

# Request for Proposals

## City of Oshkosh Zoning Ordinance Rewrite



RFP Release Date: February 16, 2026  
RFP Proposal Due Date: March 23, 2026

### **Notice and Instructions for Proposal Submittals**

One, high-resolution electronic copy in PDF format must be emailed to [BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov](mailto:BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov) by 4:00 P.M. on March 23, 2026.

- Files over 10 MB can be emailed via a transfer link upon request.
- Please title the email "2026 Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Proposal"

For questions, contact -  
Brian Slusarek, Planning Services Supervisor, at [BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov](mailto:BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov)

## **A. General Request Information**

The City of Oshkosh is soliciting proposals from qualified planning and zoning consultants and multi-disciplinary firms or teams to complete a comprehensive zoning ordinance rewrite. The City's goal is to modernize the zoning ordinance to support predictable development outcomes, reduce administrative challenges, and reflect current technology and market conditions. The City intends to replace the existing zoning code—not simply update it—with a clear, graphic-rich, user-friendly ordinance.

The original zoning code was written in the 1970's, re-written in 1996, and re-written again in 2017 and minor maintenance corrections made over the years. Parts of the code are no longer consistent. Effective code review by staff becomes difficult when working with developers who are used to Oshkosh's known history of being very efficient. The existing code does not function in an era of technology that provides fast answers.

## **B. City of Oshkosh Background**

The 65,000 plus residents that call Oshkosh, Wisconsin home know that the community provides a high quality of life along the western shore of Lake Winnebago. The University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh, the third-largest university in the state, is located in Oshkosh. The downtown campus serves approximately 15,000 students and employs 1,700 staff. Higher education is also served by the Fox Valley Technical College. With a historic downtown, successful business parks and thriving neighborhoods served by ample parks, the community offers a big-city feel within a small-city setting.

The main drive of the project is to establish a new zoning code that is easy to read, understandable by the public, and enforceable by the City of Oshkosh. The ordinance should consider form-based or context sensitive applications, creating design and infill standards for development in the City's urban residential and mixed-use districts, college campus, historic districts, business and industrial parks, as well as development and growth areas, as identified in the City's 2018 Comprehensive Plan. Key to these areas would be connectivity, walkability, and mixed-use nodes that enhance community life in the City of Oshkosh.

This zoning ordinance rewrite is intended to implement the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, and Housing Affordability Analysis by creating a regulatory framework that supports housing choice, economic development, neighborhood compatibility, and long-term infrastructure efficiency.

## **C. Project Overview and Objectives**

The City has a desire to develop a zoning ordinance that defines regulations using a combination of text, graphics and images/photographs. The ordinance must ensure predictable, high-quality outcomes that are sensitive to the character of surrounding development, while allowing economic growth in areas where that growth can benefit the identity of the community. This would ideally include a blending of zoning districts, sub-categories within each district, and overlays that allow special uses for districts depending on the district location geographically within the city.

The new ordinance should be designed to accommodate the following document design features:

1. The ordinance needs to be easy to navigate and translated by the public, and simple to be enforced by the city.
2. Text that is supported and enhanced with charts, graphics, images, and photos where appropriate.
3. The ordinance must be fully functional and user-friendly in an online format.
4. The ordinance must clearly identify when and under what conditions specific elements are permitted, and it must explicitly state when elements that may be presumed allowable are prohibited.
5. The ordinance must be designed and to allow flexibility when appropriate, without requiring frequent text revisions, while still providing a clear and reliable regulatory framework.
6. The ordinance should minimize need for the user to flip back and forth between lists and different sections.
7. Clear, concise and well defined permitted and conditional land uses.
8. The ordinance should have flexibility and a process defined for when a new or unique land use is not on any list.

