

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
TOWN OF BRIDGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The Town of Bridgton is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants to provide planning services in support of completing an update to the Town of Bridgton 2014 Comprehensive Plan. The 2014 state-issued Finding of Consistency will expire in 2026. The town would like to have the plan completed in 2025, and it must be consistent with Title 30-A M.R.S, Chapter 187, Subchapter 2 – Growth Management Program and meet all criteria established in the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry’s Optional Self-Assessment Checklist.

DATE ISSUED: APRIL 18, 2023

QUESTIONS DEADLINE: MAY 8, 2023, 3:00PM

INTENT TO SUBMIT: MAY 15, 2023, 3:00PM

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MAY 26, 2023, 3:00 PM

Contact information: Victoria Hill, Community Development Director
Town of Bridgton
3 Chase St, Suite 1
Bridgton, ME 04009

Submission Information

Please direct questions to Victoria Hill, Community Development Director, at vhill@bridgtonmaine.org or (207) 595-3560. The deadline for questions is 3:00PM Monday May 8, 2023. All interested parties must provide a written notice of their intent to submit an RFP to the Community Development Department by 3:00PM on Monday May 15, 2023. The notification of intent must include the name, address, telephone number and email of the project manager responsible for the RFP submission. The purpose of this notice is to ensure town that all potential respondents are included on any updates or modifications to this RFP, as well as answers to questions submitted by the questions deadline. Notifications of Intent will be accepted by email to Victoria Hill at vhill@bridgtonmaine.org.

To be considered, proposal submissions must include six (6) hardcopies and one (1) USB flash drive of the complete submission packet in a searchable PDF format. All submissions must be received by the Town of Bridgton Community Development Department by 3:00PM on Friday May 26, 2023 in a sealed envelope with the firm’s name and address clearly marked. No late submissions will be considered.

The Town of Bridgton reserves the right to request additional materials to decide which proposal best meets its needs and it may reject any or all proposals if deemed to be in the town’s best interest to do so.

Introduction

The Town of Bridgton is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants to provide services in support of completing an update to the Town of Bridgton 2014 Comprehensive Plan. The selected consultant will work with town staff, a task force, Planning Board, Select Board, and other committees and stakeholders as appropriate.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan Update is to have a clear and consistent document to serve as a statement of the town's vision, a base for capital improvement plans, and a legally defensible foundation for its actions, policies, and regulations for the next ten to twelve years. Although the primary goal of the Comprehensive Plan Update is to receive a new Finding of Consistency demonstrating the town's compliance with Title 30-A M.R.S, Chapter 187, Subchapter 2 – Growth Management Program and meet all of the criteria established in the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry's Optional Self-Assessment Checklist, the Town of Bridgton desires an update that extends beyond the minimum State regulatory requirements. The Comprehensive Plan Update shall address contemporary issues such as resiliency, sustainable development policies and best practices, and equity. The Comprehensive Plan Update shall also guide the town in balancing development pressures, particularly the need for affordable housing, and the preservation of the town's character and abundant natural resources.

Background Information

Bridgton Demographics

The Town of Bridgton's population has been growing consistently since the 1970s. Bridgton had 2,967 people in 1970 in comparison to an estimated population of 5,527 in 2021. As of the 2010 census, Bridgton's total population was 5,210 people. The 2010 statistics place Bridgton as the 60th largest municipality in Maine, between the communities of Bar Harbor (5,527) and Paris (5,133). Most of the population increase can be explained by growth in individuals retiring to their seasonal homes. Recently Bridgton has seen rapid influx of new residents due to the pandemic as people of all ages have fled urban areas for a more rural setting.

