**CITY OF THOMASVILLE**

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

**411 WEST JACKSON STREET**

**THOMASVILLE, GA 31792**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP DESCRIPTION: CITY OF THOMASVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SERVICES**

**DUE DATE: NO LATER THAN October 07, 2016 at 3:00 P.M. EST**

Under the Statutory Authority O.C.G.A. 50-8-7.1(b) of the State of Georgia, and following the legal standards and procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning found in the Administrative Rules for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (specifically, Chapter 110-12-1 – effective March 1, 2014), the City of Thomasville (City) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide comprehensive planning services for the City. The intent of these services is to write and adopt a place-based Comprehensive Plan based on the tenants of the new urbanism; which comports with the requirements of the State of Georgia and meets the long-range planning needs of the City.

Each proposal will have two parts.

**Part One:** The first part will entail the total costs associated with creating the City of Thomasville’s Comprehensive Plan as detailed below.

**Part Two:** The second part will entail the total costs associated with creating a combined City of Thomasville / Thomas County Comprehensive Plan; which will include all aspects of the aforementioned City-only Comprehensive Plan, but also the necessary plan elements for Thomas County contained herein.

**RFP OPEN UNTIL: October 07, 2016 at 3:00 PM EST**

**Community Background**

Located in one of the most scenic areas of Georgia, the City of Thomasville, (pop. 18,413), is situated just 35 minutes from Tallahassee Fl. in the heart of the Red Hills region. The Red Hills are home to spectacular natural attractions ranging from magnificent live oaks to the largest stand of long leaf pine forest in America. The white sand beaches of the gulf coast are less than 2 hours away. As part of an effort to preserve our unique ecosystem, over 650,000 acres of surrounding land has been protected through conservation. Not only has this helped to create one of the finest year-round recreational areas in the southeast, but the protection of rural land on the City’s edge has strengthened our thriving downtown. In 2015 USA Today listed Thomasville as one of nine top sporting destinations in America, while the Atlanta Journal Constitution lauded Thomasville as one of 7 charming Georgia cities to visit NOW!

Thomasville was founded in 1825 as seat of the newly formed Thomas County. It was incorporated as a town in 1831 and as a city in 1889. The City has a total area of 14.96 square miles (2010), of which 14.9 square miles of it is land and 0.1 square miles of it (0.40%) is water.

As of the census of 2010, there were 18,413 people, and 7,535 households in the City. The population density was 1,231.2 people per square mile. There were 8,534 housing units at an average density of 570.5 per square mile. Approximately 2.03 square miles (1,301 acres) of the City is comprised of vacant land.

The racial makeup of the City was 53.7% African American, 43.0% White, 0.3% American Indian, 0.8% Asian, 0.0% Pacific Islander, 0.0% from other races, and 1.1% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 2.2% of the population.

The median income for a household in the City (in 2014 dollars) was $31,240. The per capita income for the City (in 2014 dollars) was $18,542. In 2012 there were 2,134 firms located in the City.

**The City of Thomasville is in a very unique position in that it is able to operate without any dependence on property taxes**. The budget for the 2016 fiscal year, approved at $131,783,596, includes no revenues from property taxes within its funding.

In lieu of property taxes, margins above the cost of providing services are transferred from the City’s utility funds to general government. City utilities include electricity, water, sewer, gas, solid waste (including landfill), telecommunications (internet, telephone), cable; many of which are sold throughout a multi-county region. For FY 2016, the amount of the transfers will be approximately $10 million, an increase of approximately $480,000. These transfers are equivalent to levying about 15.12 mills of property tax.

The basically flat budget includes $24.5 million in capital projects. These projects include $5.4 million for a runway extension, taxiway extension and additional hangar space at Thomasville Regional Airport; $6.3 million in GEFA projects which serve to improve water and wastewater infrastructure; and $900,000 for the Multi-Use Trail.

The City of Thomasville and Thomas County have an agreed upon Urban Service Area (USA) that specifically addresses the extension of water and sewer service within and beyond the City limits. The Urban Service Area provides a means for promoting growth to already developed areas within the County, making more efficient use of existing infrastructure. This lessens development pressure, directing growth away from areas that lack facilities and services, or contain pristine or protected lands.

