



**CITY OF NORTH CHICAGO
ILLINOIS**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):
Consultant SERVICES TO PREPARE A UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT
ORDINANCE (UDO)**

2026

City of North Chicago
1850 Lewis Avenue, North Chicago, Illinois 60064

www.northchicago.org

INTRODUCTION

This Request for Proposals (“RFP”) intends to obtain a qualified person, firm, or corporation (“Consultant”), for the preparation of a Unified Development Ordinance for the City of North Chicago, Illinois (“UDO”). The City’s existing zoning and subdivision ordinances, having been amended numerous times over previous decades, no longer support current urban planning best practices and the community’s vision for future development that supports and uplifts the rich and diverse culture of the City, necessitating a full rewrite. Additionally, the City is currently in the process of creating and adopting an Appearance Code for non-residential properties. This document, as a component of, or compliment to, the new UDO, will further the City’s mission to pursue development regulations that add to the City’s rich and diverse atmosphere. The purpose of the UDO is to produce a comprehensive, user-friendly, legally robust regulatory framework that streamlines and facilitates new development and aligns with the objectives of the City of North Chicago’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

The Consultant will prepare a proposal package for the North Chicago City Council to consider for adoption. To be eligible for consideration, the Consultant **must be capable of supplying the services noted herein and meet other criteria outlined in this proposal.**

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

North Chicago, Illinois is a home rule municipality located in eastern Lake County along the shore of Lake Michigan. The diverse and youthful community is anchored by major institutions such as Naval Station Great Lakes, Abbott Laboratories, the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, and Rosalind Franklin University. With a population of roughly 30,000, the city stands out as one of the most racially and ethnically diverse communities in Lake County, with large Hispanic/Latino, Black, White, and Asian populations contributing to its cultural richness. Household incomes vary widely, with a median around the mid-\$50,000s: creating a community shaped by both opportunity and need. Together, these dynamics give North Chicago a distinctive civic identity rooted in resilience, diversity, and its role as a regional hub for military, medical, and scientific innovation. As the city embarks on its own rebranding and advances multiple large-scale redevelopment projects, it is poised for a meaningful renaissance and the new Unified Development Ordinance will play a critical role in these efforts.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The intent of the development of a new UDO for the City of North Chicago is to provide a set of regulations that are easily understood, navigated, and enforced; capable of balancing preservation of historic neighborhoods with enhancement of residential and commercial areas; and supportive of modern development principles and patterns. A comprehensive rewrite of the City’s current zoning and subdivision ordinances is necessary for the City to execute on the Aspirations listed in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

While the specific goals and project scope may be further refined throughout the Consultant’s engagement with the City, proposals must consider the following objectives:

- **Comprehensive Plan Alignment:** Support and facilitate implementation of the Aspirations of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

- **Accessibility:** Develop codes that are easily read and understood by residents and developers alike.
- **Enforceability:** Develop codes that are consistently enforceable by the City of North Chicago and its departments.
- **Modernization:** Include modern, innovative planning and zoning tools based on current best practices that encourage both development of vacant properties and redevelopment of existing properties in a manner that preserves community character while uplifting neighborhoods.
- **Code Integrity:** Make all necessary code corrections or enhancements to eliminate errors or inconsistencies and ensure the UDO is legally defensible.

DESIGN FEATURES

The Consultant will conduct a comprehensive review of the current adopted codes and ordinances of the City of North Chicago to determine and define the design features needed to accomplish the stated project objectives. The completed UDO will, at a minimum, accommodate the following functional and design features:

