



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN SPACE
PLAN**

TOWN OF BOWDOINHAM, MAINE

**RESPONSES DUE BY:
9:00AM ON MARCH 6, 2026**

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Sealed Requests for Proposals, plainly marked “Planning Consultant Services – DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN SPACE PLAN” on the outside of the mailing envelope, addressed to the Yvette Meunier, Director of Planning & Development, 13 School Street, Bowdoinham, Maine 04008 will be accepted until 9am (est) on Friday, March 6, 2026 Addenda to this proposal, if any, including written clarifications to this RFP, will be posted on the Town of Bowdoinham website under the project heading.

PROJECT FUNDING

This Project is anticipated to be funded by a Community Resilience Partnership Community Action Grant and is contingent upon grant award.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Town of Bowdoinham is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants interested in providing planning services to assist the Town with drafting our first Open Space Plan with robust community input. The Open Space Plan will serve as a stand-alone planning document that complements our 2024 Comprehensive Plan by further developing, and bolstering actions identified in that plan as well as include others identified through this process. The Open Space Plan will act as a community-orientated guide to elected and appointed town leadership in decision-making. Further, the Town will get technical assistance from the Consultant to develop ordinance changes which support the findings of the Open Space Plan.

To draft the Open Space Plan the consultant will help the Town collect and analyze data, create maps and data visualizations, create an online tool for the public to engage with the process, and develop and deploy surveys to identify and prioritize actions with community input. Further, the consultant will develop an implementation matrix that prioritizes actions and identifies resources including funding sources for actions. In addition, the consultant will review relevant Town ordinances and workshop suggest amendments with the Planning Board which support the desires of the Open Space Plan.

The work will include significant community outreach through events, newsletters, social media, and website information to introduce the concept and value of open space planning to residents and collect community feedback to guide and prioritize conservation efforts, recreational opportunities, and identify where commercial and residential development efforts should be directed. Additional engagement opportunities to collect feedback on the draft plan and ordinance amendments, and to promote the plan ahead of placing them on Town Meeting warrants will also be initiated.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Task 1: OPEN SPACE PLAN ADMINISTRATION

The Consultant will perform the following activities to manage the project:

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- Manage the project budget and timeline and set up project meetings and ensure completion of project deliverables; and
- Work with the Town to submit CRP reports.

Deliverables: Signed contract between Consultant and the Town of Bowdoinham; Summary of project activities for CRP quarterly reports and final report.

Task 2: OPEN SPACE PLAN

Task 2A: Inventory & Analysis

The Consultant will perform these activities to collect and analyze data for the plan:

- Review of existing plans, policies, and public input;
- Analyze our land use ordinance and comprehensive plan update process to identify potential future development;
- Provide GIS mapping of existing open space lands;
- Integrate climate impacts and stressors into the plan; and
- Outreach to community partners to identify current community plans, other mapping products, priorities and concerns.

Deliverables: The Consultant will use this inventory and analysis to create online open space maps and a list of areas that should be conserved as open space. Both analysis deliverables will be used in the plan and public engagement.

Task 2B: Public Engagement

Under the guidance of the Comprehensive Plan Committee public engagement efforts will be developed by the Consultant to collect information on how Bowdoinham's open spaces are currently perceived, valued, and used and how these assets could be improved.

The Consultant will:

- Create two kickoff events to introduce open space planning to the community;
- Launch of up to three surveys which would include both online and paper versions. One survey would be specific to agricultural protection aimed at gathering feedback from farmers on potential strategies that would help them stay in agriculture. This would include assistance from Maine Farmland Trust in drafting and deploying the survey. A second survey would be a broader survey to identify and prioritize actions from the community for the plan, with the potential for a third more in-depth survey more focused on recreation or another area that that may call for additional attention from survey responses; and
- Create a website to allow residents to interact with the process and learn more.

Deliverables will be a creation of up to three surveys, publishing of a project website, schedule of the meetings, and creation of meeting minutes.

