

**City of Rome, New York**  
**Request for Proposals RFP-2024-022**  
**Parks and Recreation Master Plan**  
**Due Date: September 26, 2024**  
**198 North Washington Street, Rome, NY 13440**

**PROPOSAL ADVERTISEMENT**

Sealed proposals will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Rome, New York, until 11:00 a.m. local time **September 26, 2024** for the following project:

**RFP-2024-022**  
**Parks & Recreation Master Plan**

**PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION**

The City of Rome (COR) is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to provide services to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The intent of the project is to create a written plan for ensuring just and fair quantity, proximity and connections to quality parks, open space, trails, and programs throughout the City while looking to the future needs of a changing community. The COR is seeking a system-wide approach in order to develop goals, policies and guidelines and prioritize strategies based on current and future needs and funding scenarios. The COR is looking to utilize the National Recreation and Parks Associations (NRPA) Park Metrics Survey & Report System as part of this master plan process to be able to compare to similarly sized communities and establish benchmarking where possible.

**Project Location:** City-Wide  
**Owner:** City of Rome  
**Owner's Representative:** Matthew J. Andrews  
City of Rome Deputy Director of Community & Economic Development  
198 North Washington Street, Rome, NY, 13440  
(315) 339-7643

**PROPOSAL OPENING**

Proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud at 11:00 a.m. local time **September 26, 2024** at 198 north Washington Street, Rome, NY, 13440, Rome City Hall, 2nd Floor, Common Council Chambers.

**PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL & FORMS**

All proposals must be received no later than the submission deadline listed above. The City of Rome will not accept late submissions. All proposals shall be made along with any required forms. Submittals shall include 8 hard copies and 1 electronic file which shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope marked to the attention of the City Clerk as follows:

**RFP-2024-022**  
**Parks & Recreation Master Plan**  
**(Proposers Names)**

**EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTS & PROPOSAL MATERIALS**

RFP front end documents will be advertised electronically at the following locations:

- <https://romenewyork.com/treasurer-purchasing/>
- <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/new-york/city-of-rome>
- <https://www.nyscr.ny.gov/>
- <https://www.nyupstateplanning.org/rfps-rfqs>

**OFFICIAL RFP HOLDERS LIST**

Proposers who intend to submit a proposal must call or email to be placed on the official plan holders list. Those that obtain RFP documents from a source other than the issuing office must notify the City of Rome in order to be placed on the official plan holders list, in order to receive addenda and other correspondences. Proposals received from

other than those on the official plan holders list may not be accepted. To be placed on the official plan holders list please contact the Department's Office at (315) 339-7643.

**ADDENDA**

The City will not issue addenda, nor will it respond to questions five (5) days prior to the scheduled RFP opening unless stated bid date is postponed.

**PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE, SITE VISITS, & PROJECT QUESTIONS**

There will be no formal pre-proposal conference for this project. All questions should be directed towards the owner's representative.

**PROPOSAL SECURITY**

None

**SPECIAL BID LANGUAGE**

None

**BID ADVERTISEMENT NOTES**

It is the policy of the City of Rome to encourage the greatest possible participation of minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBs). All qualified MWBE suppliers, contractors, and/or businesses will be afforded equal opportunity without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or sexual preference. The City of Rome reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to accept any proposals deemed to be in its best interest.

**Eric Seelig, Rome City Clerk  
Board of Estimate & Contract**

**Legal Date: 09/03/2024**

## **Invitation**

The City of Rome (COR) is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to provide services to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The intent of the project is to create a written plan for ensuring just and fair quantity, proximity and connections to quality parks, open space, trails, and programs throughout the City while looking to the future needs of a changing community. The COR is seeking a system-wide approach in order to develop goals, policies and guidelines and prioritize strategies based on current and future needs and funding scenarios. The COR is looking to utilize the National Recreation and Parks Associations (NRPA) Park Metrics Survey & Report System as part of this master plan process to be able to compare to similarly sized communities and establish benchmarking where possible.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan that will be created from this work will be a guiding document for future facility development and improvement of the City's parks, open space, and trails (POST) over the next 15 years. The consultant will collect and analyze data to develop a clear set of goals, policies and standards for the community's park system, green space, trails, aquatics, recreation facilities, and program development. The consultant will work closely with COR staff and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in preparing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## **About Rome, NY Parks & Recreation**

The City of Rome is located approximately 45 miles east of Syracuse, NY, and lies in the western Mohawk Valley region of New York State at the confluence of the Mohawk River and the New York State Barge Canal. Based on the 2020 Census, the City is comprised of approximately 32,000 residents, and covers a land area of around 76 square miles. Much of the land area consists of rural agricultural lands, natural areas, and wetlands; while the urbanized area is where much of the active recreation facilities are located. The City has a diverse network of existing parks and recreation facilities including urban parks, rural parks, multiuse trails, a technology park with an established greenway network, and waterfront parks which are situated on both the Mohawk River and the NYS Barge Canal.

