SOLICITATION FOR:
Master Planning Services for
Mary Cummings Park in Burlington, MA

RELEASED:
April 12th, 2019

DUE BY:
May 3rd, 2019

DELIVER TO:
The Trustees
113 Andover St
North Andover, MA 01845
Attn: Kevin Block
Project Manager
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
Master Planning Services

SECTION 1.0
GENERAL INFORMATION ON BID PROCESS

1.1 INVITATION: It is the intention of the Trustees to solicit proposals for Master Planning Services for Mary Cummings Park, located at 15 Blanchard Road, Burlington, MA. A map of the boundaries of the property is included in this RFP in Section 5.0.

The Trustees of Reservations (the Trustees) makes this Request for Proposals (the RFP) to select a qualified Landscape Architect (the Designer) to assist in developing a Master Plan for a newly acquired 200+ acre parcel called Mary Cummings Park. The Project is generally described in the “Scope of Services” (SECTION 2.0), contained within this RFP.

1.2 PROPOSAL DUE DATE and LOCATION: The Designer shall submit one (1) digital copy as a single PDF file to kblock@thetrustees.org with subject title MCP RFP

The submittal shall be made at or before 5:00pm EST, May 3rd, 2019.

NOTE: Late proposals will not be accepted.

1.3 PROPOSAL FORMAT: The Designer shall provide the appropriate information in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the evaluation criteria has been satisfied as specified in Section 1.5 “EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS”.

To allow for easier comparison of proposals during evaluation, proposals should contain the following sections and be arranged in consecutive order:

1. Firm profile – Show involved individuals and resumes.
2. Narrative - Should include:
   • description of understanding of the Project, including a brief summary of the Scope of Work
   • an organizational and general design approach to the Project
   • an explanation of how your team intends to work collaboratively with the Trustees and other stakeholders to obtain the best possible combination of design quality and value
3. **Scope of Services** - Describe in detail how services will be provided. Include a detailed listing and description of tasks and deliverables.

4. **Experience and Capacity** - Describe background and related experience demonstrating ability to provide required services. Describe specific experience providing design services including:
   - landscape design and master planning, including visitor experience, entrance and parking, circulation, trail systems and overall vision of a large acreage parcel of land
   - communication with community members during planning

5. **References** - List (3) references from contracts similar in size and scope.

6. **Cost/Fees** - Indicate proposed cost of service including a breakdown of fees into discreet services and project phases. Include hourly rates.

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**1.4 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS AND SELECTION OF DESIGNER:** Proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation panel made up of representatives of the Trustees’ Mary Cummings Park team. Evaluations will be based on the required criteria listed in Section 1.4 “PROPOSAL FORMAT”, and the following:

1. Quality, thoroughness, and clarity of proposal.
2. Experience producing comprehensive master plans for large, nature-based, recreational land parcels.
3. Indication of successful community outreach and workshopping experience.
4. How well the Scope of Services offered meets project objectives.
5. Organization and management approach and involvement for a successful project.
6. Small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women’s business enterprises participation.
7. Cost of services proposed.
8. Insurance coverage as defined for the services.

The selected Designer shall be notified by May 9th, 2019 and services will commence on May 13th, 2019.

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**1.5 SCHEDULE:** The following is a listing of key Proposal milestones:

- **RFP Issued** 4/12/2019
- **Deadline for Submitting** 4/26/2019 – 11:00am EST
  - Questions for Clarifications to RFP
- **Proposals Due** 5/3/2019 – 5:00pm EST
- **Anticipated Contract Award** 5/9/2019
- **Services Commence** 5/13/2019
1.6 **CONTRACT:** The contracting parties will be the Trustees and the Designer selected to provide the services as described herein. The selected proposal, along with the RFP and any counter proposal may be incorporated into a formal agreement after negotiations.

1.7 **REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION:** Prospective responders shall direct inquiries or questions to RFP in email form only to:

   Project Manager: Kevin Block, Trustees  
   Email ID: kblock@thetrustees.org

   All questions are due no later than 11:00am Monday, April 26th, 2019. Please send all questions to kblock@thetrustees.org

1.8 **REJECTION OF PROPOSALS:** Trustees reserves the right to reject any Designer on the basis of the proposals submitted.

