



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Department of Planning & Community Development

City Hall, 1 Roosevelt Square N  
Mount Vernon, New York 10550  
(914) 840-4029

Shawyn Patterson-Howard  
Mayor

James Rausse, FAICP, WEDG  
Commissioner

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### CONSULTING SERVICES

### CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, NEW YORK

### PREPARATION OF UPDATE TO THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND AMENDMENT OF ZONING CODE

*Please note that this is an extension of the RFP originally released on June 22, 2022.*

Proposals will be accepted in person or via mail, postdated until **4:30 PM, 25th day of August 2022** in the Office of the City Clerk, City of Mount Vernon City Hall, 1 Roosevelt Square N, Mount Vernon, NY 10550.

### Overview

#### **Purpose**

The City of Mount Vernon seeks proposals from professional and experienced planning consultants (Consultant) to provide a range of consulting, planning, and technical services to help update the City's Comprehensive Plan so that it: (1) reflects the community's vision for its future growth and development, (2) preserves and enhances the quality of life within the City, and (3) creates a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable Mount Vernon. The Consultant will also prepare amendments to the City's Zoning Code. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is intended to help the City select a qualified and experienced consultant in such matters.

**Proposal Due Date**

Proposals will be accepted up until 4:30 PM on August 25, 2022. Three paper copies of submission are required in addition to one complete submission in a PDF format, which can be submitted via <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/new-york/departementoofplanningcommunitydevelopment>.

Please place proposals in an envelope or box clearly labeled “Consultant Services Response to RFP for City of Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan Update” and send or deliver to:

Tanesia M. Walters, J.D., M.P.A, City Clerk  
Office of the City Clerk  
City of Mount Vernon City Hall  
1 Roosevelt Square N  
Mount Vernon, NY 10550

All hardcopy proposals must be enclosed in a sealed envelope inscribed with “Consultant Services Response to RFP for City of Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan Update.” The name and address of the persons submitting the proposal must appear on the envelope which should be addressed to the Office of the City Clerk of the City of Mount Vernon, New York.

**Consultant Responsibilities**

The Consultant shall provide a project management team experienced in services including but not limited to: project management, community engagement, research and consultation on best practices, meeting facilitation, document drafting, mapping, creating support graphics, statistical analysis and presentations to elected and appointed officials, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group, and the general public.

Primary interface of the selected Consultant with Mount Vernon will be through the Department of Planning & Community Development (PCD) who will then be interfacing and coordinating with the Mayor and City Council. PCD staff will be responsible for the direction, review, and approval of all work as well as the program administration of the contract for compliance with and interpretation of the scope, schedule, and budget. In carrying out these functions, staff will ensure the Consultant is consistent with the City’s Code of Conduct policies and procedures. The consultant firm(s) shall report to the Commissioner of Planning & Community Development, who will then be responsible for regularly scheduled updates to City Council. At the City Council’s request, the consultant may provide reports or testimony directly to them.

The selected Consultant will share in project management responsibilities and will have primary responsibility for the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code amendments. The Consultant will consider data compiled as per recent and ongoing topical and project-based studies that may help advise and/or expedite the completion of the Comprehensive Plan update. These studies may be published by public, not-for-profit or for-profit entities. The Consultant will also have primary responsibility for

developing sustainability metrics and related data, in coordination with PCD and the Director of Sustainability. As part of its efforts under this project, the Consultant will also be responsible for the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process, guiding the City Council as Lead Agency, and preparing all necessary documentation to meet SEQRA requirements for the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Code amendments, including a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS).

**Contract Term**

The contract shall be awarded for a term of two years with an option to extend the agreement upon mutual consent and to the extent that funding permits. The anticipated start date for work under the contract term is mid to late September 2022.

**Budget**

The full scope of this contract is contingent on the City of Mount Vernon securing anticipated grant funding. Should the City not secure the anticipated funding, certain tasks or elements of this RFP may be eliminated consistent with available funding. Firms shall submit cost proposals based on this knowledge.

Firms are required to express in writing and numerically the price for which they will agree to execute the contract and perform the work and/or furnish and deliver the services herein required and as set forth in the RFP documents.

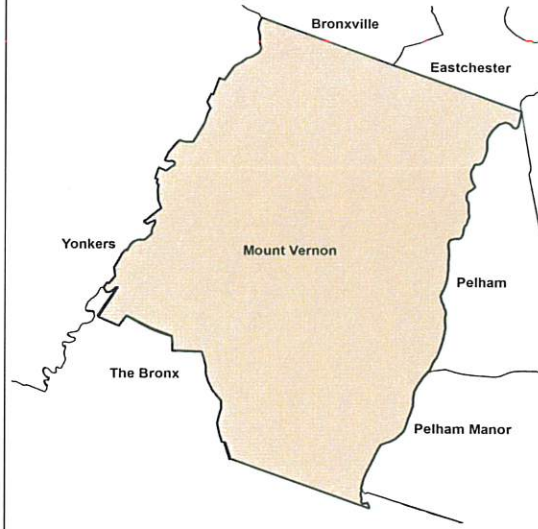
**Background on the City of Mount Vernon**

**City Profile**

In 1894, Mount Vernon (and Yonkers) residents rejected a referendum to join the boroughs to consolidate into a new “City of Greater New York.” Today, the City of Mount Vernon exists at the intersection of a city and suburb and is in the southern part of Westchester County, approximately 13 miles north of Manhattan. Mount Vernon is the eighth largest city in New York State, the second most densely populated city in the state, and the tenth most densely populated city (with a qualifying population of 50,000) in the United States. Mount Vernon’s existing land use, based on total number of lots, consists of 87% residential, 3% commercial, 3% industrial, and 7% undeveloped vacant land. It is in the 16<sup>th</sup> Congressional District and includes zip codes 10550, 10552, and 10553.