2014 Comprehensive Plan and Other Planning Initiatives

In 2014, the Selectboard adopted the town's current Comprehensive Plan. That Plan identified land use and the economy as top priorities and recommended careful planning in these areas as the best way to "protect our water quality and natural resources." The Plan also identified several areas of privately owned open space and land currently subject to development pressures and concluded that "Bridgton has natural resources, including lakes, mountains, and open spaces that enhance the quality of life, provide recreational opportunities, and create value as a tourist destination...programs must be strengthened and maintained to continue to protect the town's natural resources." The Comprehensive Plan recognizes tourism as the town's "most consistent economic sector" that exists "because of the beauty of the lakes, mountains and streams of Bridgton and the Lake Region area." The current plan cites the responsibility to protect outdoor recreation experiences that support the tourism sector.

In 2022, Bridgton started working with TJD&A Landscape Architects and Planners (now under the name Viewshed) to develop an Open Space Plan. This plan was funded by the Governor's Office of Policy, Innovation, and the Future Community Resilience Partnership Grant (GOPIF/CRP) to be completed in June 2023. The plan had an extensive community engagement process and yielded 620 survey responses discussing public and private open spaces, recreational uses, and environmental

factors. The findings in this plan should be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan Update, particularly in the open space and recreation chapter. The website for this project can be found on the Community Development page of the [town's website](#).

In 2022, Bridgton also began working with Community Heart & Soul, a resident-driven engagement process that helps the town identify what people love most about the community, and what future they want for it. The group spearheading the project decided to brand the community engagement effort as *Vision Bridgton*. They have established a logo and mission: *Vision Bridgton is a community powered engagement initiative that will gather data and ideas to inform, envision, and ensure a vibrant and equitable future for Bridgton*. The group has been engaging the public for about 9 months, and this process will yield a set of vision statements that should also be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan Update. The *Vision Bridgton* model and logo is intended to extend beyond the Community Heart & Soul process, and should be used for all community engagement processes during the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Reference Plans, Studies, and Other Relevant Reports

- Town of Bridgton 2014 Comprehensive Plan
- Lake Region Green Print
- Pondicherry Park Management Plan
- List of Town Owned Properties
- Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis
- Bridgton Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization Plan
- Bridgton Open Space Plan (coming June 2023)

Scope of Services

In order to complete the project, the selected consultant will need to provide the below identified services. The community development director, with the assistance of the town manager, and in consultation with the task force, may refine the final scope of work once a consultant firm is selected.

Project Management

The selected consultant firm shall designate a project manager to communicate regularly with the community development director, who will serve as the town's primary point of contact, to coordinate meeting agendas, deliver progress reports, and resolve any issues that may arise throughout the course of the engagement. The incumbent's project manager will be responsible for the development of a detailed project schedule and work plan that identifies key dates and milestones. Finally, the project manager will be responsible for checking in with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry to ensure that progress made on the comprehensive plan update is in alignment with the state's requirements. The incumbent will also interact with the already established Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force, in partnership with the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC), which will serve as an oversight and advisory committee to guide the direction of the update and is responsible for making a final recommendation to the Selectboard for adoption.

Town staff will be responsible for the following:

1. Provide any and all existing documentation pertaining to the 2014 Plan and the implementation to date as well as current research relevant to the Plan.
2. Assist with human and technical resources.

3. Provide and distribute agendas and minutes for all task force meetings.
4. Schedule, coordinate, and make any necessary arrangements for other related meetings.
5. Assist with community engagement efforts and coordinate with *Vision Bridgton*.

Meetings

Project Status Meetings/Task Force Meetings:

The selected consultant is expected to meet regularly with town staff and the task force to discuss project progress, direction, and tasks to be completed. In-person attendance or remote attendance in a hybrid meeting is acceptable.

