

# Town of Mount Olive Downtown Master Plan Request for Proposals

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## **Project Summary**

Background: The Town of Mount Olive, North Carolina is seeking responses from qualified planning professionals to provide planning services to support the development of a new Downtown Master Plan. Community members completed a Comprehensive 30-year Master Plan in 2012 which has served as a guide for development of the Town's service area. The Downtown Master Plan should fit together with 30-year plan.

The Town is interested in firms or teams of consultants who are experienced and capable of providing professional services including research and analysis of historic, present and future land use patterns; market analysis, mapping, creative methods of involving public engagement in downtown visioning; and development of recommendations for successful plan implementation and document preparation. The Downtown Master Plan should address design guidelines and recommend specific implementation strategies to promote economic development.

## **Community Information**

Located in southern Wayne County, the Town of Mount Olive was chartered in 1870. Its agricultural and historical roots are evident in its Center Street businesses. CSX railroad runs through the center of the downtown district, which is lined by historical buildings and some long-standing businesses. However, there are quite a few vacant buildings.

The population is 4,567 with about 40% minority, including African Americans, Hispanics and Haitians. Center Street businesses reflect this ethnic mix.

The Town is located about an hour's drive east of Raleigh via I 40, and 20 minutes from nearby Goldsboro. With the planned upgrade of Hwy 117 to interstate quality (I 795), the Town can expect gradual growth as the RTP area expands. The Town has been receiving interest from businesses wishing to expand in the area.

In 2015, the Town was placed on a Special Order by Consent (SOC) from the Department of Environmental Quality which mandated no further sewer expansions. Until the town's wastewater treatment system has been completely renovated and upgraded, the moratorium cannot be lifted. The Town has secured grant funds to bring the system up to date, but construction will take at least two

years or more since there are miles of I and I issues to be upgraded. In the meantime, Town leaders want to be pro-active making plans for the downtown area. Some businesses are just hanging on since the pandemic, and a few have had to close, including the local newspaper. There are about thirty businesses still in operation.

### **Related Planning Efforts**

The Town's current comprehensive land use plan has been updated, but little has been done to address commercial activity for the downtown area. At least three focus group sessions were held prior to the pandemic. These were sponsored by the Mount Olive Community Development Corporation, the Town's Beautification Committee and the Mount Olive Area Chamber of Commerce. The suggestions coming from these groups were varied but there was unanimous support for upgrading the commercial, aesthetic, historic and entertainment aspects of the downtown area.

In the following year, the University of Mount Olive and the Kenan Institute sponsored a survey about the economic development aspects of the town. The findings showed that residents and visitors to Mount Olive would like to see a more developed, aesthetically pleasing downtown area with more restaurants and retail offerings. University students rarely visit downtown since there is "little to do" there. These conversations were overshadowed by the sewer expansion mandate and how to move forward until it is satisfied.

### **Key Topic Areas**

**Downtown Master Plan:** The Town would like to develop a Downtown Master Plan that focuses on *what can be done to promote economic development and historical preservation of vacant buildings* while it is still under the moratorium and afterward. The downtown consists of about 10 blocks on Center Street, on either side of the CSX Railroad. At the southern end, there is a third-generation African American Funeral Home; at the northern end of Center Street there is a brewery that uses only local ingredients for its brews. In between, there are two restaurants, two banks, several insurance companies, attorneys and CPAs and other service businesses, some of which are in historic buildings. There is little retail, and there are at least twenty vacant buildings, some of them historic, that

could be developed. The Town's leadership would like to ***see more commercial businesses and fewer vacant buildings.***

No marketing study has been done of the downtown area, so the consultant will need to conduct ***an analysis that can be used to link development to current and future opportunities.*** The Town would like a ***plan that has guidelines and implementation strategies to get these city blocks healthy and economically viable. Guidelines covering what is and what is not acceptable for commercial development, as well as design guidelines,*** wayfinding signage and other improvements will be needed. Drawings, maps and other graphic demonstrations of these elements will also be helpful.

Looking to the future, after the moratorium is lifted, the town government desires ***a better sense of where its revenue might be derived.*** Little growth has happened since the moratorium (2015) was mandated, and the town's revenue growth is flat. Reliance on grants to get basic services such as wastewater treatment and I and I issues resolved will not be possible in the future. Further, ***how should the downtown position itself for the future growth that is certain to come when Hwy 117 reaches interstate quality.***

### **Scope of Services**

Phase I: This phase consists of an initial meeting with Town staff to review the project timeline, schedule meetings and begin the process of gathering data. Phase I also includes a review of all existing plans, maps, documents, data and other materials relevant to the project. The consultant or consultant group should conduct initial meetings with key elected and appointed officials and the steering committee.