### **Location**

The City of Mount Vernon is a very urban, dense inner first ring suburb of New York City located just north of the Bronx and also bordered by the cities of Pelham and Pelham Manor to the East, the City of Bronxville and the Town of Eastchester to the north, and the City of Yonkers to the west. The City is 4.4 square miles and is home to approximately 73,893 residents (approximately 16,000 per square mile). Given the City's location within the New York City Metropolitan Region and its transportation infrastructure, Mount Vernon is extremely accessible to all areas within the region.



### **Transportation**

Designated as a bedroom/commuter community from its inception, Mount Vernon is about a 25- to 30-minute commute to midtown Manhattan via one of the City's three Metro-North railroad stations. There are three additional Metro-North stations within 2/3 mile of the City's boundaries that are accessible to Mount Vernon residents. Pre-pandemic, ridership at the Mount Vernon East station averaged 2,880 riders per day in 2018, making it the busiest rail station within Mount Vernon. Additionally, two New York City subway lines terminate or commence within three city blocks of the Mount Vernon border. The Westchester County Bee-Line System connects Mount Vernon residents to NYC and parts of Westchester County, with seven routes accessible at Petrillo Plaza in the City's downtown. Three parkways run through the City and two major highways are less than a mile each from the City's borders. Currently, Mount Vernon does not have any designated bicycle lanes.

### **Travel to Work**

The 2020 ACS 5-year Estimates show that for Mount Vernon residents who commuted to work, almost 50% drove to work alone, approximately 8% carpooled, and approximately 32% used public transportation. About 4% of residents walked to work and approximately 3% used other means. The average commute time was 37.3 minutes. 3.5% of residents worked from home.

### **Population and Demographics**

Per the 2020 Census, Mount Vernon has a population of 73,893 people. Its racial and ethnic profile is 62.7% Black/African American, 17.4% Hispanic/Latino, 17.2% White,

and 2.1% Asian. The foreign-born population is 30.4%. The median income for the city is \$59,291 and the poverty level is 13.7%. 2020 ACS 5-year Estimates show that for residents who are 25 years or older, an estimated 26.1% are high school graduates, 17.7% of residents have a bachelor's degree, and 13.2% have a graduate or professional degree.

### **Employment**

In 2020, 33,951 Mount Vernon residents were employed. Some of the largest industries in terms of the percentage of employment are education services and health and social assistance (37%), professional, scientific, and management, administrative, and waste management services (10.6%), and retail trade (10%).

### **Housing**

According to the 2020 ACS 5-year Estimates, the City of Mount Vernon has a total of 28,632 housing units, 5.1% of which are vacant. Approximately 21.4% are single-unit, detached structures and 73.6% are structures with 2 or more units. The owner-occupied housing unit rate is 38.1%. The median home value is \$367,200. Renters pay a median gross rent of \$1,327. Mount Vernon is home to approximately 8,400 rent burdened households, making up about 54% of total renter households in the City. Approximately 75% of the City's housing stock was built prior to 1960.

## Comprehensive Plan Overview

The last time Mount Vernon adopted a Comprehensive Plan was in 1968. In 2011, The City's Comprehensive Plan was updated, but not adopted. Accordingly, antiquated planning principles and practices are governing the development and growth of the City in some areas, which has been a severe impediment to the City's growth and economic sustainability. The City will also be updating its zoning ordinance, which needs to be modernized and more streamlined in its approach. The current document can be confusing and inconsistent, without specified calculations to guide development in some instances.

Like many urban areas in the state and throughout the nation, Mount Vernon continues to face significant challenges, including aging housing stock and infrastructure, issues with housing affordability, significant development pressure, struggles with generating revenue, and more. At the same time, Mount Vernon boasts many assets, including its advantageous location in the region, great access to public transportation, a legacy of arts and culture, notable historic assets, and more.

As part of the Comprehensive Planning process, the City seeks to establish its identity as a municipality in order to address growth around its high population density and low-commercial tax revenue base. It also seeks to incorporate previous zoning studies and amendments to advance environmentally sustainable and equitable economic development by establishing the legal and policy framework for instituting sustainability and equity through its decision-making around land use.

