



City of Mason
201 West Ash Street
Mason, Michigan 48854

Request for Proposals

MASTERPLAN AND ORDINANCE UPDATE 2021



Issued: APRIL 29, 2021
Response Deadline: MAY 27, 2021

PART ONE: PROJECT INFORMATION

Community Overview

Mason is a community founded upon a respect for our historic past, while encouraging an atmosphere that values family, business, the environment and arts, maintaining a sense of place for present and future generations. We are located in Ingham County, approximately 12 miles southeast of the City of Lansing, and cover 5.4 sq. miles. Over 8,250 people call Mason home as of the 2020 Census which showed an increase of 22% since the 2000 Census count of 6,758. We continue to grow from the inside out, which utilizes much less land, maintaining the family farm environment that has long been a part of our identity.

Our fiscal nature is conservative, rooted in the belief that our government should focus on core services only, keeping taxes as low as possible. In keeping with traditional Mason culture, special programming is driven by community volunteer involvement and private investment. An example is the City's public art and recreation programming. The City maintains parks and basic play equipment, but has Memorandums of Understanding with several community groups such as Arts Initiative Mason (AIM) who maintain a mural and art display in the Art Alley downtown; an award-winning children's garden program at Bicentennial Park, and the Community Garden just north of downtown, both managed by independent local garden clubs.

The City maintains eight public parks totaling almost 93 acres, 2.5 miles of non-motorized trail and three trailheads with dedicated parking lots, an historic cemetery, 12.25 miles of major streets and 19.78 miles of local streets with easy accessibility to I-127 via two interchanges, one at the northern border from M-36 and one at the southern border at Kipp Rd. The Sycamore Creek runs adjacent to the Hayhoe Riverwalk Trail, and the city also has one Historic District which overlays the C-1 Central Business District encompassing the Ingham County Courthouse and many other historic buildings. Mason is the highest topographical point in Ingham County which, along with the rivers in Eaton Rapids, offer some protection from severe storms and tornadoes.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) operates and maintains M-36, a state trunkline, which begins in Mason starting at US-127 (Cedar Street/Ash Street) and runs east connecting several small communities along a 43-mile corridor to Whitmore Lake. The Adrian & Blissfield railway runs north and south through the center of Mason. Now a single track, this corridor was once part of a two-track passenger rail that provided connecting service to the legendary Polar Express route to northern Michigan. The historic depot still stands today.

Mason is a city steeped in history. In 1836 Charles Noble founded Mason Center, named after Michigan's first governor Stevens T. Mason, in hopes that it would become the state capital. He was unsuccessful in that regard; however, he did manage to make Mason the county seat of Ingham County. In fact, Mason is the only city in the U.S. that serves as a county seat ahead of a state capital; with the state capital, Lansing also being located in Ingham County. In 1865, Mason was incorporated as a village and during the 19th century enjoyed being the center of Ingham County activity.

While we have long maintained a traditional small-town neighborhood feel, we recognize the need to look forward and consider how we wish to adapt our previous food production community to ensure we thrive over the next 20 years. We need to go beyond land use and find a more holistic approach to identifying a realistic future. This includes cultivating a better understanding of the changing needs of our neighbors, and working closely with our regional partners to ensure our decisions support the collective vision of the area.

Scope, Schedule, and Budget Overview

Please visit www.mason.mi.us → Learn About → Master Plan. The City of Mason will award a fixed sum contract subject to approval by City Council. There are two parts for this project to occur as follows:

Part 1 - Masterplan Update** Funds have been obligated

This phase will focus on community engagement and technical analysis resulting in an audit of our zoning districts and ordinances, technical report of existing social, economic, and environmental conditions, stakeholder engagement including internal workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, Master Plan with recommended ordinance and zoning map revisions.

(Tasks 1-3)

Part 2 – Ordinance Updates Subject to available funding: Funds to be obligated July 1, 2021

Adoption of ordinance and zoning map revisions, and preparation of development application materials.

(Tasks 1-2, 4)

TBD – Sub-area Corridor Studies Subject to available funding: Funds to be obligated July 1, 2022

The City of Mason intends to complete two sub-area corridor plans in the future following the Master Plan. The RFPs for these projects will be posted at a later date:

- M-36/Cedar Street Corridor Improvement Plan with pre-NEPA analysis (MDOT Trunkline)
- Kipp Road/Temple Street Corridor Improvement Plan

The City reserves the right to alter the scope of work as funds are available. We are investigating options for funding and technical support through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Michigan Municipal League (MML), Lansing Area Economic Partnership (LEAP) and other sources.