Selectboard, Planning Board, and other and Committees:

The selected consultant will be expected to solicit input and feedback from the Planning Board, Selectboard, and other boards and committees as appropriate, and shall provide interim reports, presentations, and updates to each as required and appropriate. The selected consultant firm will attend at least two Selectboard meetings: the first being an introduction and plan of action, and the second being a public hearing to officially adopt the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Public Engagement:

Public participation is essential to this planning effort and must include a robust outreach and public participation process designed to engage the public and specific stakeholders in envisioning the future of Bridgton. Public participation should include diversified methods, including ensuring typically harder-to-reach populations are considered when developing outreach plans. The selected consultant will be expected to create a project website, help prepare materials for various methods of public engagement, as well as report out key findings from community outreach. The selected firm will be responsible for facilitating public meetings, posting updates to email platforms and social media, and creating collateral such as pamphlets, video content, and any other means necessary to ensure broad community outreach occurs and the results of such outreach are easily and readily available to all stakeholders. The *Vision Bridgton* logo and mission statement will be at the core of this effort, and the volunteers that make up *Vision Bridgton* and the task force will assist with outreach efforts.

The town anticipates that public meetings will be held in order to seek the opinions and views of the public at large, report on progress as the plan develops, solicit comments on specific ideas or concepts and identify problems or barriers that must be acknowledged and overcome. Public involvement in the planning process and acceptance of the final plan is critical to the success of this effort; interested consultant firms should explain their approach to ensuring robust public participation in their responses.

Tasks:

Working closely with the Town of Bridgton's community development staff and Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force the selected consultant shall provide professional services to support the following task areas:

Inventory and Analysis:

The selected consultant shall prepare the chapters as outlined in the noted Maine statute in the following areas:

- Economic and demographic data describing the municipality or region and the region in which it is located.
- Significant water resources such as lakes, aquifers, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas and, when applicable, their vulnerability to degradation.
- Significant or critical natural resources such as wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitats, significant plant habitats to include flood zones. (see environmental assessment performed in 2023 Open Space Plan)
- Commercial forestry and agricultural land.
- Existing recreation, park and open space areas and significant points of public water access within a municipality or multi-municipal region (see 2023 Open Space Plan).
- Existing transportation systems, including the capacity of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, secondary routes, pedestrian ways and parking facilities. (Greater Portland Council of Governments is assisting with the transportation chapter).
- Residential housing stock, including affordable housing, policies that assess community needs and environmental effects of municipal regulations.
- Housing that meets the needs of older residents, including housing that is rehabilitated, adapted or newly constructed to help older adults age in place.
- Historical and archeological resources working with the Bridgton Historical Society representative on the Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force.
- Land use information describing the current and projected development patterns, and the effect of zoning on those development patterns.
- An assessment of capital facilities and public services necessary to support growth and development and to protect the environment and health, safety and welfare of the public and the costs of those facilities and services. The plan should include a digital equity and inclusion plan (assisted by Bridgton Public Library).

As part of development of these inventory chapters, the selected consultant shall work with the task force to collect data to support each inventory chapter, coordinate data with other planning studies and efforts, and perform appropriate analyses of the data collected. The selected consultant shall develop an assessment of issues and opportunities based on work with staff, the task force, and the public participation process to inform the development of policies, goals, and strategies, and the future land use plan.

The selected consultant shall propose appropriate outreach and engagement around each of these topic areas, including a schedule to review chapters with the task force and presentation to the community.

Final Plan

The selected consultant will produce the final draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan, including an Executive Summary, organized in a user-friendly format, using clear, accessible language with a uniform voice that also includes attractive visuals, such as infographics, charts, graphs, maps, and pictures. The consultant will work with staff to edit the project website to reflect the executive summary in a way that can be used by the public for the next ten years. The final draft will be a compilation of the various drafts and documentation, maps, goals and objectives reviewed throughout this process.

The selected consultant will ensure compliance and consistency with 30-A MRSA, Chapter 187 and Chapter 208 of the State of Maine's Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule by reviewing the optional

self-assessment checklist as prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. The selected consultant shall present the draft plan to the Planning Board and Selectboard in advance of submission to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry.

Project Timeline

Although subject to change based upon input from the selected consultant firm, the town anticipates that the project will be completed within 18 months of contract approval.

