



# **City of Mendota Heights**

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Park System Master Plan**

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE: December 15, 2023 • 11:00am**

Released: November 22, 2023

## **Section 1: General Information**

### **Contract Administration**

All correspondence regarding this RFP (Request for Proposals) and the proposed services must be addressed to:

Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation Manager  
City of Mendota Heights  
1101 Victoria Curve  
Mendota Heights, MN 55118  
Phone: 651-255-1354  
Email: [mlawrence@mendotaheightsmn.gov](mailto:mlawrence@mendotaheightsmn.gov)

Submission must be sent by email. One PDF copy of the proposal and any relevant attachments should be sent to the mailing address above.

Due Date: December 15, 2023 at 11:00am

Anticipated Award of Contract: January 9, 2024

Target Deliverables Due Date: August 1, 2024

### **Acceptance of Proposals Contents**

The contents of this RFP and the proposal will become contractual obligations if a contract ensues. Failure of the consultant to meet these obligations may result in cancellation of the award. All information in the proposal is subject to disclosure under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13—Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

## **Section 2: Project Overview**

### **Project Overview and Purpose**

The City of Mendota Heights is connected by its parks and recreational green space. Having a variety of different neighborhood and community parks, along with larger recreational facilities has allowed the city to create the feeling of a vibrant, healthy city while also maintaining a personal experience with nature and outdoor activities. The City of Mendota Heights wants to continue upon this foundation for its residents and visitors and foster a sense of community that is fun, safe, and friendly.

This RFP outlines the nature and scope of the professional services requested for the development of a Park System Master Plan for the City of Mendota Heights. The plan must comprise of the following:

- Establish a clear, 15-year vision for Mendota Heights parks, open and public spaces to ensure it is positioned to meet future community needs and is aligned with the Mendota Heights 2040 Comprehensive Plan

- Evaluate the existing park system features and amenities related to community need and accepted national standards to identify where changes are warranted
- Evaluate the ways in which the residents are or are not currently served through access to the City of Mendota Heights recreation services (keeping in mind that local government entities also provide programming as well as private groups)
- Create an equity-based master plan which seeks balance in the park system to meet the needs of Mendota Heights residents, businesses and stakeholders, considering usability, access and differences in physical ability, race, age, income, housing status, language and culture
- Develop a prioritization strategy to guide decision-making and investment in the city's park system
- Identify and prioritize park system needs, desires, and interests of the community today and in the next 15 years based on anticipated demographic, economic and recreation trends, preferences, and social changes
- Establish a detailed implementation program for achieving the plan's vision including identifying funding opportunities and gaps, anticipated needs for staff resources, and producing high level cost-estimates for identified high-priority actions
- Consider the interrelation of the park system to transportation, housing, land use, economic development, utilities and infrastructure, natural resources and public safety
- Involve robust community and stakeholder engagement as part of the process and find ways to include underrepresented populations voices

## **Background**

The City of Mendota Heights offers a robust system of recreational and open space options, which includes regional trails, lakeside parks, scenic bluffs, and nature preserves. The City's facilities provide unique features that shape the character of Mendota Heights beyond the ordinary. The City's parks provide a visual identity to the City, in addition to contributing to the quality of life for those who recreate in the community.

Mendota Heights has over 771 acres of parks and open spaces, which include both active and passive recreation areas, along with other state and private parks. The City's 33 miles of trails offer an excellent opportunity for exercise and relaxation. Opportunities for walking, bicycling, bird watching, cross country skiing, golfing and nature hiking are sprinkled throughout Mendota Heights.

The City's parks are supplemented by three golf courses: Mendakota Country Club, Somerset Country Club, and the Mendota Heights Par 3 Community Golf Course. These contribute to open space views and recreational opportunities for residents.

