



# Design Guidelines & Neighborhood Conditions Matrix

Request for Qualifications

January 19, 2022

## Background

The City of O'Fallon, Illinois has experienced a great deal of change and growth over the past few decades. O'Fallon has become a hub for both commercial and residential development due to its excellent schools, public safety, recreation, flourishing downtown, and proximity to Scott Air Force Base, all just 15 miles east of Downtown St. Louis. At its core, many O'Fallon residents cite the community's small-town atmosphere as one of their favorite things about living here. The City grew up as a coal-mining and railroad community, fairly independent from St. Louis, despite its proximity. Now, with over 32,000 residents, O'Fallon has evolved into a diverse and vibrant community, much of which can be attributed to the City's planning for quality development.

Looking forward to the next 20 years, the City has embraced a new 2040 Master Plan to ensure O'Fallon develops as an inclusive, welcoming, and attractive place for people to build their lives and their businesses. A major principle of the 2040 Master Plan is the "15-minute city" – a concept in which residents have access to basic amenities and needs within a 15-minute walk or bike ride. The 15-minute city concept creates a potential shift in land use planning in areas of the city which have generally been developed as single-family residential developments.

Dovetailing the 15-minute city principle, the 2040 Master Plan challenges the City to provide diverse and attainable housing options. O'Fallon is aiming to fill the gaps in our housing stock to ensure residents can find options that suit them, regardless of life phase, economic status, or household size. Currently the bulk of residential development is detached single-family home subdivisions and large apartment buildings. O'Fallon is committed to encouraging the development of "missing middle" housing – a range of housing types which fill the gap between single-family and large multi-family. Missing middle housing often includes duplexes, villas, quadplexes, cottage courts, and small apartment buildings (6-20 units).

Another approach to ensuring a diverse housing stock is to support and maintain the neighborhoods which *already* have diverse and attainable housing. While the City certainly has a sense for which neighborhoods those are, an objective assessment of O'Fallon's general neighborhood conditions is needed. With this assessment, the City will need a framework or matrix tool to be used by planning staff for assessing conditions in more detail.

The implementation of these guiding principles – the 15-minute city and diverse and attainable housing – are critical to their success and reception from the community. It is the hope of the City of O'Fallon that the projects described in this RFQ will set the City on the right path toward implementing the community's vision.

## Project Description

There are three separate deliverables for the project, which shall be guided by the principles in the 2040 Master Plan introduction described above. The City currently utilizes its [Commercial Design Handbook](#) and [Downtown Design Guidelines](#) which have been valuable tools in guiding the desired design of larger commercial development as well as modifications to existing buildings in the Downtown District. The Neighborhood District Design Guidelines and Residential Design Guidelines should follow a similar framework as these two existing guidebooks.

### Neighborhood District Design Guidelines

The 15-minute city principle of the 2040 Master Plan establishes the importance of Neighborhood District nodes, or “neighborhood hubs,” to enhancing quality of life, reducing carbon emissions, and efficiently planning land use and infrastructure. Ten Neighborhood District nodes have been identified in the Future Land Use Plan. Please review the [2040 Master Plan](#) for more information on this land use category and its associated land uses and development guidelines. Pages 115-116 are most relevant, but other sections of the plan elaborate further.

The deliverable shall establish architectural design guidelines and general development guidelines addressing access, form, proximity and relationship to the street, protecting established neighborhoods, etc. The guidelines should be presented with annotated diagrams depicting the typical building orientation, buffering, massing, materials, roof planes, and pedestrian-scaled recommendations. The guidelines should communicate various design concepts, such as the use of voids and solids, fenestration, and variation of wall planes to create neighborhood oriented commercial uses that blend with adjacent residential uses. The guidelines should also utilize precedent imagery of existing neighborhood-oriented commercial development in other similar suburban communities to convey the concepts.

### Residential Design Guidelines

Ensuring that new residential development is good quality, fits with the character of the community, and is appropriately scaled, is critical to implementing the ideals of the 2040 Master Plan and maintaining community support. Thus, the City is in need of guidelines for new residential development of all types and scales, as well as exterior modifications to existing residential properties. The success of “missing middle” housing will especially rely on clear and sound design guidance, addressing elements such as relationship to the street, bulk, form, materials, and architectural style. This deliverable will follow the same process and format as the Neighborhood District Guidelines described above. Architectural guidelines should be developed with the character of our existing housing stock in mind while also looking forward to housing trends and needs. The design guidelines should be drafted in a format that is compatible with the City’s ordinances and include procedural recommendations.

### Neighborhood Conditions Assessment & Matrix

To better support our neighborhoods, the City must assess existing conditions of neighborhoods overall and the housing stock within them. This deliverable will consist of four components:

- (1) An evaluation of the existing housing stock;
- (2) Identify opportunities to diversify, stabilize, and improve the quality of the City’s housing;
- (3) Identify conditions that contribute to neighborhood distress; and
- (4) A Neighborhood Conditions Matrix, a tool that can be used by City staff to evaluate, in finer detail, each neighborhood’s condition.

As part of the analysis, the consultant shall interview key stakeholders, such as the City’s Code Enforcement Officers and subdivision trustees. The consultant shall also visit residential areas and gather images depicting factors that contribute to stabilization or decline in order to understand the current housing stock.

## Qualifications

Firms that wish to be considered should be able to provide planning and architectural design expertise necessary to understand O'Fallon's conditions and vision, and develop professional guidelines that are clear, fair, and implementable. Interested consultants shall involve a team that has the expertise, skills, and ability to:

- Prepare architectural design guidelines for use by local governments.
- Understand planning, urban design, and architecture principles.
- Engage in meaningful participation with the public, stakeholders and elected officials to ensure that the guidelines are in-line with the community's vision.
- Design digital surveys to gather feedback and visual preference.
- Develop strategies and recommendations for successfully implementing the vision of the O'Fallon Illinois 2040 Master Plan, particularly the components described above.

## Delivery of Qualifications

Any firm which desires to present its qualifications to the City of O'Fallon shall provide them to the City via digital submittal (PDF preferred) by **Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022**. Submittals and questions regarding the project can be directed to:

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