

## Request for Proposals Comprehensive Plan Update 2025

### 1. Introduction

The City of Whitewater (City) is seeking proposals from qualified, professional planning consultants with the capacity and expertise to assist the City in developing an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The current plan can be found on our [website](#). It was developed in 2010 and updated in 2017.

The Comprehensive Plan Update is intended to make the plan a strategic plan of work from both a contextual and an implementation standpoint. The update should reflect the community's desires, as well as provide action items city staff will be able to implement. An Implementation Plan should be tied to a timetable so staff may plan a course of action for implementation.

### 2. Background

The City of Whitewater is a historic, independent community of 15,627 residents in south central Wisconsin. The City is the proud home of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. Owing in part to the University's presence, Whitewater is characterized by a unique and vibrant culture, offering many of the amenities typical of a larger community. Whitewater is ideally located among Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago; at the doorstep of the Kettle Moraine; and among rich agricultural lands, all of which contribute to the City's success.

The City is experiencing ongoing growth and change. This presents both opportunities and challenges, as the City strives to maintain the quality and character of its residential neighborhoods, direct new development to appropriate locations, and contribute to a high quality of life and business activity.

### 3. Project Goal

The City is seeking an update to the Comprehensive Plan, with the goal of providing the Common Council, Boards and Commissions, staff, residents, businesses, and the overall development community with a comprehensive, implementable, and coordinated tool to guide the City's decision-making, services and development. The plan will also help maintain collaborative relationships within the community, surrounding towns, and other governmental entities.

The desired comprehensive plan document format and corresponding maps, images, and graphs, should be a user- and web-friendly document including a section for the overall city, selected specific areas, and selected corridors. The document must be supplemented by supporting documents containing the technical and specific background data used to support the goals and objectives.

#### 4. Project Scope

The City of Whitewater is seeking a consultant to update our Comprehensive Plan, including the corresponding maps, images, and graphs. A detailed schedule for the project shall be included in the consultant's proposal.

- a. The Comprehensive Plan must meet Wisconsin Statutes Section 66.1001 and all other relevant statutes. The law requires the following elements and describes their content: (1) Issues and Opportunities; (2) Housing; (3) Transportation; (4) Utilities and Community Facilities; (5) Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources; (6) Economic Development; (7) Intergovernmental Cooperation; (8) Land-Use; and (9) Implementation. The City is seeking an update to each section.
- b. The City is expecting robust public engagement to take place during this project. The project should include a plan for public participation that is, at minimum, in accordance with all relevant statutes. The public participation plans submitted will be a consideration when reviewing proposals. The selected Consultant shall be responsible gathering input from the following:
  - General Public;
  - City Boards, Commissions, and Committees;
  - City Departments;
  - Community non-profits such as the Chamber of Commerce;
  - Local Businesses;
  - School District;
  - University of Wisconsin Whitewater;
  - Gateway Technical College and Madison Area Technical College;
  - Historically underserved communities in the City;
  - Other key stakeholders.
- c. The plan and process shall also provide the necessary information, maps, and documentation to meet the Housing Affordability Report requirements of Section 66.10013 Wis. Stats.

- d. The City will rely on the experience and expertise of the consultant in creating a plan that not only conforms to all relevant state statutes, but also considers the unique needs of the City of Whitewater. It is expected that the consultant will, while observing Whitewater's unique needs and concerns, offer additional advice and expertise regarding programs, planning initiatives, and the like, that will help the City improve its quality of life. The City expects to retain a consultant with a proven track record in comprehensive planning who can provide new ideas that supplement the experience and expertise of the City's staff.

## 5. Project Deliverables

The selected Consultant shall complete a final Comprehensive Plan document that contains all legally required components, relevant graphics and maps, supporting metrics/data points, recommended goals and policy considerations, and an associated executive summary. A final presentation of the plan will be required once the document is complete. The Consultant should also budget for an appropriate number of meetings with the City elected officials, boards, committees, and staff to build the plan.

