

**CERRO GORDO COUNTY
PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT
220 North Washington Ave
Mason City, Iowa 50401**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND
REWRITE OF THE COUNTY'S
ZONING ORDINANCE**

Submission deadline – Monday, March 10, 2025 – 4:30 pm

Cerro Gordo County, Iowa is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to assist the County in a comprehensive update to its zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, and zoning map including updates that reflect recommendations from the recently adopted 2024 Cerro Gordo County Comprehensive Plan.

Questions regarding the RFP should be submitted in writing to:

Tom Meyer, Chief Administrative Officer

Email: tmeyer@cerrogordo.gov

Introduction:

Cerro Gordo County has a population of approximately 42,409. The major cities within the County are the county seat, Mason City, with a population of 26,924 and Clear Lake with a population of 7,529.

The County is unique with the lake around Clear Lake. There is a substantial residential area around the lake that is in the unincorporated areas of the County. Cerro Gordo County is centrally located between Des Moines, Iowa, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. The County (Mason City) is the major retail center in the multi county area.

The County is composed of multiple departments, including: Sheriff's Department (Law enforcement officers, jail and dispatch center), Engineering Department (Secondary Roads, ROW enforcement), Administration (P&Z, Human Resources, Building and Grounds), Public Health, Auditor, Treasurer, Recorder, IT, County Attorney, Conservation, Veterans' Affairs, County Assessor, and Emergency Management.

The County has approximately 250 employees and an annual operating budget of \$43,000,000.

Development and Current Land Use Patterns:

The predominant land use in Cerro Gordo County unincorporated areas is agricultural. The much smaller use is residential, commercial, and light industrial. Special Use Permits have been used for businesses in Agricultural districts.

The majority of residential parcels are concentrated in what we refer to as the South Shore Drive area. This is where the city limits of Clear Lake end as South Shore Drive continues around the lake into the unincorporated area of Cerro Gordo County. This is where many of the permits for new structures or remodels originate. This area is developed as you would typically see in the city limits.

Impacted Area:

The Zoning Ordinance covers the unincorporated areas of Cerro Gordo County.

Scope of Work:

The following Scope of Work is what is expected for the rewrite of the County's zoning and subdivision ordinances (hereafter "Zoning Ordinances").

1. Review current Zoning Ordinances. The consultant will work with County staff in reviewing existing Codes and determining emerging areas such as data centers and pipelines.
2. Review the recently approved County Comprehensive Plan. The consultant will review and identify Plan objectives, goals, and recommendations to ensure the new codes will be consistent with recent planning documents.
3. Public Engagement. Act as a facilitator in engaging the public in the formulation of acceptable Zoning Ordinances. Consultant will propose a plan for public outreach to inform and involve the community in the development of the new Zoning Ordinances.
4. Drafting the Document. The consultant will prepare drafts of the Zoning Ordinances, for review by County staff and steering committee, culminating in a final version to be acted upon by the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Cerro Gordo County Board of Supervisors. The consultant will assist and attend the presentation of the draft to the Planning & Zoning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors.
5. Recommend other changes as appropriate to codes and processes. Including possible additions or overlay rules for the South Shore Drive area.
6. The consultant will work with the County staff to make the new Codes accessible and interactive with the public once adopted.
7. It is anticipated that the project will take approximately nine (9) months to complete with adoption by the County Board of Supervisors in calendar year 2025.

Submission Requirements:

Those submitting a response to Cerro Gordo County Request for Proposals are required to submit the following items in order to be considered:

1. Cover letter – Include the name and address of the project manager who will direct the work for the firm.
2. Introduction to the Consultant Firm(s) – The following information shall be included for all firms, included in the submittal.
 - a. Firm name and business address, including telephone number and email contact.
 - b. History of the firm.
 - c. Identify the state in which the firm was organized or incorporated.

- d. Type of ownership, and name and location of parent company and subsidiaries, if any.
 - e. Number of full-time employees. Part-time employees or consultants routinely engaged by the Respondent may be included if clearly identified as such.
3. Qualifications and Experience of the Consultant Firm(s) – Describe recent experience relevant to this project with emphasis placed on projects managed by the key names, addresses, phone numbers of those familiar with the consultant’s ability, experience, and reliability in the performance and management of projects of a similar nature.
 4. Qualifications and Experience of Key Staff – Identify key individuals to be assigned to this project and include the function and/or responsibility of each identified individual. Experience summaries of these key individuals must be provided with emphasis on previous experience in similar roles on comparable projects.
 5. Project Understanding/Methodology – The consultant should demonstrate the firm’s understanding of the nature of the work and approach to be taken. This should include addressing project objectives, scope of work, the proposed approach, and any other pertinent elements. Creative alternative approaches are encouraged.
 6. Public Engagement – Describe your plan to engage the public in the planning process.
 7. Proposed Timeline – Provide a proposed timeline which the firm believes will accomplish the scope of work, including milestone dates.
 8. Proposed Fee – Provide a proposed fee based on the stated scope of work, which includes all reimbursable items like mileage, lodging and printing. Once the desired consultant has been identified, the County reserves the right to negotiate the final fee.

Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals received will be evaluated by the RFP Review Committee. Based on the materials submitted, the County may invite any or all firms for proposal interviews.

All proposals received will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Qualifications and expertise of the firm and personnel to be assigned to the project.

- Track record of the firm and personnel in similar projects.
- Firm’s approach to the project and project understanding.
- Public Engagement plan.
- Time needed to complete the project.
- Completeness of submitted proposal with all elements required by RFP.

All questions related to this request for proposal must be submitted in writing via email to Tom Meyer – tmeyer@cerrogordo.gov no later than 12:00 pm on February 28, 2025. Please be respectful of the limited time of County staff to meet in person to have any discussions. Please title all emails with questions as Zoning Proposal.

Timeline and Submittal Information:

Monday, February 3, 2025:	Issue Request for Proposals
Monday, March 10, 2025:	Deadline for Proposals
Tuesday, March 25, 2025:	Interview with Finalists
April 7, 2025:	Recommendation and contract presented to Board of Supervisors

Submittals of Proposals:

Proposals must be sealed and submitted no later than 4:30 pm on Monday, March 10, 2025, to the following:

Cerro Gordo County
 Attn: Zoning Department
 220 North Washington Ave
 Mason City, Iowa 50401

To be considered, five (5) hard copies and one (1) digital copy of the proposal should be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled **“Zoning Proposals”**.

Proposals must reference “Zoning Proposal” on the exterior of the sealed bid. Any proposals received after the due date and time will not be considered.

Final Work Product:

The rewrite should include better consistency throughout the ordinances, ensure terminology is current, with outdated language updated or eliminated for better comprehension. The finished product should also promote efficient administration and be responsive to the neighborhood conditions, best practices, and quality outcomes. The Zoning Ordinances should be presented in a format and language that is user friendly and accessible to the public. The use of graphics and other devices that will enhance the readability and ease of use of the Zoning Ordinances is a must.