



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

## **TOWN OF SIMSBURY REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS CONSULTANT SERVICES, SIMSBURY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

The Town of Simsbury is soliciting a statement of qualifications from qualified, independent planning and design consultants with expertise in parks and open space master plan development to prepare a municipal-wide parks, trails, and open space master plan. Consulting firms are invited to submit formal proposals that detail the scope of work and budget. After reviewing the RFQ submittals and interviewing selected firms, the Town will identify its preferred candidate and enter into negotiations resulting in a final contract agreement.

The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is available online at:

<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/finance/pages/public-bids-and-rfp>

The Town of Simsbury reserves the right to accept or reject, without prejudice, any or all submissions or to waive any irregularities therein, or to accept the submission deemed to be in the best interest of Town of Simsbury.

Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation Tom Tyburski at [ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov). In order to receive consideration, all questions must be submitted by 12:30pm on November 9, 2018. A response to all relevant questions will be provided prior to 12:30pm on November 16, 2018 via addendum that will be posted on the Town website at:

<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/finance/pages/public-bids-and-rfp>

Interested and qualified consultants are to send their statement of qualifications electronically to [tmintern@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:tmintern@simsbury-ct.gov) with the subject line reading "Simsbury Parks and Open Space Master Plan RFQ". Only electronic copies will be accepted. Hard copies will not be considered. Submissions must be received no later than noon on Friday, November 30, 2018. No statement of qualifications will be accepted after the date and time specified.

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
CONSULTANT SERVICES, SIMSBURY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

**1. Purpose**

Open space in Simsbury is over 30% of the total land area and highly valued by the Town's citizens and visitors. Protected lands include recreation areas; farmland; different types of parks; trails, corridors and connections; historical features; a wide variety of different habitats, including the Farmington River, ponds, wetlands, grasslands, thickets, shrub lands and forests. This large amount and diversity of open space protects our water and air quality, supports biodiversity, recreation and our cultural history.

The overarching goal of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan is to engage outside expertise to help the Town leverage, protect and maintain a healthy and diverse parks and open space network (considering properties owned by the Town, neighboring communities, the State, the Simsbury Land Trust and other entities) with amenities that serve the needs and promote the health of the entire community and the environment. The Master Plan will guide policy development, delivery of Town services, prioritize demands and opportunities and generate a strategic action plan for the Town's parks and open space. The Master Plan will be rooted in an all-inclusive public engagement process and will seek to incorporate current and future parks and open space needs of the Town, energy efficient strategies, accessibility, cost effective improvements and maintenance strategies, and opportunities to reuse municipal and/or non-municipal sites for passive recreation.

**2. Background and Existing Environment**

The Town of Simsbury was incorporated as Connecticut's twenty-first town in May 1670. It is centrally located in the heart of the New York-Boston corridor, and is located 20 minutes northwest of Hartford and 20 minutes southwest of Bradley International Airport. Simsbury operates under a Town Manager-Board of Selectmen form of government with the Town Manager serving as the Chief Executive Officer responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Town. The Town has an appointed Open Space Committee that assists in the acquisition of open space while the Conservation Commission may assist with the management of open space. The Town also has an appointed Culture, Parks, and Recreation Commission that serves in an advisory capacity on matters related to the same.

The Town has a land area of approximately 34.5 square miles and a population of 24,407. It is bordered by five municipalities: Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, East Granby, and Granby. The Town is traversed by State Route 10 and US Route 202, US Route 44, and State Routes 167, 185, 189, 309 and 315 and is bisected by the Farmington River.

The Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance and development of 535 acres of parks, 2,400 acres of open space and 40 athletic fields. The department provides quality leisure opportunities which contribute to the environment, needs and interests of the community. The Department has a full-time staff of 18 employees and approximately 80 part-time, seasonal, and contractual employees. The Town's primary recreational facility is the Simsbury Farms Recreation Complex. The facility consists of an 18 hole golf course, four swimming pools, a covered ice skating rink, four outdoor lighted tennis

courts, two lighted paddle tennis courts, a wheel chair accessible playground, two basketball courts, ropes challenge course, fitness trail, and picnic area.

The Department is funded by the general fund for its parks and open space maintenance operations, and a special revenue fund for all programs and facility use. The fund is intended to be self-sustaining, with a fund balance to be maintained for facility improvements.

### **3. Submission and Deadline**

It is the intent of the Town to enter into an agreement with a qualified consultant, along with any other professional disciplines team members, to evaluate and make recommendations on the management and future use of the Town's parks and open space system. The Simsbury Farms Golf Course operation shall be excluded from this study.