- **Accessible Design:** The finished UDO and all associated digital content will be formatted and designed in compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA.
- **Appearance Code:** Incorporate the approved Appearance Code for Non-Residential Properties in the City of North Chicago which is to be finalized in adopted in May 2026.
- **Graphic Components:** Provide and integrate diagrams, graphics, tables, and illustrations that improve the clarity of the regulations.
- **Enforceable Standards:** Develop regulations that are enforceable by City staff in a practical manner.
- **Non-Conforming Uses:** Identify existing uses for eventual phase-out and develop clear administrative processes for their management.
- **Definitions:** Update all existing definitions to be up to modern standards for relevance and precision.
- **Zoning Districts:** Update district regulations to be consistent and suited to the current built environment, as well as the form and type of development supported by the Comprehensive Plan Aspirations and Future Land Use Map.
- **Permitted Use Matrix:** Provide an organized and easily readable table of uses permitted in zoning districts, as well as definitions to support any new and emerging uses.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following items make up the core services required of the selected consultant. This is not an exhaustive list, and the City of North Chicago remains open to any innovative processes or project approaches that achieve the project's stated objectives.

- **Project Management Plan:** Create a project management plan based on the project objectives to deliver the project deliverables, including a timeline, needed resources, and budget for all services.
- **Initial Code Assessment:** Conduct a preliminary assessment of the current Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and any other City ordinances relevant to the development of the UDO, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- **Zoning District Review:** Review existing zoning districts and overlay districts, identifying strengths and deficiencies.
- **Diagnostic Review:** Prepare a diagnostic review report detailing all identified deficiencies of the current adopted City codes and ordinances for review by City staff.
- **Recommendations for New Code:** Develop recommendations and proposals to address identified deficiencies and any Code amendments necessary to accomplish the project objectives.
- **Public Engagement:** Create a public engagement and communications plan including diverse outreach and participation methods for all citizens and stakeholders, along with potential workgroups or project committees. At a minimum, community engagement must include three (3) community-wide public engagement events, a comprehensive community-wide survey, and all public meetings before the Planning and Zoning Commission as may be required for passage of the proposed ordinance. Summaries and documentation of all community engagement efforts must be provided to the City. The City recognizes that there are different options for community engagement. Alternative methods of community engagement will be considered and may be accepted based on their ability to satisfy the City's needs.
- **Draft UDO Development:** Develop an initial comprehensive draft of the updated UDO.
- **Draft UDO Review:** Provide for at least two reviews of the draft document by City staff and make any revisions required.
- **Development Review Checklists:** Develop standardized review checklists for staff use when reviewing project proposals for conformance with the UDO, covering review areas such as site plans, wetlands requirements, and subdivision applications.
- **Diagnosis of Non-Conforming Uses/Structures:** Identify existing uses and structures which may become non-conforming with the passage of the proposed ordinance and develop clear administrative processes for managing the transfer and permitting of such non-conforming uses.
- **Zoning District Mapping:** Provide digital maps clearly identifying the zoning district of each parcel and any appropriate supporting information. The city's existing zoning map and GIS layers will be available to the Consultant.
- **Legal Review:** Conduct a legal review of the content of the new UDO to ensure compliance with all applicable legal requirements prior to final adoption. The City's legal counsel will review the final proposed ordinance; however, Consultant must demonstrate a high level of knowledge of, and consult the City on, any relevant case law or laws which may impact the implementation or standing of the proposed ordinance.
- **Additional Amendments:** Identify any additional City code amendments necessary outside adoption of the UDO and make proposals accordingly.

- **Facilitation of Adoption:** Support the City of North Chicago throughout the code adoption process, including making presentations to the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, staff committees, and any other group or body involved in the code adoption process, including the creation of any materials needed for such presentations.

FINAL DELIVERABLES

The Consultant will develop a scope of work, to be agreed upon by City staff, evaluating existing conditions and community needs and establishing goals and implementation strategies for each element. The Consultant should define deliverables in terms of the stages at which deliverables will be provided and the expected type. The Consultant, if selected for the project, will be responsible for the development or production of all materials needed for meetings and presentations, unless otherwise determined in coordination with City staff, including graphics, images, tables, documents, and more. The Consultant will provide the following deliverables to the City of North Chicago, at a minimum:

- **Electronic Deliverables:**
 - Copies of all reference data and preliminary study documents and reports.
 - Print-ready, high resolution, fully bookmarked copies of the final UDO in both Microsoft Word and PDF formats.
 - All original files in editable format, including graphics and GIS files utilized to make any maps or exhibits.
 - Copies of all meeting presentation materials.
 - Copies of all materials used for public engagement.
 - Copies of proposed City Ordinance updates, working with City staff.
- **Written Deliverables:**
 - Nine (9) printed, bound, full-color copies of the final UDO.