The Parks and Recreation Department and Municipal Buildings and Grounds Department operate and maintain 25 parks, 12 playgrounds, 5 pools, 1 dog park, 2 boat launches, the Mohawk River Trail & Empire State/Canalway Trail, and 1 civic indoor arena. The City also has public and private organizations which own and operate other recreational lands such as Fort Stanwix National Monument, owned by the National Parks Service; the Rome Sand Plains, managed by NYSDEC; the Pitch Pine Bog Trail, managed by the Izaak Walton League; the Griffiss International Sculpture Garden Trail, managed by Griffiss Local Development Corporation; and the Rome Family YMCA, owned by the YMCA of the Greater Tri-Valley.

## **Background**

The City of Rome has experienced significant population shifts throughout its incorporation period starting in 1870 through today. Large increases in population occurred through the industrial revolution period with copper, brass, and wire manufacturing at the forefront of county-wide production of those goods occurring during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Rome's largest population period was documented in the 1960 Census at 51,646 residents. A significant population decline directly related to the Federal Base Realignment and Closure action taken on the former U.S. Griffiss Air Force Base took place between 1993 and 1997. The City of Rome Parks system has continued to change and shift complexion based on population, community needs, opportunities, and operating budgets. The City is seeking to use this master planning process to understand if there is a excess, gap, or just right makeup of parks and recreation facilities and its related operation and maintenance budget and staff. This process shall result in a Master Plan including recommendations on how to organize and strengthen is system.

With the cybersecurity and nanotechnology industry boom within Central NY and the Mohawk Valley, the City looks forward to position itself for residential growth. Currently the COR holds approximately 8,000 residential properties, with more than 300 of those units being constructed or approved over the past several years. The City is looking to grasp a sound and strong direction of parks and recreation facility improvements as a method of attracting workforce and also to providing existing residents with safe and quality facilities. The existing stable and strong neighborhoods are a point of emphasis and community pride, and its understood that a strong parks system can serve as the backbone of those quality neighborhoods.

The City of Rome School District, which operates under a separate governance and budget than the COR, serves approximately 6,000 students from the community and surrounding areas. During the summer months, the public park system becomes activated with youth recreation programs and adult sports leagues. The local YMCA and other institutions provide current opportunities for adult and senior classes and activities throughout the year. The local school district also utilizes some of the open space and public athletic fields at the parks for school sports practices and games.

The COR has recently engaged with a professional consultant to undertake a feasibility study for an indoor sports complex which, if determined feasible, could be added to the Parks and Recreation inventory. This study will be added as an appendix to this Master Plan document and will also be included in the analysis and recommendations section of this plan.

### **Park & Recreation Context**

The City of Rome's 2023 operating budget was approximately \$67 million with an additional \$37 million attributed towards its capital budget. In 2023 the City spent \$476,000 on its parks, \$210,000 on building maintenance and programming, and \$339,000 on parks administration. Currently, nearly \$40 million is valued in deferred maintenance projects for the City of Rome, and this includes streets, utilities, and playgrounds.

The Parks Department is responsible for 25 parks covering 135 acres and 20 non-park sites that cover 200 acres, four miles of trail, and 13 buildings. Amenities on park and non-park sites include one community center and two club houses, one indoor ice rink and arena, 11 playgrounds, 10 outdoor basketball courts, three multi-use indoor courts, one outdoor volleyball court, eight baseball diamonds, eight outdoor tennis courts, five outdoor pickleball courts, three indoor pickleball/tennis courts, one existing skate park and one planned for construction, one dog park, four swimming pools, and seven rectangular fields. There are no parking fees or admission fees for any of the parks. Policies prohibit tobacco use at all locations and allow the sale of alcoholic beverages to legal-aged adults on-site, which normally occurs only for special events. There are healthy food options at concession stands in select locations, but not in the vending machines. The Department has an expressed commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) which extends to hiring practices.

The Department has four full-time employees and 80 part-time employees with approximately 60% of staff time spent on programming, 30% on operations and maintenance, and 10% on administration. Activities offered by the Department include health and wellness education, fitness classes, individual and team sports, racquet sports, golf, aquatic activities, social recreation events and themed special events, and eSports/ eGaming opportunities. Responsibilities of the Parks Department include operate and maintain park sites, courts, trails, indoor facilities, pools, non-park sites, marinas, conduct special events and programming and services including summer camp and teen programs, which allows the department to serve about 60,000 people a year.

