

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
Green Stormwater Infrastructure Project Management

For RainReady Communities
(Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale, Robbins)

August 29, 2022

CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TECHNOLOGY



Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Project Management for RainReady Communities

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) invites firms who have experience with managing design, engineering, and installation of community-based green infrastructure programs to submit qualifications to provide services for planning, design, engineering, and implementation of the RainReady Plan Implementation for the Calumet Corridor Plan.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

CNT is seeking an experienced firm to help implement the [RainReady Plan for the Calumet Corridor](#), which is based on a series of plans developed in 2017 in six municipalities in south Cook County: Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale, and Robbins. These plans were prepared by CNT with extensive involvement by community members. Through funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Cook County has now committed close to \$6 million to the implementation of the recommendations in these plans. The intention of this initiative is to implement many of the green infrastructure recommendations from the RainReady Plans to decrease hazardous flooding, thereby improving stormwater infrastructure in this region and increasing the environmental sustainability and the economic vitality of these communities. CNT will be managing this overall initiative and seeks a firm to turn recommendations within the RainReady plans into on-the-ground, installed improvements. Per federal and county stipulations, all funding must be spent in ways consistent with the recommendations of these plans and must be obligated by **December 31, 2024** and expended by **September 30, 2026**.

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to solicit potential firms for their experience, expertise, and capacity to help administer this program. CNT is conducting this procurement as an RFQ rather than an RFP process and is not requesting a specific project proposal or cost. Rather, we ask for firms to demonstrate their qualifications in the different areas of specialization that are required to successfully implement this program. The selected firm may not be asked to take on every activity listed in this RFQ; CNT may take on some with its own staff, and other activities may be subcontracted to other firms through a later procurement.

Overall, we seek a firm who can clearly demonstrate:

- Ability to manage a green stormwater infrastructure investment program from start to finish, including design engineering, cost estimates, completing successful installation of projects on the ground, and developing monitoring and maintenance plans for each project
- Commitment to equitable, community-led green infrastructure investment processes
- Familiarity with the communities involved in the RainReady Calumet Corridor plans
- Experience administering federal funding and complying with federal reporting requirements
- Commitment to make this project a priority in order to obligate all funding by December 31, 2024

This contract will require firms and personnel with a high degree of experience in managing medium to large scale green infrastructure investment programs. The depth and amount of expertise will be a critical factor in determining the ability of a consultant to provide the professional services that this work requires. More detail is provided in the Scope of Services section of this RFQ.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Firms should demonstrate the following competencies. These may be demonstrated through the firm's own staff or through the identification of subcontractors. Proposers are advised to assemble a team qualified to perform all project work tasks including planning, design, engineering, bidding, construction management and post construction monitoring. Please note that not all of these may ultimately be conducted by the selected firm. Some will include significant involvement by CNT; others may be procured through further contracting led by the selected firm. However, we would like proposers to demonstrate competencies in each of these.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Project Management
 - Manage technical teams, coordinate, and prioritize work to find efficiencies

