



Cuyahoga
COUNTY PLANNING
Commission

CUYAHOGA COUNTY **UNIFIED ZONING CODE**

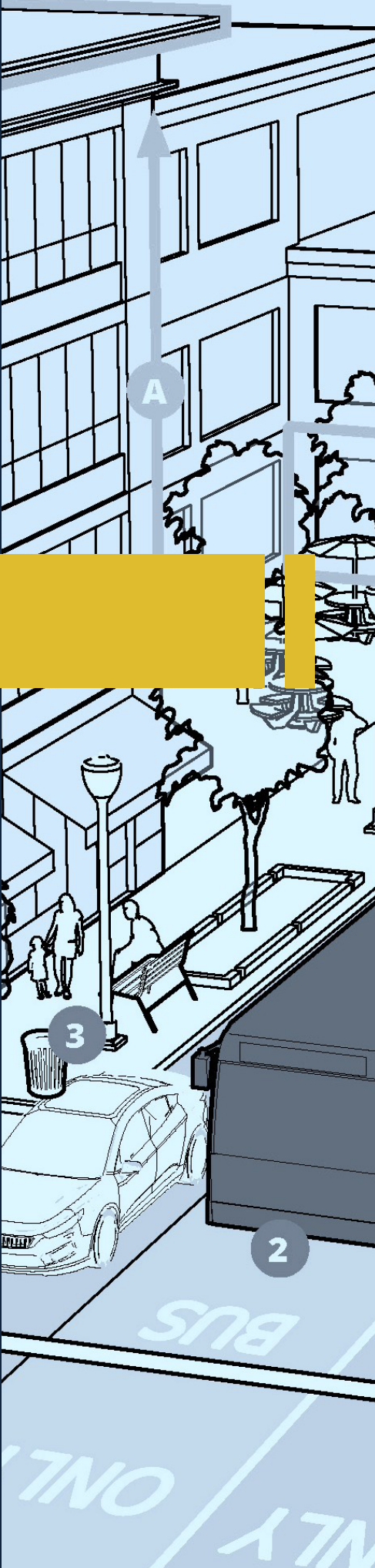
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Deadline to submit: Monday, October 23, 2026

Submit to: Patrick Hewitt | phewitt@cuyahogacounty.gov
(cc) info@countyplanning.us

CUYAHOGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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CUYAHOGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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OUR VISION

Inspiring all of our communities to thrive

OUR MISSION

To advance Cuyahoga County's social, economic, and environmental health through equitable community planning

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

A special thanks to our partners for contributing funds to the Cuyahoga County Unified Zoning Code project:



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

UNIFIED ZONING CODE

KEY DATES

Issue Date:	Monday, September 28, 2026
Deadline to Submit Questions:	Friday, October 9, 2026
Responses to be Posted Online:	Friday, October 16, 2026
Submit Questions to:	Patrick Hewitt phewitt@cuyahogacounty.gov (cc) info@countyplanning.us
Deadline to Submit Proposals:	Friday, October 23, 2026 at 4 pm
Submit Copies to:	Patrick Hewitt phewitt@cuyahogacounty.gov (cc) info@countyplanning.us

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CUYAHOGA COUNTY

Cuyahoga County is a diverse and dynamic county comprised of 59 municipalities ranging from dense urban centers to leafy suburban communities. Home to 1.2 million people, the County serves as the economic, cultural, and institutional hub of the Northeast Ohio region, anchored by major industries, renowned healthcare and education networks, and a rich legacy of innovation. At its heart is the City of Cleveland, a historic Great Lakes city known for its vibrant arts scene, world class medical institutions, and strong industrial heritage.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission (County Planning) is an independent public agency that provides professional planning services to the 59 cities, villages, and townships of Cuyahoga County.

