

**BELVIDERE TOWNSHIP
PARK DISTRICT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. CST on May 13, 2022
Belvidere Township Park District
1006 West Lincoln Avenue
Belvidere, IL 61008
Attention: Jen Jacky
815-547-5711
jjacky@belviderepark.org**

Introduction

The Belvidere Township Park District (“The District”) is requesting proposals from qualified consulting firms to provide professional services to the District to develop a Comprehensive Master Plan. The selected firm will have proven experience and knowledge in park and recreation planning, project management and effective public involvement processes and work closely with District staff and the Park Board in preparing the Plan.

The Comprehensive Master Plan will drive District long-range planning and direct decision-making and resources toward a clearly defined vision for its future, including development and redevelopment of the parks, facilities, open spaces, and recreation system over the next five years. The planning process will consist of the following components needs assessment, visioning, identifying and evaluating community needs, priorities and opportunities, and creating a phased implementation and financial plan for priority improvements, including a capital replacement plan. The firm will create a document which summarizes the planning process, data collected, the analysis of forecasted needs and implementation strategies and present it to the Park Board for review and approval.

Background

The District utilizes long-range planning to define a consistent future vision and strategic priorities as it forces the organization to imagine the desired future of its services, recognizing the realities of the external operating environment and developing an action plan to make the desired future a reality. The District conducted its last master plan in 2010 (which can be accessed on the District website at belviderepark.org) and is in the end stages of an Aquatic Feasibility Study (belvidereimagined.com). The key factors to all District long-range planning process include the following:

- Conduct a needs assessment process to analyze community park and recreation needs and interests and identify the gaps to be addressed to meet those needs and interests. In relation to the Aquatic Facility, the selected firm will need to adapt the finalized findings/recommendations from the Aquatic Feasibility Study into the long-term master plan.
- Assess the future vision of the organization and determine the strategic priorities to achieve that vision.
- Engage stakeholders in the planning process to build consensus and support for the effective development and implementation of long-range plans.
- Foster an awareness of the organization’s presence and impact on the community.
- Develop a “living document,” which reflects the outcomes of the process and provides clear direction on actions to be taken to address strategy and provides a foundation for the development of all other planning and operating documents (e.g., budget, capital, facility, and marketing plans).

- Ensure the most effective use of the organization’s resources by focusing decision making and spending on strategic priorities.

Belvidere Township Park District Profile

In 1919, the residents of Belvidere Township created a unit of local government to provide for the community’s recreational and park interests. The Belvidere Township Park District is located in the northern region of the State of Illinois, approximately 65 miles west of Chicago. Detailed from statistics collected by the U.S. Census Bureau, the District serves a population of approximately 30,000 residents residing in roughly 11,000 households. Fifty-two percent of the residents are female. The Township has a median average age of 39.9 years of age. The community’s race and ethnicity is broken down to with sixty-six percent of residents identifying as Caucasian and twenty-nine percent of the residents identifying as Hispanic.

The District owns 16 parks, greenways, and natural areas, covering 360 acres. Facilities include a recreation center, an outdoor swimming facility, a splash pad, an outdoor ice rink, a special recreation recreation center, a historic mill/museum, two maintenance facilities and an administration office building that houses a preschool. In addition, but not limited to, the District offers 13 playgrounds, 15 shelters, sand volleyball courts, full court basketball courts, baseball/softball fields, an 9-hole disc golf course, outdoor tennis courts, pickle ball courts, soccer fields, an outdoor movie screen, an assortment of art and statues and maintains 20 miles of walking/biking/jogging trails. Within these facilities, District staff offers more than numerous recreation programs throughout the year to its residents and other guests. The District is also a member of the Northlands Association for Special Recreation, which provides recreational services for children and adults with special needs. The Park District employs 20 full-time, 100 part-time and seasonal employees and has a board consisting of five elected Commissioners.

To provide the diversity of facilities and programs highlighted in this section and maintain a healthy financial condition, the District’s overall philosophy is to project revenues and expenses conservatively, and to use sound financial planning to achieve the Board’s priorities, utilize existing reserves to maintain assets, take steps and allocate resources to address competition, attract and retain customers, and provide a balanced level of services and programs expected by the community. Furthermore, staff recognize that to ensure long-term financial sustainability, the District must proactively divest in those programs with declining participation, and those that do not or cannot consistently reach established revenue benchmarks, while putting resources into areas with potential growth.

To continue maintaining its aging infrastructure and offer the programs, services and new facilities and amenities the community desires, the Board and staff must continue to make measured decisions, balancing future community needs against the District’s sound fiscal condition, including implementing the cost recovery models developed during the program planning process, and determining realistic and financially feasible future priorities during the next comprehensive and strategic planning process.

