



**City of Springfield
Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Community Engagement Consultant for the
Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan
Bid No. 26-096**

**Proposals Due:
February 10, 2026 at 2:00 PM (EST)**

ADVERTISEMENT
CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

Request for Proposals 26-096: Community Engagement Consultant for the Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan

will be received until 2:00 PM: **February 10, 2026**

BY: The Office of Procurement

Lauren Stabilo, Chief Procurement Officer

36 Court Street, Room 307, Springfield MA 01103

Phone (413) 787-6284

lstabilo@springfieldcityhall.com

at which time the bids will be privately reviewed in the Office of Procurement. Bid documents and specifications will be available beginning January 20, 2026 on the City's website at www.springfieldcityhall.com

The City of Springfield is seeking proposals from qualified individuals, firms, entities and/or joint ventures to assist the Forestry Division in developing an Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) funded through the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry grant. The UFMP will serve as a strategic guide for the long-term care, management, and growth of Springfield's Urban Forest, with a primary focus on the city's street trees. An estimated total of \$75,000 has been allocated for the Community Engagement Consultant to support the development of the Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan. The contract term is roughly two years.

All questions regarding bid or its specifications must be received by the Office of Procurement (nwalker@springfieldcityhall.com) no later than 1/29/26 by 4:00 P.M. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to waive any informality in and to reject any or all bids if it is in the public interest to do so.

Note to newspaper: Insert the above advertisement under the heading "Legal Notice" on the following date: **January 23, 2026**

Phone: 787-6284 - Reference: 4137836285 - **Bid No. 26-096**

**CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT
36 COURT STREET, ROOM 307, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP Number 26-096; Community Engagement Consultant for the Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan

Will be received at the Office of Procurement until 2:00 P.M. February 10, 2026 and will be logged in at that time. Proposals received after the due date and time will be returned unopened.

All packages must be marked with Proposer's business name, the above RFQ number and the due date.

By: Lauren Stabilo, Chief Procurement Officer

This Request for Proposal is for: Community Engagement Consultant for the Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan (Per the attached specifications)

As requested by: Department of Parks, Buildings, and Recreation Management – Forestry Division

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED, SIGNED, AND RETURNED WITH PROPOSAL.

This Proposal is submitted by: _____
(Company Name)

(Company Address)

I acknowledge receipt of addenda numbered: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____.

signed by:

(Printed or Typed Name and Title)

_____ / _____ / _____
(Signature and Date)

Telephone Number: _____

Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Part I: Introduction

The City of Springfield is seeking proposals from qualified individuals, firms, entities and/or joint ventures (hereafter “Consultants”) to assist the Forestry Division in developing an Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP). Funded through the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry grant, the City of Springfield will contract a Community Engagement Consultant to support this effort. A separate RFP will be issued to hire an Urban Forest Management Consultant. Both consultants will collaborate for the duration of the project to achieve grant deliverables. The scope of the project is to establish a strategic framework to effectively maintain and manage Springfield’s urban forest in a way that reflects the communities needs and values, while also maximizing the forest’s ecological economic, health, and social benefits. Consultant(s) must demonstrate the necessary expertise and personnel to deliver these services. The contract will be awarded to the consultant(s) whose proposal best meets the need of the city’s objectives in the most effective and responsive manner.

The UFMP will serve as a strategic guide for the long-term care, management, and growth of Springfield’s Urban Forest, with a primary focus on the city’s street trees. The UFMP will aim to enhance environmental quality, address challenges to urban forestry maintenance, and align with broader sustainability objectives outlined in Springfield’s Climate Action and Resilience Plan (2017; CARP). To support these efforts, the Community Engagement Consultant will be responsible for coordinating, facilitating, and planning public outreach efforts. Project activities include organizing community events, gathering public input, and ensuring stakeholders from all areas of the city are incorporated into the planning process. The consultant will also be responsible for producing a written summary of their findings that provides actionable recommendations to guide the development of UFMP management guide. The UFMP will recognize trees as a vital public infrastructure that contributes to public health, climate adaptation, social-wellbeing, and neighborhood livability. The overarching goal is to promote equitable, sustainable, and climate-resilient urban forest practices citywide.

Part II: Scope of Services

In collaboration with the City of Springfield Forestry Division, the selected consultant(s) will be responsible for designing and implementing a community outreach program aimed at increasing public awareness of the value of tree maintenance and tree planting. This program will focus on gathering input from neighborhood councils and educating residents about the wide-ranging benefits of a healthy, resilient urban tree canopy such as improved air quality, climate resilience, neighborhood beautification, and public health. A key objective of this initiative is to increase street tree planting within designated grant eligible areas. To achieve this, the selected consultant(s) will employ a range of inclusive and equity-driven outreach strategies including neighborhood-level, in-person community meetings, the formation of community partnerships, and the development of the UFMP to foster local stewardship and engagement. The outreach program should actively involve residents in both the planning and implementation phases to ensure the project reflects community needs, builds trust, and encourages long-term participation in the city’s urban forestry goals.