Since its first Master Plan in 1968, the City of Mount Vernon has undertaken numerous studies focused on specific areas of the City and on particular issues, including transit-oriented development, economic revitalization, and arts and culture. Relevant studies and plans include:

- 1968 Mount Vernon Master Plan
- 2009 City of Mount Vernon Parking Management Workshop Findings
- 2011 Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan Report
- 2011 Mount Vernon Demographic, Market, and Development Study
- 2017 Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization Study
- 2017 South Fourth Avenue Corridor Plan
- 2018 Mount Vernon Arts, Culture and Heritage Master Plan
- 2020 Mount Vernon Economic Development Strategy
- 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice
- 2021 Mount Vernon East Transit-oriented Development Neighborhood Plan

The time is appropriate to update the Comprehensive Plan and amend the Zoning Code to reflect the City's vision for equity, inclusivity, and sustainability through mixed-use, transit-centered growth, the preservation of existing neighborhoods, and other strategies.

The process to update the Comprehensive Plan will be participatory, with community meetings, workshops, and other engagement activities happening across the City to ensure the diversity of Mount Vernon residents, business owners, and other stakeholders shape the plan alongside the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group made up of local stakeholders.

### **Phased Approach**

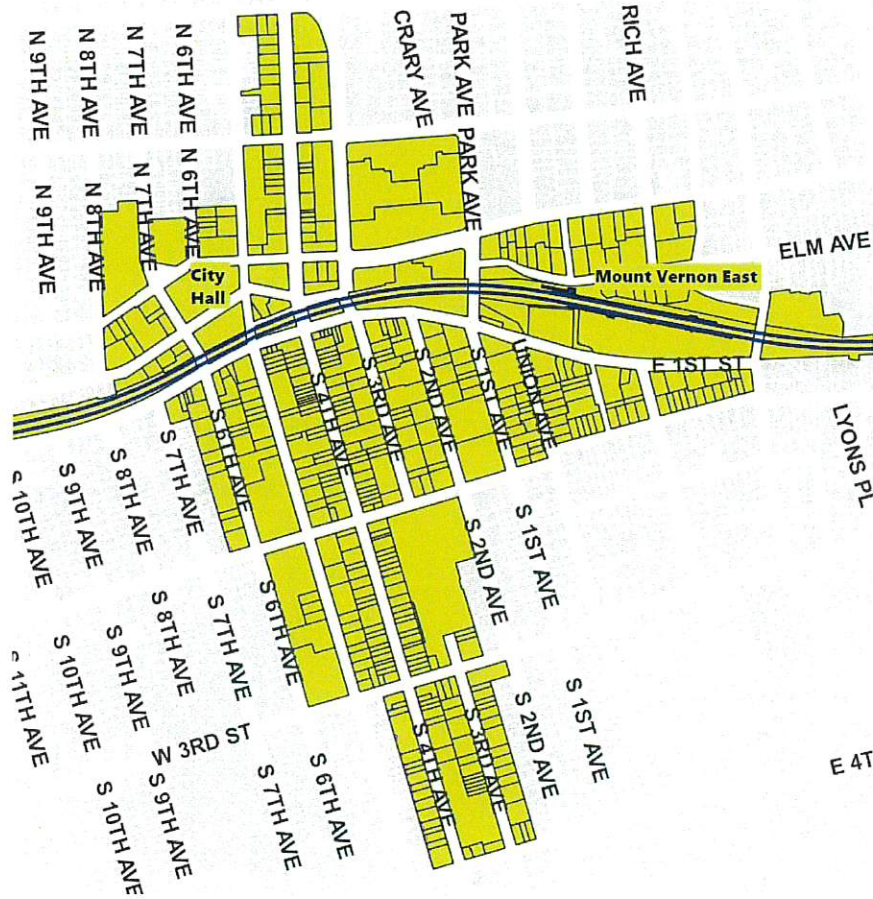
The planning process will be conducted in two phases. The purpose of the phased approach is to first address the development pressure occurring on underutilized parcels in and surrounding downtown, and to foster citywide, community buy-in through the creation of dialogue and a framework in an area that has a vested interest citywide. The first phase will be a pilot, with the second phase focused on addressing the needs of the totality of the City.

#### **Phase 1**

##### *Study Area*

Phase 1 of the Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan will be focused on an approximately 40-block area containing Downtown Mount Vernon, parcels surrounding the Mount Vernon East Metro-North commuter rail station, and portions of surrounding neighborhoods on both the North and South sides of Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon hosts a renowned downtown shopping district with a four-block area that is the heart of the City's core, located along Gramatan and South Fourth Avenues between East First Street and East Third Street. Until the late 1950's, Mount Vernon was the engine

of the region's significant retail market. Currently, this area reflects an eclectic mix of uses, ranging from government institutions, including City Hall, office and multifamily residential structures between two and fifteen stories in height, one-story taxpayer retail properties, one- and two-story light industrial uses, and one- to three-family homes.



During the past ten years, the City of Mount Vernon has targeted its urban core for future growth and pursued a strategy of transit-oriented development (TOD), with studies focused on the areas immediately surrounding Mount Vernon's transit centers. Although these actions have been beneficial to begin to improve Mount Vernon's underdeveloped areas near the railroad stations, much of Mount Vernon's downtown central business district and urban center remain economically distressed, with lower-than-average household income and employment rates, commercial vacancies, substandard housing, and under-investment in a commercial district along First Street between 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North Fulton Avenue.

