Texas Trees Foundation
for
South Dallas Greening Initiative

Request for Proposals for
Community Engagement Services

RFP Release Date:
Friday, June 21, 2024

PROPOSALS DUE:
Sunday, July 7, 2024
11:59 pm Central Daylight Time
Texas Trees Foundation
3000 Pegasus Park Drive
Suite 740 Dallas, TX 75229
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

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Section 1 Request for Proposal

The Texas Trees Foundation (TTF) is requesting proposals from qualified consultants to provide community engagement services as specified in this Request for Proposal (RFP). The required services and performance conditions are described in the Scope of Work. Consultants are encouraged to suggest additions or modifications to the scope that will enhance or clarify the work, and these suggestions should be incorporated in the proposal. If the consultant hires a subcontractor for in-person public engagement, the subcontractor must be approved by TTF.

Section 2 Background

TTF, formerly the Dallas Parks Foundation, was established as a 501 (c)(3) in 1982 as a resource to support the City of Dallas parks system. In 2004, the Foundation was renamed the Texas Trees Foundation to expand the area of focus from Dallas to the North Texas Region to better address environmental challenges. TTF has leveraged relationships with private and public partners to acquire land for parks and trails, and to plant thousands of trees at parks, schools, and other locations throughout North Texas. TTF also provides urban forestry consulting services to cities, educational institutions, and other entities.

The South Dallas Greening Initiative (SDGI) is a community-driven, urban forestry-based, transformation surrounding Fair Park that will improve human health by expanding tree canopy, increasing green space, and providing accessible urban forestry education and career training opportunities. The SDGI is funded through a $15 Million grant received as part of the Inflation Reduction Act for Urban and Community Forestry. Over the next five years, upwards of 3,000 trees will be planted in vacant lots, rights-of-ways, schools, and partner-owned land in South Dallas neighborhoods such as Mill City, Wheatley Place, Queen City, Jubilee, Dolphin Heights, Bertrand, and South Blvd/Park Row.

The project area was selected by analyzing TTF’s 2022 Tree Equity Planting Map. This map is a prioritization tool that shows areas within Dallas that are in the greatest need for increased tree canopy to help combat urban heat, poor air quality, and improve human health. This map shows the Fair Park area and surrounding neighborhoods as “urgent” and “emergent” high-priority planting areas. This data was used in combination with community-based needs identified by our organization to solidify the selection process of the Fair Park and surrounding neighborhoods in South Dallas.

The SDGI is unique in that we’re aligning all of our programs in one geographic area to move the needle on human health. This will include community engagement, our Cool Schools program, our new Workforce program, and volunteer tree plantings. It is worth noting that populations in our project area in South Dallas have on average 20+ years shorter life expectancy when compared to neighborhoods immediately North. This is due
to multiple issues that lie within the intersection of social and environmental factors—
which we’re hoping to address through the South Dallas Greening Initiative. We see that
trees have enormous potential to help cool our city, provide clean air, and improve
community member’s overall mental and physical health but having a true impact on
community member health is going to take focused and intense greening efforts that the
SDGI will deliver.

Figure 1Blue outline indicates Core Project Area, which will be the focus of our greening efforts, and red outline indicates
Community Partnership Areas, which we will expand into for additional greening efforts and educational opportunities.

Section 3 Project Purpose

Community engagement is one of the most vital components of our work in the South
Dallas community and will help cultivate community partnerships for our planting
projects. The consultant is responsible for helping conduct TTF’s community engagement
launch, with initial activities concentrated in July 2024-December 2024, for the South
Dallas Greening Initiative. TTF is looking for a consultant that will work alongside the
Community Greening Manager and Community Engagement manager to help guide
community engagement that leverages existing community meetings and assets. Our
community engagement approach will focus on co-design, where the selection of planting
sites and establishment of planting plans are based on community priorities to support the
long-term benefit and stewardship of new trees and preexisting trees.
Section 4 Scope of Work

This project will help with partner mobilization, mapping partner organizations, and the existing and planned planting and community development projects to identify and further define priority planting projects, and to surface opportunities for collaboration and joint capacity building. Through recruiting for this consultant role, we are committed to attracting a consultant with first-hand knowledge of the Core Project Area (Fig 1) and a passion for community empowerment. This consultant will assist TTF staff in conducting a community roundtable, reviewing documented feedback from recent/ongoing community engagement efforts for other neighborhood projects and attending other community meetings. This consultant will incorporate geographic and demographic tracking to ensure equitable, representative engagement of neighborhood residents. The project goal is to creatively engage a diverse group of community members in the idea-generation and decision-making process for the SDGI.

