

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**Kate & Peter Amrusko Memorial Project**  
**Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy**  
**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY PROSPECTIVE FIRMS AND ANSWERS AS OF 4/14/10**

**Consultant selection**

1. Can you please expand on the make-up of the Design Team selection committee?

The selection committee will be made up of Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy staff including but not limited to the Director of Education, Director of Parks Management and Maintenance, and the Parks Curator. Additional members will include a representative from the Amrusko family, representation from the City of Pittsburgh, and an expert in the field of informal science education.

2. How and to whom was this RFP distributed?

The RFP was distributed via mail to local landscape architecture firms that appear to possess the expertise and philosophical approach that we are seeking. It was also sent via mail to select artists and craftspeople. The RFP was also posted on the [www.pittsburghparks.org](http://www.pittsburghparks.org) website and is open to any parties who are interested in submitting a proposal. Firms who received the RFP are:

13 grounds design  
Ann Rosenthal  
Arimoto + Mercer  
Environmental Planning & Design, LLC  
Evaine Sing  
Hanson Design Group, Ltd.  
Klavon Design  
LaQuatra Bonci Associates  
Lisa Kunst Vavro  
MTR Landscape Architects, LLC  
Pashek Associates PC  
Strada Architecture LLC  
Studio for Spatial Practice  
Terra Design Studios  
Urban Tree Forge

3. How many design teams will be short listed?

That depends on the volume of quality proposals.

4. Upon inviting a short list of teams to come and present their ideas on this project, is the expectation that the design team will come to the table with pre-conceived designs to share or is this process to determine who is best qualified to proceed forward with a design phase?

Short-listed teams will be invited to present more information on their qualifications, design approach and preliminary concepts for the space. We do not expect teams to present designs in great detail; instead we will be looking for teams to present initial ideas that inspire further exploration and/or that demonstrate an approach that will lead to an outstanding final design.

### **Budget and Timeline**

5. What is the design budget? What is the estimated construction budget?

Has a specific design and or construction project budget been established?

What is the anticipated construction budget for this project? This is important information that will help us understand the scope and complexity of the project and the design time/fees required.

Has a general construction budget for the project been determined?

In planning the release of the RFP, has there been an overall budget and timeframe established?

Is there a targeted budget for the fees incurred in the design phase of the project?

Is there a targeted construction budget and if so, what is it?

What amount has been raised to date from the family memorial fund donations?

The anticipated total project budget is \$200,000. We have currently raised 50% of this and expect to raise the remaining money after concept designs are completed. The exact construction budget is dependent on the final design and we are open to making budget adjustments if appropriate.

6. Is the project fully funded or will our schematic design renderings and drawings be used for fundraising?

The design renderings will be used for additional fundraising.

7. Is there a targeted completion date for construction?

Is there general timeframe for completion of the project?

Is there a targeted memorial park opening date in mind?

Is there any anticipated start or end date for the design process.... the construction process?

Ideally construction will be completed by fall 2011.

8. What is the anticipated time frame for the new Environmental Center state of the art building?

We are still seeking funding for design of the Environmental Center and hope to begin the design process in the near future.

### **Site conditions**

9. Will the construction documents address/include a connection to the nearby existing Frick Park trail?

Yes, construction documents should identify the connection(s) to nearby trails. The site is bounded on one side by a small unnamed trail and is linked to Braddock Trail by another small unnamed trail.

10. Will the client provide a parcel map with existing utilities?

Is there a thorough and current survey with utility connections available? Or would it be commissioned for the project, likewise, are all the materials to be provided by the client available immediately?

The Parks Conservancy will provide a parcel map with 1-foot contours, utility locations, and existing structures. The survey will be completed by the time the project is awarded to a design team.

11. Should the design and design team include allowances for any utility connections, in particular lighting? Do you see that being a necessary part of the consultant team, or is there existing infrastructure out there that would be suitable for the project, or would the Conservancy team handle that portion after the design is completed?