Task 2C: Plan Drafting & Review

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The Consultant will draft an Open Space Plan with the Comprehensive Plan Committee that will include the results of the inventory and analysis and will incorporate the public input received to date. It will also include initial recommendations and strategies. Upon completion of the draft plan the Consultant will conduct two public engagement opportunities to elicit feedback and suggestions for the Open Space Plan. Strategies for this second round of public engagement include community meetings and an open comment period with the plan.

The Consultant will:

- Work with the Comprehensive Plan Committee to create two community meetings to introduce the draft open space planning to the community and solicit feedback.

Deliverables: Summary of public engagement activities, outreach and engagement materials, and draft open space plan.

Task 2D: Plan Revision & Adoption

In order to finalize a plan for adoption at the June 2027 Town Meeting the following tasks will be executed.

The Consultant will:

- Make revisions to the Open Space Plan draft based on feedback from the municipality, boards and committees, and the community.

Deliverables: Final Open Space Plan.

Task 3: ORDINANCE REVIEW & REVISION

Task 3A: Review Current Ordinance Language

The Consultant will:

- Review Bowdoinham's Land Use Ordinance to identify opportunities for incorporating open space conservation strategies and priorities into the ordinance and suggest where and what amendments might be possible and work with municipal staff and the Planning Board to choose which amendments could realistically be made.

Deliverables: List of possible ordinance revisions.

Task 3B: Draft Ordinance Revisions

The Consultant will:

- Draft ordinance language for the proposed amendments and work with municipal staff and the Planning Board on final language for consideration by the Select Board.

Deliverables: Draft ordinance amendment language for Planning Board consideration.

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Task 3C: Ordinance Revision Adoption

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Town anticipates conducting the project with the following milestones:

Request for Proposals advertised	February 17, 2026
Proposals Due	March 6, 2026
Interviews	March 2026
Contract Signing	March 2026
Project Completion	December 31, 2027

The project’s reports, recommendations, plans and design must be completed by December 31, 2027, per the Community Resilience Program Grant requirements.

TOWN ROLE

Town Planning Department staff will be responsible for administering the project and overseeing the consultant's work on this project.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals shall include the following:

A. Firm Description - Provide a brief description of the firm including firm size and area(s) of specialization, location of corporate headquarters, and potential satellite office proposed to handle this project.

B. Project Team - Provide names and resumes of key professionals who would be assigned to the project. Each team member’s education and experience shall be listed. The project manager shall be clearly identified and a description of their relevant previous projects listed.

C. Relevant Experience – Provide a list and brief description of past projects within the state of Maine that have included relevant components. Proposed project staff must have been involved with said projects.

D. Statement of Project Understanding & Scope of Services - The consultant shall state in succinct terms their understanding of the scope of services that is to be addressed as a result of selection pursuant to this Request for Proposals, and provide a description in narrative form of the consultant’s approach and technical plan for accomplishing the work.

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E. Schedule - The Consultant shall submit a proposed schedule for completing the scope of services associated with the project.

F. Fee Proposal - The Consultant shall submit a proposed budget for performing the scope of services, stated as a not-to-exceed.

G. References – Provide three (3) references, including current contact name and phone number, for projects with relevant components.

NUMBER OF COPIES

An electronic copy and three (3) unbound copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than the date and time identified above.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following:

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

The Town of Bowdoinham reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive technical or legal deficiencies, and to accept any proposal that it may deem to be in the best interest of the Town.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

The successful Consultant will be required to maintain insurance in such form as will protect the Consultant from claims and liabilities for damages for bodily injury, including accidental death, and for property damage, which may arise from operations under this contract. The Consultant shall also be required to maintain professional liability insurance. Amounts and coverages shall be subject to contract negotiations.

The Town of Bowdoinham reserves the right to negotiate directly with the firm(s) selected for additional project work including assistance with implementation of portions of the resulting Master Plan.

The Town of Bowdoinham reserves the right to undertake such investigation as it deems necessary to evaluate the qualifications of the Consultant and to evaluate its submittal. All concepts, designs, information and ideas that may be generated during the selection process shall become the property of the Town of Bowdoinham.

