



vierbicher

planners | engineers | advisors



## City of Columbus Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Rewrite



### Prepared For

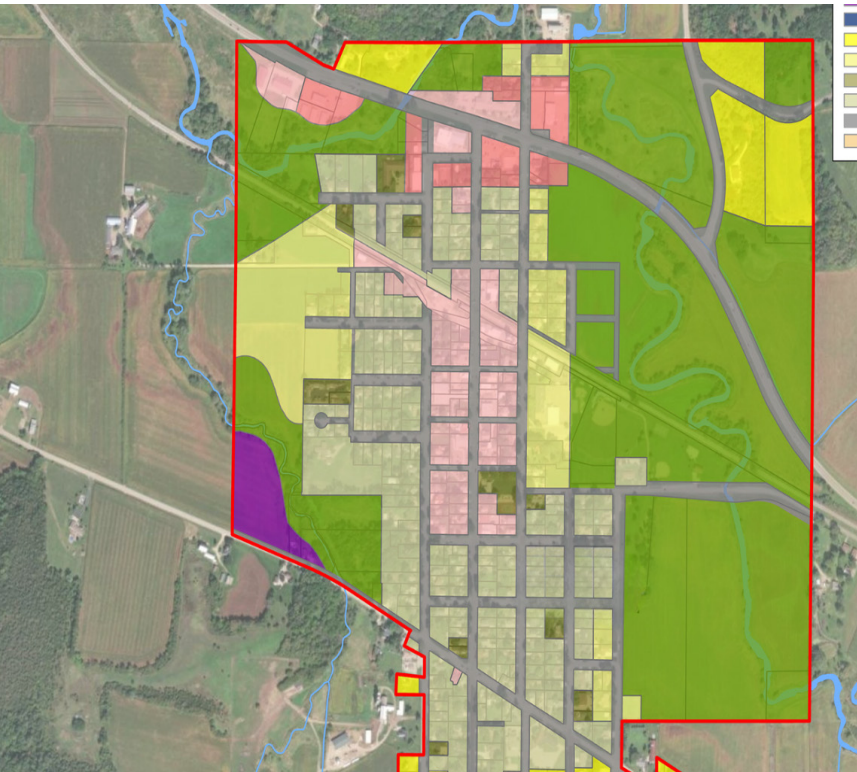
Mike Kornmann  
Director of Community and Economic Dev  
City of Columbus  
105 N. Dickason Boulevard  
Columbus, WI 53925

### Prepared By

Vierbicher  
201 E Main Street, Suite 100  
Reedsburg, Wisconsin 53959  
(608) 524-6468

### Contact

Andrew Kurtz  
Vierbicher  
201 E Main Street, Suite 100  
Reedsburg, Wisconsin 53959  
(608) 402-6387  
akur@vierbicher.com



### Authorized Corporate Officer

Craig Mathews, PE, Principal

### Submitted on

February 21, 2025

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201 E Main Street, Suite 100  
Reedsburg, Wisconsin 53959  
(608) 524-6468 phone  
www.vierbicher.com

February 21, 2025

Mike Kornmann  
Director of Community and Economic Development  
City of Columbus  
105 N. Dickason Boulevard  
Columbus, WI 53925

Re: Proposal for Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Rewrite  
City of Columbus

Dear Mr. Kornmann,

Vierbicher is pleased to submit this proposal to rewrite the zoning and subdivision ordinance of the City of Columbus. As a full-service planning and civil engineering firm with deep expertise in zoning and community development, we understand the challenges of working with an out-of-date ordinance.

Vierbicher has a proven track record of success in developing zoning codes for communities of all sizes. Our team of experts brings a diverse range of skills and perspectives, including zoning, urban planning, economic development, and public engagement.

Our approach emphasizes collaboration and community engagement, ensuring that stakeholder voices are heard and reflected in the final plan. We will work closely with your staff, elected & appointed officials, and residents throughout the entire process.

The following proposal details our understanding of and our approach to your project. We look forward to working with you to meet your objectives resulting in new zoning and subdivision ordinance that is easy to follow and implement.

We are excited about the opportunity to partner with the City of Columbus and look forward to speaking with you regarding our proposal for this important initiative.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew R. Kurtz  
Planning & Community Development Manager  
(608) 402-6387  
[akur@vierbicher.com](mailto:akur@vierbicher.com)

# FIRM SNAPSHOT

## VIERBICHER

201 E Main Street, Suite 100  
Reedsburg, WI 53959  
Phone: (608) 524-0532  
Fax: (608) 524-0530  
www.vierbicher.com

Contact: **Andy Kurtz**

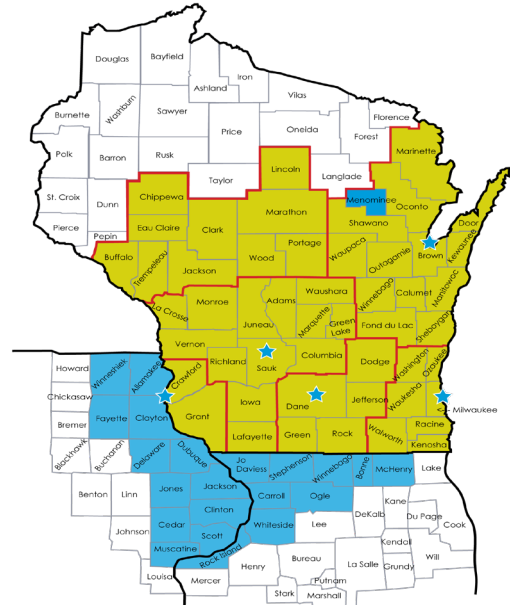


### LICENSED AND CERTIFIED PROFESSIONALS

# 53

(PE, EIT, PLS, PH, CST, PLA, CFM,  
LEED AP, AICP, CNU-A)  
WI LIC # 1326-11

## GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA



**FOUNDED 1976**



**5 OFFICE LOCATIONS**

**85% of our work is from REPEAT CLIENTS**

## PLANNING

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## PUBLIC FUNDING

## ENGINEERING

## LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

## SURVEYING

## 120 TEAM MEMBERS



**#1 VIERBICHER GOAL:**

**PROVIDE A CULTURE THAT INSPIRES PEOPLE TO DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS**



# Firm History

## Vierbicher: A History of Community-Focused Planning and Engineering

Vierbicher is a leading consulting firm providing comprehensive planning, engineering, and surveying services to communities throughout Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest. Founded in 1976 by James Vierbicher, PE, in Reedsburg, Wisconsin, the firm has grown from its small-town roots to become a trusted partner for over 100 communities across the state.

Driven by a commitment to excellence and community development, Vierbicher has consistently expanded its reach and expertise. Key milestones in the firm's history include the acquisition of Lakeland Engineering, which led to the establishment of our office in Madison (1987); opening a Prairie du Chien office (1999); opening an office in Milwaukee (2016); acquiring Mau & Associates to create our Green Bay office (2023); and acquiring KD Engineering to expand our reach into southwest Wisconsin (2024). This strategic expansion has enabled Vierbicher to better serve its clients and contribute to the growth and prosperity in diverse regions within Wisconsin.

