



## City of Racine, Wisconsin AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORADUM

**AGENDA DATE:**

May 30, 2023 – Finance and Personnel Committee

June 6, 2023 – Common Council

**SUBJECT:** Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason, from the Acting Director of City Development, submitting bid results for Contract #2023046 - RFP Zoning Code.

**PREPARED BY:** Jeff Hintz, CNU-A – Planning Manager, City Development Department

**SUMMARY:** The City's current Zoning Ordinance was adopted in September of 1973 and has seen some updates and minor changes in that timeframe. The Zoning Ordinance dictates what uses can and cannot occur on a property, where structures can/can't be built, how buildings need to look, procedures for processing applications, and other requirements related to land development.

**Background and Analysis:** The Zoning Ordinance serves a very important, but often unnoticed role in the function of development in the City. The built environment of historical buildings, diverse housing stock, and new redevelopments help to catch the eye of visitors, residents, and potential investors in the Community. The procedures, requirements, and organization of the Zoning Ordinance functions as the front door entry to those wishing to invest, buy, and move their family or business into Racine.

Best practice in Planning would dictate development regulations be evaluated and overhauled every 10-15 years. While small changes have been made to the Zoning Ordinance since its adoption in 1973, the overall expectations and development environment established by the regulations are dated; the current procedures, standards, and requirements no longer achieve the development results which are needed, desired, and deserved for the City and its residents.

The RFP sought a firm to partner with City Development Staff to ensure development standards are current with best practices in zoning for urban areas within this region. As the City of Racine is not able to grow through the addition of land area, specific attention will be paid to infill development requirements, historic preservation, and urban design. This will be achieved by:

- Updating the text of the zoning ordinance (the code);
- Developing a new zoning map;
- Creating public space standards that ensure public spaces align with land use standards and neighborhood context; and
- Updating the requirements for subdivision of land to ensure consistency with zoning requirements.

Additionally, the RFP also includes a review of the Municipal Code to identify sections of it that may need to be amended to ensure consistency with the new zoning code, subdivision of land, and public space standards. Finally, City staff will receive training and application materials to help in implementing the new code to streamline rollout to citizens, developers, and property owners.

The RFP was published on April 4, 2023, with any questions due back on April 17 of 2023; addendums were posted on April 19, 2023 with all bids due on May 4 at 10:00 AM. Eight groups downloaded and viewed the bid information, and one bid was received, from WSP USA INC.

This RFP was generally formatted so that the consultant would function as an extension of City Staff and it would be a partnership. The Zoning Ordinance is vital to the long-term financial well-being of the City; as new development through infill, building additions, and redevelopment of existing sites occurs, the set of rules and procedures contained in the Zoning Ordinance will dictate the results the City sees and assess property values upon. City Staff certainly knows Racine the best, but the partnership through this contract will help to blend that expertise with the best strategies, tools, methods, policies, and procedures brought to the table by the consultant team of nine.

This team has experience in municipal government at the local and county level with landscape architecture, urban design, historic preservation, code administration, public space, site design, subdivisions, zoning, outreach, neighborhood character, place making, planning law, and policy development. Of importance, this experience comes from localities in Wisconsin and a plethora of places across the country. The team which has been assembled and is led by WSP USA will be able to deliver the services and end product(s) that the RFP sought. While this bid was the only one received for this RFP, it is a thorough, well-thought-out, on-budget, and completely responsive proposal.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** That Contract #2023046 - RFP Zoning Code - be awarded to WSP USA INC. not to exceed \$200,000.00 and that the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the agreement.

**FISCAL NOTE:** Funding is available in 16001 52100 – Professional Services not to exceed \$200,000.00 in total.