

# Bryan County Board of Commissioners

Community Development Department



## **BRYAN COUNTY, GEORGIA REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CD RFP-1**

**Issue Date:** October 12, 2021  
**Title:** Bryan County Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Issuing Department:** Community Development

### **Overview:**

Bryan County (“County”) is seeking sealed proposals from qualified firms for the preparation of the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update for the unincorporated area of Bryan County, pursuant to the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Effective Date: October 1, 2018).

### **Submittal Requirements:**

RFP Deadline:

November 5, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. EST

Responses delivered to:

Bryan County Community Development Department  
Attn: Audra Miller, Community Development Director  
66 Captain Matthew Freeman Drive, Suite 111  
Richmond Hill, GA 31324

Number of Copies:

Four hardcopies plus digital

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# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

### I. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

#### 1.1. Purpose

Bryan County (“County”) is seeking sealed proposals from qualified firms for the preparation of the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update for the unincorporated area of Bryan County, pursuant to the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Effective Date: October 1, 2018).

#### 1.2 Project Contacts

Any questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be submitted in writing to Audra Miller, Community Development Director at [amiller@bryan-county.org](mailto:amiller@bryan-county.org). Questions must be received by October 22, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. EST. No phone calls.

#### 1.3 Submission and Deadline

Proposals must be received by November 5, 2021, 4:00 p.m. EST. No proposal will be accepted after this deadline. Respondents must submit an electronic copy on a flash drive. No email copies will be accepted. See Section III – Proposal Response Requirements.

The County is not liable for any costs incurred by respondents in the preparation, presentation, interviews or negotiation of responses submitted in response to this RFP. The County shall be under no obligation to return any response to this RFP or other material submitted as a result of this RFP.

#### 1.4 Project Budget

The estimated project budget is \$75,000. The County will negotiate the final scope of work based on the budget. Funding is contingent upon the adoption of the 2022 Budget by the Board of Commissioners.

#### 1.5 Reference Documents

The following existing planning documents are available online on the County’s Invitation to Bid page:

[Invitation to Bid | Bryan County \(bryancountyga.org\)](#)

- Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update
- Land Use Element Amended March 10, 2020
- Capital Improvement Element for Transportation / Mobility Amended July 14, 2020 (Adopted October 31, 2020)
- Richmond Hill-South Bryan County Transportation Study dated July 2016
- Transportation Study North Bryan County dated May 2018
- North Bryan Transportation Study Supplemental TIA dated June 8, 2021

## **II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The existing Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted on June 14, 2018, with a major amendment to the Land Use Element and North Bryan County Character Areas and Future Land Use Map adopted on March 10, 2020. In addition to this plan, the County also adopted a Capital Improvement Element as an amendment to the Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan, the North Bryan County Transportation Study with a Supplemental TIA, the Richmond Hill/South Bryan County Transportation Study, and a Water and Wastewater Master Plan for North Bryan County Industrial Development Region. Together, these documents serve as the long-range planning documents to assist decision-making and administrative actions in an effort to guide development in the unincorporated areas of Bryan County.

### **2.2 About Bryan County**

Bryan County is located on the eastern coast of Georgia and includes a total of 454 square miles of land. There is currently a population of approximately 44,738 people, per the 2020 Decennial Census. The County is bisected by Fort Stewart, which separates the County into northern and southern areas. There are two incorporated cities in Bryan County: Pembroke and Richmond Hill. The County seat, Pembroke, is located in the northern portion of the County, and Richmond Hill is in the southern portion. Public meetings occur in both ends of the County, and standing meetings (Board of Commissioners and Planning and Zoning Commission) alternate meeting location monthly.

The north and south portions of the County have different characteristics, populations, growth patterns, and transportation/recreation needs. The north is more rural with larger lots, farms, and a small historic downtown (Pembroke) located along the railroad. In recent years, however, the areas closest to the I-16 and Hwy 280 interchange have started to develop with large-scale industrial projects and commercial businesses typically associated with interstate travel. The County anticipates that as more industrial and commercial development occurs in this area, a denser residential development pattern will develop. The south is more densely developed with a larger downtown and shopping area (Richmond Hill) surrounded by suburban neighborhoods; however, there are still areas in the south that are rural in character with larger lots and unpaved roads. There are also historic assets throughout both areas of the County.