The Downtown Mount Vernon bus terminal in the study area is the juncture for seven bus lines, which pass through or terminate at Petrillo Plaza, connecting residents to other parts of the city, lower Westchester County, and the Northeast Bronx. Additionally, the study area is bisected by the New Haven Metro-North rail line, which provides direct transit access to Grand Central Terminal in New York City to the South as well as Stamford and New Haven, Connecticut to the North. At the same time, this

railroad cut has served as a dividing line between the north and south parts of the City since it was complete in 1894. An eyesore, the railroad cut also represents a psychological and socio-economic barrier between neighborhoods in Mount Vernon. The Comprehensive Plan will identify strategies for covering the railroad cut and reconnecting the City.

Despite these challenges, developers have shown an increased interest in Mount Vernon, as they have in other urban locations in the Mid-Hudson Region. This interest is due to the cost, efficiency, and the preferences of the growing population in this part of New York.

#### *Relevant Program Designations*

All the census blocks within the South Fourth Avenue corridor are considered a *Potential Environmental Justice Area* according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Acknowledging that this notable area holds this designation, the City seeks to improve air quality, increase pedestrian activity, offer complete streets so that recreational activity is incorporated in the area, and increase the area's green space.

Additionally, most of the census tracts that comprise the study area within Mount Vernon's downtown qualify for the United States Small Business Administration's *HUBZone Program*. This program is designed for communities that have been historically underserved by business development and business incentive resources. The program facilitates economic growth by providing incentives for businesses to open and operate within these zones in exchange for obtaining government contracts. Qualified HUBZone census tracts typically have prolonged periods of low employment, lack of investment, and very little economic growth.

Mount Vernon is also one of eight municipalities in Westchester County that has a census tract designated as an *Opportunity Zone*. This geography also overlaps with the South Fourth Avenue-East Third Street Urban Renewal area. In census tract 31, the median household income is \$33,225 according to the 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

#### *Phase 1 Priorities*

Project tasks for the Consultant will include establishing possible sub-areas in the study area for review, which may include different zoning for height and density. The Consultant will also lead public outreach activities to ensure that the goals and policies of the plan are constructed upon a foundation that reflects a broad consensus of the residents of Mount Vernon. A Massing and build out analysis will be undertaken in the study area to develop design alternatives that will test various height and Floor-to-Area Ratio densities in each sub-area. Soft sites in each area could be selected to evaluate impacts using visual simulation and to develop the build out potential for the number of units, population, traffic, parking, revenue, and other SEQRA review elements. Priority will be given to zoning, streetscape, and parking determinations. A goal for this phase includes the adoption of land use recommendations and



implementation of Zoning amendments by the City Council separately, but in coordination with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan.

Phase 1 will be the subject of its own SEQRA review prior to adoption by the City Council. Zoning changes and SEQRA findings completed separately will be coordinated and integrated into the final Comprehensive Plan. The anticipated timeframe for completion of Phase 1, including the GEIS and enactment of proposed zoning amendments, is nine to twelve months.

## **Phase 2**

### *Study Area*

The Comprehensive Plan's second phase will be focused on the rest of the City of Mount Vernon and remaining work within the Phase 1 study area that require a citywide assessment. Mount Vernon is primarily residential, with a mix of single-, two-, and three-family homes as well as multi-family buildings. The City also has commercial and industrial uses, with much of the industrial land concentrated in Canal Village, the Washington Street area, and the Mount Vernon West Industrial area. Additionally, the City has over 240 acres of parks and open space. In 2011, Mount Vernon released a comprehensive plan report (which was never adopted), which organized the City's neighborhoods into three designations, ranging from preserving and protecting the existing land use, maintaining the current land use but improving functionality, and identifying areas where land use should be modified to promote increased development. This continues to be a useful framework that considers the desire to balance preservation and growth in an intentional manner across the City.

### *Phase 2 Priorities*

Phase 2 will take the lessons learned from the first phase and apply them for full implementation of a citywide, Comprehensive Plan. Phase 2 will holistically analyze and develop strategies across major themes including demographic trends, housing, land use and zoning, open space, sustainability and green infrastructure, economic development, the preservation of cultural and historical assets, transportation, and more. A robust community engagement process will continue to be an integral part of our approach in developing the plan.

The anticipated timeframe for completion of Phase 2, including the GEIS and enactment of proposed Zoning amendments, is estimated to be twelve months subsequent to the completion of Phase 1.

## Comprehensive Plan Framework

The Consultant will prepare a DRAFT Comprehensive Plan, incorporating information from previous studies, and future work including surveys, input collected through community workshops and meetings, SWOT analyses, zoning and land use analysis, transportation studies, and any additional research or analysis. The draft will include the Phase 1 recommendations and zoning amendments for the Downtown Study Area

and the Phase 2 recommendations and zoning amendments covering the remainder of the City of Mount Vernon and its neighborhoods. Preliminary work for Phase 2 can commence during Phase 1. The Plan should include the following elements:

