

Request for Proposals

Allegheny County Trails & Greenways Development Fund Feasibility Study

RFP Issued: January 4, 2024
Responses Due: February 7, 2024



Funded By: Private Foundation

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Project Background

Introduction

Friends of the Riverfront (Friends), as part of the Allegheny Green Web Coalition, requests proposals to complete an **Allegheny County Trails & Greenways Development Fund Feasibility Study (“Feasibility Study”)** to support trail and greenway development in Allegheny County, PA. The Feasibility Study will evaluate options for capitalizing and managing such a fund, as well as mechanisms for distributing funds.

Background

The Allegheny Green Web (AGW) is a coalition of nonprofit organizations and municipal stakeholders working to develop a connected trail and greenspace network in Allegheny County ([see List of Coalition Members and Partners](#)).

The AGW spent the last 4 years developing a vision map for the county (see [Allegheny Green Web Vision Map](#)) that included extensive input from stakeholders and incorporates predecessor greenway and trail plans to create a vision for a countywide system. Allegheny County is now incorporating the Vision Map into the County’s Comprehensive Plan, Allegheny Places, which is critical to opening more public funding for trail implementation projects, but would still require local matching funds.

Friends of the Riverfront, in coordination with our Allegheny Green Web (AGW) partners, seeks a consultant to complete an Allegheny County Trail and Greenway Development Fund (the “Fund”) Feasibility Study. This Fund will be used to provide local matching funds and time-sensitive opportunities to support a growing network of local, regional, and national trails in Allegheny County.

About Friends of the Riverfront

Friends of the Riverfront is a pioneering nonprofit, responsible for the development and stewardship of the Three Rivers Heritage & Water Trails. The Three Rivers Heritage Trail is a 33+ mile urban rail-trail along the riverfronts of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The Three Rivers Water Trail is a series of 31 river access points for paddling, fishing, and other types of water recreation. Friends of the Riverfront has engaged volunteers and community partners to protect and restore our region’s priceless riverfronts since 1991.

The Study Area

Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

Related Initiatives

- Allegheny Green Web (www.alleghenygreenweb.com)
 - The Allegheny Green Web is a coalition of 22 nonprofit organizations and government agencies united under a shared vision to see an interconnected public trail and green space system come to fruition across Allegheny County, PA. The coalition aims to connect the Allegheny County parks, the municipal parks, and local conservation lands with each other, and to neighboring communities.
 - 2018 Conservation Finance Feasibility Study – The Allegheny Green Web worked with the Trust for Public Land on a Financing Feasibility Study that focused primarily on electoral and non-electoral debt financing. The Allegheny County Trail Development Fund Feasibility Study described in this RFP would build on this work and **focus on other funding sources and fund management**. (Study Available Upon Request)

- 2021 Municipal Survey – As part of the Green Web’s planning, the coalition conducted a municipal survey to achieve a clearer picture of municipal success and challenges in trail building. The results of the survey will be provided to the consultant.
- Pittsburgh Parks Trust
 - In 2021, after a ballot referendum, the creation of a Park Tax was implemented within the City of Pittsburgh. The goal of this fund is to support Pittsburgh’s Parks. Each year the Pittsburgh Parks Trust Fund released a spending plan for the annual funds to be incorporated into the city budget to fund park projects.
- Riverlife Maintenance Endowment
- Active Allegheny Program
- Allegheny County Trail Development Fund

General Requirements and Scope of Work

Project Overview

Since the Allegheny Green Web Coalition came together, one of the key concerns for the coalition members and municipalities is funding to complete small and large trail projects. To address this need, Allegheny County Government created the Active Allegheny Grant Program and the one-time 2022 Trail Development Fund (from American Recovery Plan Act funds). Since 2017, both programs have invested approximately \$24 million dollars into trail development projects in Allegheny County. With the success of these funding programs, the Allegheny Green Web Coalition is looking to create a sustainable, more permanent program as a long-term funding mechanism for trail and greenway projects within the county.

Proposed Outputs: A completed feasibility study for an Allegheny County Trail & Greenway Development Fund. The feasibility study will evaluate options for capitalizing and managing such a fund, as well as how to distribute such funds. The study will be a result of extensive stakeholder engagement from greenway and trails organizations, as well as municipalities. The study process will also include market research on existing funds within the trail and greenspace sector, as well as other sectors.

Proposed Outcomes: A clearer understanding of how to fund a growing trail network in Allegheny County and how to unlock larger amounts of public dollars. Friends of the Riverfront, and partners, can act on the Feasibility Study’s clearly laid-out next steps and recommendations. Ultimately this will lead to constructing more trails within Allegheny County that provide recreation, transportation, health, and economic benefits.