Phase II: This phase includes the development of an extensive community engagement program that will get input from community members of all ages and backgrounds. It may include a variety of workshops and participatory events, and/or utilizing online community engagement software or other technological tools so that a thorough community engagement program is evident. At a minimum, community engagement efforts should address identification of stakeholders, engagement strategies and actions geared to reach all identified stake holders, including outside of working hours; a timeline for community engagement activities; communication methods for sharing information;

strategies for effective and consistent messaging across platforms and messengers; and meaningful involvement of lower-income and underrepresented populations.

Phase III: This phase of the project will involve the development of goals, objectives, and implementation strategies based on research data and public input. Outcomes should include a draft of materials for review and comment by the Town's staff. An analysis of the Town's current ordinances and policies and their relationship to the goals and objectives will be required. When these items have been prepared and reviewed by Town staff, a draft Plan will be needed for public review and comments to include presentation to the Planning board and the Town board.

Lastly, the consultant or consultant group will need to prepare a final draft to present at all associated meetings for adoption of the Plan. At a minimum presentations should be made at one Planning board meeting, and at one public hearing before the Town board. These meetings will require in person attendance by the consultant or consultant group. The Plan's format should be in a user-friendly format in language that is easily understood by the general public.

### **Project Management**

The consultant or consultant team will manage the project and coordinate any subconsultants and all project activities, including meeting with staff and stakeholders. The consultant will identify an individual as the project manager from their own team to act as the point of contact for Town staff and leadership. Throughout the project, the consultant will be responsible for the following:

1. Creation of maps needed for the project, including working maps and maps for potential and preferred land use in a format that meets GIS standards.
2. Providing electronic copies of all flyers, hand-outs, and other materials used to announce events and gather input from the community (in PDF and native formats.)
3. Preparation of materials and providing staffing needed for community engagement activities. The Town will also be assisting with engagement activities.
4. Creation of, and content for, any on-line engagement tools used for the project.

5. Organization and preparation of a minimum of bi-weekly updates, primarily email or telephone/zoom and in person as needed, to update Town staff on project status, discuss issues, and review drafts.
6. Preparation and provision of periodic written status reports, as well as limited status update presentations, as required, to the Planning and Town Boards.

**Proposed Timeline**

The proposed schedule is the Town’s intended course of action for the project. The Town will follow the timeline to the extent possible; however, the Town reserves the right to change both the sequence and the timing if deemed necessary.

Release of Request for Proposals	November 1, 2022
Deadline for Questions	November 8, 2022
Deadline for Submissions	5 PM, November 18, 2022
Review of Proposals Completed	November 24, 2022
Interviews	Week of Nov 28-Dec 2, 2022
Selection of Consultant/Award Date	December 5, 2022
Contract Review and Approvals	January 31, 2023
Project Begins	February 1, 2023
Master Planning Process	March – August 2023
Project Wrap UP/Completion	September-October 2023

**Response**

The response must include

1. Cover Letter
2. Qualifications of the Consultant, including a description of the Consultant with emphasis on work related to downtown master planning of towns of comparable size. A list of recent projects (with

- hyperlinks to completed plans or other similar prior work product examples) on which the project team members have worked, along with a description of their responsibilities, including professional background, experience on similar projects, years of experience and primary office location should be included.
3. **Qualifications of the Project Manager:** A description should include information on work related to master planning for small town downtowns; a list of recent projects with links to completed plans along with a description of responsibilities to include professional background, experience on similar projects, years of experience and primary office location.
  4. **Statement of Project Approach:** The statement should include the overall approach to the project, the consultant's general philosophy toward the requested services, and a detailed and comprehensive description of how the consultant intends to provide the services requested. The statement should include approaches, methods and assumptions that will be used to accomplish the scope of services, as well as how and when data will be delivered to the Town and how it will be communicated and coordinated. The project approach will need a description of the working relationship between the consultant and the Town staff, and how the project will be managed and scheduled. A proposed work plan with a schedule based on months, divided into phases with key tasks, milestones and approximate dates and deliverables will be key to the project approach. Any innovative approaches to community engagement which provide effective stakeholder participation, with examples of how input will be captured, will be needed. This portion of the plan should be representative of all the Town's residents.
  5. A detailed outline of the Consultant's management plan, including proposed staff, their availability and their roles and responsibilities will be helpful. If the consultant will include subconsultants, then a detailed explanation of their responsibilities should be provided.
  6. The Town requires a minimum of three client references for the consultant and project manager, for similar projects recently completed. These references should include firm name, address, email, telephone,

project title and information, and contact person. The Town reserves the right to contact each point of contact.