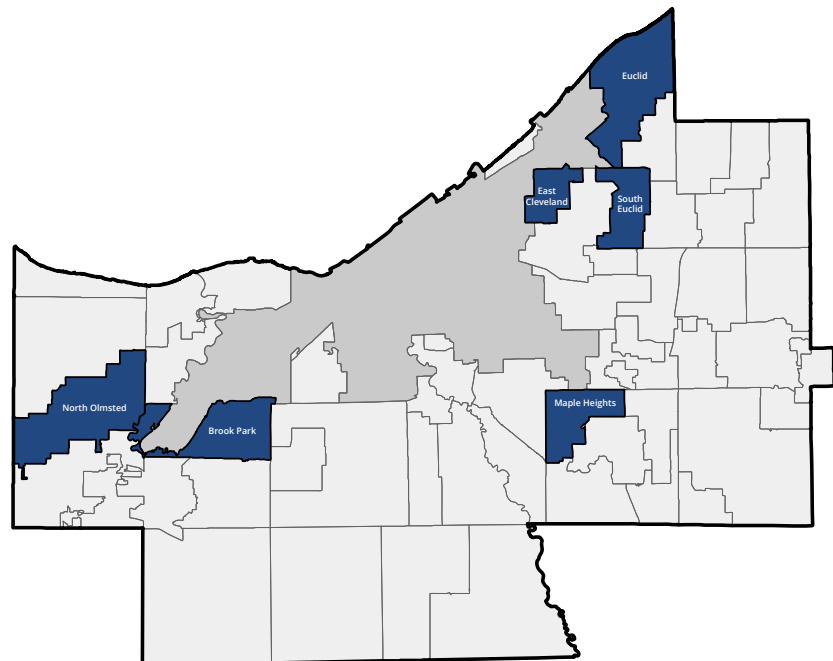
The approximately 20-person staff of County Planning are dedicated to providing the communities of Cuyahoga County with exceptional services and products, including planning services, grant administration, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and mapping services, and other special services. These planning services are delivered through master plans, corridor studies, parks plans, zoning amendments, and other initiatives.

UZY MEMBER COMMUNITIES

The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission is partnering with six communities in Cuyahoga County to establish multi-jurisdictional development regulations in a Unified Zoning Code. The six initial communities are Euclid, South Euclid, East Cleveland, Maple Heights, North Olmsted, and Brook Park.

UZY MEMBER COMMUNITIES

The map to the right showcases the six communities participating in the Unified Zoning Code in blue.



SECTION 1



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Cuyahoga County Unified Zoning Code Request for Proposals (RFP). The Unified Zoning Code (UZZ) represents a major countywide effort to modernize how zoning is written, maintained, and administered across our communities.

ZONING BACKGROUND

Over the past five years, County Planning has partnered with communities across Cuyahoga County to undertake zoning initiatives and code re-writes focused on modernizing local zoning. While County Planning does not have direct zoning authority in any of the county's 59 communities, we provide best practices and text amendments that support local zoning administration. Relevant projects include a Single-Family Zoning Analysis, a Transit-Oriented Development Zoning Study, an Accessory Dwelling Unit Study, and various code updates and best practice guides.

Dwelling Unit (ADU) Study detailed the costs and benefits of ADUs, analyzed the city's zoning code for barriers to ADUs, and offered best practices for implementation. Additionally, County Planning provided ADU zoning regulations as well as next steps for policy adoption. The report included general best practices intended to support all communities of Cuyahoga County as they considered changes to their zoning code to allow this type of housing.

The full report can be accessed at www.countyplanning.us/adus

OTHER INITIATIVES

Beyond these multi-jurisdictional and topical zoning studies, County Planning has also partnered with individual communities to review and update zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, administrative processes, parking requirements, and zoning maps.

ONGOING NEEDS

Despite the extensive work undertaken by individual communities and County Planning to modernize zoning regulations, significant structural challenges remain. Community-by-community updates take substantial time to complete, require considerable financial resources, and still result in codes that are different across jurisdictions.

The cost and complexity of maintaining modern and flexible zoning is a major barrier for communities. Comprehensive zoning updates in Cuyahoga County regularly exceed \$200,000 per community, placing full code rewrites out of reach for many municipalities. At the same time, many suburban municipalities operate with limited planning staff making it difficult to monitor changing development needs, track regulatory trends, or keep zoning language current. Because each community has a distinct zoning ordinance, planning staff also cannot easily borrow language from neighboring jurisdictions. Even after major updates, zoning ordinances can quickly fall out of date as new development trends, emerging land uses, evolving state and federal laws, and shifting market conditions outpace a community's ability to respond.

Developers experience these challenges directly. Even when communities update zoning, developers continue to face different standards, processes, and terminology across the county. This inconsistency increases costs, slows project timelines, and discourages investment. Without shared tools or coordinated updates, communities must individually research, draft, and adopt new regulations. Furthermore, while individual zoning updates are valuable, they do not address the systemic challenges created by dozens of separate, independently maintained ordinances.

Communities need a coordinated, efficient, and continually updated zoning framework that reduces local burden, supports modern development, and provides shared clarity for residents, staff, and developers.

THE UNIFIED ZONING CODE

The Unified Zoning Code seeks to meet ongoing needs by offering a collaborative zoning platform that is shared among communities, reduces duplication of effort, and ensures communities are equipped to respond to both current and emerging development challenges.