The City of Thomasville is the urban center of Thomas County, providing the majority of housing, employment, services, and educational opportunities in the region. The surrounding County is primarily comprised of conventional suburban development and rural lands. To the south and west of the City, a number of historic plantations occupy large tracts of land that were once farmed. Much of this land has been placed in permanent preserve, functioning today as private residential retreats or semi-public hunting plantations. Hunting in Thomas County is a nationally recognized multi-million dollar industry that attracts sportsman from across the Country to Thomasville. The plantations serve as economic generators that physically discourage sprawl while promoting activity downtown. Thus, there is a very strong relationship between the health of the City and the rural lands that surround it.

**Project Overview**

The City is seeking a multidisciplinary consultant team to develop a detailed Comprehensive Plan and regional-scale Character Area Map to guide both the pattern of future settlement and character of development. The Comprehensive Plan shall comply with the Georgia Planning Act and is envisioned as the overarching policy document that directs the City of Thomasville in the implementation of consensus-based goals, objectives, and strategies over the next 20 years, to the year 2038. The vision and policies of the plan will involve all aspects of City administration and community life, providing a common point of reference for all those involved in shaping the City’s future, including elected and appointed officials, City staff, citizens, businesses, and civic organizations. The document should strengthen the partnership between the public and private sectors and between citizens and the development community.

The elements listed below (Scope of Service) should serve as a guide for the plan’s development. Regional issues such as the accommodation of new residents, provision of public facilities and services, economic development, environmental stewardship, and land preservation currently require intergovernmental cooperation, and in specific instances detailed coordination (i.e. Urban Services Area). Both a City-only and City-County Comprehensive Plan will require a regional Growth Framework Map based on “Character Areas.” This State mandated element should take the structure of a Sector Analysis (in the form of a Smart Code) or similar “place type” assessment. The City will be looking to establish a Transect-Based unified development ordinance prior to, or upon completion of the Comprehensive Plan. The combination of public outreach, education, and place-based visioning should provide a strong lead-in to this effort. Therefore, a robust knowledge of new urbanism and Form-Based Codes is critical. Respondents to the RFP are encouraged to suggest creative or innovative place-based approaches to this element.

**Project Strategy**

**Phase 1. Needs Assessment – Including a Public Visioning**

Utilize a strategy that promotes public engagement and input, including methods and tools typically used for outreach. The Visioning Process component should be engaging, interactive, and generate excitement. Where appropriate, the use of charrettes, workshops, visualizations and technology (i.e. illustrative plans, social media, visual preference surveys, etc.) is strongly encouraged.

**Phase 2. Market Analysis**

**Phase 3. Workshops (Public and Municipal)**

Interim Plan presentations, public hearings and workshops will be scheduled to provide an overview of the process, present progress updates; receive elected official, commission members, staff, and citizen comments. Format and topic will influence the actual number of events.

**Phase 4. Overview of specific components of project strategy**

Provide an overview of information gathered in phases 1-3. Insure compliance with ultimate goals of Comprehensive Plan.

**Phase 5. Development of Preliminary Draft**

**Phase 6. Preparation of Final Draft and Adoption**

Provide a general work plan and adoption schedule that will allow this Plan to be reviewed and approved by the city council before March 15, 2018. Generally, the work plan for adoption should include:

1. Informal public meetings / presentations to Planning Commission & City Council (up to 4)
2. Planning Commission public hearing (up to 2)
3. City Council public hearing (up to 2)

**Scope of Services**

The City of Thomasville requires the following services for both Part One (City only Comprehensive Plan) and Part Two (dual City / County Comprehensive Plan) of the proposal. Thomas County requires those services annotated with a (\*) symbol for Part Two of the proposal. The selected consultant is expected to create a user-friendly “place-based” document using GIS mapping, illustrative master plans, renderings, and other visualizations at a variety of scales to graphically depict pertinent information for each element of the Plan.

