

# Request for Proposals -RFP- *Update to Comprehensive Plan*

May 4, 2012

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## Introduction

The City of Gardiner has recently announced its partnership with the Gardiner Board of Trade, Gardiner Main Street, and the Orton Family Foundation (collectively “Partners” or “Partnership”) in a two-year grant to undertake a Gardiner Heart & Soul Community Planning project.

“Heart & Soul Community Planning” is an innovative, multi-disciplinary approach to helping citizens from all walks of life discover and protect their community’s most important assets so that they can adapt to change while enhancing the attributes they value most. The Heart & Soul project aims to:

- Engage a breadth and diversity of Gardiner’s population in a discussion about the future of their community;
- Identify common community values and priority assets, and identify and evaluate potential actions and policies that will help Gardiner preserve and enhance those assets; and
- Support the development of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Master Plan, and Waterfront Master Plan.

***A key outcome of this Partnership is a Comprehensive Plan that reflects the values, priorities, and aspirations of the community as identified through the Heart & Soul Project.***

The City of Gardiner seeks the services of a qualified planning consultant to work with the Heart & Soul Partners and assist the Comprehensive Plan Committee in preparing a revision to the existing Comprehensive Plan. The current Plan, adopted in 1997, will cease to be consistent with MSRA Title 30-A and Chapter 208 of the State Planning Office’s Comprehensive Plan Revision Criteria Rule by the end of 2012. The update will make it eligible for a consistency finding with the Growth Management Act of the State of Maine.

The Comprehensive Plan (“Plan”) is the foundation for determining effective public policy, master planning, and land use decisions for the future, and will provide an ongoing framework for informed and directed development. The Plan shall include goals, objectives, and strategies and utilize maps, graphs, and

other imagery tools to analyze, assess, and recommend best practices for values-based planning, economic development, housing, infrastructure, and other improvements. The responsibility of the Plan is to reflect and respond to the priorities, values, and requirements of Gardiner's residents, safeguarding the city's history and sense of place while stimulating the conditions for short- and long-term assurances of dignity, freedom, life, work, and economic stability and community in Gardiner.

## **Project Area**

The City of Gardiner is located in Kennebec County, about 6 miles south of Augusta. Gardiner has a population of 5,800 according to the 2010 U.S. Census data, down 300 residents from 2000 figures. Its total land area covers about 16 square miles. Although the physical scope of the Comprehensive Plan shall not exceed the official boundaries of the City, neighboring and regional influences on future growth opportunities and challenges may be selectively incorporated into the Plan where appropriate.

## **Scope of Work**

The Consultant will conduct the following minimum tasks. The City strongly encourages bidders to expand on these tasks, to provide detail on how they are to be accomplished, to recommend which tasks require greater emphasis, and to suggest additional tasks not identified in this RFP that may be necessary or beneficial.

Project Meetings. The consultant is expected to meet regularly with project staff and Partners to discuss project progress and direction.

Meetings with the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Staff, and Council. The consultant will meet with the Committee to provide updates and collect input. In addition, the consultant will solicit input and feedback from City Council, Staff, and the State of Maine, providing interim reports, presentations, and updates to each as required and appropriate; attend the Plan's formal adoption by City Council.

Public Engagement and Communications. The Heart & Soul engagement process requires that the consultant actively collaborate in public outreach and engagement. The consultant is expected to work with the Heart & Soul project team, Partners, and the Department of Economic and Community Development and bring inquiries, information, and technical capacity to the department's delegated project manager (the Assistant Community Planner) who has been charged with delivering a community-driven, values-based planning process that identifies actions and policies for the Comprehensive Plan. This could include assisting with communications, collaborating in engagement planning and facilitation, and substantially supporting the development of policy alternatives and decision-support materials.

Comprehensive Plan Development. The consultant will research and develop materials for the comprehensive plan, including but not limited to:

- A baseline review of existing plans and relevant information, including the existing Comprehensive Plan and Master Plans, codes and policies, demographic and census data, and other information relevant to the required plan elements.

- An existing condition inventory and projected needs analysis, including a population analysis, existing land use and capital facilities (water, sewer, transportation, recreation, open space) assessment, and residential/commercial growth patterns; and a projection of Gardiner population and housing trends to 2030.
- A graphic vision plan that comprehensively addresses the downtown, waterfront, Common, Cobbossee Corridor, and other critical areas within the community.
- A strategic plan for the future of Gardiner, complete with goals, objectives, public input mechanisms and results, and implementation strategies for the 2012 Comprehensive Plan.

## **Deliverables**

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan products will include:

1. Twenty (20) printed, bound, color copies of the draft and final Comprehensive Plan, including maps and appendices;
2. An unbound, reproducible, original copy of (1) above;
3. Any derived GIS data or other new mapping information developed for the plan; and
4. A labeled compact disc of (1) above, inclusive of all graphics and appendices, in original electronic formats, as well as in PDF and Word 2007.

## **Project Management and Responsibilities**

The consultant will be responsible for working closely with the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Assistant Community Planner, and the Partners as necessary to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is aligned with the outcomes of the Heart & Soul engagement process.

The City's Director of Economic and Community Development will be the Project Director. The City's Assistant Community Planner will serve as the primary contact and coordinator between the City, the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Partners, and the successful firm. Other City staff will be available for input as necessary.