The proposed UZC is a comprehensive zoning ordinance and map being developed by County Planning. The UZC will be held and maintained by County Planning, yet adopted and administered by individual communities. This approach modernizes zoning regulations and unlocks development opportunities through a shared platform, while preserving local administrative authority and approvals so communities can shape their own growth.

The UZC addresses longstanding zoning issues—outdated codes and maps, challenges with updating language, and a fragmented regulatory environment—and establishes an innovative approach that can boost development and strengthen our region.

CODE ADOPTION

County Planning anticipates that UZC Member Communities will adopt the UZC by reference, such that amendments approved by the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission Board would apply within adopting communities. This approach mirrors how many communities have adopted other code sections, such as the International Property Maintenance Code (for example, Chapter 1751 of the City of Euclid code). The specific adoption and amendment mechanism, including any procedural steps required under each community’s charter and applicable state law, will be determined through the Legal Review described in Section 2 and may vary by community.

CODE MAINTENANCE

County Planning would lead updates to the UZC in partnership with UZC Member Communities. This would include gathering input from member communities, drafting recommended changes, and presenting updates to the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission Board for review and adoption.

LOCAL ELEMENTS

While the UZC promotes regional consistency, we recognize that each community has unique needs. County Planning proposes that communities adopt the UZC and then adopt local elements to reflect specific priorities that are not addressed. County Planning would work closely with each community to ensure these local elements align with the broader code and maintain consistency. Further, these local elements would be encouraged to follow a standard format to ensure ease of use by residents and developers.

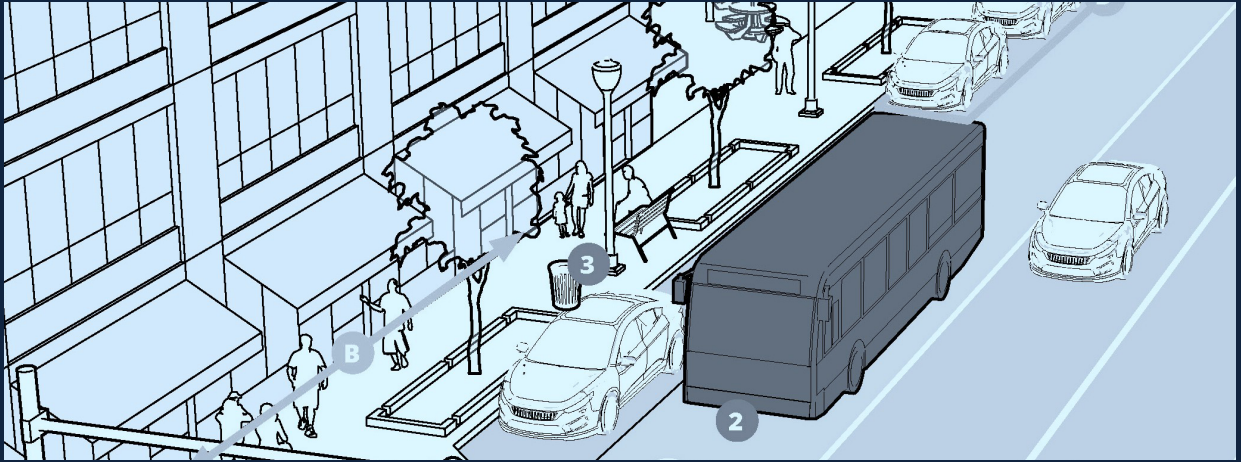
CODE ADMINISTRATION

While the UZC would be maintained by County Planning, local administration remains unchanged. Each community would continue to review and approve projects through their local Planning Commission, Design Review Boards, Boards of Zoning Appeals, or other bodies as established in local charters.

REQUEST

Through this RFP, County Planning seeks a qualified consultant to help build a modern, unified zoning framework that supports local priorities while improving consistency and responsiveness across communities. We look forward to partnering with a team that can help us create a durable, flexible, and forward-looking zoning code for Cuyahoga County.

