



**BUFFALO  
OLMSTED PARKS  
CONSERVANCY**

**Requests for Proposals**  
*for*  
**Conceptual Design Services**  
*at*  
**South Park Arboretum**  
**Nursery Complex**

February 13, 2023

**RFP Pre-Proposal Site Visit:** March 2, 2023, at 2:00 pm

**RFP Due Date:** April 10, 2023, at 1:00 pm

The *Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC)* is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, independent, community organization whose mission is stewarding Buffalo's historic park system to welcome and benefit all. Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is listed on the National Register for Historic Places.

## **I. Purpose |**

As part of the 2018 South Park Arboretum Restoration Feasibility Study, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) has identified 11-phases for restoration and future development of the South Park Arboretum. With Phase I complete, a South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex is proposed for Phase II of the Arboretum restoration. This complex will serve as a new gateway to the South Park Arboretum along the Ridge Road corridor, home to a tree and woody shrub container nursery, educational space, equipment storage space and office space for the Curator, operations staff, and future grounds supervisor.

## **II. Details |**

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) is requesting proposals from qualified, multidisciplinary design teams to provide the following: 1) existing site condition assessment, 2) prospective facility and infrastructure condition assessment, 3) cultural landscape and environmental requirements/permitting, 4) conceptual design plan/renderings, and 5) a general cost estimate for the proposed 1-acre South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex. Exemplary proposals will respect the mission of the Arboretum, create a cohesive vision, and highlight our unique history. Graphic conceptual designs will then be used to advance the project and secure funding for this new development. Firms must be licensed to do business in the State of New York. This contract will be for services to generate conceptual design plans for the proposed Nursery Complex project, located along the Ridge Road corridor of the South Park Arboretum in Buffalo, New York. Priority for projects moving into the design development stage will be determined at a later date.

## **III. Background |**

The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) is the first nonprofit organization in the nation to manage and operate an entire historic urban park system that consists of 850 acres of beautifully designed parks, parkways, and circles. Frederick Law Olmsted designed Buffalo's first Olmsted Park System. His "city within a park" concept is the first of its kind in the nation. The BOPC is an independent, community organization whose mission is stewarding Buffalo's historic park system to welcome and benefit all. Buffalo's Olmsted Park System is listed on the National Register for Historic Places.

The arboretum at South Park constitutes a small category of arboreta and associated gardens the Olmsted firm designed which included approximately 20 projects. Of those, about 15 projects produced design plans – South Park Arboretum is one of these, according to the National Park Service. Extensive planning for the Buffalo Park system was completed by Olmsted and his firm from the 1860s until the 1890s, creating a coordinated system of public parks and parkways. Unique to this park system was South Park Arboretum, an eclectic collection on par with the most notable arboreta of the late 19th century and early 20th century. The South Park plans of 1894-1895 are uniquely different from arboretum elements among other Olmsted designed parks of that era. Early photographs show a well-maintained open space with expansive and diverse plantings. The condition of the arboretum declined throughout the 20th century, causing the Buffalo Olmsted Parks

Conservancy in 2016 to initiate a South Park Arboretum Restoration Project Feasibility Study in the hope that the arboretum could be restored to the original Olmsted vision and regain its prominence in the arboretum and botanical garden community. The South Park Arboretum Restoration Feasibility Study was completed by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture (kzla) in 2018 and serves as a valuable resource in the 11-Phase Restoration process. Restoration of this historic Arboretum provides a rare opportunity to consider the realization of one of Olmsted's largest Arboretum designs.

The mission of the South Park Arboretum is to cultivate and collect trees, shrubs, and other plants from around the world, for interpretation and display across the historic Olmstedian landscape to promote wellbeing, foster curiosity and increase understanding of the natural environment for all people to enjoy. The vision of the Arboretum is to restore the South Park Arboretum to its original world-class glory through the curation of a highly anticipated tree collection by revitalizing this rare Olmstedian landscape, using Frederick Law Olmsted's 1895 planting plan and his democratic vision and philosophy that nature revives, as a guide.

As an arboretum, the park is a 155-acre landscape including a 27-acre lake and is one of the few Olmsted-designed parks of the time to include a formal botanical garden facility. Today that facility is known as the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, complete with its iconic Lord and Burnham Conservatory domes. Much of South Park's original layout and character, as designed by Olmsted remains intact - despite deferred maintenance over the past half century. Olmsted's impressive design and affinity for this arboretum set it apart through his legacy principles for creating a connection with nature as a form of respite and wellness, while providing an opportunity for the public to develop a growing understanding and appreciation for trees, shrubs, and aquatic plant collections.

Today, our plant collections include approximately 1,200 trees with a plan to add new accessions each year through future phasing. Plant collection categories include taxonomic, horticultural (gardening and landscaping), thematic (bog garden), display and demonstration (systemic gardens), evaluation (adaptability to Western New York (WNY) climate) and heritage (Olmsted originals).

