REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY HARBOR & ESTUARY PROGRAM

Site Assessment and Design Services for Stormwater Management and Park Beautification for two New York City Parks in the Harlem River Watershed

Aug 5, 2025

The New York – New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP) is working with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and community partners to advance stormwater management, park stewardship, and neighborhood beautification at two New York City Parks in the Harlem River Watershed. We are requesting proposals from qualified firms for site assessment and conceptual design services, including preparation of plans to address stormwater and erosion issues through capital improvements and management practices, and otherwise make improvements to the environmental performance, resiliency, and public experience at these parks.

A total of up to $60,000 is available under this request for proposals (RFP) for services that are to be completed no later than April 15, 2026. An additional $10,000 is available for soil borings if needed. An optional one-page notice of intent is due August 22, 2025, and full proposals are asked to be submitted by September 14, 2025.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) includes the following information:

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I. Program Background

The New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary is a complex ecological system at the heart of the nation's largest metropolitan area. Created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at the request of the governors of New York and New Jersey, the New York – New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP), engages people, partners, and communities to collaboratively advance understanding, improve stewardship, and enhance our shared waters and watersheds. HEP decisions and activities are carried out by staff and partners organized through committees and work groups. More information about HEP and the priorities of our 2017 – 2025 Action Agenda can be found here. The Hudson River Foundation (HRF) is the host of HEP and the Foundation will be the contracting entity for this request for proposals (RFP). HRF inspires and informs action through science and engaging people to enhance the Hudson River, estuary, and watershed.

II. RFP Background

In 2020, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation published the Harlem River Watershed and Natural Resources Management Plan for the Bronx in collaboration with Bronx Council for Environmental Quality (BCEQ), the Bronx and Harlem Urban Waters Federal Partnership (BxH UWFP), and the NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP). Its development involved numerous public meetings and consultation with members of a Watershed Advisory Committee, comprised of 16 City, State, and Federal agencies and local NGOs.

The plan proposes several strategies and priority projects to advance public access to the River and neighborhood beautification, park stewardship, stormwater management, and reduced erosion in the Harlem River Watershed. The Harlem River and its surrounding neighborhoods have been negatively impacted by a history of infrastructure and urbanization, leading to poor water quality in the River. Recurring extreme storms and resulting stormwater run-off has impacted these neighborhoods, including the quality and ecological health of local parks.

The UWFP and HEP are continuing to work with NYC Parks and community partners to implement the Watershed Plan to address these challenges. In particular, we are advancing tree plantings, community stewardship capacity, and this request for site assessment and design services for stormwater management and park beautification in two NYC Parks.

Project Locations and Needs:

- Fort Independence Park – This park is located between Jerome Park Reservoir and Sedgwick Ave in the Bronx. The site was identified as a green infrastructure priority project in the Harlem River Watershed Management Plan, due to trail erosion contributing to sedimentation of a catch basin downstream, within the park. Additionally, during rain events, water runs downslope and out of the park entrance on Sedgwick Avenue, where it eventually flows into the DEP sewer. Interventions to address the erosion and manage stormwater on-site would benefit the park directly as

well as help contribute to reducing flooding and combined sewer overflows to the Harlem River. The site was also identified as a concern in the Harlem River Hilltop Conceptual Study (prepared/co-sponsored by the New York City Soil and Water Conservation District, BCEQ and Riverkeeper). Community partners include BCEQ and the Friends of Fort Independence Park. Figure 1 shows the proposed project boundary for intervention.

- Mosholu Parkway – Mosholu Parkway is a historic landscape of park paths and roadways connecting Bronx residents and visitors to the Bronx Botanical Garden, Bronx Zoo, and Van Cortlandt Park. Regular flooding of the pedestrian pathways impairs pedestrian and bicycle movement, including the heavily used corridor from the Mosholu Parkway 4 subway station. In particular, the area of Mosholu Parkway between Van Cortlandt Park South and just north of Van Cortlandt Ave has been identified as problematic by the Bronx Borough Commissioner's Office. The Harlem River Watershed Management Plan identified the need for tree plantings and managing stormwater runoff through rain gardens, regrading, and other drainage improvements along the Mosholu. Parks planted new trees in fall 2024 and spring 2025, and this project will build on that effort. Figure 2 shows the proposed project boundary for intervention.

Legend

Parks Property

Site Location

Figure 1. Fort Independence Park Project Location Map

Bronx, NY

NYC Parks

N

0 86 172 Feet

Prepared By Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Resources
Data Source: NYC Parks, PLUTO
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Figure 2. Mosholu Parkway Project Location Map
Bronx, NY

III. Scope of Services

HEP is seeking proposals from a qualified consultant for site assessment services and conceptual plans for stormwater management, erosion control, and associated landscape improvements in Fort Independence Park and Mosholu Parkway.