Throughout the last fifteen years the City has made improvements and developed new parks. It has also made efforts to maintain existing open space such as purchasing the 17-acre Mendota Heights Par 3 Community Golf Course. The City recently joined in partnership with other public entities and purchased the 25.5 acre Oheyawahe area, which will be retained as open space. Protection of the Oheyawahe area as an important Dakota site has been identified as a critical issue for many residents within the City. Oheyawahe was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2017. A task force has been formed to pursue short and long-term goals for the preservation of and improvements to Oheyawahe, in addition to the creation of an interpretive plan for the site.

The City has 17 public parks throughout the community, including Oheyawahe. These parks contain over 295 acres of land area. In the 1990's, a majority of the most recent park upgrades were made due to a voter approved parks focused referendum. While the need and interest for recreational opportunities has increased over the years, the improvement of park equipment and infrastructure has not occurred due to poor funding and a lack of proactive planning.

## **Section 3: Scope of Work**

### **Scope of Services/Tasks**

The following is the general description of the tasks to be required of the consultant. A final scope of services will be negotiated and finalized once a consultant is selected. In preparing a proposal, the consultant is free to modify, revise, or otherwise amend the list of tasks to best satisfy the requirements of the plan.

#### **A. Assess Existing Park Conditions and Opportunities**

City staff has developed an Asset Management Plan and Capital Improvement Plan. The City of Mendota Heights would like a third party to review our asset management plan to ensure it aligns with professional standards. A more expanded analysis of the condition and opportunities is expected within this plan. The consultant will:

- Prioritize a list of improvements to parks and park amenities based upon an agreed upon prioritization methodology
- Assess the functionality of the assets against projected 2040 needs and community desires during the community engagement phase
- Prioritize future investment based on community needs and desires and current conditions
- Review existing built infrastructure and make recommendations for improved accessibility and universal access measured against National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) metrics
- Determine gaps in the park system and provide opportunities to fill the locations that do not have a park within walking distance

- Review existing maintenance standards and schedule of identified and unidentified deferred infrastructure maintenance-- provide recommendations on prioritization
- Provide a concept plan for redevelopment opportunities at Mendakota Park, which is the City's flagship park that hosts many City and private events and programs

#### **B. Assess Existing Recreation Programs and Services and Forecast Future Opportunities**

City staff has developed a robust number of recreation programming and services. A list of programs, events, and services will be provided in addition to participation rates and associated costs. The consultant will:

- Prioritize recreation services based upon agreed upon prioritization methodology
- Assess the functionality of the recreation services and community desires based off the community engagement phase
- Prioritize future investment of recreation services based on community need, desires and current offerings

#### **C. Community Engagement**

The consultant team is expected to lead a robust and inclusive engagement process to drive the development of the plan. Minimum expectations include:

- Meetings with City Officials: Meet a minimum of four times (two times with the Park and Recreation Commission and two times with the City Council)
- Meetings with Stakeholders and Partners: Conduct coordinated meetings with stakeholder groups and key partner agencies and organizations. The City will provide a complete list of contact information for key stakeholders and assist in meeting logistics and notifications
- Community Engagement: Lead and actively engage in community engagement throughout the planning process. There should be many varied opportunities for resident engagement and a plan to include underrepresented populations voices is imperative
- City Staff and Project Team Coordination: Meet regularly with City staff throughout the project to ensure tasks and activities are progressing in a timely manner and to address issues and opportunities that arise

#### **D. Funding Systems**

The consultant team is expected to provide a roadmap for the successful funding of the resulting initiatives and projects with the understanding that Mendota Heights has a conservative tax base and park dedication fee revenue will not be a feasible funding source in the future as the City is nearly fully developed.

