



LAND USE PLAN UPDATE

Options to Proceed:

1. Motion to recommend Town Council approve of one of the firms to update the Town's Land Use Plan

SUMMARY

The town's comprehensive land use plan is a blueprint for the town's growth and helps the planning board, Council, and staff make zoning and regulatory decisions. It is recommended that land use plans be updated at least every ten years to reflect the changes that may occur over time. Our current land use plan was adopted in 2009. Staff has solicited requests for proposals from firms that specialize in the creation of comprehensive land use plans. Staff has received three proposals that detail each company's organization, staff, experience, and process that they will use to update our land use plan, in addition to the cost of the project.

Staff sent out the three proposals to members of staff, Town Council members, and Planning Board members to solicit their feedback on each plan. Each used a rating sheet to rate each firm's proposal. There were four sections to the rating sheet:

1. Firm experience
2. Experience of the personnel
3. Ability to understand the requirements of the town's land use plan, and
4. Previous experience with the town.

Each section has a rating from 1-5 with 5 being the best. Benchmark scored 94, CJ Stone scored 89, Kimley-Horn scored 78. Staff has had some preliminary discussion with Council members and some of the firms about creating a parks master plan with the selected firm to be completed at the same time.

Those who rated the firms had this to say about each:

Benchmark

"Has the cheapest price, previously created our current land use plan and other work within town. Benchmark created a new land use plan for Cleveland County in 2021 which went well. Worked with other university communities. 1 year turnaround time."

When called for a reference, another jurisdiction stated, "Our experience was excellent! They completed the project on time and within budget. I would certainly recommend them! "

Kimley-Horn



“Highest cost with a 10-month turnaround time. They have worked to create full land use plan rewrites as well as parks, recreation, and culture plans.”

Another Jurisdiction stated “Speaking from my perspective, the experience of having them as a consultant was largely positive. They did a great job presenting at the larger-scale open houses and public events (we kept a lot of the other public engagement in-house to control costs though). And the quality of the final report was strong. Kimley-Horn focused more on the maps and graphics in the report while our Town staff project manager did the bulk of the text. I don’t know if that was an indicator of their writing abilities or just her preference. One other thing I’ll note – we have an ongoing contract with Kimley-Horn for supplemental review of development applications (ie when we have a high volume of plans being submitted, we outsource some of the work to them). That team includes members of the team that did the Future Land Use Map. So, we have a good ongoing relationship.”

CJS-Bolton Menk

Shortest turnaround time of 9-months and has the option to add on a parks master plan. Has worked with other university communities.

Another jurisdiction said “I used ColeJenest and Stone when I was in Lancaster, SC for a Cluster Subdivision Overlay plan and the 521 Corridor Overlay District. I enjoyed working with them and they were extremely helpful in understanding our needs for a growing community. I was short staffed, and they provided me supplemental pages for design standards to help with the 521 Corridor Overlay District. Marshall Giles was involved with communicating with me the process of the two plans and provided detailed reports for each task. I highly recommend them.”

Staff recommends that consideration be given to the content of the submittals, the potential for a parks master plan, and the perspective of each firm. The rating sheet is only a guideline for points to consider. One or two members of the team at CJS/BM worked with the Town on the Downtown Master Plan. Benchmark has completed Town plans and County plans. Kimley-Horn has not worked with the Town before but has a good reputation in the planning industry. Familiarity can be useful to facilitate the process as can a new perspective.

The goal of the staff is to have a detailed and thorough analysis of land use and parks. We are not in a rush to complete this plan but do need to get the process started. This document will help guide future growth and, potentially, be something we look at for the next ten years.

MATERIALS PROVIDED

- Each firm’s proposal
- Rating sheet