#### **IV. Scope of Work |**

The consultant/multidisciplinary design team will be required to develop the following:

- 1) an existing site condition assessment
  - including soil analysis for container nursery
- 2) a prospective facility and infrastructure condition assessment
  - including water, sewer, electricity and gas
- 3) cultural landscape and environmental requirements/permitting
  - including the ability to assist with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) consultation
- 4) conceptual design plan and renderings
- 5) a general cost estimate for the proposed 1-acre South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex including a tree and woody-shrub container nursery.

The proposed site for the Nursery Complex is approximately a 1-acre site, with an adjacent baseball field. The Olmsted Park System is listed on the National Register for Historic Places, thereby all proposed structures must align with the historic context of the site and design to reflect SHPO consultation, given the proposed site is part of a larger significant cultural landscape. Interested firms should be prepared to work with State funds. Proposed structures must offer a sustainable solution that will qualify for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification and provide accessibility for all patrons.

## V. Project Objectives |

The objectives for Buffalo Olmsted Parks' Arboretum Nursery Complex Project include:

- Reimagine the Ridge Road corridor and southwest entry point to the South Park Arboretum through the identification of a new gateway and park entrance by restoring and enhancing the park's edges.
  - Exceptional proposals will consider welcoming park-users and visitors who frequent the Arboretum via all modes of transport (i.e., walking, bicycle, public transit and car).
  - Articulate the Arboretum's Ridge Road entrance as the new major gateway.
  - Enhance the park's southwest entrance for pedestrians and park visitors as a welcoming, inviting space, connecting the South Buffalo and Lackawanna communities.
- Determine the suitability of the current site conditions in the re-establishment of a tree and woody shrub container nursery and identify what [soil] modifications are necessary.
- Establish the layout and general footprint of the proposed Nursery Complex facility.
  - Identify key access pathways
- Develop a prospective facility and infrastructure condition assessment
  - Assessment to include water, sewer, electricity and gas hookups.
- Identify the capital investment of the Nursery Complex project and develop a cost estimate to reflect the programming requested.

A South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex is proposed for Phase II of the Arboretum restoration. This complex will serve as a new gateway/entrance to the South Park Arboretum, educational space, office space for the Curator/future grounds supervisor and maintenance/ equipment storage space along the Ridge Road corridor and home to a tree and woody shrub container nursery. A secured arboretum container nursery is needed to care for and protect new plant accessions and stage them until they are of sufficient size to plant on site or until the phase is ready to implement. The nursery can also allow for multiple plants of the same species to be grown to select the best specimen or have replacement plants. A container grown nursery is ideal because container seedlings are grown at high densities, less land is required than for a bareroot (BR) nursery. Container nurseries can be constructed on land with low agricultural value that would be unsuitable for BR seedling production. The following describes key design considerations:

**Design Considerations:**

- LEED certified
- Historic nod to Superintendent’s/Botanical Director for the Buffalo Park Commission (see attached BOPC archives photos)
- Accessible facility

**Key Design Elements:**

- entry vestibule
- office space
- janitor’s/maintenance closet + utility sink
- conference room
- subfloor/basement storage
- large and small equipment storage (hand tools)
  - Leaf blowers and rakes

**Proposed Forestry Equipment:**

- tree pruner pole saw
- other equipment

<b>Equipment Type:</b>	<b>Model #:</b>	<b>Storage Space Required (dimensions):</b>	<b>Square Footage (SF) Total:</b>
TORO Grounds Master		107" x 53" x 89"	39
TORO Grounds Master 325-D		94" x 47" x 50"	31
Echo (string trimmer)	SRM 230	71"x 10" x10"	5
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TORO Workman gas (2)		128" x 65" x 76"	116
TORO	4500	146" x 113" x 85"	115
John Deere gas mower		75" x 62" x 55"	32
Fairway mower		72" x 100"	50
Greens mower		39" x 37" x 47"	10
Zero turn		48" x 52"	17
Ford Pick-up truck		212" x 77" x 72"	113
Jacobson r-311t		144" x 139" x 84"	139
Golf Carts (2)		92" x 48" 75"	62
			<b>734 SF</b>

## VI. RFP Consultant Responsibilities |

This list reflects the minimum requirements of the consultants' work responsibilities. Please review, expand and adjust where necessary for your firm's proposal.

