



Request for Proposals

Zoning Code Revisions

Released: July 6, 2022

Responses Due: 3:00PM, July 29, 2022

City of Bath, Maine

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The City of Bath recognizes the important role of zoning and land use policy in its ability to shape the future development of housing. The City is seeking services from a consultant firm to comprehensively update its land use code in a way that supports the creation of local housing development.

Through this project the City will bring its land use code up to current best practices, setting the stage to allow for the growth of the housing stock to meet the changing needs of the community. The City anticipates this project to be a catalyst in creating additional housing in ways that are appropriate and complementary to Bath's history and workforce needs.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Bath, Maine, is a small city built on the waterfront of the Kennebec River. The Kennebec River in Bath is a wide, deep tidal river, providing deep water access to the ocean. The river supports Bath's long history as a maritime ship building city, "The City of Ships." Bath has a vibrant and historic downtown, with diverse retail and dining amenities. Bath's residential population is 8,766 and is a regional employment hub, hosting significantly more jobs (over 10,000) than its own population.

Bath's population is aging (it has a median age of 41, compared to the USA media age of 37.2). As residents age, Bath will need an increase in units that support an aging population, such as smaller units close to local amenities with transportation and ADA accessibility. Additionally, as the population ages, attracting young professionals is becoming increasingly more imperative. This population also trends toward selecting in-town units.

Additionally, Bath Iron Works (BIW) is rapidly expanding its workforce. BIW is a large employer in the state and is representative of Maine's heritage industries, shipbuilding. The lack of availability of housing is one of BIW's largest barriers to onboarding new employees. The wide-ranging demographics of Bath employees will require a mix of new housing.

As the City considers new policies to support housing development, it must also create policies that are resilient and adaptive to the changing climate. This is particularly important for the City of Bath, given its proximity to the Kennebec River. Significant sections of downtown, both developed sections and potential building sites, are vulnerable to flooding, especially during 100-year storms. Flooding is predicted to worsen due to climate change.

HOUSING IN BATH

The housing market in coastal communities in Midcoast and southern Maine has been hit particularly hard by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of out-of-state home buyers has spiked over the past two years, making the housing market more competitive for longtime Bath residents. While Bath is excited to have an influx of new residents from out-of-state, it must ensure there is enough housing to not dislocate its existing population.

There are 558 deed-restricted below-market housing units in Bath. A 2020 Housing Study commissioned by Bath Housing estimated a need for an additional 1,383 units that would be affordable at household incomes of \$35,000 or below. It also identified a need for housing at higher income levels that could house workers at local industry and businesses. The City aims to have a mix of housing at all price points, and especially would like to protect and preserve housing for middle income families.

Housing Type	Quantity
Single Family Residence	2,370
Residential Condominium	145
Two family	237
Three family	197
Multiple houses on one parcel	74
Apartments 4-8 units	473
Apartments >8 units	353
Other	121

EXISTING CODE

Bath has had a zoning code in some form since the mid-20th century. The current land use code dates to the mid-1980s and has been amended over the years. However, there has not been a full re-write since 2000. Bath currently has 16 zoning districts and 3 overlay districts. In addition, the City of Bath has approximately 20 contract zone overlay districts.

The City's Land Use Code does not include many contemporary planning principles used to develop sustainable and practical zoning guidelines. The last major re-write of the Land Use Code occurred in the late 1990's with a focus on changing density standards to encourage more suburban style development. The current Land Use Code lacks concrete design standards. It doesn't include form-based controls that have become much more common over the last several decades and relies heavily on singularly focused use-based zoning districts. The tightening of density requirements in the last re-write as well as the lack of form-based controls is leading to development that does not meet the needs of the community and has contributed to the housing challenges facing Bath.

SCOPE OF WORK

With assistance from municipal staff and project steering committee, the selected consultant will conduct a public process to update the Zoning Ordinance for the City, potentially resulting in an entirely new code, depending on need. It is anticipated that the consultant will work with the community to develop a zoning ordinance with requirements and standards for neighborhoods and commercial districts. Overall project goals include:

- Support expansion of housing for those at all income levels.
- Foster a walkable community.
- Incorporate the expected impacts of climate change.
- Streamline, simplify, and bring code up to best practice.
- Align code with local and state recent planning efforts.

