



## **Request for Qualifications City of Carbondale – Downtown Master Plan**

### **Introduction**

The City of Carbondale, Illinois is requesting statement of qualification proposals from qualified consultants to provide professional planning services associated with developing a new Downtown Master Plan for the Carbondale community. The new Downtown Master Plan will serve as a policy document and official plan guiding growth and development of the downtown area during the next 15 years, through 2030. The new Downtown Master Plan will be titled Downtown Carbondale 2030.

Firms interested in this project are advised to carefully review the information outlined in the RFQ and respond accordingly. All submissions must be received no later than May 30, 2014. Specific instructions regarding submission requirements are included in this RFQ.

### **Background Information / Community Profile**

Carbondale, Illinois is located in southern Illinois, 90 miles southeast of St. Louis, Missouri; 95 miles west of Evansville, Indiana; and 65 miles northwest of Paducah, Kentucky. Carbondale is the home to Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIU) with a Fall 2013 enrollment of approximately 18,850 students. SIU is considered to be the driving force behind the local and regional economy providing for over 7,000 full-time and part-time jobs. The main campus of SIUC is located within the central core area of Carbondale on the south edge of the downtown area. Just south of Carbondale is Illinois' largest expanse of wooded land, the Shawnee National Forest. The boundaries of this 280,000 acre national forest stretch from the Mississippi River on the west to the Ohio River to the east providing for an oasis for outdoor recreational activities.

Carbondale is the largest community in southern Illinois with a population of 25,597 residents. Additionally, there are approximately 52,500 residents within a 10 mile radius of Carbondale. The corporate limits of Carbondale encompass approximately 17 square miles. The median age of residents in Carbondale is 24.7 years, which is reflective of the University student population residing in the community. The median family income is \$34,450. Approximately 72% of the housing stock in Carbondale is rental occupied, which is not uncommon for communities with major universities. Approximately 77% of the total housing stock in Carbondale was constructed over 40 years ago.

The 1990-2000 Downtown Master Plan for Carbondale, as adopted in May 1990, was developed with the assistance of a consultant firm selected through a similar qualification based process. Preparation of the Downtown Master Plan entailed extensive public interaction and citizen involvement. These documents are available on the city's website.

- 1990-2000 Downtown Master Plan - <http://explorecarbondale.com/node/66>
- Carbondale Comprehensive Plan, June 2010 - <http://explorecarbondale.com/node/357>

- Carbondale Zoning Code, April 2013 - <http://explorecarbondale.com/sites/default/files/pdf/Title%2015%20March%2025%2C%202014.pdf>

Copies of these documents and other related planning reports and documents are on file in the Development Services Office and can be viewed during regular office hours.

In December 2012, the City created the Illinois-University Corridor Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District which covers 134 acres and is the majority of the area to be included within the new downtown plan. To date, six property owners/developers have entered into redevelopment agreements within the district, including the most recent being for the construction of a 5-story, mixed-use, retail and student housing development in the south portion of the downtown adjacent to the SIU campus. The project will be the first major construction project in the downtown in over 20 years.

### **Project Goals / Areas of Special Consideration**

It is the intention of the City of Carbondale to procure the professional services of a qualified planning consultant to develop a new Downtown Master Plan for Carbondale. This will involve working through a collaborative effort that engages a variety of stakeholders. The process will culminate in an integrated document that reflects the needs and desires of the community and helps direct future decision making as it relates to the orderly growth and sustainable development of the downtown. Downtown Carbondale 2030 will provide a framework for the development of future public policy pertaining to growth, development, redevelopment, infrastructure improvement and expansion, provision of community services, as well as the conservation and expansion of cultural and natural resources in the downtown.

Carbondale is home to a number of organizations, governmental bodies, and institutions that conduct their own long-range planning. A major goal will be to incorporate those plans into the Downtown Master Plan where feasible. Examples of these other planning bodies include, but are not limited to, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, the Carbondale Park District, the Illinois Department of Transportation District 9, and Memorial Hospital of Carbondale.

In 2003, SIUC adopted a long-range plan for the University called "Southern at 150". This plan was augmented in 2006 to incorporate plans for "Saluki Way", which is an aggressive multi-year capital improvement program to create a new campus core of student services, academic, and athletic facilities. In an unprecedented collaborative effort, the City has entered into a partnership with SIUC and has committed \$20 million dollars to this effort over a 20-year period.

Other major issues and areas of focus that the new Downtown Master Plan will address include the following:

- Creation of a master streetscape design plan
- Analysis of the City's existing and future parking demands
- Creation of an entertainment district and eliminating any associated barriers

- Creation of specific options for outdoor sidewalk cafes
- Expansion of bicycle/pedestrian path network
- Evaluate and recommend best uses for the existing vacant downtown properties
- Evaluate the existing downtown transportation conditions and suggest alternative transportation modes.