The final plan put forth for acceptance shall be completed in such a way that it can be fully integrated with other plans and initiatives adopted by the City. The selected Consultant shall provide the City with an electronic copy of the final plan in its original and portable document format (PDF) format, including all maps, graphics, data, tables, Excel files and GIS files used to create the plan. Draft deliverables may be provided in PDF format.

The selected Consultant shall complete, on behalf of the City, all necessary state submittals, and shall prepare all necessary documents in order to meet all applicable regulations.

In addition to the plan, the following deliverables will also be required:

- Regular progress reports.
- Drafts of the Comprehensive Plan to be provided at key phases in project as outlined in final scope of services.
- All materials prepared for and related to public presentations/engagements.
- Digital, web, and social media-compatible updates and drafts for posting. The city may create a Comprehensive Plan Update project page on its website to provide information related to the project.

- Results of the public engagement activities, including but not limited to online survey results, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and other public engagement meetings in searchable format such as PDF.
- Official Maps.
- Any other documentation incidentally produced to compile the Plan.
- Implementation Plan and Timetables.
- Executive summary of final plan for ease of reference.
- Supporting documents containing the technical and specific background data used.

## 6. Proposal Requirements

### a. Cover Letter

Summarize your understanding of the project's objectives, challenges, and how your team will address them, demonstrating expertise in relevant areas. Show a clear understanding of the goals and challenges and detail how the work will be executed efficiently and effectively.

### b. Company Information

- Provide an overview of the firm's background including details about the company's history, experience, and credentials.
- Identify all staff assigned to this project and the role they will serve. Specific background information on key individuals should be summarized, most notably the project manager. The background information should emphasize their experience relative to the project requirements. Provide evidence the firm has the capacity for the project and is familiar with the City of Whitewater and its geographical area. A statement concerning the recent related experience of key staff from your team who will be actively engaged in the proposed effort should also be included. Resumes and detailed profiles are not required.
- Please list any Wisconsin projects done within the past five years. Provide appropriate reference(s), name(s), email address, and telephone number(s).

### c. Project Approach:

This section shall communicate the consultant's understanding of the project's scope of work through a description of the approach and tasks to be performed to accomplish the project's purpose and provide the required deliverables. It should also demonstrate a technical understanding of the project through a defined approach to the Comprehensive Plan Update goals and desired outcomes. Where it provides convenience and cost-savings without sacrificing quality, the city is open to a

combination of in-person and virtual formats for all meetings necessary during the planning process.

The following should be explicitly included in the proposal's methodology:

- Step-by-step explanation of the methodology and its relation to the scope of work;
- Estimated time frames/completion dates associated with each delineated task;
- Specific milestones for submitting any required deliverables;
- Any details related to the administration/management of the project such as:
  - The cadence of project meetings;
  - The role of client committees;
  - Methods or procedures for reporting progress;
  - Details on how deliverables will be submitted;
  - Communication strategies for public engagement.

**d. Project Timeline:**

It is anticipated that the Comprehensive Plan Update process will begin in November 2025. The entire process is anticipated to last approximately 12-15 months. Additional timelines related to public engagement efforts as they pertain to the submission of drafts or other deliverables will be determined during the final scoping of the project.

Firms shall provide a proposed schedule for all tasks and deliverables outlined in the sections above. The proposed schedule should be no more than two pages and should include a visual calendar of events. Proposed timelines should respect the dates and times delineated in this RFP. If the consultant believes that any delineated dates or times will adversely affect the quality of the project, please provide an alternative date, and explain why the delineated date or period would result in a lower-quality product.

**e. Project Cost**

Include a detailed budget that provides clear cost estimates and labor hour breakdown by task, as well as a lump sum, not to exceed amount. Tabulate any additional fees for extra services. Non-labor expenses should also be estimated by itemizing them. These may include mileage, printing, equipment, per diem travel, fees, and any other

applicable costs not related to the billable hourly rates of key staff. All costs shall be totaled.