Stakeholders

- Allegheny Green Web Partners
- Allegheny County
- City of Pittsburgh
- Southwest Pennsylvania Commission
- Regional Foundation Community
- Allegheny County Regional Asset District

Scope of Work

The consultants will:

- Project kick-off meeting with Project Advisory Committee
- 10 Stakeholder Interviews
- Research examples of funding and management structures of comparable trail systems

- Calculate a rough implementation cost for developing the Allegheny Green Web's [Public Green Space Connectivity Vision](#)
- Present proposed options for fund structures, capitalization (including potential new revenue streams), and management to the Project Advisory Committee
- Develop and present options to Project Advisory Committee for review, discussion, and feedback
- Present a Draft and Final Feasibility Study to the Project Advisory Committee that includes:
 - 2-3 fund options, including benefits and challenges to each structure
 - Cost estimate for completing the Green Web Vision that includes 3-6 trail and greenway cost profiles with estimated costs that consider among other factors, trail surface type, floodplain considerations, and density of surrounding infrastructure.
- Present a Final Feasibility Study to the Project Advisory Committee and Additional Stakeholders

Budget

The level of funding will be based on the scope of the work and will be negotiated between Friends of the Riverfront and the Contractor. Friend of the Riverfront has \$40,000 in funds for this project.

Anticipated Project Timeline

RFP Issued: Jan 4, 2024

Questions Due: Jan 16, 2024

Responses Provided: January 19, 2024

Proposals Due: Feb 7, 2024

Project Start: March 18, 2024

Project Completion: Sept 30, 2024

Organization Qualifications and Required Submittals for Proposal

Submission Instructions

A digital version must be received by Friends of the Riverfront by **February 7, 2024 at 5:00 PM**. All submissions should be sent to Kelsey Ripper at kelsey@friendsoftheriverfront.org.

Conditions of Proposal

All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the consultant and will not be reimbursed by Friends of the Riverfront.

Notification of Award

Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful consultant, all consultants submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful consultant.

Friends of the Riverfront and the consultant will prepare a written agreement for execution between the consultant and Friends of the Riverfront. The general provisions of this agreement, the final product and requirements placed on the project shall be made a part of this agreement. The consultant shall have authorization to proceed upon a written notice from the Friends of the Riverfront.

Proposal Format

Proposals **should not exceed 20 pages** in length and should be typed 8.5 x 11-inch pages with margins no smaller than 3/4 inch. Font size should be no smaller than 11 points.

Friends of the Riverfront may also require a prospective consultant to attend a meeting and/or participate in a conference call to discuss the proposal.

Transmittal Letter

This letter should include:

- A statement indicating your understanding of the work to be performed;
- An affirmation of the firm's qualifications for professionally and expertly conducting the work as understood;
- The firm's contact person concerning the proposal and a telephone number where that person can be reached; and,
- A clear statement of the relationship that the firm and/or principal(s) of the firm have with, or knowledge of, any officials or employees of Friends of the Riverfront and the nature of this relationship or knowledge.

Failure to state and fully disclose any of the information required in the letter of transmittal shall be grounds for Friends of the Riverfront to reject the firm's proposals and will be grounds for immediate cancellation of any contract entered into between Friends of the Riverfront and the firm without payment of work completed.

Profile of Firm

Include a brief statement indicating the firm's experience in conducting similar work sought by this RFP. This profile should include:

- The location of the firm's office that will provide the proposed service;
- Resumes of individual consultants or key employees proposed to conduct the work and the specific duties of each consultant or employee relative to the work;
- A brief reference list of other municipalities, county or state agencies served by the firm with contact names and telephone numbers;
- Any other information describing the office may be included if it relates to the capabilities and expertise of the firm in doing comparable work;
- MBE/WBE participation and subcontracting including ownership of the firm, employment levels of minorities and women in the firm, use of minorities and women on this project, and use of minority or women-owned businesses as subcontractors.

Explanation of Work to be Performed

The proposal must include a detailed description of the procedures and methods you propose to use to complete the work requested by Friends of the Riverfront. This is important because the methods and procedures proposed will receive primary consideration in evaluating your proposal. Examples of similar work will be helpful and should be included.

Work Schedule

Provide a project work schedule that includes timeframes for each major work element, target dates for public meetings, and dates for completion of draft and final documents.

Cost

Full cost information should be provided showing the minimum number of hours to be provided by each person assigned to the proposed work and by the firm's organizational levels. The proposed hourly rate for billing shall be included for each person. The hours of work and cost shall be itemized for each major work element of the

proposal. An itemized estimate of reimbursable expenses must be included. The total amount of maximum payment must be stated.