- General statements of goals, objectives, and strategies upon which proposals for the immediate and long-range enhancement, growth, and development of the City are based.
- Consideration of regional needs and the official plans of other government units and agencies within the region, including the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Strategy and the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan.
- Updates of demographics, population growth trends, socio-economic trends, and existing and future housing needs.
- Completion of housing analysis including density, market rate housing, affordable housing, and senior and supportive housing.
- Incorporation of language to be included in the zoning ordinance that promotes social and environmental justice, and inclusionary housing.
- Review of historic and cultural resources, natural resources, estuaries, and sensitive environmental areas, including brownfields, as well as related health indicators.
- Analysis of existing and proposed public and private utilities and sustainable infrastructure.
- Review of existing and proposed recreation facilities and parkland, including trail connectivity.
- Development of a new Sustainability Chapter in the Zoning Ordinance with analysis of existing zoning regulations and building codes to identify barriers to achieving the sustainable development goals developed for the Comprehensive Plan, and the promotion of green infrastructure, energy conservation, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, waste management, brownfield management, and sustainable neighborhood design at the waterfront, gateways, and downtown.
- Review of city planning studies, projects, and revitalization initiatives, including ongoing planning efforts and projects.
- Review and update of proposed downtown development with appropriate design and development recommendations.
- Analysis of increased potential for downtown development including retail environment and strategies to continue support for retail activity, and potential for cultural, educational, and institutional expansion.
- Analysis of and proposed recommendations for public and private development, policy and design recommendations, as well as linkages to improve public waterfront access and resiliency planning.
- Analysis and proposed recommendations for implementation of greenways and a bicycle master plan.
- Analysis and proposed recommendations for regulation and siting for major technological infrastructure, such as electric vehicle charging stations and telecommunication towers.
- A prioritized list of recommendations for implementation, including, but not

limited to climate smart certification actions and zoning updates.

### **Tasks**

It is anticipated that the selected Consultant will perform the following tasks:

**1. Manage the Contract and Provide Quarterly Reports**

The Consultant's responsibilities will include contract management. Additionally, the Consultant shall participate in conference calls and meetings as required and prepare and submit quarterly reports. Available draft sections of the preliminary Comprehensive Plan shall be provided on a quarterly basis.

**2. Develop a Project Execution Plan**

The Consultant will develop a Project Execution Plan within one month of selection. This Project Execution Plan will include cost estimates for each activity/task and a time frame for deliverables for review by the City. The Project Execution Plan will include the primary tasks of the project: information gathering and analysis, public outreach and community visioning, drafting plan elements, and more.

**3. Develop and Execute a Public Outreach Strategy**

The Consultant, with the assistance of the City, shall prepare a Public Outreach Strategy for the project to encourage members of the City of Mount Vernon community to contribute to the planning process for the Comprehensive Plan. This includes a methodology and strategies to encourage diverse community participation throughout the planning process.

The Consultant shall maintain and submit meeting minutes, presentation materials, and an attendance list to document results of Advisory Group meetings. Other public meetings and workshops should include synthesized notes of participants' input, presentation materials, and attendance lists.

In coordination with the City, the Consultant will be expected to conduct multiple community stakeholder meetings in every neighborhood/identified communities. This will be in addition to citywide presentations of findings at various intervals throughout the comprehensive planning process. The Consultant's Public Outreach Strategy should present plans for in-person, material, and technological outreach in order to involve as many residents in the City as possible.

**4. Evaluate the Zoning Code**

The Consultant shall conduct an in-depth review of the City's adopted plans and existing zoning laws and regulations as they relate to elements including community sustainability, vulnerabilities due to climate change, transportation, transit-oriented development, downtown development, and more. As part of this Comprehensive Plan Update, the Consultant will present any proposed Zoning amendment recommendations to City officials and residents. The

Consultant shall summarize findings and identify barriers to achieving the sustainable and equitable development goals identified for the Comprehensive Plan. The Consultant will also demonstrate the ability to develop metrics and projected benefit values to track the success of sustainability elements within the Comprehensive Plan.

**5. Draft and Finalize the Comprehensive Plan**

Consultant will submit the DRAFT Comprehensive Plan showing comments and feedback from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group. The Consultant will then prepare a proposed FINAL Comprehensive Plan in a form that is acceptable to be adopted by the City that will be a concise, graphically rich, and easily referenced document that can be distributed to businesses, residents, and prospective developers. This document must be in an electronic format that makes it easily transmittable and reproducible. All mapping should be in a format acceptable to the City for continued use and updating.

**6. Prepare for the Environmental Review**

The Consultant shall prepare all necessary documentation to meet SEQRA requirements for both phases of the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Code amendments, including the preparation of a GEIS. The Consultant shall be responsible for determining the lead agency and coordinating with stakeholder agencies and other interested parties, including public outreach, as applicable.

**7. Present to City Council**

The Consultant shall present the proposed final Zoning Code amendments and Comprehensive Plan Update to the City Council. PCD will provide City Council regular progress updates as per an agreed upon schedule.

**8. Facilitate the Final Adoption of Updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Amendments**

The Consultant shall facilitate the formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code amendments by providing the final documents to the City Council for review and final adoption and making presentations to the City Council in support of the adoption of the Update.

A final Task Outline and Schedule will be agreed upon with PCD and the City Council before proceeding. This RFP is only preliminary.

### Submittal Requirements

In order to assist the City with the evaluation of proposals that are received, each proposal shall use the following format:

**Statement of Qualifications** - A brief description of the firm or firms submitting the proposal, including full business name, legal status (corporate, partnership or sole proprietor), confirmation of registration to do business in New York, number and type of employees, specialties, and longevity. List similar projects and representative work samples from past projects, and the specific personnel who worked on them as well as who is proposed to work on this project. Include each past project's name and client, year completed, dollar amount, and telephone number of a contact person at the entity where the work was performed who has direct knowledge of the referenced project.