Utilities may not be necessary. Ideally, any features that require electricity will be able to use alternative power sources, such as the energy-harvesting play equipment being proposed by ReplayMyPlay.

## Design process

12. How do you view the Parks Conservancy team's interaction and collaboration process with the design consultant? Would they make up the decision making team or do you want more or less integration in the process?

This project speaks to a special client and many other potential community sources who will interact with the design team. Has there been consideration to the approval process format that will prioritize input from potentially many sources to maintain a shared vision yet keep the project on track?

In addition to public input into the design, we anticipate having a small advisory group, made up of representatives from the Parks Conservancy, the Ambrusko family, and select educator(s) to form a core team that will provide input and evaluation through the design process and help shape the vision for the project. Ultimately, final design approvals will be made collaboratively by the Parks Conservancy and a representative from the Ambrusko family.

13. How much time is allocated for pre-design focus group charrettes, community and family input?

We have allotted 2-3 months for input from family, community, etc. However, we are open to modifying our timeline based on suggestions from the design team.

14. The Parks Conservancy has defined a list of client provided materials in the RFP. What role will the Conservancy play in bringing together the different focus and stakeholder groups?

Can you give us more information on the “stakeholder review” process mentioned in the Scope of Services?

The Parks Conservancy will facilitate the stakeholder groups, but it is essential that the consulting team be an integral participant in these sessions and that the team utilize ideas and feedback from the sessions as much as is appropriate for the project site and budget.

15. It's mentioned in the RFP that the learning space will be used by educators from the Environmental Center at Frick Park – what will their role be in the design process?

Staff members from the Environmental Center are key stakeholders in this space and will be invited to offer ideas and critique to the design at multiple points in the process.

16. Will the Environmental Charter School continue to use the site, and if so, should they be considered a stakeholder in this process as well?

Teachers, students, and parents from the Environmental Charter School, as well as community members, should be considered stakeholders in this process. They will be invited to any public design charettes and will hopefully be involved in the construction and maintenance of the site.

17. In the list of stakeholders, 'children' are listed, are these children from the Env Charter School or the neighborhood? Would the start date of the project allow an overlap with the school year? How is the ECS involved in the design process?

Children may include students from the Environmental Charter School and the neighborhood. The School and its students are one group among many stakeholders and will be invited to participate in public charettes, along with other community children.

18. Has this project been presented to the surrounding community and park users? If it has, what has the response been?

The project has not been formally presented to the community. However, the community is widely aware of the project through informal means. Response varies from passionate support to cautionary worry that the proposed changes to the public space will bring too many additional visitors to what has traditionally been a quiet corner of the park. More formal presentation to the community will need to occur shortly after the design team has been selected.

### **Programming**

19. What role will the Conservancy's Education Director play in guiding the educational goals and objectives?

The Director of Education will take the lead on developing the educational goals and objectives for the project, in close collaboration with a small advisory group, the consulting team, and key stakeholders.

20. How does this memorial learning center link back to the Environmental Center in terms of program, staff, usage?

We anticipate that the Environmental Center staff will ultimately use each of the park's learning spaces to tell the story of Frick Park and Pittsburgh's urban environment during school and camp programming.

21. In trying to understand the role of educational programming within the Memorial Project, what is the holistic relationship of this memorial park to the bigger picture Frick Park programming?

Do the other learning spaces already have themes and budgets assigned? Please quantify in terms of budget, program and size. For instance, is this memorial site of the

greatest stature in either scale or programming opportunity as compared to the other 12 spaces? Please provide some insight of rank or general description of the other spaces and how they relate to the overall park complex.

In terms of importance for outdoor learning spaces how does this memorial site rank amongst the other 12 to be developed?

Is there an explicit environmental curriculum that this space and the 13 outdoor learning spaces are intended to communicate or is the framing of the environmental message part of the stakeholder discernment process?