ITEM 1: Develop Foundation for the Community Engagement Process

Gather information/context about the history of Springfield's urban forest as it relates to community involvement, form key partnerships, and build a Community Advisory Board (CAB).

1. Review Springfield Forestry Division programs/policies and evaluate historical conditions/events contributing to the current state of the urban forest (e.g., 2011 tornado, development practices, etc.).
2. Perform a community relationship inventory to identify key stakeholders (individual, organizational, institutional) and define networks that can be tapped to share information and opportunities with the community.
3. Create a preliminary Community Engagement Plan (the plan should evolve throughout the process, in collaboration with the CAB). The preliminary plan should lay out ideas within each category of work listed below ("Design & Implement a Robust Community Engagement Process") and consider methods/strategies/approaches that:
 - a) Center low to moderate income communities based in low-canopy areas of the city.
 - b) Value and appropriately compensate community members for their participation in the planning process.
 - c) Blend the perspectives of those with lived experience and those with technical expertise.
 - d) Allow for engagement and communication with the public that is ongoing throughout the Urban Forest Master Plan process.
 - e) Establish goals and benchmarks for the process, and criteria/metrics to measure meaningful community participation.
 - f) Consider opportunities for continued community involvement beyond the planning process and into Plan implementation phases.
4. Create the CAB and identify key partners in the planning process
 - a) Identify key stakeholders to involve in the planning process, including community members, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and other relevant entities.
 - b) Assemble stakeholders with lived and/or technical expertise by involving key constituencies in the design and implementation of strategies.

ITEM 2: Guide the Work of the Community Advisory Board (CAB)

Lead monthly working meetings with the CAB, facilitate progress in between meetings, and support CAB members' involvement in community engagement activities outside of the CAB.

1. The CAB shall be comprised of 8-10 selected community members, the Community Engagement Consultant team, and key urban forestry practitioners (Springfield Forestry Division staff, ReGreen Springfield staff). The Community Engagement Consultant shall work with the Forestry Division (and partners identified via the methods listed above) to form the CAB.
2. The CAB should develop a shared vision and framework for the planning process. The CAB will employ this process to develop principles and goals for the Plan, considering community needs/desires, environmental goals, and urban forestry best practices.

3. The CAB shall convene for twelve (12) in-person, monthly meetings over the course of one year. Two of those meetings will be in the form of “field trips” that bring the CAB into the outdoor realms that they are discussing.
4. The Consultant shall:
 - a) **Manage the logistical administration of the CAB**
 - i. Work with the Forestry Division to identify spaces and secure A/V equipment (as needed) for in-person meetings.
 - ii. Coordinate/pay for (out of the project budget) any other meeting needs, such as food, interpretation, childcare, transportation, etc.
 - iii. Process monthly stipend payments (and any necessary tax documentation) for each of the CAB community members.
 - iv. Plan out the content of each meeting, in collaboration with other project team members during quarterly Community Engagement Coordination check-ins.
 - v. Prepare meeting agendas and circulate meeting notes and post-meeting action items to CAB members.
 - vi. Communicate with the CAB re: meeting schedules, locations, or any other logistical details.
 - vii. Compensate CAB members who perform additional outreach work or who assist in drafting the final Plan.
 - b) **Guide and oversee the CAB’s work**
 - i. Facilitate CAB meetings. Keep the CAB on task and aligned with the collectively-defined project goals, while leaving space for open dialogue/organic visioning.
 - ii. Develop methods for connection/synergy between the Urban Forest Management Consultant’s portion of the planning process and the community engagement portion of the planning process to ensure that the concurrent processes inform/involve each other in an ongoing manner.
 - iii. Provide education to the CAB as needed. Education in the realm of urban forestry can be performed by Forestry Division staff, partners, or the Urban Forest Management Consultant, but there may be a need/desire for education on topics related to community experiences of environmental services/disservices or other topics as they come up in the process. CAB “field trips” may also be an opportunity for group education.
 - iv. Empower CAB members to participate in the Community Engagement process outside of their participation in the monthly meetings (neighbor outreach projects, assisting with talks/workshops within community groups that they are a part of, etc.)

ITEM 3: Design & Implement a Robust Community Engagement Process

Collaborate with the Community Advisory Board and the project team to enact a wide-reaching community engagement process to engage the public in co-creating the Urban Forest Plan by providing information/education about the urban forest while collecting their opinions, values, and needs around trees and urban forestry programs.