**Project Team Members** - List the names of all personnel who will be part of the project team and any specialties and strengths that make the Consultant and the personnel assigned to this project uniquely suited to the task of performing the work as outlined in this RFP. Provide an organizational chart of the employees proposed to work on this project, including a project manager who will be assigned to this project and who shall be the City's main point of contact. It is very important to include project management experience for the proposed project manager. This section shall include a listing of team member's relevant project experience regarding the tasks and responsibilities they would perform in this project, and their curriculum vitae.

**Project Schedule & Details** - The Consultant shall provide a detailed proposed project schedule consistent with the *Tasks* identified on page 10 of the RFP. This shall include a detailed description of the Consultant's proposed approach, scope of services, and timeline to complete each task. The City will make available copies of regulations, ordinances, maps, information regarding infrastructure, and any other studies relevant to the project.

**Cost & Payment Schedule** - All invoices shall specify the name and title of Consultant staff providing services, and details as to the services provided. Further, each invoice shall reference the specific work scope item identified in the Consultant's scope of work or as otherwise specified in the contract for services between the Consultant and the City, which shall include a calculation as to the percentage of work completed for each task. A total, not-to exceed dollar value for any reimbursable expenses associated with each individual work scope item must be specified. A rate for each type of expense, such as mileage, printing expenses, etc. must be specified.

**MWBE Requirements** - Pursuant to NYS Executive Law Article 15-A and NYCRR Parts 142- 144, for the purposes of this procurement, New York State establishes an overall goal of 30% of the contract for Minority and/or Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) participation. For the purposes of meeting these participation goals, please identify how the MWBE goal is proposed to be satisfied. Special consideration will be given to primaries that are MWBEs.

### **Proposal Evaluation**

The City of Mount Vernon will select the most highly qualified firm according to the following criteria:

1. Responsiveness to the Request for Proposals.
2. Demonstrated understanding of the Project Objectives and Scope of Work.
3. Recent and relevant experience in similar projects.
4. Demonstrated reliability to perform and manage projects of the nature described herein.
5. Familiarity with innovative sustainable, technological, and equity practices.
6. Familiarity with NYS agencies and NYS reporting requirements and the project area.
7. Qualifications and relevant experience of the Consultant team.
8. Cost-effectiveness of the proposal.
9. Ability to meet the City's MWBE objectives.
10. Schedule.

### **Conditions and Limitations**

The selection and retention of a firm will be contingent upon the availability of the proposed key staff unless substitutes are approved by the City of Mount Vernon during negotiations. The top-ranked firms may be requested to prepare and give oral presentations before the City of Mount Vernon Consultant Selection Committee.

The City of Mount Vernon expects to select a consulting firm from the proposals submitted but reserves the right to request substitutions of firms. The City is not required to accept the lowest bid. Additionally, the City reserves the right to waive any non-compliance with Conditions in its sole discretion. The City also reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFP, to advertise for new responses, or to accept any response deemed to be in our best interest. A response to this RFP should not be construed as a contract or an indication of a commitment of any kind on the part of the City of Mount Vernon, nor does it commit either to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a response to this request or for any costs incurred prior to the execution of a final contract.

Bids will publicly be opened and read aloud at a meeting of the Board of Estimate and Contract in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall, Mount Vernon, New York.

Sub-consultants, sub-contracting and/or joint ventures are permitted. Upon selection, a Professional Service Contract shall be prepared, negotiated, and fully executed before work is initiated.

The acceptance of the proposal and award of the contract will be by notice, in writing, signed by the City Clerk. No other act by the City, its members, officials, agents or employees shall constitute acceptance of the proposal.

The successful firm will be required to appear at the Office of the Corporation Counsel to execute the contract agreement within ten (10) days from the mailing of notification by the City Clerk of acceptance of the proposal.

## Questions

Any questions regarding this RFP can be submitted to Tomeka Graham-Ouattara, Executive Secretary, at [tgraham-ouattara@cmvny.com](mailto:tgraham-ouattara@cmvny.com) or 914-840-4029.

Proposers requiring assistance submitting a response online should contact Bidnet's vendor support department at 800-835-4603, Option 2, or email [support@bidnet.com](mailto:support@bidnet.com).

## Topics to be considered:

### Housing

- Density
- Affordable Housing
- Senior & Supportive Housing
- Market Rate Housing
- Homeownership
- Section 8
- Sustainability

### Transportation

- Metro-North
- Beeline Bus
- Parkway/Highway Access
- Local, County, and State Roads
- Bicycles
- Alternative Modes (i.e., Scooters, E-bikes, etc.)
- Traffic Impact Analysis
- Traffic Signalization

### Economic Development

- Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the City's economy
- Downtown
- Neighborhood Business Districts
- Local Retail
- Small Business Services
- Industrial Development/Preservation
- Employment, by Sector
- Job Growth Sectors
- MWBE Growth and Support
- Citywide Marketing Strategies
- Adaptive Reuse Strategies
- Other Market Niches in the City by Specific Use (i.e., Hotel, Medical, etc.)