Statement of qualifications must be received by noon on Friday, November 30, 2018. Complete electronic statement of qualifications, clearly marked "Simsbury Parks and Open Space Master Plan RFQ," shall be sent to [tmintern@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:tintern@simsbury-ct.gov). Only electronic copies will be accepted. Hard copies will not be considered. No statement of qualifications will be accepted after the date and time specified.

Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation Tom Tyburski at [ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov). In order to receive consideration, all questions must be submitted by 12:30pm on November 9, 2018. A response to all relevant questions will be provided prior to 12:30pm on November 16, 2018 via addendum that will be posted on the Town website at:

<https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/finance/pages/public-bids-and-rfp>

Proposals shall indicate specific tasks and members of the consulting team. Weight for the selection for the award of the study will be given, among other considerations, to the appropriateness of the personnel to the task, similar experience, and proposed tasks which are unique to the study's needs. Each task's time for completion shall be identified, along with any additional optional tasks which the consultant considers advantageous to the final study. A lump sum fee shall be provided for the scope of services tasks, along with fees for any optional tasks.

#### **A. Scope of Work**

The Scope of Work should satisfy the objectives below and meet the expectations of a comprehensive parks and open space master plan.

The consultant is expected to attend a project kickoff meeting with Town staff, conduct the inventory of parks and open space on site, conduct interviews with key stakeholders and community engagement sessions on site, and attend a meeting to present the final report to Town officials.

1. Conduct a planning process with vigorous public involvement.
2. Conduct a broad-based recreational needs assessment that includes the general citizenry, organized community groups, local government, and other stakeholders.

3. Create a database of information on each major open space property (i.e. how the property is used, deed restrictions, habitats, biodiversity, wetlands, trails, etc. using the best available information about each property). Identify other major open space and recreational parcels owned privately or publicly, (i.e. neighboring towns, the Simsbury Land Trust, McLean Game Refuge, etc.) that are adjacent to Town of Simsbury owned open space and parks noting how their habitat and management issues may affect town open space properties directly or indirectly. Identify opportunities to work collaboratively with these land owners where possible.
4. Review the environmental features of properties identified in the Inventory of Town Owned Open Space and the public biodiversity databases. Upon review of the inventory, compared with field examination, identify and discuss any additionally significant erosion, wetlands, watercourses, vegetation, pollinator habitat, aquifer protection, wildlife corridors, special habitats and invasive species, or other environmental issues that should be considered as part of the Master Plan.
5. Evaluate current open space and park facilities and the current life cycle status of included amenities to identify opportunities to improve health of all residents through dedicated active recreation areas.
6. Evaluate current park facilities for appropriate signage, fencing, turf & surface conditions, and condition of fixed equipment (such as playground equipment and tables/benches).
7. Complete assessment of parks, facilities, open space and playgrounds to ensure compliance with current Americans with Disability standards, and all state and federal guidelines. Identify disabled accessibility upgrades of parks, facilities, open space, and playgrounds with recommended improvements.
8. Review and evaluate the four Town parcels with existing Forest Management plans and make recommendations regarding the same. Such review should be done with the input from a forest ecologist with the goal of identifying areas where addressing invasive plant species is most urgent, identifying areas suitable as self-sustaining natural forests and future old growth forests and identifying projects that may be suitable community groups or Eagle Scouts. Consider the suitability of the properties for passive recreation activities and make recommendations for habitat improvements such as invasive plant control.
9. Identify the strengths, challenges and opportunities of existing parks and recreation facilities. Identify the natural/passive vs. programmed recreational space and streamline stewardship and maintenance accordingly.
10. Identify opportunities for connecting or expanding recreation and/or open space on vacant and distressed, or currently undeveloped lands.
11. Evaluate current maintenance practices and their environmental impact on adjacent open space areas or environmentally sensitive areas. Determine appropriate maintenance and staffing levels for our parks facilities and open space parcels. Provide recommendations to

support any proposed enhancements. Identify open space parcels in which minimal maintenance of natural areas is appropriate (as close to a natural state as possible).

12. Develop clear community goals for the recreational system that incorporate: improvements to public safety and security, streamlining future maintenance requirements, enriching park aesthetics, habitat improvements, and “green” design principles.
13. Develop strategies for merging the parks, recreation, trails, and open space recommendations with natural resource conservation, green storm water infrastructure, energy efficiency methods, accessibility, and environmental remediation opportunities.
14. Develop recommendations to meet the recreational needs of all ages, interests and abilities, year round.
15. Develop illustrative conceptual site improvement plans for as many existing parks as is feasible.
16. Create a conceptual plan that proposes opportunities to improve access, connectivity, and usage of existing parks, trails and open spaces and improves connectivity between neighborhoods.
17. Create an action plan which achieves the recommendations, maximizes limited financial resources and staff, identifies partnership opportunities, and positions the Town of Simsbury for available funding from public and private sources.
18. Develop an official document that will, in part, guide Town policy and decisions regarding parks and open space.