CONDITIONS OF PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

All Consultant shall comply with all conditions, requirements, and specifications herein; any departure will constitute sufficient cause for the rejection of the proposal. A duly authorized official of the proposing Consultant submitting the proposal must sign the proposal. All price quotes must be firm for ninety (90) days following the proposal's due date. The City of North Chicago reserves the right to reject all proposals or any part(s) thereof, to waive any formalities or informalities contained in any proposal, and to award the proposal to the most responsive and responsible proposing Consultant as deemed in the best interest of the City of North Chicago. The City of North Chicago will not return proposals or other information supplied to them by any proposing firm.

PROPOSAL SELECTION/EVALUATION FACTORS:

The City of North Chicago established a review committee to evaluate all proposals and provide a recommendation to the Economic Development/Planning/Zoning Committee. The Consultant selected for the award will be chosen based on the apparent most significant benefit to the City of North Chicago and not necessarily on the lowest price. Following notification of the successful Consultant, it is

expected that a contract will be executed between the parties dependent upon and subject to the availability of specific funding for these professional services.

Proposals shall be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Responsiveness to the needs of the City of North Chicago, both in cost of services and in the scope of the services offered;
- Responsibility of the proposing Consultant and its experience in dealing with municipal governments, specifically on projects of similar scope and nature;
- The degree to which the proposal meets or exceeds the terms of the RFP;
- The total value of the proposed fee structure based on the services to be provided.

The following schedule will be utilized during the selection process.

<i>Critical Dates</i>	<i>Description</i>
March 20, 2026	RFP Deadline
Later March/Early April, 2026	Selection Committee – Interviews
Early April, 2026	Finalize Professional Services Agreement
April 2026	Professional Service Agreement presented to Economic Development/Planning/Zoning Committee
April/May 2026	City Council Approval of the Professional Service Agreement
Late May 2026	Project Start
November 2027	Project Complete – All deliverables to city

PROPOSAL ELEMENTS AND FORMAT

Proposals submitted shall contain all information as requested herein and any additional information necessary to summarize the overall benefit of the proposal to the City of North Chicago.

Proposals shall include the following:

1. A cover letter stating the name, physical address, email address, and telephone number of the Consultant, binding the firm in a formal contract with the City of North Chicago.
2. A response that defines the methods and means by which the proposing Consultant will perform the services outlined in the RFP.
3. A project timeline that indicates the dates at which each task is expected to be completed, deliverables are available for review, critical milestones will be met, community engagement activities are to take place, and more as necessary by the Consultant.
4. A list of references for services provided by the proposing Consultant for municipal governmental agencies for projects of this or a similar type. Include contact names, email addresses, and telephone numbers.
5. The proposed not-to-exceed budget. The Consultant should submit a budget describing the categorical costs necessary to complete the proposal and indicate the approximate percentage of available funding estimated to be required for each task. Respondents should be prepared to provide a detailed budget in a timely fashion should they be selected.

6. Evidence that the Consultant has worked and excelled on similar projects.
7. A staffing plan for the proposed project, including a statement of qualification listing those individuals who will be working on the project either as employees or a subcontractor who will work on the project under the supervision of the Consultant.
8. Any other information deemed necessary by the proposing Consultant.

Please provide six (6) printed copies and one (1) electronic (USB flash drive) of the proposal. Submittal of a proposal shall be taken as prima facie evidence that the Consultant has full knowledge of the scope, nature, quality, and quantity of work to be performed and the detailed requirements and conditions under which the work is to be performed.