- Review project site and background information
- Gather additional information for possible design solutions
- Prepare at least 2 conceptual designs for review
- Present the conceptual designs for review
- Prepare a final conceptual design package based on client feedback
- Partake in Arbor Day Press Event
- Prepare cost estimates based on the final conceptual designs
- Facilitate key stakeholder and BOPC staff design charrette
- Prepare a color graphic representation of the final design concept
- Attend 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Frederick Law Olmsted Gala

## VII. RFP Submittal Requirements and Contents |

- One hard copy and one electronic copy of each of the following:

**Cover Letter:** The letter must be a statement signed by a representative of the company who is duly authorized to execute and submit this RFP. The letter must also state that if awarded this project they will enter into an agreement with the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) to provide all the services outlined in their proposal within the required timeline and budget and comply with the terms of the contract that will later be negotiated with the BOPC. Please identify the multidiscipline design team, firm(s) including name(s), address, phone number and contact person (1-2 pages).

**Approach to Project:** Provide a description of your approach to the design process as it relates to your review of the project site visit and background information. Give a brief overview of your company and highlight your background as it applies to this type of project. List completed similar projects or studies including size, location, and contact person for reference (2 minimum). Clearly identify the project deliverables and your timetable for completion. Describe your approach for the Nursery Complex project (2 pages).

**Design Team:** Identify all key team project members with their resume, their role and time commitment to this project, for your staff and any consultants. Companies are encouraged to create a multidiscipline team that may require collaboration with other design firms to provide BOPC and South Park Arboretum (SPA) with a complete package of conceptual designs and cost estimates. At a minimum, BOPC expects a NYS licensed architect and a NYS licensed landscape architect. BOPC welcomes and prefers multidiscipline design teams with members skilled in horticulture and engineering. Design professionals with experience in both historic landscapes and historic structures are preferred. The desired design team will demonstrate experience in planning for park/arboretum operations in planning the future facility. Provide an organization chart identifying disciplines, specific personnel and

roles for those who would be assigned to this project. Also, provide resumes and workload for people assigned to this project. Please indicate the primary contact for this project team.

**Additional Services:** Identify any additional needed services that should be provided by the Arboretum or through a separate contract if they are not provided through your proposal. BOPC is working in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and will submit the project scope of work to the Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) for review. Findings will be shared with shortlisted firms. Prospective firms must be able to assist with SHPO consultation work.

**Consultant Fees:** Submit a proposal that includes the cost of services as follows:

- Lump sum fee for services outlined in your proposal to complete all the work identified in our scope of work, including any outside consultant fees.
- List those items that are considered reimbursable costs and estimate the dollar amount for each.
- Identify any tasks or services that cannot be quantified at this time and list an hourly rate with a maximum not to exceed cost.

**References and Experience:** Provide a list of three projects completed within the last 5 years in which you have provided similar services. Preference should be given to a project of similar scope and size. For each project include the following: project name and address, your firm's role and cost of services, year completed and construction cost, contact person (name, position, phone and e-mail). Provide images of work completed by your firm applicable to this project that demonstrates your company's design aesthetic and proficiency. List completed similar projects or studies including size, location, and contact person for reference (2 minimum). Describe what makes your firm uniquely qualified for this project (1-3 pages).

**Claims and Suits:** Please provide detailed information with your proposal whether your firm is currently involved in any litigation from past or current projects and/or if your company has ever failed to complete any work it has been awarded.

## **VIII. RFP Submittal Instructions |**

- Please submit one bound copy by mail, and one digital PDF version by email, of qualifications documentation to the address and/or email below.
- Mailed submittals to be delivered in a sealed envelope marked:  
**"South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex Project"**
- Submittals to be sent to:
  - ATTN: Margaret Lapp, South Park Arboretum Curator  
Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC)  
Parkside Lodge  
84 Parkside Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14214

- Emailed submittals to be remitted to:
  - Email: [margaret@bfloparks.org](mailto:margaret@bfloparks.org)
- Questions to be submitted in writing via email to Margaret Lapp, South Park Arboretum Curator, at [margaret@bfloparks.org](mailto:margaret@bfloparks.org) no later than March 10<sup>th</sup>.

**IX. RFP Conceptual Design Timetable:**

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| • Release RFP  | 2/13/2023               |
| • Pre-proposal Site Visit                            | 3/2/2023                |
| • RFP Questions Due                                  | 3/10/2023               |
| • RFP Answers Provided by BOPC by                    | 3/21/2023               |
| • RFP Submittals Due                                 | 4/10/2023               |
| • Presentation/Interview Firms                       | 4/17 – 4/20, 2023       |
| • Award Contract                                     | 4/25/2023               |
| • Press Conference Arbor Day Announcement            | 4/28/2023               |
| • Design Charette for Nursery Complex                | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter |
| • Submit completed Conceptual Design Work            | 8/22/2023               |
| • 21 <sup>st</sup> Annual Frederick Law Olmsted Gala | 9/8/2023                |

**X. Administrative Information |**

**Pre-Proposal Site Visit:** The Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) will host a pre-proposal general information and site visit meeting on Thursday, March 2nd, 2023, to allow all selected firms the opportunity to view the proposed project site and ask questions. Key staff members will be present to assist with reviewing the site and provide background information. The meeting will begin at 2:00 pm at the Lackawanna Public Library in the Community Room, adjacent to the South Park Arboretum, at 560 Ridge Road, Buffalo, NY 14218.

