



Department of Planning & Zoning
Town of Stowe
PO Box 730
Stowe, VT 05672
www.stowevt.gov

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Professional Services to Develop Inclusionary Zoning

Date Issued: March 23, 2026

Responses Due: Monday April 27, 2026, at 12:00 PM

The Town of Stowe is seeking qualifications from experienced firms, teams, or individuals (“the consultant”) interested in leading the development of inclusionary zoning regulations. The consultant will conduct research and analysis, engage with stakeholders, and draft regulatory language designed to increase the availability of affordable housing as part of market rate developments. The Town will conduct a Qualification-Based Selection process to identify the most qualified consultant. Selection will be based on qualifications, with preference given to consultants who have experience working in high-amenity resort communities.

Background

Located in Lamoille County, Vermont, Stowe is frequently recognized as one of the best small towns to visit in America and is celebrated for its world-class outdoor recreation, charming historic downtown, scenic forested hillsides, and preserved natural and working landscapes. Residents cherish the town’s strong sense of community and character while enjoying the amenities of a premier four-season resort, including restaurants, shops, arts, and special events. With a year-round population of roughly 5,200 and approximately 3,500 housing units, most of which are seasonal homes, Stowe often welcomes more than 10,000 visitors per day during peak periods, many staying in the 2,500 hotel rooms and short-term rentals. While these attributes make Stowe a vibrant destination, the town faces growing housing challenges. Steadily rising home prices, limited inventory, high construction costs, near-zero vacancy rates, and the growth of the short-term rental market have made it increasingly difficult for low- and moderate-income households to live in the community they help support.

To address these challenges, the Town established a Housing Task Force in 2024 and recently completed a Housing Needs Assessment. The Planning Commission is finalizing an updated comprehensive plan, *Stowe 2050*, which includes policies and actions to expand housing opportunities for year-round, low- and moderate-income residents and families. Building on this momentum, the Town now seeks a consultant to develop inclusionary zoning regulations that are tailored to Stowe’s unique housing needs and community character.

Scope of Services & Time Frame

Working closely with municipal staff and the Planning Commission, the selected consultant will be responsible for, at a minimum, the following tasks. The final scope of services will be developed collaboratively with the consultant, but will include, at a minimum:

- Analyze market and development data to inform appropriate affordability levels, fees, and program applicability.

- Develop recommended inclusionary requirements, including income eligibility thresholds, verification processes, and ongoing monitoring protocols.
- Develop the recommended number of market rate units that would trigger a requirement to build an affordable unit(s) and the recommended ratio of market rate units to affordable units.
- Engage with local market rate and affordable housing developers and other pertinent interested parties.
- Define developer incentives, such as density or height bonuses, and develop alternative compliance options, including off-site development or payment-in-lieu fees, along with parameters for evaluating and monitoring these alternatives.
- Draft regulatory language, supporting materials, and community engagement documents.
- Identify the likely number of units built and/or fees estimated to be raised over the next ten years based on past and anticipated development trends.
- Outline the administrative effort necessary for the municipality to administer the inclusionary zoning program in terms of staffing hours and any other relevant considerations.
- Support Town staff in finalizing the regulations and serve as an expert resource throughout public review and adoption.

The Town anticipates that this project will begin in summer 2026. The final scope of services and project timeline will be finalized through negotiation prior to contract execution.

Funding

The total budget for consulting services shall not exceed \$35,000.

Submission Requirements

1. Cover letter/letter of interest (limit of one page).
2. A statement of qualification to carry out the project. Consultants should provide a description of their general qualifications, relevant skills and services they offer, and experiences with similar types of projects preferably but not necessarily in Vermont. If a sub-consultant is involved, describe the qualifications of that person or firm. Provide resumes of all the key individuals that will be involved in the project.
3. Provide a brief description of the general method and approach to completing the project.
4. Provide a proposed timeline for completing the work and indicate when the consultant can begin services. Include information on any existing commitments or projects that could affect the consultant's ability to complete the project on schedule.
5. An overall budget including a not-to-exceed total for the entire project for the services described herein.
6. At least three references with contact information where similar services were provided.

Submission Deadline: Submission must be received via email to the below by Monday April 27, 2026 at 12:00 PM. An extension of the deadline may occur if necessary.

Respondents must submit one (1) digital copy (pdf) to:

Town of Stowe
Sarah McShane, Director of Planning & Zoning

(802) 253-2705
smcshane@stowevt.gov

Please expect a confirmation email upon receipt of your submission. If you have any questions about this project or the RFQ, please address them in writing by email to smcshane@stowevt.gov. We will respond to all questions in writing within 1-3 business days.

Selection Criteria

A selection committee will conduct an evaluation of qualifications and will consider the following criteria:

1. Understanding of the project and approach
2. Experience, knowledge, familiarity and past performance with work described herein.
3. Ability to begin and complete the project
4. Cost for services
5. Satisfaction of previous clients

The Town intends to select a consultant within four weeks of receiving the responses to this RFQ and expects to complete final scoping and contract negotiation in June 2026. This will be a qualification-based selection process where factors other than cost may be considered. Following the selection process, one (1) consultant will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of work with specified deliverables will be developed through negotiation of the final contract.

Costs Associated with Proposal

Any costs incurred by any person or entity in preparing, submitting or presenting a proposal are the sole responsibility of that person or entity. The Town will not reimburse any person or entity for any costs incurred.

Rejection of Proposals

Through its Town Manger, the Town reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to negotiate with one or more parties, or to award the contract to the proposal the Town deems will meet its best interests, with price not being the sole consideration. The Town reserves the right to re-advertise and to extend the deadline for submissions. This RFQ in no way obligates the Town to award a contract. The municipality reserves the right to issue supplemental information or guidelines relating to the RFQ, as well as make modifications to the RFQ or withdraw the RFQ.

Ownership of Documents

Any materials submitted to the Town in response to this RFQ shall become the property of the Town unless another arrangement is made by written agreement between the Town and the responding party. The responding party may retain copies of the original documents.

Public Records

Any and all records submitted to the Town, whether electronic, paper or otherwise recorded, are subject to the Vermont Public Records Act. The determination of how those records must be handled is solely within the purview of the Town. All records the responding party considers to be trade secrets, as that term is defined by subsection 317 (c)(9) of the Vermont Public Records Act,

or that the responding party otherwise seeks to have the Town consider as exempt must be identified clearly and specifically at the time of submission. It is not sufficient to merely state generally that a proposal is proprietary, contains a trade secret, or is otherwise exempt. Particular records, pages, and sections which are believed to be exempt must be specifically identified as such and must be separated from other records with a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify each exemption from release consistent with Section 317 of Title 1 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated.