REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
PLANNING CONSULTANT SERVICES

ISSUED DATE: June 21, 2022

SUBMITTAL DEADLINE: Thursday, July 15, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
TEXAS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING CONSULTANT SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Texas Charter Township is requesting proposals from qualified consultants to provide professional planning services. The Township will accept proposals until 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 15, 2022.

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The Township reserves the right to reject all proposals in its sole discretion. The Township reserves the right to reject any proposal which is not submitted on the due date and/or supported by a bill of materials or services. The Township reserves the right to reject any and all proposals in whole, or in part and accept any proposal or portion of the proposal that, in their opinion, best serves the interests of the Township.

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SECTION 1: COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Texas Charter Township is located in the southwest part of Kalamazoo County just southwest of the City of Kalamazoo. The Township is approximately 36 square miles with a population estimated at 17,500 residents. The Township was incorporated in 1838 and government business is conducted by an elected seven-person Board of Trustees including a supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and four trustees that employs a Township Superintendent. Texas Township serves Kalamazoo proper as a bedroom community containing residential, agricultural and small commercial uses.

The Township Board receives recommendations in governing the Township from various Boards and Commissions, including the Downtown Development Authority, the Planning Commission, Parks and Trails Committee and Road Committee. Texas Township’s character and excellent quality of life have seen a significant growth in families and businesses with its picturesque neighborhoods, natural features, access to major transportation hubs along I-94 and its downtown Corners Business District.

The Township Board has identified several priorities for the Planning Commission and Planning Department to focus on, including:

- Development and adoption of a riparian district or overlay zone to manage residential development (preliminary work underway)
- Finalize the Corners Business District ordinance (nearing completion)
- Develop an ordinance for the newly created Rural Preservation Zoning District
- Require installation of fiber network for incoming developments
- Update subdivision and site condo ordinance to improve the development process
- Review past program and develop a streamlined process for CIP management
- Updates to the sign ordinance to ensure content neutrality
- Assess current sidewalk connectivity; develop list of missing segments

SECTION 2: GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK

The Township seeks a firm to provide planning services referenced herein after as “Township Planning Consultant.” The Township Planning Consultant shall assist the Planning Department staff in providing high caliber services through the review of site plan applications, preparation of staff reports and providing recommendations to the Township’s Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Township Board.

1. Retained General Services

- Serve as the consulting professional to the Township regarding all planning functions, supported by a full-time Zoning Administrator employed by the Township. Time commitment required from consultant will vary based on development activity within the Township and staff ability/availability to handle projects.

- Answer questions from Township staff related to planning matters, as well as represent the Township to residents and applicants in a professional and timely. Other required services include regular participation in pre-application meetings and answering prospective applicant questions.
• The Township prefers a consultant to provide in-office hours twice per month at a minimum; but is open to virtual office hours or a blend of in-office and virtual office hours. The Township is requesting prospective firm to provide an estimate on number of designated office hours needed and how those hours would be spent (either virtually or in-office). Site visits and certain inspections not able to be facilitated by Zoning Administrator or Ordinance Enforcement Officer are expected as well.

• Provide monthly Planning Report to the Township Board regarding all active projects and reviews, and prepare the Planning Commission annual reporting as well.

• Develop and maintain a clear understanding of Township ordinances and promote the adopted plans.

• Assist with the development of Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals agendas, agenda packets, public notices and other materials related to Planning and Zoning.

• Attend all Planning Commission (2 per month) and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings (1 per month, as needed) as well as other Township meetings (as needed) to provide staff reports.

2. Development Review Services

• Conduct application and plan reviews for projects submitted to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and/or Township Board for action. This includes site plans, special land uses, subdivisions, land combinations/divisions, right-of-way vacations, plats, site condominiums, P.U.D.s, re-zonings and other matters as required by the Township’s Zoning Ordinance.

• Assist Planning Department with complex zoning reviews.

3. Specialized Services

The selected consultant should have the organizational capabilities to augment service levels based on demand for retained services and specialized services as enumerated below:

• Provide suggested amendments to zoning ordinances to facilitate master plan land use goals, meet current planning/zoning demands, and ensure consistency/clarity in standards.

• Assist the Township with the promotion of public participation for Township projects as required.

• Provide special project assistance to support economic development and and similar initiatives, as needed.

• Coordinate larger projects, such as major zoning ordinance amendments/reviews, technical training for Boards and Commissions, updates to the Township’s Master Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan, Downtown Development Authority Tax Increment Finance Plan, Capital Improvement Plan or similar projects, which would be governed by separate mutually-agreed-upon Scopes of Work and budgets.

• Other tasks as requested
SECTION 3 - Submission Requirements

1. Cover Letter: The cover letter must indicate the composition of the entire team including the Principal in Charge, Project Manager, and other staff to be assigned including support staff.

