

Date October 25, 2010

APPROVING A SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT A NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY OF THE CITY'S PARK AND OPEN SPACE LAND AND AUTHORIZING PROCUREMENT ADMINISTRATOR TO ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR SAME

WHEREAS, the Park and Recreation Department is charged with providing recreational opportunities and leisure activities throughout Des Moines; and

WHEREAS, management of the City's park and open space land in a ecologically sounds manner is key to providing recreational and leisure activities for the citizens of Des Moines; and

WHEREAS, The Park and Recreation Department's Land Stewardship Policy calls for the Park and Recreation Department to enhance the park system by maintaining each individual property according to a plan that seeks to maximize the value of natural, cultural and recreational resources present; and

WHEREAS on November 29, 2009, by Roll Call No. 09-2143, the City Council approved a recommendation to construct a trail connection to McHenry Park as part of the rebuild of the Birdland Levee; and

WHEREAS one of the recommendations of this approval was to conduct an inventory of the City's park and open space lands; and

WHEREAS the Parks and Recreation Department has prepared a Scope of Services to conduct and report on a natural resource inventory of the City's park and open space land, which is attached to the Council Communication.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, that the above described Scope of Services is approved and the Procurement Administrator is hereby authorized to issue a Request for Proposals to solicit a consultant to conduct a natural resource inventory of the City's park and open space land.

(Council Communication 10- **643**) Moved by _____ to adopt.

Approved as to Form:

Ann DiDonato Ann DiDonato, Assistant City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				
MOTION CARRIED			APPROVED	

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

_____ Mayor

_____ City Clerk

Draft Scope of Services

City of Des Moines,
Parks and Recreation Department
Natural Resource Inventory

October 20, 2010

Project Summary:

The City of Des Moines Park and Recreation Department is seeking a consultant to conduct a natural resource inventory of the City's Park and Open Space System. The City's park and open space system consist of over 3,500 acres of parks and open space areas throughout the City of Des Moines. While parks and open space is spread through the entire City, a majority of the land is contained along the two rivers that traverse Des Moines, the Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers.

The City is looking for a qualified consultant that will conduct an inventory of these park and open space areas and will develop an inventory of the existing land cover and communities based on its current ecological stage. The goal is to have an accurate assessment of the City's park and open space land that will assist the City in developing future plans and identifying areas of high value or high potential for restoration.

Natural Resource Inventory:

The consultant will conduct an inventory of the City's park and open space land by creating a report and GIS database of plant communities based on the ecological succession stages of the land. The consultant shall provide the proposed community classifications of the land in their proposal along with proposed descriptions of each classification. The City is willing to consider any potential classification system that may be proposed by the consultant. One example of classifications is from the Nature Conservancy's ecological based classification of plant communities in the Midwest.

In addition, the City would like to see the following things evaluated and studied as part of the inventory:

- Map and delineate major plant communities, by describing the composition, structure and successional status of each community
- Areas of high erosion
- Trees of importance due to size or rarity or any other condition of interest
- Areas of high infestations of invasive species
- Areas of high biological or ecological diversity
- Identify large concentrations of ash trees that could be impacted by the emerald ash bore
- Dumping areas
- Areas with unique passive recreation or environmental education opportunities

Prioritizing Areas for Restoration:

The consultant will provide the City a series of recommendations upon completion of the inventory as to assist the city in conducting future land restoration projects. The prioritization should be based on the following criteria:

- Size of area
- Existing master plans
- Areas that can be phased
- Areas with most potential for success
- Unique or rareness of landscape within the city, or the state
- Areas that are highly visible should be a priority, this can include areas along bike and pedestrian trails
- Quality of the existing land and vegetation

Data That Can Be Provide:

In order to assist the consultant the City of Des Moines can provide the following data available in GIS format to assist the consult in conducting this inventory:

- Park and Open Space Property Lines
- 2002-2010 Aerial Photography
- Sewer utility locations
- Road networks
- Property lines
- Rivers, creeks and lakes
- Topography
- LIDAR data

In addition, other data can be downloaded from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. If needed, the City can assist in this process. These data sets include, but are not limited to:

- Polk County Soils Data
- Historical Aerial Photos (1930s, 1950s and 1990s)
- Wetland data
- Maps of previous/historical vegetation based on the soil surveys of 1846
- Color infrared aerial photos
- Watershed data

Other Studies:

Over time various studies and reports have been completed on various park and open space areas across the study. The City will compile these studies to assist the consultant in completing the inventory. A sampling of the available reports and studies include:

- Environmental assessments conducted for various construction projects
- Wetland assessments conducted for trail projects
- Individual plant and tree studies done for parks and open space areas across the City (Greenwood and Ashworth Park has a study completed)

Areas to be Included in the Inventory:

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for management of nearly 3,500 acres within the City of Des Moines. The attached map will serve as a guide to the land that will be studied as part of this project. In addition, the City will provide the selected consultant with a GIS layer of all land to be studied.

