

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:
CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT
RECREATIONS NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND
FEASIBILITY STUDY**

FOR

**LOWELL SCHOOLS
CITY OF LOWELL
LOWELL TOWNSHIP
VERGENNES TOWNSHIP
WEGE FOUNDATION**



August 2007



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

I. INTRODUCTION

The municipalities of City of Lowell, Lowell Township and Vergennes Township in Kent County in the State of Michigan together with Lowell Schools and the Wege Foundation (collectively the “Requester”) are collaborating on a Request for Proposal (RFP). The purpose of the RFP is to identify and contract with a consulting firm (Consultant) to assist the Requester to review and update municipality recreation plans (to Michigan Department of Natural Resources standards), provide a Needs Analysis concerning recreational needs of the greater Lowell area, and develop a recreational Feasibility Study.

The reason for the Study is to present a vision of opportunities to Peter M. Wege President of the Wege Foundation (or representative), who has offered the Requester a parcel of land in Vergennes Township, on Alden Nash Ave between Foreman St. and Vergennes St., for recreational purposes, provided that, the Requester is able to present him with a Feasibility Plan for an effective use of the property. As a secondary outcome, and in order to be eligible for potential grant funding for this joint project, the municipalities need updates to their recreation plans. Our timeline is short as the Requester desires to select a Consultant in September, begin the project in September and conclude the project by mid-November 2007.

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Requester collectively has some unique features that both challenge and encourage the Requester to move forward with a recreational project for the area. Described briefly, they include:

- Lowell is a rural setting but close to, and a short commute to Grand Rapids, MI
- Lowell has the Lowell Area Community Fund, an endowment for community purposes
- The greater Lowell area covered by the Requester contains a population of approximately of 15,000 people and is next to Ionia County, MI
- A Lowell school population of 3,900 students (2600 K-8; 1300 9-12)
- Lowell Area Recreational Authority
- Local YMCA which is small but very active in the Lowell area.
- North Country Trails
- Growing healthcare region – MSU Medical College move to Grand Rapids
- \$35,000 grant for the development of the proposal.



III. PROJECT OBJECTIVES & SCOPE OF WORK

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project for which the Requestor is seeking Consulting services are:

- To identify and enter into a contract with a Consultant who is able to provide the services and products defined in the Scope of Work, to include the review and update of current Municipal Parks and Recreation Plans, conduct and report on a Recreation Needs Analysis and prepare a Feasibility Study relating to a parcel of land now available to the Lowell community for recreational purposes.
- As part of the selection process, identify a Consultant who is positioned to provide other services through the lifecycle of the project, including, but not limited to design, funding, identification of suppliers, construction/implementation, operations management and other on-going consulting services.
- Deliver the Feasibility Study, including presentation to requestor by mid-November, 2007.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Consultant will provide services and products as defined below. These may be refined through the RFP and selection process as well as during the contract stage if additional information is necessary to provide the Requestor with the level of detail needed for good decision making.

Recreational Plan Review

The City of Lowell, Lowell Charter Township and Vergennes Township have current Park and Recreation Master Plans. Each municipality desires the Consultant to review and analyze their plan and prepare updates of these plans. The plans should reflect the findings and products adopted by the Requestor specific to this project. A Summary Report will be provided by the Consultant to each municipality based on the analysis developed from the Study. The goal for the Municipalities is that the Needs Analysis and Study will enable the Consultant to provide an “area” recreational vision that can help the Consultant and each municipality to update their individual Recreation Plans for the foreseeable future. As part of the Consultant’s review, the Municipalities are interested in the Consultant’s perspective concerning “best” land use in relationship to the other municipality plans and the Study for the Wege Foundation and potential financial investment priorities.

Needs Analysis

The Consultant will:

- Prepare a Community Recreation Needs Analysis, including an assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Integral to preparing this will be a thorough analysis of the Park and Recreation Plans and other materials provided by the Requestor.