2. Provide a list of current active municipal assignments, especially where providing similar comprehensive services, including the name, type of project, location, firm's role in the project and status of the project.

3. Summary of firm’s background, focus and how the firm is qualified to carry out the scope of services covered within this RFP.

4. Team Composition: provide names, titles and qualifications of individuals who will be assigned to the Township. This section of the response should include descriptions of the respective roles that will be filled by team members. Discuss the experiences of team members on the example projects referred to above. A resume (no more than one-page in length) should be included for key team members in an addendum to the response.

5. Professional References: List a minimum of three (3) references from clients for whom your organization provides similar services. References for active municipal services like those requested from the Township are preferred. For each reference, list the contact's name, address, phone number and relationship to the firm.

6. Statement of Philosophy and Project Understanding: Provide a concise statement (one page) outlining the philosophy of the team in approaching municipal planning and zoning, along with the team's grasp of issues and goals to ensure fair and consistent application of zoning ordinances while also facilitating economic growth.

7. At least three (3) samples of site plan, special land use or other review letters.

8. A comprehensive cost and staffing proposal identifying specific rates for services and meeting attendance including: on-site hours at the Township offices, sample invoice detail, billing schedule, mileage charges and/or incidental costs.

9. Proof of Insurance and levels of coverage.

10. Draft of typical professional services agreement terms and conditions (inclusive of proposed retainer fee and proposed rates for project reviews, and rates for specialized services). **The Township is desirous of a multi-year agreement with renewal options. The Township will consider a Retainer for Services as well.**

Qualifications packages should not exceed 20 pages. Resumes of professionals, work samples, invoice samples, billing schedule, required insurance and draft agreements are excluded from the page count.

SECTION 4 - Estimated Timeline

Key milestones for the procurement are shown below. Proponents should note that the dates provided are provided as a guideline only and are subject to change as the Township deems in its own best interests.
SECTION 5 - Review & Selection Process
The following factors will be used to evaluate proponent firm’s qualifications:

- Demonstration of a thorough approach/understanding of comprehensive planning and zoning services for a mixed-use, Michigan Township such as Texas Township.
- Demonstration of experience and knowledge in providing PUD plan review, Special Land Use review and Site Plan Review in accordance with Township zoning ordinances, especially in relating to the Township’s ordinances regarding the distinctions between residential, downtown and industrial land uses.
- Demonstration of a strong understanding of the Township’s current and future land uses and its ordinances or the ability to quickly acquire and implement such knowledge.
- Demonstration of experience and knowledge in presenting staff reports to various boards and commissions.
- Demonstration of experience and knowledge in developing and updating comprehensive master plans.
- Demonstration of experience and knowledge in developing and updating a Capital Improvement Plan
- Demonstration of ability to involve partners and stakeholders in the planning process.
- Demonstration of ability to provide excellent and timely customer service to both the Township and those making application to propose developments within the Township.
- Outcome of internal staff interviews, as well as potential interviews with the Township Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, if deemed necessary by the Township.
- Demonstration of qualifications and capabilities of assigned staff, support staff and organization as a whole to meet the Township’s needs.
- Adequate Insurance.
- Outcome of reference checks.
- Pricing of professional services, including retainer cost, hourly fees, etc.
SECTION 6 - Conditions and Limitations

All materials submitted in response to the RFP become the property of the Township and supporting materials will not be returned. The Township is not responsible for any costs incurred by the company in the preparation of the proposal or for presentation or related meeting time.

The successful service provider will be asked to enter into a service agreement satisfactory to the Township, and to provide a certificate of insurance showing coverage for liability, workers compensation and automobile insurance. The service agreement will contain a provision specifying a deadline for submitting invoices. Any invoices submitted for services not billed in accordance with the deadline may, at the sole discretion of the Township, be considered invalid and payment may be refused. Any future relationship between the Contractor and the Township will be an “at will” relationship and may be terminated by either party, for any reason, following a 60-day notice.

The Township requires that service providers disclose conflicts of interest when they may occur immediately to the Township Superintendent or their designee. The Township, at its discretion, may arrange for alternative third-party support in such cases. In general, the Township will not allow a service provider to review applications from a client of the service provider. Past or pending client relationships may or may not be determined to be conflicts, but should always be disclosed and discussed with the Township.

The Township expects to select a consulting firm from the proposals submitted but reserves the right to request substitutions of firms. The Township also reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFP to advertise for new responses or to accept any response deemed to be in the best interest of the Township. A response to this RFP should not be construed as a contract or an indication of a commitment of any kind on the part of the Township, nor does it commit either to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a response to this request or for any cost incurred prior to the execution of a final contract. In addition, the Township reserves the right to check all references furnished and consider responses received in determining the award.

Upon selection, a contract shall be prepared and fully executed before work is initiated. The Township reserves the right to dismiss any part or all of the contracted team when, in the Township’s opinion, the services are not being provided in accordance with performance expectations.