

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
(RFQ-2023-11-01)
NORTHWEST ILLINOIS
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING PROJECT**

Issued on November 1, 2023, by:



309 1st Ave
Rock Falls, IL
815-625-3854

Questions?

Please contact us at info@blackhawkhills.com.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ-2023-11-01)
NORTHWEST ILLINOIS
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING PROJECT

Blackhawk Hills Regional Council (BHRC) invites consultants to submit their qualifications for assisting Northwest Illinois units of local government with assessing and costing architectural/engineering/other projects during the formation of a limited number of capital improvement plans as described in this scope of work.

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 About BHRC

BHRC – a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit – is Northwest Illinois’ regional planning organization, economic development district, and resource conservation and development district for Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside counties.

1.2 General Information

BHRC will evaluate submissions, potentially conducting interviews with consultants that it determines can best meet the needs outlined below. Negotiations will be held with the consultant or consultants that can best satisfy project requirements at rates BHRC perceives are reasonable for the services provided.

SECTION 2. PROJECT SCOPE

2.1 Project Background

BHRC has received an award from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity’s Research in Illinois to Spur Economic Recovery program to assist Northwest Illinois communities with the formation of five-year capital improvement plans (CIP).

The BHRC region consists of six counties (Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside counties) with a total population of approximately 224,490 (source: 2021 U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates). There are 64 incorporated municipalities, 58 of which have populations under 5,000. The majority of these communities have experienced population decline for the past two decades, with a decrease of 3.8% for all BHRC communities from 2000 to 2020 (source: 2000 and 2020 Decennial Censuses, retrieved July 5, 2023). In addition to its people, the region lost 2.2% of its jobs from 2012 to 2022 (source: EMSI Legacy Industry Snapshot, retrieved July 10, 2023). A decline in both population and private enterprise means less revenue available for city construction, operations, and maintenance. Deficient infrastructure and insufficient services deter new residents from moving in and businesses from investing. They also hasten out-migration, perpetuating the cycle of decline.

However, historic funding is now available for communities ready to apply for new state and federal programs. Additionally, over \$18.5 million in State Local Fiscal Recovery Funds were allocated to BHRC municipalities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of population decline, economic stagnation, and staffing, communities typically have not articulated

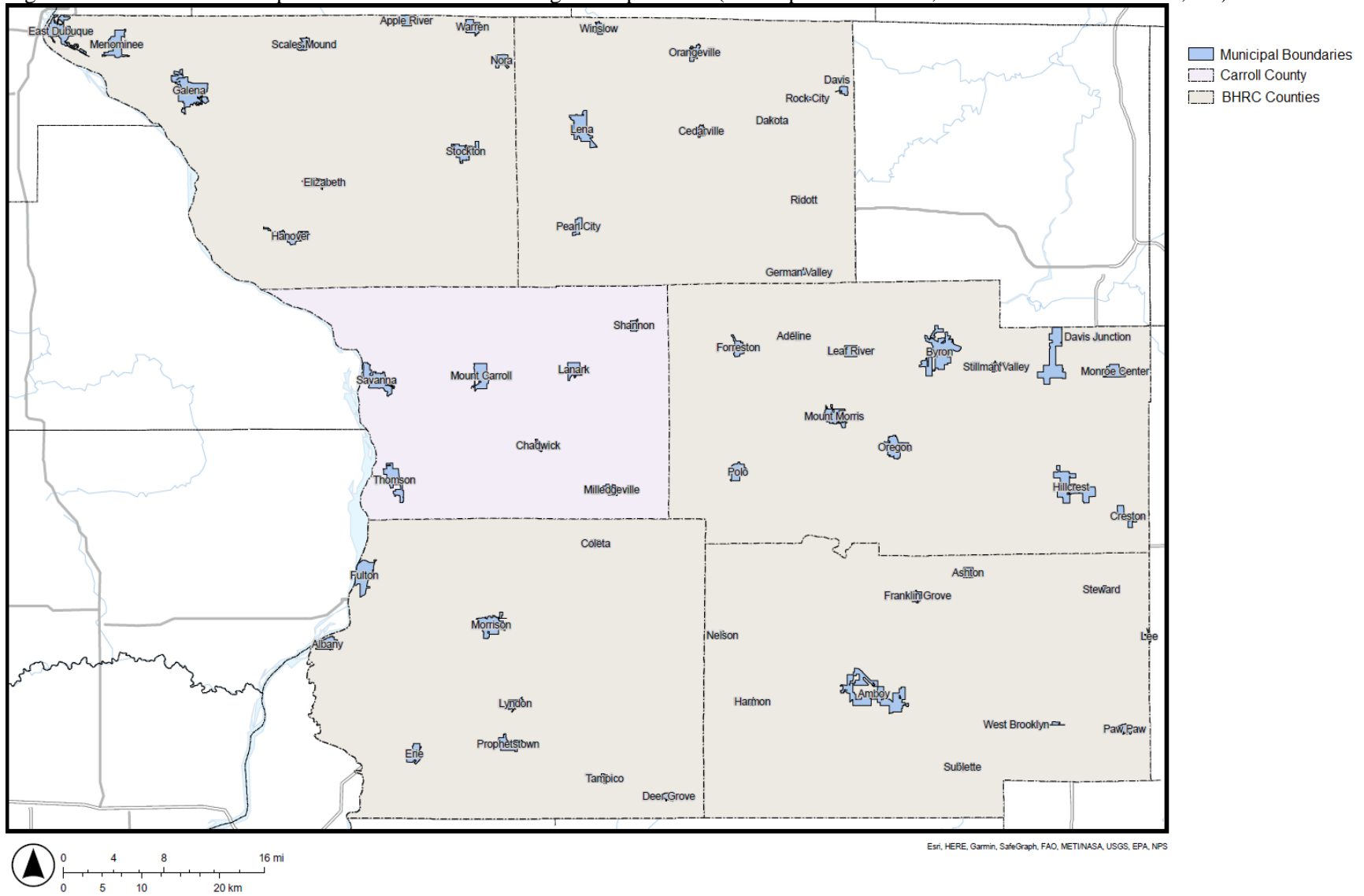
investment priorities. Consequently, local government is often in crisis mode with available capital funds spent on the next emergency.