SECTION 2



PROJECT SCOPE & REQUIREMENTS

UZY SCOPE OF WORK

The anticipated Scope of Work consists of background review and research, legal review, and the creation of the zoning elements that will comprise the UZY. In addition to these zoning elements, mapping, data management, and public engagement elements will be required. Finally, the project also requires capacity to assist County Planning and UZY Member Communities through the adoption process and training on its use. These elements and their deliverables are outlined in this section and should be reflected in the applicant's response as required in Section 3.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

County Planning and UZC Member Communities are committed to a Unified Zoning Code shaped by the following principles, which will guide how zoning text, regulations, and processes are developed and applied:

- 1) Common Foundation with Local Flexibility:**
The UZC should provide a shared countywide zoning framework that applies broadly across communities while allowing those communities to tailor local elements to reflect their unique priorities and conditions.
- 2) Predictable and Development-Friendly:**
The UZC should provide clear and consistent standards that reduce uncertainty for applicants while supporting development through streamlined processes across jurisdictions.
- 3) Grounded in Modern Best Practices:**
The UZC should integrate contemporary planning, land use, and zoning administration best practices to ensure the code aligns with emerging trends and evolving development patterns, housing needs, environmental and climate adaptation, and transportation trends.
- 4) Flexible, Easily Updated, and Responsive to Emerging Uses:**
The UZC should provide mechanisms for easy updates that keep the code current while enabling communities to respond quickly to new technologies, land use trends, and statutory or legal changes.
- 5) Expandable Framework:**
The UZC should provide a forward-thinking framework that can be adopted by additional communities over time while ensuring consistency and alignment across an expanding countywide network and among communities with varying development characteristics.
- 6) Visually Clear, Modern, and Well-Organized:**
The UZC should provide intuitive navigation, consistent formatting, and clear graphics, illustrations, and visual elements to improve readability and usability for staff, residents, and developers.
- 7) Suited for Communities of All Sizes and Capacities:**
The UZC should provide procedures, standards, and regulations that can be administered by both small and large planning departments while reducing local burden through coordinated support by County Planning.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The consultant shall provide the following deliverables, which will form the foundation for drafting, adopting, and maintaining the Unified Zoning Code:

1) Legal Review:

The selected consultant will conduct a charter and statutory review for each participating community to identify legal issues affecting UZC adoption and implementation. The review must address the adoption and amendment mechanism for each community as well as propose clear strategies to address any identified issues.

The Legal Review shall be prepared by, or under the direct supervision of, an attorney licensed to practice law in Ohio with experience in Ohio municipal zoning and land use law. Proposals shall identify this attorney and describe their role on the project team. The Legal Review is a project deliverable and does not constitute legal advice to County Planning or to any UZC Member Community.

2) Zoning Diagnostic Reports:

The selected consultant will review the zoning codes of participating communities and prepare a Zoning Diagnostic Report for each community identifying regulatory gaps, inconsistencies, overlaps, and deficiencies that will need to be addressed in the UZC. The format of this deliverable is flexible (e.g., report, tables, presentation) but must clearly convey findings and key issues.

3) UZC Framework:

Using the Zoning Diagnostic Reports, the selected consultant will provide a framework for the UZC, outlining overarching structure and approach for the full UZC.

4) UZC Elements:

The selected consultant will draft complete zoning regulations—including text, tables, graphics, figures, and diagrams—for all elements of the UZC. The consultant will deliver a fully organized code document with a clear structure, consistent formatting, and a modern layout that reflects best practices in zoning and administration.

5) Local Elements:

The selected consultant will develop community-specific Local Elements as needed by participating communities and as identified in the Zoning Diagnostic Reports. The consultant will also provide supplemental district options, overlay districts, and any community-specific design guidelines needed to support adoption and administration of the UZC.

These deliverables must align with the structure and format of the Unified Zoning Code and support consistency across communities while enabling local variation where appropriate.

6) Zoning Map and Mapping Files:

The selected consultant will develop an associated zoning map incorporating proposed districts for all communities. The selected consultant will deliver ESRI Geodatabase(s) for each participating community identifying the zoning designation for each parcel and a consistent symbology for how those districts should be represented. Geodatabases must meet specifications for integration with the County's mapping system.

See optional additional deliverables for further items.

See "UZC & Local Elements" on
page 13 for further details

7) **Administration and Adoption Materials:**

The selected consultant will prepare formal adoption materials—including ordinance language, adoption checklists, and process overviews—for use by communities and the County Planning Commission Board.

The selected consultant will also provide materials and instructions for ongoing UZC updates and amendments, outlining roles for County Planning and UZC Member Communities. This includes recommendations for procedures and templates for the creation of Local Elements and their long-term integration with the UZC. The selected consultant will also develop standardized forms for consistent planning administration (e.g., application forms, staff reports, review checklists, submission requirements).