The selected consultant will be responsible for the tasks below, but applicants may formulate and present their own approach to the tasks in their proposals:

- ***Task I – Site assessment***
  - Participate in a kickoff meeting with project team to review scope of work, site assessments, plan development objectives, and timeline;
  - Review all relevant information including but not limited to items listed in Section IV. Available Data;
  - Prepare site maps overviewing the drainage area and project area, including the following site details:
    - Existing site conditions via aerial maps, street views, and photos
    - Land ownership boundaries
    - LiDAR informed topography, contour elevations, low-lying locations

        - Overland flow directions, hydrography
        - Vegetation, public ways and utilities
        - Park landscaping and furniture
        - Other significant natural or cultural features
        - Planned project development by City Agencies, including NYC Parks, NYCDEP and NYCDOT
        - Previous NYC Parks projects at the site
        - Request and obtain NYC Parks map file records for any existing topographic surveys
    - Develop site plans that identify the location, condition, and likely cause of all areas subject to flooding and/or erosion at each site including:
        - Areas of flooding
        - Source(s) of water
        - Location & type of drainage issues
        - Location of sediment deposit, etc.)
    - Present assessment findings, and discuss overall objectives and possible enhancement opportunities for the conceptual plan with the project team
    - If proposing a rain garden, develop soil boring plans. Please note, an additional $10,000 is available for the borings as warranted.

- ***Task II – Design Services & Public Input***
    - Prepare an initial draft of the conceptual plans that identify potential measures to improve sites in Fort Independence Park and Mosholu Parkway, and includes the following elements:
        - A statement of objectives of the project;
        - A map and other documentation of the site and its existing condition;
        - Considerations for capital improvements, plantings, and management practices needed to address the flooding and erosion concerns in the two sites.
        - Other potential park enhancements that would advance park beautification, improve habitat, resiliency, and public experience.
    - Review initial draft with project stakeholders and discuss alternatives;
    - Incorporate feedback, where applicable, and prepare a final draft of the conceptual plan;

- ***Task III – Final Plan and Summary Report***
    - Prepare schematic/conceptual designs (up to 30% design) for each of the project study areas that support the proposed site improvements and any alternatives, including non-structural/stewardship interventions, site grading, drainage, and other proposed improvements related to stormwater management, erosion

control, and park beautification. Graphic materials should include photos and/or figures of the current site conditions. Conceptual designs & site analysis should be informed by LiDAR data and the soil borings, if undertaken;

- Develop summary report(s) for all tasks above which includes at a minimum: maps, figures and description of existing conditions; project objectives; summary of community priorities; identification of applicable regulatory guidelines and restrictions, including required permits; identification and explanation of proposed interventions and park enhancements, limitations or challenges for implementation including possible additional site assessments; and estimated costs for construction;
- Work with project stakeholders to present the final draft of the conceptual plan(s) to a public meeting, likely a meeting of the Parks Committee of Community Board 8, and solicit comments;
- Make any necessary final revisions and submit final documents to the project stakeholders

IV. Relevant Studies and Available Data

Harlem River Watershed and Natural Resources Management Plan: Developed by NYC Department of Parks and Recreation in coordination from the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, the Bronx and Harlem Rivers Urban Waters Federal Partnership, and NY-NJ Harbor and Estuary Program, this plan provides a vision and goals for the Bronx portion of the Harlem River watershed. Building on past planning efforts, this plan includes strategies and site-specific recommendations for achieving its goals of:

1. Protect, restore and enhance natural resources to maximize diverse, native and contiguous ecological communities.
2. Manage stormwater through green infrastructure to capture, retain, and treat runoff.
3. Promote access and connectivity to the shoreline and between existing parks and open space.
4. Engage and educate the public to increase community awareness, environmental protection, and stewardship among diverse stakeholders.

Harlem River Watershed Hilltop Green Infrastructure Conceptual Neighborhood Plan: Developed by Riverkeeper and New York City Soil & Water Conservation District with input from the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality and the Bronx Community Board 8 Environment & Sanitation Committee, with design work from Perkins + Will. This project evaluates a 75 acre study area in the Harlem River Watershed and proposes a comprehensive green infrastructure plan to reduce combined sewer overflow (CSO) into the Harlem River.

New York City Parks Data

The consultant can pull record requests, including recent topographic surveys, from NYC Parks mapfile for Fort Independence Park and Moshulu Parkway.

Fort Independence Park – https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/fort-independence-playground

Mosholu Parkway - https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/mosholu-parkway

LiDAR Data – Where relevant, the consultant should use LiDAR data to inform their analysis & to develop project maps.

Newly planted trees – NYC parks can provide a map of newly planted trees in Mosholu Parkway.

