



MOWER
COUNTY



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Comprehensive Plan



SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Summary

The City of Austin and Mower County, Minnesota are seeking a highly qualified consulting firm to develop and outline two distinct Comprehensive Plans that include citywide and countywide policies, goals, and strategies, which reflect a unified vision for both the City of Austin and Mower County into the year 2045. The development of these plans is a cooperative planning effort enhancing and facilitating alignment between the City of Austin and Mower County, but recognizing there are areas of responsibility that rest solely within one jurisdiction or the other. For regional reference, Mower County is approximately 720 square miles with a population of 40,000, containing 20 townships and 13 cities. Interstate 90, Minnesota Highway 218, 56, 63, 105 & 16 pass through the county. There are 13 cities ranging in size from Taopi at 57 to Austin at 26,000.

The respective Comprehensive Plans are intended to replace the existing plans, adopted in 2016 for the City of Austin, 2002 for Mower County and 2014 for the City of Austin Downtown Master Plan. While the current plans retain some value, new plans are needed to accurately reflect present aspirations of the residents as well as address areas of overlap not previously considered in depth. The selected consultant will work under the direction of the City of Austin and Mower County with assistance from the Development Corporation of Austin, both city and county Planning Commissions, City Council, and County Board.

The communities are also aligned on bringing a “Food City” concept to life in Austin and the Comprehensive Plan should incorporate thought-leadership initiatives and ideas around how to bring this concept to life. Add alternatives specific to the City of Austin Comprehensive Plan should also include a Downtown Master Plan that incorporates the above-mentioned items as well as recommendations encompassing Arts, Culture, Health and Well-being, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Community information and reports can be found at www.ci.austin.mn.us and www.co.mower.mn.us

1.2 Scope of Services

Two distinct Comprehensive Plans will be prepared (one for the City of Austin and one for Mower County). We recognize that some elements of the plan may intersect or be universal to both plans, while other elements will be specific to the city or county plan.

City of Austin	Core Components of Both Plans	Mower County Plan
	Executive Summary	
	Development of Goals	
	Future Land Use and Map (FLUP)	
	Growth Management Plan	
	Transportation – multi-modal/complete streets	
Stormwater		Ag Preservation/Conservation/One Watershed, One Plan, Protected Habitat
Infrastructure Element		Waste Management
	Economic Development and Tourism	
	Parks, Trails and Open Space, including floodplain, i.e. farmers market, etc.	
Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization		Alternative Development and Redevelopment
Sustainability	Both (we participate in the All hazard mitigation plan)	Emergency Management
	Healthy Community	
	Resiliency Plan	
	Other Special Planning Areas	
Community Character and Urban Design – explore		Historical Properties, Archeological Protected Sites

historic district/designations		
	Implementation Plan	
	Capital Improvement Plan	
	Environmental Justice	Public Services (AT/Assessor/VA/LE & Corrections/Data)
	Technology Recommendations	
Downtown Master Plan	Food City, Environmental Justice	
	Public Participation	
Implementation strategies for communities with limited resources/tax base	Deliverables	

1.3 Calendar of Events

Proposal Deadlines and Tentative Project Schedule

RFP Invitations Sent	January 23th 2024
Deadline for Questions/Clarifications	January 31st, 2024
City Responses and/or Addenda	February 16th, 2024
Proposals Due	March 15th, 2024
Evaluation Period and Interviews	March 18th thru April5 th , 2024
Selection of Consultant	Est. April 22nd, 2024
Meet with City Staff to review schedule, etc.	TBD
City of Austin Planning Meeting	TBD
City of Austin Council Meeting	TBD
Project Kick-Off	TBD
Project Completion	TBD

The Agencies anticipate the planning process to span 18 months, to be completed and adopted by their respective communities by 2025.

Submission: One (1) original and one (1) digital format (PDF or USB) of the proposal documents should be submitted to the following: Email, Mail or in Person to:

City Hall
Attn: Holly Wallace
Planning and Zoning
500 4th Ave NE
Austin, MN 55912
Email: hollyw@ci.austin.mn.us

*Planning and Zoning will distribute copies to the county

Due Date: Submissions are due to Planning and Zoning by 1:00 PM, March 15th, 2024. Proposals received after this time will not be considered.