A CIP is a long-range plan that identifies all capital projects over a specific cost threshold and period of time, prioritizing them based on criteria established by a unit of local government (ULG), taking into account anticipated annual budgets. The prioritization schedule ensures expenditures are timely, economical, necessary, and support a wholistic approach to improving community quality of life. CIPs can help federal and state funding go further and support counties and municipalities shift from an emergency mindset to one that builds resiliency into investments.

2.2 Project Location

The project will involve communities within the BHRC planning region. At present, this includes Morrison, Oregon, Polo, and Savanna, IL, as well as Carroll County, IL, with the potential for adding up to one additional ULGs.

Figure 2.2.1 – BHRC Municipalities and Counties with Eligible Populations (municipalities under 5,000 and counties under 15,000)



Source: 2020 U.S. Census TIGER/Line Files and 2020 U.S. Decennial Census.

2.3 Scope of Services

Expected project activities and timelines are described below; some flexibility may be allowed in specific deliverable format and content.

2.3.1 Project Assessment

A typical CIP includes a list of community equipment/capital projects for assets valued over a specific cost threshold (\$5,000 or more, typically). BHRC’s regional planner will collaborate with each community’s CIP administrator to compile a list of equipment/capital projects, providing the following level of detail:

- Project name
- Project location
- General description of project
- Project (including planning), program, or policy classification
- Department and personnel who will oversee and complete the project
- Status of existing assets associated with project, including:
 - Name, location, description, and contacts
 - Age
 - Current condition and maintenance record
 - Other records

BHRC will also provide a copy of the community’s project scoring criteria.

The consultant will use this information to evaluate a project’s scope and cost. Where the municipality provides its own assessment, general or specific, the consultant should evaluate whether such assessment is accurate and, if warranted, provide additional information or an alternative assessment.

The following table should be used by the consultant to prepare project profiles:

Table 2.3.1.1 – Criteria and Deliverables to Include in Completed Project Profiles

Criteria	Deliverables
Planning, design, and construction costs (planning-level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall planning, design, and construction costs • For construction projects, list costs by likely SF-424C classification • For equipment and infrastructure, include depreciation schedule
Annual operational and maintenance costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life expectancy • Expected operations/maintenance costs over lifetime • If project contains multiple major assets, those assets should be broken out with respect to life expectancy and operations/maintenance costs
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall timeline • Key project milestones • Anticipated cost of each key milestone
Payback period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If relevant, payback period calculation that estimates revenue generated or costs minimized/eliminated (e.g., energy efficiency upgrades)
Project area and service level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of project area • Estimated size of constituency served (i.e., tens, hundreds, thousands)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the level of service change over the project’s lifespan?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternatives to the proposed project that reduce stormwater runoff, energy and water consumption, emissions (like CO2, PM, and VOCs), land use impacts (e.g., infill vs greenfield construction), etc. • How will the project be resilient with respect to natural and manmade disasters, including those exacerbated by climate change?
Public health, safety, or legal concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What public health, safety, or legal steps are needed to implement the project?
Funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected funding sources for planning/design/construction costs, including breakdown of costs by source

This process will support ULGs that have traditionally lacked the resources to thoroughly evaluate their community’s needs. The consultant should be prepared to serve as the sole expert for developing project profiles. When data is incomplete or unavailable, the consultant should be prepared to use their best judgement in making an assessment after having communicated with BHRC and the ULG.

2.4 Project Timeline

December 1, 2023, to March 31, 2023. RFQ timeline follows in section 3.1.

SECTION 3. SELECTION PROCESS

3.1 RFQ Timeline

Item	Date
RFQ Issued	November 1, 2023
Last Date to Submit a Question	November 10, 2023
Last Date to Submit Qualifications	November 14, 2023
Evaluation	November 2023
Selection	November 2023
Contracting	November 2023
Consultant Work Begins	December 1, 2023

3.2 Pre-Submittal Meeting and Interviews

There is no pre-submittal meeting, and interviews are not scheduled. If BHRC determines that interviews are needed, it will schedule them during the evaluation phase and amend the timeline as it sees fit to do so. In general, BHRC reserves the right to modify the RFQ timeline as necessary.