The cost shall be based on the hours of work provided and “out-of-pocket expenses” and shall not exceed the maximum cost proposed unless an amendment to the contract is negotiated and approved by the proper authority of Friends of the Riverfront.

Billing

Your method of billing must be indicated. The preferred practice of Friends of the Riverfront is to pay for this type of consulting service upon completion of the work and receipt of the required report/documents.

Consultant Questions

All prospective bidders must provide an email address to which responses to questions may be sent.

Questions should be sent to Kelsey@friendsoftheriverfront.org by **January 16, 2024 at 5:00 PM**. All responses to questions will be in writing and provided on our **website by January 19, 2024**.

Friends of the Riverfront will make every effort to provide the written responses in a timely fashion, but failure to do so will not affect the sole authority of Friends of the Riverfront to complete the RFP process.

Other Submittals

Additionally, documents attached as appendices to this RFP shall be fully executed and returned with the proposal as follows:

- **Nondiscrimination Certification (Appendix A)**

Evaluation Criteria

Submittal Evaluation Criteria

Submittals received by Friends of the Riverfront will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below:

1. Specialized experience and competence of the consultant, including principal firms, joint venture partners, and sub-consultants, considering the types of service required; and the strength of the key personnel who will be dedicated to this contract;
2. Appropriateness of approach;
3. The organization, presentation, and content of the submittal;
4. Proposed methods and overall strategic plan to provide the services in a timely and competent manner;
5. Knowledge and understanding of the local environment and a local presence for interfacing with Friends of the Riverfront;
6. A willingness to make meaningful wide-range subcontracting and employment opportunities available to all interested and qualified firms and individuals in the marketplace.

Appendix

Appendix A.

Nondiscrimination Certification for Friends of the Riverfront

Nondiscrimination and equal opportunity are the policy of the Commonwealth/Friends of the Riverfront in all its decisions, programs, and activities. The purpose is to achieve the aims of the United

States and Pennsylvania Constitutions. Executive Order 1972-1, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, Act of October 27, 1955 (PL. 744), as amended, (43 P.S. & 951, et. seq.), and (43 P.S. & 153), by assuring that all persons are accorded equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age or sex.

During the term of this contract, the Contractor agrees as follows:

- A. Contractor shall not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, or any other person because of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, or handicap. The contractor shall take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees or agents are treated during employment, without regard to their race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, or handicap. Such affirmative action shall include but is not limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training. The contractor shall post in conspicuous places, available to employees, agents, applicants for employment, and other persons, a notice to be provided by the contracting agency setting forth the provision of this nondiscrimination certification.
- B. Contractor shall, in advertisements or requests for employment placed by it or on its behalf, state all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex.
- C. The contractor shall send each labor union or workers' representative with whom it has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding, a notice advising said labor union or worker's representative of its commitment to this nondiscrimination certification. Similar notice shall be sent to every other source of recruitment regularly utilized by the bidder.
- D. It shall be no defense to a finding of noncompliance with this nondiscrimination certification that the contractor has delegated some of its employment practices to any union, training program, or other sources of recruitment that prevents it from meeting its obligations. However, if the evidence indicates that the contractor was not on notice of the third-party discrimination or made a good faith effort to correct it, such factor shall be considered in mitigation in determining appropriate sanctions.

- E. Where the practices of a union or any training program or other source of recruitment will result in the exclusion of minority group persons, so that contractor will be unable to meet its obligations under this nondiscrimination certification, the contractor shall then employ and fill vacancies through other nondiscriminatory employment procedures.
- F. The contractor shall comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination in hiring or employment opportunities. In the event of the contractor's noncompliance with the nondiscrimination certification or with any such laws, this contract may be terminated or suspended, in whole or part, and the contractor may be declared temporarily ineligible for further Friends of the Riverfront contracts, and other sanctions may be imposed, and remedies invoked.
- G. The contractor shall furnish all necessary employment documents and records to, and permit access to its books, records, and accounts by Friends of the Riverfront for purposes of investigation to ascertain compliance with the provisions of this certification if requested. If the contractor does not possess documents or records reflecting the necessary information requested, it shall furnish such information on reporting forms supplied by Friends of the Riverfront.
- H. The contractor shall actively recruit minority and women subcontractors or subcontractors with substantial minority and women representation among their employees.
- I. The contractor shall include the provisions of this nondiscrimination certification in every subcontract so that such provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor.
- J. The contractor's obligations under this clause are limited to the contractor's facilities within Pennsylvania or, where the contract is for the purchase of goods manufactured outside of Pennsylvania, the facilities at which such goods are produced.

Name of Consultant	
Name of Authorized Official	
Title	
Date	