### **2.3 Study Area**

The subject of the Comprehensive Plan Update is the unincorporated area of Bryan County only. While the incorporated areas of the City of Richmond Hill and the City of Pembroke are not included, it is expected that the study will need to take into account existing trends and data available on the entire county and surrounding region, for purposes of providing an accurate analysis.

### **2.4 Scope of Work**

The chosen consultant will oversee completion of a major update to Bryan County Comprehensive Plan. The product of this work must satisfy the current requirements outlined in Chapter 110-12-1 of the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. The result will be a Comprehensive Plan that provides a DCA-compliant framework to promote orderly growth and development consistent with the goals, objectives, and vision of the community. The scope of work and tasks provided herein are general requirements for the update

and are intended to establish general expectations for the RFP. It is expected the consultant will review the attached Scope of Work (Exhibit A), the Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update with amendments, and the Rules of DCA and their guidelines in order to provide the County with more specific recommendations for approaches, tasks and deliverables based on their experience and expertise from past work on similar planning projects and community engagement efforts. Upon selection of a consultant, a more detailed scope including tasks and deliverables will be developed by the consultant and the County.

## **2.5 Project Schedule**

It is anticipated that the project will commence in January of 2022. The deadline for Bryan County to adopt and transmit the final plan to the Department of Community Affairs is October 31, 2023. All public hearings and agency/regional reviews that are required by the Rules of DCA, Chapter 110-12-1, must be completed within this timeframe.

# **III. PROPOSAL RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

## **3.1 Required Documents**

Responses must include the following sections in the order described below. Failure to provide any portion of the requested information may result in the consultant's proposal being rejected.

- 3.2.1 Letter of Transmittal: This letter should summarize, in a brief and concise manner, the firm's understanding of the Scope of Work. The letter must name all persons authorized to represent the firm, and include the titles, addresses and telephone numbers of such persons.
- 3.2.2 Project Team: Provide an introductory statement about your firm and team, including qualifications. Include firm name(s), disciplines, contact information, and key personnel of the prime consultant and all sub-consultants proposed for this project. List the designated project manager and principal contact for the project. Include resumes for key personnel. Resumes shall be no more than two pages each.
- 3.2.3 Scope of Work and Approach: Discuss firm's understanding of the proposed project and scope of work. Describe approach to completing the project including, but not limited to, methodologies, technologies, key milestones and processes you would employ. Describe what information you would expect the County to supply or be responsible for.
- 3.2.4 Experience: Detail three (3) example projects (1-page maximum for each example) that best illustrate the team's ability to provide the requested services. Explain how these projects are similar to this request and what the anticipated differences might be. Provide client reference names and telephone numbers, and either a webpage link (or other electronic format) to the completed plan document.
- 3.2.5 Project Schedule: Provide a proposed project schedule with milestones identified to demonstrate the firm's understanding and ability to complete the work tasks within the timeframes identified under Section 2.5 of this RFP.
- 3.2.6 Cost: The County seeks proposals that create maximum value, innovation, and cost-effective implementation; therefore, a detailed breakdown of the fees necessary to accomplish each task identified in Exhibit A of this RFP shall be provided. Cost proposals shall include the following: schedule of fees broken down by work task, hourly rates for project personnel to be used as the basis for payment, and total estimated cost for the work.

### 3.2 Required Format

The RFP response should be submitted in the following format:

3.2.1 Number of copies: Four hard copies sized 8.5 x 11 with consecutively numbered pages.

3.2.2 Page Limitation: Total sheet count shall be limited to 40 pages.

3.2.3 Digital Copy: One electronic copy on a USB flash drive as a PDF document that is PC readable, labeled, and not password protected. The electronic copy will be one single document for main submittal. Any confidential and/or proprietary documents must be on a separate flash drive or CD and labeled appropriately.

3.2.4 Envelope: RFP shall be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled “RFP Bryan County Comprehensive Plan Update,” with the cost proposal in a separate sealed envelope clearly marked “Cost Proposal”.