### **Project Budget & Schedule**

A budget of \$200,000 has been established for this project.

The following tentative schedule is anticipated for selection, contract negotiations and contract award.

- Proposals due September 26, 2024.
- Proposal review and interviews to take place October 2024.
- Contract award expected in November 2024.
- The Master Plan associated with this proposal will commence on or about January 2025.
- The timeline that is projected for the preparation and completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is nine (9) months from the City Council award date.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **1. FOUNDATIONAL/PROJECT ADMINISTRATION**

- a. Consultant to establish a project advisory board
- b. Consultant to establish specific goals, policies, and guiding principles through committee and public engagement
- c. Consultant to establish a stakeholders list
- d. Consultant to provide the COR staff, and POST Advisory Board with a presentation of your approach to the planning process and provide an outline of specific deliverables which will be included in the complete project. The presentation shall include a realistic timeline for the project.
- e. Consultant to present approach to Master Plan to Elected Officials and provide three (3) progress reports.
- f. Consultant to participate in progress meetings with the Project Manager as often as necessary, but not less than once per month until the final plan is approved.
- g. Consultant to supply the Project Manager with at least one (1) copy of all completed or partially completed products as deemed necessary by the Project Manager at least three (3) working days before each progress meeting. The Project Manager shall schedule the meetings, as necessary, at key times during the development of the Master Plan.
- h. Consultant to research local history of each public park and provide written and graphic interpretive panel for each park.

**Deliverables: Consultant shall provide a comprehensive list of POST stakeholders and committee members for the project. Consultant shall provide an interpretive informational panel for each public park intended to be displayed onsite at each park. Interpretive panel shall be appropriately sized for each facility.**

### **2. INVENTORY**

- a. Consultant to provide inventory of existing parks, open space, and trails (POST)
- b. Consultant to provide inventory of existing aquatics & pool facilities (indoor and outdoor) (municipal & non municipal)
- c. Consultant to provide inventory of existing athletic fields
- d. Consultant to provide inventory of existing recreation programs (both public and private)

**Deliverables: Consultant shall assist with completing the NRPA Agency Performance Survey. Consultant shall provide a full inventory of each facility, inventory of water related recreation facilities, inventory of athletic fields (utilized and unutilized), and inventory of existing recreation programs. Inventory shall include both list and GIS mapping displays. Any files produced shall be provided to the COR.**

### 3. **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

- a. Consultant to identify, describe and implement a comprehensive strategy and methodology for community involvement in this Master Plan development process.
- b. Consultant to review existing documents to compile available information about community needs. Summarize and identify gaps in data.
- c. Consultant to provide well-organized and directed activities, techniques and formats that will ensure an equitable, inclusive, open and proactive public participation process is achieved. These methods should solicit quality input from as many people as possible, including under-resourced populations and users and non-users of the services and facilities.
- d. Consultant to act as professional facilitators to gather specific information about services, use, preferences and any agency strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- e. Consultant to provide written records and summaries of the results of all public process and communications strategies that can be shared with the public.
- f. Consultant to help to build consensus and agreement on the plan and if consensus is not possible, provide information for informed and equitable decision making for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Technical Advisory Committee, and/or Steering Committee.
- g. The COR will maintain a project website for the community to review materials and learn about the Master Plan process and the parks system.

**Deliverables: Consultant shall provide a public engagement schedule and outline the format for each. Consultant shall create public surveys in both digital and hard copy to be used for collecting valuable insight from the community and stakeholders. Public Surveys and in person meetings are intended to provide the committee and consultant with meaningful insight from the community, school district, and other stakeholders. Meeting summaries and presentation materials will be uploaded to the project website by the COR to keep the community updated on the projects progress.**

### 4. **TRENDS, ISSUES, and NEEDS**

- a. Consultant to provide a written analysis of trends, issues, and needs directly related to the City of Rome POST & Programming
  - i. Overlapping planning documents shall be utilized by the consultant including but not limited to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Rome Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan, Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan, NY SCOPR, Erie Canalway Preservation & Management Plan, etc...
- b. Consultant to conduct analysis that considers the fair and just quantity, distribution, inclusivity, condition, cultural relevancy, connections and proximity of parks, green space, programs, recreation centers and services. Evaluation criteria should be based on the expressed values of the community and focus on improved health and environmental outcomes.
- c. Consultant to provide an assessment and analysis of the park and recreation department's current level of programs, services and maintenance in relation to present and future goals, objectives and directives.
- d. Consultant to compile an inventory and assessment of the existing parks, trails, green space and facilities in Geographic Information System (GIS). Compare to national benchmarking tools.
- e. Consultant to provide a community-wide statistically valid community needs assessment survey on recreation and park programs and facilities. The return rate should accurately represent a sampling of

- the population, including vulnerable populations, so that an analysis can be segmented by race, gender, age and other demographic groups.
- f. Review and interpret demographic trends and characteristics of the community, using information from local and regional plans.

