

Village of Watkins Glen, New York
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Comprehensive Plan Update

Proposals due: Friday, October 18, 2024 by 2:00pm

The Village of Watkins Glen is requesting proposals from qualified consultants to assist in the development of a new Comprehensive Plan to guide future sustainable growth. The project is funded by a Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning grant from the New York State Department of State.

ABOUT WATKINS GLEN, NY

The Village of Watkins Glen (pop 1,859) is a small, vibrant village located at the headwaters of Seneca Lake. The village attracts more than one million tourists each year, who primarily visit Watkins Glen International racetrack, regional wineries, and Watkins Glen State Park.

The village’s most recent Comprehensive Plan was approved in 2012 (https://www.watkinsglen.us/pdf/document_library/comprehensive-plan.pdf). In 2017, the village was awarded a \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant from New York State, which resulted in significant positive changes and growth within the village. The village is ready to review its priorities for the next ten years that will be articulated through its updated comprehensive plan.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant will work closely with a Comprehensive Planning Committee to create a plan that will be driven by community engagement and incorporate Smart Growth principles.

The plan will include the community’s short- and long-term land use priorities and will establish goals that will guide future sustainable growth, enhance quality of life, and protect natural and cultural local resources.

The Comprehensive Plan must address the following general Smart Growth principles, in addition to the elements suggested by the New York state statutes:

- Promote mixed land uses in focus areas
- Propose an adequate range of housing opportunities and choices

- Promote development/redevelopment where infrastructure is adequate and sustainable
- Build on existing characteristics that make a community distinctive and attractive with a strong sense of place
- Promote well-planned and well-placed public spaces
- Promote sustainable, compact neighborhoods
- Increase mobility and circulation within jurisdictional lines and improve connectivity outside of jurisdictional lines
- Promote walkable/bikeable neighborhood designs
- Promote and integrate clean energy resources and related incentives
- Improve green infrastructure and resident participation in this effort
- Increase resiliency to extreme weather events
- Encourage social diversity and integration
- Expand planning and implementation efforts across jurisdictional lines to increase effectiveness, sustainability, and resiliency
- Promote community and stakeholder collaboration in planning

As enumerated in the Department of State (DOS) Contract Work Plan, preparation of the village's Comprehensive Plan shall include the following tasks and provisions:

1. Community Participation Plan

In collaboration with the Comprehensive Planning Committee, the consultant will prepare a Community Participation Plan that describes public outreach and participation efforts that will be conducted during development of the Comprehensive Plan, pursuant to local and state statutes. At a minimum, the Community Participation Plan shall include (in-person or virtual) interviews with local and regional stakeholders, a community survey, a public information meeting, one or more public workshops, one or more public hearings, and a webpage with links to announcements, presentations, and documents prepared during the planning process. The Community Participation Plan shall identify key individuals, organizations, and entities to be involved, and shall identify roles and responsibilities to coordinate the entire outreach process, logistics, and the proposed schedule of these efforts.

All public outreach and participation efforts will be publicized in the community through press releases, announcements, individual mailings, and any other appropriate means. Public access must be provided to each public meeting or workshop. Outreach efforts should encourage participation from populations who are frequently underrepresented in this process, including immigrants, refugees, and minorities. A summary of each public outreach and participation efforts will be made available to the public in written form and through other appropriate means, such as websites.

Products: Draft and Final Community Participation Plan

2. Community and Stakeholder Interviews

Develop a relevant and realistic community survey about current local conditions and issues. The survey should be made available to the public as a hard copy and online. In addition, identify a set of topics that shall be discussed with stakeholders to obtain additional relevant information and elicit stakeholder reactions and suggestions. Following the completion of the survey, develop a summary of results and analysis.

Products: Draft and final Community Survey. Draft and final list of topics to be discussed during the stakeholder interviews. Summary of survey and interviews responses and analysis.

3. Review Local and Regional Planning Efforts and Ongoing Initiatives

Identify and review existing local and regional planning documents and ongoing initiatives. This review process will also include consultation with community leaders and with neighboring communities, if applicable, to identify common issues and assess if Smart Growth principals are the basis for addressing those issues.

The consultant shall develop a written report describing and assessing existing planning documents and the issues and opportunities identified by community leaders.

Products: Written findings report.

