



BOROUGH OF AVALON

640 California Avenue

Avalon, PA 15202

Phone: 412-761-5820

Fax: 412-761-5953

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES

PROPOSALS DUE MARCH 1, 2021

The Borough of Avalon is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) for building inspection services, including but not limited to plan review, residential and commercial inspections, and meeting attendance when requested. Zoning consultation services may also be required as specified by our Tri-Borough Joint Zoning Ordinance.

The services under the proposed contract would begin April 1, 2021.

The Borough of Avalon is committed to an objective and open selection process. Every proposal shall receive an unbiased review.

The Borough of Avalon has issued this RFP to ensure competitive pricing and services for the benefit of all Borough taxpayers.

Questions concerning this RFP should be directed to:

Lorraine Makatura
Borough Manager
Borough of Avalon
640 California Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15202
412-761-5820 Ext. 1001
lmakatura@boroughofavalon.org
www.boroughofavalon.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1 – BACKGROUND

THE COMMUNITY	3
CURRENT PRACTICES	3

SECTION 2 – REQUIREMENTS OF PROPOSAL

SCOPE OF SERVICES	5
DUTIES	5
AVAILABILITY IN BOROUGH.....	6
COMPENSATION	6
INSURANCE	6
QUALIFICATIONS.....	6

SECTION 3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

DIRECTIONS FOR SUBMITTAL	7
CONTRACT TERM	7
COSTS FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION	7
RESERVATION OF RIGHTS TO REJECT, WAIVE, AND REISSUE.....	7
OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS	7

SECTION 4 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS 8

SECTION 5 EVALUATION PROCESS..... 9

SECTION 1 – BACKGROUND

THE COMMUNITY

Avalon Borough is a small community located 6 miles northwest of Pittsburgh. Avalon is .69 square miles with a population of approximately 4,537 residents (United States Census Bureau Annual Estimate of Resident Population for 2019). Situated along the Ohio River, the Borough is bordered by Bellevue Borough, Ross Township, Kilbuck Township, Ben Avon Heights Borough, and Ben Avon Borough.

Planning and zoning issues are governed by a Tri-Borough Zoning Ordinance, which was established by the Joint Planning Commission, comprised of representatives from Avalon Borough, Bellevue Borough and Ben Avon Borough. The community does not have a Borough Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and is therefore subject to the Allegheny County SALDO for development. A Joint Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2017 which developed plans for Avalon Borough, Bellevue Borough, Ben Avon Borough and Ben Avon Heights Borough.

The Route 65 corridor along the Ohio River has experienced some new commercial growth and revitalization in recent years. There are approximately 2,939 housing units, largely single family and 2-4 unit rental properties. This includes 1,129 owner-occupied units and 1,234 rental units. There are 6 large apartment complexes with at least 50 units; 9 mid-size apartment complexes with between 10 and 48 units; 4 condominium buildings, each with a minimum of 7 floors; several smaller apartment buildings with 5-10 units and a large skilled nursing home facility. Numerous blighted properties have resulted in demolitions. However, zoning requirements limit rebuilding on those vacant lots, allowing for very little new housing development.

Homes and businesses are served by public utilities, cable, telephone, electric, and gas. The sewer system is Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN), with less than 10 homes having individual septic systems. Avalon Borough is a separate sewer overflow (SSO) system, therefore, requiring downspouts be disconnected from the sanitary system.

CURRENT PRACTICES

Avalon Borough is currently using a 3rd party building inspection service. Inspections are scheduled two days per week between the hours of 11:00 am and 3:00 pm, with required paperwork being submitted to Borough staff following the inspections. The Inspector does not hold regular office hours. However, office space is available for the inspector to use to complete paperwork, review plans, make phone calls, and meet with residents. Meetings with Borough Administration are scheduled as needed. The Building Inspector is required to attend court on behalf of the Borough for scheduled hearings related to inspections and property maintenance. Monthly billing for inspection services is required; fees are set by Borough Resolution which includes the inspection company's fee schedule.

The Borough requires several property inspections in addition to inspections required for the usual building/electrical/HVAC/plumbing permits:

1. Occupancy Inspection at time of sale of residential and commercial properties.
2. Dye Test Certification – after a certified plumber completes the dye test and makes any necessary corrections to remove the unauthorized connections to the sanitary system.

3. Fire Safety Inspection for a Rental Operating License
4. Commercial Fire Inspections

Avalon Borough has an ordinance in place for all properties to have an occupancy inspection and dye test completed before a sale is final. This includes sale of residential and commercial properties as well as vacant land. All property records are maintained within the Borough Administration Office.

