

**Great Parks of Hamilton County
Request for Letter of Interest
Sustainability Action Plan
August 19, 2021**

Introduction

Great Parks of Hamilton County (GPHC) is requesting Letters of Interest submittals from qualified consulting firms or teams to provide professional services to develop a Sustainability Action Plan.

Background

GPHC manages 21 Parks and Nature Preserves totaling approximately 17,742 acres. More than 80% of all park land is managed for conservation purposes. The remaining developed areas include six golf courses and hundreds of facilities for various outdoor recreation activities, education programming, and special events. GPHC logged more than 5 million visits in 2020.

While conservation and sustainability are complementary approaches, in 2010, an internal Green Team was established to map existing projects and frame the principles of future initiatives to promote a sustainable agency operation and maintenance. Since the beginning of their work, many improvements have been made from recycling programs, stormwater management infrastructure, switching to LED light fixtures, reducing mowing areas, building a hybrid fleet, etc. With time, GPHC realized that a holistic approach supported with policy or protocols is required.

The first-ever Comprehensive Master Plan, completed in January 2019, supports the holistic approach and marked sustainability as one of the eight priorities for implementation. As a result, the Sustainability Coordinator role was created to lead the agency toward developing and improving GPHC's sustainability performance. This prompted the next version of the Green Team, the Sustainability Task Force.

In late 2020 GPHC joined the 2030 District initiative as community members and building partners. The agency submitted seven buildings from three different parks totaling 55,358 square feet of building space.

Currently, GPHC is organizing its database to set a baseline and monthly reporting for water and energy usages, waste and recycling programs, and sustainable food services. With the help of the Sustainability Task Force, 12 representatives from various divisions and departments, and volunteers, GPHC is conducting in-house audits and inventories.

Reference Materials

Mission: To preserve and protect natural resources and to provide outdoor recreation and education in order to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations.

Vision: Great Parks enriches the region by inspiring nature-based experiences, celebrating cultural heritage, and building strong and healthy communities through our dedicated staff, volunteers, and friends.

Core Values: Integrity, Sustainability, Inclusivity, Fun

The following background and reference materials are available through the links provided:

- [Comprehensive Master Plan Executive Summary](#)
- [2019-2028 GPHC Comprehensive Final Plan Overview](#)
- [GPHC 2020 Annual Report](#)
- [Green Initiatives](#)

Project Description

The purpose of the Sustainability Action Plan is to provide a comprehensive framework for GPHC's sustainability efforts. The action plan will serve as the agency's guide when prioritizing sustainability projects and capital investment in the next decade. The Action Plan should incorporate an overarching set of measurable goals, strategies, and best practices, supported by cost-saving analysis for capital projects and updated evaluation tools and benchmarking.

With more than 9,850 acres of forestland, GPHC has an essential role in carbon sequestration and buffering against the impacts of climate change. Therefore, the Sustainability Action Plan should recommend specific mitigation projects that emphasize the value of GPHC in minimizing the effects of climate change on local residents.

The Action Plan should be developed to accommodate GPHC's core values and culture.

The consultant will work with the Sustainability Coordinator and is encouraged to meet the Task Force members, and key staff when more perspectives are required

to understand better the internal culture, the challenges, abilities, and opportunities. New policies and recommendations for cultural changes and education to help GPHC achieve its sustainability goals are required as part of the plan.

While GPHC consolidated a sustainable future path, the Sustainability Action Plan should reflect up-to-date practices, methods, and benchmarks to meet national and regional regulations and trends.

Required Scope of Work

A. State Measurable Goals for the next decade

- Goals should align with the 2030 District commitment
- Priority action areas of operation include but are not limited to :
 - Energy efficiency
 - Water conservation
 - Waste management
 - Park maintenance
 - Vehicle Fleet
 - Community outreach
 - Partnerships and collaborations
 - Education
 - Agency culture

B. Develop Policies and Strategies

- Recommend new policies, projects, and action strategies for more straightforward implementation
- Provide educational tools and available resources for GPHC employees and volunteers

C. Provide an organized evaluation process that includes:

- Matrixes and reporting tools
- Achievable milestones broken down by years to evaluate progress

D. Present cost-benefit analyses for capital projects and operating practices that improve sustainability.

Consultant Selection Process

The process for selecting a consultant will be as follows:

Consultants shall submit their letter of interest and qualifications, including personnel resumes and additional information concerning their general qualifications to perform the work.

- The GPHC project team will evaluate all submittals and choose a list of consultants to be interviewed.

- Consultants selected for an interview will be asked to make a presentation at the time of the interview. These selected consultants will be notified and will receive information, dates, and times prior to interviews.
- Selection of the successful consultant will be made through a review process including but not limited to the following components:
 - Scope of Services
 - Project Approach
 - Project Team
 - Past Project Experience
 - Interview and Presentation

Do not include a cost figure for professional services within the Request for Letter of Interest submittal. Doing so will disqualify the applicant.

Tentative Consultant Selection Schedule

August 19	Issue Request for Letter of Interest
September 7	Letter of Interest submittals due
September 8-9	Submittals reviewed and scored, top-rated consultants contacted for interview
September 10	Interviews with selected consultants
September 13	Consultant selection
September 23	Scope of service meeting, pricing, contract review
October 21	Contract approval by Board of Park Commissioners

Letter of Interest submittals due Tuesday, September 7, by 1:00 p.m.

Submittals shall be submitted in one (1) digital file PDF format by email to Moran Slakmon at msslakmon@greatparks.org

Submittal files shall contain the firm's name and "Sustainability Action Plan LOI" in the file name.

Any questions prior to the deadline should be submitted in writing by email to Moran Slakmon at msslakmon@greatparks.org.

General Notes

1. Acceptance: GPHC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, modify or postpone the proposed scope of services, and accept the proposal that, in GPHC's sole judgment, is in its best interest. GPHC also reserves the right to waive any minor defects or informalities in the proposal process.
2. Contract: The consultant will enter into a contract with GPHC and will operate as an independent contractor; consultants will not be considered employee(s) of GPHC.
3. Invoices: The consultant will submit monthly invoices that reflect the work that has been completed.
4. Insurance Requirements: The firm or individual shall maintain insurance that is sufficient to protect the firm's or individual's business against all applicable risks.
5. Non-Endorsement: As a result of the selection of a consultant to supply services to GPHC, the firm or individual agrees to make no reference to GPHC in any literature, promotional material, brochures, sales presentation or the like without the express written consent of GPHC.
6. Non-Collusion: Submittal and signature of this proposal swears that the proposal is genuine and not a sham or collusive, and not made in the interest of any person not named and that the firm or individual has not induced or solicited others to submit a sham offer, or to refrain from proposing.
7. Compliance with Laws and Regulations: The firm or individual awarded the contract shall comply with federal, state and local laws, statutes and ordinances relative to the execution of the work.
8. Public Records: Under Ohio state law, all documents and correspondence submitted in response to this RLOI become a public record upon submission to GPHC. These records will be made available as requested per GPHC public records request policy.