Selection Timeline

Thursday, April 29, 2021	RFP posted
Wednesday, May 12, 2021	<p>Zoom Information Session for interested teams: Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88301638830?pwd=bUFRU2dZSGdLN3lCZHR3NCtZUU5wUT09 Meeting ID: 883 0163 8830 Passcode: 618718 One tap mobile +13017158592,,88301638830#,,,,*618718# US (Washington DC) +13126266799,,88301638830#,,,,*618718# US (Chicago) Dial by your location +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC) +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) +1 646 558 8656 US (New York) +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma) +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston) +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)</p>
Thursday, May 27, 2021 by 3 pm	Bids Due
Wed-Fri., June 9-11, 2021	Interviews with selected teams
Monday, June 21, 2021	City Council reviews recommendation
Tuesday, June 22, 2021	Bid Award
Friday, June 25, 2021	Final contract execution
Tuesday, June 29, 2021	Kick-off meeting to review draft of Task 1.A and Task 2.A

PART TWO: SCOPE OF WORK FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The scope of services that the consultant must be prepared and qualified to provide are as follows:

Task 1 - Project Management

The selected firm must demonstrate exceptional project management ability, taking the lead to proactively ensure tasks are completed on time, within budget, and meeting the City's expectations. This will require excellent communication skills, the ability to prioritize work and anticipate needs throughout the course of the project. Additional Task 1 deliverables may be determined by the selected team in consultation with the City. At a minimum, the following will be required:

- A. Project management plan:
 - I. Project contact list– names/roles, contact information
 - II. Detail by task showing deliverables, schedule for completion and assigned budget; must be in a format such as a Gantt Chart using excel, Microsoft Project or similar software.
- B. Meetings:
 - I. The selected firm will be responsible for scheduling meetings and sending invites, tracking attendees and recording minutes.
 - II. Weekly project management calls to review action items (who, does what, by when) and deadlines (may be reduced to bi-weekly during production times); an email summary of the call briefly bulleting discussion and action items within 1 hour of each call
 - III. In-person meetings with staff and/or steering committee when required for broader discussion and decision making; anticipate 1-2 monthly; summary with action items emailed within 24 hours of meeting
- C. Monthly invoices that detail amounts invoiced by task/deliverable, % task complete and remaining, \$ amount and % budget expended and remaining (% and \$ are not necessarily the same. If 75% of task is complete but only 50% budget remains, this is an indicator of a potential scope issue that needs to be addressed).
- D. Records management – The selected firm will be responsible for maintaining records accessible through a file sharing service that they provide; files will be organized by task/deliverable. A consistent naming system will be followed, for example **2019.06.30 MIN – Weekly PM call_final site plan** (Minutes from June 30 weekly call regarding the final site plan). All documents, records and materials produced must be available to City, including GIS layers and files created for the masterplan.

Task 2 – Community Engagement

The selected firm will prepare a Community Engagement Plan – A very brief, easy to follow document that provides the project team with a schedule for activities, regular communication milestones to update the public on the project, key decision points that may require input from stakeholders, and protocols for media interaction. The Plan needs to be developed with input from City staff and officials.

Key Deliverables:

- Community Engagement Plan
 - o Up to 3 workshops with staff, Planning Commission, and City Council to confirm strategies and activities related to community engagement
 - o Recommendations for stakeholders, sub-committees, and focus groups that are both topically and geographically relevant
 - o Clearly outline strategies to reach the largest number of community members from different perspectives – geography, demographics, and relationship (property owner, business owner, tax payer, lives outside of City limits but works/goes to school in Mason, etc.). This means diversifying

engagement tools and ways to access information. We wish to measure success by the number and demographics of people reached.

- Stakeholder database in excel - The team will be responsible for maintaining a database in coordination with the City's Constant Contact subscription.
- Materials for City website, social media, email, presentations, etc. - The selected firm will be responsible for providing content for the website and creating materials for public review necessary to keep everyone informed about the project's status. Materials will be distributed using a variety of tools, many of them to be provided in-house through the City website and social media feed (Facebook), as well as public meetings.
- Summary reports for community engagement activities
- OPTIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT:
 - o Online simulator tool for evaluating decisions and impacts – The City would like to utilize an online engagement tool that allows citizens to prioritize concerns and see the impacts such as cost (tax dollars), traffic generation, and other outcomes.
 - o Student programs – consider materials from American Planning Association, Junior Achievement, 4-H, MSU and U of M programs that can be integrated into curriculum in Mason Public Schools as a way to engage children and their parents about Mason's future.
 - o Citizen's Academy – Prepare materials in a way that could serve as a Citizens Academy module about planning, zoning and budgeting; after participating, the City can follow up and encourage citizens to serve as ambassadors and volunteer to serve on boards and commissions as part of an implementation strategy.