Avalon Borough also has ordinances in place requiring landlords to annually register their tenants and obtain a Fire Safety Rental Operating License. All units are to be inspected every 4 years or upon the change of a tenant. The Borough maintains all census and inspection records, notifying the Landlords when inspections are needed.

In addition to the rental inspections, the Borough also has an ordinance in place to do an annual fire inspection on all commercial properties. The Borough contacts the owners of all commercial properties yearly to ensure compliance with this ordinance.

The Borough accepts all applications and payments for inspections and permits and schedules all appointments. Any additional appointments that cannot be scheduled during our regular inspection days are handled directly through the inspector as his schedule and availability permits. All occupancy and fire safety inspection fees include the initial inspection and one follow-up inspection. Any additional inspections are billed per inspection. All building permits are issued by the building inspector.

The Borough Zoning Officer handles zoning issues such as fencing, signage and variances, occasionally asking the advice of the building inspector. Zoning permits and zoning hearings are issued and scheduled by the Zoning Officer and the Borough Administration Office.

Limited code enforcement involving garbage or grass and snow removal ordinances are handled internally through the Borough's Police Department. Larger issues such as structural damage, property maintenance, retaining walls or condemnations require the expertise and involvement of the building inspector which requires follow-up and possible citation and court time.

The Borough is billed monthly. The invoice will include the address of the property that was inspected, the type of service and the total amount of the service.

SECTION 2 – REQUIREMENTS OF PROPOSAL

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Building Inspector (Inspector) is expected to review plans, conduct inspections, and attend meetings when requested. The Inspector shall carry out the administration and enforcement requirements as set forth in State building codes, maintain required certifications and credentials, and assist the Borough in any legal aspects of enforcement of the Borough Code of Ordinances, such as investigating complaints and appearing as an expert witness. The Inspector shall meet with the public and Borough staff as requested, respond promptly to telephone and email inquiries, and submit reports in a format agreed to by the Borough.

DUTIES

The proposal shall address all Building Inspector duties, including but not limited to the following:

1. Review building plans and conduct all necessary and required building, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC inspections on residential and commercial construction within the Borough of Avalon. These include but are not limited to footings, foundations, basement floors, site erosion control and final occupancies.
2. Maintain all required certifications in the disciplines of residential and commercial construction, plumbing, electrical, energy conservation and heating, ventilating, and air conditioning.
3. Conduct all necessary inspections on permitted activities such as, but not limited to, decks, swimming pools, accessory buildings, and residential and commercial alterations, additions, and new construction.
4. Assist Borough staff with inquiries.
5. Assist with the investigation of complaints related to the State building code and the Borough Code of Ordinances, including but not limited to inspections for occupancy permits, fire safety inspections, conditional use permits, etc.
6. Attend occasional meetings as requested.
7. Provide reports on reviews and inspections performed in a format agreed to by the Borough. The following information must be provided for each permit upon completion: Property Address, Type of Inspection, Name of Inspector, Date of Inspection Request, Date of Inspection, and Result of the Inspection (pass/fail/partial).
8. Occupancy permits and Fire Safety Operating Licenses must be given to the Borough within 24 hours of issuance.

AVAILABILITY IN BOROUGH

The Inspector shall be available to the public and Borough staff by telephone, email, and facsimile to respond to inquiries and provide and receive information. Established office hours are not required, however, two half days per week of inspections are required by the Borough. The Inspector shall promptly pick up building plans or other documents as notified or otherwise agreed with Borough staff. Face-to-face meetings with Borough staff are also required.

COMPENSATION

The proposal shall explain the type of compensation desired by the Inspector—compensation based upon a percentage of the established inspection fee amount. Fees established per the Borough's ordinances are updated annually by Resolution. A copy of the current Fee Schedule is attached. Given the Borough's active role in collecting fees, scheduling, and maintaining records, any proposal requesting 100% of the fees charged for initial occupancy inspections, fire safety inspections, and commercial inspections will not be considered. The Borough will consider proposals that request 100% of reinspection fees be paid to the Inspector; however, payments for the re-inspections must then be billed directly to the property owner rather than to the Borough.

With respect to building permits, if there is a charge per inspection or re-inspection, examples of the required inspections for routine projects, such as single-family dwellings or home additions, should be included. Compensation will be withheld until the completed file is returned to Borough. Permit fees for building, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing shall be defined per your fee schedule. If the Inspector proposes collecting 100% of the fee for plan review, those fees should be billed directly to the permit applicant rather than to the Borough.