1. **Public Visioning Process**\*
2. **Elements of Comprehensive Plan**
3. *Community Goals*\*
   1. General Vision Statement
   2. List of Community Goals
      1. Include Goals from City of Thomasville 5-year Strategic Plan
      2. Reserved
   3. Community Policies
   4. Character Areas & Defining Narratives
      1. Community / Neighborhood Design
      2. Reserved
4. *Needs & Opportunities*\*
5. *Community Work Program*\*
6. *Capital Improvements*\*
7. *Economic Development*
   1. Market Analysis
      1. New home generation
      2. New business generation
      3. Cost to City to meet market demands
   2. Reserved
8. *Growth Framework* (Land Use)\*
   1. Character Areas Map and defining narrative
   2. Reserved
9. *Transportation*
10. *Housing*\*
    1. Attainable Housing
    2. Reserved
11. *Areas Requiring Special Attention*
    1. Storm Water Management – Light Impact / Low Impact Development. Best practices related tools and integration opportunities, fee structure, etc.
    2. Public Engagement and Participation –\* Best practices and tools related to citizen engagement for public projects.
    3. Downtown – Including a process for shared parking, ways to promote upper story uses, and emphasize importance of public realm.
12. *Natural and Cultural Resources\**
13. *Community Facilities*
    1. Civic Spaces and Buildings – Including review and analysis regarding oversight /operation of parks.
    2. Administrative Facilities – Including review of planning/economic development agencies / boards to ensure best practices.
    3. Public Works Facilities
14. **Adoption Process**\*

**Schedule for Project Completion**

Each proposal submitted should include a realistic timeframe for completion of the project consistent with the City’s stated “Project Strategy” and “Scope of Work;” although, it is expected that the tasks associated with the phases outlined in the Project Strategy will be completed within 12 months of commencement of work. Project completion infers separate adoption by the Thomasville City Council.

**Final Product**

The final product shall be provided to the City of Thomasville in both digital and paper format. One (1) digital copy of the completed and adopted document in Word and pdf formats with graphics shall be provided. The receipt of other alternative digital formats of the final product will be considered by the City if presented by the consultant during the RFP process. A minimum of two (2) print-ready copies of the final product and associated forms and applications shall be provided as well.

**Qualifications**

The City anticipates selecting a qualified consulting team that includes the broadest mix of experts in urban planning, market analysis, state and federal economic development programs and incentives, urban design, landscaping, form and/or transect‐based codes, marketing, historic preservation, and land use & redevelopment law. The selected consultant should be able to demonstrate the widest possible application of these varying fields of experience through **past examples of work within the State of Georgia**. It is essential that the consultant also be able to demonstrate a proven ability to implement public input processes that ensure any final product has received adequate input from a variety of user groups, and been developed through collaboration with City officials, stakeholders and the general public.

The project leader is expected to possess professional planning credentials including AICP certification and must be identified as part of the proposal. Résumés of all primary staff members working under this contract must be provided with the proposal.

**Proposal Submittal Requirements**

1. Contact Information

Name, address and phone number of the consulting firm. The location of the offices where the work will be performed, and the locations of the project manager and other key members of the project team, should be specified. Availability of key staff members at strategic times during the project must be assured.

1. Form of Organization

Whether the firm(s) is/are a partnership, corporation or sole proprietorship, where it is organized, and the names of the principals, officers, and directors of the firm(s).

1. Qualifications and Approach

Narrative directly linking the qualifications of the proposed firm(s) with the project as defined within this RFP. Demonstration of familiarity and experience with State of Georgia and federal programs, statutes, funding sources, etc. which are commonly applicable to community development efforts. Clear summary of the proposed approach to meeting the stated needs of the City which also include reference to potential challenges in meeting the overall goals of the project. Defined distribution of activities in relation to each of the tasks identified in this RFP

1. References and Experience

Names and telephone numbers of persons whom the City can call for references regarding the firm(s) past performance – particularly on municipal projects of similar scope. This should include a list of similar projects completed by the firm, project cost and name of community.

1. Key Personnel

Résumés of all primary staff members to be assigned to the project, including: titles, education, related experience, tenure with the firm and anticipated role.

1. Sub-Consultants

Any proposed sub‐consultants with indication of approximate percentage of work for which they will be responsible.

1. Project timeline

Approximate project timeline and anticipated completion date. The project timeline should include an overall project schedule linking all project components; and, independent schedules for component. The proposal must also specify the intended role(s) of City staff, and identify the key points throughout the project in which any significant staff contribution is necessary. City staff time should only comprise a small portion of the overall project labor.

1. Person Hours and Cost

A cost proposal to complete each of the tasks (independently) shall be provided in a separate sealed envelope clearly marked: SEALED COST PROPOSAL FOR: CITY OF THOMASVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SERVICES. This cost proposal should include hourly billing rates for each professional title, a distribution of hours by task, and reimbursable direct expenses. Overhead rates must be shown. Unit costs for providing staff support to public meetings must be described.

**Collusion Among Respondents**

Each respondent, by submitting a proposal, certifies that it is not party to any collusive action or any action that may be in violation of State and Federal law.

**Evaluation Criteria**

An Evaluation Committee – to be established by the City Manager – will identify the two to three consultant teams selected to move on through the selection process.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluation Committee Criteria | Maximum Possible Score | |
| Experience, Qualifications, Availability, and References of the Project Director/Principal In-Charge | 15 | Points |
| Experience, Qualifications, Availability, and References of the overall Comprehensive Plan Project Manager, and his/her knowledge of Transect analysis | 15 | Points |
| Experience, Qualification, Availability, and References of the Capital Improvement Plan Element Project Manager | 10 | Points |
| Experience, Qualification, Availability, and References of the Housing Element Project Manager | 10 | Points |
| Experience, Qualification, Availability, and References of the New Urbanist Community / Neighborhood Design Element Project Manager | 10 | Points |
| Team Experience with Comprehensive Community-based Planning Projects within Regions, Towns, Neighborhoods, and Streets | 10 | Points |
| Experience, Qualifications, Availability, and References for other Key Task Leaders | 10 | Points |
| Demonstrated success of the team in other communities | 10 | Points |
| The quality of the example products (provided by internet links) that demonstrate user-friendly “place-based” documents using GIS mapping, illustrative master plans, renderings, and other visualizations at a variety of scales to graphically depict pertinent information for each element | 10 | points |
| *TOTAL* | ***100*** | ***Points*** |

**Project Selection Schedule**

The following table identifies the dates for the Selection Process.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Schedule Item | Date |
| Public Notice of release of RFP | 8/24/2016 |
| Questions regarding RFP due at 5:00 PM EST to City of Thomasville City Planner, Brian Herrmann | 9/14/2016 |
| Release of final RFP updates/clarifications/addendum | 9/21/2016 |
| Proposals due at 3:00 PM EST | 10/07/2016 |
| Proposals distributed to Evaluation Committee | 10/07/2016 |
| City of Thomasville short-lists firms | 10/13/2016 |
| Notify short-listed firms | 10/14/2016 |
| Presentation by short-listed firms | 11/02/16-11/04/16 |
| Notify selected firm | 11/07/16 |
| Recommendation to City Council | 11/14/2016 |
| Refine contract / negotiate specifics | 1st work day after City Council Hearing |
| Commencement of Project | 10 business days following finalization of the contract |

**Award of Contract**

If a contract is awarded, it shall be done as soon as possible after the review process. Any awarded contract for this project is expected to be approved no later than November, 2016 and a notice to proceed will be issued the day following execution of a contract.

Nothing within this Request for Proposal shall be considered an order for the City of Thomasville to proceed with the project. Award is strictly contingent upon the continued appropriation of necessary funds, and the determination that award of a contract is in the best interest of the City of Thomasville. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to modify or amend any portion of this RFP.

**Contract Commencement and Completion**

The selected firm will be required to enter into a Professional Services Contract for this project with the City of Thomasville (see attached draft).

Any contract resulting from this RFP shall not be effective unless, and until, approved by the City Council or its designee. Upon approval, contract services shall commence within (10) ten business days after the award of the contract. The estimated completion date shall be defined in the proposal submitted by the selected firm.