Scope of Work

The specific work to be undertaken by the successful firm for the comprehensive master planning process is described in this Section, and respondents should include in their proposals how they will assist the

District with completing this work. The work described in this Section is considered to be the minimum required to complete this process. In their submittals, firms should propose additions or edits to this scope that lend to the best process. Following the firm selection process, a meeting will be held with the successful firm to negotiate the final scope of work and a contract for services. Therefore, the District reserves the right to revise the final scope of work.

Project Kick-off

The first step in the project will be to hold an onsite meeting with District staff to establish objectives for the project, including confirming roles and responsibilities and finalizing the project methodology, scope of services, timeline and format and content of deliverables.

Conduct a Needs Assessment

A key component in creating the Plan will be a needs assessment process that taps the opinions and ideas of the community, Park Board and staff and includes a comprehensive inventory of the current state of the District, including its financial condition, operations, park system, facilities, programs and services. The needs assessment also entails a review of current and projected demographics, current planning standards, regional and national trends and how facilities owned by other entities factor into the park and recreation needs of the community. It will provide the data and information necessary to evaluate how the District's park and recreation facilities meet current and future needs and whether modifications and/or additions will be required. An overview of each facet of the needs assessment is as follows:

Develop and Implement Public Involvement Strategy

The planning process must result in a shared, clearly defined vision for the District driven by input from the community. Public involvement is extremely important to the District and informs decision making processes. The successful firm will propose a robust and innovative public outreach strategy that describes how the community, staff and Board will be provided opportunities to participate in the development of the Plan. In their submittals, firms should at a minimum provide the following:

- Identify and describe a comprehensive strategy and methodology for citizen, participant and stakeholder involvement (i.e. proposed outreach process, methods of outreach, outreach tools, anticipated schedule)
- Ensure the residents, user groups and other stakeholders are provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the Plan
- Act as professional facilitators to gather specific information about services, use, preferences and any agency strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- Provide well-organized and directed activities, techniques and formats that will ensure that a positive, open and proactive public participation process is achieved
- Provide written records and summaries of the results of all public process and communication strategies
- Develop and manage any online public involvement tools and data
- Throughout the entire process, help to build consensus and agreement of the plan and if consensus is not possible, provide information for informed decision making for the staff and Park Board

Collect and Analyze Data

- Review current long-range plans and related documents such as, but not limited to, the District's 2010 Strategic Plan, 2022 Budget, 2021 Audited Financials, and 2021-2022 Aquatic Feasibility Study.
- Develop and administer a comprehensive public outreach strategy. Please separately bid cost associated to administer a statistically valid District-wide community assessment survey.

- Collect and interpret demographic characteristics and trends of the District population using information from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey, tapestry segmentation, regional and local sources, etc.
- Compile data on participation, operations, technology, programming, programming space and land use trends and acquisition opportunities
- Compile an inventory of indoor and outdoor facilities, including capacity of each amenity found within the park system as well as its functionality, accessibility, condition, and convenience, etc.
- Review available funding and financing strategies that are options for funding future improvements.
- Develop Level of Service (LOS) standards to meet community needs. Standards should consider geographic distribution of indoor and outdoor facilities and their amenities.
- Provide usable and workable definitions and recommendations for designated park and open space with acreages and parameters defined as appropriate

Determine the District's Strategic Direction and Analysis of Forecasted Needs

The firm will review needs assessment outcomes with the Board and staff and facilitate a review of the District's strategic direction to identify and affirm the long-range vision for the District. This step of the Plan process is vital for clarifying the District's organizational direction for action planning, decision making, and resource allocation. To determine the District's strategic direction, the firm will assist the District with accomplishing the following:

- Review the District's purpose, aspiration, and organizational values;
- Conduct a situational analysis and environmental scan utilizing the needs assessment data to determine gaps in what is being provided versus the needs and interests identified;
- Develop a list of critical issues and opportunities based on the results of the situational analysis and environmental scan.

Develop Recommendations and Implementation Strategies

To ensure that the Plan is implementable upon its adoption by the Park Board, it must include realistic, feasible and clearly defined planning scenarios. Based on the outcomes of the needs assessment and the District's strategic direction, the firm will be expected to develop the following:

- Prioritized recommendations to meet current and future needs through, but not limited to, land acquisition, construction or redevelopment of indoor and outdoor facilities, development of additional recreational amenities, park maintenance, etc.
- Estimates of the capital and operational costs for land acquisition, construction or redevelopment of indoor and outdoor facilities, development of additional recreational amenities, park maintenance, etc. The analysis should be designed to connect with the District's capital plan.
- Recommendations for addressing operations, staffing, maintenance, technology, programming and services and funding needs to support implementation of this Plan.
- Evaluation of the feasibility, cost-effectiveness/return on investment of suggested strategies and recommendations.