7. Cost proposal, detailing the cost breakdown for each phase in the scope of services will be required in the RFP. Each phase shall include line items for job classification, the unit cost or hourly rate for each job class, the estimated quantity of hours for each job class, and the extended cost or *unit cost x quantity* for each job class. Contingency costs and an explanation of these costs, along with expenses for printing, travel and other items should be included. Proposed costs should be totaled per phase and then the subtotals should be tallied into a grand total.
8. The consultant will need to provide a copy of license to do business in the State of North Carolina, and certificate of insurance. Any conflicts of interest, on the part of the consultant or any subconsultants must be provided in writing.

**Response Instructions:** Submit an electronic copy of the response in PDF format to both Barbara Kornegay, Ed. D, Town Commissioner at [bkornegay@nc.rr.com](mailto:bkornegay@nc.rr.com) and Jammie Royall, Town Manager, at [j\\_royall@townofmountolivenc.com](mailto:j_royall@townofmountolivenc.com) or Sherry Davis at [secretary@townofmountolivenc.com](mailto:secretary@townofmountolivenc.com). All responses must be received by 5 pm on 11/8/22.

1. Responses should be limited to 20 pages, not including resumes, examples of prior work, business license and certificate of insurance.
2. When received, all responses and supporting materials, as well as correspondence relating to the RFP, will become the property of the Town of Mount Olive and subject to the public records laws of the State of North Carolina. All RFP responses will be made public as required by G.S. 132 and G. S. 143B-1350.
3. When submitting responses, consultants must understand that the Town of Mount Olive reserves the right to accept any response in whole or in part, to reject any and all responses as non-responsive, and to waive any irregularities or informalities in responses when doing so is in the best interest of the Town. The Town reserves the right to negotiate with one or more consultants if the response to the RFP demonstrates a lack of competition; to not award; or if all responses are found non-responsive terminate and reissue the RFP.

4. In submitting a response, it is understood by the consultant that consultant agrees to abide by the laws of the State of NC, Wayne County, and the Town of Mount Olive, and that consultant has not colluded with other consultants in the preparations of their response.
5. Any responses may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the consultant, provided such request is received by the Town at the designated email address prior to the date and time set for receipt of responses as noted in the Proposed Timeline section contained herein.
6. If a response includes any confidential or proprietary information, then such information must be specifically identified as such on every page on which the information appears. After determining that such information is excepted from G.S. 132, data or information so identified will remain confidential to the extent allowed by North Carolina law pursuant to G.S. 132-1.2 and will be used by Town personnel solely for the purposes of evaluating responses and conducting contract negotiations. The practice of labeling unqualified pages as confidential, including the bid form, may result in a response being dismissed from evaluation.
7. All proposing firms or individuals shall comply with all conditions, requirements, and specifications contained herein, with any departure constituting sufficient cause of rejection of the response. However, the Town reserves the right to change the conditions, requirements, and specifications as it deems necessary.
8. No responses will be accepted from any person or organization that is in arrears for any obligation to the Town, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unresponsive by Town staff or the Town of Mount Olive board.
9. All prices quoted must be held firm for a period of ninety (90) days following the Response Deadline to allow for evaluation and a contract award period.
10. The cost of preparing a response to the RFP will not be reimbursed by the Town.
11. No agreements with any selected consultant shall be binding until a contract is signed and executed by the Town Board and authorized representative/s of the consultant.

12. Any responses that do not adhere to these response instructions may be deemed non-responsive and rejected on that basis. Only information that is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated.
13. Delivery of the response to the Town on or before the above date is solely and strictly the responsibility of the consultant.
14. The Town Manager shall be the official authority for determining late bids.
15. It is the consultant's responsibility to read and understand the requirements of this Request for Proposal (RFP).

