

Cherokee Park Natural Surface Trail Restoration, PHASE 2

Louisville, Kentucky

Overview

The Olmsted Parks Conservancy (OPC) and Louisville Parks and Recreation (LPR) are soliciting request for qualifications (RFQ) from professional natural surface trail building organizations for a natural surface trail implementation project in Cherokee Park, a Frederick Law Olmsted designed park in Louisville, Ky. In 2019, OPC and LPR hired a consultant team to create a natural surface trail plan that included recommended trail concepts for hiking, running, and cycling in Cherokee Park, a heavily used Olmsted park. The plan was guided by the following four principles: environmental sustainability, social sustainability, economic sustainability, and historic integrity. The overarching goal of the plan is to provide a sustainable park trail system that will carry forward Olmsted's historic vision of equitable use in the natural areas for all park visitors.

Background

Cherokee Park - Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted along with his son and stepson in the late 1800's. Original 1897 and 1935 park designs illustrated an extensive trail network in this 400-acre park which included pedestrian and equestrian trails. Historic aerial photos reveal that the trail network was largely not implemented. Over the history of the park, a network of trails evolved with no real regard to sustainability or equitability. As a result, with modern day uses including mountain biking, many of the trails experienced severe erosion leading to tree root exposure and loss of soil to Beargrass Creek which courses through the middle of the park and ultimately flows into the Ohio River.

Recent Work

In early 2022, OPC/LPR hired a professional trail builder to build new hiking only and multi-use trail as well as restore some existing multi-use trail. An effort was placed on proper trail alignment and construction to reduce erosion and user conflict issues as much as possible. The work has been successful and received

well by park users but much more is required. The current trail layout in Cherokee consists of approximately 7 miles of multi-use trail. However, there are many rogue trail segments that have been created by users which need to be decommissioned.

Scope of Work

This will be a design build process with the selected trail building team. Once a trail building team has been selected and under contract with OPC, an OPC representative will work closely with the team in determining which sections of the existing multi-use trail are to be restored and/or re-routed and what techniques will be used. **(See attached map of existing Cherokee trails. The gold trails labeled as the Cherokee Loop will be the primary focus)**. In addition, the trail building team and OPC will work with the local mountain bike community in selecting specific mountain features to install along the multi-use trail system. The selected trail building team shall have experience mitigating tree root exposure on existing trails, preventing tree root exposure on new trails, building mountain bike specific trail features, and overall sustainable trail design. OPC has approximately \$50,000 for Phase 2 trail work and is continually fundraising for additional trail work in the future.

The OPC/LPR team will work with the trail building team to prioritize sections of the Cherokee Loop based on factors such as existing conditions, current use level, and funding available to determine where to allocate building resources. The proposed layout for Cherokee does overlay on the existing trail layout in many locations but the existing trails are in very poor condition. Therefore, some work consists of restoring existing trail, if possible, versus constructing new trail. In some regards, this could be considered a restoration/new trail building project.

OPC/LPR staff will provide 2' contour interval mapping for Cherokee Park as well as locations of sensitive plant areas to be avoided and natural areas that can be highlighted along the trails. OPC/LPR staff will work with the trail building team to flag proposed trail sections and will be onsite during construction to help guide the building team as they progress. The building team is expected to use currently accepted trail building techniques and equipment and limit the amount of disturbance throughout the trail corridor. The woodlands of Cherokee Park are heavily fragmented by roads and paved paths and the Park is heavily used.

Creative thinking and possibly non-traditional trail building techniques may be required in this park to create a sustainable trail network.

RFQ Submittal Requirements

Due Date – February 5, 2024

Interested professional trail building teams must demonstrate expertise in the skills needed to carry out the scope of work, including but not limited to flagging sustainable routes, tree and herbaceous plant identification, trail building equipment operation, minimal disturbance practices, identifying possible drainage issues, mitigating drainage issues, mitigating root exposure issues, and developing accurate cost estimates.

Interested firms are encouraged to submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) which shall include the following information:

- A. Firm's contact information
- B. Sub-consultant firms, if required, to be included on the project team and their respective roles.
- C. Name and assignment of key personnel and an estimate of the amount of time they will spend on this project and a description of their experience on trail building projects.
- D. Summary and **photo documentation** of firm's recent experience.
- E. Summary and **photo documentation** of the work of **key personnel** with similar or representative projects. Provide information as follows:
 1. Task
 2. Person assigned
 3. Similar or representative project experience
- F. A narrative describing the project approach.

- G. Ability to meet timelines and integrate this project into the firm's present workload.
- H. 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.
- I. A list of company owned equipment.

Selection Process

All Statement of Qualification (SOQ) submittals will be reviewed and scored by a committee consisting of OPC/LPR staff and 1-2 individuals representing the mountain bike community and possibly someone representing the trail running community. Scoring categories for the submittals will be:

1. Key personnel and demonstrated experience.
2. Company relevant experience.
3. Equipment available for use.
4. References.
5. Company diversity.

The companies earning the top two scores will be contacted to set up an interview to further discuss details of personnel and experience and details of the project. Finally, a selection will be made based on the submittals and interviews and the selected company will move into a contract negotiation phase. At this point in the process, personnel from the selected trail building team will walk the site with OPC staff to discuss areas of concern and restoration techniques and begin to discuss costs associated with the project. A traditional cost/linear foot of trail will not be especially useful for this project. OPC proposes working with the builder to cost out each section of trail identified for restoration. Once agreed upon, the builder can proceed with that section. OPC anticipates having enough funds for approximately 1.5 miles of trail restoration.

