



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) for Municipal Tree Assessment

PURPOSE OF REQUEST

The City of Lakewood, WA seeks responses to this RFQ from consulting firms and/or individuals with proven expertise and understanding of municipal urban forestry programs and both GIS and on-the-ground tree canopy assessments to conduct a 2024 tree canopy assessment in Lakewood's municipal boundaries.

This project is to be funded with City funds reserved for the purpose. City staff will assist in administration of the project, to be further defined once a firm or individual has been selected to perform the work.

BACKGROUND:

Lakewood, WA adopted a new Tree Preservation Code in 2022 that is published at [LMC 18A.70 Article III](#). Background information prepared related to the City's tree canopy can be found at <https://cityoflakewood.us/trees/>.

The City collects money for its City Tree Fund as payment in lieu of on-site tree replacement, for removal of trees in excess of retention requirements, and as mitigation for oak trees removed in conjunction with development projects.

The City has an obligation to spend the funds received for planting of trees, to include oak trees and activities intended to improve Oregon White Oak Woodland habitat, as well as improving the health of current or new tree and natural areas citywide. The code language at [LMC 18A.70.340](#) authorizes that the Tree Fund be used for:

- Acquiring, maintaining, and preserving wooded areas within the City;
- Planting and maintaining trees within the City;
- Restoration or enhancement of native trees like Oregon white oaks, such as on public lands, private tree tracts, critical area buffers, or lands with conservation easements;
- Establishment of a holding public tree nursery;
- Urban forestry education;
- Implementation of a tree canopy monitoring program;
- Scientific research;
- Resources to support the administration of this article; or
- Other purposes relating to trees as determined by the City Council.

Increasing the City’s tree canopy aligns with Council’s 2021 adoption of a Comprehensive Plan Energy & Climate Change Element. A 2019 urban tree canopy assessment concluded that the City had a 26% tree canopy, an increase of 0.5% from the last assessment in 2011.

In 2023, the City updated its Comprehensive Plan to include the following goal and policies:

3.12.6 Urban Forestry

GOAL LU-60: Institute an urban forestry program to preserve significant trees, promote healthy and safe trees, and expand tree canopy coverage throughout the City.

Policies:

- LU-60.1: Establish an urban forestry program for the City.
- LU-60.2: Promote planting and maintenance of street trees.
- LU-60.3: Provide for the retention of significant tree stands and the restoration of tree stands within the City.
- LU-60.4: Work towards a citywide goal of 40% tree canopy cover by the year 2050. Consider opportunities to increase canopy and environmental equity when evaluating tree canopy distribution.

On May 22, 2023, the City Council accepted a [report from the UW Evans School of Public Policy & Governance](#) regarding establishing an urban forestry program over a 5 year period. The Council obligated funds to implement the report’s recommendations for a certified arborist, tree assessment, and public outreach efforts through 2026.

RFQ PROCESS

This is a notice of “Request for Qualifications” for consultants. The ultimate purpose is to hire a consultant(s) to conduct an on-the-ground tree assessment in Lakewood, WA to gather needed foundational information that the City can use to launch a new municipal urban forestry program. Based on a review of the submitted proposals, up to three (3) consultants will be selected for an interview. The interview, in conjunction with the proposal and qualifications submitted, will be used to identify the consultant(s) selected. The City of Lakewood will approve the final consultant agreement.

TIME SCHEDULE

The City will follow the time table below, which should result in a selection of a firm in March, 2024.

Issue RFQ	January 31, 2024
Deadline for receiving proposals	<u>February 23, 2024 (5:00 PM)</u>
Contract Award	March 15, 2024

INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS:

- One copy (not to exceed 20 pages, excluding resumes and supplementary appendices) of this RFQ must be labeled “Lakewood 2024 Tree Assessment” and be placed in sealed envelopes addressed to the following persons:

Tiffany Speir, Long Range & Strategic Planning Manager –
Community & Economic Development Department
City of Lakewood
6000 Main Street SW
Lakewood, WA 98499-5013

For questions, contact Tiffany Speir at (253) 983-7702 / tspeir@cityoflakewood.us

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to determine and waive minor irregularities in any proposal.
- The City reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any proposer.
- The City reserves the right to determine the most qualified consultant based on the City’s evaluation of the selection criteria included below and any factors relevant thereto.
- The City reserves the right to award contracts for all or some of the tasks in the scope of the work to one or more consultant(s) as part of a team to complete the tasks in the Scope of Work.
- The City reserves the right to award any contract to the next most qualified consultant, if the successful consultant does not execute a contract within thirty (30) days after the award of the proposal.
- The City shall not be responsible for any cost incurred by the firm in preparing, submitting or presenting its response to the RFP.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Experience and background of personnel assigned to the project;
- Successful, recent and relevant experience in conducting tree assessments and working with municipal urban forestry programs and/or community and special interest tree planting and maintenance organizations;
- Past record in the timely and efficient management of projects referenced above, including documentations that the projects were implemented on budget and on time;

- Quality of work products and successful implementation of related work;
- Experience in facilitating public meetings and making presentations before public agencies, citizen groups and elected officials; and
- Other selection criteria shall include: (a) responsiveness of the written proposal and/or interviews to the purpose and scope of the service; (b) price; (c) a history of successful contracts of this type and (d) an ability to adhere to projected deadlines and demonstrated experience in similar work.

Required information in the response includes:

- A listing of the clients, contract amount, contact person, and their phone number for which the proposer has conducted the same or similar work.
- Other references who would be helpful to contact. The information provided should include reference name, phone number, and why they are being suggested as a reference.

SCOPE OF WORK

The following scope of work shall be completed for the City of Lakewood.

- Provide regular status updates regarding the assessment to City staff.
- Participate in appropriate Planning Commission and/or City Council meetings where the 2024 tree assessment results are presented;
- The 2024 tree assessment results must contain at a minimum:
 - (1) A canopy baseline percentage that includes
 - a. Tree location information;
 - b. Tree species information and whether they are drought-tolerant and/or heat-tolerant;
 - c. Approximate age of trees in stands; and
 - d. Identification of any trees obviously diseased or damaged that will not provide mid- or long-term tree canopy.
 - (2) Assessment results that can be incorporated as GIS data and layers by the City.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The deadline for completion and presentation of the tree assessment results is September 1, 2024.

COMPENSATION

- Please present detailed information on the proposer's draft fee schedule for the work specifications and for any variation for non-routine services, inclusive of Washington State sales tax and any other applicable government charges. Please provide specifics as to definitions of routine versus non-routine tasks, what is fixed as opposed to variable, and how costs are adjusted according to that classification.
- Payment for the aforementioned services will only be made after the services have been performed, an itemized billing statement is submitted in a form specified by the City and approved by the appropriate representatives, which shall specifically set forth the services performed. Payment will be made in accordance with the payable payment cycles based upon a signed consultant agreement with the City.