- Prepare a site analysis of the property being offered for recreational purposes and the potential improvements to the property as a result of the Recreation Needs Assessment. This will include any safety related issues, e.g., egress and ingress to the site (traffic light or deceleration lanes, etc.) as well as any maintenance or operational implications specific to this site and its planned recreational use that the Requestor will need to be aware of when making decisions regarding the development and long term maintenance of the project.

List and prioritize proposed recreational programs, facilities and services most likely to be used and funded by the public.

- Assist the Requestor in securing public or stakeholder input. Offer ideas and suggestions as to how public input should be solicited based upon your firm's experience. Travel and administrative expense will be considered billable based mutual agreement of Requester and Consultant.

Feasibility Study

Requester requires the Study to be provided in written report format in Microsoft Word as well as in presentation format (Microsoft PowerPoint). The Study will contain:

- An Executive Summary
- A Public Statement of the results of the Study for communication with the public
 - Include qualifications of Consultant
 - Include Consultant Statement about the feasibility of the project
- Restatement of the Scope of Work and Study Methodology utilized
- Study Observations and Findings
- Consultant's Concept(s), including revenue and expense projections
- Consultant Recommendations that include options, phases within options and rough order of magnitude (ROM) costs or ranges of cost

Progress Reports and Work Schedule

Consultant and Requester will develop a schedule and format for progress reports during the engagement. Requester will require Consultant to provide short-term deliverables as practicable. Include a work schedule indicating any milestones, meetings, and reviews needed during the planning process.

IV. PROFESSIONAL FEES

The Consultant will provide a lump sum fee for the work entailed. Also provide a loading chart indicating the person's hours by job title and task. Indicate all reimbursable or other charges outside the lump sum fee. Finally, include hourly rates for all staff members that might be used on this project if additional work is required.



Break the Fee Schedule as follows (can add more if needed):

- Recreational Plan Updates and Reviews – by municipality
- Needs Analysis
- Feasibility Study and Presentation

V. STAFFING

Include all key staff members to be used on the project. In addition list all sub-consultants. Provide biographies/resumes and any other information that you feel is pertinent.

VI. REFERENCES

Please provide at least three references (with contact information) of similar work provided by your firm and a summary of at least three case studies. Please provide twelve hard copies. Full case studies may be requested if necessary to complete our review.

VII. PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Consultant will bear all costs to prepare the RFP proposal, including travel expenses if incurred.

VIII. SELECTION/CONTRACTING PROCESS

The Requester will evaluate Consultant on the following areas of qualification (in no particular order of priority). Requester reserves the right to weigh the Selection Criteria at its sole discretion.

- Credit worthiness
- Qualifications of staff and experience
- Cost effectiveness
- Thought leadership
- Quality and feedback from references
- Flexibility
- Quality of the Consultant's proposal/presentation
- Project approach and availability to do the work
- Industry information
- Fit with the project team
- The requestor reserves the right of refusal to select any contractor. Low bid does not guarantee acceptance by the requestor.



IX. RFP CONTACT INFORMATION AND SCHEDULE

Consultant is instructed to send 12 hard copy of the proposal and one CD copy of the proposal to Liz Baker at Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, (113 Riverwalk Plaza, PO Box 224, Lowell, MI 49331) no later than 4:00 PM EDT, August 30, 2007. All proposals received after this date will not be included for evaluation by the Requester's project team.

Requester will attempt to follow the RFP schedule listed below but reserves the right to change based on its sole discretion. Questions regarding the project should be directed to: Gregory H Pratt, Superintendent, LOWELL AREA SCHOOLS (616- 987- 2501).

- RFP Release – August 13, 2007
- RFP Responses Due – August 30, 2007 by 4:00 PM EDT
- Short List – Sept. 6, 2007
- Vendor Presentations – September 11-12, 2007 at 7:00 – 8:00 PM EDT
- Vendor Selection – September 14, 2007
- Contract Negotiation – Week of September 17, 2007
- Project Begins – September 24, 2007
- Projected Project End Date – November 30, 2007 (preferred by November 21, 2007)

X. CONFIDENTIALITY

Documents will remain confidential and not be reproduced for any reason other than for the evaluation relative to this project.