1. General Vision and Methodology

- a) Assess current public opinion – conduct outreach to determine public opinion concerning services currently provided by the Forestry Division and partners, as well as preferences for future urban forestry programs/investments.
- b) Engage with stakeholders who are not involved in the CAB (independent community members, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, business owners, professionals whose industry “touches” the urban forest, and other relevant entities) so that they may participate in identifying the focus, priorities, and objectives of the Plan (or identify topics that the CAB should discuss).
- c) Coordinate and facilitate broad-reaching engagement opportunities, designed to be as accessible as possible to City residents.
 - i. Conduct community engagement opportunities in locations across Springfield, with an emphasis toward low to moderate income communities based in low-canopy areas of the city.
 - ii. Utilize a multilingual and multimodal approach that supports engagement with community members of a wide variety of backgrounds, representative of Springfield’s demographics.
 - iii. Collaborate with other local, concurrent, and related community-engaged planning/outreach initiatives to identify methods for synergistic community engagement activities (e.g., the CARP update).

2. Community-Wide Survey

- a) Create (in collaboration with the CAB and the Urban Forest Management Consultant), distribute, and publicize a digital community survey. The survey should be written in accessible language, be available in multiple languages, and be designed to gather information about:
 - i. How Springfield residents feel about the trees in their community (inviting both positive and negative attitudes/experiences)
 - ii. What they want/need from urban forestry programming/resources
 - iii. How they envision being involved with the future growth of their urban forest
- b) Coordinate the promotion of the survey via community networks, earned media, and paid media avenues.
- c) Coordinate/pay for survey respondent prizes to incentivize participation.
- d) Develop survey success metrics with the CAB – including optimal response numbers and proportion of responses from communities of color, low-income individuals, renters, and low canopy neighborhoods among the respondents.

3. Practitioner Working Groups

- a) Plan and facilitate some of the practitioner working group meetings (others will be facilitated by the Urban Forest Management Consultant when applicable).
There shall be at least one meeting held per practitioner category. These working group categories may include:
 - i. Educators and students
 - ii. Workforce development and reentry professionals
 - iii. Public health professionals and health care providers concerned with environmental determinants of health

- iv. Small business owners (especially those with storefronts/properties along major commercial corridors)
- v. Youth services/youth employment organizations
- b) Utilize these working group meetings to incorporate industry-specific expertise into the Plan, while laying the groundwork for cross-sector collaboration around implementing the Plan.

4. Events, Talks, and Workshops

- a) Utilize the community relationship inventory (above) and CAB member networks to identify key groups with whom to co-organize community-wide and group/neighborhood-specific events, workshops, listening sessions, focus groups, etc. These events should take place in accessible locations across the city and offer interpretation (some events should be Spanish language events). They may include:
 - i. Community-wide Plan Kick-Off
 - ii. Tree planting and tree stewardship events
 - iii. Tree workshops or lectures
 - iv. Youth-focused activities
 - v. Art builds
 - vi. Forums, town halls, or Q&A sessions about the Plan and urban forestry programs
- b) Attend external (not organized by the Springfield Urban Forest Plan) community events in order to facilitate participation and collect survey responses from individuals on-site (i.e., tabling at a community festival or farmers market).
- c) Utilize media/communications strategies and community networks to promote these events and reach individuals who have not previously participated in urban forestry activities.

5. Media/Promotional Campaign

- a) Develop a media outreach strategy to inform the public about the planning process as well as opportunities for residents to be involved.
- b) Develop eye-catching and culturally-relevant media messaging materials in collaboration with local artists (subcontractors).
- c) Collaborate with local media outlets to promote the master plan and related events through press releases, media pitches, and interviews.
 - i. Create and pay for ads as needed.
- d) Document the community outreach process – take pictures/videos, record quotes, etc.

ITEM 4: Create Conclusions & Recommendations in Collaboration with the Community Advisory Board

Build the data/information/feedback/ideas collected during the community engagement process & through CAB discussions into conclusions and recommendations that can be incorporated into the Urban Forest Plan.

1. Establish Conclusions Drawn from Community Outreach Process

- a) What do community members say that they want and need? Where do they want trees? What types of trees do they want? How do they want to be engaged in the decision-making and implementation of urban forestry projects?
- b) Identify major challenges/barriers for Springfield communities in engaging with urban forestry programs and planting/maintaining trees on private property.
- c) Identify aspects of the Forestry Division's programs/policies that pose the greatest challenges and opportunities for community members. What potential future investments within the Division are most and least preferred?

