



Requests for Proposals  
Master Plan Update  
Town of Bethlehem NH

Bethlehem Planning Board

Dawn Ferringo, Planning and Zoning Clerk  
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[planning@bethlehemnh.org](mailto:planning@bethlehemnh.org)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
MASTER PLAN UPDATE

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Town of Bethlehem, New Hampshire, is seeking proposals from qualified planning consultants to assist the Planning Board in comprehensively updating the Master Plan. The chosen firm will possess expertise in strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and creating actionable recommendations to shape Bethlehem's future growth and sustainability. The updated Master Plan will serve as a guide for the Town's land use and zoning policies, long-term planning and will be a key resource in evaluating significant policy changes in Bethlehem.

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The Town of Bethlehem invites qualified planning consultants to submit proposals for professional services to provide professional planning services in the development of a comprehensive update to the Master Plan. The planning process should include significant public input and involvement and represent an accessible and comprehensive living and working document for continued reference. The consultant team should have demonstrated experience in crafting all chapters of the Master Plan, and particular expertise in the areas of public engagement, implementation, data analysis, and a creative and innovative professional approach to planning projects, and actionable recommendations as outlined in this Request for Proposal (RFP). Lastly, the finalist will be invited to review their proposal at a meeting with the Master Plan Steering Committee for selection.

## **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Bethlehem is a quaint village in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, brimming with a strong sense of community offering old-fashioned festivals, outdoor concerts, ongoing art shows, live musical performances, antique shopping, restaurants, breweries, coffee shops, and beautiful inns.

Bethlehem offers plenty of outdoor activities year-round including cycling in the Bethlehem area, which is one of only three newly certified Bike Friendly Communities nationwide! You'll find mountain biking, road and gravel biking plus fat tire biking in the winter. Biking in the highest town in New England in the northern White Mountains brings exhilaration and excitement at every bend!

Located in the White Mountain National Forest, Bethlehem has more hiking trails than you can count in a 360-degree radius around Bethlehem, and the Appalachian Trail is just up the road.

Bethlehem is uniquely rich in arts and cultural activities for such a small town. The Colonial Theater offers relevant arts and cultural programming and makes a positive difference in creating a sense of belonging, fellowship, and community that enriches all. Bethlehem Events, a volunteer 501(c)3 non-profit organization, works year-round in planning and scheduling events in Bethlehem, NH that are fun for the whole family.

The Bethlehem Historical Society, established in 1997, is dedicated to preserving and sharing the captivating history and cultural heritage of Bethlehem. From the early settlers to the present day, their mission is to illuminate the stories, events, and people that have shaped our community.

Bethlehem boasts two championship 18-hole golf courses designed by the legendary Donald Ross, the Bethlehem Country Club and the Maplewood Golf Course. Donald Ross designed 400 courses in his lifetime, 10 of which are in New Hampshire. What makes his golf courses stand out is the design principles and elements he used.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

This project involves a comprehensive update of the Bethlehem Master Plan. The consultant team will be expected to work independently with expertise in a broad array of subject areas.

To the greatest extent possible, the Master Plan should be an integrated document, identifying goals and implementation measures that span subject areas.

The Planning Board welcomes creative and non-traditional proposals that may utilize innovative formats or integrate topic areas into single sections or chapters of the plan.

The following is an outline of sections to be included in the Master Plan. The consultant is expected to provide all information required by NH RSA 674:2 and 674:3. The outline is not all-inclusive and the Master Plan Steering Committee may revise topic areas as appropriate:

- Executive Summary
- Vision
- Population and Housing
- Economic Base
- Natural Resources and Conservation
- Historic Preservation
- Recreation
- Community Facilities
- Public Utilities
- Transportation
- Land Use
- Sustainability
- Community Design
- Implementation

\*Additional topic areas may be included based on the recommendations of the consultant or the Master Plan Steering Committee, as deemed appropriate.

It is not necessary for the document to follow the outline above and topics may be consolidated, provided all themes are incorporated into the plan.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH**

Public involvement and engagement will represent an integral foundation of the plan and the master plan should incorporate public input from a broad cross-section of the community.