Task 3 – Master Plan

The City of Mason is looking for a qualified team to prepare the five-year update to its Master Plan in accordance with the [Michigan Planning Enabling Act, 2008 PA 33](#), the [Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, 110 of 2006](#) and the City of Mason Ordinance Chapters [50](#) and [94](#)*. The City's Masterplan is a 20-year roadmap for how the City of Mason wishes to evolve over time, and the basis for future budget, policy and ordinance decisions and was last updated in 2014 – [click here to view](#). The Masterplan is comprised of professional technical studies, graphics, maps, analysis and recommendations for ensuring that land uses, public facilities and infrastructure investments are well coordinated in a manner that supports the public's health, safety and social/economic/environmental welfare consistent with the community's vision. The selected team will be asked to assist staff with recommendations for updates to the six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in support of the Master Plan's implementation.

Like so many, the City of Mason is looking to build upon the lessons learned through the Covid-19 pandemic, preserve what makes this place special, and shape a more resilient, adaptable, and sustainable future. The selected team must not only be familiar with the State of Michigan requirements for the master plan and the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities Best Practices, but also capable of re-imagining the traditional format to better meet the needs of our community members, elected and appointed officials, and developers today. The final document must be business friendly, customer friendly, staff friendly – highly visual and concise with infographics that can be used in future reports and communication pieces. We wish to adopt a format that will consolidate content into primary values and establish simple, clear, and measurable goals and objectives for each with concrete action items that lead to change and investment.

We need the Master Plan to answer the following questions:

1. What are the most effective ways Mason can continue to evolve while preserving our neighborhood/small town charm? (Placekeeping vs Placemaking)
2. What infrastructure projects, policy decisions, and community engagement efforts will foster a more innovative, welcoming, and forward-thinking environment in Mason?
3. Where and how do we guide future development in Mason for the best utilization of space at the lowest cost to taxpayers?
4. How do we create a development review process that is consistent, efficient, cost-effective, and honors the community's vision?

Key Deliverables:

- Master Plan (Microsoft Word, digital pdf format)
 - Clear rubric for decision making
 - Infographics
 - Metrics that can be used to measure progress
- GIS layers, technical reports to support master plan

Task 4 – Ordinance Updates

Parallel to the completion of the Master Plan update, the selected team will be responsible for working with staff to prepare updates to City ordinances, future land use and zoning maps necessary to implement the master plan. We need to address ordinances that are inconsistent with the community vision, and are outdated or unenforceable due to conflicts with other laws (Federal, State), or Supreme Court rulings.

Task 4.A – Zoning Map Amendments

Staff has begun evaluating non-conforming properties in zoning districts throughout the City. We are working with property owners to revise zoning district classifications in a manner that is consistent with the current community vision and favors the property owners' desire to invest in improvements in a reasonable manner. The selected team will be expected to follow the process underway as necessary to complete the audit City-wide. This involves reviewing property information exported into a list from the BS&A system, making site visits, communicating with property owners and staff, creating a list of recommended changes and the documents necessary to move the amendments through the public process.

Key Deliverables:

- Technical Report – Audit of existing zoning districts and identification of non-conforming properties with recommendations for re-zoning or amendments to the lot and building dimensional requirements; may also require text amendments as part of Task 4.B below.
- Zoning Use Matrix – Identify all uses in all districts to serve as a baseline for a discussion on change; prepare a revised use matrix as a tool for completing Tasks 4.B and 4.C.
- Materials for proposed zoning map updates

Task 4.B – Text Amendments

In conjunction with Task 4.A, the selected team will be required to make a careful review of the entire City ordinance to identify all relevant updates necessary to implement the master plan including our general ordinances as well as chapters on building, zoning, planning, historic preservation, subdivisions, and signs. Recommendations may include text amendments, consolidation of chapters, repeal and replacement of entire chapters or sections.

Key Deliverables:

- Technical Report – Audit of existing city ordinances (all chapters) and report of recommended changes prioritized to support zoning first
- Materials for proposed ordinance changes to support zoning

Task 4.C – Development Application Materials

To manage implementation of the master plan, application materials and guidance documents related to development will be prepared that meet the needs of our community, developers and business owners and achieve certification eligibility through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation Redevelopment Ready Communities Certification Program. The selected firm will be responsible for reviewing prior planning documents, the City ordinance, current development application procedures, and relevant materials as necessary.

