



Town of Amherst, New Hampshire
Office of Community Development

Building · Code Enforcement · Planning · Zoning · Economic Development
2 Main Street, Amherst, NH 03031

January 26, 2024

RFP - OCD - 01 - 24

The Town of Amherst is seeking Requests for Proposals from 36 CFR 61 qualified consultants to prepare a set of Historic Preservation Design Guidelines for the Town of Amherst Historic District.

Background

The Town of Amherst established a local historic district in 1978 which was listed on the National Register in 1982. There are 167 properties defining the historic village center. In 1986 the Town expanded the area to create a local regulatory district for the purpose of protecting the village center. An Historic District Commission (HDC) has been in place since 1970. The Historic District section of the Zoning Ordinance was established in 1986. The Town's Historic District Commission Regulations were adopted in 1991 and amended most recently in 2023 to clarify the requirements for applications and the things the HDC requires for construction, maintenance and/or rehabilitation of properties in the district.

The HDC and the Office of Community Development created a document which is available on the HDC website called "[Introduction and Guidelines](#)". This provides an easy-to-read overview and introduction to the Town's Historic District, what does and does not require an application to the HDC, and some frequently asked questions.

The Office of Community Development hosts a GIS [interactive map of the Historic District](#) that includes details of the properties, Historic Register #, attributes of note, and so on. It is a useful tool for the public and staff alike as applications are submitted.

In 2019, the HDC was awarded a CLG grant to create the [Amherst Historic District Historic Preservation Survey and Evaluation](#). It has provided the HDC with enough information to determine a period of significance for the original historic district and the expanded local regulatory district in order that the HDC can continue to make consistent and defensible decisions about applications for construction, maintenance and/or rehabilitation of properties within the entire historic district. The HDC is working on using the information from this Survey to consider the significance of properties when they come before the Commission.

Design Guidelines

The aim is to provide a document rich with diagrams, drawings, plans and photographs to give better understanding of the regulations and clear direction for appropriate alterations, new construction and rehabilitation within the historic district in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Property. In consultation with the professional who is selected to perform this work it will be determined if these guidelines will be an adjunct to the existing [Historic District Commission Regulations](#) or if it would be more efficient to revise

the regulations to incorporate the design guidelines into one document.

Office of Community Development staff and the volunteer members of the HDC work with residents of the historic district in the preparation and presentation of applications for work within the district. For people unfamiliar with regulations and technical language, the ordinance and regulations can be difficult to navigate. The HDC seeks to provide a document that will offer a visual guide to the requirements of the historic district in an easy to understand and user-friendly fashion. It is desired that these guidelines will explain things such as suitable massing for a new addition or renovation to be in keeping with the existing structure, how to plan a project with preservation of architectural details in mind, and how to provide what the HDC requires for review as part of an application. This will be made available on the HDC website in a searchable format. Having design guidelines will make it easier for applicants to understand what is required of them for the project they wish to undertake. It will make for more productive meetings with the HDC when the applications are presented for review.

The Town of Amherst Historic Preservation Design Guidelines will be consistent with the Town's existing ordinance and regulations and will provide one more tool in the preservation toolkit that the HDC can use to make sure residents in the historic district are aware of the requirements and have a user-friendly way to understand them.

It is possible that the project could be phased depending on project costs in order to meet funding availability.

Scope of Services

The consultant will work directly with the Historic District Commission and Office of Community Development. The scope of services includes, but is not limited to:

- Meetings
Attendance at a kick-off meeting with the HDC to discuss the goals of the project, tasks to be completed, and anticipated timelines. Work sessions or meetings with the HDC as needed to discuss and refine the project and report on progress. A public review meeting to present the general content of the Design Guidelines, answer questions and take feedback. A final meeting with the HDC and/or participation at the public hearing for adoption of the Design Guidelines, as needed.
- Timing
This project is made possible by partial funding from a Certified Local Government Grant from the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources. It must be completed by September 2024.
- Research
Access to the Town of Amherst's existing ordinance and regulations, Master Plan, applications and plans will be facilitated through Town of Amherst staff as appropriate.
- Property Review
Use the Preservation Survey and Evaluation and existing approved plans to understand design, examples of architectural styles, character-defining features, and both appropriate

and inappropriate changes to properties over time. Additional photographs, if needed to show a unique feature of style, will be clear and well-composed to appropriately illustrate the Design Guidelines and will be high resolution and suitable for inclusion in the final deliverables.

- Deliverables

Town of Amherst Historic Preservation Design Guidelines in hard copy and electronic format. The guidelines should follow the sections from the HDC Regulations. Additional or modified sections can be discussed with the HDC during work sessions or meetings. The final organization of the Guidelines will be developed and agreed upon by the consultant, the HDC and staff.

General Requirements

- In the performance of the services requested, the consultant shall not be considered an employee of the Town of Amherst but shall be an independent contractor or employee of the company/organization submitting the proposal. The consultant shall perform the services on behalf of the Town and will serve as the Town's agent.
- The consultant shall provide a summary of the firm's current insurance coverage for comprehensive, general liability, professional liability, automotive liability and workers' compensation insurance. Indicate the limits of coverage on each policy.
- The issuance of this RFP is not a guarantee that the Town of Amherst will select any of the applicants that submit a proposal. The Town reserves the right to withdraw this RFP or to reject all proposals received in response to it. The Town reserves the right to waive any non-material irregularities or information in any RFP.
- The Town of Amherst assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by recipients of this RFP in responding to it or in responding to any subsequent information requests.

Submission Requirements

The consultant shall provide the following information for consideration:

- A letter of interest, signed by an individual authorized to bind the offer.
- Description of the work to be performed and the deliverables.
- Consultant's plan of action for accomplishing the work including personnel and a schedule with the time frame and hours for each component.
- Total project cost, with itemized budget.
- Statement of qualifications and proposal for consulting services, to include the experience of each company staff person expected to work with the Town, any additional consultants and subcontractors, company history and outline of capabilities, including previous work for municipalities.
- Samples from previous Design Guidelines, including links to websites if available.
- Copies of all applicable certificates of insurance.
- A list of at least three references with contact information.

Historic District Design Guidelines

Request for Proposals

January 26, 2024

- A current fee schedule of billing rates for the tasks identified and individuals to be assigned to the work, including any reimbursable expenses.
- All proposals must be received at the Amherst Town Hall no later than February 9, 2024. Questions shall be directed to Nic Strong, Community Development Director.
- Three copies of proposal and one electronic PDF copy clearly marked "Town of Amherst Historic District Preservation Design Guidelines Proposal" to:

Town of Amherst
"Historic District Preservation Design Guidelines Proposals"
Attn: Nic Strong, Community Development Director
2 Main Street
Amherst, NH, 03031

Proposal review, evaluation and selection process

- Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated following the submission deadline using a quality-based evaluation process.
- The Town will select a consultant based upon the submission items listed above, interviews, reference checks and any other information deemed pertinent by the Town.
- The Town may select one or more consultants for interviews. The submission of a response does not guarantee an interview.
- The Town will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by Town Counsel and approval by the Board of Selectmen.
- **Opt-Out Provision:** The Town of Amherst may terminate this contract at any time for any reason by giving at least thirty (30) days' notice in writing to the consultant. If the contract is terminated by the Town of Amherst, as provided herein, the consultant will be paid a fair payment as negotiated with the Town of Amherst for the work completed and materials supplied as of the date of termination.

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