At the heart of Vierbicher's success is its multi-disciplined, team-based approach. By bringing together planners, community development professionals, funding specialists, engineers, landscape architects, and surveyors the firm provides innovative and cost-effective solutions tailored to each client's unique needs. This collaborative philosophy has been instrumental in navigating significant challenges and achieving notable successes throughout the company's history.

Vierbicher's dedication to its employees is reflected in its structure as an employee-owned corporation. This ownership model fosters a strong sense of shared purpose and commitment among the firm's 120+ person team. A seven-person Board of Directors, elected by the shareholders, provides oversight and guidance, ensuring the company remains true to its founding principles while adapting to the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

Today, Vierbicher stands as a testament to the vision of its founder and the dedication of its employee-owners. The firm's unwavering commitment to quality, innovation, and community partnership has solidified its position as a leader in the consulting industry. As Vierbicher looks to the future, it remains dedicated to building stronger, more vibrant communities across Wisconsin and beyond.

## Expertise and Key Services

With a team of over 120 professionals, including planners, community development specialists, funding specialists, licensed engineers, surveyors, and landscape architects, Vierbicher has the expertise to manage complex projects from concept to completion. Core service areas include:

- Community Development: zoning, comprehensive planning, grant writing, and economic development initiatives for municipalities throughout the state.
- Public Funding: Securing over \$100 million in grants for clients, participating in the creation and amendment of numerous TIF districts, and providing guidance on various public funding programs.
- Municipal Engineering: Road reconstructions, utility expansions and upgrades, municipal consulting services, park development, and ongoing road maintenance for various municipalities across Wisconsin.



## Industry Leadership

Vierbicher is an active participant in various industry associations, including the American Planning Association, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, the Wisconsin Economic Development Association, American Public Works Association, and Wisconsin Rural Water Association. This involvement allows the firm to stay at the forefront of industry trends and best practices. Vierbicher's professionals regularly share their expertise through presentations and publications, contributing to the advancement of the engineering profession.

## Client-Focused Approach

Vierbicher prides itself on its client-focused approach providing the highest level of customer service. The firm's professionals take the time to understand each client's unique needs and develop tailored solutions that meet those needs. Vierbicher's commitment to clear communication, prompt responsiveness, and consistent staffing ensures that clients receive the highest level of service. We pride ourselves on being an extension of your staff.

The brief case studies below illustrate our client-focused approach and samples of projects similar in scope to the Columbus Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Rewrite.

The City of Mauston was challenged with growing development pressure and a complex outdated zoning code. Vierbicher was contracted to update the code, ensure consistency with the code & with state statutes, improve usability, consolidate the number of zoning districts and update the conditional use process. Vierbicher also worked with the City to implement a clear and concise review process to streamline zoning entitlement and approvals.

The City of Richland Center needed assistance in updating their zoning code and administering their zoning process. They contracted with Vierbicher to update their zoning code integrating changes in state statute and incorporating case law. Vierbicher also streamlined the code to improve usability and implemented forms & processes to assure consistency within the zoning review.

The Village of DeForest has experienced significant development over the past decade. To support this growth, the Village has pursued frequent zoning code updates to actively manage their zoning code and processes. Vierbicher has provided services to the Village for over 30 years and was selected to assist in the zoning ordinance updates. The zoning updates to ensure compliance with state statutes, integrate case law, and implement zoning best practices. Vierbicher also provides site review services and zoning entitlement reviews to Village.



# Project Statement

The City of Columbus is seeking assistance in rewriting the current zoning & subdivision code of the City. The original code dates back to the 1970's with a minor update in 2008. The current code is described in the RFP as “no longer consistent with or follow state statutes”. Additionally, the current code creates challenge in completing efficient code reviews and is discouraging to developers seeking quick and efficient reviews.

The new zoning & subdivision code must be easy to administer, easy to interpret by residents and developers, and provide defensible enforcement authority to the City. Additionally, a review of the Comprehensive and other City plans will be required to ensure the new codes are in line with the identified priorities of the community.

The updated zoning code must provide standards for design that are compatible with the historic downtown, business / industrial parks, residential areas, subdivisions and identified growth areas while allowing flexibility. This is achieved by evaluating the existing structures and properties to form a generalized set of standards that encompass a variety of compatible & complimentary uses and designs. Integration of reduced transportation facilities requirements (narrower streets) and implementing a Complete Streets philosophy will improve non-motorized facilities while enabling a reduction of development costs. Considerations for traditional neighborhood design will be considered to link new development with the historic feel of mature residential districts of the City.

Vierbicher will work closely with City Staff to generate new zoning and subdivision ordinances that provide flexibility, promote higher density opportunities, increase housing unit diversity within zoning districts, provide for in-fill development, maintain the character of the community and are compatible with the desired development of the City of Columbus. A review of existing zoning districts and alignment with current best practices for entitlement will be completed resulting in more by uses by right and a reduction in conditional use permits and /or Planned Unit Developments (PUD).

The City is seeking a zoning code that facilitates a streamlined review process enabling administrative review and approval of projects under a defined threshold and expedites the review and approval process for projects over a defined threshold. The City has identified a need to simplify the zoning and subdivision codes to make them easier to interpret by residents, developers and staff through graphical representations where appropriate. The new codes must include intuitive maps that can be accessed by stakeholders via GIS or delivered as a PDF. Simplification of the codes must reduce or eliminate the need to reference other elements of the code, eliminate conflicting definitions and significantly reduce the need to interpret definitions.

The new zoning and subdivision codes must incorporate modern approaches and best practices for parking, lighting and landscaping standards. The new codes should be crafted in a manner to address challenges related to multiple overlay districts of the current code.

While stormwater and erosion control ordinances have been removed from the Columbus zoning code, shoreline and floodplain zoning should be included in the new codes to address the presence of Crawfish River, FEMA designated floodways, and DNR designated wetlands

Vierbicher will employ a public engagement process that enables a broad group of stakeholders to participate in the ordinance rewrite process. This group of stakeholders includes City governing body, commissions, City staff, residents, property, business owners, real estate and development professionals. The engagement plan will include the use of Vierbicher Community Engagement Platform for public communications and surveys. The plan will also include public meetings and focus groups with stakeholders throughout the process.



The new zoning and subdivision codes must be consistent with the latest changes to the Wisconsin State Statutes related to zoning, conditional use, property owner notification, and public hearings to enable enforcement and to provide defense if challenged.

The deliverables from the zoning and subdivision code rewrite will be provided to the City of Columbus in electronic format. The City of Columbus hosts its ordinances on the Municode platform which provides a level of accessibility to the public and staff. Vierbicher will work with City Staff and Municode to deliver the new ordinances in a compatible format and assure that the usability desired by the City can be attained via the current hosting platform. All maps created as part of the code rewrite process will be provided in a PDF format and as GIS shapefiles compatible with the ESRI platform.