Contract: In addition to the completed proposal, a resulting contract may be required by the Client, including but not limited to, written correspondence between the Client and the vendor subsequent to the proposal submission, facsimiles, and product literature.

SECTION 2. SUBMITTAL, EVALUATION, SELECTION, AWARD

2.1 Discussions with Candidates

The City of Austin and Mower County may conduct discussions and/or negotiations with any Candidate that appears to be eligible for award (“Eligible Candidate”) pursuant to the selection criteria set forth in this RFP.

2.2 Submittal Requirements

Interested firms shall limit their Proposal to a maximum of 15 pages and are required to submit the following information:

1. A letter of interest, including a brief statement of your firm’s understanding of the services to be performed and the name, title and contact information of the person(s) authorized to make representations for your firm.
- 2.) Provide information on the size, location, available resources, and business history of your firm.
- 3.) An organizational chart of the project team including identification of project manager, professional support staff, principal in charge, and known sub-consultant/contractor relationships.
- 4.) Statements of qualifications for project team members with specific mention of related projects including specific knowledge and experience.

5.) A proposed scope of services and timeline.

6.) Include links to a minimum of three completed and adopted Comprehensive Plans for similar municipalities by the proposed project manager. Provide a list of references along with contact information for the municipal officials that were involved with the preparation and implementation of the plans provided.

7.) Provide information that demonstrates your firm's understanding of the unique issues facing the City of Austin and Mower County, respectively and cooperatively, and how those issues will impact your methods and approach to the comprehensive plan, i.e. community engagement, citizen and staff roles, facilitation tools and techniques, plan drafting and revision, maps, graphics and anything unique to your firm.

8.) Example(s) of when policies and goals were successfully implemented through resources identified in a comprehensive plan.

2.3 Selection of Candidate

The Candidate selected for award will be the Candidate whose vision, as presented in response to this RFP, that would be the most advantageous to the City and County as determined by the City and County. Candidates acknowledge that the City and county are not bound to accept the lowest-priced consultant.

2.4 Evaluation of Proposals

A selection committee, including city and county staff will review and evaluate the proposals. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any technicalities in the proposal process. a. Submission of a proposal indicates the Candidate's acceptance of the evaluation process set forth by this RFP and the Candidate's acknowledgment that subjective judgments must be made by the city in regard to the evaluation process.

2.5 Cost Proposal

1) Provide a not-to-exceed fee schedule to include travel and material expenses for each phase of the project as follows:

- A. Project initiation and data gathering
- B. Community engagement
- C. Document Production
- D. Plan Adoption

2) Provide a fee schedule for additional services which should include, at a minimum, the hourly rate for each team member and sub-contractor, reimbursable costs, and any other costs that may be required to complete the additional services.

3) Fees shall be paid based on the percentage completion throughout the project. Payment schedule will be negotiated upon award.

4) Total proposal cost should not exceed \$450,000.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK AFTER SELECTION OF CONSULTANT

The selected consultant is expected to use visualization techniques to graphically depict pertinent information for each element as the Plans are developed, including but not limited to GIS mapping, photographs, illustrations, story mapping, heat mapping and digital renderings.

The proposed elements of the Comprehensive Plans are listed below, and they serve as a guide for each plans' development. Many elements of the plans are universal and should be incorporated into both the City of Austin Plan and Mower County Plan, however some elements may be specific and only apply to either the City of Austin or Mower County. Potential partners are welcome to suggest creative or innovative addition/modifications to these elements. Such suggestions should be listed and explained in the submitted RFP. New elements may be generated during the initial phase of community engagement and should also be addressed. The ability to adapt is critical.

3.1 Executive Summary – An executive summary should outline the vision, detailed goals, objectives, and policy statements that are laid out in the Comprehensive Plan. This executive summary will be used as a guide for decision making and as a means to educate the citizens of the community. It is expected that the executive summary will be located within the Comprehensive Plan document but can be a stand-alone document in a form that is suitable for easy distribution.

3.2 Development of Goals, Objectives, and Policies – The goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan should be developed with significant public participation in order to develop an acceptable and viable vision and guide for the community regarding future development and redevelopment. The development of goals should align between the City of Austin and Mower County comprehensive plans, with specific recommendations for development of the two-mile extra-territorial zone (potentially including ghost platting/build out plans in this specific area). Gaps or conflicts between current codes and ordinances and the new Comprehensive Plans should also be identified. Where applicable, a statement of needs and reasonableness (SONAR) should be incorporated into the recommendations- where there is discussion of the issue, alternatives considered, and why the option was chosen, and the other alternatives dismissed.