4. Develop a Community Profile

Draft a Community Profile consisting in an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, including narrative, maps, and relevant data. The inventory will be used to assist in the identification of local issues and potential opportunities. The analysis of the local conditions and issues will be conducted from a Smart Growth perspective and identify potential solutions. A chart of Smart Growth principles should be included in the Comprehensive Plan, summarizing opportunities and challenges for addressing each principle. The inventory and analysis of existing conditions may include the following:

- History of the municipal jurisdiction and boundaries.
- Description of previous comprehensive plan development and adoption processes.
- Demographic characteristics (population and growth trends, age distribution, average household size, ethnic composition, average household income, social diversity and integration, demographic trends).
- Local and regional economic characteristics (unemployment rates and trends, work force characterization, dominant business sector type, major employers and industries, sales tax information, property tax rates, economic trends and jobs range).
- Housing characteristics (the age, type, and condition of structures, type of occupancy - renters versus owners, vacancy rates and trends in the community and length of residency)

- percentage of residents five years in home, the extent and availability of low-income housing throughout the community and in identified neighborhoods, assessment of housing opportunities and choices, housing trends and access to jobs).

- Local and regional economies and development trends (including housing, commercial, industrial and agricultural development).
- Land use and smart growth focus areas.
- Agricultural and forest lands, uses, and districts.
- Infrastructure and public utilities (i.e., drinking water supply, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, stormwater management and green infrastructure, communications, gas and electricity) extent, capacity, age, and maintenance.
- Transportation systems, local levels of greenhouse gas emissions, levels of mobility and circulation, walkable/bikeable neighborhood, connectivity with areas outside jurisdictional lines, distance to jobs.
- Natural resources and climate (air quality, watercourses, wetlands, floodplains, aquifers, forests/tree cover, steep slopes, soil types, and rare plant and animal habitats, precipitations, winds, temperatures, etc.).
- Extreme weather events, flooding, erosion hazards, and local resiliency.
- Health and emergency services and facilities.
- Parks and public spaces, recreation facilities, range of passive and active recreation, capacity and maintenance, accessibility etc.
- Historic, cultural, and scenic resources.
- Waterfront resources and public access.
- Zoning and other relevant local development controls.
- Fiscal resources.

The draft Community Profile shall be submitted to the village for review before being used to design workshop activities and prepare materials needed to conduct community visioning workshops or to draft the Comprehensive Plan.

Products: Community Profile report, including a comprehensive inventory and analysis in the form of relevant data, narrative, maps, and graphics.

5. Conduct Community Visioning Workshops

Two workshops shall be advertised with generous advance notice to garner maximum publicity, awareness, and participation. The site of the workshops must be accessible to the public.

Products: Published workshop announcements and flyers. Materials prepared for each public workshop. Record of number of workshops held, number in attendance.

6. Develop Draft Comprehensive Plan

Assemble the draft Comprehensive Plan that addresses each of the Smart Growth policies and establishes a long-term strategy for future growth and protection of resources. The plan may include the following topics commensurate with the community's needs and vision for future actions:

- Goals, objectives, principles, policies, and standards upon which proposals for the immediate and long-range enhancement, growth, and development of the community.
- Consideration of regional needs and the official plans of other government units and agencies within the region.
- The existing and proposed location and intensity of land uses.
- Consideration and recommendations for the protection of agricultural and forest lands, historic and cultural resources, natural resources, and sensitive environmental areas.
- Consideration of population, demographic and socio-economic trends and future projections.
- Location and types of transportation facilities that reduce the local levels of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Existing and proposed general location of public and private utilities and infrastructure, including clean energy generation.
- Existing housing resources and future housing needs, including affordable housing.
- The present and potential future general location of educational and cultural facilities, historic sites, health facilities, and facilities for emergency services.
- Existing and proposed recreation facilities and parkland.
- The present and potential future general location of commercial and industrial facilities.
- Specific policies and strategies for improving the local economy in coordination with other plan topics.
- Proposed measures, programs, devices, and instruments to implement the goals and objectives of the various topics within the comprehensive plan.
- All or part of applicable plans of other public agencies.

- All other items which are consistent with the orderly growth and development of the community.
- A detailed strategy implementing the community’s policies, concepts, projects, and programs shall be identified in the plan. This includes phased implementation approach (short-term, mid, and long-term), as well as anticipated costs, and priorities.
- Submit the draft Comprehensive Plan to the village for review and approval and incorporate the village's comments in the final plan.

Products: Draft Comprehensive Plan, including relevant data, narrative, maps, and graphics.

7. Village Board Review of Draft Plan

Submit the draft Comprehensive Plan to the village board for review, comment, and recommendations.

The comments and recommendations prepared by the local governing board/local legislature shall be addressed and incorporated into the final plan, prior to making the draft available for public review. In addition, comments received from the local municipal board shall be addressed before the initiation of the SEQRA compliance process.

