



## Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

### Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

City of Thomasville Department of Parks and Recreation, Thomasville, North Carolina

#### INVITATION

The City of Thomasville (further referred to as “the City”) is soliciting Requests for Qualifications from qualified firm(s) or a team to prepare a Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The major purposes of the plan are to identify the current state of the department’s facilities, collect citizen input on future needs, identify program trends specific to Thomasville Citizen’s needs, and to make recommendations for the future of the department.

The plan will focus on parks and programs, but may also include greenways, bicycle and pedestrian routes depending upon citizen input. The plan should include an illustrative and usable plan to guide the City’s actions over the next 10 years regarding the development of its park facilities, programs, and land acquisition needs and be prepared in a manner that will meet the requirements of a 10-year master plan for typical agencies.

The plan will be completed after a thorough inventory of existing park, lands, facilities; public input through community meetings, focus groups and surveys; research on current parks and recreation trends and standards; input from City staff, the public and ultimately approval from the Thomasville City Council.

The goal of the project is to develop a community supported plan that can be successfully implemented through the capital improvement plan as well as through programmatic strategies and operations.

Sealed qualification packages, plainly marked “Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan” on the outside of the mailing envelope, addressed to the City of Thomasville, PO Box 71, Thomasville, NC 27361, will be accepted until 5 pm on April, 14, 2023. Packages may also be hand-delivered in person to the Parks and Recreation Main Office by the required date and time. Submittal packages delivered after the posted deadline will not be considered for selection. No faxed, telephone, or email proposals will be accepted.

#### PURPOSE

The City desires to contract with qualified consultants with proven experience developing Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plans to work with City staff in the development of a Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This would be the City’s first Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The City seeks a plan to guide the future growth, development, and redevelopment of the City of Thomasville Parks and Recreation Department.

The City seeks a consultant that will provide expertise and a strong leadership role in advising both staff and the City Council on how to best plan for recreation facilities in our community. The proposed plan will be comprehensive in nature, with data and analysis backing up any policy recommendations. The master plan is intended to be a tool used in guiding City decision-making related to parks and recreation planning, programming, and facility development on a long-term basis.

All respondents to this RFQ are subject to the instructions communicated in this document and are cautioned to completely review the entire RFQ and follow instructions carefully.

The Request for Qualification document may be obtained by visiting the City's website at [www.thomasville-nc.gov](http://www.thomasville-nc.gov).

## **CITY OVERVIEW**

The City of Thomasville is located in Davidson County, North Carolina. Incorporated in 1857, it is home to approximately 27,000 residents. Total land area is 16.78 square miles and the City is accessible from Interstate 85. The Parks and Recreation Department oversees over 85 acres of park space and facilities. It will also be adding the municipal golf course to its oversight within the next calendar year.

Thomasville is a Council/City Manager form of government. It is served by three school districts and several private school programs as well.

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The City of Thomasville Parks and Recreation Department has served the community for over 70 years. Recently the City Council has turned its focus to renovating and building new recreational spaces in our city. In 2019 our Recreation Center Gymnasium was renovated and a new Aquatics and Community Center will open to the public this spring. Our department is now positioned at a crossroads to determine what is next for our park system. The last formal comprehensive plan is on file from 1998. We are seeking to create this comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan to help guide our community and park system for the next 5 to 10 years.

## **GOAL**

The Thomasville City Council seeks a cost-sensitive plan to move forward with a comprehensive Master Plan Process, which can guide our Recreation Department for the next 5 to 10 years.

## **ANTICIPATED SCOPE OF WORK**

The Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan should include the following information and analysis. Alternative services and deliverables may be proposed on evidence of the need to meet the purpose of the RFQ. RFQs that do not include all these will not be considered.

### **Existing Parks, Recreation Facilities and Open Space**

- Locate and clearly identify existing park and recreation facilities. With residents, City Council, Municipal leadership, and Recreation and Parks team input, evaluate and make recommendations regarding priorities for the improvement and expansion of these facilities. Provide detailed outline of recommended improvements along with cost estimates for each priority.

- The inventory of existing parks and recreation and other community recreation park-facilities should be developed in GIS data sets and compatible with existing County GIS systems. The data sets will be used to generate maps within the master plan and will be transferred to the Developmental Services Department for future mapping needs.
- Based on existing plans and consultations, identify, analyze, and make recommendations on how the City of Thomasville might partner with other agencies and townships, to maximize and leverage resources for our citizens and programs.
- Identify and evaluate current utilized property and undeveloped facilities or open spaces owned by the City and make recommendations as potential for utilization to serve the community through further recreations services. Provide general cost estimates for these projects.