### Environmental

- Brownfields
- Health Indicators
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Climate Change
- Existing Urban Habitats (flora and fauna)

- Water Quality of Hutchinson and Bronx Rivers and their tributaries
- Stormwater and Flooding
- Air Quality

#### Open Space

- Open Space Survey
- Expansion in Underserved Areas
- Greenways (i.e., Pedestrian and Bicycle Paths)
- Open Space Typology/Placemaking

#### Infrastructure/Public Works

- Sanitary Sewer
- Stormwater
- Road Maintenance
- Sanitation
- Water
- Electrical
- Natural Gas
- Telecommunications
  - Cellphone Towers
  - 5G Small Cell Service
  - Overall Adjustable, Long-term Telecommunications Strategy

#### Institutional

- Hospitals
- Public Schools
- Private Schools
- Higher Education
- Community Centers
- Recreation Centers
- Mental Health Facilities
- Support Service Institutions
- Day Care Facilities

#### Public Safety

- Police
- Fire
- Emergency Management
- Infrastructure (i.e., Lighting)

#### Public Health

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Mental Health Facilities
- Senior Facilities (i.e., Nursing Homes, Assisted Living)
- Health Indicator Programs (i.e., Asthma, Obesity, Diabetes, etc.)

#### Sustainability/Resiliency

- Green Building
- Sewer and Stormwater Infrastructure
- Emergency Management
- Energy Sources



### Special Zones

- Downtown
- Art District
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Senior Overlays

### Historic Preservation

- National Historic Register
- New York State
- County/City Approach
- Landmark Buildings
- Historic Districts

### Contextual Zones

- Downtown
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Low-Density Districts
- Inclusionary Housing

## Addendum

The Consultant shall comply with all applicable provisions of Section 239-m of the General Municipal Law.

**QUESTIONNAIRE REGARDING BUSINESS ENTERPRISES OWNED  
AND CONTROLLED BY PERSONS OF COLOR OR WOMEN**

**M/WBE Policy**

**A. Non-Discrimination Policy**

In connection with this proposal, the bidder, its employees, its subcontractors, if any, or any other person acting on its behalf shall not discriminate against or intimidate any employee or other individual on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, alienage or citizenship status, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, familial status, genetic predisposition or carrier status during the term of or in the connection with any resulting contract, as those terms may be defined in Chapter 700 of the Laws of Westchester County. The bidder will take affirmative action to assure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, alienage or citizenship status, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, familial status, genetic predisposition or carrier status. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship.

The successful bidder shall furnish all necessary information and reports and shall permit access to its books, records, and accounts by the City for purposes of investigation to ascertain compliance with the provisions of any resultant contract.

**B. Minority/Local Participation Policy**

It is the policy of the City to use its best efforts to encourage, promote and increase the meaningful and significant participation of local business enterprises and business enterprises owned and controlled by persons of color or women, Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Women Business Enterprise (WBE), in contracts and projects funded by all departments of the City and to develop guidelines to efficiently and effectively monitor such participation.

The term persons of color means a United States citizen or permanent resident alien who is and can demonstrate membership of one of the following groups: (a) Black persons having origins in any Black African racial groups; (b) Hispanic persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Cuban, Central or South American descent of either Indian or Hispanic origin regardless of race; (c) Native American or Alaskan native persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America; or (d) Asian or Pacific Islander persons having origins in any of the Far East countries, South East Asia, the Indian sub-continent or the Pacific Islands.

An enterprise owned and controlled by persons of color or women means a business enterprise including a sole proprietorship, limited liability partnership, partnership, limited liability corporation or corporation that is: (a) at least 51% owned by one or more persons of color or women; (b) an enterprise in which such ownership by persons of color or women is real, substantial and continuing; (c) an enterprise in which such ownership interest by persons of color or women has and exercises the authority to control and operate, independently, the day-to-day business decisions of the enterprise; and (d) an enterprise authorized to do business in this state which is independently owned and operated.

In addition, a business enterprise owned and controlled by persons of color or women shall be deemed to include any business enterprise certified as an MBE or WBE pursuant to Article 15-a of the New York State Executive Law and implementing regulations, 9 NYCRR Subtitle N Part 2 540 et seq., or as a small disadvantaged business concern pursuant to the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 631 et seq., and the relevant provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations as amended.

In furtherance of this goal, the bidder must complete a MBE/WBE questionnaire attached hereto. The completion of this form is requested to compile statistical data. The successful bidder shall also be required to complete a similar questionnaire as part of the contract.

**QUESTIONNAIRE REGARDING BUSINESS ENTERPRISES OWNED  
AND CONTROLLED BY PERSONS OF COLOR OR WOMEN**

As part of the City's desire to encourage the meaningful and significant participation of business enterprises owned and controlled by persons of color or women in City contracts, completion of this form is required. In order to provide economic opportunity for its residents and businesses, and stimulate economic development, the City of Mount Vernon has developed various policies that directly impact how public funds are spent. These policies are aimed at using the power of the public purse to stimulate economic development through the support and empowerment of the local community, especially those aspects of it that have been placed at a disadvantage in the past.

