

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**Master Planning & Due Diligence Services
Cherokee County
Recreation, Sports, and Tourism Property**

RFQ 2024-04



COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Cherokee County is seeking Statements of Qualification (SOQ) from professional consulting firms for Master Planning and Due Diligence Services related to recreation, sporting, and tourism-related economic development investments.

The County will select a firm to negotiate with using a qualifications-based selection process. Selections will be based on demonstrated experience and expertise in recreation, sports, and tourism-related land master planning, economic impact studies and due diligence. The selected firm must also demonstrate their ability to work in tandem with County staff, management, private developer, and other County stakeholders.

II. BACKGROUND

The selected Firm intends to serve, and Cherokee County intends to accept the selected Firm, as Cherokee County's independent contractor "Project Manager/Consultant" for purposes of the use Grant Funds related to Grant, to provide the funding of necessary feasibility and due diligence studies in support for establishment of a public regional sports tourism complex and conference/event center, including, for example, sports tourism, recreational fields, trails, amphitheaters, and community gathering spaces, and which could also include aspects of mixed-use, including, for example, housing, and commercial (including restaurant, retail, and office spaces) development, engineering/design and other development and pre-development-type items, and may also focus on one or more specific sites, including, for example, two sites each over approximately 250 acres, and for other similar and/or related uses, but which does not include any other pre-construction or construction activities (collectively, "Project"). Any changes in use of Grant Funds must be submitted in writing by selected Firm to Cherokee County, and approved by Cherokee County, which such approval shall not be unreasonably conditioned, delayed, or withheld.

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm shall be qualified and capable of accomplishing the following tasks:

(Please note that examples listed below are illustrative and are not an exhaustive list. The County welcomes input from respondents as to other tasks that should be considered.)

- **Due Diligence** – Conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), Boundary Survey, Preliminary Topographic Survey, Wetlands Delineation and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Verification, Cultural Resources Survey, Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation, and Preliminary Geotechnical Subsurface Exploration of the Properties.
- **Market Analysis** - Conduct a regional market analysis to evaluate sporting and tourism-related investment opportunities for the master planning process.
- **Site Evaluation** – Conduct physical and regulatory evaluation of the site to inform the master planning process.
- **Master Planning** – Develop a master plan for the property that maximizes the

- County's return on investment and is in harmony with adjacent development.
- **Conceptual Design** - Provide a conceptual-level design and cost construction estimate based upon the master plan.

IV. SCHEDULE

- RFQ Invitation Release Date/Advertisement 11/21/2023
- Submission for Questions and Clarifications 11/29/2023
- Response to Questions and Clarifications 12/1/2023
- Submission of Qualifications 12/7/2023
- Selection Committee's Recommendation 12/14/2023

V. CONTRACTED SERVICES AGREEMENT

Cherokee County's intent is that the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process will result in the execution of a contract. This RFQ and the qualification package submitted shall all be incorporated into the executed contract. It is anticipated that the contract will be executed in phases, beginning with due diligence work and master planning. As progress is made, and scope of the project becomes more definitive, additional phases of the contract will be executed in a logical sequence to maintain project momentum.

VI. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Submit three (3) hard copies of the SOQ by 5:00 PM (EST) on December 7, 2023, at Cherokee County, 110 Railroad Avenue, Gaffney, South Carolina 29340.

The proposal package shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope/box marked: Request for Qualifications – Cherokee County Recreation, Sports and Tourism Property and delivered to: Cherokee County, ATTN: Abi Reid, 110 Railroad Avenue, Gaffney, South Carolina 29340.

Responsibility for submitting proposals (including all documents requested herein) is solely and strictly that of the firm. Cherokee County is not responsible for delays in the delivery of mail, or delays caused by any other occurrence.

There will be no pre-submission meeting. Questions about this solicitation shall be submitted via email and will be answered until 5:00 PM (EST) on November 29, 2023. Questions received after this time will not be answered. Individual meetings with firms will not be accommodated.

VII. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL FORMAT AND CONTENTS

The firm will assemble a team of professionals with experience in all tasks outlined in the Scope of Services. The SOQ must clearly describe the credentials of the personnel who will perform the services. It must also contain a specific plan with timeline for completing the Scope of Services. The statement must include a technical approach that demonstrates a well-structured and reasonable work plan. Firms are encouraged to refine and/or expand the Scope of Services contained herein to reflect the manner the services would be performed. The SOQ should include identification of major issues or challenges that may be encountered and specific methods of dealing with the issue and avoiding such problems.