## IV. RFP TIMELINE

The County anticipates the following timeline for selecting a consultant:

| <b>Milestone</b>   | <b>Date</b>                    |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Issue Request for Proposals  | October 12, 2021               |
| Last day to submit written questions or clarification, no later than 5 P.M. (EST)  | October 22, 2021               |
| Last day for Bryan County to respond to written questions or clarification, no later than 5 P.M. (EST) (Responses will be posted on Invitation to Bid page.) | October 29, 2021               |
| Response submittal deadline, no later than 4:00 P.M. (EST)   | November 5, 2021               |
| Evaluation of Responses  | November 8 – 12, 2021          |
| Respondents will be notified if selected for interviews (Contingent on County preference)  | November 16, 2021              |
| Optional interviews scheduled  | November 29 – December 3, 2021 |
| Award by Bryan County Board of Commissioners   | January 11, 2022               |

## V. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

A Selection Committee will review all proposals submitted pursuant to this RFP and will score all firms on the information submitted in order to compile a ranking. Additionally, this Committee may, at its sole discretion and in the course of its evaluation, arrange to conduct interviews.

The County will evaluate submissions based on background, experience in providing similar services, staff background and experience, references, and other relevant criteria.

The County reserves the right to reject any or all submissions for any reason and to waive any informalities or minor inconsistencies with this RFP. The County will award the contract to the firm it determines best qualified for the project.

All proposals will be evaluated and ranked using the following criteria/point system:

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Project Team Qualifications                  | 20 Points |
| 2. Scope of Work and Approach                   | 50 Points |
| 3. Knowledge of Project and Experience          | 20 Points |
| 4. Experience and Approach to Public Engagement | 10 Points |

## **SECTION VI – AWARD OF CONTRACT**

After all evaluations are completed by the Selection Committee and the proposals are ranked, the Committee will provide the rankings with its recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, which will make the final decision as to the award of contract.

## **SECTION VII – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **7.1 Non-Collusion Affidavit**

By submitting a response to this RFP, the respondent represents and warrants that such proposal is genuine and not a sham or collusive or made in the interest or in behalf of any person not therein named and that the respondent has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any other respondent to put in a sham proposal, or any other person, firm or corporation to refrain from submitting and that the respondent has not in any manner sought by collusion to secure to that respondent any advantage over any other respondent.

By submitting a proposal, the respondent represents and warrants that no official or employee of Bryan County Government has, in any manner, an interest, directly or indirectly in the proposal or in the contract, which may be made under it, or in any expected profits to arise there from.

### **7.2 Cost Incurred by Proposers**

All expenses involved with the preparation and submission of the RFP to the Bryan County Board of Commissioners, or any work performed in connection therewith is the responsibility of the respondent(s).

### **7.3 Open Records**

All Proposals and other materials or documents submitted by Proposer in response to this RFP will become the property of the Commission. The Commission is subject to open records requirements of the State of Georgia Statute 50-18-70, and as such, all materials submitted by Proposer to Commission are subject to disclosure. Proposer specifically waives any claims against the Commission related to the disclosure of any materials if made under a public records request.

### **7.4 General Liability Insurance**

The Proposer selected must procure and maintain at its sole expense the following types and amounts of insurance throughout the Term of the Agreement, which amounts may be adjusted by the Commission in the future, protecting the Proposer and Commission from claims and actions set forth in the indemnity provisions of this Agreement:

- (1) General Liability Insurance - no less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) each occurrence, Combined Single Limit (“CSL”), bodily injury and property damage, including Employer’s non-ownership liability and hired auto coverages as applicable.



## **Exhibit A**

The Consultant shall assist Bryan County in developing and adopting a major update to the Comprehensive Plan that exceeds the minimum standards for local comprehensive planning as outlined in the most recent version of the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1. The scope of work and tasks provided herein are general requirements for the update and are intended to establish general expectations for the RFP. It is expected the consultant will review this Scope of Work, the Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update with amendments, and the Rules of DCA along with their guidelines, in order to provide the County with more specific recommendations for approaches, tasks and deliverables based on their experience and expertise from past work on similar planning projects and community engagement efforts. Upon selection of a consultant, a more detailed scope including tasks and deliverables will be developed by the consultant and the County. In general, the Comprehensive Planning process can be broken down into the following major tasks:

### **Task 1: Public Engagement**

Each element of the Comprehensive Plan must be prepared with involvement and input from stakeholders and the general public in order to ensure that the plan reflects the full range of community needs and values. It is important that the consultant develop a compelling approach to public engagement to maximize involvement from all members of the community. At a minimum, the consultant will be expected to incorporate the following into their Public Engagement Plan:

#### 1.1 Technical Advisory Committee

It is expected that a Technical Advisory Committee will be established, to be made up of County staff members. This group shall meet on a regular basis throughout the planning process. The purpose of the Technical Advisory Committee is to provide feedback on the planning process and activities proposed for the Steering Committee and public engagement activities.