- Review current and recommend future funding strategies related to the staffing, operations, enhancement, and maintenance of the Park System
- Benchmark the City's parks finances against other comparable park agencies, broken into the following categories:
  - Recreation
  - Park Maintenance
  - Park Capital Improvements
  - Municipal Par 3 Golf Course
- Determine what strategic actions the City must take in order to meet financial needs of the Park System in the future as defined in this new master plan

## **E. Implementation Plan**

The Park System Master Plan will compile and summarize the findings regarding the needs, desires, challenges, and opportunities of the community today and over the next 15 years based on anticipated demographic, economic, social, and recreational changes. The Master Plan should provide clear goals, objectives, guiding principles and a vision that will provide the framework for decision-making regarding development, redevelopment, and enhancement of park and open space facilities and the provision of recreational opportunities and services. The implementation plan is a critical component of the Master Plan and will describe the, "what, when, and how" to achieve the vision, goals and objectives. At a minimum the implementation plan should include:

- Prioritization Strategy: describes a process and criteria for prioritizing investments and modifying practices including recommended priorities regarding:
  - Replacement, consolidation, and/or repurposing of facilities
  - Parkland acquisition
  - Changes to programs, events and services
  - Changes to maintenance and required staffing (level of service)
  - Integrating equity considerations in decision-making
  - Improve sustainability of resources (natural, fiscal, and social) facilities and operations
- Identify the highest priorities for investment as well as near, mid, and long-range priorities
- Prepare cost estimates, including inflationary expectations based on market studies, for high priority investments
- Assess the City's staffing and funding levels in relation to regional averages and comparative to cities of similar size in relation to parks and recreation. The consultant will provide a budget and staffing analysis needed for current level of service, an adequate level of service and a desirable level of service. The analysis will also include funding and staffing requirements for future growth and

operation in line with priority recommendations. The Consultant will also provide suggested funding strategies

## **Approach**

The consultant is asked to keep in mind the following approaches as the plan is developed:

- **Regional to Community to Neighborhood Focus:** This project should consider the park amenities outside of the City, but also within a reasonable distance from Mendota Heights as potential amenities for residents of Mendota Heights to utilize. It is a goal of the City of Mendota Heights to have parks and open space within a reasonable walking and/or biking distance from every home. Somewhere between regional and neighborhood amenities are community amenities—those that might require a longer trip but are not economical to have as close to every home. What amenities are reasonable to view as neighborhood amenities, community amenities, and regional amenities? Where are the gaps in the community?
- **Community Building Driven:** This project should be driven by what the community needs and wants, but recommendations should also consider the power of parks and recreation amenities and services to build community by bringing people together.
- **Future Focused:** While the needs and wants of the community today are important, it is also important to consider changing demographics and likely changes to demands as those demographics' changes. Twenty years ago, no one would have expected pickleball to be as popular as it is today. What types of changes in demand do we expect because of changing demographics as well as culture?

The City anticipates that this is a team approach between the consultant, the City organization, and the community. The consultant is responsible for bringing expertise, new ideas and challenging the old way of thinking. The preparation of the final deliverables will be the responsibility of the consultant.

## **Final Document**

The Plan should be in a reader-friendly document with an emphasis on maps, charts, photos, graphics and tables to convey information rather than using lengthy text. The Plan should be formatted in such a way that it is easy to update on a routine basis.

- **Printed Material**
  - Seventeen printed copies of the final Park System Master Plan should be provided to the City in the following format:
    - Spiral-bound book, with individual sections marked by label dividers
    - Printing to be double sided (back-to-back)
    - 8.5" x 11" paper except for maps, charts, or diagrams that may be on folded 11" x 17" paper
    - Color copies of pages including graphics, maps and photographs

- **Electronic Materials**
  - The documents and graphics should be available in a digital format compatible with the City's software (e.g. Adobe Creative Suite package, ESRI GIS products, MS Word). The final products, as well as all presentation materials (i.e. Power Point presentations, maps, graphics, etc.) used throughout the planning process, shall become property of the City of Mendota Heights, who shall have all-inclusive rights for reproduction and distribution. The material will be provided to the City via a secure file sharing website or via USB Flash Drive.

## **Section 4: Proposals**

The proposal shall contain the type of information summarized below. Additional information is allowable, provided it is directly related to the proposed project. The proposal should follow the Table of Contents listed below. The four (4) sections of the proposal should be separated using tabs.

