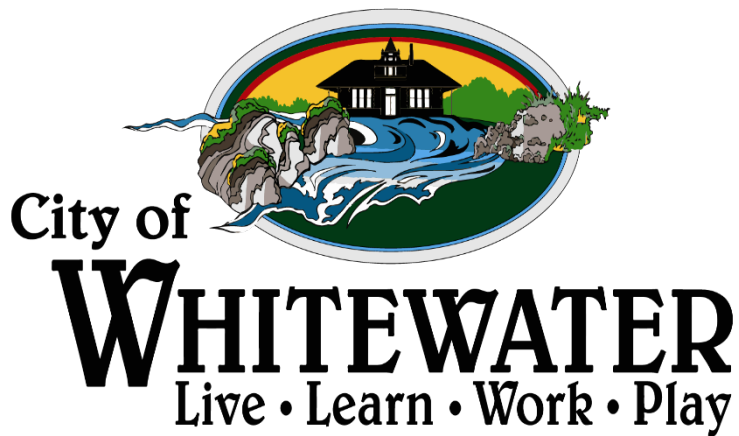




Zoning Code Rewrite

Request for Proposals

Posting Date: June 1, 2026
Submission Deadline: July 31, 2026, 3:30 pm
Central Time
Community Development Department
Attn: Llana Dostie
Zoning Specialist
PO Box 178
312 W Whitewater Street
Whitewater, WI 53190
ldostie@whitewater-wi.gov

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Purpose

The purpose of the Request for Proposals (RFP) is to receive competitive proposals from qualified consultants who are interested in completing a Zoning and Land Division rewrite. **The city expects to start the Zoning Code rewrite in first quarter of 2027.**

Background

The City of Whitewater, located in Walworth and Jefferson Counties, was incorporated in 1885. The City of Whitewater is the largest City in Walworth County, Wisconsin with a population of approximately 14,889. The City is also home to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

The City's primary zoning regulations [Title 19](#), were last updated in 2016, remains rooted in conventional zoning. Since that time development practices, planning principles, state and federal regulations, and community expectations have evolved substantially. As a result, portions of the existing ordinance no longer reflect current best practices of the City's long-term vision for growth, preservation and redevelopment.

The City's Land Division and Subdivision Code [Title 18](#) has not been substantially updated since 2002. Similar to the Zoning Code, there are sections that are outdated and in need of comprehensive revision.

The City of Whitewater is in the process of rewriting its Comprehensive Plan Whitewater Forward 2045, and completion is anticipated in October of 2026.

The main intention of the project is to establish a zoning code that is easy to read, understandable to by the public, and enforceable by the City while also being modern and forward looking.



RFP Schedule (subject to change):

1. RFP Issued:

a. June 1, 2026

2. Written Questions due to the City sent via email to ldostie@whitewater-wi.gov :

a. by July 17, 2026

b. Written responses will be posted as an addendum no later than July 24, 2026

3. Proposals due to the City:

a. July 31, 2026, by 3:30 pm Central Time

4. Possible interviews with finalists:

a. August 10-August 14 2026.

6. Plan Commission Recommendation to Common Council

a. September 14, 2026

7. Common Council Approval

a. October 6, 2026

Objectives

1. **Expand Housing Choice and Diversity:** Create zoning standards that allow and encourage a broad range of housing types, sizes, and tenures to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population. This includes, but is not limited to, single-family homes, duplexes and small multiplexes, townhomes, cottage housing, mixed-use residential, and housing options appropriate for seniors, workforce households, ADUs, Multifamily and multigenerational living. The code should support housing affordability through flexibility in design, density, and dimensional standards where appropriate.
2. **Integrate and Simplify the Zoning Framework:** Reduce complexity by minimizing reliance on Planned Development Districts and Conditional Use Permits and creating adaptable base zoning districts that accommodate a wider range of development scenarios that take into account smaller lot sizes, lot widths and reduce setbacks.
3. **Improve Clarity, Usability, and Ease of Implementation:** Draft the zoning code to be clear, concise, and easy to administer for staff and decision-makers, and understandable to applicants and the public. Standards should be objective where possible, approval processes streamlined, and discretionary reviews clearly defined. The code should reduce ambiguity and improve consistency in interpretation and enforcement.