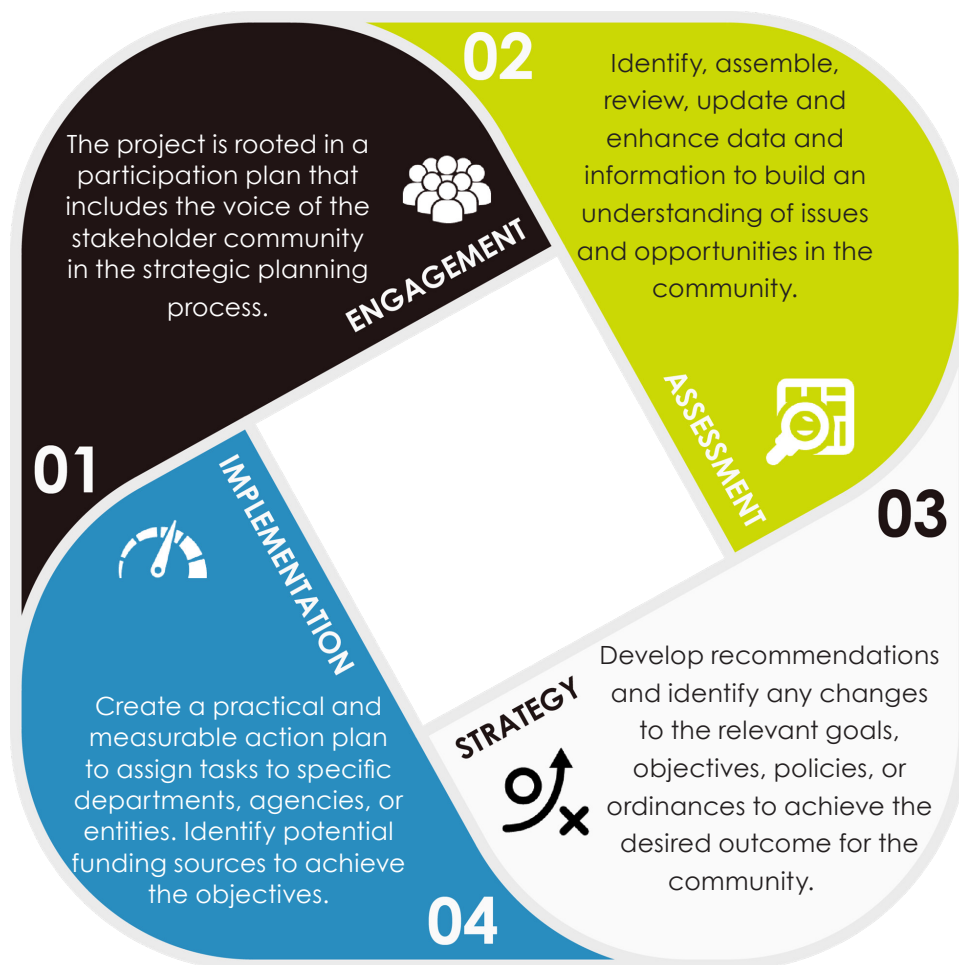
Due to the scope of the project, it is anticipated that the project will span 2025 and 2026. Vierbicher's target for completion is the end of Q3 2026. The City of Columbus is seeking a "not to exceed" price for the project. Vierbicher has generated a scope of work based on its project understanding which will be a fixed bid proposal. The final scope of work and contract will be based on the proposal and any modifications requested by the City. Scope changes after the contract is executed will be addressed via addendum and may result in a change of price.



# Project Approach

Our team's goal is to be a partner with the City of Columbus to develop new zoning and subdivision ordinances that are consistent with state statutes and current best practices. Our focus will be the delivery of user-friendly zoning and subdivision codes that are clear to the public and enforceable by the City. The new codes will be consistent with the goals and objectives defined by the City within the current comprehensive plan, comprehensive outdoor recreation plan and through stakeholder input. We provide a coordinated project experience, building on previous community successes and engaging the community throughout the process.

Vierbicher staff will guide the process of developing new zoning and subdivision ordinances, as well as reviewing and revising the historic preservation ordinance, shoreland and watercourse ordinance, and floodplain regulations using our proven **EASI** model for planning. The model is based on four components **E**ngagement, **A**ssessment, **S**trategy, and **I**mplementation enabling a collaborative and thorough approach to developing zoning ordinances. The **EASI** Model phases overlap and often run concurrently to enable the optimal flow of information, the maximum level of engagement and the flexibility to focus resources and time where it is needed during the project.







PROJECT  
APPROACH

01 ENGAGEMENT

Vierbicher views community engagement as a critical component of successful Planning & Community Development. One element of that engagement is communication and Vierbicher hosts a public Engagement Web Portal during the project. This page contains valuable information that is readily available to stakeholders and the public throughout the project. Examples of information include multi-media content, project overview, and a project calendar. A second element of engagement is a community survey. Vierbicher works with the local government representatives to develop a project focused community survey. Vierbicher utilizes an Enhanced Community Engagement platform with which integrates robust survey capabilities with a powerful GIS platform. The platform enables survey questions to be linked to interactive community mapping to add spatial context to the survey.



The City of Columbus has begun the process of rewriting its municipal zoning code and has generated this survey to obtain public input.

All responses to the survey are anonymous and confidential.