Products: Comments and recommendations received from the local municipal board submitted to the village.

8. Conduct Environmental Quality Review

Prepare materials necessary for compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The adoption of a new or amended Comprehensive Plan is classified as a Type I action, pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and 6 NYCRR Part 617. The Consultant may be required to prepare the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to provide a review of land use actions proposed in the comprehensive plan. The local municipal board shall declare Lead Agency for the action of adopting the new or amended comprehensive plan.

Copies of all SEQR documents shall be submitted to the village.

Products: SEQRA documents.

9. County Planning Board Review

The Schuyler County Planning Board shall review the final version of the Comprehensive Plan prior to adoption. Comments received from the County Planning Board shall be submitted to the village.

Products: Comments and recommendations prepared by the County Planning Board.

10. Prepare Final Comprehensive Plan

Address all comments and recommendations received from the public and involved local, regional and State agencies and incorporate them into the Final Comprehensive Plan. Schedule a public hearing on the adoption of the plan by the village board. The final Comprehensive Plan, date of the public hearing and notice of adoption of the plan shall be submitted to the Department of State.

Products: Final Comprehensive Plan ready for local adoption.

11. Public Hearing and Local Adoption

The village will conduct a public hearing prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Notice of the public hearing shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the community at least ten calendar days in advance of the hearing. The proposed comprehensive plan shall be made available for public review during said period at the office of the municipal clerk and public library and shall be posted on the municipal website. The public hearings may also be publicized in the community through press releases, announcements, individual mailings, and any other appropriate means.

Copies of the public hearing minutes and the local adoption resolution shall be submitted to the Department of State.

Products: Minutes from the public hearings and record of decision submitted to Department of State.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Respondents must submit three (3) paper copies and one (1) electronic version of their proposal (USB drive please) no later than **2:00 pm on Friday, October 18, 2024.**

Proposals should be hand delivered or mailed to:

Fred Warrick, Watkins Glen Village Clerk
Village of Watkins Glen
303 N. Franklin Street
Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Proposals received after the scheduled time and date will not be accepted. Facsimile and email proposals will not be accepted.

PROPOSAL CONTENT AND CONDITIONS

1. A cover letter expressing the firm's interest in working with the Village of Watkins Glen and its Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee.
2. A description of the general approach to be taken to complete the project, an explanation of any variances to the proposed project scope of work as outlined in the RFP, and any insight gained as a result of developing the proposal.
3. A full description of how the Scope of Work will be completed along with a schedule detailing when tasks will be completed, and products/deliverables resulting from each task.
4. Budget and expense information which details all costs including:
 - a. Personnel expenses which state the name/title of everyone assigned to the project, hourly rates and the number of estimated hours the individual will be working on the project. The same information should be submitted in detail for subcontractors.
 - b. Administrative costs for travel, postage, photocopying, telephone, printing, and other related expenses must be detailed.
 - c. Estimates of expense for each of the tasks with assumptions.
5. A description and/or resume for each staff member or sub-consultant who will be involved with the project and their roles/responsibilities.
6. A representative work sample comparable to the work being requested.
7. Demonstrated success on projects of similar scope and nature. Please include brief descriptions for each project and contact names/phone numbers for reference.

Proposal items 1-4 should be limited to fifteen (15) pages. Resumes, professional qualifications, and work sample(s) are not included in this total.

The electronic version must be divided into two PDFs as described below:

First PDF – Letter of Interest, required proposal components, resumes, summary of previous relevant work, proposed budget and schedule.

Second PDF – Examples of previous relevant work.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING PROPOSALS

Only those proposals which contain complete information and are responsive to the RFP will be considered. Proprietary or patented information which may be included in the proposal must be clearly identified and brought to the committee's attention.

The Village of Watkins Glen reserves the right to:

- accept or reject any or all proposals;
- waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received;
- negotiate with proposers, within proposal requirements, to best serve the interests of the community and the Department of State;

- amend specifications after their release, with due notice given to all bidders to modify their proposals to reflect changed specifications;
- consider every offer as firm and irrevocable for a period of sixty (60) days unless withdrawn in writing or unless otherwise specified in the solicitation;
- award a contract for any and all parts of a proposal including award of specific project components to individual proposer team members and to negotiate with the successful bidder(s);
- By submitting a proposal, the contractor agrees that it will not make any claim for or have any right to damages because of any lack of information or misinterpretation of the information provided in this RFP;
- The village will not utilize any of the materials submitted in the RFP process included in unsuccessful proposals without permission.

The New York State Department of State must approve all consultants and subcontractors.