Before the City executes a contract, the selected firm shall furnish the City a certificate evidencing Workmen’s Compensation Insurance with limits no less than $1,000,000 per accident or disease and Comprehensive Public Liability Insurance or General Liability Insurance with limits no less than $1,000,000 per occurrence. The City shall be named as an additional insured. Certificates of Insurance must be accompanied by the applicable endorsements for the specific insurance policy.

**Acknowledgment of Amendments**

Each agency receiving a copy of this shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this RFP by signing and returning the amendment with the completed proposal. The acknowledgement must be received by the City of Thomasville at the time and place specified for receipt of proposals.

**Applicable Laws Shall Apply**

The contract awarded shall be governed in all respect by the laws of the State of Georgia, and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of the State of Georgia, Thomas County Superior Court. The firm awarded the contract shall comply with applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

**Change in Objectives**

The City of Thomasville may materially change the Objectives. Such changes may include additions, deletions, or other revisions within the general scope of RFP requirements. No changes or adjustments shall be made without a written amendment to this RFP, signed by Brian Herrmann, City Planner.

**Expenses Incurred**

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the City to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request. Materials submitted by respondents are subject to public inspection under the Georgia Public Records Act (Government Code Sec. 6250 et seq.), unless exempt. Any language purporting to render the entire proposal confidential or proprietary will be ineffective and will be disregarded.

**Late Submissions**

Any proposal received at the place designated in this RFP after the time specified for receipt will not be accepted or considered.

**Withdrawal of Proposal**

Respondents may withdraw all or any portion of a proposal at any time during and after the review and award process, up to ratification of an agreement between the City of Thomasville and the designated firm.

**Communication with City Representatives**

Requests for information by firm(s) regarding the meaning or interpretation of terms or requirements in this RFP must be requested of Brian Herrmann, through email only. Firms are advised that from the date of release of this RFP until award of the contract, NO contact with other City personnel or City officials is permitted, except as authorized by the contact person listed above. Any such unauthorized contact will result in the disqualification of the firm’s submittal.

All questions about this RFP must be submitted via email by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 14, 2016, as outlined in the schedule herein. All updates/clarifications/addendum to the RFP will be issued to all respondents as a single communique on Friday, September 21, 2016:

All inquiries and final proposals shall be submitted to Brian Herrmann, City Planner, City of Thomasville, via mail or hand‐delivery to:

Mail:

**Brian Herrmann, City Planner, City of Thomasville**

**P.O. Box 1540**

**Thomasville, GA 31799**

Hand Delivery:

**Brian Herrmann, City Planner, City of Thomasville**

**411 West Jackson Street**

**Thomasville, GA 31799**

Email and Phone Contact:

**Brian Herrmann, City Planner, City of Thomasville**

[**brianh@thomasville.org**](mailto:brianh@thomasville.org)

**(229) 227-4118**

Proposals must be received no later than **3:00 PM EST, Friday, October 07, 2016**.

**Attachments / Links**

1. Current Thomas County / City of Thomasville Joint Comprehensive Plan <https://thomasville.org/uploads/groups/3/Documents/Planning/2005-2025_comp_plan.pdf>
2. Current City of Thomasville Strategic Plan <https://thomasville.org/strategic-plan>
3. Trailhead & Creative Arts District Plan <https://thomasville.org/uploads/groups/3/Documents/Planning/GURA-Plan--draft--no-appendices.pdf>
4. City of Thomasville form based code Overlay District (Victoria Park) <https://thomasville.org/uploads/groups/3/Documents/Planning/Victoria-Park-Overlay-District.pdf>
5. Gateways Urban Redevelopment Plan (draft) <https://thomasville.org/uploads/groups/3/Documents/Planning/GURA-Plan--draft--no-appendices.pdf>
6. Proposed Cover Letter

PROPOSAL COVER LETTER

# (to be submitted with proposal)

**RFP DESCRIPTION: CITY OF THOMASVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SERVICES**

## DUE DATE: NO LATER THAN October 07, 2016 @ 3:00 P.M. EST

Signature Date

Title Telephone

Company Address