I confirm that I am only responding to this survey once

I consent to my responses being published as part of the results





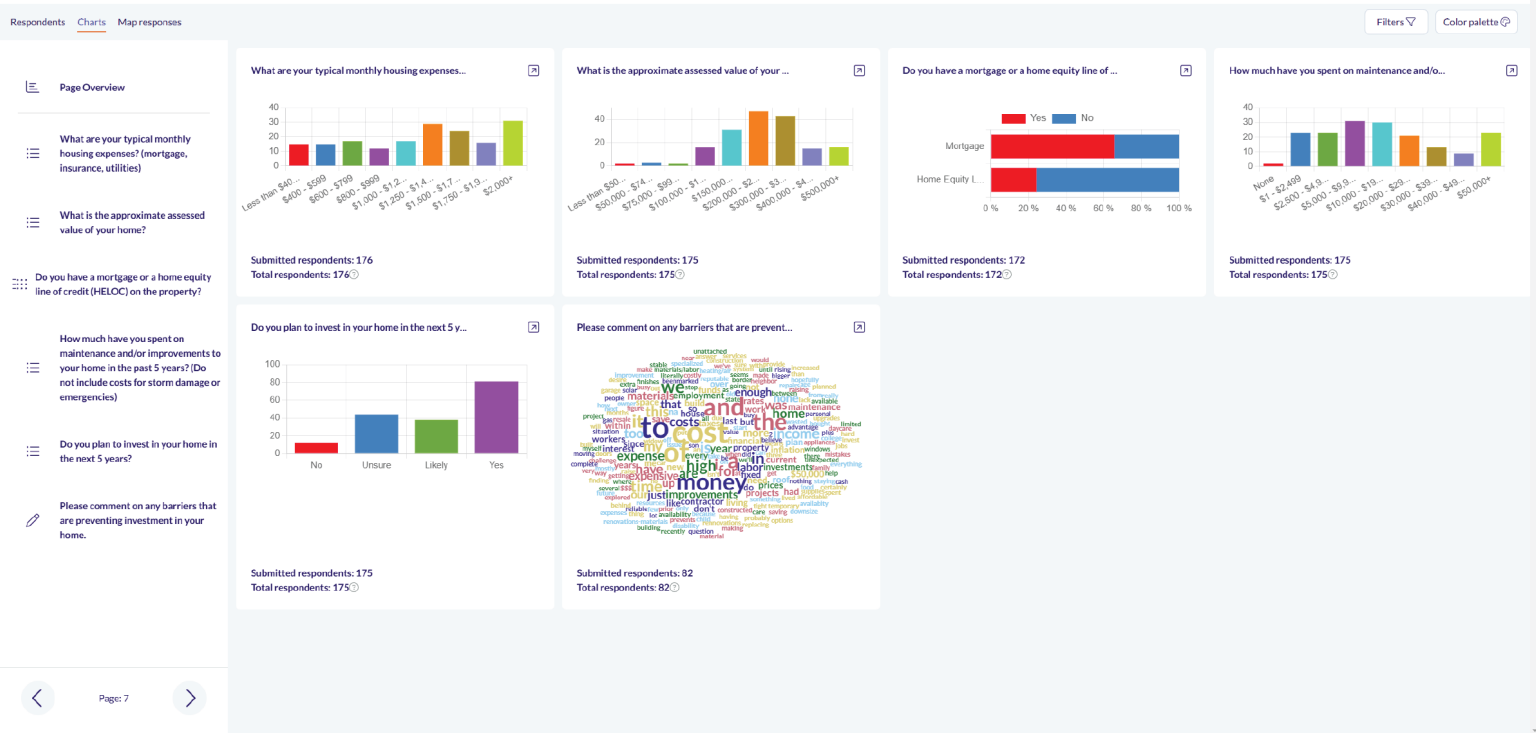
# PROJECT APPROACH

# 02 ASSESSMENT

A full review of the current zoning code Chapters 114 & 90 and a SWOT analysis with the project stakeholders is facilitated to identify specific concerns and challenges with the current code. The perspectives of the City staff and members of the governing body on these additional planning documents will be collected and integrated into the zoning code and subdivision ordinance updates. In addition, Vierbicher will review the Columbus Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) to identify zoning specific items or requirements in those plans.

The Community Survey provides data from the residents & local stakeholders. This data is collected throughout the survey period to provide "in process" perspective to the governing body during the initial Direct Engagement sessions. The results of the Community Survey are integrated with data collected from other sources. The Community Survey data provides local perspectives and priorities to stakeholders for consideration when developing the new zoning and subdivision code.

## Example of Community Survey Analysis Tool





## 03 STRATEGY

Information collected during the Engagement and Assessment phases is compiled for review with the stakeholder. Vierbicher staff facilitate discussions with City staff, governing body, and community stakeholders to review the information assembled. We draw on the expertise of our personnel, industry best practices, stakeholder perspectives and state statutes to develop the zoning strategies that will be employed for the City of Columbus. The recommended strategies and approaches encompassed in the new zoning and subdivision codes will embody the history and character of the community, reflect the community's needs for a modern and usable code and support the future vision of the community.

## 04 IMPLEMENTATION

The final phase of the EASI model is Implementation. The Implementation phase is a critical phase in determining the success of the project. It is where the work completed in the previous phases come together in a new zoning and subdivision code. Vierbicher staff drafts the new codes leveraging the information gathered in the Engagement and Analysis phases. As the codes are developed, we continue to engage with City staff, the municipal attorney, the governing body and stakeholders to review what is being developed assuring that the end product meets and exceeds expectations.

The final zoning and subdivision code is not only deliverable of the Implementation phase. A successful zoning cost must be accompanied by the forms, exhibits, and processes that enable City staff and stakeholders to utilize the new codes. Vierbicher staff work with City staff to develop these materials and to deliver form and exhibits in formats that facilitate electronic or analog delivery. Jointly developed processes are drafted with a focus on efficiency, ease-of-use, and user experience.

The Scope of Services and Deliverables below provide details on how Vierbicher will **E**ngage stakeholders, **A**ssess the current code, develop a **S**trategy to fulfill stakeholder needs while eliminating current challenges, and creating new zoning & subdivision ordinances for Implementation by City staff.



# Scope of Services

## I. SCOPE OF SERVICES

### A. General

The Consultant shall review the current zoning code and generate an analysis report detailing recommended modifications. Based on stakeholder approval of the analysis and recommendations, the Consultant shall develop updated, user-friendly zoning and subdivision codes that are clear to the public and enforceable by the City. The new zoning code will include provisions for lighting, parking, landscaping, and design standards. Consultant shall also review and revise the historic preservation ordinance (maintaining National Park Service Certified Local Government status), shoreland and watercourse ordinance, and the floodplain regulations. The new and revised codes will ensure fairness, consistency and a streamlined permitting process while engaging stakeholders throughout the process.

### B. Specific Services Provided by Consultant

#### 1. Engagement and Assessment

##### a. City Staff Meeting #1: Project Kick-Off Meeting:

1. Vierbicher will conduct a Kick-Off meeting with City staff to establish a shared understanding of the project goals and objectives.
2. This meeting will include a detailed review of existing ordinances to identify implementation challenges and areas of concern.
3. Discussions will cover current zoning districts, including potential eliminations or consolidations, along with a review of the Official Zoning Map.
4. An initial review of zoning, subdivision, historic preservation district, shoreland and floodplain applications will be conducted.
5. Vierbicher staff will facilitate a review of current zoning forms and processes with Client staff.
6. The project timeline will be reviewed, and a project meeting schedule will be developed with City staff. The meeting schedule will cover Vierbicher and City Staff meetings, as well as relevant boards, commissions, and committees required throughout the project.
7. Vierbicher will discuss public engagement strategies and demonstrate the Enhanced Community Engagement platform. A public participation plan outlining methods to collect input from stakeholders and residents via survey, focus groups and public meetings will be generated.

##### b. Follow-Up to the Kick-Off Meeting

1. Vierbicher will create a Public Participation Plan for the City of Columbus Zoning and Subdivision Rewrite.



2. Vierbicher will develop engagement surveys using the Enhanced Community Engagement platform. One survey will gather input from City departments and elected officials, while another will target stakeholders such as developers, surveyors, and the general public. These surveys will help address concerns from various perspectives, including NIMBY's (Not in my backyard), CAVE's (Citizens Against Virtually Everything) and LULU's (Locally Unwanted Land Use).
- c. **City Staff Meeting #2: Review Ordinance Templates**
1. Vierbicher will provide & present two ordinance examples from other communities for City staff to evaluate.
  2. City staff will review the provided ordinances and offer input on elements they would like to incorporate into the City of Columbus' ordinances.
- d. **City Staff Meeting #3: Analysis and Assessment**
1. Vierbicher will conduct a site visit to areas identified by City staff to assess zoning and subdivision regulations, as well as the Historic Preservation District identifying non-conforming properties and to gauge zoning elements that work and/or create challenges. This will provide insights into ordinance recommendations.
  2. Vierbicher we will review shoreland and floodplain maps to understand their impact on development.
- e. **Review and Documentation:**
1. Vierbicher will review ordinances to identify barriers to mixed-use developments, redevelopments, affordable housing, a diverse mix of housing options, and outdated requirements for parking, lot size, setbacks, etc.
  2. Vierbicher will review current street design standards will be reviewed and analyzed to identify alternative approaches that facilitate development and improve cost-effectiveness.
  3. Vierbicher will, utilizing GIS, review the lots will be evaluated based on lot size, lot widths, lot depths, floor area ratios, and setbacks. Existing lots will be categorized to assess the current built environment and guide ordinance revisions.
  4. Vierbicher will, utilizing GIS and information from City staff, review non-conforming lots, uses and structures will be analyzed, assessed and reported.
  5. Vierbicher will review existing conditional uses will be evaluated to determine whether they would be better suited as permitted use or remain as conditional uses in the ordinance rewrite.
  6. Vierbicher will review and annotate the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Historic Preservation Ordinance, Shoreland and Watercourse Zoning Ordinance, and Floodplain Regulations to highlight potential changes and inconsistencies.