3.3 Submissions Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used:

- A. Project team management capabilities
- B. Understanding of project goals and scope of work
- C. Working knowledge of capital improvement planning
- D. Familiarity with participant communities
- E. Performance on prior BHRC or BHRC stakeholder contracts, if applicable
- F. References from at least three communities that can speak to the submitter's capital improvement planning experience or related work

3.5 Submissions Order

- A. Introduction/summary of submission
- B. Team description
- C. Narrative
- D. Other relevant information
- E. References
- F. Attachments

3.5 Submission Delivery

The file should be saved as a PDF, named "RFQ-2023-11-01 Submission," and emailed to info@blackhawkhills.com with the subject "Northwest Illinois Capital Improvement Planning Project."

SECTION 4. SUBMITTER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

4.1. RFQ Document

Information provided here is intended solely to assist consultants in the preparation of their qualifications. To the best of BHRC's knowledge, the information provided is accurate. However, BHRC does not warrant such accuracy and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this RFQ.

4.2. Ownership of Records

BHRC will retain ownership of all interim and final documents, and related materials that are either produced or developed in conjunction with the consultant's contract. The consultant is prohibited from copying or distributing any of these documents or other reports developed in conjunction with the BHRC without written permission from BHRC.

4.3. Inquiries

Email all inquiries to info@blackhawkhills.com no later than November 10, 2023. BHRC will review all inquiries received prior to this date and respond to questions as soon as possible. Any errors, omissions, or ambiguities discovered within the RFQ publication should be identified in an email sent to BHRC prior to the RFQ submission deadline.

4.4. Acceptance of Submitter Content and Public Information

As much as possible, BHRC will treat all submissions as proprietary and confidential from the time of receipt and throughout the review process; however, the submitter agrees that all submissions become the property of BHRC and information included in or attached become available to the public after recommendation for endorsement of contract is made.

Any specific portions of the submission which the submitting firm desires to remain confidential due to legitimate "proprietary information" or "trade secret" must be identified in an attachment to the submission entitled "Request for Confidentiality." In the event that BHRC judges the information to be non-confidential, the submitter will be notified and given the opportunity to change the designation or withdraw the submission prior to evaluation.

4.5. Withholding Content

To the extent permitted by law, it is the intention of BHRC to withhold the contents of the submission from public view until such times as competitive or bargaining reasons no longer require non-disclosure, in the opinion of BHRC.

4.6. Subcontractors

It is intended that a single contractor will have total responsibility for all services identified in the Northwest Illinois Capital Improvement Plan Development Project RFQ. Therefore, any submitter using a subcontractor(s) must identify each on a document supplied as an attachment to the submission and titled "RFQ-2023-11-01 Response - Subcontractors." It should include:

- the company's name,
- the company's principal owner(s),
- a description of their involvement in the project, and
- qualifications for each aspect of the scope of services with which they are involved

The subcontractor(s) cannot be changed after submission except with the written approval of BHRC. The consultant is responsible for all subcontractor actions, workmanship, performance, and payment.

4.7. Submitter Costs

BHRC is not liable for any costs or expenses incurred by any entity related to this RFQ. BHRC is not liable for payment of any amount to the selected consultant until the contract has been awarded and executed by BHRC, and the consultant has performed services pursuant to the contract that entitle the consultant to receive payment under the terms of the contract.

4.8. Rejection of Submissions

BHRC reserves the right to waive any informality, and/or to reject, at any time and for any reason, submissions received as a result of this RFQ. BHRC's intent is to enter into a contract following this process. However, if after reviewing submissions received, BHRC determines that BHRC should not enter into any contract, or to enter into a partial or different contract from the contract contemplated by this RFQ, BHRC will act in accordance with what BHRC determines at that time to be in its best interest. No submitter or any other party has any entitlement, interest, or right in this decision by the BHRC and by submitting, acknowledges BHRC's right to exercise its discretion in this regard without any right of recourse by the submitter.

4.9. Insurance and Hold Harmless

The successful submitter will provide proof of insurance prior to contract execution, including workers' compensation, employer's liability, commercial general liability with comprehensive broad form endorsement, auto liability, and professional liability. In addition, "hold harmless" provisions will be contained in the contract between BHRC and the submitter chosen.

4.10. Contract Negotiations

BHRC reserves the right to negotiate with any number of submitters to finalize the project scope and cost prior to entering into a written agreement.

4.11. Applicability of State and Federal Regulations

The selected consultant will comply with all applicable terms and conditions of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and applicable federal regulation. This includes regulations and policies related to nondiscrimination, equal employment opportunity, lobbying, as well as any agreements between BHRC and DCEO.

4.12. Rights Reserved

BHRC reserves the following rights:

- Withdraw this RFQ at any time without prior notice
- Accept or reject any and all submissions, or any item or part thereof
- Postpone due dates
- Not award a contract to any submitter
- Discuss a submission or negotiate a contract with any submitter
- Award a contract without negotiations or discussions