#### 1.2 Steering Committee

Prior to the award of this contract, the Board of Commissioners will appoint a Steering Committee that will work with staff and the consultant throughout the comprehensive planning process. It will be the responsibility of the consultant to coordinate the tasks of this committee. It is expected that the consultant will hold regular meetings with the Steering Committee in order to receive input and feedback as the plan is being developed.

#### 1.3 Individual Stakeholder Interviews

The selected consultant should be prepared to identify and interview up to 20 individual community stakeholders. This should include one-on-one interviews with the Chairman of the Bryan County Board of Commissioners and each Commission member (five members). The final list of stakeholders to be interviewed shall be developed in coordination with, and approved, by the County.

#### 1.4 Kick-off Meeting

A “Kick-off” meeting will be required in the form of a public hearing at the inception of the planning process. The purpose of this hearing will be to brief the community on the process to be used to develop

the plan, opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and to obtain input on the proposed planning process. The Consultant will attend the public hearing to make a presentation regarding the planning process and public engagement plan and to respond to any questions.

### 1.5 Public Engagement Activities

Consultants are expected to propose creative, cutting-edge methods of engaging the general public in order to educate and solicit specific input on the content of the plan. Activities may include surveys, visioning workshops, project website, pop-up kiosks, etc.

### 1.6 Commission Updates

Consultants should expect to provide updates to the Board of Commissioners throughout the process and at major milestones. Consultants should explain their approach to providing updates within their proposals.

### 1.7 Draft Plan Open House

A minimum of two open house events, one in the north end of the County and one in the south end of the County, shall be held at the end of the process to present the draft plan prior to holding the final public hearings required by DCA, and as identified under task 3.

## **Task 2: Comprehensive Plan Development**

The consultant will serve as the primary drafter of the plan and shall update and develop materials for the Comprehensive Plan. In general, the County encourages the use of graphics and maps to effectively communicate ideas. These should be integrated into the following tasks and incorporated throughout the final plan in order to aid in the readability of the plan as well as create a visually appealing, well designed layout.

### 2.1 Research and Data Collection

The Consultant will collect and analyze a range of information about existing conditions and projected growth and trends for the future of the County. Previously compiled data and studies should be used and incorporated where possible. Emphasis should be on the identification of features and conditions that may influence or affect the planning process, rather than extensive documentation of existing conditions other than what is necessary to comply with State standards. Areas to consider for this review should include population, housing, economic/job trends, as well as natural and cultural resources, and community facilities and infrastructure.

### 2.2 Consideration of Regional Water Plan

During the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan, the consultant will review the Regional Water Plan(s) covering this area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (established and administered by the Department of Natural Resources pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) to determine if

there is a need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources.

## 2.3 Required Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The Consultant will be responsible for preparing and drafting the following required elements with input received from staff, the Steering Committee, Planning and Zoning Commission, and community stakeholders. All elements must meet the minimum requirements as specified in the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), O.C.G.A. Chapter 11-12-1-.03.

### 2.3.1 Community Goals

The consultant will be expected to update the County's Community Goals in order to effectively represent the community's vision and direction for the future. The consultant will lead interactive discussions with the staff and community stakeholders to gain meaningful participation and input in order to either prepare a new vision statement, list of community goals and/or policies, or Character Area-specific goals along with a defining narrative.

### 2.3.2 Needs and Opportunities

The Consultant will be expected to review the existing Needs and Opportunities in the 2018 Bryan County Comprehensive Plan, incorporate their review of demographic, economic, housing, transportation and other data and information, and work with staff and community stakeholders in order to make recommendations for additions, revisions, or deletions. It is expected that the Needs and Opportunities element will be developed using a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) or similar analysis of the community and then prioritized. Those Needs and Opportunities that are identified as high priority must be followed-up with corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program.

### 2.3.3 Community Work Program

This element of the comprehensive plan lays out the specific activities the community plans to undertake during the five years following adoption of the plan in order to address its Needs and Opportunities. The Consultant will be expected to assist staff and community stakeholders in identifying specific activities to be included in the Community Work Program, along with the following information for each activity:

- Brief description of the activity;
- Timeframe for initiating and completing the activity;
- Responsible party for implementing the activity;
- Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity; and
- Funding source(s), if applicable.