- Develop a program framework that describes how sites will be selected, how program operations will be conducted, how the program will support and tap into other programs, and how the program will use funding on the required schedule
- Federal and County Funding Administration
 - Assist CNT in complying with all detailed reporting, contracting, and other requirements
- Reporting on Metrics
 - Develop and track performance indicators to measure success towards project goals
- Equity Alignment
 - Use elements of the [Equity Guide for Green Stormwater Infrastructure Practitioners](#) in project implementation
- Communications and Outreach
 - Develop communications strategy and lead communications activities
 - Assist CNT with community engagement and outreach
- Planning
 - Develop a planning process to identify specific GSI project locations based on the recommendations of the RainReady Calumet plans, current community support, feasibility, and other factors
- Field Investigation / Data Collection / Surveying
 - Provide survey, geotechnical, and environmental analysis as needed for prioritization and design
- Design and Preliminary Engineering Services
 - Preliminary engineering for stormwater management projects to address local flooding problems identified in the RainReady Calumet plan
 - Prepare preliminary design reports, drawings and specifications, and cost estimates
 - Provide landscape architecture services as needed
 - Develop 30% plans and concept-level cost estimates
- Land Acquisition and Easement Assistance
 - Permitting, recognizing that projects will need to coordinate with multiple municipalities, landowners, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD)
 - Securing real estate permissions
- Final Engineering Services / Engineering Services During Construction
 - Prepare final design plans and specifications, and opinions of probable construction costs
 - The scope of services may include data review and field work, verification of preliminary/existing design and alternative development, permit applications, preparation of plans and specifications, cost estimating, and preparing operations and maintenance plans
- Bid and Award Services
 - Procure services using government rules for construction (including engineering services during construction) and operation/maintenance
 - This may include procurement of design-build services or individual bidding of projects
 - Develop and ensure strong labor standards including project labor agreements, community benefits agreements, and/or payments of appropriate wages
- Workforce Development
 - Create a workforce development strategy to ensure meaningful work experiences by participants in local workforce training programs in multiple aspects of the projects including planning, design, construction, and post-construction phases
 - Assist with providing necessary training for organizations with maintenance responsibility for completed project sites
- Construction Management
 - Owner's representation
 - Post-Award construction management services for local stormwater projects
 - Review of contractor submittals and shop drawings, responding to contractor requests for information, change order assistance, and field survey and as-built drawing verification
 - Post-construction inspections of completed GSI projects may also be requested
 - Project quality assurance certification

- Management of Vegetation Establishment and GSI Maintenance
 - Development of a strategy for post-construction site assessments, monitoring, and care plan maintenance
 - Management of contracts with firms for up to two years of maintenance, through September 30, 2026

Firms are NOT expected to include construction firms on their teams at this point. Rather, the selected firm is expected to lead the identification and selection of firms to conduct the construction, either through individual procurements or larger design-build contracts. This will be scoped out further with CNT following selection.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Firms wishing to be considered in the consultant selection process must submit an electronic proposal package **no later than 5 pm Central time on Friday, September 30, 2022**. No proposals will be accepted after this date and time.

CNT has implemented online proposal submissions for this project. **Only electronic submissions will be accepted.** Please see the next section entitled “SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS” on how to submit a proposal.

CNT will not be liable for any costs incurred by the respondents in replying to this RFQ. In addition, CNT is not liable for any costs for work or services performed by the selected consultant prior to a written Notice to Proceed. CNT reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive informalities or irregularities in the selection process.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please include the following documents in your proposal:

- Transmittal Letter (1 page maximum) on company letterhead clearly identifying the firm name, address, and telephone number. The Transmittal Letter shall be signed by a person authorized to submit a proposal.
- Overall Qualifications of Firm / Team (4 page maximum) – aligning with tasks and expected responsibilities.
- Project Manager / Key Personnel (4 page maximum) – including alignment of personnel with tasks. Provide a chart showing key personnel involvement. Provide the name and qualifications of the Project Manager (PM) to be assigned to this project. Include the PM’s experience with projects that best illustrate his/her expertise to perform the requested services while meeting project schedules and budgets. Provide the identity and qualifications of Key Personnel (both prime and subconsultants) to work on this project. Include the experience of Key Personnel that best illustrates their expertise to perform the requested services.
- Project Approach (8 page maximum) – aligning with tasks and responsibilities outlined in this RFQ, plus general thoughts. Firms are requested to provide a narrative description of the approach they will use to work with CNT on this project. Please provide sufficient detail so the proposed project approach can be readily understood, while remaining within the target page count. The proposed project approach should include a brief statement of project understanding, a project management approach describing the specific techniques to perform the tasks outlined in the Scope of Work, and a specific focus on how your approach will advance equity. Identify key issues that would need to be addressed to deliver the proposed services.
- Sample Projects (6 page maximum) – provide 3 examples of similar projects in scope and scale (1-2 pages each) performed by your team within the last five years. The examples should include: the nature of involvement in the project; any special environmental, technical or political challenges involved in the project; how the challenges were addressed; implementation of sustainable principles and practices; any community equity focused efforts; the name, phone number, and email address of the owner's representative in charge of the project; the Consultant’s contracted amount for the project; the total project cost; and when the project was performed.
- Resumes (2 page maximum per project manager and each key person; no more than 4 total resumes).
- Hourly rates for each identified staff person (1 page maximum).