- 1). Project Approach
- 2). Proposed Project Team and Experience
- 3). Schedule
- 4). Fee Quotation

### **1). Project Approach**

Provide specific approaches and methods that will be utilized to complete this project as outlined and to accomplish the work items listed under Section 3 of this RFP. Include philosophy on designing improvements for parks. Explain why the consultant's firm should be selected to perform the services for this project.

### **2). Proposed Project Team and Experience**

- Provide identification of the offering firm (s), including name, address and telephone number of each firm
- List the name, title, address, email address, and telephone numbers of contact person during period of proposal evaluation
- Provide history, years in business and background on the firm
- List any subcontracted professionals that will be used on the project
- Identify the key project team members and describe their specific roles on the project
- Include resumes for key members of the project team
- Describe relevant experience and provide information on at least three (3) reference projects completed in the last five (5) years
- Include specific descriptions of proposed team members' roles on relevant projects. Provide a contact name and information for each of the references



### **3). Schedule**

Provide a proposed timeline with projected completion dates. The City's expectation is to complete the Master Plan by August, 2024.

### **4). Fee Quotation**

Proposals shall include a total cost for completion of the project described that is based on an hourly fee not to exceed the contract amount. The cost should include detailed estimates of the number of hours to be worked by specific team members on each major (numbered) work item under section 3 of this RFP. A cost estimate summary for each of the work items outlined in the RFP shall also be included. The estimate shall clearly identify as additions, overhead, and reimbursable expenses.

### **Submission of Proposal**

Submission must be sent by email to [mlawrence@mendotaheightsmn.gov](mailto:mlawrence@mendotaheightsmn.gov) One PDF copy of the proposal and any relevant attachments should be sent to the mailing address above. Proposals will be accepted until December 15, 2023 at 11:00am.

## **Section 5: Consultant Selection**

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by City staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission Master Plan Subcommittee on the basis of the following criteria:

- Consulting firm and key project staff experience with similar projects
- Proven track record in successfully completing similar projects on time and within budget
- Successful experience of both the firm and the individual team members will be considered
- Proposed approach to completing the project
- Components and details of the scope of the project
- Proposed fee

Following review of the RFPs by the City, staff will recommend a consultant to enter into a contract with to the City Council. It is anticipated that a proposed contract will be brought to the City Council for consideration at their January 9, 2024 meeting.

## **Section 6: Terms and Conditions**

Upon selection of a Consultant, a contract shall be entered into by the City and Consultant. It is expected that the contract will provide for compensation for actual hours expended on a not-to-exceed basis. In addition:

1. Deletions of specific components, such as individual project meetings, will be at the discretion of the City. Payment or reimbursement shall be made based on actual hours worked on the various tasks required for the project plus necessary subcontractor work

(as applicable) and out of pocket expenses. Billing that exceeds the not to exceed will not be compensated unless a contract extension has been approved by the City Council.

2. If, for any reason, a firm is not able to commence the services in that firm's proposal within 30 days of the award, the City reserves the right to contract with another qualified firm.
3. The City shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the Consultant prior to the signing of a contract including, but not limited to, proposal preparation or final contract negotiations.
4. The proposal must be signed in ink by an official authorized to bind the consultant to its provisions. The proposal must include a statement as to the period during which the proposal remains valid. This period must be at least 90 days from the date of the proposal deadline.
5. The City shall retain ownership of all plans, maps, reports, models, and data prepared under this proposal.
6. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to request additional information from any or all consultants.

## **Section 7: Attachments**

Consultants interested in submitting a proposal will be sent the following documents by requesting them from Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation Manager:

- Mendota Heights Parks Asset Management Plan
- Mendota Heights Capital Improvement Plan
- Mendota Heights Bike and Pedestrian Plan
- Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan
- Mendota Heights Natural Resource Management Plan
- Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation Budget
- Mendota Heights 2040 Comprehensive Plan