2. Create Recommendations for Meaningful Community Involvement in the Growth of the Urban Forest

- a) Urban Forest Management, Growth, and Preservation
 - i. Recommend ongoing community input around urban forest management. Tree planting and care will not be a city endeavor alone – it will require the participation and investment of the community and partners.
 - ii. Define strategies to encourage and assist residents, businesses, and private property owners to plant and properly maintain trees on their own property.
 - iii. Recommend resident incentives/compensation for tree planting and maintenance in the areas in the greatest need of increased tree canopy.
 - iv. Suggest ways to involve residents in organizing neighborhood and community-led tree planting and stewardship projects, particularly on public property (tree belts, parks, school grounds).
- b) Staffing, Capacity, and Coordination
 - i. Suggest ways to strengthen partnerships & cross-sector participation in tree planting and stewardship projects; identify untapped opportunities for partnership.
 - Recommend partnerships around youth training, internships/apprenticeships, and workforce development programs in urban forestry/arboriculture skills
 - ii. Identify areas where overlapping or duplicated community outreach and engagement work among partners (or potential partners) could be streamlined.
- c) Ongoing Community Engagement (post-planning process)
 - i. Identify strategies and structures to keep public engagement at the forefront of urban forestry work in Springfield; recommend ways to keep the community informed about programs/resources.
 - Identify potential messaging for large scale education and public engagement campaigns around future urban forestry initiatives.
 - ii. Recommend methods for regularly educating residents about the urban forest and how they can be involved in supporting the urban forest – including information on what residents are allowed or required to do with public trees.

- d) Plan Governance and Accountability
 - i. Provide recommendations and suggest community-centered mechanism for accountability and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the Plan.
 - Define metrics to measure the success of Plan's implementation projects.
 - Provide guidance around ways to keep the Plan updated and useful for the long term.

CONTRACT TERM AND TIMEFRAME

This project is expected to take roughly two years. The work of the Community Engagement Consultant(s), as outlined in this RFP, will take place during the full duration of the project. There will be no option to renew. The anticipated project timeline is as follows:

Community Engagement Consultant Project Activities	
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hire and onboard consultant (Q1) b. Consultant(s) perform background research, recruiting and guiding the CAB, and performing other community engagement work (surveys, workshops, presentations for community groups, etc.) (Q2–Q4) c. Six (6) monthly CAB meetings subsequent to establishment (Q2–Q4) d. Quarterly meetings with Forestry Division staff for Community Engagement coordination check-in (Q2–Q4) e. Quarterly meetings will be coordinated jointly with Urban Forest Management Consultant and Forestry Division staff for coordination check-ins (Q2–Q4)
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continuity of project activities b, above (Q1–Q2) b. Six (6) monthly CAB meetings (Q1–Q2) c. Quarterly meetings with Forestry Division staff for Community Engagement Coordination check-in (Q1–Q4) d. Synthesize community engagement work into priorities and goals (Q3–Q4) e. Produce deliverables in collaboration with the Urban Forestry Management Consultant, Springfield Forestry Division Staff, and the CAB (Q3–Q4)

****Q1 = Quarter 1, Q2 = Quarter 2, Q3 = Quarter3, Q4 = Quarter 4; Practitioner Working Group meetings may take place at the discretion of the Consultant(s), provided that a total of five (5) meetings are held over the duration of the contract.

DELIVERABLES

The crafting of the final plan will be a collaborative effort to mesh the work of the Urban Forest Management Consultant, the Community Engagement Consultant, the Community Advisory Board, and other community engagement avenues (survey, listening sessions, etc.). The

Community Engagement Consultant should (a) synthesize the priorities, goals, and desires of the community that came to light through the community engagement and (b) participate in the collaborative process of bringing together all components of the urban forest planning process into one cohesive plan document in an accessible format for a non-technical audience. This will take place over a series of meetings in Year 2, Q2 and Q3, with Plan finalization in Year 2 in Q4 (see timeline above).

Final Approval: The Community Engagement Consultant shall collaborate with the Community Advisory Board, the Urban Forest Management Consultant, and the Forestry Division to refine the Springfield Urban Forest Plan until approved by the City Forester in writing.