- MBE/WBE/VBE/SDVBE/PDBE Involvement (2 page maximum) – If applicable, please provide proof of certification letter from certifying entity.

All proposals should contain concise written material and may contain illustrations. Please do not submit marketing brochures or other materials not directly related to this project.

Please submit the proposal by email to Brandon Evans, bevans@cnt.org, by **5 pm Central time on September 30, 2022**. Please include the phrase “**RainReady RFQ**” at the front of the subject line.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following information will form the basis of the evaluation. Each of these items will be given equal weight in the evaluation.

- Overall qualifications of team. The project team will be evaluated based on its demonstrated ability and experience of the firm to conduct the project as described in the Scope of Services. This will be primarily based on its experience on previous projects involving work of this nature, as demonstrated through the sample projects included and the description of the firm’s experience.
- Qualifications of key staff. The experience and credentials of the proposed project manager, as well as the professional qualifications and experience of the task leaders and other personnel that will perform the work.
- Project approach. The evaluation team will evaluate each firm’s understanding of the scope of the work, familiarity with the context in which they will be working, and ability to offer innovative ideas or alternatives. This will be demonstrated through the project approach section of the proposal.

VENDOR ENGAGEMENT AND QUESTIONS

CNT will not be hosting a vendor meeting for this procurement. All questions related to this RFQ must be directed by email to Brandon Evans, at bevans@cnt.org by **no later than 5 pm Central time on Monday, September 19, 2022**. Questions directed to other contacts at CNT will not be recognized. CNT will endeavor to answer all questions in writing by **Friday, September 23, 2022**.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTICIPATION

This contract does not have a specific DBE requirement, but firms with DBE status are encouraged to apply.

SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

The proposals received in response to this request will be evaluated by CNT staff. This team will evaluate the proposals using the proposal evaluation criteria outlined herein (except compensation). Depending upon the thoroughness of the proposals and because of time constraints, CNT may select a consultant based upon the initial proposal submittal. Depending on the qualifications and project approach submitted, CNT may or may not choose to interview potential firms to gather additional information.

CNT will select a consultant based on the proposals received and may communicate with the highest-rated proposer seeking clarification to any part of the proposal deemed necessary or interview the highest-rated proposer. If CNT intends to hold interviews, one or more proposers will be contacted to schedule an interview. Information obtained through written communication or interviews will be used to further evaluate the proposals. The initial scores awarded for proposals are subject to change based on written communications and interviews, if held.

Following selection of the highest rated proposer, a letter will be sent to all proposers informing them of CNT’s selection. CNT will negotiate final scope and contract terms with the highest-rated proposer. Upon successful negotiations, CNT will enter into a contract with the selected firm.

The following is the proposed schedule for this project, including anticipated timeframes for selection and award:

August 29, 2022 - Issue RFQ
September 19, 2022 – Deadline to submit questions
September 30, 2022 - Deadline for receipt of qualifications
Early October, 2022 - Selection by CNT
October 2022 - Contract negotiations
November 2022 - Notice to proceed
December 2024 - All funds required to be obligated
September 2026 - Construction required to be completed

INSURANCE AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Proposers should be prepared to provide proof of insurance coverage required by CNT. CNT's selected contractor will be expected to provide general and professional liability insurance and workers' compensation insurance coverage for all of its employees involved in the performance of this contract. CNT's selected contractor shall provide and maintain, at contractor's own expense sufficient insurance coverage to protect any funds provided to contractor from loss due to theft, fraud and/or undue physical damage. Contractors that are self-insured shall maintain excess coverage over and above its self-insured retention limits. The selected contractor will need to comply with standard federal and county requirements.