

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Municipal Comprehensive Plan

Town of South Bethany, Delaware

1. Introduction and Purpose

The Town of South Bethany ("Town") is requesting proposals from qualified planning and consulting firms to prepare a Municipal Comprehensive Plan ("Plan") in accordance with Title 22, Chapter 7 of the Delaware Code.

The Town intends to undertake a full rewrite of its existing Plan and is seeking professional planning services for this effort. In accordance with Chapter 7 §702(b), and because the Town has a population under 2,000, the document should contain, at a minimum, a municipal development strategy setting forth the Town's position on population and housing growth, expansion of its boundaries, development of adjacent areas, redevelopment potential, community character, and the general uses of land within the community, and critical community development and infrastructure issues. The comprehensive planning process shall demonstrate coordination with other municipalities, as well as the county and the State during plan preparation

The Plan will serve as the Town's official policy document guiding land use, growth, redevelopment, infrastructure investment, environmental protection, and community development over a ten-year planning horizon. The Plan must be consistent with state, county, and regional planning goals and be eligible for certification by the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC).

2. Background Information

The Town of South Bethany is an incorporated town in Sussex County and has a total area of 0.53 square miles of which 1.89% is water. As the community is located on the local barrier islands, it is subject to tides, which can fluctuate up to multiple feet per day. According to the 2020 Census, the Town had a population of 451, with a median age of 69. South Bethany is almost exclusively residential, with a small section of commercial property located at south end of Town.

The Town last adopted a Plan in 2017 and seeks to expansively rewrite its existing Plan to reflect current conditions, community priorities, statutory requirements, and long-term planning objectives. Challenges and threats from sea level rise and opportunities for enhanced resiliency will be a primary focus of the new Plan.

3. Scope of Services

The selected consultant will be responsible for preparing a complete, state-certifiable Plan that includes all required elements under Delaware law, with special attention to the Municipal Development Strategy.

3.1 Project Management

- Develop a detailed project schedule and work plan
- Coordinate regularly with Town staff, Planning Commission, and elected officials
- Attend meetings (virtual or in-person, as required)
- Prepare draft and final plan documents suitable for public review and adoption

3.2 Public Engagement

The consultant shall design and implement a public engagement strategy appropriate for a small municipality, which may include:

- Public workshops or open houses
- Stakeholder or focus group meetings
- Surveys or online engagement tools
- Presentations to the Town Council and Planning Commission

The approach should encourage meaningful participation while remaining cost-effective.

3.3 Existing Conditions Analysis

Prepare an analysis of existing conditions, including but not limited to:

- Population, housing, and demographic trends
- Development/redevelopment potential
- Community character
- Environmental features and constraints (including floodplains and wetlands)
- General use of land within the community
- Critical community development issues
- Infrastructure issues
- Threats from sea level rise and associated opportunities for increasing resilience

3.4 Implementation Strategy

- Identify short-, mid-, and long-term implementation actions
 - Recommend amendments to zoning or development regulations, if appropriate
 - Provide guidance on capital improvements and funding strategies
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4. Deliverables

At a minimum, the consultant shall provide:

- Draft Comprehensive Plan (including maps and graphics)
 - Final Comprehensive Plan suitable for adoption
 - Municipal Development Strategy maps and documentation
 - Public presentation materials
 - Digital files in editable and PDF formats
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5. Project Schedule

Proposals should include a proposed schedule. The Town anticipates the project will begin in spring, 2026 and be completed within approximately 10-12 months, subject to public review and state certification timelines.

6. Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals shall include the following:

1. **Cover Letter**
 2. **Firm Qualifications and Experience**
 - Relevant experience with Delaware Comprehensive Plans and MDS preparation
 - Experience working with small municipalities
 3. **Project Team**
 - Key personnel and roles
 4. **Proposed Approach and Methodology**
 5. **Public Engagement Strategy**
 6. **Project Schedule**
 7. **Cost Proposal**
 - Lump sum or detailed fee breakdown
 8. **References**
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7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Demonstrated understanding of Delaware planning requirements

- Experience with Municipal Development Strategies
- Qualifications of the project team
- Quality of proposed approach and public engagement
- Cost and value

The Town reserves the right to interview shortlisted firms.

8. Submission Instructions

Proposals must be received by:

Date: March 2, 2026

Time: 12:00 PM

Submission Method: email at townmanager@southbethany.org or hard copies can be mailed or delivered to: Town of South Bethany | 402 Evergreen Road | South Bethany, DE 19930

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Maureen Hartman, Town Manager
Townmanager@southbethany.org

9. General Conditions

- The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals
 - This RFP does not commit the Town to award a contract
 - Costs incurred in preparing a proposal are the responsibility of the proposer
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10. Anticipated Approval

The selected consultant's contract will be subject to approval by the Mayor and Council of the Town of South Bethany.