3.3 Future Land Use Plan and Map (FLUP) – Develop realistic population projections and build-out scenarios utilizing preferred land-use patterns. The build-out scenarios shall include projections of uses and infrastructure improvements required. The Land use maps should reflect the desired future development pattern for the identified area, while the zoning maps should define and regulate usage allowed for the identified parcels of land. The FLUP and Map, as well as the existing land use components, need to be created in GIS format (.shp or .gdb file format) and present themselves in a parcel by parcel format. A planning “paintbrush” approach

is not acceptable. The Zoning Map must be consistent with the Land Use map and Zoning districts between City of Austin and Mower County should be compatible, consistent and reflect future growth.

3.4 Growth Management Plan – Review the outlying areas of Austin, Mower County and the shared 2-mile extraterritorial space and provide locations for potential future growth, including annexation, future infrastructure needs (water, gas, electric, sanitary sewer, roads), a response to the current housing market study, and impacts on infrastructure.

3.5 Transportation –To guide investment in transportation systems that modernize infrastructure, expand access and mobility for all people across communities, improve public health and safety, and boost local economies. For the City of Austin, this includes exploring pedestrian facilities, complete streets and multi-modal transportation. Considerations for Highways (interstate, trunk highways, county state aid highway), aviation, rail, and public transit should be included in the Mower County plan and where appropriate for the City of Austin plan.

3.6 Water – Incorporate goals, objectives and policies recommended in the Stormwater Master Drainage Plan and County’s Watershed 1 Plan(s) for the Cedar River and Root River Watershed District. In addition, integrate the recommendations regarding floodplain, watershed protection, stormwater, septic, feedlot and county waste management into all pertinent components of the Comprehensive Plan to include specific provisions for regional detention ponds.

3.7 Infrastructure Element – Review any existing master plans related to water supply and sanitary sewer facilities and recommend any future modifications to those plans that will be required in order to achieve the overall community vision or to support the approved build-out scenarios for future land use mixes. Include recommendations for Well Head Protection and Drinking Water Supply Management Areas.

3.8 Economic Development and Tourism – Review, analyze and update local, state, and regional factors that influence the future development, redevelopment, and tourism opportunities countywide. Include the economic impacts for major components of the Plan and consider the influence of revitalization of the core downtown district, the potential redevelopment of other areas specifically within Austin, and planning efforts throughout all communities. The plan should indicate the biggest opportunities for the growth/enhancement of Austin and surrounding communities as a desirable tourism and meeting destination, outline the main roadblocks and recommend strategies on how they can be overcome.

3.9 Parks, Trails and Open Space – Incorporate the City of Austin Master Parks and Trail Plan, into the new Comprehensive Plan. Explore opportunities that may extend into Mower County and neighboring communities and make recommendations.

3.10 Neighborhood Revitalization – Identify areas that are in need of innovative redevelopment strategies and provide goals, objectives and strategies for revitalization. Plans should incorporate findings from the CRE report for the City of Austin. Incorporate goals for

walkability, bike-ability, safety, and access to food and services in relation to other aspects of the Comprehensive plan. The Mower County plan should include alternative and or redevelopment opportunities for closed landfill spaces.

3.11 Sustainability/Resiliency – Integrate the latest best practices the City should pursue and policies that are recommended to achieve a sustainable and resilient community. (A community that is prepared to deal with natural and man-made disasters as well as economic shifts.) The current emergency operations plan and hazard mitigation plan should be reviewed and integrated with this element of the plan. Any gaps that may exist should be identified.

3.12 Healthy Community – Incorporate healthy community principles into all pertinent recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Specific principles to be incorporated with the major components of the Plan are safe, accessible, active lifestyles for all populations and a clean, natural environment.

3.13 Other Special Planning Areas – Evaluate development patterns in the city to determine if there are areas in the city with special conditions that require further study or policies. Unique planning areas that may be included in this plan include the FAARM Program. The plan should also incorporate the latest findings and build on the recommendations from the Hometown Food Security Project.

