



**Texas Trees Foundation
for
TFS Schoolyard Forests - RGV**

**Request for Quotations for
Landscape Design Services**

RFP Release Date:

~~***Tuesday, September 2, 2025***~~
Thursday September 25, 2025

PROPOSALS DUE:

~~***Tuesday, September 16, 2025***~~
~~***11:59 pm Central Daylight Time***~~
Thursday, October 9, 2025
11:59 pm Central Daylight Time

Last updated: September 25, 2025

**Texas Trees Foundation
3000 Pegasus Park Drive
Suite 740 Dallas, TX 75247**



REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (RFQ)

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1. Introduction

The Texas Trees Foundation (TTF) is seeking proposals from qualified landscape architecture firms to provide design services for the Cool Schools Program, specifically the RGV Schoolyard Forests. This project aims to connect children with nature through holistic ecological education and the transformation of school campuses in Donna and Mercedes Independent School Districts, both located in Hidalgo County, Texas. Services will include site assessment, schematic design, construction documentation, and participation in design charrettes.

Campus designs, tailored to each school's needs and space, should feature a green space that boosts tree canopy and provides outdoor learning opportunities for students. Design elements may include features such as a schoolyard forest, discovery play areas, outdoor classrooms, respite and social spaces, pollinator and rain gardens, interactive and sensory gardens, natural log amphitheaters, log benches, stepping stumps, and sensory activities like interactive play elements and observation spots. Local ecology and plant life, such as the Tiny Tamaulipan Thornscrub, should be incorporated into project designs.

The selected firm will work closely with TTF to develop designs that support outdoor learning, address urban heat, and improve ecological functions in the surrounding environment. This will include collaboration with campus stakeholders, project partners, local ecological experts, and the broader community.

2. Background

Texas Trees Foundation is a leading urban forestry nonprofit organization based in Dallas and working throughout the State of Texas. Its mission is to *improve the health of cities and people through the transformative power of trees*. Over its 43-year history, Texas Trees has supported the growth and stewardship of urban forests, planting over 1.5 million trees and contributing to healthier, greener communities. Through research, education, and partnerships, Texas Trees has also become a leading voice and resource to communities and decision makers.

The Cool Schools Program™ supports the health and well-being of PK-12th grade students through a focus on environmental stewardship and personal connection to nature. This program aims to nurture a life-long love of exploration and appreciation for the natural environment through expansive tree planting, outdoor experiential learning opportunities, and unstructured play.



3. Project Overview

The RGV Schoolyard Forests project aims to create green schoolyards across twelve elementary and middle school campuses in Donna and Mercedes Independent School Districts. The project will expand native tree canopy, enhance environmental education, and strengthen community engagement and climate resilience, and will ultimately benefit students, educators, parents, and local communities. Each campus transformation will include planting at least one hundred trees and development of areas for experiential learning and play. The design phase must be completed by May 2026.

The campuses being transformed through this program are:

Donna ISD

- J.W. Caceres Elementary School
- P.S. Garza Elementary School
- A.M. Ochoa Elementary School
- M. Rivas Elementary School
- Captain D. Salinas II STEAM Academy
- C. Stainke Elementary School
- Daniel Singleterry Senior Elementary School
- A.P. Solis Middle School

Mercedes ISD

- Hinojosa Elementary School
- W.B. Travis Elementary School
- Sgt. Manuel Chacon Middle School
- Sgt. William G. Harrell Middle School

To-Be-Determined

- Campus #13
- Campus #14



4. Scope of Services

The selected firm will be responsible for providing professional design services from site assessment through construction observation. Services are anticipated to include the following tasks, with adjustments based on project needs and final contract negotiations.

Task 1: Site Identification, Site Assessment & Program Development

The consultant will review base plans and evaluate existing site conditions to establish a comprehensive understanding of the project area. Site analysis may include soil testing and assessment of drainage, grading, and existing vegetation conditions to inform design decisions. Working closely with the program team, the consultant will identify opportunities, constraints, and priorities that will shape the site program.

Task 2: Schematic Design

Based on the program and site assessment, the consultant will develop preliminary concepts for both hardscape and planting elements. Concepts should address site-specific environmental considerations, including grading, stormwater management, and soil conditions. These concepts will be refined through the incorporation of stakeholder and client feedback.

Task 3: Design Development

The consultant will refine schematic designs in alignment with the approved direction, selecting specific hardscape and planting materials and coordinating with the project arborist to ensure feasibility and performance. This phase should include detailed review of soil test results (if applicable) to inform plant species selection and placement. Possible deliverables for this task might include hardscape material plans, preliminary site sections or details, conceptual grading and drainage plans, and preliminary material schedules and samples.

Task 4: Final Renderings

The consultant will prepare final site plan rendering(s) to communicate the design intent, incorporating one round of revisions based on client input.

Task 5: Construction-Implementation Documents

The consultant will prepare detailed CAD-based construction drawings and schedules. These will include hardscape layout and dimension plans, planting plans, material schedules and details, conceptual grading and drainage plans (as applicable), and all necessary notes for implementation. Construction-Implementation documents should also identify irrigation infrastructure requirements, if applicable, to support plant establishment.



Task 6: ~~Construction Implementation~~ Observation

The consultant will provide construction observation services, including participation in the pre-construction meeting and periodic site visits. Responsibilities will include reviewing submittals, shop drawings, and RFIs; preparing field memos, sketches, and punch lists; and supporting resolution of field issues.