1.9 **ADDENDUM TO THE RFP:**

   The Trustees reserves the right to cancel or amend the RFP at any time.

1.10 **SITE VISITS:** Designer may visit the Mary Cummings Park property in reference to the services to be provided but are prohibited from interviewing site staff or other visitors in any effort to obtain information relating to this RFP. All requests for clarification should be submitted in writing as outlined in this RFP. Failure to follow this prohibition could result in the rejection of the proposal.

**SECTION 2.0**  
**SCOPE OF SERVICES**

**INTRODUCTION:**

2.1 Founded in 1891 by Boston landscape architect Charles Eliot, The Trustees have worked for more than 125 years to conserve the cultural, natural, and historic character that makes Massachusetts’ landscapes and communities unique. Our mission is to preserve, for public use and enjoyment, properties of exceptional scenic, historic, and ecological value in Massachusetts. Presently, The Trustees protect and steward 117 iconic reservations, and look to do the same at Mary Cummings Park, our 118th property.

Mary Cummings Park is named for Mary P.C. Cummings, a Massachusetts resident whose generosity, foresight, and commitment to outdoor recreation resulted in a singular achievement for the Greater Boston Area. In 1930, the Boston City Council accepted Mary’s land to be kept
forever open as a “public pleasure ground.” The 200-acre park, located on the Burlington-Woburn border, is now one of the largest areas of parkland in a heavily-developed region of eastern Massachusetts.

The Mary Cummings Park property features a mosaic of open meadows and successional fields, wetlands, and woodlands. The park is located at the boundary of two watersheds, adjoins considerable protected conservation land, and overlaps a large priority habitat for rare species. The parcel is part of the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

The Trustees is thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the City of Boston to take on management of the Park, and we are committed to greatly increasing public participation within this important urban location. This opportunity will not be the first time that we take on a public space in a community similar in size and demographic to Burlington and Woburn. The Trustees began acquiring large “countryside” parks in suburban and urban areas in 1993 with the acquisition of Ravenswood Park from the City of Gloucester (600 acres), and later acquired Francis Bird Park in East Walpole (89 acres) in 2003. These parks underscore our commitment and ability to preserving scenery for public use and access and bringing nature to populations with limited opportunities to enjoy woodlands and open space.

Our goal is to bring Mary Cummings Park back to life, and to provide an array of active outdoor events for the public and area businesses. Working in collaboration with the Towns of Burlington and Woburn, surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and recreation groups - as well as other stakeholders interested in the future of the park - our plans will be based on the milestones identified in a comprehensive master plan.

We envision a park where families engage in day hikes, nature walks, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, trail running, scouting, geocaching, flyer clubs, picnics, nature photography, and more. School groups will gather at the Park for field trips. Picnics and concerts will be complemented by nature and cultural walks. Agriculture will be reintroduced to the site through community and corporate gardens, offering a source of fresh produce for the gardeners, as well as a platform for student-farmer apprenticeships and programs for horticulturalists and gardeners.

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DETAILS:

2.2 The Mary P.C. Cummings Estate is owned in trust by the City of Boston. The Trustees currently serves as the Estate’s manager pursuant to a management agreement between the parties as well as holds a conservation restriction to preserve the Estate’s use as a public pleasure ground in perpetuity. As manager of the Estate, the Trustees will carry out the Project funded by a PARC grant on behalf of the City.
Vision for Mary Cummings Park: The collective vision nurtured by the City and the Trustees’ for Mary Cummings Park is of a vibrant and diverse collection of landscapes and natural communities located in one of the Commonwealth’s most densely-developed regions; the mature, inner-ring suburbs of Woburn and Burlington. These communities have seen waves of development since Route 128 (then known as “America’s Technology Highway”) was built in the 1950’s and are currently facing intense development pressure as the less-dense, manufacturing-oriented buildings of the 50’s and 60’s are replaced by far denser office buildings. Mary Cummings Park itself is within ½ mile of Route 128, and of the Burlington Mall, which is effectively the epicenter of development in the region.