3.14 Community Character and Urban Design – The Plan, through community input and review of existing plans, shall have a set of policies that address community image and preservation of community attributes and character. The consultant should consider density, aesthetic design guidelines, historic character and design guidelines, sign regulations, building types and transportation corridors. Retention of the youth of the community and talent of the employment base should be key considerations incorporated into the plan.

3.15 Implementation Plan – The Plan should update short-, mid-, and long-term strategies relative to the identified elements. An implementation plan should include potential funding sources for recommendations, responsible parties to implement each recommendation, and a timeframe. Benchmarks, priorities, and measures of accountability should be established.

3.16 Capital Improvement Plan – Identify and forecast capital improvement needs in the City of Austin and Mower County. The projects selected should provide the vital link between visions articulated by comprehensive plans and the City of Austin’s annual capital expenditure budgets. All projects proposed will need to closely match projected revenues and capital needs over a (5)-year period, (10)-year period, and (15)-year period. An emphasis should be placed on projects that promote safety and quality of life for the community.

3.17 Public Services- Specific to the Mower County Comprehensive Plan, evaluation of the following services, Land Records and Taxpayer Services (including Auditor/Treasurer and Assessor offices), Law Enforcement, County Court, Health and Human Services, Social Services, Solid Waste, Septic, Feedlot, as well as recommendations for smaller communities/townships in the county.

3.18 Technology- Assessment of accessibility of resources within the community. Identify gaps and opportunities in this area.

3.19 Add Alternates:

1) Downtown Master Plan – Provide a Downtown Master Plan for the City of Austin as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan. Elements of the plan should include:

- a. Sub-planning districts that incorporate parcel level planning & design, experience and business strategies, for example:
 - Downtown Core
 - 4th Ave Cultural District
 - Healthcare District
 - Other identified downtown districts
- b. Five-year municipal improvement investment plan
- c. Public and private catalytic project opportunities
- d. Implementation plan
- e. Recommendations for updated development code to operationalize vision
- f. Parking plan
- g. Downtown gateway design plans
- h. Streetscaping and traffic management
- i. Outside drinking and dining opportunities
- j. Signage and wayfinding
- k. Green Space Addition and Utilization with attention to floodplain area
- l. Organization and management plan

2) Food City

- a. Public and private catalytic project opportunities
- b. Implementation Plan

3) Arts, Culture, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Planning

- a. Public and private catalytic project opportunities
- b. Implementation Plan

3.20 Public Participation:

The communities consider citizen participation essential to a successful Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan process shall be structured to efficiently maximize citizen involvement and participation. The consultant shall be responsible for designing a public engagement strategy, including an online platform, that incorporates effective and innovative participation techniques and encourages participation throughout the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Participation by residents, businesses, agencies, organizations and officials is a must throughout the planning process. The proposed public engagement strategy must include the latest technologies and be creative, inclusive, efficient, and reliable with the goal of channeling this input into realistic alternatives for consideration by the public, the perspective Planning and Zoning Commissions, and the City Council and Board of Commissioners. The consultant team must demonstrate extensive expertise and experience in the public participation and

facilitation processes. In regard to public participation, the consultant team must have strong leadership and creativity to provide clear direction in participation techniques that result in inclusive yet timely decisions. Underrepresented communities should be given special consideration.

3.21 Deliverables:

Required services will include but are not limited to:

- The FLUP and other maps along with the existing land use components need to be delivered in GIS format (.shp file format), as well as PDF format.
- 15 bound, colored copies of final plan, in 8 1/2 by 11 portrait format. Maps and illustrations will be reproducible in 11 x 17 format

Digital copy/copies of final plans should be available in a word-based format, as well as PDF format. Maps and graphics should be in JPG format. The formats must allow for amendments, reproductions and direct web posting via the city website. Products produced as part of the plan process, including but not limited to GIS layers, studies, documents, drawings, etc., shall be the property of the City of Austin and Mower County.

SECTION 4: RFP REQUIREMENTS & PROCEDURES

4.1 Right to Modify, Rescind, or Revoke RFP

The City and County reserve the rights to modify, rescind, or revoke this RFP, in whole or in part, at any time prior to the date on which the City and County execute a Contract with the selected Candidate. It is important to note that either jurisdiction may award this contract in whole or in part and may opt out of servicing listed in the scope of services.