#### 4. **Proposals**

The Town of Simsbury will not be liable for costs incurred in the preparation of the response to this RFQ or in connection with any presentation before the Town. Consultants shall submit the following as their statement of qualifications:

- **Letter of Transmittal** – A letter addressed to Maria Capriola, Town Manager, which includes a statement by the respondent accepting all terms and conditions contained in this RFQ. The letter should also include a brief discussion of the consultant’s background, experience, and ability to perform this contract in accordance with the Scope of Services. The letter must be signed by the firm's authorized official. The letter must also provide the name, title, address, and telephone number for the person who may be contacted for the purpose of clarifying any information provided in the submission.
- **Project Understanding** – Statement regarding the firm’s qualifications related to this project and detail on the firm’s understanding of the requirements presented in this RFQ.

- **Service and Staffing Plan** – Description of project approach/methodology, anticipated schedule with project milestones, and resumes of key personnel assigned to the project.
- **References** – Provide a minimum of three (3) references for which work of a similar scope was conducted. Include the names, titles, addresses and telephone numbers for individuals that the Town may contact.
- **Fee Proposal** – One cost proposal to include all elements of the work to be performed. Please include the name, title, address, and telephone number for the individual with authority to negotiate and contractually bind the firm. The Town reserves the right to negotiate the fees and payment schedules with the selected consultant.

**5. Selection Criteria, Evaluation and Award**

The Town will evaluate submissions based on factors such as background and experience in providing similar services; the specific background, education, qualifications and relevant experience of key personnel to be assigned to the project; references; technical understanding of the scope of services to be provided; proposed schedule for project completion; proposed fees; and other relevant criteria. The Town reserves the right to award the work to a firm other than that with the lowest cost if it is in the best interests of the Town.

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all submissions or parts thereof for any reason, and to waive any informalities or minor inconsistencies with this RFQ. The Town anticipates inviting the firms with the most responsive submissions for an interview and detailed presentation before representatives from the Town. Following the interview process, the Town will award the contract to the firm it determines best qualified to perform the required services.

**6. Information to be Provided by Town of Simsbury**

- Current inventory of Town owned Open Space [https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/simsburyct/files/uploads/inventory\\_of\\_town\\_owned\\_open\\_space.pdf](https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/simsburyct/files/uploads/inventory_of_town_owned_open_space.pdf)
- Simsbury Farms Master Plan, Bike Pedestrian Master Plan, with current Capital Improvement Program
- Program reports and user surveys.
- Plan of Conservation and Development
- Existing Forest Management Plans
- Additional documentation, that pertains to various parks and open space parcels, may be provided as needed.

**7. Timeline**

The anticipated RFQ schedule is as follows:

RFQ Issued	October 19, 2018
Questions Due	November 9, 2018
Response to Questions Posted	November 16, 2018
Statement of Qualifications Due	November 30, 2018
Interview Selected Respondents	Mid-to-Late December, 2018 or early January 2019
Select Respondent	By January 31, 2019
Commencement of Services	On or around February 1, 2019
Completion of Preliminary Report	Per agreement
Staff & Consultant Meetings To Review Draft	Per agreement
Completion of Final Report	Per agreement

The Town reserves the right to modify this timeline following receipt of RFQ responses.

**8. Insurance and Indemnification**

The selected firm will be required to furnish certificates of insurance, including general liability, umbrella liability, automobile, and workers compensation with the following minimum limits:

<u>General Liability:</u>	\$1,000,000
<u>Umbrella Liability:</u>	\$5,000,000
<u>Auto Liability:</u>	\$1,000,000
<u>Professional Liability:</u>	\$1,000,000
<u>Worker's Compensation:</u>	Statutory
<u>Employer's Liability:</u>	\$1,000,000

Contractor coverage shall be primary and non-contributory. The Town of Simsbury shall be named as additional insured on the general liability, umbrella liability and automobile liability policies. Each policy shall include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the Town. All policies shall be kept in force throughout the duration of the project, with an extended reporting period of 36 months after the agreement terminates.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the consultant shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Town of Simsbury and its agents and employees from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees to the extent caused by the negligent acts, errors or omissions of the consultant, or those for whom the consultant is legally responsible in the performance of the work.