Project Budget

The total approved budget for this project is \$80,000. In their response, interested consultant firms should identify the services that they can provide within this budget. Preference will be given to those that offer services on a firm, fixed price versus billing at an hourly rate.

Selection Process

Submission Requirements

To be considered, proposal submissions must include six (6) hardcopies and one (1) USB flash drive of the complete submission packet in a searchable PDF format. All submissions must be received by the Town of Bridgton Community Development Department, Attn: Victoria Hill by 3:00PM on Friday May 26, 2023 in a sealed envelope with the firm's name and address clearly marked. Elaborate proposals are not necessary, nor desired; proposals should be limited to a maximum of 40 pages. Late submissions will not be considered.

Submissions must include:

1. Cover letter briefly describing the project team and interest in the project.
2. An organization chart of the project team, including associated costs per hour of all personnel and any sub-consultants assigned to this project. This chart should also include an estimated number of hours per team member needed to satisfy the scope of work
3. Qualifications of project team and sub-consultants (if any), including the project team's experience on similar projects. Identify the key personnel, and any sub-consultants, assigned to the project and their individual education and relevant experience.
4. Scope of work.
5. Timeline, including key milestones and estimated dates of completion.
6. Proposed budget.
7. Contact information for no less than three (3) professional references from past or current clients involving similar projects.

The town reserves the right to require additional materials to determine which proposal best meets its needs. If such materials are requested from any one of the submitting consultants, all consultants

remaining under consideration will be allowed, but not required, to provide similar materials. The town may reject any or all proposals if deemed to be in the town's best interest to do so.

Upon submission, all proposals become the property of the Town of Bridgton. The expense of preparing and submitting a proposal is the sole responsibility of the consultant. The Town of Bridgton reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP as in the best interest of the Town of Bridgton. This solicitation in no way obligates the Town of Bridgton to award a contract.

The Town of Bridgton Community Development Office will review all applications received by the submission deadline. Based on its review of the RFP submissions, the Community Development Office may schedule interviews with one or more consultants or firms prior to finalizing a Scope of Work and contracting with a firm based on the review criteria listed below.

Selection Process and Criteria

Selection Process

The town intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair and impartial evaluation of proposals received as a response to this RFP. The selection of the successful consultant will be made using evaluation criteria established below. The selection team will be made up of the community development director, the town manager, the Selectboard chair or their designee, and representatives of the Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force. The selection team will review and evaluate all written submissions properly made in response to this RFP in accordance with the submittal requirements identified in this RFP, based on such other information and matters as they deem necessary or desirable to determine the qualifications, responsibility, and suitability of each firm submitting a proposal in response. The selection team may conduct interviews at their discretion. A final decision shall be made by the selection team and their decision will be notified no more than ten days after the public bid opening.

Selection Criteria

- Approach to conducting the tasks outlined in the scope of service 40%;
- Qualifications, experience and performance (e.g., adherence to schedule and budget, quality of work) on similar types of project for consultant & project team members 40%; and
- Appropriateness of compensation rates and overall cost estimate 20%.

Contract Agreement

The selected consultant will execute an Agreement for Services with the Town of Bridgton describing the Scope of Work to be performed, the schedule for completion of the work, compensation, and other pertinent provisions. The successful firm will be required to:

1. Enter into a contract with the Town of Bridgton;
2. Create a working schedule for the scope of services; and
3. Coordinate and work with the Town of Bridgton Community Development Department and comply with invoicing, billing and payment requirements of the Town of Bridgton.

Please note that all materials developed as part of this project will become property of the Town of Bridgton.

Reservation of Rights

The Town of Bridgton reserves the right to reject any and all firms, decline to proceed with selection of any candidates, to request additional qualifications, and to make inquiries as may be necessary to verify qualifications.

Nothing in this document shall require the Town of Bridgton to proceed with any of the identified services stated in this request for proposal.