The final work program will be confirmed with the consultant in conjunction with staff and steering committee, but the scope of work should include, at a minimum, the following:

1. Review of recent planning efforts and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The consultant will review and identify plan goals, objectives, and recommendations to ensure the new code will be consistent with recent planning documents.
2. Evaluation of Existing Neighborhoods, Corridors and Districts within the study area. Bath contains unique areas that will warrant context-sensitive regulations. The consultant will identify these areas and utilize this information to inform the mapping of anticipated districts. This process should also serve to relay the discrepancies in its current zoning standards and the existing conditions found within the evaluated area.
3. Public Outreach. The consultant will develop a robust public outreach strategy designed to gather further input that confirms the comprehensive planning vision and provides guidance for proposed zoning changes. The public outreach will also serve to inform community stakeholders and the general public on the benefits of a new code, as well as conducting regular meetings and web/social media interaction throughout the process to inform, educate, and confirm development/vision preferences.
4. Drafting the Document. The consultant will prepare drafts of the revised zoning code, including graphics and parcel-level maps for review by staff and the steering committee, culminating in a final version to be acted upon by the City Council.
5. Integration of the New Code. The consultant will work with City staff to reconcile the new and proposed ordinance language with existing land use regulations, to prevent conflicts, redundancy, and enhance readability/usability.
6. “How To Use the Code” Public Document and Support Services. The Consultant shall provide resources to assist City staff, residents, and developers with the implementation of the new code through a ‘start-up’ period not to exceed one year, including the development of a “How to Use the Code” reference document.

TIMELINE

July 6 th , 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release RFP at 12:00 PM EST
July 29 th , 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final deadline to submit RFP is 3:00PM EST
August 3 rd , 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee reviews RFP submissions
August 11 th , 2022 Week of the 11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview applicants • Select winning bid
September 1 st , 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official start date for project
October – December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Outreach on data and ideas
February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit draft of new zoning language for formal review
April – May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council adoption of zoning revisions

SCORING

Applicants will be scored on the following criteria:

1. Project approach, including community engagement
2. Quality and clarity of proposal
3. Understanding of the issues and community
4. Relevant experience
5. Cost of Services
6. References

SUBMISSION

Please submit the following in response to this Request for Proposal. Please provide one (1) electronic copy and three (3) hard copies for consideration.

- Narrative that includes the following:
 - Approach to achieve goals identified in the RFP
 - Outline community engagement process
 - Demonstrated ability to complete project successfully
 - Other pertinent information
- Schedule
- Fee (total budget should not exceed \$100,000)
- Project team and resumes
- References

The City is requesting both digital and hard copies of the RFP. Firms must submit one (1) electronic copy and three (3) hard copies to: **The City Manager's Office, Bath City Hall, 55 Front Street Bath, ME 04530**. Proposals will be accepted until **3:00PM EST on July 29th, 2022**. Submissions of proposals past this deadline will not be accepted. Questions regarding the project or proposal guidelines should be directed to **Ben Averill, Director of Planning, by calling (207) 443-8363 or by email baverill@cityofbath.com**. Any subsequent addendums to this RFP will be made available on the City's website: www.cityofbath.com.

During the evaluation process, the City reserves the right, where it may serve the City's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At the discretion of the City, firms or individuals submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation process.

The City reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is accepted. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm or individual of the conditions contained in this request for proposal. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted or select a particular proposal regardless of price if deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the City of Bath to reimburse the responding firms or individuals for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request. All pertinent reports or studies completed on the site will be available upon request from the bidder.

REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

The City of Bath Housing Subcommittee will serve as the project Steering Committee. The project Steering Committee will review proposals, interview consultants, and make a recommendation to the Bath City Council. The City Council will select a bidder after considering the recommendation of the Steering Committee.

The City reserves the right to negotiate a satisfactory contract (including price) with any bidder. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in this RFP unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the City and the firm selected.

REFERENCES

The City of Bath Comprehensive Plan (from 2009, currently under revision):

<https://www.cityofbath.com/departments/PlanningDevelopment/comprehensive-plan>

Bath Zoning Ordinance: <https://www.cityofbath.com/land-use-code>

Local Needs Assessments:

2014 Housing Study: <https://www.bathhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/18.420-Bath-Area-Housing-Assessment-11-04-2014-no-maps.pdf>

2020 Housing Study: <https://www.bathhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Bath-Report-2.10.2021.pdf>

2014 DART study: <https://www.slideshare.net/CivicStudios/bath-maine-design-and-resiliency-team-dart-project>

Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions: [7705 \(maine.gov\)](#) See under, *Land Use Commission Recommendation #4*