All proposals must be submitted on or before **Friday, March 20, 2026**, in a sealed envelope labeled "PROPOSAL – UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE". Proposals must be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Taylor Wegrzyn
Economic and Community Development Director
City of North Chicago
1850 Lewis Avenue
North Chicago, IL 60064

GENERAL REQUIREMENT OF THE SUCCESSFUL PROPOSING FIRM

The successful proposing Consultant and its employees will operate as independent contractors and will not be considered an employee who will act as independent contractors. Therefore, they will not be regarded as employees of the City of North Chicago.

INQUIRIES & CORRECTIONS

All inquiries relating to this request shall be addressed to the contact below. Should there be any need for addendum to this RFP, it will be posted on the City's website. Additionally, interested parties may register their interest in the project by email to this contact to receive further updates.

Taylor Wegrzyn
Economic and Community Development Director
City of North Chicago
1850 Lewis Avenue
North Chicago, IL 60064
(847) 596-8671
tayweg@northchicago.org

ADDITIONAL EXHIBITS

1. 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

https://www.northchicago.org/vertical/Sites/%7B52959CF2-969E-41D9-A9CF-CF0A11D0BEA9%7D/uploads/North_Chicago_Comprehensive_Plan_Final_Plan.pdf

2. North Lakeshore Trail Connectivity Plan

https://www.northchicago.org/vertical/Sites/%7B52959CF2-969E-41D9-A9CF-CF0A11D0BEA9%7D/uploads/Northern_Lakeshore_Trail_Connectivity_Plan_final.pdf

3. Zoning Map

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ecd208e13fb34de9b12acd9f9b86843a/>

4. Zoning Ordinance

https://www.northchicago.org/vertical/Sites/%7B52959CF2-969E-41D9-A9CF-CF0A11D0BEA9%7D/uploads/Zoning_Ordinance_2024-11-18.pdf

5. Subdivision Ordinance

http://www.northchicago.org/vertical/sites/%7B52959CF2-969E-41D9-A9CF-CF0A11D0BEA9%7D/uploads/Subdivision_Ordinance_2009-06-15_2.pdf

INSURANCE

At his own expense, the successful Consultant shall keep in force and at all times maintain during the term of any contract resulting from this **RFP** the insurance requirements as outlined below.

1. GENERAL LIABILITY: \$100,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, property damage, and personal injury with a 2,000,000 general aggregate limit.
2. AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY: \$100,000 combined single limit per accident for bodily injury and property damage.
3. WORKERS' COMPENSATION: Statutory limits are required by South Carolina State law, and employer's liability limits of \$100,000 per accident.

The successful Consultant shall provide acceptable Insurance Certificate(s) and Endorsement(s) to the City no later than executing any contract resulting from this **RFP**. The City reserves the right to receive any additional documentation or Information verifying insurance coverage at the City deems necessary. The City may contact the successful Consultant's insurance agent(s) or carrier(s) directly concerning any insurance issues. The City of North Chicago must be advised immediately of any changes in required coverage(s).

INDEMNIFICATION

Except for expenses and liabilities arising from the negligence of the City, the Consultant as a result of this, expressly agrees to indemnify and hold the City of North Chicago harmless against any expenses and liabilities arising out of the performance or default of any resulting contract as follows:

- The Consultant expressly agrees to the extent that there is a causal relationship between its negligent, reckless, or intentionally wrongful action or indirectly employed by the Consultant and any damage, liability, injury, loss, or expense (whether in connection with bodily injury, death or property damage or loss) and save the City and its employees harmless against all liabilities, penalties, demands, claims, lawsuit, losses, damages, cost, and expenses arising out of the performance or default of any resulting contract from RFP. Such costs are not included any defense, Settlement, or any fees incurred by the City or it's employees. This promise shall consist of bodily injuries or death occurring to Consultant's employees and any person directly or indirectly employed by the Consultant (including without limitation any employee of any subcontractor), the Town's employees, the employees of any other independent contractors, or occurring to any member of the public. When the City submits notice, the offerer shall promptly defend any action mentioned above. This obligation shall survive the suspension or termination of this Agreement. The insurance coverage limits required herein shall not serve to limit this

obligation to indemnify. The recovery of costs and fees shall extend to those incurred to enforce this indemnity.