



CENTENNIAL PARK - MASTER PLAN RFQ

The Conservancy for Centennial Park and the Parthenon A Master Plan for Centennial Park, Nashville, Tennessee

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

The Conservancy for Centennial Park and the Parthenon (hereinafter, the Conservancy) is soliciting qualifications from architectural and/or landscape architectural firms and/or consultant teams in advance of issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide professional and technical services to the Conservancy for preparation of a master plan for Centennial Park in Nashville, Tennessee. It is anticipated that this RFQ will result in a short list of three to five finalists who will develop formal proposals for final selection by the Conservancy.

Nashville Mayor Karl Dean has appointed a citizen committee to lead the development of the master plan in conjunction with the Conservancy and staff from the Metropolitan Board of Parks and Recreation (Metro Parks).

Background

Centennial Park contains over a century of history that documents the growth and evolution of the Nashville community. As a designed landscape, the park features both classical and picturesque elements, thus reflecting these two distinct schools of design. The park also displays the way in which national trends, such as the parks movement, playground movement, the recreation movement, and the modern movement, took place at the local level. The park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2008.

The approximately 132 acres of Centennial Park was farmed from its purchase in 1783 until the Civil War era. After the war the land was used as the state fairgrounds until 1884, when it became the West Side Park horse racetrack. On the site in 1895 construction began on the buildings that would be used for the Tennessee Centennial Exposition and the property began to take the form with which Nashvillians are familiar today. When the exposition closed in October of 1897, its leadership called for the grounds to become a city park; this occurred in 1902.

The most visible legacy of the exposition is the Nashville Parthenon, which served as the expo's Fine Arts Pavilion and still dominates the park landscape. Originally constructed of lathe and plaster, the building was reconstructed in more permanent materials--aggregate concrete--beginning in 1920; the structure opened to the public in 1931. Architect Russell Hart collaborated with William Bell Dinsmoor, Harvard University archaeologist and author of *The Architecture of Ancient Greece*, to produce a faithful full-size reproduction of the Athenian original. The



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Parthenon was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972; a major restoration was completed in 2001.

The five-acre Lake Watauga is also an exposition survivor; its irregular and organic form provides a picturesque counterpoint to the classical lines of the Parthenon standing just to the west. Other prominent examples of historic architecture include the Rose Arbor, Shell Spring, Picnic Pavilion, and two concrete bridges: the bridge at Lick Branch sewer and the bridge between the Sunken Gardens (Lily Lake during the exposition and the Japanese water garden from 1922 to 1949) and Lake Watauga. In 1903 the Parks Board erected monuments paying tribute to Nashville cofounder James Robertson and to the leaders of the Centennial Exposition, the first of many monuments and memorials placed in the park.

The development of the landscape during Centennial Park's history closely parallels national trends in urban park development. The park can be viewed as a physical representation of the early 20th century scenic and leisure municipal parks movement and the playground movement, as well as the recreation movement of the Great Depression. The post-World War II park saw the introduction of modern architecture and increasing accommodation to the automobile. A major re-landscaping effort of the early 21st century has made the park a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

The park is home to a number of programmed and permitted activities, utilizing the Bandshell, Sunken Garden, South Lawn, pavilions, the Lake Watauga walkways, and other open space throughout the park. Major art festivals are held annually on the South Lawn, while "Shakespeare in the Park", "Movies in the Park", and other concert events, including a Nashville Symphony outdoor series take place at the Bandshell. Other recent events include a Memorial Day Blues Festival, Labor Day Music Festival, Celebration of Cultures, and the Big Band Dance Series, which is held in the event shelter.

The Centennial Sportsplex includes two indoor ice rinks, a fitness center, tennis center, and two indoor swimming pools. It is the official practice facility of the NHL Nashville Predators, and is the site of many local, regional, and national youth sports tournaments.



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Project Description

The Master Plan will serve as a template for long-term development within the park. Generally, the plan shall include an analysis of existing site facilities, conditions and programs, development recommendations, phasing/priority recommendations and cost estimates.

A significant intent of the master plan shall be to enhance the classical and picturesque elements in Centennial Park's landscape design. The plan shall emphasize viewsheds, visual moments, and in general discipline the landscape to create a more coherent design statement within the total land holding that is Centennial Park.