**Receipt of Proposals (RFP):** One printed copy and an electronic copy of the proposal must be received on Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at or before 1:00 pm at the Parkside Lodge, 84 Parkside Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214, and identified:

**Request for Proposals – Conceptual Design Services  
Parkside Lodge  
Attention: Margaret Lapp, Curator**

**Owner Rights:** The BOPC reserves the right to accept or reject either in whole or part, any and all submittals in response to this request, with or without cause, as is determined to be in the best interest of the South Park Arboretum. The BOPC reserves the right to contact any references or clients listed in the documents for information in evaluating the consultant’s performance on previous projects. All materials submitted for this RFP become the property of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy (BOPC) and will only be returned at their option, upon request. The BOPC is not responsible for costs incurred by the consultants prior to issuance of a written agreement.

**Acceptance of Proposal Content:** The contents of the successful proposal may become the basis for a contract with the consultant. Failure of the chosen consultant to accept these obligations in contract or a similar instrument may result in cancellation of the award and removal from future proposal solicitations.

**Contract Products:** All products produced in response to the contract resulting from this proposal will be the sole property of the BOPC. This includes any original and reproducible drawings prepared for the project.

## **XI. Presentation and Interview Guidelines |**

Interviews with selected consultants will be held April 17-20th, 2023 in the Parkside Lodge. The consultants will be notified by April 14th, as to whether they have been selected for an interview. The specific date and time of the interviews will be determined after reviewing the written proposals. The presentation and interview will be allotted no more than one hour. The consultant's presentation should be no more than 40 minutes, to allow sufficient time for questions by both parties.

## **XII. Proposal Evaluation |**

The project proposal will be evaluated by a staff team using the following basic criteria:

- Completeness of the proposal with items requested in the RFP
- Proposed methodology and creative process
- Previous background and experience
- Cost effective approach to the project
- Cost of services

## **XIII. Reference Material |**

The following reference materials have been attached with the RFP:

- South Park Arboretum Restoration Feasibility Study:
  - <https://view.publitas.com/bopc/sparp-feasibility-study-full/page/1>

## **XIV. Contact |**

All questions regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Margaret Lapp, MSLA, MPH  
South Park Arboretum Curator  
Phone: 716-838-1249 ext. 17  
Email: [Margaret@bfloparks.org](mailto:Margaret@bfloparks.org)

## **XV. Press Conference, Arbor Day Announcement |**

If awarded the contract for conceptual design services, the selected design team will be invited to attend the 2023 Arbor Day event at South Park Arboretum on Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup> (Arbor Day). The selected design firm/team will be introduced publicly at the Press Conference Event at the South Park Arboretum. Attendance is required.

#### **XVI. Design Charrette for South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex**

The selected design firm/team will be asked to facilitate and run an interactive design charrette for the advancement of the South Park Arboretum Nursery Complex. This is a key function of conceptual design development. The date and time of the charrette will be agreed upon by both BOPC and the selected design firm/team and set for Q2 (May or June 2023). BOPC will aid the selected firm in organizing the logistics of the design charrette. The intent is to effectively engage the public, BOPC staff and key stakeholders in a visioning exercise for the new gateway to the South Park Arboretum, the Nursery Complex. Key concepts and ideas are expected to be considered in the design concepts, as a result.

#### **XVII. Post Design Key Function | 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Frederick Law Olmsted Gala |**

The design firm/team awarded with the contract will be responsible for the printing and display of final conceptual design plans and displays for the Nursery Complex at South Park Arboretum as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Frederick Law Olmsted Gala; BOPC's largest fundraising event that will be held at the South Park Arboretum in 2023 on September 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### **XVIII. Due Date |**

To reply to this RFP, submit a hard copy (1) of a proposal, and a digital copy in .PDF form outlining how your firm would meet the project tasks and selection criteria outlined below. The Pre-Proposal site visit will be held on March 2, 2023, at South Park Arboretum at 2 PM. Return proposals no later than 1 PM on April 10th, 2023, to **Margaret Lapp, South Park Arboretum Curator, 84 Parkside Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214.**

*An evaluation of the submitting firms will be conducted internally, and a list of firms that meet criteria may be interviewed as necessary. The Conservancy reserves the right to reject proposals or parts thereof. The Conservancy also reserves the right to waive irregularities and inconsistencies or take whatever other action that is in the Conservancy's best interest. Statement of Non-Commitment Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of proposals responding to the RFP. Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and re-advertise. All proposals become the property of the Conservancy.*