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TOWN OF YARMOUTH
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Request for Proposals
Town of Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Update

The Town of Yarmouth is requesting proposals from qualified and experienced professional consultant firms to complete an update to its 2010 Comprehensive Plan ("2010 Plan"). The 2010 Plan's State-issued Finding of Consistency will expire in October 2023. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for the Town to complete the update process in a timely manner that is consistent with Title 30-A M.R.S, Chapter 187, Subchapter 2 – Growth Management Program and that meets all of the criteria established in the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry's Optional Self-Assessment Checklist.

Date Issued: September 7, 2022
Virtual Information Meeting: September 21, 2022 at 2:00 PM
Deadline for Questions: September 23, 2022 at 12:00 PM
Staff Responses to Questions: September 30, 2022 by 12:00 PM
Submission Deadline: October 7, 2022 at 12:00 PM

Contact Information: Erin Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP
Town of Yarmouth Department of Planning and Development
200 Main Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
207-846-2401
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Please direct questions about the Request for Proposals (RFP) to Erin Zwirko, Director of Planning and Development, at 207-846-2401 or ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us. The deadline for questions is 12:00 PM on Friday, September 23, 2022. Town staff will host an optional virtual information meeting at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, September 21, 2022. To join the virtual information meeting held on Go To Meeting, please request the credentials from Erin Zwirko at ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us.

Interested parties may submit sealed proposals that meet the format specified in the RFP until 12:00 PM on Friday, October 7, 2022 at the Department of Planning and Development, Yarmouth Town Hall, 200 Main Street, Yarmouth, ME, 04096. Incomplete or late proposals will disqualify a consultant from consideration.

Finally, the Town of Yarmouth 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.

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Request for Proposals Town of Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Update

I. Introduction

The Town of Yarmouth seeks proposals from qualified and experienced firms to prepare an updated Comprehensive Plan. The selected consultant must be an expert in planning, specifically in long-range planning, research, project management, and public engagement. The consultant will be working with Town Staff, a Steering Committee, the Planning Board, and the Town Council, and with other boards and committees as appropriate. The Town's current Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2010 and is currently consistent with the State's Growth Management Act.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide town-wide growth and development patterns, investments, and initiatives, and is the foundation for determining effective public policy, master planning, and land use decisions for the future. It will provide an ongoing framework for informed and directed development. It serves as the guiding policy document for many of the Town's most critical decisions. The plan shall include goals, objectives, and strategies, and will utilize maps, graphs, and other imagery tools to analyze, assess, and recommend best practices for values-based planning, economic development, housing, infrastructure, transportation, and other improvements. The purpose of the plan is to reflect and respond to the priorities, values, and requirements of Yarmouth residents, safeguarding Yarmouth's history and sense of place while providing for our future. To this end, the Town expects a realistic document with goals, policies, and guidance that can be holistically and collaboratively implemented to enhance existing town services and growth patterns.

II. The Town of Yarmouth

A southern Maine scenic suburban coastal community with a population of 8,990 (US Census 2020), Yarmouth is in Cumberland County, 12 miles north of Portland, Maine. Geographically covering 13 square miles and two island communities, the primary business and economic development corridors are: Yarmouth's Main Street (Downtown / Village) and working waterfront (Lower Falls Landing); and US Route 1 corridor, accessible by I-295 Exit 15 (Cumberland-Yarmouth) and Exit 17 (Yarmouth-Freeport). Incorporated as a Town in 1849, Yarmouth is known for its historic village center, fine public educational systems, the prestigious private school, North Yarmouth Academy, and many parks, trails, and open spaces. Most importantly, its residential community is one whose pride in serving community, organizations and schools is exemplified by the Town motto, "Our Latchstring Always Out".

Yarmouth's early settlers looked to the natural resources of the area - timber, sheltered ocean access, farmland, and rivers - to support their new community. When hydropower was harnessed to run several mills along the river in the mid-1800s, the Town became an industrial center. Ships and railroads provided transportation for people and goods. The population grew.

The 20th Century brought about civic improvements, including a library, public water and sewer, and regional trolley service. Small manufacturing businesses throughout the state gave way to service, retail, and technology. Following the construction of Route One, and later, Interstate 295, Yarmouth's population tripled as residents commuted to jobs in the Portland metropolitan area, a journey made faster through better highway systems.

Yarmouth is now home to nationally ranked technology businesses, including Garmin (formerly DeLorme) and Tyler Technologies. According to the 2014 Esri Business Summary, source information from Dun & Bradstreet, Yarmouth has 754 businesses, with 3,346 employees.