8) **Project Meetings & Engagement Deliverables:**

The selected consultant will produce public-facing materials for meetings, website content, outreach events, and engagement activities (e.g., slides, boards, surveys, videos, fliers, info sheets, renderings, graphics, and social media content). The purpose of this content will be to engage UZC Member Communities and the public during the development and adoption process. A summary of all engagement activities should be included, providing documentation of feedback and how it informed the UZC.

Additionally, the selected consultant will provide training materials for participating communities to support adoption, interpretation, and administration of the UZC.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are optional services the selected consultant may include in their proposal. These services should be listed and priced separately from the above deliverables, and County Planning reserves the right to determine whether these deliverables will be included in the final contract for services.

9) **Digital Platform:**

The selected consultant may propose a digital platform to support long-term access, display, and maintenance of the UZC and zoning maps. The platform may be developed in ArcGIS, Gridics, and/or another suitable system and should include functions for viewing regulations, searching text, mapping districts, and updating code language. Consultants offering this option must identify required software, hosting, subscription needs, and impacts on the project budget and timeline.

10) **Ongoing Support & Maintenance Plan:**

The selected consultant may propose an ongoing support and maintenance plan to assist County Planning during the first three years of UZC implementation and early operations. This may include annual support services, subscription or maintenance contracts, and identified or requested text changes.

11) **Post-Project Indicators:**

The selected consultant may propose a monitoring plan identifying key indicators, data sources, and methods for measuring the UZC's long-term effectiveness. The plan should outline recommended metrics, tracking procedures, and reporting formats for evaluating outcomes such as housing production, variance reductions, and timelines.

The Unified Zoning Code document is anticipated to be developed in InDesign and exported to PDF. If alternate methods of producing the document are proposed, this must be indicated in the RFP submission response.

UZC & LOCAL ELEMENTS

The following is an overview of each zoning element of the UZC to be developed for this project. Proposals shall demonstrate understanding and experience in addressing these elements in the Statement of Qualifications as outlined in Section 3. Elements are subject to adjustment based on consultant experience and best practices.

1) Introduction, Applicability, & Legal Requirements:

The introductory sections of the UZC, including where and when the code is applicable, and any legal requirements necessary to adopt, regulate, enable, administer, or enforce the UZC as the zoning regulations within UZC Member Communities. This element must also take into account the unique structure of the UZC, which will be adopted by the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission Board and subsequently adopted by individual communities.

2) Zoning Districts:

A menu of standardized zoning districts and the permitted, conditionally permitted, accessory, and prohibited uses associated with each based on current and desired land use patterns. These zoning districts will cover the range of land use types and use graphic representations to communicate their intent. These districts must be applied/mapped appropriately within UZC Member Communities, and the consultant should preemptively incorporate additional districts as necessary for future communities and/or anticipated land uses. This element will also include rules of interpretation such as measurements.

3) Use Regulations:

General or specific regulations for conditionally permitted and accessory uses for each zoning district created in the previous element.

4) Development Standards:

Regulations controlling the development of land and buildings within communities. It will cover topics such as, but not limited to, landscaping, tree preservation, access, walls and fences, screening, parking, signs, lighting, design standards, subdivision regulations, and environmental protection.

5) Definitions:

Definitions for words, processes, concepts, roles, uses, and other critical terms used in the document. It should provide clear, concise and modern definitions to facilitate easy understanding, clear interpretation, and efficient administration of the UZC.

6) Administration:

Powers and duties for boards, commissions, and other administrative authorities as well as processes through which the UZC will be administered. This includes the processes, standards, and requirements for review and approval of developments, rezonings, conditional uses, variances, and other functions.

7) Local Elements:

Community-specific alterations to elements of the UZC to meet local needs (e.g. reduced setbacks, enhanced environmental protections, specific design standards, or alternate administrative processes). While some local changes may be minor, others local elements may be larger, such as overlay districts or historic preservation standards. Consultants should describe how they will approach these concerns in their proposal and consider how this will impact the project timeline and budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The selected consultant will support County Planning in implementing a comprehensive engagement process that informs, educates, and involves participating communities and the public throughout development and adoption of the Unified Zoning Code. County Planning will serve as the primary point of contact for coordinating all engagement activities, with the consultant responsible for producing materials, participating in meetings, and ensuring clear communication.