Experience has shown that attendance has been limited at traditional public outreach events. The Planning Board is interested in reaching out to all members of the community and welcomes non-traditional public engagement ideas.

Consultants are encouraged to include platforms for interactive participation so that residents can provide their opinions without needing to attend meetings.

Although the Planning Board is seeking innovative public outreach, the Board also expects the process to include some forms of traditional public participation. The consultant will be expected to attend the steering committee meetings and present final and draft chapters to the Planning Board.

## **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Once the chosen consultant team is selected, the Planning Board envisions a timely and efficient project schedule that will maintain the interest of the community to ensure the process carries momentum, but one which also allows for robust public involvement, collaboration, thoughtful debate, and opportunities to thoroughly vet the document.

While the Municipal staff will be closely involved with the preparation of the Master Plan, existing work commitments preclude them from spending substantial time conducting research, writing documents, and setting up meetings. The consultant must be able to dedicate the time needed to conduct tasks and manage the project independently.

## **BID DELIVERABLES**

Ten (10) separate hard copies, and one (1) electronic copy (as a MS Word document on a portable USB drive) of the qualification's proposal shall be submitted along with the costs to complete the services described in the proposal in a secure/sealed package.

Proposals submitted by fax or email will not be considered.

Proposals must be received at the office of Planning and Zoning, at the address below, no later than 12:00 PM, Friday, April 4, 2025, Late proposals will not be considered. All bids must be received in a sealed envelope, clearly marked:

RFP Master Plan Update  
Attn: Dawn Ferringo  
Town of Bethlehem NH  
PO Box 189  
2155 Main Street  
Bethlehem NH 03574

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and/or to limit this procurement to a portion based on the availability of funds and/or as deemed in the best interest of the Town.

All proposals must include the following information:

1. Letter of transmittal
2. Project Team: provide an organizational profile of the project team, including the background and experience of all firms represented. Identify the project manager and team members and staff who would be assigned to each section of the project. If different consultants are teaming together identify who would be the lead consultant.

3. Summary of Project Understanding and Approach: Provide a statement summarizing the proposed technical and professional approach to the project and a detailed outline of the proposed services for executing the requirements of this RFP.
4. Summary of Options for Public Outreach: Provide a detailed description of how the proposal will address the need for innovative outreach and engagement. The Town is open to dynamic and innovative approaches to soliciting citizen participation and includes the type of approach proposed.
5. Project Schedule: Submit a schedule detailing how the project approach would be implemented including estimated dates for project milestones.
6. Comparable Projects: Submit summaries of at least three projects with a similar scope described in this RFP. The summaries should reflect a demonstrated record of completing projects on time, within budget, and to the satisfaction of the communities involved. The summaries should include public engagement tools utilized, key recommendations, and illustrations derived directly from the plan. The contact information for the municipal contacts should be included and the Town reserves the right to contact any references provided or otherwise obtained.
7. Cost Proposal and Budget: Please submit a cost estimate and typical billing rates (in a separate sealed envelope).

## **PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

1. At least one reproducible hard copy of the final report
2. One electronic copy in both Adobe PDF and MS Word format including all narratives and graphics.
3. Maps and supporting map data prepared by the consultant for the report, provided in a format compatible with the latest version of ArcGIS.
4. Spreadsheets and charts in MS Excel format including support data for all tables and graphs used in the report.

## **GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

PREPARATIONS OF BIDS/PROPOSALS: Proposals must be signed by the Bidder or his authorized representative. The person signing the proposal shall initial any corrections to entries made on the attached forms.

Bids must include pricing for all items listed on the bid forms, unless the advertisement, bid form, or special provisions specifically allow for partial bids. Failure to provide pricing for all items may result in the disqualification of the bid. Alternative bids will be considered only if fully described, including sufficient specifications to allow for a proper comparison to the original request, unless otherwise stated.