4.2 Compliance with RFP Requirements

By submission of a Proposal, a Candidate agrees to be bound by the requirements set forth in this RFP. The City and/or County, may disqualify a Proposal from consideration if it is determined by the City and/or County that a Proposal is non-responsive and/or non-compliant, in whole or in part, with the requirements set forth in this RFP.

4.3 Signature, Certification of Candidate

The Proposal must be signed and dated by a representative of the Candidate who is authorized to bind the Candidate to the terms and conditions contained in this RFP and to compliance with the information submitted in the Proposal. Each Candidate submitting a Proposal certifies (a) the completeness, veracity, and accuracy of the information provided in the Proposal and (b) the authority of the individual whose signature appears on the Proposal to bind the Candidate to the terms and conditions set forth in this RFP. Proposals submitted without the required signature shall be disqualified.

4.4 Risk of Loss, Damage, Delay

Candidate acknowledges and agrees to release and hold harmless the City of Austin and Mower County, its employees, agents, and personnel, from and against any and all claims, liability, damages, and costs, including court costs and attorneys' fees, arising out of or pursuant to delivery of the Proposal or failure to deliver the Proposal to the Central Purchasing Agent's Office of the City of Austin and Mower County, as designated in Section 1.3 of this RFP.

4.5 Ownership of Proposals

All Proposals become the physical property of the City of Austin and Mower County upon receipt.

4.6 Use, Disclosure of Information

Candidates acknowledge that by submitting materials to for the consideration of the City of Austin and Mower County the Candidate is waiving any claim of confidentiality, trade secrets or privilege with respect to materials submitted. All submittal materials are subject to disclosure under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Proposals with information marked "confidential" will be rejected upon discovery of such statement. By submitting a proposal, a Candidate specifically assumes any and all risks and liabilities associated with the information contained in the proposal and the release of that information contained in the proposal and the release of that information by the City of Austin and Mower county for purposes related to or arising out of the (a) evaluation of Proposals, (b) selection of a Candidate pursuant to the RFP process, and (c) negotiation and execution of a Contract, if any, with the Candidate selected.

4.7 Costs of Participation

The City of Austin and Mower County specifically disclaims responsibility and/or liability for any and all cost, expenses, or claims related to or arising out of a consultant's participation in this RFP process, including, but not limited to, costs incurred as a result of preparing, copying, shipping, presenting, and/or clarifying the Proposal and the information relevant to the Proposal.

4.8 Compliance with Applicable Laws, Regulations, Ordinances, City of Austin and Mower County Policies and Procedures

By submitting a Proposal, the Candidate agrees to and shall comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations, as well as with all applicable policies and procedures of the City of Austin and Mower County. The awarded entity is responsible for any costs of such compliance.

4.9 Rescission of Proposal

A Proposal can be withdrawn from consideration at any time prior to expiration of the deadline for Proposals, pursuant to a written request sent to the City of Austin Planning Office.

4.10 Questions by Candidates and Addenda

If warranted, any updates, revisions or modifications to this RFP shall be posted on the City of Austin's website at: www.ci.austin.mn.us during the advertising period, and it shall be the responsibility of the Candidate to review the website during the advertising period to verify any changes.

Any changes resulting from the questions submitted affecting specifications, the scope of work, or which may require an extension to the proposal due date will be in the form of an addendum to the RFP. Addenda will be posted on the City of Austin website. It is the Candidate's responsibility to check the website to determine if the city has issued any addenda and/or schedule changes.

Each Candidate shall carefully examine all proposal documents and all addenda thereto, and shall thoroughly familiarize themselves with the detailed requirements thereof prior to submitting a proposal. Should a Candidate find discrepancies or ambiguities in, or omissions from documents, or should they be in doubt as to their meaning, they shall, , notify the City of Austin,. The City of Austin and Mower County will not be responsible for any oral instructions. All inquiries shall be directed to Holly Wallace, Planning and Zoning Administrator for the City of Austin: hollyw@ci.austin.mn.us

4.11 Communications with City of Austin and Mower County

Except as provided in this RFP and as is otherwise necessary for the conduct of ongoing City of Austin and Mower County business operations, Candidates are expressly and absolutely prohibited from engaging in communications with City of Austin and Mower County personnel who are involved in any manner in the review and/or evaluation of the Proposals; selection of a Candidate; and/or negotiations or formalization of a Contract. If any Candidate engages in conduct or communications that the City of Austin and Mower County determines are contrary to the prohibitions set forth in this Section 4.11, the City of Austin and Mower County may, at its sole discretion, disqualify the Candidate and withdraw the Candidate's Proposal from consideration.