A Comprehensive Plan Committee will serve as an oversight committee for this project, consisting of a minimum of seven (7) and a maximum of nine (9) members who are residents of Gardiner and who will guide, evaluate, and approve the direction and completion of the Plan. This committee will recommend the final Plan to Council for approval.

The Partners will collaborate with the consultant and substantially support and direct the community engagement efforts, and will play an advisory role on the translation of Heart & Soul project outcomes into the Comprehensive Plan.

The Heart & Soul Advisory Team will play an advisory role and act as liaisons to the broader community.

The City of Gardiner will also:

- Provide any and all existing documentation to the consultant as requested, within reasonable expectations and costs;

- Assist with human and technical resources as needed to facilitate timely progress;
- Provide and distribute minutes for all Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings; and
- Schedule, coordinate, and make necessary arrangements for other Plan-related meetings.

## Project Budget

The City of Gardiner expects this contract amount to fall between \$17K and \$35K.

## Project Schedule

The consistency finding by the State of Maine for the plan adopted in 1997 expires at the end of 2012, but the Plan itself and its associated recommendations remain valid. By purposefully extending the City's timeline for updating the Comprehensive Plan, the Partners expect the update process to be closely aligned with the Heart & Soul engagement activities arising from the Orton Family Foundation's Heart & Soul planning framework.

Key phases in this process will include:

- **July 2012 - December 2012:** development of a community-driven, values-based vision for Gardiner's future.
- **January 2013 - June 2013:** the use of these values to engage the community in crafting and evaluating policies and actions.
- **June 30, 2013:** the deadline for the Comprehensive Plan update and all associated deliverables.
- **July 2013 - January 2014:** pending outcomes of the Heart & Soul project as well as budgetary considerations, the City may request a limited scope of services extending to the close of the two-year project (January 2014), or that requires a revisit and incorporation during this time period of any continuing Heart & Soul processes that may relate to the Comprehensive Plan deliverables.

The City wishes to complete and adopt the plan in a timely manner that does not shortcut or circumvent the Heart & Soul process.

## Submission Requirements

For consideration, please submit two (2) digital files, including one PDF and one Word (2007-compatible) file, containing your proposal to the City of Gardiner on or before 4:30 PM on Friday, June 1, 2012. Please also submit one (1) paper copy of the proposal. We will accept this copy by mail after the due date provided it is postmarked no later than June 1, 2012.

Each proposal should include no more than thirty (30) pages and adhere to the following format:

- Project understanding;
- Work and cost proposals meeting or exceeding the scope of work in this request;

- Statement of qualifications illustrating the ability and skills of consultant and all staff/subcontractors in the areas covered in this request;
- Names and contact information of three (3) professional references;
- Names and contact information of authorized agent to negotiate on behalf of and contractually bind the consultant during the period of the proposed evaluation;
- Statement that the proposal is binding for not less than 60 days after the proposal due date;
- Acknowledgment that the selected Consultant shall agree to indemnify and hold the Partnership harmless from claims, demands, suits, causes of action and judgments arising from the Consultant's performance, including claims of professional malpractice or negligence; and
- List of hourly billing rates to be charged should the City expand the project scope or require additional services.

### **Selection Process**

After initial review by the Comprehensive Plan Committee and City Staff, a shortlist of consultants will be selected and evaluated based on (but not limited to) the following:

- Consultant shows a demonstrated understanding of the Heart & Soul approach to planning;
- Proposals that are complete and on time, and that meet specified minimum requirements;
- Qualifications, technical and creative approach, performance in similar communities, and references of each bidding consultant (as well as each contributing staff or team member);
- The success of the bidder in any interview or presentation process that may be requested; and
- Additional evaluation (as needed) and approval by City Council.

Interviews, if conducted, will be limited to a maximum of four (4) consultants, and will result in a negotiations process with each of the top prioritized list of consultants based on the above evaluation until a suitable negotiation has been reached for both the City and the consultant, upon which a contract with the winning bidder may be drawn. This contract will specify the terms and schedule of reimbursement as agreed upon during negotiations.

### **Reservation of Rights**

This Request for Proposal shall not be construed as a contract or commitment by the City of Gardiner, or as a statement of intent to award a contract or pay any costs incurred by a bidding consultant. The City reserves the right to cancel or re-advertise this request, to accept, reject, or hold over any and all bids received, to interview at its discretion, to negotiate acceptable contract terms, and to seek timely proposal clarifications on bids upon which acceptance may be contingent.

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the City. The City has the right to disclose information contained in the proposals after an award has been made unless the Consultant requests certain portions remain confidential. All products developed for this project shall be considered public information and shall be co-owned by the Heart & Soul Partnership and the Consultant. All

products, both paper and digital, and borrowed materials shall be delivered to the City of Gardiner prior to final payment.

### **Inquiries & Contact Information**

Please submit any written inquiries about this project by May 18, 2012. We will collate all questions and respond collectively by May 25, 2012. Any inquiries and associated contact information will remain confidential.

Please send all inquiries and proposal submissions to:

City of Gardiner  
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The deadline for submission of proposals is 4:30 PM on Friday, June 1, 2012.