**Deliverables: Consultant shall provide a written and detailed analysis of trends, issues, and needs for the COR facilities and programming.**

**5. RECOMMENDATIONS & JUSTIFICATION of City of Rome POST**

- a. Consultant to develop an action plan that includes strategies, priorities and an analysis of budget support and funding mechanisms for the short-, mid- and long-term for the park system, green space, trails and recreation programs and services. The action plan should prioritize strategies by their level of impact on social, health and environmental outcomes.
- b. COR to prioritize recommendations for needs regarding land acquisition, and the development of parks, trails, green space and recreation facilities.
- c. COR to prioritize recommendations for maintenance, renovation and operations of parks, trails and recreation facilities.
- d. Consultant to recommend collaborative partnerships and other solutions to minimize duplications or enhance opportunities for collaborative partnerships.
- e. Consultant to identify areas of service shortfalls and projected impact of future trends.
- f. Consultant to develop recommendations for operations, staffing, maintenance, programming and funding needs.
- g. Consultant to provide a clear plan for development of programming based on demand analysis.
- h. Consultant to provide a clean and acceptable GIS data set and layout of parks, trails, and other recreation areas within an Arc GIS map package.

**Deliverables: Detailed recommendations on budgeting, operations, staffing, partnerships, and developed action plan. Recommendations shall include facts, figures, graphics, maps, and other materials necessary to facilitate the recommendations and messaging to the public. Any data or mapping files shall be provided to the City.**

**6. FINAL PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN with SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

- a. Consultant to provide a final product including any and all supporting materials for final adoption.
  - i. The plan must include an executive summary of the plan with supporting maps and graphics.
  - ii. The Master Plan must include written goals, objectives, policy statements, a financial and action plan that articulate a clear vision and “roadmap” for the City & Department of Parks and Recreation annual and long-term planning.
  - iii. A summary of existing conditions, inventories and system-wide metrics, distribution metrics, and population demographics and outcome metrics. Refer to “System-Wide Metrics” in the NRPA Resource Guide
  - iv. Charts, graphs, maps and other data as needed to support the plan and its presentation to the appropriate audiences.

**Deliverables: Master Plan Summary, Final Report, and Supporting Documents including:**

1. Overall parks, open space, and trails (POST) map
2. POST service map and gap analysis
3. NRPA based POST community need analysis
4. NRPA based POST recommendation and justification for adjustments to recreation facilities
  - a. Locations
  - b. Equipment

**c. Services & Hours of Operation**

- 5. NRPA based POST recommendation for annual budget and maintenance staff for current and future community demographic and size**
- 6. Aquatics & Pool Facility Plan (Indoor & Outdoor)**
- 7. Athletic Field Use Plan (coordinate with Rome City School District & other sports leagues)**
- 8. Community & Indoor Recreation Center Recommendation & Plan (City to Provide)**
- 9. Recreation Trails and Connectivity Plan (public and private organization facilities with map)**
- 10. Interpretive Panel for each public park outlining background and history**
- 11. 15-year Capital Improvement Plan for all park & recreation facilities based on plan and recommendations**

**7. 15 Year Capital Improvement Plan**

- a. Consultant to provide a capital improvement plan for each park and facility intended to be utilized for annual budgeting and park improvements.

**Deliverables: Consultant shall provide a detailed and realistic capital plan for buildings and facility maintenance and improvements for a 15 year period. The capital plan shall be broken down by park site and by facility type (building, playground, pool, athletic field, etc...)**

**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

**All proposals should include the following information:**

- 1.** A Letter of Submission that includes the name, address and telephone number of the person(s) who is representing the firm.
- 2.** Background on the firm and its experience in preparing Master Plans for public agencies, as well as engagements involving communities that have characteristics similar to the COR.
- 3.** A narrative that presents the services the firm would provide detailing the approach, methodology, deliverables and client meetings. Deliverables summary should include those listed in this RFP plus any additional the firm would consider beneficial or necessary. Include any analytical and mapping exercises.
- 4.** Identification of the personnel to be assigned to this engagement, including a résumé of related experience and estimated number of hours per person.
- 5.** A timeline for preparation and implementation of the Master Plan and its components.
- 6.** At least three (3) public agency references for projects of a similar nature. Include a description of the projects, including (at minimum) client, location, contact person, contact information (telephone/email address) and a brief summary of the project.
- 7.** Provide itemized project costs summary following the scope of services. The project cost for services should be a “not-to-exceed cost for services.”

Proposing consultants should be prepared to provide an in-person presentation for the project selection committee.