The un-polished deliverables below should contain a framework of short-term and long-term actionable goals, objectives, and recommendations, strategies in each category that align with the City's overall goals and priorities, funding possibilities and resource needs. The final plan shall include the following components, with the Community Engagement Consultant providing the majority of the content for the sections in **bold**. *Non-bolded items will be developed in collaboration with other team members:*

1. An explanation of the big-picture vision for the next 20 years of Springfield's Urban Forest.
2. An overview of the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment and State of the Urban Forest
 - a. **An overview of the community engagement process, including the avenues of engagement, metrics, the identified priorities, and the process to establish the priorities and objectives of the community**
 - b. Discussion about how the Springfield Urban Forest Plan connects/intersects with other State/regional/local sustainability planning
 - c. A narrative explaining the current and anticipated impacts of climate change on Springfield's population, built assets, and natural resources which **recognizes the unequal impacts of climate change across Springfield communities and the causes of those disparities**.
 - i. A narrative explaining the role that urban tree canopy can play in preventing the impacts of climate change in Springfield.
 - d. A description of current conditions and plan objectives, goals, recommendations and strategies (identified by both consultant groups and the Community Advisory Board) within each of the plan categories – including, but not limited to:
 - i. Management Practices (planting, canopy maintenance)
 - ii. Staffing, Capacity Boosting, and Interorganizational/Interdepartmental Collaboration
 - iii. Policy
 - iv. **Community Engagement – A total of twenty-five (25) meetings are anticipated over the term of the contract. This included twelve (12) Community Advisory Board meetings, five (5) Practitioner Working Group meetings, four (4) quarterly community engagement coordination meetings with Forestry Division staff (Year 1), and four (4) meetings with the Urban Forest Management Consultant and Forestry Division staff (Year 2). The total number of proposed meetings is an estimate and may be subject to change and negotiation upon contract finalization.**
 - v. Funding/Budget

- vi. Plan Governance & Accountability
 - Provide a detailed methodology for prioritizing and achieving all of the goals identified in the Springfield Urban Forest Plan.
 - Provide strategies for ongoing evaluation of recommendations to integrate a meaningful feedback loop into this long-term City project.
- e. Data and GIS for all maps, graphs, charts, and tables.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to bi-weekly Community Engagement Coordination check-ins, the Community Engagement Consultant (the lead team member) will be expected to attend a monthly Project Management meeting with Forestry Division staff and the Urban Forest Management Consultant(s) for the duration of the project, at which each consultant shall prepare an informal presentation of project updates since the previous Project Management meeting.

Part III: Submission Process

Submission Requirements

Questions regarding the RFP should be in writing and delivered via email nwalker@springfieldcityhall.com on or before close of business on **January 29, 2026** to:

Office of Procurement
Attn: Neil Walker, DPO
City Hall – Room 307
36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103

All inquiries related to the requirements of this RFP should prominently refer to **“Bid # 26-096 – Community Engagement Consultant for the Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan,”** and the opening date.

Responses to inquiries will be in the form of a numbered addendum to the specifications issued by the Office of Procurement and sent to all parties listed in the bid file as Proposer(s) having requested the bid documents from the Office of Procurement. Proposer should base responses only on the specifications including any addenda.

PLEASE NOTE that all addenda must be acknowledged either in the bid response (there is a space for that purpose on the bid cover sheet) when submitted or by following the instructions on the addendum cover sheet. If using the latter means to acknowledge receipt, the Vendor must write the business name of the firm, sign the sheet and email to nwalker@springfieldcityhall.com and/or include a copy of the sheet in the bid response.

Failure to acknowledge any addendum may cause rejection of a bid response as required by chapter 30B. Proposer(s) are advised to call the Office of Procurement (413-787-6285) before sending their bid responses to confirm that all addenda are accounted for.

The Proposer understands that the following documents included in this bid must be included in the Proposer's response to this bid. If Proposer fails to provide all documents requested below, the bid may be rejected.

Proposals will be received until **2:00 p.m. EST on February 10, 2026**, at the **City of Springfield, Office of Procurement**. If at the time of the scheduled RFP opening, City Hall and/or the Office of Procurement is closed due to uncontrolled events such as fire, snow, ice, wind, or building evacuation, the RFP opening will be postponed until 2:00 p.m. on the next normal business day. RFP will be accepted until that date and time.

The City anticipates choosing the most advantageous Proposal within thirty (30) days, unless further extended by written notice from the City to all Proposers that have submitted Proposals. Unless the deadline is so extended, the failure of the City to designate a Proposal as most advantageous by this date will constitute rejection of all Proposals.

A Selection Committee composed of or designated by the City, will review all proposals and recommend a finalist that has submitted the most advantageous proposal based on all the evaluation criteria as well as price. Finalists may be brought in for interviews before the Selection Committee.

The City reserves the right to cancel this RFP, at any time prior to award, or reject in whole or in part any portion of the RFP. The City may reject all proposals if in the best interest of the City.

The consultant(s) must possess the necessary skills, qualifications, expertise, experience, education and ability to provide these services to the City and is willing and able to provide the services for the amounts budgeted by the City.