The consultant will work directly with County Planning in hosting and jointly facilitating meetings, with the following types anticipated:

- Project Team Meetings: Meetings with County Planning staff to review progress, discuss drafts, and refine materials
- UZC Member Meetings: Meetings with representatives of the UZC Member Communities to coordinate input across participating municipalities
- Public Official Workshops: Workshops with local boards, commissions, and councils to explain draft UZC language and gather feedback
- Open Houses: Public meetings to present key components of the UZC, answer questions, and solicit public input
- Presentations: Presentations to planning commissions, design review boards, councils, and other local bodies during adoption
- Trainings: Pre- and post-adoption trainings to support implementation and administration of the UZC

The selected consultant will develop all required engagement materials, including presentations, diagrams, informational sheets, graphics, and other resources needed for public communication or internal review. Engagement materials shall be clear, visually accessible, and tailored to the needs of the audience. A summary of all engagement activities must be provided, documenting meeting outcomes and demonstrating how feedback influenced the final UZC.

TRAVEL FOR PROJECT

Virtual meetings will generally be acceptable for Project Team and UZC Member meetings. However, in-person participation will be required for open houses, workshops, and adoption-related activities as needed. Consultants shall indicate in their response the anticipated number, type, and purpose of in-person meetings, and any related travel expenses shall be incorporated into the project budget.

PHASING THE UZC

A phased approach will be used to complete the deliverables outlined previously. The following is the suggested phased approach; however, alternate approaches may be outlined in the RFP response:

Code Development
Phases

- 1) Project Initiation, Planning, & Legal Review:**
Establish a project framework, engage the UZC Member Communities, and set roles and responsibilities. Complete the Legal Review element to identify needs and goals, and establish the legal framework for the Unified Zoning Code.
- 2) Foundation & Administrative Alignment:**
Complete the Zoning Diagnostic Reports and provide a framework for the UZC, outlining overarching structure and approach for the full code text. Organize the UZC code document and draft administrative sections.
- 3) Developing Zoning Districts and Standards & Applying to Communities:**
Build individual zoning districts and zoning maps for UZC Member Communities.
- 4) Developing Standards and Regulations & Building Digital Platform:**
Develop additional code elements (development standards, use regulations, definitions, and other modules).

Adoption
Phase

- 5) Adopting in UZC Member Communities:**
Adopt Unified Zoning Code by Cuyahoga County Planning Commission and UZC Member Communities. Train County Planning and UZC Member Communities on contents and use of the UZC.

Consultants may choose to follow this phasing approach or may propose an alternate approach. However they shall outline those phases, the rationale for the approach, and how this will inform budget, timeline, and other project constraints in their response.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Code development is expected to take approximately 18 to 24 months* with a desire to begin the project in the fourth quarter of 2026. The adoption process is anticipated to extend beyond the initial 24 months. Below is a general timeline of the entire UZC project, including subsequent adoption and maintenance.

	2026		2027				2028				2029				2030			
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Consultant Selection	-----																	
Code Development (Phases 1 -4)		-----																
Adoption (Phase 5)							-----											
Rollout, Maintenance, & Tracking (Ongoing, Post-Project)											-----							

*This timeline is subject to change

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SECTION 3



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

County Planning is requesting proposals from a consultant or consultant team for the preparation of a Unified Zoning Code for the UZC Member Communities. The consultant(s) is expected to work closely and proactively with County Planning and UZC Member Communities representatives to deliver the general requirements and deliverables as outlined in Section 2: Project Scope and Requirements.

Proposals shall include a Statement of Qualifications outlining the consultant's experience and skills to complete the project Scope of Work as well as a Project Proposal outlining the consultant's understanding of the request and their approach to the project. The required contents of each section are outlined on the following pages.

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

As part of each response, it is up to the prospective consultant to fully describe their qualifications in meeting the scope and requirements outlined in this request. The Statement of Qualifications should be organized and provide, at a minimum, the information in the following order:

1. INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Letter of Interest (1 page maximum): Please include an introductory letter of interest/ executive summary that states how the consultant views and understands the project and provides an overview of their approach. Also include a brief description of the consultant's experience, past performance, and capacity to deliver the update within the desired timeframe.

2. QUALIFICATIONS

At a minimum, please include the following in this section:

Consultant Background (2 pages maximum): Provide a brief description of the consultant(s) including the range of professional services, office locations, and staff size. This shall apply to all subcontractors.

Consultant Experience and Qualifications (6 pages maximum): Outline the experience of the consultant and other credentials that illustrate qualifications to undertake this project. Provide at least three examples of zoning code updates that your consultant has completed within the past five years. Codes may be referenced electronically. Example codes should demonstrate work with communities of diverse sizes and types and be representative of UZC Member Communities found in Cuyahoga County. Also, list recent projects on which principal staff have worked and describe their responsibilities.