### **Future Parks, Recreation facilities, Greenways, and Open Space**

- Using relevant data from the existing Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan and input from staff and citizens, develop objective criteria, evaluate, and make recommendations for future priorities for new land acquisition and park/facility construction. Recommendations should include a prioritization of both land acquisition and facility construction. Both traditional and non- traditional, active and passive recreation facilities must be considered and uniquely different for all future parks in the system. Provide preliminary cost estimates both cumulatively and individually based on current conditions and with anticipated inflation.
- Using most recent data from the existing Comprehensive Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan, identify and priority changes and include any unidentified locations to the proposed greenway system connection at existing and future Recreation and Parks facilities, Community Recreation facilities, along utility, sewer, historical right-of- ways, etc. Provide general cost estimates for project.
- Evaluation of current and projected (twenty years) demographic, sociological, and equity factors pertinent to the City of Thomasville, including population composition, population growth projections and trends, economic factors and land use patterns.
- Through reasonable consultation and investigation, attempt to identify and forthcoming trends that might affect the delivery of recreation and leisure services in The City of Thomasville and make recommendation strategies on how to address them.

### **Public Engagement/Community Needs Assessment Survey**

- Understand the public's perceived needs for parks and recreation facilities through a variety of input gathering formats such as large group workshops, focus groups, surveys, individual interviews, community-wide meetings, etc.

Record and compile the information in the following categories:

- Recreation facilities
- Greenways
- Programming
- Economic and Tourism Development Opportunities
- Walkability/Bikeability

### **Track common responses and identify the most popular needs.**

- Coupled with the community input received from planning meetings, it is desired the firm complete a Community Needs Assessment Survey. We are requesting that the firm conduct/ascertain a statistically valid survey or a subcontracted firm associated with the agency. An internal Recreation Needs Assessment Survey was conducted by the city in 2019. This information may be referenced and evaluated.

### **Strategic Growth of Agency and Personnel**

- Identify growth trends related to the TPRD's current and future programming, events, tourism, and maintenance operations and make strategic recommendations on how to navigate enhancement or expansion of these services.
  - Identify agency personnel benchmarks and smart growth patterns, which TPRD may implement within five (5) to seven (7) years. Update the Department's organizational chart to reflect growth changes in logical sequence.
  - Provide prioritization and needs justification for each personnel addition and how the agency can elevate revenue resources directly related to the essential job functions of each position.
- The Completed Comprehensive Master Plan Update The completed Comprehensive Master Plan Update should include but not be limited to:
- Introduction.
  - Executive Summary.
  - Plan Objective.
  - Clear definition of public involvement process including survey results.
  - Existing and Proposed Facility Update.
  - Recommended priorities for both existing and future development of greenways and parks, including evaluative criteria and rationale used for recommendations.
  - Action plan - With information on the inventory and analysis of Thomasville Parks and Recreation, an analysis of our current position weighed against standards and trends of similar size municipalities in the State of North Carolina, an understanding of community needs and the formulation of recommendations, develop an action plan. The action plan will be a detailed chapter of the master plan that presents its implementation in a methodical, detailed, comprehensive, written and tabular format. The action plan will span 5-7 years and include the realistic priority recommendations as gathered from the public planning process and directed by City staff, leadership, and City Council. Additionally, the action plan will include strategies for funding sources, partnership opportunities and land acquisition. The action plan will include each recommendation and its phase for completion.
  - Estimated general costs of prioritized items using expected future dollar costs over the 5-10 year plan.

## **DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE**

The following deliverables will be due to Thomasville Parks and Recreation at the conclusion of the contract period:

- First Draft: Ten (10) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy (in PDF format on USB Drive)
- Final Draft: Ten (10) hard copies and an one (1) electronic copy (in PDF format on USB Drive)
- Final Adopted: Fifteen (15) hard copies of the final master plan document and two (2) electronic copies (in PDF format on a USB Drive)
- GIS data in a format specified by the City's Planning Department

The City will work with the chosen firm to develop a timeline with clear decision points for the elements/phases of this contract.

### **Final Comprehensive Master Plan Update Format**

- Plan document shall be in an 8.5" x 11" format with 11" x 17" map fold-outs if needed. The master plan document shall be well-organized and soft cover bound.
- Electronic copies of all maps, which can be edited by staff.
- Format all materials for seamless placement on the City webpage.
- Two (2) 24" x 36" dry mounted facility maps suitable for presentations.
- Two (2) hard cover copies in an 8.5" x 11" format in a 3-ring binder (for copying purposes).

### **Supplemental Comprehensive Master Plan Update Documents**

Provide a summary of conclusions and recommendations in addition to the technical report/document plan. This summary should be designed to be read by the elected officials and interested citizens who have a vested interest about the plan and its purpose. A brief synopsis suitable for creating an informational brochure (suitable for mailing and distributing for publicity/information purposes) is also required

### **RFQ Submittal Requirements**

Qualification package shall be submitted on 8.5" x 11" paper in 12-point font. Submittals shall not exceed twelve (12) pages single-sided, or eight (6) pages double-sided (\*\*Front/back covers, table of contents, tab pages and photographs are excluded from these page totals). Complete responses to each of the following categories are required:

- Describe the organization personnel of the consultant team.
  1. Provide a description of your project team, listing the firm name (s), individuals involved and the role they will perform (ex. principal - in - charge, project landscape architect, consulting engineer, etc.)