Part IV: Submission Requirements for Non-Price (Technical) Proposal

The consultant or team of consultants do not need to have experience/expertise in urban forestry/arboriculture, but should have basic understanding of/interest in the benefits of trees in cities & the ability to learn/absorb enough about the practice of urban forestry to be able to communicate effectively during community engagement activities. (There will be many opportunities for knowledge sharing with the Urban Forest Management Consultant and Forestry Division/partner nonprofit staff.) The team shall also include members with experience in community engagement or youth leadership, and help design and implement a transparent and participatory process that elevates the voices of low-income communities traditionally excluded from planning processes. Desired skills/types of experience include:

- Experience performing outreach/engagement work in Springfield, an existing community network, and knowledge of local issues as well as values of the community

- Facilitation, communication, and/or mediation skills
- Experience with creative approaches to neighborhood-scale community outreach
- Experience structuring and managing a multi-phased and multi-stakeholder project; experience working collaboratively with team members of a variety of different professional and personal backgrounds
- Ability to facilitate creation of written, multilingual outreach materials
- Ability to deliver quality written materials and reports, by mutually agreed-on deadlines

All information pertaining to the prospective Consultant's approach to meeting the requirements of the RFP response shall be organized and presented in the prospective Consultant's submission. The instructions contained in this RFP must be strictly followed. Accuracy and completeness are essential. Omissions and ambiguous or equivocal statements will be viewed unfavorably and will be considered in the evaluation.

The Consultant must complete:

- Request for Proposal (Coversheet) Signature Form that is included in this RFP
- Non-Collusion Form
- Tax Certification Affidavit, signed and notarized
- Technical (Non-Price) Proposal
- Budget/Price Proposal, submitted in separate sealed envelope
- Affirmative Action Plan Form 3

Proposals must include the above, signed and notarized as required. **Failure to submit any of the above forms may be cause for rejection.**

All response requirements must be submitted for each party comprising the prospective Consultant's organization, firm, or joint venture as well as any sub-consultants and sub-contractors.

The City may reject any and all submissions that do not meet the requirements set forth.

RFP Submission Contents

We encourage respondents to collaborate on proposal submissions and there is a preference for proposals consisting of partnerships among multiple consultants and/or community-based organizations to best address the needs and goals laid out in this RFP. (For collaboratively-developed submissions, only one proposal needs to be submitted, as long as the project roles within it are clearly defined.) We welcome proposals that engage with either one, some, or all aspects of the work laid out in this RFP.

All responses to the RFP shall include the following information:

1. **Cover Letter** – A letter of interest and a summary of qualifications, recommended approaches, scope of work, processes and deliverables for the project.

2. **Scope of Services** – Describe the approach to the project and proposed methodology, broken down by each component of the Scope of Services. The consultant may also propose additional supplemental items to the Scope of Services. While the work plan above outlines the components of the Springfield Urban Forest Plan to be provided by the Community Engagement Consultant, feel free to propose new/creative approaches to this project.
3. **Proposed Schedule** – Provide a schedule that includes completion of work tasks and deliverables including key meetings and complies with the timeframe provided above.
4. **Project Budget** – Provide a detailed budget broken down by task and team member. Include your overhead and hourly rates for the individuals involved. **The Consultant must submit price proposal/budget under separate and sealed envelope.**
5. **Qualifications and Staffing** – Provide a qualifications profile for each team member, including:
 - a. The role of each team member within this project (with context regarding similar/relevant roles on past projects)
 - b. Resume and relevant certifications
6. **Related Projects and References** – Describe relevant experience on similar projects. Include a minimum of three (3) professional references for whom a similar project has been completed within the last ten (10) years.

Conflict of Interest

Each prospective Consultant is advised that their performance of work for the City may, at any time, raise questions about real or perceived conflicts of interest because of its relationship to other entities or individuals, including but not limited to, private and/or public owners of properties that abut or may be affected by the Project and/or other state-created entities with potentially conflicting interests or concerns.

Accordingly, the City reserves the right to:

1. Disqualify any prospective Consultant or reject any proposal at any time solely on the grounds that a real or perceived legal or policy conflict of interest is presented;
2. Require any prospective Consultant to take any action or supply any information necessary to remove the conflict, including but not limited to obtaining an opinion from the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission; or
3. Terminate any contract arising out of this solicitation if, in the opinion of the City any such relationship would constitute or have the potential to create a real or perceived conflict of interest that cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the City.

In addition, representatives, employees, sub-consultants and/or sub-contractors of the successful Consultant will be required to agree to certify from time to time, in a form approved by the City,

that in connection with work under this RFP, they are in full compliance with the provisions of MGL, Chapter 286A and any other applicable conflict of interest laws. The prospective Consultant agrees to disclose in writing any facts the City may need in order to resolve questions about potential conflicts of interests occurring during the period of solicitation or performance hereunder and upon request of the City supply a full and complete list of its relationships to other entities and individuals. In such event, the prospective Consultant shall consult with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's authorized representative to learn what action must be taken to resolve such conflicts and to comply with all applicable laws.