4. **Facilitate Predictable and High-Quality Development Outcomes:** Establish standards that promote high-quality site and building design, compatible transitions between land uses, and positive relationships between private development and the public realm. The code should provide predictability for applicants while ensuring development contributes positively to community character and livability.
5. **Ensure Legal Soundness and Consistency:** Update the zoning and sign regulations in a manner consistent with current state and federal legal requirements and best practices, including sign code standards that are content-neutral and legally defensible. The revised code should be internally consistent and aligned with the City's Comprehensive Plan and other adopted policies. The City expects that the selected consultant will make zoning recommendations that are consistent with all applicable state and federal regulations. The City Attorney will be involved in codifying the final product. However, the consultant should not have the expectation that the City Attorney will be actively involved as the revised zoning regulations are drafted.
6. **Coordination with the Comprehensive Plan (Update to be completed October 2026):** Ensure close coordination between the zoning code rewrite and the Comprehensive Plan update, so that land use policies, future growth areas, and implementation strategies are clearly reflected in the zoning framework. Opportunities for efficiency and consistency between the two efforts should be maximized.



Plan Consistency

The following plans and studies should be consulted with:

Whitewater Forward 2045

City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2026-2031

Scope of Work

1. Conduct comprehensive review of Whitewater's existing Ordinances connected to Zoning, and related zoning policy.
 - Title 12-Streets and Sidewalks and Public Grounds needs to be reviewed to maintain consistency in the ordinances
 - Title 14-Buildings and Construction needs to be reviewed to maintain consistency within the ordinances
 - Title 20 Property Maintenance needs to be reviewed to maintain consistency within the ordinances
 - Title 8 Health and Sanitation
 - [Landscape Policy from 2010](#)
2. The consultant will work with City Staff in identifying key challenges and inconsistencies within the existing codes, including areas where regulations are outdated, could be consolidated, overly complex and do not align with the City's current development needs.
3. Evaluate conditional uses and advise as to what conditions, if any should apply to warrant designation as a conditional use vs permitted use.
4. Guidance regarding Best Practices. The consultant will be expected to provide guidance regarding modern best practices regarding zoning and subdivision codes relevant to communities like Whitewater, as allowed under Wisconsin laws and regulations. This should include the use of visual tools to explain proposed ordinance regulations and the benefits to achieving City land use goals for public and Plan Commission meetings.
5. In collaboration with City staff, develop a stakeholder engagement plan that outlines strategies for involving key community members, City staff, elected officials, and other stakeholders in the process. Proposals shall specify the engagement tools and meetings that the consultant proposes as part of the cost estimate:
 - Design the engagement approach to build upon and complement the extensive public outreach conducted as part of the recent Comprehensive Plan update, with a level of effort that is proportional and cost-effective.
 - Budget for and attend an appropriate number of Plan Commission meetings to review key elements of the revised zoning code; City staff will lead meetings with additional boards, commissions, or committees, with consultant participation as appropriate.
 - Prepare clear, accessible public education and outreach materials explaining proposed zoning changes in plain language, including maps, graphics, and other visual aids.
 - Clearly describe proposed engagement activities, tools, and meetings in the consultant's cost estimate.
6. Prepare a draft of the revised zoning ordinance, including all necessary sections,

tables, graphics, and regulatory language:

- Present the draft zoning ordinance to City staff, elected officials, and other stakeholders

7. Adoption Support:

- Provide support to the City through the formal adoption process, including preparing necessary reports and presenting revised zoning ordinances to the Plan Commission and Common Council.
- Assist with public hearings and other adoption-related activities, addressing any questions or concerns raised by the public or decision-makers.
- Provide the City with final, adoption-ready versions of the zoning ordinance, Sign Code, and related materials in both digital and publication-ready formats.

Deliverables

The selected consultant shall complete a final zoning code and zoning map with supporting documentation. Format the documents to be incorporated within the Whitewater Municipal Code of Ordinances maintained by Municode. The final zoning code shall include easy to use charts, tables, checklists, graphics, images and figures. The consultant shall provide the City with electronic copies of all files in their editable formats compatible with Microsoft Office, AdobeInDesign, ESRI and our existing public and internal GIS maps.

Expected documents include:

- Project Workplan
- Zoning Code Analysis Summary Report and Map(s)
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Draft Zoning Ordinance and Map
- Final Zoning Ordinance and Map

These are the general requirements for the creation of new zoning and subdivision codes and are not intended to be an all-inclusive list of every task necessary to complete the project. It is expected that consultants will submit proposals that provide the City with more specific recommendations for approaches, tasks, and deliverables based on their expertise from past work on similar projects. Innovative approaches that meet the intent of the Plan Objectives and Scope of Work are welcomed; these could be presented as additional services or additional approaches in the consultant response if desired.



Evaluation and Selection

1. Transmittal Letter

The submission must include a transmittal letter on official letterhead that provides contact information for the person with authority to negotiate on behalf of the consultant. The letter must also include an affirmative statement that the consultant agrees with the minimum business terms in the RFP.

