

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Housing Needs Assessment
Town of Hinesburg, Vermont
January 5, 2010

Objective:

The Town of Hinesburg is issuing a Request for Proposals to conduct a housing needs assessment in the Town of Hinesburg. The purpose of this project is to review current issues and needs with respect to the availability of housing in the Town of Hinesburg. The study will document the current inventory of available housing, including the supply of affordable housing as defined in the Hinesburg Zoning Regulations, attached hereto as Exhibit A, identify the range of current and projected housing needs facing the Town and provide direction for developing strategies to address those needs.

Background:

Hinesburg is a town of approximately 4,600 people, located in southern Chittenden County; approximately a 25 minute drive from Burlington. Hinesburg is home to fertile farmland, productive forest land, high tech industry, thriving local businesses, and numerous commuters. Hinesburg is a town with a deep sense of its agricultural roots and historic character whose abundant assets include engaged community leaders and volunteers. Hinesburg's civic and commercial activities are concentrated in the vibrant and growing village area on VT Route 116. Land in the western half of the Town remains largely agricultural with both long term and new, start-up farm operations although the number of dairy operations has declined in recent years. The eastern half of Town is dominated by forest land and ongoing forest management, with a small but increasing number of house lots.

In 2009, the Zoning Regulations were revised to reflect the Town's desire to increase the supply of housing in the Town that is available to and affordable by low or moderate income households and to ensure that such housing remains affordable over the long-term. As stated in the Regulations, the revisions were adopted, in part, to implement the specific policy goals and objectives of the Town Plan, which include: (1) the maintenance of diversity in Hinesburg's population (Section 1.6, General Goals); (2) the encouragement and support of the development of a supply of safe and affordable housing in a variety of types and price ranges (Section 2.1, General Goals); and (3) the consideration of the establishment of goals or targets for affordable and reasonably priced housing, especially where municipal services (e.g., water, sewer, etc.) make affordable housing projects easier to accomplish (Section 2.2.1.d). The revised zoning regulations for the Village Area provide density bonuses and reduced fees for projects providing affordable housing. The Town currently has an abundant supply of wastewater allocation and water supply to accommodate future projects in the village growth area. In an effort to achieve the objectives of the Town Plan, the Affordable Housing Committee is charged with the task of assessing the quality and quantity of current affordable housing in the Town and advising the Town Selectboard, the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board and Town staff. As a first step in this process, the Affordable Housing Committee conducted a Community Survey in 2007 to gather information and help determine community need or support of affordable housing. Almost 500 survey responses were received. Over two thirds of the

respondents were concerned about the affordability of housing in Hinesburg. With the commission of the Housing Needs Assessment, the Affordable Housing Committee seeks to further its mission of gathering, generating and prioritizing ideas and plans which will help to increase the availability of affordable housing in the Town.

Tasks & Deliverables:

The consultant will work closely with the Affordable Housing Committee, key community organizers, and certain Town staff. The consultant will largely work independently; however, attendance at some evening meetings will be necessary. Hinesburg is an energetic and progressive community; therefore, the consultant must be willing to work as a “team player”. This includes providing professional expertise and incorporating material and feedback from community leaders.

Specific project tasks & deliverables include:

A. Existing Conditions

1. Determine the existing mix of housing stock by number, type of units (i.e., rental and homeownership; special needs housing; multi-unit housing; mobile homes; senior housing, affordable housing (as defined in the Hinesburg Zoning Regulations attached hereto as Exhibit A)).
2. Determine the average age, general quality and approximate value of the housing stock by type: rental, homeownership, mobile homes, senior, and affordable.
3. Identify and describe the existing patterns of development such as: location of rental housing; village settings vs. rural; availability of infrastructure; etc.
4. Provide an analysis of sales prices, market rents and subsidized project rents for housing types for the last two (2) to three (3) years.

B. Needs Assessment Study

1. Determine a realistic market area for the Town of Hinesburg, evaluating the impact of housing supply and demand, and the relevant nearby communities.
2. Evaluate the demographic factors affecting ongoing housing demand. Key demographic factors may include trends in population, housing tenure, age distribution, household formation, in- and out-migration, housing income distribution, and housing cost burden. Include analysis for the size, type and cost of rental and homeownership units in demand.
3. Evaluate the economic and other factors affecting ongoing housing demand. The factors may include changes in tax structure, employment, unemployment, labor force participation, local jobs and wages, recreational, cultural and community amenities, etc.