Project Team Composition (4 pages maximum): Provide a description of the team that will be assigned to the project including resumes for all team members. Focus on experiences related to the delivery of this project. Identify the capacity in which team members will be used and identify the Project Manager, who will be the main point of contact during the UZC process. Any work intended to be subcontracted must be disclosed, including the name of the subcontractor and specific tasks that will be subcontracted. County Planning expects that the principal staff person(s) listed will not change and will continue through the entirety of the project.

References (3 pages maximum): Provide a minimum of three references for services comparable to this project, including subconsultant references if applicable. Include a contact person, title, address, telephone number, and email address.

PROJECT PROPOSALS

1. APPROACH

Work Plan & Project Approach (8 pages maximum): A narrative explaining the consultant's approach to this project in the context of the Scope of Work and UZC Elements outlined in Section 2 of this RFP. This includes:

- a. An overview of the project communicating an understanding of the needs and goals of the Unified Zoning Code, County Planning, and the Member Communities
- b. A detailed work plan explaining meetings, tasks, subtasks, and resources needed to accomplish deliverables for all elements outlined in Section 2.
- c. Timeline for completion of the detailed work plan elements, including all public outreach and meetings, identifying milestones for development of the project, and completion of individual tasks in accordance with the schedule set forth in Section 2.
- d. A schedule of regular updates and inclusion of status reports to County Planning and member communities.
- e. Capacity of consultant to meet required time schedules based on current and known future workload of staff assigned to the project
- f. Estimated budget and an explanation of the consultant's ability to stay within total project budget, with a detailed breakdown on budget in regard to each element outlined in Section 2. The budget estimate must include a base budget for a UZC incorporating the initial six UZC Member Communities as well as a budget proposal for any additional communities that may be added within the first year of the project.
- g. Inclusion of any phasing or other project tasks and a detailed explanation of their content as well as how they meet the explained purpose of this project and will fit within the overall project approach, timeline, and budget.

2. OTHER INFORMATION

Additional Details (2 pages maximum): Consultants may provide additional or alternative versions of elements of the Scope of Work, including phasing, deliverables, or other elements from what is listed in Section 2. However, the consultant must outline how the intent of the outlined Scope of Work, including UZC elements and deliverables, will be satisfied with their approach, as well as how they will impact the project timeline and budget.

Subconsultants (2 pages maximum): If necessary, subconsultants may be employed. If the execution of work to be performed requires the hiring of subconsultants, you must clearly state this in your response. Subconsultants must be identified, and the work they will perform must be defined. All services and costs incurred by the subconsultant are under the direction and underwritten by the prime consultant selected.

Signature: The submission must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer, agent of the consultant, or person submitting the response.

SUBMITTING

FORMAT

Proposals shall be submitted in the process and manner described below.

- Proposals must be provided in a searchable .pdf format
- 25 page maximum (content, not including cover page or table of contents)
- Pages shall be 8.5 x 11 inches, except for relevant illustrative/supporting pages, which may be presented in 11x17 inch format if limited to only graphics, images, and/or designs and may not be used for narratives
- Font shall be no smaller than 10 point

QUESTIONS

Submit questions electronically to:

Patrick Hewitt (phewitt@cuyahogacounty.gov)
(cc) info@countyplanning.us
(Subject: UZC RFP QUESTIONS)

The deadline to submit questions is Friday, October 9, 2026 by 4 pm.

Answers for questions received by email will be posted on a rolling basis. Final answers will be posted on the UZC website: www.countyplanning.us/uzc on Friday, October 16, 2026.

SUBMITTAL

Submit one (1) .pdf copy of the Proposal by 4 pm Friday, October 23, 2026.

Submit responses electronically to:

Patrick Hewitt (phewitt@cuyahogacounty.gov)
(cc) info@countyplanning.us
(Subject: UZC RFP)

SECTION 4



EVALUATION & SELECTION

SELECTING A CONSULTANT

County Planning, in consultation with the UZC Member Communities, will select a consultant based upon a review of the qualifications of responding consultants and the merits of the proposals received. Our goal is to select a highly qualified team with significant zoning experience that shows a thorough understanding of the project and its desired outcomes, as well as a proven track record of completing projects of this size and scope.

SELECTION PROCESS

EVALUATION OF RESPONSE/SHORT LIST

County Planning and representatives of the UZC Member Communities will review responses received, evaluate each, and rank them in relative position. County Planning shall be the sole judge of its best interests in the evaluation of responses. County Planning's decision shall be final, and the ranking of the responses shall be at the sole discretion of County Planning.