V. Additional Considerations

Communications – The selected consultant should anticipate attending a monthly meeting with project team to report on progress and receive comments on draft materials, in addition to the project stakeholder meetings listed above. As noted above, the consultant should also anticipate making at least one presentation to local audiences describing the project and major highlights of the final plan and summary report.

Quality Assurance & Quality Control Requirements – If you plan to publish, post, distribute, analyze, or otherwise use data collected through monitoring or other means (including data collected previously by you or others), proposals will be required to develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that must be approved by HEP and EPA before any monitoring or data analysis can begin. A QAPP is a written plan of why, how, and where you intend to collect data; once submitted, the approval process can take two months or more. Please note that data collection or analyses conducted solely for educational purposes (no data published, posted or distributed in any manner) does not require a QAPP. HEP staff will provide technical assistance for the development of the QAPP, if needed, but be sure to allocate time and effort for QAPP preparation as part of the proposal.

MBE/WBE – Minority and women owned businesses and others included in EPA's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program are encouraged to apply. Certified businesses should self-identify in the proposal.

Match – No matching funds are required, but contribution of outside funds, in-kind services, or other match will be favorably reviewed and should be indicated.

VI. Submissions Process

Notice of intent to apply (optional, due August 22, 2025)

HEP welcomes a brief notice of intent to apply, including your expected project lead, contact information, and (one-two paragraph) statement on your strategy. Please send the notice of intent to christina@hudsonriver.org by August 22, 2025.

Questions about the RFP (optional, due August 22, 2025)

You may submit any questions about the RFP via e-mail to Christina@hudsonriver.org. Questions will be answered via email by August 29, 2025, to all who are filing a notice of intent.

Full Proposal (due September 14, 2025)

Proposals must be submitted by no later than 11:59 PM September 14, 2025 to the Hudson River Foundation's grant management portal, ProposalCentral. To apply for this grant, you must create an account with ProposalCentral by completing the registration form here: https://proposalcentral.com/register.asp.

After creating your account, log in at https://proposalcentral.com, click on the "Grant Opportunities" tab, search for "Hudson River Foundation", and locate the "Rapid Response Grants" under Programs. Click the blue "Apply Now" button to begin your application.

Please follow the instructions below to complete your application. Note that not all steps are required.

1. Select Title Page in the side bar. You must save a title for your project before advancing to the next page. Select "Greening in the Harlem River Watershed" as the program you are applying to. **(Required)**
2. See the full RPF and Budget instructions under "Download Templates & Instructions.
3. Select Applicant/PI in the side bar. Click "Edit Professional Profile", which will take you to a new page. Click "Add Institution" to update your information, which includes address and contact info. Search for your institution by typing it into the "Institution Name (partial)" field and clicking "Display Results" to search. If your institution is not present in the search results, you can request a new institution profile OR you can search the "No Institution Available" option and select that as your institution. **(Required)**
4. Select Key Personnel and add any other Personnel who would participate in this project.
5. Select Institution & Contacts. Add information for Signing Official, Fiscal Officer, and Grant Administrator. **(Required)**
6. If you would like to work on your application with another applicant(s), click 'Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal' on the side bar to add information of those you'd like to give access to. Those individuals will also need to create an account.
7. Select Budget Details and add budget period (the duration of this project), budget details, and any notes for line items. Please indicate the source of any matching funds or in-kind services. If matching funds are included, please specify if these have been secured or are being sought. **(Required)**
8. Select Budget Summary and add any narrative support for the budget. **(Required)**
9. Select Attachments in the side bar.
    a. Project Description: Add a pdf attachment of your project description as detailed below. Must not exceed 8 pages. **(Required)**
    b. Work Samples: Add a pdf attachment of printed materials describing comparable projects that your firm has undertaken. Must not exceed 3 pages. **(Required)**
10. Select Validate in the side bar. Click Validate to see a list of any missing fields.
11. Select Submit in the side bar and submit your application. **(Required)**

Please submit your letter of interest through the grants' portal by 11:59 PM on September 14, 2025.

Contact christina@hudsonriver.org with any additional questions.

VII. Project Description

The Project Description should not exceed eight single spaced pages and should be submitted as a pdf. The proposal must include the following information:

- **Work Plan:** Clearly describe the tasks you will need to carry out to address the project (identifying the team member responsible, where appropriate). Please include:
    - Overall technical approach and expected results for the project, including the ways you plan to achieve Tasks I, II, and III as well as any other actions that will help you achieve expected deliverables.
    - Identify and describe deliverables associated with each of the desired outputs identified in the Scope of Services (Section III).
    - Communication strategies involving HEP and project team to incorporate feedback into the approach and final deliverables.
- **Professional Merits and Experience:** Describe the relevant work experience of the project team and reference projects conducted in the last five years. Providing references for these projects is recommended. Define the roles of the project manager and partners in the project.
- **Project Timeline:** Develop a timeline for meeting project tasks and deliverables identified in the work plan. The expected project period for this work is October 13, 2025 – April 15, 2026.