Each of the prospective Consultants shall submit to the City all such potential conflicts or a written certification this it has none.

Part V: Submission Requirements for Price Proposal

In the proposed budget, please include anticipated outsourced/subcontractor costs, outlined in the Scope of Services. These sorts of costs may include, but are not limited to:

- CAB member stipends, supporting costs for CAB meetings (food, transportation, interpretation, childcare)
- Art/graphic design services
- Costs related to organizing a public event (food, entertainers/speakers, event infrastructure – rented furniture/tents/sound systems as needed)
- Online survey platform subscription fees and survey translation (as well as translation of other outreach materials)

An estimated total of \$75,000 has been allocated for the Community Engagement Consultant to support the development of the Springfield Urban Forest Master Plan. Respondents should submit a detailed budget that encompasses all of the tasks outlined below. The proposed budget should include all associated costs, including but not limited to subcontractors, stipend community participants, meetings and events, and other project-related expenses (please see the “Additional Information” section for more detail).

The Consultant must submit a separate price proposal/budget under separate and sealed envelope. Exterior of envelope should be clearly marked “**BID # 26-096 - PRICE PROPOSAL/BUDGET**”. The Price Proposal Submission will remain sealed until completion of the evaluation of the Non-Price (technical) Proposals.

Part VI: Selection Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of Springfield Urban Forest Plan partners. The committee will score proposals based on but not limited to: qualifications; proposed project framework (workplan, fees, methodology, schedule); and proposal quality/completeness. A short list of consultants may be selected for interviews. Preference will be given to Springfield-based applicants.

The Minimum Threshold Criteria will establish the basic eligibility of the proposal for further review. Acceptable proposals then will be evaluated in accordance with the Comparative Evaluation Criteria provided below. The City intends to select the most advantageous proposal, from a responsive and responsible proposer, taking into consideration all evaluation criteria and price.

Final Consultant Selection – Following the selection process, one consultant or team of consultants will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of services with specified deliverables may be modified through negotiation of the final contract. The final project team may also be modified through negotiation of the final contract. Any expenses resulting from the interview and proposal process will be the sole responsibility of the consultant(s). The City of Springfield reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to award one or more contracts to complete this project.

Minimum Evaluation Criteria

Submissions must meet the following minimum criteria in order to be considered:

1. The Consultant and its' team must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consulting services to governmental organizations that are comparable to the City of Springfield.
2. The Consultant must have a minimum of three (3) professional references for whom a similar project has been completed within the last ten (10) years.

Comparative Evaluation Criteria

The following ratings will be used to measure the relative merits of each proposal that met the above delineated Minimum Evaluation Criteria, against each of the criteria listed below. The criteria are those qualifications that are valuable to the City and for which the City may agree to pay more.

Highly Advantageous: The proposal fully meets and significantly exceeds the standards of the specific criterion.

Advantageous: The proposal fully meets the evaluation standard of the specific criterion.

Not Advantageous: The proposal does not fully meet the evaluation standard of the specific criterion, is incomplete, unclear, or both.

Unacceptable: Proposal is non-responsive to criterion.

A. Qualifications and experience as related to the RFP

Highly Advantageous (HA): The Proposer is considered to be above average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Advantageous (A): The Proposer is considered to be average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Not Advantageous (NA): The Proposer is considered to be below average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Non-Responsive (NR) The proposer did not respond.

B. Understanding objectives and scope of work performed

Highly Advantageous (HA): The Proposer is considered to be above average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Advantageous (A): The Proposer is considered to be average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Not Advantageous (NA): The Proposer is considered to be below average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Non-Responsive (NR) The proposer did not respond.

C. Alignment with project objectives specified in the RFP

Highly Advantageous (HA): The Proposer is considered to be above average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Advantageous (A): The Proposer is considered to be average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Not Advantageous (NA): The Proposer is considered to be below average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Non-Responsive (NR) The proposer did not respond.

D. References and satisfactory record of related projects

Highly Advantageous (HA): The Proposer is considered to be above average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Advantageous (A): The Proposer is considered to be average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Not Advantageous (NA): The Proposer is considered to be below average based on the opinion of the Evaluator

Non-Responsive (NR) The proposer did not respond.