The Consultant must comply with all provisions of the contract between the New York State Department of State and the Village of Watkins Glen.

NEW YORK STATE MWBE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, the State recognizes its obligation under the law to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority and women-owned business enterprises and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of state contracts. For the purposes of this project, the NYS Department of State has established an MWBE participation requirement of 30% of the total state grant contract value. The selected contractor, if not certified MWBE, must actively solicit bids for contracts and subcontracts from qualified State certified MWBEs which can be identified using the NYS Directory of Certified Firms (<https://ny.newnycontracts.com/>).

INQUIRIES

All inquiries regarding the RFP should be made in writing and sent either regular mail or email (preferred) and must cite the RFP section in questions. Answers to substantive questions will be provided to all proposers.

Inquiries should be directed to:

Fred Warrick, Village Clerk
Village of Watkins Glen
303 N Franklin St
Watkins Glen, NY 14891
villageclerk@watkinsglen.us
607-535-2736

PROPOSER INTERVIEWS

The Village of Watkins Glen will conduct interviews with two to three of the top scoring proposals. The intent of the interview process will be to provide the village and the Comprehensive Planning Committee with an opportunity to obtain an understanding of:

- The extent of the firm's depth of knowledge of the subject matter of the RFP, overall project understanding, and insight into local conditions;
- Whether the methods and resources that will be used by the firm performing the services to achieve the project goals and objectives are appropriate and cost effective;
- The firm's ability to draw together specialists and professionals with the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the overall project;
- To allow proposers to further define the primary features and benefits of their proposal; To evaluate the communication and public presentation skills of the proposers.

LIABILITY

The Village of Watkins Glen and the Comprehensive Planning Committee are not liable for any cost incurred by any individual or firm for work performed to prepare its proposal or for any travel and/or other expenses incurred in the preparation and/or submission of its proposal. Further, the village is not liable for any costs incurred prior to approval of the contract.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The Village of Watkins Glen, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and representatives from the NYS Department of State will review submitted proposals with reference to the qualifications and criteria as detailed in this RFP. The intent is to select the planning consultant firm having the technical capability and necessary experience to perform the services as outlined in this RFP within the time frame required. Please note that the total grant funding award has not been presented in this RFP as the village will select a consultant through a qualifications-based selection process. The selection of a consultant will be made without regard to race, color, age, religion, national origin, or political affiliation.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection of a consultant for this effort will be based on the following criteria:

- **Technical Proposal:** Proposals will be evaluated based on their quality and clarity; creativity and thoroughness in addressing the Scope of Work; demonstration of overall project understanding and insight into local conditions and potential issues. Proposal must include a plan outlining how each Task in the Scope of Work will be addressed. (25 pts)
- **Relevant Experience:** Proposer must provide a list of projects similar in scope and nature completed in the last 5 years. Proposer should demonstrate experience with New York State- based land use and planning, local laws, and regulations. Proposals will also be evaluated based on quality of representative work sample provided. (20 pts)

- **Implementation Schedule:** Proposals will be evaluated based on ability and capacity to complete project by February 3, 2026. Proposal must include an implementation schedule that lists all milestones for the development and implementation of project deliverables. (15 pts)
- **Cost Proposal:** A cost proposal organized to follow the outline of the Scope of Work, with details of costs assigned for the task/action, including personnel costs and reimbursable expenses. (10 pts)
- **Team Composition and Resumes:** Evaluation will be based upon the experience of the consultant personnel working together as a team to complete comparable projects. The Proposer must provide a list of all person(s) who will be assigned work pursuant to this RFP (including subcontractors) and resumes showing qualifications and relevant experience. Proposer must designate an individual as the Project Manager who will be directly responsible for all activities of the organization relevant to this RFP and provide their resume and relevant experience. The designated Project Manager must have managed the implementation of at least one other project of similar scope and nature, a description of which must be submitted with the Project Manager resume. (15 pts)
- **Presentation/Communication Skills:** The proposer will be evaluated based on their knowledge of the subject material, their overall understanding of the proposed project, their ability to relay the message in a clear, concise, and timely fashion and their ability to field questions posed to them from Comprehensive Planning Committee members. (15 pts)

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

The village will notify the successful bidder by phone and/or email, followed by written confirmation. Each bidder whose proposal is not accepted will be notified in writing.

The village will authorize the award of a contract to the successful proposer based upon the evaluations and recommendations of the Comprehensive Planning Committee. In the event a contract cannot be finalized within thirty (30) days of the award, the Comprehensive Planning Committee reserves the right to enter negotiations with the consultant that received the second highest evaluation.