VIII. General Guidelines for Applicants

Eligibility

Any non-federal public agency, institution, business, or nonprofit entity is eligible to apply. No matching funds are required, but the contribution of outside funds, in-kind services, or other match will be favorably reviewed and should be indicated.

Grant Awards

HEP expects to provide award notification to applicants on or about October 6, 2025. Projects cannot start until both parties sign the contract. Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis. Invoices should be sent to HEP at a frequency of no more than one per month and include a narrative of tasks completed. HEP and the Foundation reserve the right to modify, postpone or cancel this solicitation and to reject all applications.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals should respond to the requirements of this RFP in a straightforward and concise manner. Proposals will be evaluated based on staff qualifications, experience, project cost, and approach to bringing the project to a successful completion. All proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a review panel consisting of HEP and HRF staff, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, relevant experts, and project partners. Applications will be evaluated based on the project's merits as outlined in Appendix C. Revisions may be required before or after reaching a final decision, and in consideration of the final amount of funding available for this task. Criteria for project evaluation include:

- Understanding and Responsiveness to the Goals and Objectives of this Request for Proposals
- Technical Approach to the Project and Specific Tasks
- Ability to Meet Schedule
- Professional Merits and Relevant Experience
- Cost Effectiveness

Schedule

August 5, 2025 – RFP Announced

August 22, 2025 – Notice of intent to apply and submission of written questions (optional)

August 29, 2025 – HEP Response to questions

September 14, 2025 – Full proposals due by 11:59 pm

October 6, 2025 – Approximate award notification date

October 13, 2025 – Project begins

April 15, 2026 – Project completion

IX. Appendix B: Budget Forms

BUDGET CATEGORY *(Add/remove itemizing lines below major categories as necessary, but please do NOT delete major categories)*	**FUNDS REQUESTED FROM HEP**	**FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES******	**TOTAL BUDGET**
A. PERSONNEL (list individual staff member, task, and hours or % time) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
B. FRINGE BENEFITS % of (e.g., 30% of total personnel costs) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
C. TRAVEL (estimate number/purpose of trips below) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
D. EQUIPMENT and SUPPLIES (Itemize below) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
F. CONSULTANTS** (identify & itemize below) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
H. OTHER (identify & itemize below) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
	$	$	$
I. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (SUM OF A-G)	$	$	$
J. INDIRECT COSTS % of (Up to 40% of total personnel costs are allowed) **TOTAL:**	$	$	$
K. TOTAL PROJECT COST (SUM OF H+I)	$	$	$

* Note that equipment refers to items that cost $5,000 or more each. Items of lesser cost are considered supplies.

** F. Contracts refers to goods and services, generally from a for-profit vendor operating in a competitive environment, being delivered at the direction of the applicant. Subawards refers to funding being provided through grants to non-profit or public sector entities for activities that are addressing proposal objectives.

*** G. Construction: If construction costs are proposed for funding, site safety plans, insurance, and other compliance measures may be required.

****Please indicate the source of any matching funds or in-kind services. If matching funds are included, please specify if these have been secured or are being sought, and if they are from federal or non-federal sources.

X. Appendix C: Evaluation Criteria

Score: 0 = not likely, 1 = somewhat likely, 2 = likely, 3 = very likely. Maximum score: 45.

	This proposal…	**SCORE**
Goals, objectives, and rationale	Makes a clear case for applicant's motivation to carry out the project.	
	References and supports relevant goals and objectives as described in the RFP.	
	Shows familiarity with the study area and understands the characteristics and challenges of the Harlem River watershed	
Approach to the Project and Specific Tasks	Provides a clear and well-thought-out course of action, including a list of specific tasks, actions and methods.	
	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the required technical background and how to use the available data provided to carry out expected tasks.	
	Provides purposeful opportunities to work with the community and share results of the project with stakeholders.	
	Has outputs and outcomes in line with those required in the RFP and the proposed course of action.	
Ability to Meet Schedule	The timeline for the identified tasks is realistic and likely to be met.	
Community and Professional Merits and Relevant Experience	Demonstrates applicant's capacity and Interest in working in partnership with community representatives.	
	Demonstrates project manager and/or team member's relevant technical experience and knowledge of study area.	
	Indicates understanding of and connections with relevant federal, state, and local agencies including required permits.	
	Demonstrates commitment and support from project team and relevant partners.	
Cost Effectiveness	Includes a budget that is clearly presented.	
	Has costs that are reasonable and justified.	
	Provides for contribution of outside funds, in-kind services, or other match.	