5. Submission Requirements

To be considered, respondents shall submit their quotes 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 ~~Tuesday, September 16, 2025~~ **Thursday, October 9, 2025**, to:

Anabel Castillo-Soto

Anabel@texastrees.org

1. **Cover Letter** – Introduce your firm and interest in the project.
2. **Firm Profile** – Overview of firm, including size, location, and relevant experience.
3. **Project Team** – Key staff, roles, and qualifications.
4. **Relevant Project Experience** – Minimum of three examples of similar projects, with images and descriptions.
5. **Project Approach** – Summary of how your team would approach this project.
6. **Fee Proposal** – Proposed fee schedule (by task, campus and total), including hourly rates and anticipated reimbursable expenses.



6. Evaluation Criteria

TTF will select a Contractor based on the quotation submitted and presentation to TTF staff. TTF may also make the selection of the Contractor based on negotiation with one or more of the respondents. In conducting such negotiations, TTF will avoid disclosing the content of competing quotations. TTF reserves the right to award multiple contracts for various portions of the requirements to different Contractor's including, but not limited to, the creation of data-based reports and interactive dashboards.

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

TTF will review all submitted quotations to determine those Contractors that best meet the requirements of this RFQ, and the evaluation criteria listed below:

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Demonstrated expertise in similar projects, local knowledge, and qualifications of key personnel, proven skills in site assessment, grading and drainage design, planting design, and construction documentation	30
Local Experience in the Rio Grande Valley – demonstrated familiarity with climate, soils, and plant materials of the region	30
Demonstrated ability to deliver clear and buildable nature-based designs	15
Track record of successful project delivery, quality work, budget and schedule management and client satisfaction	15
Cost effectiveness	10
Total Points Possible	100

All quotations submitted shall be valid for a minimum period of one hundred and twenty (120) calendar days following the last date established for quotation submission. Quotations may be withdrawn on written requests from the contractor at the address shown in this solicitation prior to the last date for quotation submission. Negligence on the part of the contractor in



preparing the quotation confers no right of withdrawal after the time set for quotation submission.

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

7. RFP Timeline

The anticipated schedule is as follows:

- **RFQ/RFP Released:** ~~9/2/2025~~ 9/25/2025
- **Questions Due:** ~~9/9/2025~~ 10/2/2025
- **Submissions Due:** ~~9/16/2025~~ 10/9/2025
- **Selection / Contract Award:** ~~9/23/2025~~ 10/23/2025
- **Project Start:** Fall 2025

9. Acceptance or Rejection of Proposals

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

10. Questions

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing and directed to Anabel Castillo-Soto, via e-mail at anabel@texastrees.org no later than ~~-October 2, 2025~~ September 9, 2025, 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 quotations. TTF looks forward to your response to this Request for Quotations and appreciates your interest.



11. Reservations

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

1. All quotations will become the property of TTF and will not be returned to Contractors.
2. TTF reserves the right to reject any and all quotations, whether minimum qualifications are met, and to modify, postpone, or cancel this Request for Quotation, in whole or in part, or decide to award a contract to perform only some of the services outlined in this Request For Quotation, without liability, obligation, or commitment to any party, contractor, or organization.
3. In addition, TTF reserves the right to request and obtain additional information from any candidate submitting a quotation, and to negotiate the final scope of services with the selected Contractor. TTF is not liable for any costs incurred by Contractors prior to the issuance of an agreement, contract, or purchase order. The costs of developing quotations, oral presentations, or any other such expenses incurred by the Contractor in responding to the RFQ are entirely the responsibility of the contractor 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 quotations it receives without conducting discussions, interviews, or negotiations.
5. If, in the opinion of TTF, a quotation 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 Contractor's quotation or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular quotation. Failure of a Contractor to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification may result in rejection of the Contractor's quotation.
7. Failure to comply with these instructions, and the other specific provisions of the RFQ, may result in the Contractor's quotation not being reviewed.
8. TTF reserves the right, without qualification, to select a Contractor's for further discussions based solely on the content of the RFQs and relevant information obtained from others concerning the respondent's respective records of past performance.
9. The Contractor's quotation shall not be made contingent upon uncertain events, which shall not have occurred until after the RFQ is completed.



10. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFQ due to inquiries raised, an email notifying an addendum, supplement or amendment to this RFQ will be provided to Contractors 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 RFQ. Changes to the RFQ shall be accomplished by an amended page or pages.
11. The Contractor must comply with all items in Appendix A – Standards and Specifications for Purchasing, Planting, and Maintaining Trees (Community Forestry Grants 2024 Awardee Resource Packet) in order to receive payment.
12. TTF reserves the right to refuse (and not pay for) substandard trees per Appendix A – Standards and Specifications for Purchasing, Planting, and Maintaining Trees (Community Forestry Grants 2024 Awardee Resource Packet).
13. If the Contractor hires a subcontractor for any purpose, the subcontractor must be approved by TTF.

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 identify/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 quotations must be received by- Thursday, October 9, 2025 ~~Tuesday, September 16, 2025~~, 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 RFQ's will not be considered. If only one quotation is received in response to the RFQ, the TTF may either make an award or, if time permits, re-solicit it for the purpose of obtaining additional quotations.

END of Request for Quotations