7. Related planning documents will be examined by Vierbicher staff to incorporate relevant recommendations into the ordinance assessment. These include the City's Comprehensive Plan and Outdoor Recreation Plan. Review and incorporation of other plans identified by the City can be accommodated via amendment to the scope of services.
8. Ordinance amendments passed by the Common Council over the last 10 years will be reviewed and integrated as appropriate to ensure consistency with the rewrite by Vierbicher staff.
9. Wisconsin State Statutes regarding land use, zoning, subdivision, conditional uses, historic preservation, shoreland and floodplain will be reviewed by Vierbicher staff, with necessary updates incorporated into the revised ordinances, and this includes the conditional use, substandard lot, nonconforming language from 2017 Wisconsin Act 67.
10. Relevant rulings from the US Supreme Court, US Court of Appeals, and Wisconsin Supreme Court that impact land use, zoning, subdivisions, historic preservation, shoreland and floodplain will be analyzed, and ordinance adjustments will be made accordingly by Vierbicher staff.
11. Vierbicher staff will complete an analysis of the Official Zoning Map, and up to two (2) conceptual maps will be prepared to illustrate potential zoning district changes. These maps will serve as examples of proposed modifications

## 2. Strategy and Implementation

### a. City Staff Meeting #4: Final Report and Review Meetings:

1. A Zoning Assessment and Recommendation Report will be developed based on meetings, communications, and data analysis, with dedicated sections for zoning, subdivision, historic preservation, shoreland and watercourse zoning and floodplain ordinances. This report will highlight the strengths and limitations of the current ordinances and will provide a review of the best practices in land use planning and zoning and how those may be incorporated into the revision.
2. A second meeting will be organized with City staff to review the Ordinance Assessment and Direction Report.
3. This will be followed by meetings with the Planning Commission and the Historic Landmarks & Preservation Commission to review the Ordinance Assessment and Direction Report.

### b. Ordinance Rewrite:

Once comments are received from City staff and from the Commission meetings, Consultant shall implement approved changes based on feedback, discussions and the contents of the Zoning Assessment and Direction Report.

1. Recent changes to state law regarding conditional use permits and impact fees will be incorporated.



2. New tables and select graphics will be created to illustrate elements in the five (5) ordinances including permitted and conditional uses, development standards, and lot layouts.
  3. New forms will be developed to assist City staff in streamlining the permitting and subdivision review process.
  4. A revised Zoning Map will be prepared to reflect any changes in zoning or historic preservation district boundaries.
  5. Coordination with the City Attorney will take place for a legal review of the draft ordinances.
- c. **City Staff Meetings 5 – 9:** Coordination with City Staff:

We will coordinate with City staff on proposed changes to the draft sections and schedule a meeting to review the draft ordinances. This will involve five (5) separate staff meetings, each focusing on a different draft ordinance:

1. Historic Preservation Ordinance
2. Subdivision Ordinance
3. Shoreland and Watercourse Ordinance and Floodplain Regulations
4. Zoning Ordinance
5. Forms, Exhibits, and Processes

The purpose of this order is to ensure the ordinances work together, culminating in the Zoning Ordinance.

d. **Stakeholder Focus Group**

Consultant will facilitate a zoning stakeholder focus group meeting to discuss zoning issues from the developer, realtor, and general public. Data collected will be reviewed with City staff and incorporated into the zoning rewrite as appropriate.

e. **Historic Landmarks & Preservation Commission Meeting #1:**

Historic Preservation Ordinance Review:

We will present the draft historic preservation ordinance to the Historic Landmarks & Preservation Commission for final feedback prior to the public hearing.

f. **Plan Commission Meeting #2:** Comprehensive Ordinance Review:

The draft zoning, subdivision, historic preservation, shoreland and watercourse ordinances and floodplain regulations will be presented to the Plan Commission for final feedback before proceeding to the Common Council and ultimately the public hearing.



g. **Common Council Meeting #2:** Common Council Review:

The final draft ordinances will be presented to the Common Council for review of the process and the changes incorporated into the ordinances. Once approved, the Common Council will authorize a public hearing, which can be held either at the Planning Commission or Common Council meeting.

h. **Public Hearing:**

During the public hearing, Vierbicher staff will present the changes to the public. Once the ordinances are approved, Vierbicher will finalize them.

C. **Deliverables**

The final adopted ordinances will be provided to the City in Microsoft Word and Adobe PDF formats, both featuring bookmarks and searchable capabilities. Vierbicher will collaborate with Municode to ensure the ordinances are delivered in a compatible format, incorporating imagery, sketches, and graphics for proper display on the hosting platform.

1. Zoning Forms
2. Zoning Exhibits (zoning process and review flowchart)
3. Zoning Processes (application, review requirements, timing, review, communication, appeals)

II. **INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OTHERS**

To complete our scope of services, the following information shall be provided by others:

- A. City staff will provide a list and copies of all ordinance amendments adopted since the most recent zoning amendment in 2008.
- B. City staff will provide a list and details on identified non-conforming properties within the City.
- C. City staff will provide a list of approved conditional use permits as well as conditional use applications from the past 12 months.
- D. City Staff will identify vacant areas and sites with development potential.
- E. City Staff will provide electronic copies of current zoning forms, zoning approval process documents, and zoning notices.





# Time Schedule

The following Schedule section provides the proposed scheduled and high-level tasks that Vierbicher has identified to complete the zoning code rewrite requested by the City of Columbus. This schedule / workplan is based on a project time from March of 2025 through January of 2026. Vierbicher will work cooperatively with the City of Columbus to finalize the project schedule / workplan as the Statement of Work and contracts are completed. Adjustments to the schedule / workplan are anticipated over the course of the project and will be mutually agreed upon as needed.