END OF RFP

COLLUSION OR FRAUD STATEMENT

THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFIES UNDER PENALTIES OF PERJURY THAT THIS BID IS IN ALL RESPECTS BONA FIDE, FAIR AND MADE WITHOUT COLLUSION OR FRAUD WITH ANY OTHER PERSON. AS USED IN THIS SECTION THE WORD "PERSON" SHALL MEAN ANY NATURAL PERSON, JOINT VENTURE, PARTNERSHIP, CORPORATION OR OTHER BUSINESS OR LEGAL ENTITY.

(NAME OF PERSON SIGNING BID)

(SIGNATURE)

(COMPANY)

THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED & RETURNED WITH YOUR BID OFFER. FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS FORM MAY BE CAUSE FOR IMMEDIATE REJECTION

TO BE INCLUDED IN ALL SPECIFICATIONS

COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL, COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, AND CITY OF SPRINGFIELD TAX LAWS.

A. COMPLIANCE WITH TAX LAWS

The contractor must be in compliance at the time it submits its bid and afterwards if selected as the contractor, with all Federal, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Springfield tax laws, the contractor will be disqualified from the bidding procedure.

B. TAX CERTIFICATION AFFIDAVIT.

The contractor must complete and return the Tax Certification Affidavit with the contractor's bid/proposal. Failure to complete and return the Tax Certification Affidavit will disqualify the contractor from the bidding procedure.

C. VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND MASSACHUSETTS TAX LAWS.

If the City of Springfield discovers that the contractor is not in compliance with Federal or Massachusetts tax laws, the contractor shall be excluded from the bidding procedure.

D. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD TAXES.

If the City of Springfield discovers that the contractor owes the City of Springfield any assessments, excise, property or other taxes, including any penalties and interest thereon, the contractor shall be excluded from the bidding procedure.

The contractor at all times during the term of an awarded contract shall observe and abide by all Federal, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Springfield tax laws and remain in compliance with such laws, all as amended.

TAX CERTIFICATION AFFIDAVIT FOR CONTRACTS

Individual Social Security Number

State Identification Number

Federal Identification Number

Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 62c, sec. 49a.

Company: _____

P.O. Box (if any): _____

Street Address Only: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Email: _____

List address(es) of all other property owned by company in Springfield: _____

Please Identify if the bidder/proposer is a:

Corporation _____

Individual _____

Name of Individual: _____

Partnership _____

Names of all Partners: _____

Limited Liability Company _____

Names of all Managers: _____

Limited Liability Partnership _____

Names of Partners: _____

Limited Partnership _____

Names of all General Partners: _____

You must complete the following certifications and have the signature(s) notarized on the lines below.

TAX CERTIFICATION

I, _____ certify under the pains and penalties of perjury that _____, to my best
(Authorized Agent) _____ (Bidder/Proposer)

knowledge and belief, has/have complied with all United States Federal, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and City of Springfield taxes required by law.

Bidder/Proposer/Contracting Entity

Authorized Person's Signature

Date: _____

Notary Public

STATE OF _____, 2026

County of _____, ss.

Then personally appeared before me [name] _____, [title] _____ of [company name] _____, being duly sworn, and made oath that he/she has read the foregoing document, and knows the contents thereof; and that the facts stated therein are true of his/her own knowledge, and stated the foregoing to be his/her free act and deed and the free act and deed of [company name] _____.

Notary Public

My commission expires: _____

YOU MUST FILL THIS FORM OUT COMPLETELY AND, SIGNATURES MUST BE NOTARIZED ON THIS FORM AND YOU MUST FILE THIS FORM WITH YOUR BID/CONTRACT SUBMISSION. TAX AFFIDAVITS THAT ARE NOT SIGNED AND NOTARIZED WILL BE REJECTED.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN
 (GOODS AND SERVICES BID ONLY)

NAME OF PROJECT _____ BID NO. _____

A.) What is the total number of employees that is currently employed by your company?

OVERALL TOTALS (SUM OF COL. B THRU F) A	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES									
	MALE					FEMALE				
	WHITE (NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN) B	BLACK (NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN) C	HISPANIC D	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER E	AMERICA N INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE F	WHITE (NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN) B	BLACK (NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN) C	HISPANIC D	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER E	AMERICA N INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE F

B.) What is your anticipated work force for this project/service? _____.
 Number of Minorities _____ Number of Females _____.

C.) Is your company at least 51% owned and controlled by one of the following groups members? Please circle the appropriate categories.

MALE---FEMALE: Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian,
 Alaskan Native, Cape Verdean, Caucasian.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

DATE

FIRM

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE NO.

**THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE BIDDER WITH THE BID /PROPOSAL,
 AND SIGNED BY THE BIDDING COMPANY IF THE REQUIRED INFORMATION IS
 PROVIDED OR NOT.**