Key Deliverables:

- Permit Application materials for:
 - Zoning (Site Plan Review, Special Use Permits, Zoning Board of Appeals)
 - Signs
 - Condominiums
 - Subdivision and Land Division
 - Others may be determined by outcome of Master Plan
- Recommended application fee schedule developed with staff input; including guidance on use of Performance and Surety Bonds

PART THREE: SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS

I. **Deadline:**

In order to be considered, proposals must be received by the City of Mason **NOT LATER THAN 3:00 P.M. on Thursday, May 27**. The City of Mason reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Proposals should be submitted:

ELECTRONICALLY TO: SARAHJ@MASON.MI.US

SUBJECT: MASTERPLAN

HARD COPIES TO: SARAH JARVIS, CITY CLERK

201 W. Ash Street, Mason, MI 48854

Submissions will be provided a confirmation email indicating the City's receipt.

II. **Required Content:**

Submissions should be included **three (3) hard copies and one (1) electronic file containing only items 1-3 below on a thumb drive (do not include electronic file for Proposal Fee as this is a sealed document)**. The proposal must include and should be organized in the following way:

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Provide an overview of the firm, preferably one page, with the following information:

- A letter of transmittal containing the name, title, address, telephone and email of the person authorized to represent the firm.
- The lead firm's profile, including:
 - Full name and address
 - If applicable, any branch office(s) or other subcontractors that will perform or assist in performing the work, including the number of professional staff by classification;
 - Indicate whether you operate as an individual, partnership, or limited liability company or corporation. If a corporation or limited liability company, indicate the state in which you are incorporated;
 - State that you are licensed to operate in the State of Michigan and/or provide a list of your staff members that are; and
 - Include the names, telephone numbers and e-mails of those persons in your organization authorized to negotiate the proposed contract with the City of Mason.

2. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

A background of the team's experience. Include a list of similar projects completed in the last five (5) years, and any projects completed in Mason, MI. Provide the following:

- Name of project
- Date of project start and completion
- Services provided
- References for each project

3. KEY PERSONNEL QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

A background of the team's key personnel and qualifications shall include information on the key personnel assigned to this project, including at a minimum their role and a current resume.

4. PROPOSAL FEE – MUST BE SEALED

Bid will not be opened until end of process. Bid proposals are to include the following:

- Discuss your team’s approach to the completion of each task such as kickoff meeting, community engagement, document reviews/revisions and cost associated with this process.
- Provide history of team and list staff that will be in charge of the project.
- If any sub-contractors are being used, please provide their history and information.
- Provide the hours/rates allocated during this phase plus rates for independent contractors, such as
 - Principal hours/rate
 - Planner hours/rate
 - Architect hours/rate
 - Engineer hours/rate
 - GIS hours/rate
 - Graphic Design hours/rate
 - Public Relations hours/rate
 - Other’s hours/rate
- Provide the total estimated cost for the project with a breakdown of costs by task.
- Provide the additional cost/percentage of what would be charged for optional tasks.

PART FOUR: SELECTION CRITERIA

All proposals will be scored and ranked with the highest rated firm being awarded a contract.

Firm Qualifications and Experience – 30 Points

A premium will be placed on the experience of the firm with masterplan and ordinance revision projects in Michigan. Premium will also be placed on experience resulting in successful projects that occurred in Mason.

Key Personnel Qualification and Experience – 15 Points

A premium will be placed on the experience and qualifications of the firm’s key personnel who will be responsible for project management.

Proposal Fee – 5 Points

The fee proposal shall include all applicable costs expected to be incurred by the team during the life of the project. A detailed description of anticipated costs shall be provided along with a “not to exceed amount” for the duration of the project which shall form the basis of scoring and evaluation.

NOTE: A fixed sum contract on a cost reimbursement basis will be negotiated with the actual fees for services subject to approval by City Council.

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE 50 POINTS

PART FIVE: INTERVIEWS (OPTIONAL)

Team interviews MAY be conducted by the City of Mason prior to contract award if consultants cannot be differentiated from proposals alone. If desired, interviews will be scheduled on the following days:

June 9-11, 2021 for one hour – times to be confirmed closer to date

The point structure above will be re-evaluated and become the basis for the decision based on the additional information provided during the interview.