The SOQ shall be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper, side bound with Table of Contents and reference tabs for key sections. Statements shall be limited to twenty (20) single pages (utilizing front and back of each) except that the cover, section tabs/dividers and resumes are not included in this page limit. The minimum font size is 12 pt. Times New Roman font or 10 pt. in Arial font, with the exception of captions. The statements must include the following sections:

1. Introductory Letter

Submit a clear concise response identifying:

- a. Name of the firm and contact information;
- b. Primary contact person and his/her contact information;
- c. "Why the County should select your firm for these services";
- d. Addendums that might have been issued; and
- e. Signed by an authorized representative of the company which shall be interpreted to signify the firm's intent to comply with all the terms, conditions, and specifications set forth in this SOQ.

2. Company Profile

Provide the following information about your company:

- a. Identify the location of the corporate office;
- b. Identify the office locations where all team members are located; and
- c. Acknowledgement firm is licensed in South Carolina and provide licensure number.

3. Project Understanding and Approach

Provide a detailed description of the firm's understanding of the project. This description should include, at a minimum:

- a. Identify approach for dealing with tasks identified in the Scope of Services;
- b. Summary of general issues related to each key item identified in the Scope of Services;
- c. Specific issues or problems that were not considered or identified;
- d. Identify key, unique or special qualifications or approach that the firm wishes to be considered;
- e. Include a proposed schedule and milestones indicating the duration and relationships of tasks, key events and deliverables for each; and
- f. County staff will work closely with the firm throughout the entire process. Include a description of any assumptions that were made concerning the nature and extent of County staff contribution.

4. Project Team(s)

Provide detailed information to demonstrate expertise of the proposed team:

- a. Identify team members, their role and responsibility, and the approximate percentage each of these members will be providing;
- b. Project references and contact information should be included that demonstrate firm and team's capability;
- c. Persons from the principal firm and any sub-consultants should be included; and
- d. Provide specific recent examples of how the staff proposed collaborated in a team environment, including owners and contractors.

5. Qualifications and Experience

Firms shall submit the following to demonstrate their experience and qualification on the last five completed projects where the firm provided similar services. At a minimum, the project summaries shall contain:

- a. A brief description of the project scope and the services provided by the firm and their team; and
- b. Provide the name and telephone number of a contact person, employed by the project owner, familiar with the firm's work. (These may be contacted for further information and reference.)

VIII. SELECTION COMMITTEE AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

A selection committee consisting of County representatives and private developer will evaluate the SOQs. If necessary, a shortlist of firms may be invited to interview with the selection committee. If firms are interviewed, their responses will be included as part of the evaluation process.

The County will be the sole judge as to which SOQ(s) represents experience that will be of the most benefit to the County. SOQs will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Firm's Resources and Capability

Of particular importance is the relevant experience of the firm and its sub-consultants. The successful completion of similar projects in other locations will receive favorable evaluation. It is also essential that the proposal demonstrates the firm's ability to develop and maintain the project budget and schedule. Specific management procedures in these areas should be described. The firm's quality control program should be described and its successful use on other projects documented. *Maximum Points: 30*

2. Team's Qualifications and Experience

Similar experience of the key members that will be performing the actual project work will be considered; therefore, each key member of the project team must be identified and his or her qualifications described. The qualifications of the project manager should identify major projects completed, unique or innovative accomplishments, the time commitment and availability through completion of the project, and the office location from which he or she will work. Similar information should be provided for key discipline leaders. The manner the team will be managed in a cohesive manner to complete the work should be summarized. The ability of consultant staff to work together and with the County staff should be demonstrated. Moreover, firms need to provide any statements of conflict that may be relevant to the underlying project and completion of the study. *Maximum Points: 40*

3. Project Understanding and Approach

A thorough understanding of the scope of the project must be evident. The Scope of Work contained in this solicitation provides the general direction for the project. The SOQ should elaborate on this information and provide a detailed description of how the work will proceed. Major issues and tasks should be thoroughly described. Use of innovative techniques based on experience should be included. *Maximum Points: 30*

IX. EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT

After the interview process, the Selection Committee will rank the firms, highest to lowest, based on the evaluation criteria. Negotiations will commence with the highest ranked firm. If those negotiations fail, the County will then begin negotiations with the next highest ranked firm. The successful firm will enter into an agreement with Cherokee County as outlined herein. The County reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals.

X. RFQ QUESTIONS

Questions concerning this request for qualifications package shall be submitted via email in writing to Abi Reid at abi.reid@cherokeecountysc.com.