



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

# MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR BEARGRASS PRESERVE AT CHEROKEE PARK

**Submit to:** Olmsted Parks Conservancy  
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Louisville, Ky 40213  
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### Overview:

Olmsted Parks Conservancy is soliciting proposals (RFP) from consultant teams to provide professional services for landscape architecture, civil engineering, architecture, management and maintenance planning, and natural resource management as needed for the development of a Landscape Design and a Management/Maintenance Master Plan for Beargrass Preserve, a 25-acre tract situated in the Alta Vista neighborhood adjacent to historic Cherokee Park and the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Beargrass Preserve is bordered by Alta Vista Road on the northeastern edge, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary on the north, and Beargrass Road and Cherokee Park on the southwestern edge.

### Park History:

The property was once part of a larger parcel that was owned by the Norton family. Beargrass Preserve is on the former site of Norton Hall, home to the George Norton family. Mr. Norton's sisters lived next door at Garden Court. The property was gifted to the University of Louisville in 1947 and the School of Music operated out of Garden Court. The Louisville Presbyterian Seminary purchased the property in 1963. Norton Hall was razed, and 7 dormitory buildings were built in its place.

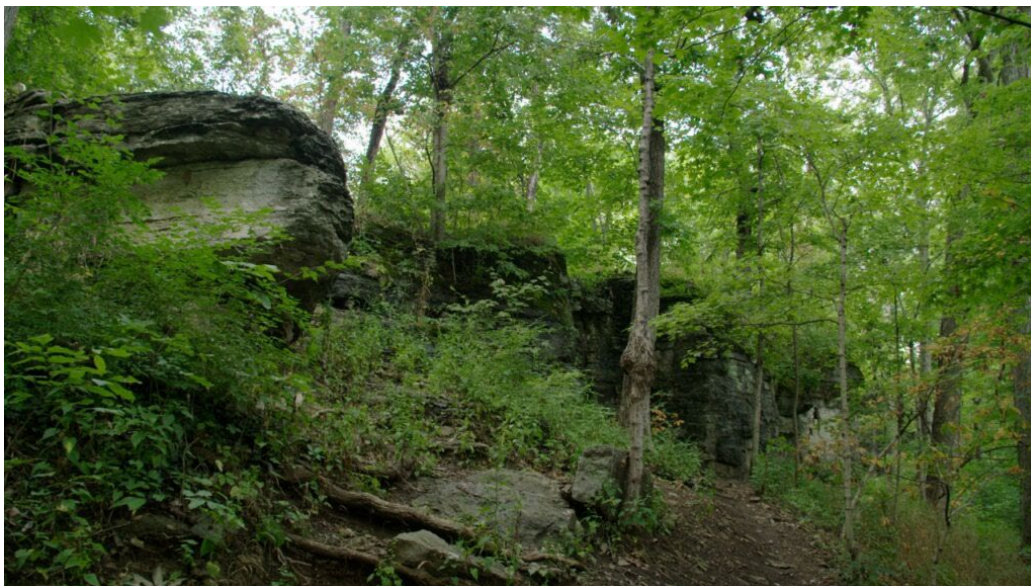
In 2021, The Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary listed approximately 25 acres of their 50-acre campus for sale. Numerous developers were interested in the property and plans were drawn up for a subdivision with up to 75 single family homes. In response, neighbors Norman and Belita Noltemeyer gave a historic \$8 million gift to Olmsted Parks Conservancy, enabling us to purchase the property and protect the land in perpetuity.

The property is adjacent to Cherokee Park, a 400-acre park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted in 1891. The park is part of Louisville's Olmsted Park system consisting of 17 parks and 6 parkways. It was the fourth and most fully realized park system ever designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. After Mr. Olmsted's retirement, his son, John Charles Olmsted, took over the Louisville project, ending with the design of Seneca Park in 1935. Encompassing over 2200 acres, Louisville's Olmsted Park system is an intrinsic part of daily life for Louisvillians, regardless of race, income, or background.

The design of Beargrass Preserve is an opportunity to add to this historic park system. This will be the greatest land addition to Cherokee Park in over a century.

The property has approximately 9 acres of woodlands with multi-use trails. Prior to OPC's purchase, this property had been treated as an extension of Cherokee Park and indeed, many users likely assumed it was park property. The property has dramatic scenic beauty with limestone cliffs and the Middle Fork of Beargrass Creek flowing through the woods. The wooded limestone cliffs are home to a large diversity of herbaceous plants including several that are uncommon for the area. The Master Plan should include ideas on how to protect these sensitive ecological areas while at the same time allowing access for interpretive purposes. The Master Plan should also include ideas on how to use Beargrass Creek for environmental educational purposes. The Creek represents a significant drainage of approximately 25 square miles of Jefferson County. It is one of the three forks of the Beargrass Creek drainage system and flows through two of our Olmsted parks.

The site of the dorms is a generally flat hilltop with vistas into Cherokee Park. The southwestern edge of the property is bordered by Cherokee Park, the northwestern border of the property is shared with the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and the northeastern border is a quiet residential neighborhood with expansive lots.



### About OPC:

Olmsted Parks Conservancy's mission is to restore, enhance and forever protect our Olmsted parks and parkways, connecting nature and neighborhood. We value diversity in all its forms for the same reason we value biodiversity in our parks: it makes communities more resilient, sustainable, and vibrant. Our parks are an intrinsic part of Louisville, and, as an organization striving for inclusivity, we commit to fostering diversity and respect both in nature and neighborhoods.