## CITY OF COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA & DODGE COUNTY, WI

### ZONING CODE REWRITE

Anticipated Summary of Activities and Timetable

(Subject to Revisions)

Action	Responsible Party	Date Range
<b>Common Council Meeting #1:</b> Selection of Consultant. Authorization to proceed with Zoning Code update.	City Common Council	April 8, 2025
<b>Vierbicher Internal Kick-Off Meeting</b> Assessment Phase Begins: Data Collection and Consolidation	Vierbicher	April 10, 2025
Draft Public Participation Plan Sent to City Staff	Vierbicher / City Staff	April 10, 2025
Staff/Vierbicher communication	City Staff/ Vierbicher	Throughout Process
<b>City Staff Meeting #1: Project Kick-off</b> REVIEW: Project Goals & Objectives, Challenges & Concerns with current code, current forms & processes, and project timeline & schedule.  REVIEW: Zoning, Subdivision, Historic Preservation District, Shoreland, and Floodplain code. Review current official zoning map.  PERFORM Zoning SWOT Analysis w/ Plan Commission  DISCUSS: Vierbicher Engagement Platform & Community Survey goals /objectives  RECOMMEND: Public Participation Plan forward to City Council	City Staff/ Vierbicher	April 15, 2025
Vierbicher to review zoning ordinance amendments, non-conforming properties, approved conditional uses, and vacant / underutilized sites  REVIEW & APPROVE: Zoning Survey	City Staff/ Vierbicher	April 16 – May 1, 2025



<p><b>Common Council Meeting #1: Approval of Public Participation Plan via Resolution.</b> REVIEW &amp; APPROVE: Zoning Survey</p>	City Common Council / Vierbicher	May 6, 2025
Launch Community Public Survey – Open for ~seven (7) weeks	Vierbicher	May 7 – June 27, 2025
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #2: Work session</b> REVIEW: Two Zoning ordinance examples</p> <p>DISCUSS: Elements to be included in new code.</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	May 13, 2025
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #3: Work session</b> CONDUCT: Historic Preservation District and areas of concern identified by City Staff</p> <p>REVIEW: Infrastructure design standards, and development barriers.</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	May 27, 2025
Prepare Zoning Assessment & Recommendations Reports	Vierbicher	June 2025
<p><b>Stakeholder Focus Group #1: Work session</b> DISCUSS: Zoning Perceptions and Issues</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	TBD June
Compile Zoning Survey Response Data	Vierbicher	July 11, 2025
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #4: Work session</b> REVIEW: Zoning Assessment &amp; Recommendations Report</p> <p>RECOMMEND: Approval of Report to Plan Commission and City Council</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	July 22, 2025
Prepare Draft #1 the Zone Ordinance and generate updated maps.	Vierbicher	August 1 – November 21, 2025
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #5: Work session</b> REVIEW: Historic Preservation Ordinance</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	December 9, 2025
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #6: Work session</b> REVIEW: Subdivision Ordinance</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	Jan 13, 2026
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #7: Work session</b> REVIEW: Shoreland, Watercourse and Floodplain Regulations</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	February 10, 2026
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #8: Work session</b> REVIEW: Zoning Ordinance</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	March 10, 2026
<p><b>City Staff Meeting #9: Work session</b> REVIEW: Zoning Forms, Exhibits and Processes</p>	City Staff/ Vierbicher	April 14, 2026
<p><b>Historic Landmarks &amp; Preservation Commission Meeting #1: Working session</b> REVIEW: Historic Preservation Ordinance</p> <p>DISCUSS: Potential Revisions</p>	Landmarks & Preservation Commission / Vierbicher	May 12, 2026



<p><b>Plan Commission Meeting #2: Working session</b> REVIEW: Zoning, Subdivision, Historic Preservation, Shoreland, Watercourse, and Floodplain</p> <p>DISCUSS: Potential Revisions and submission to Common Council</p>	Plan Commission / Vierbicher	June 9, 2026
Prepare Final Zoning Ordinance	Vierbicher	June 26, 2026
Final Draft of Zoning Ordinance sent to City for Common Council Packets	Vierbicher	June 29, 2026
Public notice sent to eligible newspaper	City Clerk	July 1 or July 2, 2026
Public notice published in eligible newspaper (required 30 days before hearing) – and Draft Comprehensive Plan available for viewing on website and at City Hall.	Newspaper	(thirty days before August 4, 2026)
<p><b>Common Council Meeting #2: Public Hearing Adoption of Updated Zoning Code</b> CONDUCT: Public Hearing on City of Columbus Zoning Ordinance</p> <p>ADOPT: City of Columbus Zoning by Ordinance</p>	City Common Council / Vierbicher	August 4, 2026

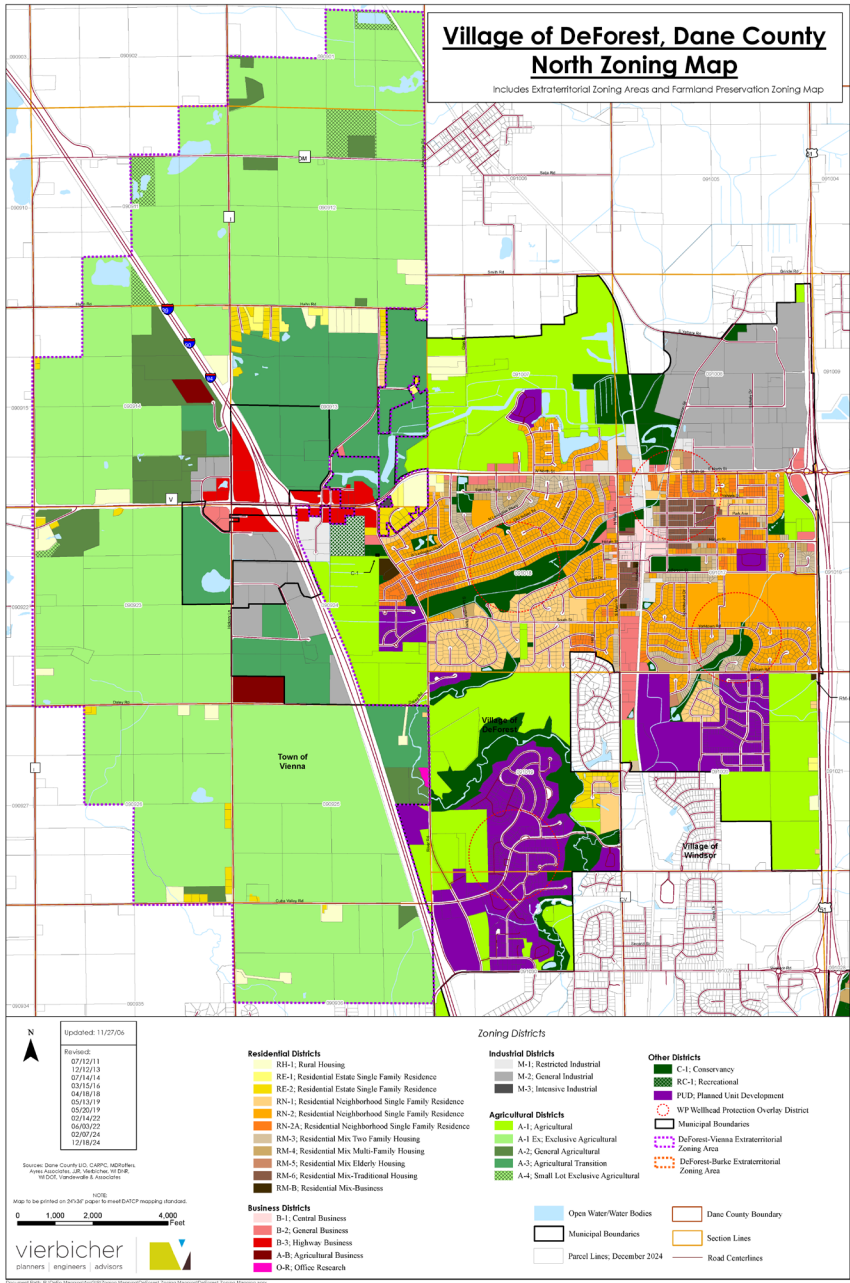
**City Council** meets 1st Tuesday of the month @ 6:00 PM in City Hall.