### **Scope of Work**

The professional consulting firm selected for this assignment will work closely with City and University staff, an advisory committee, local elected officials, and various City boards and commissions to prepare Downtown Carbondale 2030. Following are major work components and elements which are expected to be provided. The final scope of services will be developed in conjunction with the consulting firm selected for this project.

- With the assistance of City staff, provide analysis and subsequent updating of local and area wide demographics, housing characteristics, social and economic indicators, natural and historic resources, existing land use and other data contained within the 1990-2000 Downtown Master Plan. The analysis to include projections for community profile data over the next 5, 10, and 15 years.
- Working with City staff and the Advisory Committee, the consultant is to review and revise, as needed, the community goals, objectives, policies, and programs for the downtown area including; growth management, housing, transportation, economic development, natural features/open space and infill development/redevelopment.
- Conduct an analysis of the City's downtown building inventory and assess the feasibility of future mixed-use projects.
- Conduct an analysis of the impact of future developments on existing parking facilities and the need for additional downtown parking opportunities.
- Work with City and SIU staff to create new downtown land use maps and map exhibits. The City will provide consultant with access to GIS base maps and other pertinent data and information.
- Facilitate public input meetings and focus group sessions throughout the various phases of developing the Downtown Master Plan. Incorporate the findings into the plan document.
- Completion of a development strategy that identifies priority projects with general cost range estimates.
- Attend and participate in meetings scheduled with the Advisory Committee and the City Council as the plan evolves to provide progress reports and obtain feedback.

### **Deliverables**

The consultant will prepare the Downtown Carbondale 2030 document in a format that is agreed upon by the City. Furthermore, throughout the course of preparing Downtown Carbondale 2030, the consultant will provide draft versions of the plan document for review and comment at various stages of the project. The specific deliverables will be subject to further discussion with the selected consultant. The final product deliverables will be in a format appropriate for distribution on the City's website, as well as a format that the City could update from time to time.

## **Submission Requirements**

Prospective consultants are instructed to respond to the RFQ with information as outlined below. Consultants are advised to be succinct in their responses and attach only relevant information. Eight (8) hard copies of the material, as well as a digital copy are to be received no later than 4:00 P.M. on May 30, 2014.

At a minimum, all submittals should include the following:

1. Company information: Name, address, phone number, organizational structure, number of professional staff and principals and their specialties that will be assigned to work on this project. Location of firm's offices where the various aspects of the work will be performed.
2. Availability: A brief statement as to the availability of the key personnel of the firm responsible for the project and the ability of the firm to complete the project within the prescribed time frame.
3. Statement of Qualifications: Provide summary of the firm's background, capabilities, experience and qualifications. Include a synopsis of similar assignments and projects completed by the firm in the last five years with specific emphasis on downtown master planning related projects performed in university communities.
4. Understanding of Project: An overview of the consultant's understanding and approach to the project, including coordination of various stakeholders to build community consensus, ability to perform within projected time-line, any critical issues/concerns in successfully completing the project.
5. Examples of Work: Complete or partial samples of work involving similar types of projects and assignments.
6. Client support: A description of the type and level of support the consultant will require/expect from the City through each phase of the project.

All submittals must be received no later than 4:00PM on May 30, 2014, by:

Christi Green  
Purchasing/Risk Management Coordinator  
City of Carbondale  
200 South Illinois Avenue  
PO Box 2047  
Carbondale, IL 62901

## **Evaluation Criteria / Selection Process**

- Qualifications of the consultant/project manager
- Individuals and professional staff to be assigned to the project
- Demonstrated experience in Downtown Master Plan projects and related assignments in college and university communities
- Clear understanding of the community dynamics and overall objectives of the project

- Ability of the consultant to communicate effectively with the client, identified stakeholders and ability to garner community consensus
- Ability of the consultant to complete the project in a timely manner and within budgeted resources
- Estimated range of fees to provide the professional services to successfully complete this project
- Approaches in organizing and carrying out the need to obtain public participation and interaction throughout course of this project.

A selection committee will review responses received from interested consultants. From this internal review, a number of firms will be chosen for interviews by the selection committee. The selection committee will recommend a consulting firm to the City Council.

Selection of the firm that the City intends to employ for this project will be based on the above criteria and interview results. The City and selected consultant will work collectively to define the specific scope of services to be provided and negotiate a contract for the services. If a contract cannot be successfully negotiated with the selected firm, discussions will be terminated and a contract negotiated with another firm. Subject to appropriate approvals and successful contract negotiation, the selection committee will recommend that the City Council authorize the execution of the contract.

### **Project Time Frame**

The consultant firm selected for the project will be expected to successfully complete all elements and scope of work to be outlined in the contractual agreement within a 9 to 12 month period. In preparing the proposal, the consultant is asked to make a recommendation on the most appropriate project time frame for best satisfying the objectives of Downtown Carbondale 2030.

### **Contact for Project**

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