Anticipated Master Plan components include:

- Review of site analysis, opportunities and constraints
- Refinement and broadening of the program for the park
- Identification and location/relocation of facilities
- Identification of needed improvements
- Guidelines for implementation
- An overall Master Plan map and, as needed, conceptual plans for specific sub-areas and presentation renderings
- Cost estimates for implementation
- Recommended priorities and phasing of improvements

Known issues to be addressed in the Master Plan are:

- Landscape plan, including vegetation management, habitat enhancement and beautification
- Current landscape and its relationship to the park's cultural history, development, and established use patterns
- Preservation of historic features, including monuments and buildings
- Interpretation of the park and its history
- Use patterns within the park, including events, and spontaneous and programmed activities
- Vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the park and connections to adjacent neighborhoods
- Parking, including overflow parking for major events in and around park
- Associated signage including wayfinding, identification and traffic control
- Review of existing designs for lighting, site furnishings and other such elements
- Condition, location, and design of outdoor spaces for public performances
- Condition, location, and design of restrooms, water fountains, picnic shelters and other comfort and safety facilities



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- Utilities
- Potential for naturalizing water conveyances
- Condition, location and types of playgrounds, including incorporation of natural play features
- Public art opportunities
- Viewsheds to and from the park
- Land ownership issues, including perimeter properties, private development encroachments
- Other constraints and opportunities

The Master Plan recommendations will be developed in response to input from the Client, and will include Metro Parks' program staff, natural resources managers and maintenance staff. In addition, the plan will reflect public input as endorsed by the Client.

It is anticipated that funding will be available in the near-term for high priority plan elements.

Sustainability

It is a goal of the city and the Conservancy to make Centennial Park a model of sustainability on a regional and national basis. As Nashville's most recognized and frequented park, Centennial Park is uniquely positioned to elevate and advance the use of green practices in its design and operation. The master plan in its development and recommendations should be a reflection of this goal.

As a guide to consultants, plan recommendations shall take into account the following **minimum** considerations for sustainable planning, building, site, and design practices, but should also expand upon this list to achieve the expressed goal for sustainability:

- Permeable surfaces
- Habitat protection and enhancement
- Reducing floodplain development impacts
- Minimizing light pollution
- Naturalize water conveyances to the maximum extent possible
- Gray water harvest and reuse
- Water use efficiency
- Energy conservation and atmospheric impact
- Materials and resource use and efficiency
- LEED Certification for all buildings



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Submission Instructions

Projected timetable (subject to change):

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| Request for Qualifications Issued: | June 17, 2009 |
| Qualifications from interested teams due: | July 17, 2009 |
| Shortlist of candidates established: | July 31, 2009 |
| RFP issued to shortlist: | August 3, 2009 |
| Pre-proposal conference or availability (optional) | week of August 15, 2009 (Date to be determined) |
| Proposals due: | September 1, 2009 |
| Interviews/presentations: | week of September 14, 2009 |
| Final consultant selection: | September 30, 2009 |

Submission Requirements

Submissions should be submitted electronically (either by CD or email attachment in PDF or DOC format), along with two hard copies, and shall include the following items:

1. A letter of interest from the prime consultant, introducing any team members and highlighting the consultant/team's qualifications for the project.
2. A current resume from each team member.
3. A representative project list with visuals and narratives
4. A list of references for each consultant/team member.
5. Confirmation of all amendments issued prior to official submittal deadline.

Submissions will not be returned.

We encourage you to demonstrate your experience through sharing of comparable undertakings. Please send us only TWO hard copies of your RFQ submittal materials along with a designated web address where each of our committee members can electronically review your materials. Thank you for supporting efforts to reduce paper products.

At the end of this RFQ, we are providing a list of all the firms, both local and national, who are receiving this invitation in order to encourage submittals from teams composed of joint ventures between local and national offices. We would like to have a local firm administer the contract and carry the primary responsibilities to fulfill the contract.



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All **submissions** must be received by July 17, 2009

The Conservancy
511 Oman Street
P.O. Box 196340
Nashville, TN 37219-6340

or

masterplan@conservancyonline.com

All **inquiries** should be directed by email only to:

masterplan@conservancyonline.com

All questions related to the content or submission of this RFQ must be submitted in writing to the email address above. Questions and responses will be posted on the Conservancy website.

Submissions must confirm, and respond to, any and all amendments posted on the Conservancy website prior to the official submittal deadline.



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Selection Criteria

The selected Consultant/Consultant Team will exhibit extensive experience specific to the development of master plans for large, multi-objective parks and related site planning; professional background in the treatment of historic landscapes; the design of outdoor park amenities, recreational lakes, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and urban design.

In addition, experience specific to the management of intensive, large-group, public input planning processes is required.

Consultant/team will be selected based on the following criteria (in no order):

- Broad expertise of consultant/teams applicable to this project
- Nationally recognized experience on urban park projects
- Specialized experience of the key personnel proposed for this project
- Expressed understanding of issues related to this project
- Demonstrated understanding and leadership in the area of sustainable development practices
- References
- Small/Disadvantaged Business Participation

Presentation Costs

The Conservancy will not be liable for any costs associated with responses to the RFQ or the subsequent RFP.

Public Disclosure

As this is a joint project with the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, submissions will be considered public and subject to review upon request after selection process is completed.