The physical evidence of Yarmouth's history can be seen in every area of Town. Residents today still look to natural and community resources as a reason to settle in Yarmouth. Among those resources are an intact, compact Village Center, historic architecture, nearby recreation along the shore, rivers, parks, and open spaces, the library, schools, and proximity to Maine's largest city, Portland.

2010 Comprehensive Plan, Charge, and Accomplishments

The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Town Council on December 16, 2010, and was submitted to the (then) Maine State Planning Office for review. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan was found consistent with Maine's Growth Management Act in October 2011 with a finding of consistency for 12 years or through October 2023. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan was subsequently amended to incorporate the Complete Streets Policy, adopted by the Town Council and added to the plan as an appendix on November 19, 2015. The amended Comprehensive Plan was reviewed by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, which found that the amended Plan continued to be consistent with the Maine Growth Management Act. This finding remains valid until October 2023.

When the 2010 Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) was established to oversee and report on progress implementing the plan. One of the major initiatives out of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan was the adoption of the Character Based Development Code (CBDC), a form based code, for Route One in 2013 and for the Village Center in 2018. In 2018, CPIC retired as a large majority of the 2010 strategies had been implemented at that time. Although CPIC had been the lead entity to assure that implementation steps were advanced each year, CPIC noted at the time of their dissolution, that many town boards and committees were acting on the remaining strategies and those that were not addressed could be incorporated into the next comprehensive plan.

In 2018, CPIC identified the remaining strategies as:

- Adopt Village Residential Zoning
- Adopt Inclusionary Housing
- Revise the Mobile Home Park Overlay
- Work with Surrounding Communities to Develop a Regional Affordable Housing Plan
- Advance Historic Preservation Efforts
- Amend the Open Space Residential Development standards
- Develop Zoning to Enhance Yarmouth's Rural Character
- Green Infrastructure Plan (i.e. Open Space Plan)
- Develop an Interconnected Network of Roads
- Participate in the Consideration of Commuter Rail
- Consider Adoption of Impact Fees
- Encourage the Use of LEED Policies (Municipal and Private)

Of the items on the list, the following were completed or in progress:

- An Open Space Plan was adopted by the Town Council in 2019 following the work of the Open Space Task Force and the Parks and Land Committee.
- The Historic Resources Steering Committee completed a reconnaissance level architectural survey of historic resources in the Village in 2018, worked to develop a demolition delay ordinance which was adopted by the Council in 2018. In August 2021, the Town Council adopted a Historic Preservation Advisory Ordinance and amendments to the demolition delay ordinance, now known as the Historic Building Alterations and Demolitions Ordinance and appointed a Historic Preservation Committee in March 2022.
- The Town Council created an Affordable Housing Committee in December 2020 which is tasked with developing recommendations to address housing affordability in Yarmouth. The Affordable Housing Committee issued recommendations to the Town Council in January 2022 and is currently developing an inclusionary zoning ordinance for review by the Planning Board and the Town Council.
- Although not identified on the above list, the Town Council adopted a Climate Emergency Declaration in early 2022 and is considering the appointment of a Climate Emergency Task Force, which would be charged with developing a Climate Action Plan, in addition to other priorities.

Yarmouth has much to be proud of in regards to the implementation of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

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Visioning Effort

In mid-2022, the Town began a Visioning effort and hired BerryDunn to provide support to the Town in community facilitation and public engagement services. This public engagement process will support the development of a draft Vision Statement. The resulting Vision Statement will become the foundation for the next Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan which will establish policy recommendations for the Town for the next 10 years. The visioning process is meant to be a community-wide discussion of residents, business owners, employees, and other stakeholders to understand the Town's priorities for the future.

This effort was advanced ahead of the update to the comprehensive plan due to demand in the in the community to provide an opportunity for the public to provide input on the direction of the community. Beginning in late 2020 and through summer 2021, the Planning Board reviewed a series of projects on Main Street and Route One that introduced expanded business and housing opportunities in Yarmouth through new mixed-use and multifamily developments compliant with the Character Based Development Code. These projects were approved and are in varying stages of construction, but the discussions at Planning Board meetings and in the community brought into clear focus that the community is ready to begin a comprehensive planning process again.

LD 2003

The Town of Yarmouth is also working toward a strategy on addressing LD 2003, which may have implications for the development of an updated Comprehensive Plan and designation of growth areas. Although guidance at this time is limited, the Town continues to pursue support from the Greater Portland Council of Governments, as well as develop our own strategy.