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Requests for additional information or clarifications should be directed to Yvette Meunier, Director of Planning & Development, at (207) 666-5531 or planning@bowdoinham.com by February 25, 2026. Any questions and their answers will be posted on the Town's website by March 2, 2026.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS FOR SUBMITTAL

- I. Compliance:** all participating Offerors shall agree to comply with all conditions, requirements and instructions of this RFP as stated or implied herein. Should the Town of Bowdoinham omit anything from this packet which is necessary to the clear understanding of the requirements, or should it appear that various instructions are in conflict, the Offerors shall secure instructions from the Planning Department prior to the date and time of the submittal deadlines shown in this RFP.
- II. Altering Proposals:** Any alterations made prior to opening date and time must be initialed by the signer of the proposal, guaranteeing authenticity. Proposals cannot be altered or amended after submission deadline without express approval from the Town of Bowdoinham.
- III. Withdrawal of Proposal:** A proposal must be firm and valid for award and may not be withdrawn or canceled by the Offeror prior to the sixty-first (61st) day following the submittal deadline date and only prior to award.
- IV. Acceptance of Proposal Content:** the contents of the proposal of the successful Offeror shall become contractual obligations if acquisition action ensues. Failure of the successful Offeror to accept these obligations in a contract shall result in cancellation of the award.
- V. Exceptions and Substitutions:** All proposals meeting the intent of this RFP shall be considered for award. Offerors taking exception to the specifications shall do so at their own risk. The Town of Bowdoinham reserves the right to accept or reject any or all substitutions or alternatives. When offering substitutions and/or alternatives, Offeror must state these exceptions separately. Exceptions/substitution, if accepted, must meet or exceed the stated intent and/or specifications. The absence of such a list shall indicate that the Offeror has not taken exceptions, and if awarded a contract, shall hold the Offeror responsible to perform in strict accordance with the specifications or scope of work contained herein.
- VI. Minimal Standards for Responsible Prospective Offerors:** a prospective Offeror must affirmably demonstrate their responsibility. A prospective Offeror must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Have adequate financial resources, or the ability to obtain such resources as required
 - b. Be able to comply with the required or proposed completion schedule
 - c. Have a satisfactory record of performance
 - d. Have a satisfactory record of integrity and ethics

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- e. Be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award and enter into a contract with the Town of Bowdoinham
 - f. Be able to pass a background check as may be conducted by the Town of Bowdoinham
- VII. **Amendment:** No oral statement of any person shall modify or otherwise change, or affect the terms, conditions or specifications stated in the resulting contract.
- VIII. **Assignment:** The Contractor shall not sell, assign, transfer or convey any contract resulting from this RFP, in whole or in part, without the prior written approval from the Town of Bowdoinham
- IX. **Contract:** This Request for Proposal, submitted documents, and any negotiations, when properly accepted by the Town of Bowdoinham, shall constitute a contract equally binding between the Town of Bowdoinham and the Contractor. Any and all verbal communications and/or commitments made during negotiation process that are deemed agreeable to both the Town of Bowdoinham and selected Offeror shall be submitted in written form and made part of any resulting contract. No different or additional terms shall become a part of the Contract with the exception of an Amendment.
- X. **Contract Termination:** this contract shall remain in effect until any of the following occurs: (1) contract expires; (2) completion of services; (3) acceptance of services, or, (4) for convenience terminated by either party within a written *Notice of Cancellation* stating therein the reasons for such cancellation and the effective date of cancellation at least thirty days past notification.
- XI. **Indemnification:** Contractor shall defend, indemnify and save harmless the Town of Bowdoinham, and all its officers, employees, insurers and self-insurance pool, from and against all liability, suits, actions, or other claims of any character, name and description brought for or on account of any injuries or damages received or sustained by any person, persons, or property on account of any negligent act or fault of the Contractor, or of any Contractor's agent, employee, subcontractor or supplier in the execution of, or performance under, any contract which may result from proposal award. Contractor shall pay any judgment with cost which may be obtained against the Town of Bowdoinham growing out of such injury or damages.
- XII. **Costs of Response:** All costs borne by the Offeror in submitting a response to this RFP shall remain the sole responsibility of the Offeror.