Since we were founded in 1989, we've partnered with Louisville Parks and Recreation and overseen over \$50 million of investment into our parks and parkways.

The acquisition of Beargrass Preserve marks the first time that we have owned land and have full responsibility for its creation, development, investment, and ongoing care and maintenance.

### Purpose:

The purpose of this RFP is for the development of a Landscape Design and Management/Maintenance Master Plan for Beargrass Preserve. The Master Plan should be based on the guiding principles of Frederick Law Olmsted while addressing present day issues and current needs as identified with public input. The addition of facilities (i.e., OPC offices, event venue, Olmsted library) shall be investigated as a part of the master plan development. The Master Plan shall be developed and coordinated with OPC for participation and review.

### Areas of analysis:

Hydrology – The plan shall include a detailed analysis of stormwater runoff from the site and make recommendations for possible incorporation of green infrastructure to reduce future runoff. A detailed analysis of current runoff from the Presbyterian Theological Seminary property should be included in this section. Currently, there are several locations where runoff from Seminary parking lots and rooftops drain across Beargrass Preserve and ultimately flow into Beargrass Creek. There is significant erosion occurring on steep wooded slopes as a result. The Master Plan should include an evaluation of the flood prone nature of Beargrass Creek and how this affects the adjacent flood plain. The plan shall make recommendations for educational and interpretive opportunities for interacting with the creek and its riparian zone.

Land use – The plan shall include a hydrological analysis and evaluation of site development for roads, walking paths, buildings, etc. Beargrass Preserve includes a significant amount of topographical relief with a relatively small flat area at the point of highest elevation. This

plan shall include an analysis of how this topographical relief can be used to enhance passive and active recreational activities.

Circulation – The plan shall include an analysis of potential pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns suitable for all phases of site development.

### **Visioning and Engagement:**

The master planning process shall engage a variety of interested entities, stakeholders, public officials, neighborhood associations, park user groups, and neighbors. At least two public input sessions shall be hosted by OPC and the design team for engaging park users in the planning process. The public engagement process should be creative and thoughtful to maximize positive input and productive outcomes.

### **Scope of Work:**

OPC would like the Master Plan project completed in approximately 9 months. The scope of work to be provided by the consultant includes the following:

#### Master Plan Development

- An analysis and summary of historic design approach.
- The Master Plan shall be developed with reference to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. A cultural and historic evaluation of the property is required.
- The Master Plan shall address Olmsted design principles.
- Determine regulatory and zoning requirements applicable to the project.
- A survey and assessment of existing site conditions, including utilities. Geotechnical exploration and field survey will not be required for the Master Plan.
- A tree survey will be necessary for planning purposes and inclusion in the final plan.
- Evaluate drainage issues, if applicable.
- Integration of green infrastructure / low impact development options.
- A community engagement process with a minimum of (2) guided public input sessions. The first will be a picnic at the park to introduce the master plan process and present the history of the park and opportunities available. The second session will present at least two conceptual models of site development for review and comment.
- Further development of concept plan alternatives for OPC review.
- A final plan with elevations, sections and perspectives, rendered as needed to illustrate the park conceptual design.

- The Master Plan final report shall include a cost opinion for the primary concept and include a maintenance cost opinion for site features such as landscape plantings, trees, turf, drainage structures, etc. The final report shall also include a phasing plan.

### Submittal Requirements and Criteria

Interested firms are encouraged to submit their RFP's which shall include the following information:

- Master Plan project approach,
- Firm's contact information,
- Subcontracting firms to be included on the project team and their respective roles,
- Name and assignment of key personnel,
- Summary and **photo documentation** of firm's recent experience,
- Summary and **photo documentation** of the work of **key personnel** with similar or representative projects. Provide information on task, person assigned, similar or representative project experience,
- A narrative describing the project approach,
- Ability to meet timelines and integrate this project into the firm's present workload,
- References: names and telephone numbers of previous clients with a description of the type of project completed, the time frame for the process, and the date completed.

**PROPOSALS SHALL BE EVALUATED BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

**Qualifications (40 points)**

- **Minimum qualification** (Pass/Fail) – Is the Master Plan team capable of meeting the basic requirements laid out in the RFP?
- **Technical capabilities** (20 pts) – How well can the Master Plan team fulfill the scope of work provided above?
- **Vendor Experience** (20 pts) – Has the Master Plan team successfully completed comparable projects?

**Planning (40 points)**

- **Schedule** (10 pts) – How does the proposed timeline for Master Plan completion compare to other team proposals? How does the timeline match up with OPC's expectations?
- **Project approach** (20 pts) – Does the project approach address all items of the project scope and all items of the submittal requirements?
- **Reputation and customer references** (10 pts) – Past performance is a measure of customer satisfaction on other projects and can provide clarity on what to expect with contractor.

**Social policies (20 points)**

- **MBE/WBE/DisBE** (8 pts) – Is this provider registered through state/local disadvantaged/ woman-owned / minority-owned business enterprise database?
- **Diversity and sustainability** (4 pts) – Does this provider have policies and practices that align with OPC values for environmental sustainability and diversity?
- **Local vs. global** (8 pts) – Does this provider have local offices/personnel? Are they able to complete the work without major relocation?