C. Policy recommendations and conclusions

1. Based on the study results, identify and describe unmet housing needs in the existing market area, including an assessment of the affordable housing needs, and provide recommendations and strategies for concrete public policy and/or public/private actions designed to address those needs. Provide examples of successful strategies that have been used in other comparable towns.

Schedule:

Letter of interest with scope of work – **Feb 2, 2010, 4:00pm.**
Consultant Selection – approximately six (6) weeks (i.e., March 12, 2010).
Tentative Project Timetable – to be finalized after consultant selection.

Funding:

The total budget for consulting services is \$5,000 from Town funds, which is currently allocated in the Town budget until June 30, 2010.

Submission Requirements:

Please provide the following items. Please do not submit any more than a total of 10 pages.

1. A short letter of interest, including firm/individual name, address and contact information. Please address any current time constraints, the approximate date you can start the project and the approximate date you will complete the project. Please state if you do not anticipate being able to complete the project by June 30, 2010.
2. A scope of work to address the tasks & deliverables. The scope of work should also include a discussion/recommendation of additional housing needs issues that may not be set forth in the RFP but that may be pertinent to the objectives of the project.
3. A brief statement on your qualifications, experience and any other pertinent information to show knowledge and experience relative to housing needs assessments. If more than one person or firm is involved, please describe the working relationship.
4. The proposal must include detailed qualifications and levels of competence of individuals to be assigned to the project. This should include the total number of such individuals at each level and the estimated hours to be spent by each.
5. The proposed fee for the project, showing base labor rates, materials, and overhead. Please include any standard fee schedules regarding hourly rate, travel rates, mileage, etc.
6. Short summaries of similar projects and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of 2-3 references.

Submissions are due at the Hinesburg Town Office by February 2, 2010, 4:00pm.

Submissions must be sent to Rocky Martin either by (i) e-mail (MS Word or Adobe PDF documents) to hinesburgpw@gmavt.net, (ii) regular mail to Buildings and Facilities Director, Town of Hinesburg, P.O. Box 133, Hinesburg, VT 05461 or (iii) hand delivered to the Hinesburg Town Hall at 10632 Route 116, Hinesburg, VT 05461.

Selection Process:

The Affordable Housing Committee will review consultant qualifications and make a selection in consultation with the Hinesburg Selectboard. Interviews may or may not be conducted. A formal contract will be worked out with Town staff after the selection is made.

Selection Criteria:

The selection will be made using the following criteria (in order of importance):

1. Experience in: (a) the preparation of demographic, employment and wage forecasts; and (b) preparing housing need projections in the areas of rental housing, homeownership and affordable housing.
2. Innovation of proposal and the consultant's approach to project objectives.
3. Ability to complete the necessary work.
4. Feasibility of proposed scope of work and project budget.
5. Cost.
6. Availability to meet (in Hinesburg) with project steering committee, including some evening meetings.
7. Experience working with municipal government, especially on related topics.

Information:

See "Affordable Housing Committee" link on the Hinesburg website at www.hinesburg.org for more information on committee activities to date. The Town website also contains a wealth of other information about the Hinesburg community – e.g., community groups, Town Plan, Town Report, etc.

Primary Contact:

Rocky Martin, Chairperson, Affordable Housing Committee

Phone: 482-2096

E-mail: hinesburgpw@gmavt.net

EXHIBIT A

HINESBURG ZONING REGULATIONS DEFINITION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

ARTICLE 10: DEFINITIONS

Section 10.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions contained in Section 4303 of the Planning Act shall be applicable throughout this Regulation. The following additional terms shall, for the purpose of this Regulation, have the meaning indicated. Words used in the present tense include the future; the singular number includes the plural and plural includes the singular; the word "lot" includes the word "plot." The term "occupied" or "used" shall be considered as though followed by the words "or intended, arranged, or designed to be occupied or used."

Affordable housing or Affordable: Housing priced such that the total cost of the housing, including principal, interest taxes and insurance and condominium association fees, if owned housing, or the total cost of the housing, including rent, utilities and condominium association fees, if rental housing, is not more than 30% of the gross annual income of a household earning not more than 80% of the county median income or 80% of the standard metropolitan statistical area (MSA) income, as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and adjusted for household size.