Evaluation Criteria: Only responses submitted by consultants that meet requirements set forth in Section 3 will be evaluated. Responses submitted by the deadline will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 40%** **Experience & Qualifications.** The applicant's experience and qualifications demonstrated in the submittal requirements of this RFP. An applicant must demonstrate their team's experience providing these services, technical capabilities and skill, ability to meet milestones and deadlines, and methodology.
- 30%** **Project Understanding.** The applicant's demonstrated understanding of the background, context, need, and intended outcomes of the Unified Zoning Code as outlined in this RFP.
- 30%** **Project Approach.** How the applicant intends to satisfy the elements and deliverables stated in the Scope of Work; manage the project; adhere to the proposed budget and timeline; and provide a final deliverable in response to requirements of this RFP.

Budget: While County Planning expects to have ample funding to complete this project, proposed budgets we feel underestimate the cost or are higher than our expected funding may cause proposals to not be considered for selection.

Demonstration of Capabilities: Each consultant team should be able to accurately demonstrate their capabilities through graphic samples, prior client testimonies, and other similar project descriptions.

Additional Information: At any time during the evaluation period, County Planning may request additional or alternative options and prices. Such request shall be deemed to be part of the original RFP. Consultant teams shall not be permitted to revise their original responses without the permission of County Planning.

SHORT LIST/INTERVIEW

Once a review of the submitted responses is complete, County Planning will determine a short list of the two (2) to three (3) top-ranking submissions to be invited for an in-person interview. This will be an opportunity for the consultant to discuss their qualifications, experience, and proposal and for County Planning and representatives of the UZC Member Communities to ask questions of the consultant. Selected consultants may be asked to provide additional information relating to this RFP or their proposals.

SELECTION OF CONSULTANT

Following the interview, County Planning, in consultation with the UZC Member Communities, will select a single, best qualified consultant to award the project. The selected consultant will negotiate with County Planning to finalize a project scope, budget, and contract for review and approval by the Board of the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission.

SELECTION SCHEDULE

September 28, 2026	RFP Issued
October 9, 2026 (4pm)	Questions Submitted by Email
October 16, 2026 (5pm)	Final Responses Posted
October 23, 2026 (4pm)	RFP Submittal Deadline
November 2-6, 2026	Short List Determination and Interviews (Estimated)
November 13, 2026	Selection of Consultant (Estimated)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

COST OF PREPARING A RESPONSE TO THIS RFP

All expenses for preparing and submitting responses are the sole cost of the party submitting the response. County Planning is not obligated to any party to reimburse such expenses.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

County Planning reserves the right to issue amendments and addenda to this Request for Proposals (RFP), as well as the right to cancel or reissue this RFP in its entirety. County Planning also reserves the right to evaluate the proposals submitted, request additional information, and/or to make inquiries as necessary to verify qualifications.

In its sole discretion, County Planning may waive any irregularities or reject any and all consultant teams submitting a response to this RFP should it be deemed in the best interest of County Planning to do so.

County Planning may disqualify a consultant team if any interest disclosed from any source is either deemed by County Planning to be a conflict or give the appearance of a conflict or otherwise cause speculation as to the objectivity and/or integrity of the work to be undertaken.

County Planning may choose to negotiate with the consultant of next-ranked proposal if negotiations with the selected consultant fail or for any other reason an agreement is unable to be reached.

Nothing in this RFP shall obligate, compel, or require County Planning to proceed with the project, product, or services contemplated herein.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY

Any document or product that has any kind of content produced by generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and submitted to or produced for County Planning must be disclosed. This includes (but is not limited to) responses to RFPs, any kind of reports (including progress reports), final reports or documents, and graphics, artwork, or images.

OWNERSHIP OF DELIVERABLES

All deliverables, including the UZC text, graphics, maps, GIS data, and native source files, will be the property of County Planning. Any proposed digital platform must ensure County Planning's continued access to and ownership of its data regardless of the status of any subscription or hosting arrangement.

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

All documentation and submitted proposals provided to County Planning are considered public records under O.R.C. 149.43. Consultants should mark any claimed trade secrets in their proposal by page on which it occurs. Consultants recognize and agree that County Planning will not be responsible or liable in any way for any loss consultants may suffer from the lawful disclosure of information or materials to third parties.

RESOURCES

The following resources should be reviewed when responding to this RFP:

- www.countyplanning.us/uzc
- www.countyplanning.us/singlefamily
- www.countyplanning.us/tod
- www.countyplanning.us/adus

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