The outdoor learning spaces are intended to provide schools, the Environmental Center staff, and most importantly families, opportunities to engage in unique, meaningful, and varied interactions with nature in Frick Park. The learning space themes will be defined more clearly during the design process for the Environmental Center. This project is happening in advance of the design for the Environmental Center for two reasons: 1. To meet the desired timeframe of the Ambrusko family; 2. To provide a demonstration to the community of park users what the potential of the outdoor learning spaces may be.

Ideas for the other learning spaces range widely and include some simple concepts, such as a ring of stones for group seating or restored wetland habitat maintained by school students. They also include more innovative concepts, such as robotic instruments that are triggered to make music by wind or water or a smartphone application that allows the user to visualize a specific location in the park from the Pennsylvanian Period to the present through artistic renderings. The sites are not ranked in any way; instead we hope that together they offer the user an educational experience that leads to an intellectual and emotional connection to place.

22. Are any of the resources from the [ECS] school included in the programming for the memorial?

The Environmental Charter School is interested in placing an energy-generating piece of play equipment (likely a swing) at the site. They are working with a Spark funded artist/engineer to design and construct the piece. If appropriate to the overall design, we have suggested that the piece be included as a temporary art installation. If the piece is included it will need to meet all safety regulations.

23. We assume that interpretive signage is part of the scope. Will the consultant also need to develop any additional educational material such as lesson plans for site specific outdoor activities to accompany design elements?

The Parks Conservancy will be responsible for developing educational material in partnership with staff from the Environmental Center. Interpretive signage should be kept to a minimum and must conform to pre-approved park signage standards.

24. We understand the desire to provide services to children of all ages, but as you know, there are vast differences between how educational and natural play spaces are designed for the cognitive and motor skills of 3-year-olds as compared to pre-teens. Has a specific target age range been defined?

It is essential that the space be designed for the enjoyment and interest of people of all ages. The site is in a public park with a wide variety of users, as opposed to a school ground that clearly focuses on a target age range. Of course not every visitor will be interested and able to engage in every aspect of the design. However, there ought to be some aspect of the design that is interesting and engaging to most visitors. Given that the natural world so elegantly engages people at all learning levels and abilities, we hope that the design team will use natural spaces as inspiration to achieve this challenging goal.

### **Municipal approvals**

25. Has the memorial been vetted within the City of Pittsburgh regulatory agencies? And to that end, will this project be reviewed as a play structure and therefore fall under the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Public Playground Safety Standards? Will it also be required to meet the ADA standards for play structures?

The preliminary project concept has been presented to representatives from the Mayor's office, Citiparks, and the Department of Public Works. Since the space will be an outdoor learning area and not a public playground we have not received indication that we will need to comply with U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Public Playground Safety Standards and/or ADA standards for play structures. However, given the practicality of receiving continuing support for the construction of the project, the design team should carefully consider these regulations when planning.

26. The Historic Review Com and City Council are listed for applicable approvals, but is there a specific reason other than alerting the local council members? Typically, these committees would not be included in typical design process approvals.

The municipal agencies, committees, etc. that were listed in the RFP are those that the Parks Conservancy often works with for project review and approval. They were included in the list as a general indication of the review process. Specific agencies and committees needed for review of this project will be defined during the design process.

27. Can you give us more information on the "formal review process" mentioned in item #4 of the Scope of Services? E.g. at what stages of the design would each of these agencies give their input, and do you anticipate separate meetings with each entity? (We have a sense of how this might go based on past experience, but would like to know if there are any specific expectations ahead of time so we can include them with our project approach.)

The Parks Conservancy will begin to meet with appropriate committees/commissions once concept designs have been completed in order to lay the groundwork for project approval. Although the Parks Conservancy will have the primary responsibility for obtaining approvals, the consulting team should be available to prepare for and/or attend meetings to support this effort. Separate meetings with each entity may be required.

### **Management and maintenance**

28. When the project is completed who will be responsible for its maintenance and upkeep?

Have there been provisions set up for a future operational plan?

