Planning and Community Development, Zoning Administrator, and Town Administrator

1. The Consultant shall meet with town staff listed above to: a) Gain a better understanding of what projects are currently underway in the CBD, proposals that are forthcoming, what is possible for development in the future, and to identify what regulations within the ordinance are working or not working; and b) Become familiar with desired strategic planning efforts and Town goals as they pertain to the larger commercial core.
2. The Consultant may meet with other town staff as needed. This shall be coordinated through the Director of Planning & Community Development.

Task 3 – Meet with town Boards and Committees to gather further input

1. The Consultant shall meet with the Planning Board, Town Council, and Economic Development Committee to: a) Solicit input on the issues surrounding the current zoning in the CBD; and b) Gain insight to assist in developing a strategic plan encompassing the broader commercial core. These tasks ideally would be accomplished through a joint meeting.

2. The Consultant may meet with other Boards and Committees that he/she deems necessary after consultation with the Director of Planning & Community Development.

(It is estimated this phase will include attendance at three public meetings.)

Task 4 – Hold a public listening session

The Consultant shall meet with the public to: a) Solicit input on the issues surrounding the current zoning in the CBD; and b) Gain insight relative to the development of a strategic plan for Durham’s commercial core.

(It is estimated this phase will include attendance at two public meetings.)

Task 5 – Provide an analysis/summary of Tasks 1-4 relating to Central Business District.

The Consultant shall provide an analysis/summary of the previous meetings for review by the Planning Board and Director of Planning & Community Development to include what is working well and areas in which changes are warranted.

(It is estimated this phase will include attendance at one public meeting.)

Task 6a – Draft Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance relative to Central Business District and present to the Planning Board for their review and revisions.

(It is estimated this phase will include attendance at three public meetings.)

Task 6b – Develop strategic plan that identifies steps needed and assigns responsibilities to increase taxable value and social capital in the CDB and downtown commercial core as outlined herein. This will be accomplished with review and guidance by Director of Planning and Community Development and Town Administrator.

Task 7a – Attend Planning Board and Town Council public hearings on CBD zoning amendments and revise as necessary at the direction of the Planning Board and/or Town Council.

(It is estimated this phase will include attendance at three public meetings.)

Task 7b – Attend Town Council meetings to introduce draft strategic plan, incorporate changes due to feedback, and produce final product.

Task 8 – Assist the Town with specialized planning services on an as needed basis to potentially include an upcoming Master Plan update process.

(It is estimated this phase will include attendance at three public meetings.)

IV. MATERIALS

The Consultant will be responsible for providing all necessary materials including draft documents and maps and the final products. The Consultant shall provide the Town with one (1) PDF version and one (1) editable version of documents or maps. The software packages used will be agreed upon prior to any work being produced. Any maps should be developed for easy integration into the Town's GIS.

V. TOWN OF DURHAM STAFF INVOLVEMENT

Staff will be available to answer any questions that may arise but all correspondence should go through the Director of Planning and Community Development. The town will make every effort to have staff available if necessary. This must be coordinated with the Director of Planning and Community Development.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation will be an important part of this zoning review and strategic planning process. It is anticipated that at least two public listening sessions will be held by the Consultant to hear from the public before any public hearings by the Planning Board and Town Council.

VII. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All responses to this RFP must be received in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Review of the Central Business District Zoning, Strategic Planning for Commercial Core, and Specialized Planning Services as Needed" by 4:00PM, on May 29, 2009 to be eligible for consideration. Proposals shall be submitted to:

Planning & Community Development Department
ATTN: James B. Campbell
Durham Town Hall
15 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824

Please submit six (6) copies of the responses to the RFP.

Any questions regarding the RFP should be submitted to the Director of Planning and Community Development.

VIII. REVISIONS TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFP, an addendum will be sent to all those who received the original document.

IX. LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY

The Town of Durham assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by Proposers in responding to this RFP or in responding to any further request for interviews, additional data, etc.

X. PROPOSAL PREPARATION

In order to facilitate evaluation of the proposals, the proposer is instructed to be concise and to follow the outline below in responding. Proposals that do not follow the outline, or do not contain the required information, may be considered as invalid proposals. Additional detailed information may be annexed to the proposal.

XI. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Proposers are instructed to be concise and proposals should include, in order, the following:

- A. Letter of Transmittal;
- B. Executive Summary to include understanding of the project and scope of work;
- C. Brief organizational profile, including background and experience of the firm;
- D. Previous project summaries, including reference contact information for a minimum of three (3) projects, which are similar in scope to the project described herein that demonstrate pertinent corporate and key personnel experience; listing of the pertinent projects may be included (The Town reserves the right to contact any references provided by the proposer or otherwise obtained);
- E. Approach to work - A detailed outline of the proposed services for executing the requirements of the Proposed Scope of Services;
- F. Proposed potential project schedule. It is the Town's desire to commence these projects as expeditiously as possible;
- G. Proposals shall include billing rates for services provided, travel time, copying costs, as well as the cost for attendance at public meetings.

XII. SIGNATURE/CERTIFICATION

The proposal shall be signed by an official authorized to bind the offer and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for a ninety (90) day period from opening. The proposal shall also provide the following information: name, title, address and telephone number of the individual(s) with authority to contractually bind the company and also who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation for the purpose of clarifying submitted information.

XIII. NATURE OF PROPOSAL AND ELIGIBILITY

The determination of whether a proposal may be withdrawn is solely at the discretion of the Planning & Community Development Director. However, in no event shall a proposal be withdrawn unless the request for withdrawal is filed within five (5) days of the date of the opening and the proposer establishes that the proposal contains a material mistake and the mistake occurred despite the exercise of reasonable care.

XIV. RIGHT TO REJECT PROPOSALS AND WAIVE INFORMALITIES

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason, or any part of a proposal, to waive any nonmaterial irregularities or information in any response to the RFP, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items.

XV. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The Director of Planning & Community Development, in conjunction with the Planning Board and Town Administrator, will evaluate each proposal based on the documentation requested herein using criteria which include but are not necessarily limited to or in the order of, the following:

- A. The proposal's responsiveness to the RFP (format, capabilities, approach, clarity, etc.);
- B. How well the proposal matches the needs of the Town of Durham;
- C. The qualifications and experience of personnel committed to each of the separate components of the Request for Proposal;
- D. The proposal's unique ideas and creativity;
- E. Familiarity with the unique characteristics of Durham as host to the University of New Hampshire;
- F. Experience with smart growth principles and best practices in sustainability;
- G. Time and materials costs.

Once the best proposals have been identified, the Director of Planning & Community Development will contact and schedule an interview with the most

qualified firms. The Director of Planning & Community Development will recommend to the Town Administrator the highest ranking firm (or firms) for selection. The Town reserves the right to hold a second interview with firms to discuss the proposal's cost and negotiate the price with prospective Consultants prior to making a final determination. Depending upon the qualifications and strength of proposals received, the Town reserves the right to select a single firm, or a team of professionals with varying specialties from separate firms, to assist with the desired scope of work and services identified in this Request for Proposal.