GENERAL
Gaines Charter Township (Township) is requesting proposals from qualified firms and organizations to create a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The Parks and Recreation Plan will be completed in accordance with Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) guidance documents and include all requisite components for certification by the MDNR (Recreation Plan Guidelines Booklet IC1924).

The Gaines Charter Township Parks Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and Township Board of Trustees recognize the need to have a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan in place to better manage Prairie Wolf Park, trails, and recreation facilities, but also to explore and outline future uses and needs. Staff has been authorized to seek proposals from qualified planning consultants with experience drafting community parks and recreation plans. The Township’s goal is to receive proposals for a complete Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

ABOUT GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
The Township is located in southern Kent County surrounded by City of Kentwood on the north, with Caledonia, Leighton (Allegan Co.), and Byron Townships on the east, south, and west sides respectively. Township residents enjoy a community that varies from suburban residential and retail to rural environments with easy access to the urban amenities of the greater Grand Rapids community.

Over the last 30 years the Township has seen significant increases in population, which has approximately doubled from 15,000 in 1990 to 28,800 in 2020 and continues to grow. New industrial and transportation businesses are establishing a presence in the northeast area of the Township, and residential subdivisions and apartment complexes are growing due to the demand for housing. The Township is undertaking an update to its land use Master Plan in 2022, which will include a major public input process in May and June.

The central and southern portions of the Township which only a generation ago were open fields and wood lots are rapidly being converted to residential use and residents are concerned with the loss of open space. The Township has also committed to finding new opportunities for recreation trails that can connect existing County and Township parks and enhance mobility options beyond the automobile. It also recognizes that urbanization of former agricultural areas is not likely to slow down, and desires to find areas to set aside for future park and open space acreage for future generations enjoyment.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Available</td>
<td>April 12th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submittals due</td>
<td>May 13th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Commission Review/Recommendation</td>
<td>May 26th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Board of Trustees Selects Firm</td>
<td>June 13th, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin Parks Master Planning Process</td>
<td>July, 2022</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Township reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to reject any or all proposals, to waive irregularities, informalities and/or non-conformities in any submission, to select the proponent and proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the Township and to negotiate with the selected proponent(s).
SCOPE OF WORK
The Township has never utilized a consultant to create a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and does not have true inventory of recreation infrastructure. The Township only manages one developed park, Prairie Wolf Park, which is immediately south of the Township Hall (all other parks in the Township are managed by Kent County), but it does own several opportunity sites that could be developed for recreation. The Township’s desired plan would provide direction for larger development initiatives and future land use goals.

The primary motivations for this plan are to integrate the Parks and Recreation Plan more closely with the Townships land use Master Plan update, incorporate the ideas of the Parks and Trails Committee, and to become compliant with the MDNR’s requirements to pursue recreation grants to enhance park, trail and recreation infrastructure.

The Township and Kent County Parks Department (KCPD) have worked together in the past to better provide recreational activities to the region’s youth. The Township desires to strengthen this partnership with the KCPD to identify future park sites and leverage investment into recreational facilities.

Regional Geographic Information System (REGIS) supports the Township in all its mapping needs and will provide graphics and maps for the plan. REGIS has already developed birdseye and plan view maps of individual parks. These maps are available upon request.

The following required elements identified by the MDNR will serve as the primary guidance for this Plan;
1. Community Description
2. Administrative Structure
3. Inventory of Existing Parks, Natural Areas, and Recreational Facilities
4. Accessibility Assessment
5. Resource Inventory
6. Description of Planning and Public Input Process
7. Goals and Objectives
8. Action Program

REQUIRED MEETINGS and PRESENTATIONS
To ensure the requisite inventories are up-to-date and the new plan supports other initiatives, the successful respondent will need to interact with Township Planning and Management staff on a regular basis. Additionally, the requisite public input process will demand several public meetings to solicit input on the proposed Plan. In responding to this RFP, respondents should anticipate a minimum of five (5) meetings as outlined below:
- Kickoff meeting with the Planning Commission to discuss scope of the project and introduce the project team to the Planning Commission.
- Kickoff meeting with the Township Board of Trustees to discuss scope of the project and introduce the project team to the Board.
- Work session with the Parks & Trails Committee.
- Public input sessions as required
- Public hearing/presentation to Township Board of Trustees

DELIVERABLES
The selected firm agrees to provide the following deliverables.
1. Complete crafting of Township Parks and Recreation Plan
2. Consult with REGIS to create a Recreation Map and individual park maps as needed.
3. Integrate recreational facilities and uses into the Future Land Use Map
4. Facilitate the process for community engagement and feedback on the draft Parks and Recreation Plan.
5. Ensure that the plan and its development process comply with all applicable state/federal laws including, but not limited to, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 (PA 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3801, et seq.), the Municipal Planning Act (Act 285 of 1931) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements.

SELECTION PROCESS
Selection of a consultant will be made at the discretion of the Township Board of Trustees, based upon the recommendation of Township Planning Commission and staff.

The proposals will be evaluated through consideration of several factors. The review of all documents submitted will be in accordance with the following:

- Ability to meet all RFP conditions and instructions as outlined.
- Experience in integrating electronic communication for data collection, public notifications, social media, project marketing, and community awareness.
- Qualifications and previous experience.

**Detailed fee proposal including meeting and work session costs.**
- A minimum of three (3) references.
- Ability to execute contract in accordance with Township policies and in full compliance with all applicable laws, ordinances and regulations.
- The firm’s familiarity with Gaines Charter Township, Kent County, and West Michigan.

The above criteria will be used to evaluate the submittals. The Township reserves the right to use other factors deemed relevant by the Township Manager, Planning Director, Planning Commission and/or Township Board of Trustees.

Proposals will be reviewed following the May 13th, 2022 deadline.

Following Planning Commission review and recommendation to the Township Board of Trustees, a firm will be selected to complete the Parks and Recreation Plan.

PROPOSAL CONTENT
Each proposal should provide the following information:

- Letter stating firm(s), location, and central address.
- Intended areas of interest listed within the generalized scope of work.
- Qualifications of staff to be utilized.
- Project descriptions which demonstrate similar work.
- List of previous municipal clients, their phone numbers, and other information.
- Listing of current and past projects.
- Insurance carrier and applicable coverage (minimum amount of liability insurance required is $1million).

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
One (1) original (bound) and eight (8) copies (unbound) and an electronic version in PDF format submitted electronically should be received at Gaines Charter Township Hall no later than 12 PM on May 13th, 2022, and via email dan.wells@gainestownship.org. Proposals should be addressed and submitted to:
Questions regarding this request may be directed to Dan Wells at the Gaines Charter Township Hall offices at (616) 698-6640 x120.

Proposals received after the above noted deadline will not be considered. Submitted proposals shall remain in effect for 90 days from the due date. All costs incurred for proposal preparation, presentation or contract negotiations are the responsibility of the consultant.

Gaines Charter Township reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted in response to this request for proposal and/or to select the proposal that it determines, in its sole judgment, to best meet the needs of the Township.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
The Gaines Charter Township current Master Plan can be found [here](#), and 2008 Update [here](#).