III. Purpose

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 Yarmouth desires an update that extends beyond the minimum State regulatory requirements. The Comprehensive Plan Update shall address contemporary issues such as climate change and adaptation, sea level rise, and resiliency, sustainable development policies and best practices, and equity. The Comprehensive Plan Update shall also guide the Town in balancing intense development pressure, especially for affordable housing, and the preservation of the Town's character and abundant natural resources. Finally, the Town favors an integrated approach to comprehensive planning that identifies and builds upon the interrelated nature of the individually required inventories and elements.

IV. 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.

V. Project Budget

The approved budget for this project is \$90,000, which is available through June 30, 2023. The Department of Planning and Development will request up to another \$90,000 for the Fiscal Year beginning on July 1, 2023, and ending on June 30, 2024. In their response, interested consultant firms should identify the services that they can provide within the budget. If the budget is not adequate to complete the project, interested consultant firms shall propose an alternative budget and include the additional services that they can provide under that budget.

VI. Project Management and Responsibilities

The selected consultant will be responsible for working closely with the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and Town staff. The Director of Planning and Development will serve as the primary contact and coordinator between the Town, the Steering Committee, and the selected consultant. Consistent with their charge, the Steering Committee 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 Town Council for adoption.

Interested consultant firms should be aware that the Town Council has not yet appointed a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

Town staff will be responsible for the following:

1. Provide any and all existing documentation pertaining to the 2010 Plan and the implementation to date.
2. Assist with human and technical resources, as necessary.
3. Provide and distribute minutes for all Steering Committee meetings.
4. Schedule, coordinate, and make any necessary arrangements for other update-related meetings.

VII. Scope of Work

In order to complete the project, the selected consultant will need to provide the below identified services. The Director of Planning and Development, with the assistance of the Town Manager, and in consultation with the Steering Committee, 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 Director of Planning and Development to coordinate meeting agendas, deliver progress reports, and resolve any issues that may arise throughout the course of the project. The project manager of the selected consultant firm will be responsible for the development of a detailed project schedule and work plan that identifies key dates and milestones. Finally, the project manager of the selected consultant firm 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 consistent with the state's requirements.

Meetings and Public Engagement

Project Status Meetings:

The selected consultant is expected to meet regularly with Town staff to discuss project progress, direction, and tasks given by the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee:

The selected consultant firm will attend Steering Committee meetings. Although the Town Council has yet to appoint a Steering Committee, it is anticipated that the selected consultant, Town staff, and members of the Steering Committee will mutually decide on a regular meeting schedule. It is anticipated that the meetings will be held once a month, with additional meetings scheduled as necessary, and may require increasing regularly scheduled to twice a month, if possible, as the effort comes to completion.

In-person attendance preferred, but remote attendance in a hybrid meeting setting may substitute.

Town Council, Planning Board, and other Boards and Committees:

The selected consultant will be expected to coordinate meeting presentations and attendance with Planning and Development Department staff to solicit input and feedback from the Planning Board, Town Council, 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 Planning Board meetings: the first being a workshop and the second being a public hearing to make a recommendation to the Town Council.

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The selected consultant firm will attend at least two Town Council meetings: the first being an introduction of the item 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 visioning the future of Yarmouth. Public participation should include diversified methods. The selected consultant will be expected to prepare materials for various methods of public engagement, ranging from facilitating public meetings, to email platforms and social media, to pamphlets, video content, and other means to ensure broad community outreach occurs.

Planning and Development staff anticipate 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 and interested consultant firms should explain their approach and public participation plan in detail in their responses.

Tasks

Working closely with the Town of Yarmouth Planning and Development staff, the selected consultant shall provide professional services to support the following task areas:

Inventory & 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 multimunicipal 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, coastal islands, sand dunes, scenic areas, shorelands, heritage coastal areas as defined under Title 5, §3316, and unique natural areas. This should also include floodplains.
- Marine-related resources and facilities such as ports, harbors, commercial moorings, commercial docking facilities and related parking, and shell fishing and worming areas.
- Commercial forestry and agricultural land.
- Existing recreation, park and open space areas and significant points of public access to shorelands within a municipality or multi-municipal region.
- Existing transportation systems, including the capacity of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, secondary routes, pedestrian ways and parking facilities.
- Residential housing stock, including affordable housing, policies that assess community needs and environmental effects of municipal regulations, lessen the effect of excessive parking requirements for buildings in downtowns and on main streets and provide for alternative approaches for compliance relating to the reuse of upper floors of buildings in downtowns and on main streets and policies that provide for accessory dwelling units.
- 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 including, at the discretion of the municipality or multi-municipal region, stone walls, stone impoundments and timber bridges of historical significance.
- 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.