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is in the process of negotiating an agreement with the City of Pittsburgh for taking on responsibility for the long-term maintenance of the project site. A maintenance fund has been factored into the budget.

29. Has there been consideration to monitoring use, access, or hours of supervision for this memorial park?

The site is within a City of Pittsburgh public park and will be subject to the standard conditions of use.

### **Proposal preparation**

30. Scope of services item #2.a.ii. "Detailed budget for all aspects of construction" – we interpret this to mean a cost estimate, but let us know if it is meant to be something different (e.g. if the consultant is to get actual bids from contractors at this stage)

Detailed cost estimates are fine.

31. It is difficult to estimate a full scope of work for a design that has not yet been conceptualized. We feel the project would benefit economically by allowing the design team to provide firm budget fees through schematic design. After the approval of the overall schematic design, we will understand what we are designing, and then we could prepare a closely targeted design fee budget with the appropriate team members in place. Otherwise, we must estimate high to cover the "unknown" challenges of structural engineering, electrical engineering, full architectural services, water feature design, etc. For example, we do not know what "kind" of artist/craftsman to include on our team until we know the design, medium, and the advisory committee's input to who those artists should be. Art is a personal thing. Please advise.

You are welcome to break your scope of work into two distinct phases: 1) concept design through schematic design and 2) design development through construction. We would prefer you provide estimated budget numbers for the entire project, but welcome a clear, concise

explanation for why some budget numbers may need to be revised once schematic designs are complete. You can indicate that you have estimated high for the less known portion of the work and provide an explanation for why. If your firm is selected we can structure our contract to cover work through schematic design with a contract extension for future phases of design work which will allow for budgetary revisions.

Also, please note that we encourage you to include an artist or craftsperson early in the process so that they are able to provide substantive input into the design and not simply manufacture someone else's vision. If you do chose to work with an artist or craftsperson, they will ideally be part of defining the design and medium to be used.

32. Is it anticipated that this project (or aspects of it) will be put out to public bid? If it does, that typically means a lot more paperwork and administration time during the construction documents, bidding, and construction phases of the project, so it is something everyone needs to be aware of ahead of time.

Depending on the nature of the design, this project may not need to be put out to public bid. For example, the 'treehouse' design may be a unique piece of art that can only be built by the craftsperson that conceived it. There may also be aspects of the design that the Department of Public Works park crew or volunteers may be able to build as an in-kind contribution. Plantings may also be done by the community, parks crews, or Parks Conservancy staff. We would like to include the community and parks crews as much as possible during construction to increase local buy-in and to support long-term maintenance of the site. However, if the final design has complexities that are beyond the abilities of these groups then some public bidding during construction will be necessary. The Parks Conservancy will take the lead on managing this bid process.

33. Are there any expectations for specific services the consulting team might provide during bidding and construction – e.g. review of bids, periodic monitoring of construction progress, etc.?

In addition to construction drawings, will the consultant prepare the bid package including technical specifications?

The consulting team may be asked to review bids and provide monitoring during construction. However, the Parks Conservancy will take the lead on managing the bid and construction process.

34. How many copies of the conceptual design, schematic design, and the construction drawings are requested by the client?

Ten (10) hard copies of each, plus an electronic copy will be requested.

35. Will the consultant be responsible for preparing any promotional material such as

brochures, web content, park opening announcements, etc.?

No, the Parks Conservancy will produce promotional materials.

36. The RFP requests M/W/DBE documentation. Is there a specific target for this project?

We do not have a specific M/W/DBE target. However, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy encourages minority and female owned business participation in projects; firms should demonstrate this to the extent that they are able to.

37. The RFP requests a copy of professional liability. Are there minimum requirements for occurrence and aggregate?

We only need a certificate of insurance for professional liability for the design phase of the project. Minimum occurrence requirements will come into play only if there is a contract for construction on City property (for example if the craftsman on the team is also going to build the structure). Under those circumstances, the City requires \$1,000,000 per occurrence for all contractors and subs.