

Request for Proposals

DUE: JUNE 26, 2015
9 A.M.



Planning Consultant
Northfield Township, Michigan

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
MICHIGAN

Introduction:

Northfield Township Board of Trustees (BOT), in partnership with the Planning Commission, invites planning consultants (both firms and individual consultants) to submit proposals for general planning services. Proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of the consultants experience and approach acting as a staff level planner in a small community / township. Please mail 17 hard copies of the proposal to the following address:

Northfield Township
Attention: Howard Fink, Township Manager
8350 Main St.
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

Background:

Northfield Township is a mostly rural / small town community located 10 minutes north of Downtown Ann Arbor, with a population of 8,245. The Township is located in Washtenaw County, and is roughly half-way between Brighton and the City of Ann Arbor. Its land use makeup is mostly residential, with a small downtown business district situated along U.S. 23 and adjacent to Whitmore Lake. The Township also has a small industrial area situated along U.S. 23 and North Territorial. There are a number of existing assets that provide a great deal of potential for Whitmore Lake and Northfield Township to thrive;

- Whitmore Lake, one of the premier lakes in Southeast Michigan, with 750 acres of open water accommodates all sports, including fishing, boating, water skiing, etc.
- Three interchange locations off of U.S. 23 that bisect through Northfield Township
- Beautiful rural landscape
- Small town feel with development potential in all areas of the Township
- An engaged citizenry
- While small, an existing high end Industrial Park and light manufacturing district

Both currently and in years past, the Township residents have fiercely debated the development patterns of the community. That discussion continues, as the Planning Commission is in the midst of updating its Master Plan. The Planning Consultant will be expected to get up to speed quickly on the communities issues and help lead the debate (while not dictating any particular outcome) on the Township's future land use map and planning direction.

Scope of Work:

The Township is requesting RFP's for a planning consultant that will function both as a quasi "staff" level planner and visionary planning consultant on zoning / land use issues. Examples of typical duties include, but are not limited to:

- Planning support and attendance at every Planning Commission meeting.

- Review site plans and approval processes; provide staff reports, and other “staff” level planning functions.
- Lead the update of the Master Plan Process.
- Provide overall planning services to the Planning Commission, Board of Trustees and other bodies of the Township at their request.
- Provide staff reports and updates to the Board of Trustees and attend meetings when site plans, zoning changes, and ordinance changes are being discussed / debated.
- Attend meetings with businesses and residents for development proposals.
- Respond to any questions by staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Trustees on planning or development issues.

Anticipated Timeline / Selection Process:

The Township anticipates receiving proposals in three weeks. Township staff and elected officials will chose the preferred proposals for a full and intensive review by both the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will be the final decision making body in choosing the firm or consultant of choice. While the precise process has not been finalized, firms and consultants should expect interviews with both Planning Commission Members and Board of Trustees.

Final decisions on awarding a contract will not be based solely on price, but the right fit for the Township. Criteria that will be evaluated include, but are not limited to;

- Cost of Consulting Services.
- Past Performance by the firm or individual consultant in similar communities.
- Planning approach; including organization of the firm, and planning vision / ideology – and how that might be applied in Northfield Township.
- Quality and completeness of the proposal.
- Qualifications, education and capability of key staff and planning consultant.
- Demonstrated experience and creativity in conducting public engagement.
- Demonstrated experience and suggestions on how to handle competing public desires in creating Land Use Visions.
- A high level of expertise in the “nuts and bolts” of planning work, both at a staff and visionary level.
- The proven ability to think “out of the box” in both creating a land use vision and identifying strategies to implement that vision in Northfield Township.
- Knowledge and practice of recent planning ideologies / principles, including form based codes, cluster development, smart growth, etc. and the wherewithal to create code that allow for the implementation of these strategies in today’s market reality and development realities of Northfield Township.
- A visionary leader who will engage, educate and provide realistic planning strategies to help define the Townships identity / vision.

In recognition of the unique issues that are facing Northfield Township, careful consideration will be given to firms that have expertise in the following areas:

1. Planning in a community that is mix of rural, suburban, and small Town.
2. Capitalizing on natural resources, including rural character and beautiful inland lake, to name a few.
3. Experience dealing with conflict between the desire to preserve natural areas / large lot zoning and the desire to grow.
4. Revitalization of underdeveloped and disinvested small downtowns.
5. Pressure for new suburban style residential housing development.
6. Multiple School Districts that have varying degrees of desirability, leading to development pressure in some areas and not others.
7. Economic Development Background.

All proposals shall become the property of Northfield Township. The Township reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, advertise for new proposals, or to accept any RFP responses deemed to be in the best interest of the Township.

Submittal Format:

Registration:

All interested consultants are encouraged to send an email to the Township Manager, Howard Fink at finkh@twp.northfield.mi.us to register their intent to respond to this RFP. All firms expressing interest will be added to an email distribution list and will be notified if additional information related to the RFP becomes available.

Question Period:

Any questions regarding the proposal may be submitted by email to the Township Manager, Howard Fink. Responses will be sent to all registered participants in a timely manner.

Proposals must including the following items:

- Cover Letter
- One to three examples of work and experience in similar communities / planning consulting
- Consultant fees and proposed retainer, if applicable
- Proposed staffing, including resumes for all project staff