As part of development of these inventory chapters, the selected consultant shall 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 Steering Committee, 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 Steering Committee and presentation to the community.

Vision:

Building off of the Visioning Initiative underway in the Town, the selected consultant shall review the draft vision statement throughout the process of updating the comprehensive plan to ensure that it continues to serve as a focal point for goals, policy, and strategy decisions.

The final vision statement shall be prepared and incorporated into the comprehensive plan update and presented to the Steering Committee and the community as part of the public engagement process.

Implementation Plan:

The selected consultant shall develop an implementation program, including responsible parties and an annual review program, to help achieve said vision, goals, and objectives.

Final Plan:

The selected consultant will produce final draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan, including an Executive Summary, organized in a user-friendly format, and rich in visualizations such as charts, graphs, maps, and pictures. 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 Town Council in advance of submittal to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. The selected consultant is required to obtain a consistency determination of the updated Comprehensive Plan on behalf of the Town of Yarmouth in consultation with Town staff and the Steering Committee.

VIII. Consultant Firm Selection Process

Submission Requirements

Interested parties shall submit seven (7) hardcopies and one (1) USB flash drive with digital file(s) in a PDF or Microsoft Word file format in a sealed envelope with their name and address and plainly marked, "Town of Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Update." Proposals will be accepted at 200 Main Street, Attn: Erin Zwirko until 12:00 PM on Friday, October 7, 2022. Incomplete or late submissions will disqualify a consultant from consideration.

Submissions shall include:

1. Cover letter briefly describing your 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.

3. Qualifications of project team and sub-consultants, if any. Include 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 experience.
4. Proposed scope of work.
5. Proposed timeline, including estimated dates or time frames in which to achieve key milestones.
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 Yarmouth. The expense of preparing and submitting a proposal is the sole responsibility of the consultant. The Town of Yarmouth 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 Yarmouth. This solicitation in no way obligates the Town of Yarmouth to award a contract.

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 Director of Planning and Development, the Assistant Planner, the Town Manager, the Economic Development Director, the Planning Board chair or their designee, and the Town Council chair or their designee.

A selection team from the Town 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.

Selection Criteria

The Comprehensive Plan Update Selection Committee will use the following criteria to evaluate and rank proposals:

1. Understanding of the Project and Familiarity with Project Type (20 Points):

The selection committee will review responses for their understanding of the unique situation of joining an ongoing process, the identification of any concerns about meeting the proposed timeline with the proposed budget, and an understanding of the State's mandatory requirements and the challenges posed by these requirements.

2. Project Approach (30 Points):

The selection committee will review responses for their scope of work, including their approach to public participation and proposed timeline.

3. Qualifications (30 Points):

The selection committee will review responses for a demonstrable record of success in completing similar projects, professional experience of key members, and references from previously completed projects of a similar nature.

4. Value (20 Points):

The selection committee is not obligated to select a consultant firm based on lowest budget, but the committee will review responses for the anticipated quality of work and the timeframe in which it will be completed.

Interested consultant firms shall direct questions about the selection process to Erin Zwirko, Director of Planning and Development, at ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us or 207-846-2401. To request to join the virtual information meeting, please send an email to ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us. The virtual meeting will be held via Go To Meeting.

Selection Timeline

RFP release:	Wednesday, September 7, 2022
Virtual Informational Meeting:	Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 2:00 PM
Deadline for questions pertaining to the RFP:	Friday, September 23, 2022 at 12:00 PM
Staff responses to firm questions:	Friday, September 30, 2022 at 12:00 PM
Final submission deadline:	Friday, October 7, 2022 at 12:00 PM
Selection committee review of submissions:	Week October 10, 2022
Interviews with preferred consultants:	Week of October 24, 2022

IX. Ownership of Material

All rights, titles to and ownership of the data, material and documentation in all forms resulting from this project and/or prepared for the Town pursuant to this RFP shall remain with the Town of Yarmouth except that consultants may reserve the right to preserve the integrity of deliverables so that they are not misrepresented or misused.

X. Contract Agreement

The selected consultant will execute an Agreement for Services with the Town of Yarmouth 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 Yarmouth;
2. Create a working schedule for the scope of services;
3. Coordinate and work with the Town of Yarmouth Department of Planning & Development; and
4. Comply with invoicing, billing and payment requirements of the Town of Yarmouth