The consultant must certify that the RFP response and exhibits are true and correct. Unsigned and/or undated submissions will not be accepted.

2. Proposal Content and Sequence of Information

The response to the proposal shall include the following information in the order shown in the following section. The consultant should be sure to include all information that will enable the evaluation committee and the City to make a decision. Failure of the consultant to provide specific, detailed information may result in its proposal being rejected in favor of a sufficiently detailed proposal. Any necessary exhibits or other information, including information not specifically requested by this RFP but that would be helpful, should be attached at the end of the proposal.

3. Qualifications and Experience

Provide a statement of qualifications for your organization, the size of your firm, a description of the services provided by your organization, and a statement of the extent of experience/history of providing the services requested by this RFP.

List the personnel to be involved in the study, their roles and responsibilities, and list the professional qualifications for everyone that would be assigned to provide services requested by this RFP. Professional qualifications include date and educational institutions of any applicable degrees, additional applicable training, and any professional certifications and/or licensing. In lieu of listing this information, you may submit a resume or curriculum vitae for each such individual if the resume/CV includes all the requested information.

List the roles of each employee that will be assigned to this project over the anticipated project duration and a breakdown of each employee's expected time commitment to the project, as a proportion of total work time. Availability may be listed as a percentage of a full-time employee (FTE).

Identify the three most recent examples of comparable zoning code rewrites accomplished with name and contact information for references.

Identify sub-consultants to be utilized and the role to be played by the sub-consultant(s). Provide information on the two most recent similar projects for the respective work of the sub-consultant(s).

4. Proposed Approach

This section describes your proposed approach for meeting the services required by the City as explained above. Relevant considerations include the quality and feasibility of your approach to meeting these needs, the way in which you plan to provide adequate staffing, the equipment or other resources provided by you (if applicable). List any needs for physical space and/or equipment at the City, if any.

Identify how you will meet all other aspects of the scope of work and related requirements stated above. List any items you cannot provide. If there are any components or details of the proposed project that are identified in this RFP that the consultant believes should be modified based on best practices or prior experience, the alternatives should be explained in the proposal:

- Methodology addressing the scope of work, including how you will analyze existing information, perform the required analysis, and methods to evaluate land use options.

Proposed Project Schedule and Cost

Include the expected timeline of the project and cost to fulfill the requirements of the RFP for the zoning code rewrite.

- Proposed project scheduled
- Cost for the requested services.
- Itemized budget and a detailed explanation for all costs associated with providing the requested services.
- Estimated labor hours by task that clearly identifies the project team members, their hourly rate and the number of hours expected to complete each task.
- The expected payment schedule and project milestones with which payments will be due. Payments shall be tied to identified performances criteria and not specific dates.
- Is travel time for meetings expected to be billable? If so, how will travel time invoices be calculated? Travel costs should be included within the City's allocated budget for the project.
- Include similar information for any subcontractors.

Claims, Licensure and Non-Discrimination Violations Against Your Organization

List any current licensure or non-discrimination claims against you/your organization and those having occurred in the past five years, especially any resulting in claims or legal judgements against you/your organization.

Questions and Addenda

All Questions regarding this Request for Proposal must be submitted in writing.

Questions shall be submitted via mail to:

Llana Dostie, Zoning Specialist, ldostie@whitewater-wi.gov

Questions must be received no later than July 17, 2026.

Response to questions regarding clarification will be issued in the form of written addenda distributed to all known recipients of the RFP.

All Addenda issued shall become part of this Request for Proposals.

Proposal 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-30 Points
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 -50 Points
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 -20 Points
This includes the ability to stay within budget while meeting all project requirements.

Contract Terms and Conditions

The selected consultant will enter into a professional services agreement with the City of Whitewater defining scope, compensation, schedule and responsibilities.

City Rights and Reservations

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive informalities, request additional information, and negotiate scope and fees.

The City reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time without prior notice and makes no representation that any agreement will be awarded to any respondent. Additionally, the City expressly reserves the right to postpone opening responses to this solicitation for its own convenience.

All cost associated with preparation and submission of proposals in response to this Request for Proposals shall be the sole responsibility of the proposer. The City of Whitewater shall not be liable for any costs incurred by proposers in the preparation of proposals or participation in selection process.

The City reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from any proposer regarding the contents of their proposal. Such requests may include written clarifications, additional documents, or participation in interviews or presentations.

The City reserves the right to determine whether the proposals are responsive to the requirements of this Request for Proposals. Proposals that are incomplete fail to comply with the requirements of this Request for Proposals or contain material irregularities may be rejected at the discretion of the City.