2. Provide a description of the qualifications and experience of the specific individuals that will be involved in this project, including the staff of other professional firms. Identify their experience with similar type projects.
- Explain the firm's approach to parks and facilities planning and agency growth and development, including methods with user involvement.
  - Summarize at least five (5) planning projects of similar scope for which at least one team member was primarily responsible within the last five (5) years. This experience should include knowledge of and success in planning park and recreation facilities. Projects older than five years may be listed in the background materials of projects that key staff worked on. Each of the project summaries should include the following:
    1. Description of the project including scope and size.
    2. Project schedule (initial schedule and actual/final schedule), including an explanation of any delays.
    3. Description of service rendered by the consultant.
    4. Degree of involvement (prime consultant or sub-consultant).
    5. Key principal and associated staff involved, along with their assigned responsibilities.
    6. Associate firms involved and their assigned responsibilities.
    7. Project reference including current names, addresses and telephone numbers.
  - Provide web links to completed projects. In the event that web links are not available, be prepared to send hard copies of completed projects.
  - Explain the teams' experience conducting public meetings and the method proposed for soliciting public input.
  - Include a description of the master plan development process. Provide information relative to recommendations for data/fact finding, and discovering issues relative to the determination of site planning.
  - Provide a detailed project schedule with a clear and concise timetable of the process.
  - List other current projects and schedules for completion.
  - Rate the schedule for all personnel who will work on the project and estimate the percentage of time those individuals will commit to the project (should equal 100%).
  - List any awards received for related work.

### **Submission of Qualifications and Proposals**

Six (6) copies of the proposal and one (1) electronic copy in PDF format on a USB Drive should be received on or before 5:00 p.m. on, April 14th , 2023 and should be submitted to:

Cory Tobin  
Parks and Recreation Director  
PO Box 71  
Thomasville, NC 27361

If using Fedex or UPS our office address is preferred for shipping.  
1 E. Main St.  
Thomasville, NC 27360

\* Proposals may be delivered in person to a TPRD Administrative Team designee at the designated address noted above at 1 E. Main St. Thomasville, NC 27360

### **Questions and Clarifications**

Questions related to the process for submitting proposals or the master plan update project should be directed to Cory Tobin via email: [cory.tobin@thomasville-nc.gov](mailto:cory.tobin@thomasville-nc.gov) or call direct (336) 475- 4281.

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

Staff will review the qualification packages received, based on the evaluation criteria established below, to arrive at a shortlist for an interview. An interview panel will review proposals and interview applicant teams. Short-listed consultant teams will be ranked after the interview and a recommendation made to the City Council. The City may choose to contact officials from other jurisdictions regarding the consultant, their prior work experience, and their ability to successfully complete the scope of services. The City may require changes in the scope of services as deemed necessary by the City, before execution of the contract. The City intends to enter into an agreement with the consultant team who provides a proposal that, in the opinion of the City, best meets all of the below listed evaluation criteria as determined by the City's selection committee and ranks the highest in the interview. The Director of the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Thomasville will submit a final recommendation to the City Manager and the City Council for approval. Upon selection of a Consultant, the City intends to enter into an agreement using the standard AIA services agreement as modified for North Carolina Government Requirements.

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The following criteria will be the basis on which consultants will be selected for further consideration (in no particular order):

- Team organization and structure
- Personnel qualifications
- Specialized experience of the firm and related experience with similar projects, with emphasis on recreational facilities, comprehensive recreation and park planning, and agency growth and development strategies.
- Proposed project approach, the methodology for forming the master plan update and schedule for completion
- Proximity to and demonstrated knowledge of the area where the project is located
- Experience conducting public meetings and ascertaining statistically valid survey results
- Current workload and firm capacity
- Client references
- Quality of the proposal
- Other factors relevant to the project

The City of Thomasville reserves the right to reject any or all qualification packages received, and to waive any irregularities or information in the evaluation process. The final selection is the sole decision of the City of Thomasville, and the respondents to this formal request have no appeal rights or procedures guaranteed to them. The City reserves the right to award additional work and contracts for future phases of the final design, construction documents and construction administration to the team that completes the feasibility study and schematic design, or to one or more of the finalist teams selected in the initial selection process.

### **Notification**

A preferred Consultant and one or more alternates will be selected and notified of their status at the completion of the selection process.

### **Contract Execution**

A designated Thomasville representative will request the Thomasville City Council's authorization to negotiate and execute a contract with the preferred Consultant. If after discussion and negotiation, the parties do not agree on a mutually acceptable fee, designated Thomasville representative will terminate negotiations with the selected Consultant, and at its sole discretion, enter into negotiations with the alternate firm. The City reserves the right to withhold the award for any reason, elect not to proceed with any of the respondents, modify the scope of the work, or re-solicit RFQs.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Inquiries should be directed in writing to Cory Tobin at (336) 475-4281 or [cory.tobin@thomasville-nc.gov](mailto:cory.tobin@thomasville-nc.gov). Any oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding on the City.

### **RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT**

All costs for developing proposals in response to this RFQ are the obligation of the Consultant and are not chargeable to the City. All proposals and accompanying documentation will become property of the City and will not be returned. Proposals may be withdrawn at any time prior to the published close date, provided notification is received in writing to the Park & Recreation Director listed on this RFQ. Proposals cannot be withdrawn after the published close date.