Despite its location, and notwithstanding a post-WWII taking of land by the Department of Defense (now owned by Northeastern University), Mary Cummings Park remains a sanctuary, albeit one in deep need of restoration, but with great potential to engage and refresh a population with limited access to meaningful open space at this scale. Over time, the Park’s woodlands have been significantly impacted by invasive species, its open fields are being encroached on by the inevitable process of succession, and the trail system, which has always been informal by nature, suffers from poor drainage, erosion, and many of the trails are so overgrown as to be impassable. Even with all that as current conditions, and with no real defined access point and deficient parking, the park sees significant use and visitation. However, with the assistance of the PARC program, The Trustees and the City envision a much brighter future for Mary Cummings Park.

Visitor Services: The Park improvement plan begins at the Blanchard Road street frontage, where a 20-25 space gravel parking area may be created. The parking area would be signed consistent with The Trustee’s standard signage plan, with a hanging sign at the roadside, and an informational kiosk and interpretive signage at the trailhead. We want to have the parking lot separate from the Burlington soccer fields parking lot. The map in section 5.0 shows an initial placement but depending on Master Planning this can be changed.

Proximate to the parking area would be the “Picnic Lawn” area, an open grassy sward conducive to informal public use, but which might also be the site of concerts, family reunions, community events, etc. Also shown in Section 5.0 on the map, but we are hiring a Designer to make sure this is the best location for these two visitor service entities.

Community Gardens: Adjacent to the Picnic Lawn we propose a community garden consisting of raised beds for ease of cultivation for seniors, and available to community members. Conversations with the Burlington community garden coordinator indicates significant demand for plots based on large numbers of new empty nester-targeted residential units created in Burlington in multi-family buildings. These new residents have been accustomed to having their own outdoor space and so we are seeing new demand for community garden opportunities. The selected Designer will work with the town of Burlington to provide future gardeners with appropriate water access, and to determine the best water access point. Also shown in section 5.0, but looking for best location depending on access from parking lot and water access.
Habitat and Field Restoration: Another major element of the park improvement program is the restoration of the Central Field, a former farm field at the core of the Park, which will be cleared of woody growth, and managed as a native meadow. These restoration efforts will re-claim one of the Park’s most attractive landscapes, which is rapidly being lost to successional growth. In addition to clearing and restoring Central Field, there are approximately 27 acres surrounding the proposed parking lot and picnic lawn that needs to be cleared of invasives and undergo a phased restoration strategy. A master plan would include directives on clearing that optimizes neighborhood screening and the implementation of a trail system.

Trails and Circulation: Beyond the improvements planned in the gateway area, roughly 5,400 feet of trail will be either created or improved, along with the installation of related way-finding signage. A 1500-foot universal access trail will also be implemented leaving the parking lot and providing access to the Burlington ball fields.

This project also includes community engagement to include the town of Burlington, surrounding neighbors, and other stakeholders. In addition to working with a team of Trustees staff, coordinated by the Project Manager, the design team will be asked to take part in community input-gathering workshops.

Collectively, these efforts will transform Mary Cummings Park into a vital, healthy landscape offering passive recreational and outdoor program opportunities to a community deeply in need of access to natural resources.

2.1 SCOPE OF WORK

The Designer will:
- Review relevant Trustees’ documents on initial design concepts
- Take part in two (2) community input-gathering sessions
- Produce illustrative plan and presentation level renderings of key site features (parking lot, picnic lawn, community gardens, trails)
- Assist the Trustees with outreach to key stakeholders
- Produce a master plan for the entire 200+ acres of Mary Cummings Park
- Work directly with Trustees’ Project Manager to lead coordination efforts of Project Design Team, to be determined if needed
- Review relevant local, state and federal regulations and policies for their impact on the proposed design

SECTION 3.0 PROJECT SCHEDULE
SECTION 5.0

Map of Mary Cummings Park and Key Features

SECTION 6.0

GENERAL TERMS AND REGULATIONS