The new ordinance must specifically address the following:

- Minimize the use of Planned Development Districts (PDs).
- Discrepancies in different sections of the ordinance need to be eliminated.
- Landscaping, and other required conditions – enforcement tools for full compliance.
- Allowances for acceptable “required” building materials, with flexibility to add and revise newer and more modern technologies
- Administrative Design Review
- Sign Code Review
- Nonconforming situations: existing parking and gravel areas
- Subdivision Code – Complete streets

The following section from Chapter 30 does not require review: **Historic Preservation.**

### **Guiding Principles**

- Predictability and enforceability
- Graphic-forward and online-ready design
- Reduced administrative burden
- Flexibility without frequent text amendments
- Alignment with adopted City Plans

### **D. Expected Tasks and Services**

The successful respondent is expected to perform many tasks for the development of the zoning ordinance rewrite including, but not limited to the following:

1. **Diagnostic Review:** A comprehensive review and executive summary of deficiencies identified in the current zoning code. This should include a review of the zoning code against the following measures, at a minimum:
  - Meeting and discussions with City Staff
  - Concurrency with the City’s Comprehensive Plan
  - Compliance with State and Federal laws and case law
  - Overall cohesiveness and consistency
  - Enforceability
  - Workability for staff, developers and the general public
  - Public Outreach comments (see below)
  - Understanding of Wisconsin State Statutes as related to Municipal Zoning
2. **Public Outreach:** Conduct individual or small-group interviews and public open houses with community stakeholders. Consider a public meeting for the general public and/or online methods of engagement to gain public input throughout the process. The consultant should provide a written summary and analysis of the comments made by the individuals and groups.
3. **Solutions and Code Outline:** Develop an outline of solutions to the problems identified in the above outreach and diagnostics steps. Determine if elements from the original zoning ordinance can be incorporated into the rewrite text. Develop a working outline of the newly updated ordinance.
4. **Draft Code:** Complete an initial draft of the new Zoning Ordinance. Facilitate a process of presentation of the draft to stakeholders and the general public; ongoing refinement of the draft based on feedback from staff, stakeholders, and citizens; and tracking of all changes. Identify changes needed on the Zoning Map. Assist City staff with public outreach and explanation of the proposed changes.
5. **Maps and Graphics:** Provide maps and graphics identifying parcels with uses and structures that become inconsistent with proposed standards and zoning regulations.
6. **Legal Consultation:** Provide legal opinions regarding specific questions that arise during the process as well as a full legal review of the final draft.
7. **Adoption:** Assistance with presentations to the Plan Commission, Common Council, potential other Boards and Commissions, along with any additional revisions requested from these meetings until final adoption of the rewritten Zoning Ordinance is made by the Common Council.

Throughout the entire process, interaction is expected with City Staff. The detailed schedule for the project shall be included in the consultant’s proposal, and should be limited to 12 to 18 months.

## **E. Deliverables**

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All items delivered as part of this project shall be the sole property of the City of Oshkosh. The consultant shall be responsible for the submittal and execution of the following:

1. **Progress Reports and Research:** The consultant shall be responsible for submitting monthly progress reports and research information relative to the project. The consultant shall clearly communicate how the regulatory effects of the proposed ordinance may differ from the effects of the current ordinance. Background information regarding subjects addressed in the new ordinance, which are not addressed in the current ordinance shall also be submitted by matrix.
2. **Meetings:** The consultant will be responsible for meeting with the Plan Commission for plan updates on a quarterly basis. The consultant will also meet with staff as the project develops on a regular basis. The purpose of the meetings will be to establish objectives, discuss alternatives, provide direction and review progress. In addition, the consultant may be expected to attend periodic meetings of the Common Council or any other Boards/Commissions, as needed.
3. **Final Work Products:** The new zoning ordinance must be provided in both print and electronic format. Easy-to-use charts, checklists, graphics, and images/photos within the document are required. The consultant shall provide the following specific ordinance products:
  - One (1) electronic Microsoft Word version and PDF version of the ordinance.
  - A copy of the zoning map data that is compatible with the City’s GIS System, in a format that can be edited by the City of Oshkosh staff.
  - All graphics, images, and design elements shall be provided in editable source formats.
  - All materials produced under this contract shall become the sole property of the City of Oshkosh.

The final zoning map shall be included as part of the zoning ordinance document. The City shall be provided with the following map products:

- A digital version/shape files of the individual parcel level for use in and compatible with the City’s Geographic Information System, which uses ESRI platform and can be edited by the City of Oshkosh staff.

## **F. Existing Ordinance**

The Zoning Code is Chapter 30 in the City’s Municipal Code. The consultant will be expected to complete a comprehensive, independent review of the entire Zoning Ordinance to determine if items should be retained as part of the rewrite.