**Doing Business:** Awarded consultant shall possess or be able to acquire a license to do business in the State of North Carolina. Awarded consultant shall produce a certificate of insurance to the Town with the following limits and coverages:

1. Workman's Compensation Insurance—The awarded consultant shall maintain during the life of the contract all Workman's Compensation Insurance as is or may be required by the Laws of North Carolina.
2. Automobile Liability Insurance—Insurance for all vehicles used in the performance of this contract must be in place at a minimum amount of at least \$300,000 per person and \$500,000 per occurrence for personal injury and wrongful death; and at least \$100,000 for property damage; and medical payment coverage of at least \$5,000 per occurrence.
3. Professional Insurance—Consultant shall maintain professional liability insurance with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage coverage, and shall include premises and operations, independent contractors, products and completed operations, contractual liability, and broad form property damage. The Town shall be named as an additional insured on each of said insurance policies. Consultant shall furnish copies of all such policies and all renewals, terminations, and alterations to the Town on a current basis.

**Interpretation and Clarifications:**

1. Requests for information or clarification of this RFP must be made in writing and emailed to Barbara Kornegay at [bkornegay@nc.rr.com](mailto:bkornegay@nc.rr.com) **and** Jammie Royall at [j\\_royall@townofmountolivenc.com](mailto:j_royall@townofmountolivenc.com). Email is the preferred method of communication. The RFP name, page number (if

applicable), and topic of question should be included with the request. Any and all amendments or revisions to this RFP will be made via written addendum and posted to the Town’s website.

2. All questions must be received by 5 PM on 11/8/2022. Replies will be posted to the Town’s website. There will be no last date of addendum for the RFP.

**Evaluation and Award:**

**Selection Criteria:** Responses will be evaluated and scored by a committee consisting of, at a minimum, the Town Manager, and one Town commissioner. To assist the evaluation committee in determining if the response represents the best value for the Town, the evaluation and scoring of responses will be based on the following criteria. The evaluation committee will consider the information submitted in the response, and the interview. The evaluation criteria listed below will be used to recommend selection of the consultant or for the purpose of selecting short-listed consultant/s for interviews. The Town may choose to award without engaging in interviews.

<b>Selection Criteria: Department of Commerce Rural Transformation Grant for Downtown Master Plan: Mount Olive, NC</b>	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Score</b>
<b>Project Approach</b>	30 points
1.Understanding of the unique elements, issues, concerns and variety of interests and approach in analyzing and solving key issues with a rational methodology to implementation	
2. Clearly identified methods to be used by the consultant and link methods to specific deliverables identified by the Town	

3. Coordination of the project, and proposed timeline for completion of the project	
<i>Additional consideration will be given for effective, proven methodologies that will ensure satisfactory performance and timely completion of the project.</i>	
<b>Consultant's Overall Experience and Qualifications</b>	25 points
1. Overall experience and qualification of consultant, excluding the proposed project manager	
2. Comparable experience to the requirements in this RFP and for other similar projects	
3. Comprehensive organizational descriptions which include professional history of the consultant and demonstrate a working knowledge or previous performance of the services required	
4. Comparable experience and resources consultant provides with respect to downtown master planning, market studies, and public engagement	
<i>Additional consideration will be given for licenses and certifications held by consultant personnel, excluding proposed project manager; experience with small towns, and feedback obtained from consultant's client references.</i>	
<b>Project Manager's Overall Experience and Qualifications</b>	20 points
The evaluation should include, at a minimum:	

1. Overall experience and qualifications of the proposed project manager, including experience outside the consultant's firm	
2. Histories, skillsets, and relevant previous projects that demonstrate experience in and working knowledge of the services required in the RFP.	
3. Overall understanding and knowledge of downtown master planning	
4. Overall understanding and knowledge of G.S. 160D.	
<i>Additional consideration will be given for licenses and certifications held by the proposed project manager; availability to the Town; proximity to the Town; experience with small towns, and feedback from project manager client references.</i>	
<b>Interview</b>	15 points
1. Knowledge demonstrated by consultant's representatives who attend the interview. The individual identified in the response as the project manager should attend the interview.	
2. Participation from consultant's representatives.	
<b>Cost Proposal</b>	10 points
<b>Total Possible Score</b>	100 points

**Award:** The Town reserves the right to select the response that is most advantageous to the Town and meets the best needs of the Town considering available funding, proposed methodology and process, and other factors deemed

relevant by the Town. The Town will make a final selection based on the evaluation committee's recommendation and such other factors as the Town deems to be in its best interests.