4.12 Evaluation of Proposals

The Selection Committee will review Proposals in accordance with the procedure and criteria set forth in this RFP.

Q&A

1. Item 3.13: The RFP references the FAARM Program. We understand a consultant was recently selected to work the FAARM project. To what extent does the city and county anticipate the FAARM planning work to be coordinated or integrated into these comprehensive plans? ***We expect the chosen consultant would be aware of the project and coordinate with them as appropriate, but the FAARM project would not be a major focus of the comprehensive plan.***
2. Item 3.16: Is the CIP expected to be a full Engineering Capital Improvement Plan and if so for what facilities in the city and county? How do you see these supporting or differing with the city and county's current CIPs? ***We would expect the consultant to review the full Engineering capital improvement plan and identify areas where we might focus our attention based on the outcome of the planning process.***
3. Item 3.17: Is the evaluation of Public Services (AT/Assessor/VA/LE & Corrections/Data) intended to assess the current level of service based on budget? Or is it related to identifying gaps/opportunities? ***Yes, we are looking for identification of gaps and opportunities.***
4. Item 3.18: Is the evaluation of Technology limited to accessibility or is it related to quality, cost and speed? Has the city or county previously completed an audit? ***We have completed an audit. To build on the work that has already been completed, we are looking for help identify technology opportunities that we will need to utilize in the future.***
5. Item 3.19: The text of the RFP identified Downtown Master Plan, Food City and Arts/Culture/Justice, Diversity and Inclusion Planning as add alts, but the table in Item 1.2 lists these topics as elements to be addressed in both plans. Can you please clarify the intent. ***The intent would be that Downtown Master Plan and the Food City will be focused in Austin (but we could see partnerships and collaboration with the county). Arts/Culture/Justice and Diversity and Inclusion Planning would apply to all.***
6. Page 2 of the RFP talks about working under the direction of the City of Austin and Mower County, as well as coordination with the Development Corporation of Austin, both Planning Commissions, City Council and County Board. What is the anticipated project communication/reporting structure (i.e., will the project team respond to an established management structure as defined by the City and County)? ***The chosen consultant would work primarily with the city and county planning staff. The planning commissions and board/council would be updated perhaps a specific number of times with approval authority for the final plan as required by state law.***
7. Page 4, section 1.2 Scope of Services: Can you provide more insight on the City's goals as a "food city"? (i.e., is this aspect a community health focus, arts and culture, or a combination of interest areas?). ***We have not settled on what that will look like, we are hoping to add value to multiple areas of our community as a "food city" while capitalizing on our diversity, food production and agricultural resources.***
8. Page 4, section 1.3 Calendar of Events "RFP invitations sent": Can you share who was invited to submit a proposal? ***Velocity Group, SEH (Short, Elliot and Hendrickson) and Stantec were***

aware that we were developing an RFP and requested we send them the link. It was also posted on League of MN Cities and APA websites.