### **Reference Links, City of Oshkosh**

- Comprehensive Plan:  
<https://www.oshkoshwi.gov/PlanningServices/Documents/CP/OshkoshCompPlanFinal.pdf>

- Plans: <https://www.oshkoshwi.gov/PlanningServices/Plans.aspx>
- Housing Affordability Analysis: [https://www.oshkoshwi.gov/CommunityDevelopment/Housing\\_Affordability\\_Analysis.aspx](https://www.oshkoshwi.gov/CommunityDevelopment/Housing_Affordability_Analysis.aspx)
- Strategic Plan: <https://www.oshkoshwi.gov/StrategicPlan/>

## **G. RFP Requirements**

Consultants are asked to respond to this RFP by developing a proposal to fully meet the work associated with this project. Consultants are asked to submit a concise proposal describing their capacity to manage the project and their experience with similar projects.

Samples of zoning ordinances/rewrites and public participation plans are expected. The proposals should include a clear outline of how the consultant will meet the objectives of the project.

The City of Oshkosh does not have a specific proposal format; however, the City expects the following information to be included with the proposals:

1. **Contact Information:** Consultant's name, address, phone number, email, along with the name and signature of the authorized agent and contact person.
2. **Firm History:** Brief history of the firm, including short case studies of similar projects.
3. **Project Statement:** Statement of overall project understanding and general approach to meet project objectives and tasks of the project, description and modifications or expansion of the information provided.
4. **Time Schedule:** A detailed project time schedule for accomplishing the expected tasks and services, including start dates, major project milestones and anticipated completion dates. Time schedule should specifically identify how and when there is outreach to the public, staff, and elected officials. The timeframe for project completion should be approximately twelve (12) months.
5. **Examples:** Demonstrate related projects that were completed for other communities that are similar to the city.
6. **References:** A list of client references (WI preference) for whom the consultant has provided similar services including name, address, e-mail and phone number of a contact person for each reference.
7. **Project Manager Qualifications:** A statement indicating the qualifications of the key person who will be assigned as the project manager and their responsibilities.
8. **Budget Proposal:** A proposed budget with level of effort for each member of the team and for each major task.
9. **Fee Schedule:** A fee schedule for personnel involved with the project.

## **H. General Selection Process**

A selection committee comprised of the Community Development Director, Deputy Community Development Director, Zoning Administrator, Planning Services Supervisor and the City Attorney will review the proposals based on the following criteria:

1. **Qualifications:** Qualifications and previous related work experience, particularly related to similar sized communities.
2. **Understanding:** Demonstrated understanding of project objectives, tasks, and services.
3. **Price:** The proposed price/cost will be considered.
4. **Related projects:** Examples of related completed and in-progress projects.
5. **Proposal Quality:** Quality of requested submission requirements, including sample materials and proposal package.

## **I. Terms**

The City of Oshkosh reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or parts thereof and reissue the RFP without stated cause. Upon selection of a consultant, the City of Oshkosh 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.

The City of Oshkosh is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost, but may accept the proposal that best meets the needs of the city.

## **J. RFP Schedule**

1. RFP Issued:
  - a. February 16, 2026
2. Questions due to the city: (sent via email to [BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov](mailto:BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov))
  - a. March 2, 2026
3. Responses to questions posted on City website:
  - a. March 6, 2026
4. Proposals due to the city:
  - a. March 23, 2026
5. Possible interviews with finalists:
  - a. April 1, 2026
6. Plan Commission Consultant Selection:
  - a. April 7, 2026
7. Common Council Consultant Selection:
  - a. April 14, 2026

*NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change*

## **K. Project Budget**

The consultants for this project will be retained by the City. Interested parties should provide a total cost to prepare the zoning ordinance to include hourly rates and estimated expenses associated with the project. Please provide information on services that City Staff can conduct to reduce project costs. The proposed budget should not exceed \$125,000 including all travel and incidental project costs.

**L. Contact and Questions**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) has been distributed by the City of Oshkosh Community Development Department. All questions and inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to:

Brian Slusarek, Planning Services Supervisor  
City of Oshkosh Planning Services Division  
215 Church Street, Room 204  
Oshkosh, WI 54901-4747  
920-236-5035  
[BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov](mailto:BSlusarek@oshkoshwi.gov)