### 2.3.4 Broadband Services Element

The Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted prior to the requirement for the inclusion of a Broadband Services Element; therefore, the Consultant will need to assist the County

in developing the required action plan for the promotion of the deployment of broadband services by broadband service providers into unserved areas within unincorporated Bryan County.

#### 2.3.5 Capital Improvements Element

The County has adopted a Capital Improvements Element as an amendment to the Bryan County 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update. While the Consultant will not be expected to perform a complete update to this element of the Comprehensive Plan, they will be expected to include the adopted Capital Improvement Element, as may be amended by staff, into the final plan document to be adopted.

#### 2.3.6 Land Use Element

The Consultant will be expected to perform an analysis of existing land uses and development patterns, along with the County's existing Character Area/Future Land Use Map, in order to draft and prepare in map form, along with text descriptions and narratives, recommendations for a new Characters Areas and/or Future Land Use Map.

### 2.4 Optional Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The following optional elements are recommended by the Department of Community Affairs and may be considered for inclusion in the County's Comprehensive Plan with the final scope of work and based on the budget. Therefore, Consultants should be prepared to address these optional elements and include separate line item cost estimates for each with their cost proposals.

#### 2.4.1 Economic Development

The consultant will be expected to assist the County in identifying community goals, needs, and opportunities related to economic development and vitality of the community, and Community Work Program activities for addressing these needs and opportunities, considering such factors as diversity of the economic base, quality of the local labor force, and effectiveness of local economic development agencies, programs and tools.

#### 2.4.2 Transportation

Although not a required element for the unincorporated areas of Bryan County, transportation does have a significant bearing on the planning efforts of the County. The County has adopted the North Bryan County Transportation Study with a Supplemental TIA and the Richmond Hill/South Bryan County Transportation Study, and is currently engaged in the preparation of a Bike and Pedestrian Plan in order to improve connectivity within the County. Therefore, it is expected that these plans would be substituted for the analytical requirements required for this element by DCA and will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by appropriate reference, with applicable community goals, needs and opportunities and community work program items integrated.

### 2.4.3 Housing

The County does not have a local housing plan that can be substituted for the analytical requirements required for this element by DCA; therefore, the consultant will be expected to evaluate the adequacy and suitability of existing housing stock to serve current and future community needs. Factors to be considered include: housing types and mix, condition and occupancy, local cost of housing, cost-burdened households in the community, jobs-housing balance, housing needs of special populations, and availability of housing options across the life cycle.

### 2.5 Use of GIS

The County anticipates the Consultant's use of GIS in the preparation of the Character Areas Map and/or Future Land Use Map. In addition to this, it is expected that data collected regarding population, housing, economic/job trends, as well as natural and cultural resources, and community facilities and infrastructure will be compiled into spatial data layers in order to allow the creation of data overlays to create maps and presentation materials that can be used to facilitate discussions in meetings with staff, the Steering Committee, other community stakeholders, and in public meetings.

## **Task 3: Agency Reviews and Adoption of the Plan**

### 3.1 Workshop

Staff anticipates a joint workshop between the Board of Commissioners and Planning and Zoning Commission will be required. The consultant will be expected help coordinate and lead this workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to provide the Board of Commissioners and Planning and Zoning Commission an overview of the draft Comprehensive Plan prior to commencing the public hearing process.

### 3.2 Public Hearings

Once the plan has been drafted and made available for public review, the final public hearings required by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will be scheduled. It is expected that there will be a minimum of two public hearings, one with the Planning and Zoning Commission and one with the Board of Commissioners. The Consultant will attend the public hearings to make presentations regarding the plan and to respond to any questions. Any comments received at the public hearings will be addressed by the consultant prior to transmitting the plan to the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC).

### 3.3 Regional Compliance Review

The consultant will work with the County, the CRC and the DCA during the review to revise/reconcile any issues or compliance deficiencies. Any regional review hearings that are scheduled by the CRC or DCA will be attended by the consultant.

### 3.4 Adoption by the County

The County's Board of Commissioners is charged with the responsibility to adopt the Comprehensive Plan. After the CRC/DCA accepts the Plan, a resolution for adoption will be prepared by the County to adopt the Comprehensive Plan. The Consultant will attend the meeting associated with the adoption process to respond to any questions or comments, and where appropriate, make presentations regarding

the Plan. County staff will then transmit the Resolution and all required documentation to CRC/DCA within seven (7) days of adoption to remain in compliance with state requirements.