9. Per page 5 of the RFP, do we need to submit only 1 hard copy of the proposal? **Yes**
10. Will Planning and Zoning distribute copies to the County? **Yes.**
11. If so, will those copies be in color and per the format that the proposal was submitted? **We imagined that we would primarily be reviewing electronic versions, but yes, if a hard copy was requested, we would not alter the document for distribution.**
12. Page 5, section 2.2 Submittal Requirements: Is this the expected order of proposal content or is it acceptable to rearrange the information? **It is not necessary to organize the proposal as listed in the RFP. Please organize the document however you like.**
13. Page 6, section 2.3 Selection and 2.4 Evaluation of Proposals: Who will make up the Selection Committee? Will you use a ranking or weighted system (numerical, etc.) to determine proposal responses? If so, can you share this system? If not, can you further clarify the 'subjective' criteria? (Per the comment, "...that subjective judgements must be made....in regard to the evaluation process.") **We have not fixed on a specific criteria. At this point we are just finalizing the selection committee. We know all of the submissions will be professional and competitive and it will be a difficult choice.**
14. Pages 6-7, section 2.5 Cost Proposal: Will lump sum cost proposals be evaluated, or is time and expense contract a requirement for consideration? **Both will be evaluated, but more detail can be helpful.**
15. Page 11, section 3.21 Deliverables: Does the deliverable quantity include fifteen each of the City Comp Plan, County Comp Plan and Downtown Plan for a total of 45 bound copies? Or fifteen total, with five bound copies of each? **15 combined city comp and downtown plans are good and 15 county plan for a total of 30. We tend to use electronic versions for day to day work and reference.**
16. Page 11, section 4.1 Right to Modify, Rescind or Revoke the RFP: Please further explain the rationale behind .."either jurisdiction may award this contract in whole or in part...". Is it possible that more than one contract could be awarded to more than one consultant proposal? And if so what is the rationale behind having each jurisdiction the latitude to act independently of one another? If multiple project teams are selected, would it be expected that they coordinate efforts? **We are keeping our options open depending on what the proposals look like. The thought is that we could potentially allocate portions of the project to more than one firm, but it is most likely that the project will be awarded to one consultant and that consultant will arrange for additional services as needed.**
17. Is there a target budget for each of the two efforts (greater precedence on one plan over the other)? **The consultant would propose how to allocate the budget to tasks, the budget is made up of funding from multiple sources.**
18. How would the schedule process be facilitated? Would one process lead the other or is it expected they will occur at the same time? **We are flexible on this, each consultant will have their own preference and approach, however community engagement should be concurrent.**
19. Will there be differing stakeholders/core team for each of the projects? This will require doubling up of meetings, etc. for each of the system plans. **Yes, each Comprehensive Plan will have its own advisory committee or similar structure.**

20. Will City/County staff have any involvement/support with Public Engagement or is the consultant to provide staff to facilitate all events at 100%? ***The city, county, and Impact Austin in conjunction with the Development Corporation of Austin will facilitate community engagement.***
21. Will City and County provide GIS data for base mapping? If so will it including existing zoning, roadways, trails, land uses, etc.? ***Yes, any GIS data we have is available.***
22. Are current plans available in digital form? ***Current plans are available on the city (planning) and county (public works).***
23. What is the relationship between the City and the Austin Public Utilities. Is the APU another entity that needs to be included in utility discussion on a regular basis? ***Austin Utilities (AU) is a separate entity with its own board, but falls under city authority. AU is important with regard to extension of gas, electric and water. There is some territory around Austin covered by Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative.***
24. Regarding the on-line platform do you want that housed on the City website or are you asking the consultant to house the project site? ***Platforms for sharing information can be housed on our website(s).***
25. Are there any local groups or committees outside of the City or County governmental structure that you want specifically included in the plan updates? ***Impact Austin was vital in bringing together funding partners for this project.***
26. E: "Nearly 10% of the population in Austin is classified as speaking English "Not Well" or "No English" " How does the City/County approach translation services for non-english speaking residents? Would these resources be available to the planning team or should we expect to provide translation services as part of this proposal? Into what languages does the City/County typically translate materials? ***It is challenging, but we have interpreters available for some languages, primarily Spanish, Karen/Karenni and French, although there are several others. We have not found a best practice yet.***
27. Are there existing relationships that can be leveraged to improve input and engagement with typically under represented communities in the area? (Churches, social networks, community services, City/County leadership, existing working groups, etc...) ***Yes, we do have a very good network with a few organizations that work directly with or include representative of these communities who will facilitate engagement (Welcome Center, Apex Austin, Austin Public Schools, Austin Public Library, United Way of Mower County).***
28. It seems that the County and City have a good working relationship. If the County and City are not in agreement on specific policy directions, would the expectation be that the plans can diverge on those points, or should they be brought into alignment? ***Plans can diverge, we will not be able to resolve all areas, but it is our hope that we can align on most issues.***
29. To what extent does Austin anticipate growth to the west and how would you like Freeborn County to be engaged on this project? ***That is a good question. It is very possible that Austin could expand to the West. It should be considered, but we have not contemplated how we would work that out with Mower Freeborn County or their Townships.***
30. For the County plan, how much engagement do you anticipate happening at a smaller scale (Cities other than Austin, townships, etc.). ***We will leave that to the consulting firm to recommend.***