The scope of work should include four sections: 1) Strategy and Plan, 2) Outreach and Marketing, 3) Event/Meeting Facilitation and Attendance, and 4) Reporting. Each section should include details on how the consultant will meet the following deliverables, along with cost per section.

Deliverables for each section include:

1. Develop a Community Engagement Strategy and Plan
   - Research prior community engagement conducted in project area and summarize findings. This task will also include determining gaps in engagement that are missing or still need to be conducted.
   - Create a community asset map to help identify existing community resources and organizations.
   - Create a process for fielding and categorizing project stakeholders. This should also include creating a database for storing contacts.
   - Determine how to measure and record stakeholder perspectives.
   - All items included in this deliverable should be included in the Community Engagement Strategy and Plan, which is due by October 15th, 2024.

2. Develop Outreach and Marketing Plans + Materials
   - Work alongside TTF to create program messaging and marketing for the SDGI. This will also include methods and channels for outreach that focus on increasing the reach and diversity of stakeholders.
   - With input from the Community Engagement Manager and Community Greening Manager, create templates and captions for social media posts.
3. Event/Meeting Facilitation and Attendance
   - In partnership with the TTF Community Engagement Manager, lead community meetings on an as-needed basis with the goal of having a minimum of 20 potential partner opportunities by project close.
   - Help coordinate and host one larger stakeholder meeting. Tasks may include coordinating project partners and their roles, creating the run of show, sourcing vendors, strategizing on how to record feedback, advertising the event, and providing a summary of collected feedback.
     - Please include an hourly rate for attendance tasks such as setup and teardown, keeping attendees on task, communicating project outcomes.
   - After each community or stakeholder meeting, provide a report that includes attendance at the meeting, photos taken at events (can be uploaded via Dropbox), and summary on results/feedback. This role will also be tasked with entering community meeting feedback/results into the predetermined database.

4. Progress Updates and Reporting
   - Meet with the Community Greening Manager and/or Community Engagement manager bi-monthly for progress updates and check in.
   - Once a month, provide a report that includes an update of the previous month’s activities.
     - Report provided in PDF format and should include a summary of previous month’s activities such as number of meetings, number of people engaged, area of South Dallas targeted, and new/emerging partnerships.
     - Report is due by the 5th of each month.
   - Before the project closes (12/18/24), provide a final report that summarizes community feedback, sets up an external feedback loop, and highlights potential need for recurrent/future engagement. This report should also include major themes and community/stakeholder priorities along with recommendations for TTF for moving forward.
Section 5 Contents of Proposal

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format and not-to-exceed 3 pages. Proposals must include the following information:

- General description of the firm, and the credentials and background of the team members who will be responsible for the project.
- Summary of consultant’s experience conducting neighborhood-based community engagement and two (2) referrals and contact information from previous community engagement clients.
- Consultant’s recommended Project Schedule/Timeline, not to exceed 6 months from Project Launch for completion of final report.
- Description of consultant’s approach to managing the project. Description should include all tasks listed in the Scope of Work. The consultant should list additional steps, tasks or information the consultant feels would improve the quality of the community engagement launch.
- Cost proposal by task and total cost.

Section 6 General Requirements and Submittal Instructions

The selected consultant must meet the following requirements:

- Consultant should possess all applicable licenses and certifications required by the State of Texas and shall also maintain all other business and professional licenses that may be required by Federal, State and Local Codes.
- Provide a W-9.
- Selected Consultant, their employees and subcontractors must pass a background check and maintain acceptable status whenever requested by TTF.
- Must satisfy all requirements pertinent to insurance, including a Certificate of Insurance.

To be considered, respondents shall submit their proposals electronically by sending one complete PDF file by email or other electronic transmission service accessible by email (such as Dropbox, Google Drive, etc.) no later than 11:59 pm Central Daylight Time on Sunday July 7, 2024, to:

Emily Plauche, TTF Community Greening Manager
emilyp@texastrees.org
An email response will confirm receipt for all electronic submissions successfully received. The cost for preparing a proposal in response to the RFP is the responsibility of the Consultant.

Any questions or concerns regarding this RFP shall be directed to:

Texas Trees Foundation
Emily Plauche, Community Greening Manager
3000 Pegasus Park Drive, Suite 740
Dallas, TX  75247
Office: 214-953-1184
Cell: 469-865-5694
emilyp@texastrees.org

Section 7 Selection Process

TTF will select Consultant based on the proposal submitted and presentation to TTF staff. TTF may also make the selection of the Consultant based on negotiation with one or more of the respondents. In conducting such negotiations, TTF will avoid disclosing contents of competing proposals. TTF reserves the right to award multiple contracts for various portions of the requirements to different consultants including, but not limited to, community engagement.

After submission of a proposal but before final selection of the Consultant is made, TTF may permit a respondent to revise its proposal to obtain the respondent’s best and final offer or to provide clarification as requested by TTF.