INSURANCE

As a condition of the contract, the Inspector shall be required to provide proof that they are fully licensed, bonded and insured, including General Liability Insurance (Contractual, Bodily Injury and Property Damage) at a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence / \$3,000,000.00 aggregate; Worker's Compensation at state-mandated statutory minimums; Vehicle Liability Insurance (Bodily Injury and Property Damage) at a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence / \$3,000,000.00 combined coverage, and Professional Liability Coverage at a minimum of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence and annual aggregate. All of said insurance policies shall specifically name the Borough of Avalon as an additional insured for the term of the Inspector's Agreement. The proposal shall state whether such insurances are currently in force or will be at time of contract execution. Inspector shall provide the Borough with certificates of coverage consistent with the requirements specified above.

QUALIFICATIONS

The proposal shall include a list of person(s) who would conduct inspections, their credentials/certifications, and three (3) references with contact name and number. Avalon Borough prefers to have one inspector assigned to our needs with alternates assigned during times of absence due to vacations. If commercial electric inspections are to be performed by someone other than the Inspector submitting a proposal, qualifications for that individual should also be included.

SECTION 3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

DIRECTIONS FOR SUBMITTAL

Applicants should submit two (2) copies of their response. To be considered, these materials must be received in sealed packages marked "PROPOSAL FOR BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES" and must be delivered to the Borough Administration Office on or before 2:00 pm on Monday, March 1, 2021.

Proposals shall be valid for ninety (90) days.

Packages containing the proposal and any related material should be plainly marked on the outside as follows:

'INSPECTION SERVICES PROPOSAL'

Packages shall be delivered via mail, courier, or in person to:

Lorraine Makatura
Borough Manager
Avalon Borough
640 California Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15202

CONTRACT TERM

It is anticipated the contract period will begin April 1, 2021 and run for one year, with the option to extend for additional one-year periods with the agreement of both parties.

COSTS FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION

The Borough of Avalon shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the Inspector and/or assigns in responding to this Request for Proposal, or for any costs associated with discussions required for clarification of items related to this proposal, including any interviews.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS TO REJECT, WAIVE, AND REISSUE

The Borough of Avalon reserves the right to reject any and all submittals for any reason, waive any irregularities, reissue all or part of this Request for Proposal, and not award any contract, all at their discretion and without penalty. The Borough also reserves the right to request additional information/clarification or to allow corrections of errors or omissions.

OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS

All materials, including but not limited to paper and digital materials, that are prepared, acquired, created, or utilized to fulfill this Request for Proposal and its objectives shall become the property of the Borough of Avalon where allowed by law.

SECTION 4 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposal shall provide the following information in this order:

1. General information about the employee/firm, experience credentials/certifications, and training. Include experience performing similar work for other municipalities.
2. Division of responsibility between the Inspector and Borough staff regarding:
 - a. collecting, processing, and approving applications
 - b. issuing building permits
 - c. tracking expired permits
 - d. scheduling inspections
3. Permit summary reports (if possible, provide examples).
4. Inspector availability and methods of contact for the public and staff.
5. Space, materials, equipment, or equipment access requested from the Borough.
6. Inspector compensation (including a proposed schedule of fees) and invoicing, including additional charges to attend meetings or for reimbursables such as mileage.
6. Proof Inspector is licensed, bonded, and insured as stated under the Insurance section on page 3 of this RFP. If desired coverage has yet to be obtained, a statement of intent to insure to those limits shall be submitted.
7. Three or more professional references, including contact names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
8. Proposed contract form.

SECTION 5 EVALUATION PROCESS

The Borough of Avalon is committed to an objective and open selection process. Every proposal shall receive an unbiased review. The Borough reserves the right not to award a contract based on price alone.

The Borough will review all proposals for completeness. The Borough Council or their appointee will interview finalists before making a decision on the matter. The Borough intends to award a contract no later than April 1, 2021 after formal action at the regular council meeting.

The evaluation criteria include:

- The contractor has no conflict of interest regarding any other work being performed by the contractor for the Borough.
- The contractor adheres to the instructions in this Request for Proposal on preparing and submitting the proposal.
- The contractor submits a copy of its licenses, bonds, and insurance.
- Overall qualifications, experience, and competence of inspection staff.
- Ability to meet service expectations detailed in Section 2 – Duties of this Request for Proposal.
- Experience in projects of similar scope in communities with comparable characteristics.
- Experience in working with and involving the public.
- Proposed compensation for services.
- Reference checks.
- Written and visual quality and accuracy of the proposal.
- Project approach.
- Oral interview.