## 7. Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if it meets the submittal requirements contained within this RFP. Failure to meet the requirements for the RFP may be cause for rejection of the proposal.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals that meet submittal requirements:

### Company Background

This includes: demonstrated experience and qualifications relevant to key personnel; level of experience with local government entities of similar size, structure and complexity; and knowledge of comprehensive planning legislation as well as other applicable aspects of Wisconsin planning law.

### Project Approach

The Consultant is encouraged to provide an innovative approach and methodology to provide the requested services based on their experience. This includes: demonstrated understanding of the deliverables; demonstrated experience and technical competence to adequately engage the public and incorporate public comment into the plan; and the ability to produce outcomes on schedule.

### Budget Value and Management

This includes the ability to stay within budget while meeting all project requirements.

## 8. Submission Guidelines

Submission Deadline: August 29, 2025.

Submission Method: Provide one electronic copy of the proposal. Hard copies are not required. Please submit all proposals, aggregated into a single PDF including the sections outlined within this RFP, to Betsy Swenson at [bswenson@whitewater-wi.gov](mailto:bswenson@whitewater-wi.gov) and include "RFP Comprehensive Plan Update: City of Whitewater" in the subject line.

Submissions should not exceed 30 pages. Submissions should be letter-sized (8.5" by 11") for printing purposes. As such, please utilize a white background to maximize the printability of proposal submissions.

## 9. Timeline

The timeline for reviewing proposals and selecting a final consultant is outlined below. This timeline may be modified by the City of Whitewater, as necessary.

EVENT	EVENT DESCRIPTION	DATE(S)
RFP Released	The proposal submission window opens.	08/01/2025
Deadline to Submit Questions	All requests for clarification or additional information shall be emailed to: <a href="mailto:bswenson@whitewater-wi.gov">bswenson@whitewater-wi.gov</a> by this date.	08/08/2025
Response to Questions Posted	All project-related questions and responses will be added to the City website on or before this date.	08/15/2025
Deadline to Submit Proposals	A proposal received after 4:30 pm CST on this date will NOT be considered.	8/29/2025
Review of Proposals	Committee reviews and scores the proposals based on the evaluation criteria.	09/02/2025 – 09/19/2025
Notification of Candidate Status	Each consultant who submitted a proposal will be notified whether they were selected as a finalist.	09/23/2025
Finalist Interviews/ Presentation	The Committee may host individual 30-minute, in-person interviews and presentations.	9/24/2025 -10/13/2025
Recommendation to the City Council	The Committee will submit a recommendation to the City Council based on the results of the process.	10/16/2025
Project Contract Finalized	The contract will be submitted for approval to the City Council.	10/30/2025
Project Period	Comprehensive Plan Update begins.	11/05/2025

## 10. Terms and Conditions

The City of Whitewater reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or parts thereof and reissue the RFP without stated cause. This RFP does not constitute a contract or offer of employment. The cost of preparation of proposals shall be the sole

obligation of the consultant. All proposals, whether accepted or rejected, shall become the property of the City, subject to open records law. Any language purporting to render the entire proposal confidential or proprietary will be ineffective and will be disregarded.

The City of Whitewater is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost, but may accept the proposal that best meets the needs of the City. Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if it meets the submittal requirements contained within this RFP. Failure to meet the requirements for the RFP may be cause for rejection of the proposal.

Upon selection of a consultant, the City shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement. If the City, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with the selected consultant, the City then reserves the right to reject the selected consultant and negotiate with others.

Elements or tasks may be added or deleted at the discretion of the City pending negotiation of the scope of work and compensation. All completed work, including surveys, workshop documents, schematic designs, ancillary reports, and the final master plan in all relevant formats become the property of the City of Whitewater at the end of the project

The City reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted, and to use any idea in a proposal, regardless of whether the proposal was selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in the RFP, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the City and the Consultant. All property rights, including publication rights of all reports produced by the selected firm in connection with services performed under this agreement shall be vested in the City.