TTF will review all submitted proposals to determine those consultants that best meet the requirements of this RFP and the evaluation criteria listed below:

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<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Demonstrated ability to complete scope of work</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>First-hand knowledge of project area, prioritization of an equity-based approach, and cultural relevance while working in the project area</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Qualifications and experience as it relates to the scope of work in the RFP</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reasonableness of proposed cost</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Minority-and/or woman owned business enterprise</td>
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All proposals submitted shall be valid for a minimum period of one-hundred and twenty (120) calendar days following the last date established for proposal submission. Proposals may be withdrawn on written request from the consultant at the address shown in this solicitation prior to the last date for proposal submission. Negligence on the part of the consultant in preparing the proposal confers no right of withdrawal after the time set for proposal submission.

It is the intent of TTF to enter and execute a contract for services with the selected consultant no later than sixty (60) days of the last date established for proposal submission. TTF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. The final selection will not necessarily be based on the lowest bid, but rather the best value.

Section 8 Acceptance or Rejection and Negotiation of Proposal

TTF reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or select more than one firm to complete this work. After selection by TTF, the contents of the submitted proposal will become a contractual obligation. Failure to agree to include the proposal as part of the contractual agreement will result in cancellation of the award. TTF reserves the right to negotiate a modification to, or accept any part of the proposal, and will not be obligated in any way to accept those parts that do not meet the approval of TTF. Terms and conditions of the contract will be subject to the approval of TTF legal counsel. The proposal, draft report, and final report shall become the property of TTF.

Section 10 Questions

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing and directed to Emily Plauche, TTF Community Greening Manager via e-mail at emilyp@texastrees.org no later than June 28, 2024, by 5:00 pm CDT. As necessary, responses to questions will be issued via an addendum to all prospective bidders. TTF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. TTF looks forward to your response to this Request for Proposals and appreciates your interest.
Section 11 Reservations

Additional information regarding RFP submittal, content, processes, and procedures are listed below:

1) All proposals will become the property of TTF and will not be returned to Consultants.
2) TTF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, whether minimum qualifications are met, and to modify, postpone, or cancel this Request for Proposal, in whole or in part, or decide to award a contract to perform only some of the services outlined in this Request For Proposal, without liability, obligation, or commitment to any party, Consultant, or organization.
3) In addition, TTF reserves the right to request and obtain additional information from any candidate submitting a proposal, and to negotiate the final scope of services with the selected consultant. TTF is not liable for any costs incurred by consultants prior to issuance of an agreement, contract, or purchase order. Costs of developing the proposals, oral presentations or any other such expenses incurred by the consultant in responding to the RFP are entirely the responsibility of the consultant and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by TTF. No materials or labor will be furnished by TTF.
4) TTF reserves the right to waive or permit cure of minor informalities and/or insignificant mistakes such as matters of form rather than substance and to conduct discussions and negotiations with any qualified respondent in any manner deemed necessary by TTF to serve its best interests. TTF also reserves the right, based on its sole judgment and discretion, to award a contract based upon the written proposals it receives without conducting discussions, interviews, or negotiations.
5) If, in the opinion of TTF, a proposal contains false or misleading statements or references, it may be rejected.
6) TTF reserves the right to obtain written clarification of any point in a Consultant's proposal or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal. Failure of a Consultant to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification may result in rejection of the Consultant's proposal.
7) Failure to comply with these instructions, and the other specific provisions of the RFP, may result in the Consultant's proposal not being reviewed.
8) TTF reserves the right, without qualification, to select a Consultant for further discussions based solely on the content of the RFPs and relevant information obtained from others concerning the respondent’s respective records of past performance.
9) The consultant’s proposal shall not be made contingent upon uncertain events, which shall not have occurred until after the RFP is completed.
10) If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP due to inquiries raised, an email notifying an addendum, supplement or amendment to this RFP will be provided to
Consultants who received an original invitation to bid via email OR responded to us with their contact information as described on the cover letter of this RFP. Changes to the RFP shall be accomplished by an amended page or pages.

**Equal Opportunity Statement**

TTF is an equal opportunity employer. Employment at TTF is based solely on a person’s merit and qualifications directly related to professional competence. TTF does not discriminate against any employee or applicant because of race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy or related conditions (including breastfeeding), or any other basis protected by law.

**Closing Date and Time**

All proposals must be received by Sunday, July 7th, 2024 at 11:59 PM

It is your responsibility to make sure that you submit a response by the date and time indicated above. Late or incomplete RFP’s will not be considered. If only one proposal is received in response to the RFP, the TTF may either make an award or, if time permits, re-solicit for the purpose of obtaining additional proposals.

**END of Request for Proposals**