Create Action Plan: Strategic, Capital and Financial

The firm must develop an action plan which includes strategies, priorities and budget support and funding mechanisms for the short term, mid-term and long term, which were developed during the previous stage in the process. The Action Plan must be a phased with prioritized recommendations and a capital projects prioritization process/ranking system for future strategic investments and level-of-service/reoccurring capital needs.

Final Report and Presentation

The selected firm shall submit a draft and final report which summarizes the findings and conclusions and includes a clear demonstration that the firm has fulfilled all elements contained in the agreed upon scope of work. The Plan must include written goals, plans, objectives and policy statements that articulate a clear vision and “road map” for the District’s future.

The firm will make two (2) presentations, preferably on site, to report and summarize findings to the Park Board and staff. The reports must be in an easy-to-understand format with charts, graphs, maps, and other data as needed to support the plan and its presentation to the appropriate audiences. The final report must be submitted as follows:

- A color version of the draft Master Plan document consisting of ten (10) printed copies and an electronic copy.
- A color version of the final Master Plan document consisting of ten (10) printed copies and an electronic copy.

Services Provided by Staff and Progress Reporting

The Belvidere Township Park District will assist the firm in managing the operational aspects of the project and coordinating work with the relevant parties. The District will provide overall support for project tasks. The Executive Director will serve as the lead liaison for the project with support. The Executive Director will provide all existing documentation (as requested by the consultant during final scope review) and compile contact information for staff and local organizations. District staff, primarily the Executive Director, will also schedule, coordinate the availability of staff based on their work schedules and make all necessary arrangements for meetings and interviews conducted by the consultant during the course of the project.

The firm and the Executive Director will hold progress meetings in person or virtually as often as necessary, approximately once per month with a mix of in person and virtual meetings until a final plan is approved by the Park Board. The Executive Director shall schedule the progress meetings, as necessary, at key times during the development of the Plan. The firm shall provide the Executive Director with at least one (1) copy of all completed or partially completed reports, studies, forecasts, maps or plan as deemed necessary by the Executive Director.

Instructions for Submitting Proposals, Proposal Components and Evaluation Criteria

All respondents to the RFP must include the items provided in the following list. All the listed items should be addressed completely and should follow, as closely as possible, the order and format in which it is listed below. These categories and criteria will be major considerations in the evaluation and determination of the most qualified and capable firm(s). The sequence of the listing is not intended to reflect the relative weight of each category.

1. Letter of transmittal
 - a. Statement indicating an understanding of the work to be performed and interest in performing the scope of work.
 - b. Discuss consultants’ availability over the next 6-12 months.
 - c. Identification of key contact person for communicating with the District on the proposal and all project-related matters.
2. Qualifications/Project Portfolio
 - a. Areas of specialization.
 - b. Practice philosophy.
 - c. Years in the business and history of firm.

- d. Examples of three (3) to five (5) projects the firm took a lead role in the preparation of a Comprehensive Master Plan and a community-wide survey. The projects should be comparable in complexity, size, scope, and discipline (as described in the Scope of Work section) and been undertaken during the past five years.
3. Project Management
 - a. Introduction to the team (all firm staff and sub-consultants assigned to complete work on the project), including resumes for all the key personnel, which provide educational background/training, experience and detailed descriptions of roles played on past projects.
 - b. Services/functional roles to be performed by each team member (including all sub-consultants).
 - c. Location of each team member.
 - d. Availability and commitment of assigned professionals who will undertake the scope of work.
 - e. Technical resources of the firm and any sub-consultants.
 4. Methodology and Process to Complete All Phase of Project
 - a. Describe the vision, strategic overview and approach to the project.
 - b. Express how the components above reflect your qualifications for this project.
 - c. Discuss what parameters you will engage to develop a project that will be creative, logical, and engaging.
 - d. Include detailed descriptions of the procedures and methods you propose to use to complete all tasks within the scope of work.
 - e. Discuss tasks, timelines and anticipated deliverables for each phase of the project.
 - f. Include the proposed process and methods to assure quality, cost, and schedule control.
 - g. Explain in the proposal all supporting studies, models, and assumptions that will be developed or used as part of the study.
 5. References
 - a. List at least three (3) to five (5) references we may contact (preferably from the projects provided in 2(d) of this section that have been undertaken during the past five years) with client contact information (current email and telephone).
 - b. Indicate project names and the personnel assigned to this project (including all sub-consultants) roles and involvement in each project.
 6. Schedule
 - a. Provide a proposed detailed project work schedule with a start date of June 15, 2022 (contingent upon negotiation of a final scope of work); all meetings that need to be scheduled should be built into the timeline (e.g., initial meeting with staff to review project schedule, strategic direction review, presentations of the final report, etc.).
 - b. Include time frames for each major component of the scope of work and target dates for completing each phase of the project.
 7. Fee Proposal - one (1) copy in a sealed envelope (see also Fee Proposal section following this list)
 - a. Include a total "not to exceed" figure for the scope of work (based on the estimated level of effort to be spent on each task).
 - b. Include itemized schedule of all expenses by phase (reimbursable expenses listed separately), including a composite schedule of hours estimated for included tasks.
 - c. Provide hourly rates for all team members, sub-consultants and staff levels.
 - d. Describe the methodology for billing reimbursable expenses (such as travel, production of documents, purchase of data, etc.).
 - e. Describe method for billing additional services beyond the initial scope of work (beyond approved not-to-exceed amount).