**Plan Commission** meets 2nd Thursday of the month @ 4:00 PM in City Hall.



# Examples

Vierbicher understands the importance of clear, concise, and user-friendly zoning ordinances. We also recognize the value of incorporating visual aids to enhance comprehension and accessibility for all stakeholders. The following examples demonstrate our commitment to these principles, showcasing projects where we have successfully integrated graphics and imagery into zoning ordinances for communities similar to the City of Columbus. These examples illustrate our ability to not only modernize and streamline zoning regulations but also to present them in an engaging and informative manner.





# City of Richland Center Zoning



**CLIENT**  
City of Richland Center

**LOCATION**  
Richland Center, WI

- PROJECT SERVICES**
- Zoning Administration
  - Zoning Ordinance Rewrite
  - Annexation

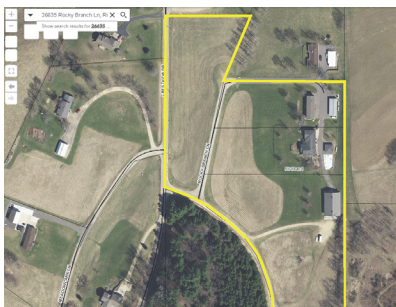
Situated along US Highway 14, in the driftless region of Wisconsin and along the Pine River, the City of Richland Center is the cultural, governmental and economic hub of Richland County.

Due to housing and commercial development pressures, a zoning ordinance amendment was needed in order to clearly depict the development process for residential and commercial projects and to be more user-friendly for the applicant as well as the appointed and elected officials. A number of changes in Wisconsin State Statutes, particularly conditional use permitting, also created a need to update the zoning ordinance to be compliant with state law.

Vierbicher was contracted to manage zoning administration for the community and update the zoning ordinance to ensure consistency in review language and permit processes. As part of this update, the conditional use permit code was revised to include a completeness review, clear review criteria, and a defined amendment process.

To enhance clarity and usability, allowable uses within each zoning district were consolidated into a use table, providing a streamlined reference. Additionally, the definitions section was updated to align terminology across all relevant sections of the ordinance.

The updated zoning ordinance establishes a clear and consistent process for reviewing and amending large-scale development plans. These improvements provide greater transparency for review staff, governing bodies, and applicants, ensuring a shared understanding of expectations, procedures, and outcomes.





# City of Mauston Zoning



## CLIENT

City of Mauston

## LOCATION

Mauston, WI

## PROJECT SERVICES

- Zoning Ordinance Rewrite
- Economic Development Planning
- Housing Study

The City of Mauston, the county seat of Juneau County, is located along Interstate Highway 90/94. Mauston is the gateway to the driftless region of Wisconsin and sits along the Lemonweir River.

Due to development pressures, and too many zoning districts a zoning ordinance amendment was needed in order to clearly depict the development process for residential and commercial projects and to be more user-friendly for the applicant and the decision-makers. A number of changes in Wisconsin State Statutes, particularly conditional use permitting, created a need to update the zoning ordinance to be consistent with state law.

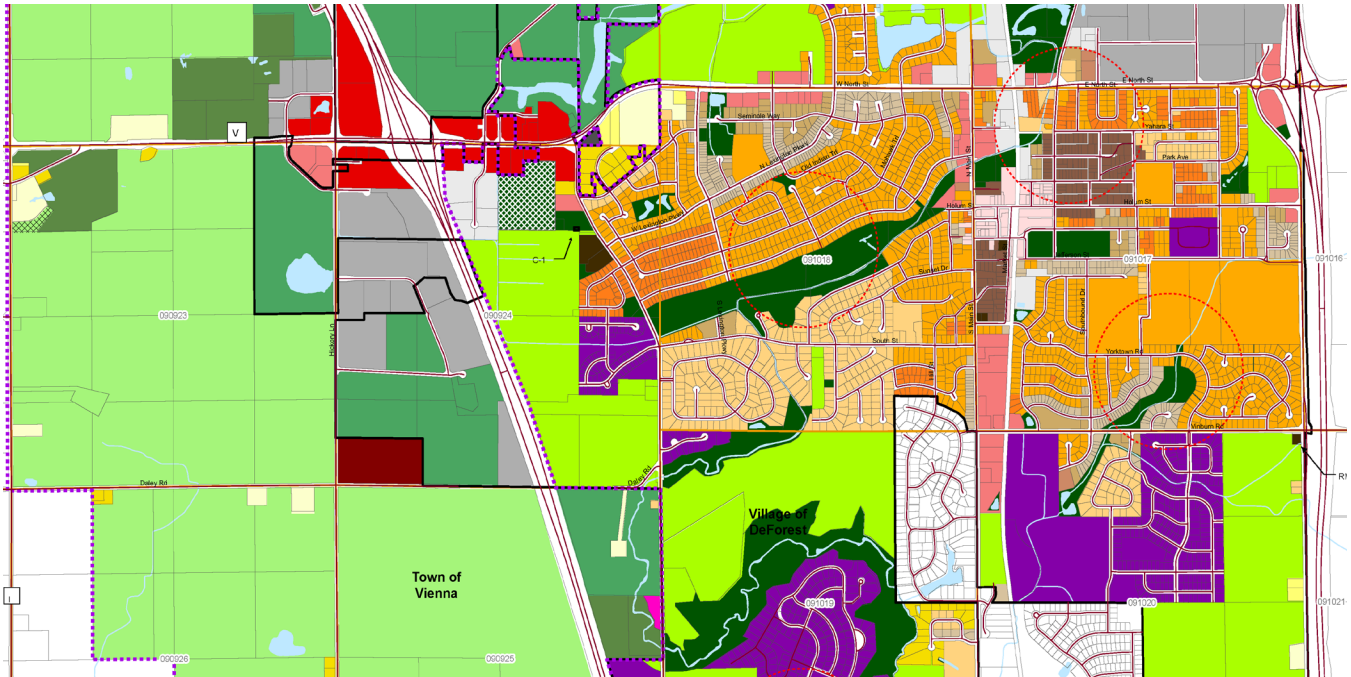
Vierbicher was contracted to update the zoning ordinance to ensure consistency with the language and permitting process. As part of this update, the conditional use permit code included clear review criteria, and a defined amendment process.