Any questions or inquiries must be submitted in writing and must be received by the Planning Office no later than seven (7) calendar days before the RFP due date to be considered. Any changes to the RFP will be provided to all bidders of record.

Proposals must be typewritten or printed in ink. Proposals must be mailed or delivered in person. Proposals that are faxed or emailed will not be accepted.

**WITHDRAWING BIDS/PROPOSALS:** Proposals may be withdrawn prior to the opening date and time upon written request of the Proposer. Negligence on the part of the Proposer in preparing his/her proposal shall not constitute a right to withdraw a proposal subsequent to the proposal opening.

**PROPOSAL EVALUATION:** The Town reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received.

## **RECEIPT AND OPENING OF PROPOSALS:**

Proposals shall be submitted prior to the time fixed in the RFP. Proposals received after the time so indicated shall be returned unopened.

### **PROPOSAL RESULTS:**

All sealed bids received will be considered confidential and not available for public review until after the bid opening is conducted. Bid openings will be scheduled and opened accordingly. Results will not be given over the phone. Please send your request in writing or send an email to [planning@bethlehemnh.org](mailto:planning@bethlehemnh.org) to receive results after the public opening.

All Bids will remain unofficial and if applicable confidential until the award has been posted on the Town website.

**AWARD OF CONTRACT:** It is the policy of the Town of Bethlehem, NH that contracts are awarded only to responsible bidders. To qualify as responsible, a prospective vendor must meet the following standards as they relate to this request:

- Have adequate financial resources for performance or have the ability to obtain such resources as required during performance.
- Have the necessary experience, organization, technical and professional qualifications, skills, and facilities.
- Be able to comply with the proposed or required time of completion or performance schedule; and have a demonstrated satisfactory record of performance.

Comply with the specifications outlined in this RFP and submit all required documentation as specified.

**EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT:** The successful proposer shall sign (execute) the necessary agreements for entering into the contract and return such signed agreements to the town within ten (10) calendar days from the date mailed or otherwise delivered to the successful Proposer.

**APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT:** Upon receipt of the agreement that has been fully executed by the proposer, the owner will complete the execution of the agreement and return the agreement to the contractor. The Agreement accompanied by a town-issued purchase order will be delivered to the contractor and will constitute a mutual approval and agreement by both parties to abide by the terms and conditions of the agreement.

**FAILURE TO EXECUTE AGREEMENT:** Failure of the successful proposer to execute the agreement at the date and time agreed upon by the Town and the successful Proposer shall be just cause for cancellation of the award and forfeiture of all deposits.

CONTRACT TERMINATION: If at any time the proposer fails to provide proper services during the contract period, the Town of Bethlehem, New Hampshire, will have the option to terminate the contract at any time without notice.

### **INSURANCE CERTIFICATES:**

Prior to award of this contract, the Contractor shall submit insurance certificates indicating coverage for all vehicles, public liability, and property damage in the following amounts:

Comprehensive General

Liability

\$ 1,000,000 / \$ 1,000,000

Auto Liability: Property

Damage

\$ 1,000,000 / \$ 1,000,000

Personal Injury \$ 1,000,000 / \$ 2,000,000

Workmen's Compensation as required by the State of New Hampshire

PRICING: Unless otherwise specified all prices listed are firm for the term of the contract.

### **INVOICING:**

Invoices must be physically mailed and/or submitted (emailed invoices unacceptable) to Accounts Payable at:

Town of Bethlehem  
c/o Accounts Payable  
PO Box 189  
Bethlehem, NH 03574

The invoice must include an itemization of all action items as identified in the bid award. The total amount due shall be clear on the invoice for proper payment. Payment terms are net thirty (30) days from the date of the invoice.

General terms as allowable: Invoices received before the twentieth of each month should be processed for said month with payment available through said month check disbursement. A completed W-9 is required for all vendors prior to processing payment.

TAX: The Town is exempt from all sales and federal excise taxes. Our exemption number is 02-6000078. Please Invoice less these taxes.

DELIVERY: Deliveries are to be made only to the Planning Office.