The term persons of color means a United States citizen or permanent resident alien who is and can demonstrate membership of one of the following groups: (a) Black persons having origins in any of the Black African racial groups; (b) Hispanic persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Cuban, Central or South American descent of either Indian or Hispanic origin regardless of race; (c) Native American or Alaskan native persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America; or (d) Asian or Pacific Islander persons having origins in any of the Far East countries, South East Asia, the Indian sub-continent or the Pacific Islands.

An enterprise owned and controlled by persons of color or women means a business enterprise including a sole proprietorship, limited liability partnership, partnership, limited liability corporation or corporation that is (a) at least 51% owned by one or more persons of color or women; (b) an enterprise in which such ownership by persons of color or women is real, substantial and continuing; (c) an enterprise in which such ownership interest by persons of color or women has and exercises the authority to control and operate, independently, the day-to-day business decisions of the enterprise; and (d) an enterprise authorized to do business in this state which is independently owned and operated.

In addition, a business enterprise owned and controlled by persons of color or women shall be deemed to include any business enterprise certified as an MBE or WBE pursuant to article 15-a of the New York State Executive Law and implementing regulations, 9 NYCRR subtitle N Part 540 et seq., or as a small disadvantaged business concern pursuant to the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 631 et seq., and the relevant provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations as amended.

1. Are you a business enterprise which is owned and controlled by persons of color or women in accordance with the standards listed above?  
 No  
 Yes (as a business owned and controlled by persons of color)  
 Yes (as a business owned and controlled by women)
  
2. Are you certified with the State of New York as a minority business enterprise ("MBE") or a women business enterprise ("WBE")?  
 No  
 Yes (as a MBE)  
 Yes (as a WBE)

If yes, official documentation of such certification must be attached hereto.

3. If you are a business owned and controlled by persons of color, please specify the minority classifications which apply: \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. If you are certified with the State of New York as an MBE, please specify the minority classifications which apply: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Are you certified with the Federal Government as a small disadvantaged business concern?  
 Yes  
 No

6. Name of Firm/Business Enterprise: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed By (Print Name/Title): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

A. The Contractor and any individual or legal entity in which the Contractor holds a ten percent (10%) or greater ownership interest and any individual or legal entity that holds a ten percent (10%) or greater ownership interest in the Contractor (a) has no business operations in Northern Ireland, or (b) shall take lawful steps in good faith to conduct any business operations in Northern Ireland in accordance with the MacBride Principles.

B. For purposes of this Certification, "MacBride Principles" shall mean those principles relating to nondiscrimination in employment and freedom of workplace opportunity which require employers doing business in Northern Ireland to:

- (1) increase the representation of individuals from underrepresented religious groups in the work force, including managerial, supervisory, administrative, clerical and technical jobs;
- (2) take steps to promote adequate security for the protection of employees from underrepresented religious groups both at the workplace and while traveling to and from work;
- (3) ban provocative religious or political emblems from the workplace;
- (4) publicly advertise all job openings and make special recruitment efforts to attract applicants from underrepresented religious groups;
- (5) establish layoff, recall and termination procedures which do not in practice favor a particular religious group;
- (6) abolish all job reservations, apprenticeship restrictions and differential employment criteria which discriminate on the basis of religion;
- (7) develop training programs that will prepare substantial numbers of current employees from underrepresented religious groups for skilled jobs, including the expansion of existing programs and the creation of new programs to train, upgrade and improve the skills of workers from underrepresented religious groups;
- (8) establish procedures to assess, identify and actively recruit employees from underrepresented religious groups with potential for further advancement; and
- (9) appoint a senior management staff member to oversee affirmative action efforts and develop a timetable to ensure their full implementation.

C. For purposes of this Certification, "Northern Ireland" shall be understood to be the six counties partitioned from the Irish Province of Ulster, and administered from London and/or from Stormont.

D. The Contractor agrees that the warranties and representation in paragraph "A" are material conditions of this Agreement. If the City receives information that the Contractor is in violation of paragraph "A", the City shall review such information and give the Contractor opportunity to respond. If the City finds that such a violation has occurred, the City may declare the Contractor in default, and/or terminate this Agreement. In the event of any such termination, the City may procure the supplies, services or work from another source in accordance with applicable law. The Contractor shall pay to the City the difference between the contract price for the uncompleted portion of this Agreement and the cost to the City of completing performance of this Agreement either by itself or by engaging another contractor. If this is a contract other than a construction contract, the Contractor shall be liable for the difference in price if the cost of procurement from another source is greater than what the City would have paid the Contractor plus any reasonable costs the City incurs in any new procurement and if this is a construction contract, the City shall also have the right to hold the Contractor in partial or total default in accordance with the default provisions of this Agreement. In addition, the Contractor may be declared not to be a responsible bidder or bidder for up to three (3) years, following written notice to the Contractor, giving the Contractor the opportunity for a hearing at which the Contractor may be represented by counsel. The rights and remedies of the City hereunder shall be in addition to, and not in lieu of, any rights and remedies the City has pursuant to this Agreement or by operation of law or in equity.

AGREED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Legal Name of Person, Firm or Corporation)*

By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Signature of Authorized Representative)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Title)*

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_