Areas to be Evaluated for Establishment of Natural Areas

The City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation staff have evaluated the City’s park and open space system to determine which parks should not be inventoried due to the lack of potential existing natural areas. Most of these parks are small neighborhood parks that are highly developed and relatively small in size. Despite the current lack on natural areas within these parks, the City requests that the consultant evaluate these parks for the potential to develop natural areas within these parks. This could be in the form of a small wetland, rain garden or a small prairie or savanna due to the current mature trees in the park or any other existing condition that could be a base for a future natural area. The following parks should be evaluated for these potential natural areas:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Blank Park | • Drake Park | • Pocket Park #2 |
| • Allen Park | • Easttown Park | • Redhead Park |
| • Ashfield Park | • Edna Griffin Park | • Riley Park |
| • Belle Turner Park | • Evelyn K Davis Park | • Royal Park |
| • Brody School Park | • Evergreen Park | • Sam Cohen Park |
| • Birdland Sports Complex | • Fairmont Park | • Sayers Park |
| • Burke Park | • Frisbie Park | • Sheridan Park |
| • Chamberlain Park | • Jordan Park | • Stewart Square Park |
| • Cheatom Park | • Laurel Hill Park | • Tower Park |
| • Chesterfield Park | • Martin Luther King Jr. Park | • Westchester Park |
| • Columbus Park | • Pete Crivaro Park | • Western Gateway Park |
| • Crowley Park | • Pocket Park #1 | • Whitmer Park |

Project Presentations:

The consultant, upon completion of the project will provide a presentation to staff as to the overall results of the study and will also be available to provide a presentation to the Des Moines Park and Recreation Board, the Urban Conservation Advisory Committee and the Des Moines City Council, if requested.

Data and Results Provided to the City:

Written Summary

The consultant will provide a written summary of the study and deliver it to the City. This report will contain the following items:

- Summary of the study results
- Findings of significant interest
- Recommendations for future study
- Recommendations for priority restoration areas
- Note threats to the system – potential new roads, invasive plant infestation levels high, new sewer lines, etc.
- Policy or management recommendations

Staff Education

The consultant, upon completion of the inventory and associated report will provide opportunities for staff to increase our knowledge in this area by hosting a meeting to present key findings of the report including information about the most common plant communities found in the park and open space system, findings of rare or significant importance, and areas that are highly infested with invasive species. Also, the consultant will provide a tour for staff of some of these areas to provide on the ground information to help staff increase its knowledge base so that it we can work towards improving our skill set towards a more sustainable and ecological land management philosophy.

Data Formatting

The consultant will provide the City the data compiled from the study in GIS format using ESRI GIS product format. The City's IT GIS Division staff will be available to help the consultant to set up the data formatting at the beginning of the project to ensure that the final result meets the City's standard for quality and usability. The following parameters must be met for data production and delivery.

- The data must be delivered in a file geodatabase using ESRI GIS products.
- The data must use Iowa State Plane, NAD 83, Iowa South as the projection for all data.
- The consultant must provide metadata for the project. This can also be referenced in the final document and not be totally loaded into the geodatabase.
- All data must be setup as records with domains and sub-type data to ensure data accuracy

In addition, consultant will also provide the GIS data on the special points of interest that have been documented along the way.

Consulting with Other Entities

The consultant will review and coordinate with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability on their upcoming Star Communities Index to ensure that work done on the natural resource inventory is compatible with the Index. The STAR Community Index is a national, consensus-based framework for gauging the sustainability and livability of U.S. communities. STAR will be launched in 2011, and is currently being developed through a partnership between ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), and the Center for American Progress (CAP).

Much as LEED™ transformed the building industry, STAR will transform the way local governments set priorities and implement policies and practices to improve their sustainability performance. It will become the definitive means by which local government measures and “certify” their achievements.

For more information about ICLEI and the Star Communities Index, please see their website:

<http://www.icleiusa.org/star>

Selection Criteria:

The consultant will be selected by a team of 5-8 individuals. The team will represent the Parks and Recreation Department (2-3 people), other city departments (1-2 people), an outside expert (1) and members of the Park Board or their Urban Conservation Committee (1-2) people. This team will evaluate the proposals based on the following criteria:

- A. Qualifications (20)
 - Organizational structure of firm or consulting team, including all team members (5).
 - Education, relevant licensures, and other qualifications of Consultant and team (15).
- B. Experience (60)
 1. Recent experience of the Consultant and team in similar work for others, including but not limited to: identification of plant communities and their successional stage, identification of invasive species, or identification of native plants specials in Central Iowa (40).
 2. Submission of hard copy of a similar report or study (10 points)
 3. References (10 points). Information from other organizations for which the Consultant has provided comparable services.
- C. Development of the Work Plan, Schedule, and Project Assignment of Consultant's Staff (10 points).
- D. Cost of Master Service (10 points).
- E. Local Preference (1 point) Given to businesses with headquarters, or headquarters of its parent or holding company, residing within the corporate limits of the City of Des Moines as required by section 2-705 of the Municipal Code.