To enhance clarity and usability, allowable uses within each zoning district were consolidated into a use table, providing a streamlined reference. Additionally, the definitions section was updated to align terminology across all relevant sections of the ordinance.

The updated zoning ordinance establishes a clear and consistent process for reviewing and amending development plans. These improvements provide greater transparency for staff review, governing bodies, and applicants, ensuring a shared understanding of expectations, procedures, and outcomes.



# Village of DeForest Zoning



## CLIENT

Village of DeForest

## LOCATION

DeForest, WI

## PROJECT SERVICES

- Zoning Ordinance Rewrite

Vierbicher has maintained a long-standing partnership with the Village of DeForest, Wisconsin, providing comprehensive consulting services for decades. This enduring relationship has allowed us to develop a deep understanding of the Village's unique needs and priorities, particularly concerning its municipal code of ordinances. Our expertise has been instrumental in helping DeForest adapt and refine its local regulations to meet evolving community standards, statutory requirements, and development pressures.

Over the years, Vierbicher has collaborated with the Village of DeForest to rewrite and update numerous sections of its municipal code. These updates have encompassed a wide range of critical areas, including zoning, subdivision regulations, fire protection, stormwater management, stormwater utility establishment, shoreland zoning, conditional use permits, and floodplain management. Beyond these comprehensive rewrites, Vierbicher provides ongoing support to the Village, offering regular feedback and modifications to their Zoning and Subdivision codes based on changes in state statutes and practical experience gained during project implementation. This continuous improvement process ensures that DeForest's ordinances remain current, effective, and aligned with best practices. Furthermore, Vierbicher plays a crucial role in the administration and enforcement of these codes, conducting thorough reviews of 15-20 development and land division projects annually. This ongoing involvement provides valuable consistency and ensures that all projects adhere to the Village's established regulations.



# Client References

## **City of Richland Center**

Ashley Oliphant, City Administrator  
City of Richland Center Municipal Building  
450 South Main Street  
Richland Center, WI 53581  
(608) 647-6428  
[ashley.oliphant@richlandcenterwi.gov](mailto:ashley.oliphant@richlandcenterwi.gov)

## **City of Mauston**

Daron Haugh, City Administrator  
City of Mauston  
303 Mansion Street  
Mauston, WI 53948  
(608) 747-2704  
[dhaugh@mauston.com](mailto:dhaugh@mauston.com)

## **Village of DeForest**

Brandi Cooper, Zoning Administrator  
Village of DeForest  
120 South Stevenson Street  
DeForest, WI 53532  
(608) 846-6751  
[cooperb@deforestwi.gov](mailto:cooperb@deforestwi.gov)





# Project Manager Qualifications

The Vierbicher team is proud to offer the services of Mark Steward, AICP, as Project Manager for the City of Columbus zoning ordinance rewrite project. Mark has over 20 years of experience in planning and zoning, and he is a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners. Mark has worked on a variety of projects similar in scope to the City of Columbus's needs, including several zoning ordinance rewrites and updates.

Mark's responsibilities as Project Manager will include:

- Leading the project team and ensuring that all project objectives are met on time and within budget.
- Working with City staff to develop the new zoning ordinance.
- Conducting public outreach to gather community input on the project.
- Drafting the new zoning ordinance and ensuring that it is consistent with state law and the City's comprehensive plan.
- Presenting the new zoning ordinance to the Plan Commission and City Council for adoption.

Mark is committed to providing the City of Columbus with a high-quality zoning ordinance that meets the needs of the community. He is confident that his experience and expertise will be a valuable asset to the project. Mark's full resume experience follows on the next page.



SENIOR COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
CONSULTANT

# Mark Steward, AICP



## BACKGROUND & ROLE

With over 20 years of experience in Planning & Zoning and as a Municipal Administrator, Mark has developed a wide range of skills in both the public and private sectors. Mark's expertise is in economic development, grant writing, administration, writing and interpreting ordinances, codes and laws, polices, and administering and enforcing zoning. He is also a master with budgeting financials and project management.

## RECENT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

### Planning & Zoning

- Sauk County Comprehensive Plan
- Highway 12 Corridor Study, Sauk Co.
- Elroy Downtown Revitalization Plan
- Elroy Zoning Ordinance Update
- Sauk County Zoning Ordinance Update
- Rusk County Zoning Ordinance Rewrite
- City of Richland Center Zoning Administration
- City of Richland Center Ordinance Rewrite
- City of Mauston Ordinance Rewrite

### Community Development

- Development Agreements
- Memorandums of Understanding
- Business Recruitment & Retention
- Blight Remediation

### Public Funding Services

- Capital Improvements Planning
- Funding Research & Analysis
- Grant & Loan Applications
- Grant & Loan Administration
- Tax Incremental Financing
- Low to Moderate Income Surveys
- FEMA Firefighter Grants

### Floodplain Management & Floodplain Mitigation

- CDBG-EAP Grant Application & Administration, Elroy
- WDNR Municipal Flood Control Grant, Elroy
- Powerhouse Flood Mitigation Project, Elroy
- FEMA Flood Buyout Application & Administration
- Sauk County Floodplain Ordinance
- Rusk County Floodplain Ordinance
- Elroy Floodplain Ordinance
- Viola Economic Recovery Plan
- La Farge Economic Recovery Plan

### Flood Recovery & Mitigation Experience

- Village of Rock Springs Municipal Buildings
- Village of Viola Resettlement Project
- Village of Rock Springs Resettlement Project
- Village of La Farge Substation Relocation Project

## EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science Degree  
(1994)  
University of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis, MN

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Vierbicher  
Senior Community  
Development Consultant (2020)

Kalahari Development  
Facilities Director (2017-2020)

City of Elroy  
City Administrator (2011-2017)

Sauk County  
Planning and Zoning Director  
(2007-2011)

Rusk County  
Zoning Administrator (2003-  
2007)

Ayres Associates  
Project Manager (1999-2003)

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Institute of Certified  
Planners (AICP)

American Planning Association  
- Wisconsin Chapter

Wisconsin City/County  
Management Association



# Budget Proposal

## FEES

The total Planning Services proposed cost for the City of Columbus is \$72,500. The following section contains a breakdown of the proposed pricing.

The fixed fee to provide the scope of services described herein is:

Engagement		
Meetings		\$12,500
Community Survey		\$5,500
Public Engagement Events		\$7,500
Assessment		
Review & Analysis		\$8,500
Strategy		
Zoning Assessment & Recommendations Report		\$8,500
Implementation		
Zoning Ordinance		\$15,000
Subdivision Ordinance		\$10,000
Forms, Exhibits & Processes		\$5,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$72,500</b>

## REIMBURSABLES

Most reimbursable items, such as mileage, copies, survey equipment, are included in the fees above. Anything that might become a reimbursable cost will be discussed in advance and billed at the actual cost.



# Fee Schedule



<b>Classification</b>	<b>Labor Rate</b>
Planning & Community Development Manager	\$190.00/hr
Engineering Manger / Floodplain & Watercourse Specialist	\$190.00/hr
Senior Community Development Specialist/Project Manager	\$175.00/hr
Community Development Specialist	\$165.00/hr
Administrative Staff	\$130.00/hr