Fee Proposal: One (1) copy of the cost of services must be included in a **separate, sealed envelope** with appropriate detail reflecting all costs. The firm is required to **separate cost** by the major phases of the process and any requested for the project. **Do not include any reference to fees in the body of your RFP response.** Failure to comply with this provision will result in disqualification of your firm. The District reserves the right not to fund any portion the firm's proposal.

Understanding and Approach of Scope of Work: Proposal shall describe the approach to the scope of work described in the Scope of Work section of this RFP, including process and schedule. Firms are encouraged to make suggestions to amend the scope of work to achieve the project goals. This criterion will be evaluated based on the proposer's understanding of the project objectives and ability to demonstrate a process that efficiently and effectively achieves the desired outcomes. Reasoned creativity is encouraged. The District anticipates modifying, where appropriate, the objectives and/or scope of work listed in this RFP based on the firm's experience and expertise in completing similar projects.

Disclosure: Proposal will disclose any professional or personal financial interest which could be a possible conflict of interest in contracting with the District. Consultant shall further disclose arrangements to derive additional compensation from various products or services, including financial. The firm must also list all current and unresolved litigations, arbitrations, or mediations of the firm in its proposal.

Selection of Consultant

The Belvidere Township Park District will select a firm based on its ability to respond to the Request for Proposal (RFP) requirements, the qualifications and expertise of the team working on this project, past performance on similar projects, the time required to complete project, methodology, firm resources, and the firm's willingness to negotiate and execute an acceptable written agreement. The District reserves the right to reject any, some portions of or all proposals and supporting material and to request written clarification of any portion or section of proposals and support materials. The District reserves the right to negotiate with more than one potential respondent after the submission of all proposals. The District also reserves the first right-of-refusal to work with any sub-consultant proposed by the firm.

After a thorough review by District staff of the proposals submitted by respondents to this RFP, a short list will be created of the firms that meet the requirements outlined in this RFP and those firms will be required to make a presentation on their qualifications and proposals to the District's Search Committee. Based on these interviews, the committee will recommend to the Board the firms that are the best fit for the District and this project. The Board will interview these firms and formally approve the selection of a firm. The Board makes all final assessments and judgments regarding selection.

All proposals will be afforded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion and revision. Any such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offer at the discretion of the District. When conducting negotiations, the District will not disclose information from proposals submitted by competing firms.

Selection Process Timeline

The timeline for selecting a firm is as follows:

Deadline for Proposal Submission	May 13, 2022
Firm Oral Presentations/Interviews with the Staff and Board	Beginning May 17, 2022
Potential Approval of Firm by Belvidere Township Park District Board	May 24, 2022
Proposed Project Start Date	June 15, 2022
Complete Project	No later than April 2023

General Requirements of the Selected Proposing Firm

The selected proposing firm must follow these general requirements to be hired by the District:

- Enter into a contract with the District and maintain insurance coverage for the duration of the contract period;
- Prohibit assigning or subcontracting the whole or any part of the contract without the prior written consent of the District;
- Operate as an independent contractor and will not be considered employee(s) of the Belvidere Township Park District; and
- Paid on actual invoices as work is completed.

Submittal Deadline

Ten (10) hard copies of the proposal must be received by the Belvidere Township Park District, 1006 West Lincoln Avenue, Belvidere, IL 61008, (Attention: Jen Jacky) on or before 4:00 p.m. CST, May 13, 2022. Each proposal must be submitted with all required documentation.

Questions about RFP

All questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Jen Jacky at Belvidere Township Park District at jjacky@belviderepark.org.