



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

MARTHA RIVERS PARK PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT PROJECT – COMPREHENSIVE PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT (1515 NEAL HAWKINS RD, GASTONIA, NC 28056) OPTIONAL COMPONENT: SITE DEMOLITION AND RECOVERY SERVICES

I. OVERVIEW

- A. The City of Gastonia is seeking comprehensive, competitive proposals from qualified playground manufacturers and installation contractors to design, procure, and install new commercial-grade playground equipment at Martha Rivers Park in Gastonia, North Carolina.
- B. The current wooden community-built playground (Leathers design) was constructed in 1999. Over the years, the wood has degraded; therefore, a new and exciting playground design that meets national standards will need to take its place.
- C. The City of Gastonia seeks to maintain a similar overall design, structure, layout, and play experience as the existing Martha Rivers Playground, while incorporating modern, innovative, accessible, and code-compliant playground equipment and amenities.
- D. Vendors are encouraged to use the existing playground as a reference for the overall character, scale, configuration, and relationship between play components.
- E. Vendors are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to salvage, preserve, and incorporate existing nostalgic and historically recognizable elements of the Martha Rivers Playground, including hand tiles and brick pavers.
- F. Preliminary design and construction will be the focus of this RFP.
- G. The Vendor will be required to provide the best quality and quantity of services within the allotted budget for this project.
- H. A critical administrative element of this solicitation is cost flexibility surrounding demolition. The City reserves the absolute right to execute the dismantling, footing extraction, and disposal of existing site structures using in-house municipal/agency staff (Path A), or to award this segment to the selected Vendor as an optional contract add-on (Path B).
- I. The Submitting Vendor will ideally possess experience in playground design and installation and must be able to demonstrate a very high customer satisfaction level from past projects.
- J. The selected Vendor(s) will be required to coordinate the final design and selection of playground equipment with the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure a

coordinated and cohesive finished project that benefits the community. The selected Vendor(s) will be required to coordinate the installation of the selected playground equipment with the City.

- K. Federal funds may be used as part of this project and will require compliance with federal provisions.
- L. Vendors are invited to submit Proposals with playground equipment designs identified in this RFP.

II. **SCOPE OF WORK**

The City of Gastonia is soliciting sealed, competitive proposals from qualified vendors to provide comprehensive design, procurement, and turnkey installation services for commercial-grade playground facilities. A critical administrative element of this solicitation is cost flexibility surrounding demolition. The City reserves the absolute right to execute the dismantling, footing extraction, and disposal of existing site structures using in-house municipal/agency staff (Path A), or to award this segment to the selected Vendor as an optional contract add-on (Path B).

Selected Vendor will be responsible for the design, provision and installation of play equipment and surfacing at the Martha Rivers Park site. The maximum budget for this project is projected at \$1,000,000 and includes taxes. The optional site demolition and footing extraction components are not included in the maximum budget projection. A maximum of two proposals/designs for the Martha Rivers Park Playground may be submitted, per proposal. The Vendor must provide an isolated, fully unbundled cost for the complete demolition, extraction of underground concrete footings, sorting, and hauling away of all existing playground equipment.

The Vendor must break down pricing using this exact structure. Bidders contractually guarantee that core item numbers 1 through 3 will remain locked and unalterable regardless of whether the City of Gastonia elects to strike out Optional Item 4:

Item	Cost Component Category	Total Cost (USD)
1	Playground Engineering Design & City Permitting	\$
2	Equipment Manufacture & Freight to Gastonia, NC	\$
3	Turnkey Assembly, Footings, and Safety Surfacing	\$
4	OPTIONAL ITEM: Complete Site Demolition & Footing Extraction	\$

TOTAL	Combined Turnkey Project Cost (Items 1-4 Inclusive)	\$
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Location: Martha Rivers Park, 1515 Neal Hawkins Rd, Gastonia, NC 28056

Budget: Maximum expenditure on all costs related to the proposal is \$1,000,000

Playground Theme: Castle-theme

Playground Footprint: Utilizing current playground footprint (approximately 10,395 sq. ft.)

Project Start: December 2026

Project Completion: by July 31, 2027

The City is looking for a qualified vendor who can construct an attractive and inviting playground project to be completed per the following:

1. Obtaining applicable permitting
2. Design and installation of multiage playground
3. Provide pedestrian links to walkways around the play space
4. Manage all installation of equipment and surfacing
5. Any other work to provide a turnkey project while staying within budget

Desired Equipment:

- Equipment and structures should adhere to a castle theme
- Play structure and amenities for ages 2-5
- Play structure and amenities for ages 5-12
- Poured-in-place playground surfacing with concrete edging
- Play structures and amenities must be age appropriate with proper signage
- All products shall bear the certificate seal of IPEMA and shall meet or exceed ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas
- All equipment shall conform to current playground-related ASTM and CPSC technical standards including, but not limited to:
 - ASTM F1487 (Playground Equipment)
 - ASTM F1292 & ASTM F3313 (Impact Attenuation of Playground Surfaces)
 - CPSC Publication 325: Public Playground Safety Handbook
- Vendor and their contractor(s) must be prepared to comply with all state, federal and local requirements for play structure equipment. Vendors are responsible for verifying site conditions. No allowances will be made if a Vendor fails to adequately examine a location before submitting a Proposal. All equipment shall be installed by a factory trained, insured, and certified installer. Following installation, a full and thorough audit of all newly installed play equipment will be performed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Vendor(s) will be required to address and resolve any identified deficiencies within seven (7) days of notification of the deficiencies by the City.

- Site visits will be held for any interested Vendor. Vendors are encouraged to review site conditions to familiarize themselves with the park and playground area. The site is open to the public and interested bidders are encouraged to visit for site clarity of dimensions and site survey.

III. PROPOSAL PARAMETERS & GUIDELINES

- A. **Submission Requirements.** All submissions must be presented in accordance with the requirements, format, and guidelines described in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document.
- B. **Submission Deadline.** Interested entities must submit two (2) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy (PDF format) of the information no later than **2:00 p.m., October 2, 2026**. Submittals should be addressed and forwarded to:

Andy Stahr
 Senior Administrative Services Coordinator
 PO Box 1748
 Gastonia, NC 28053-1748
- C. **Interpretation and Addenda.** Proposer(s) shall carefully examine this Request for Proposal (RFP) and any addenda. Proposer(s) should seek clarification of any ambiguity, conflict, omission or other error in this RFP in writing. All questions, requests for interpretation, and comments shall be prepared in writing and submitted to Andy Stahr via email by September 14, 2026. Questions and answers will be incorporated into an addendum and distributed to Proposer(s). Discussions with other City employees or officials during the solicitation and evaluation period are inappropriate. Therefore, Proposer(s) shall not contact any other City employees or officials regarding this RFP during the period of solicitation and evaluation. Oral comments do not form a part of this RFP. Question and clarification responses will be sent to all parties having submitted questions. All responses will be binding. If a respondent has no questions, please state so via email so that responses will be forwarded. Oral and other interpretations will be without legal effect.
- D. **Changes in the Request for Proposals.** Any changes made in this RFP will be posted and distributed to Proposer(s) of record. Any and all addenda will be numbered in sequence, dated as of the date of issue, posted and distributed via fax, e-mail or U.S. Mail.
- E. **Award.** Award will be made to the Proposer(s) whose submission is determined to be most advantageous to the City, taking into consideration the evaluation factors set forth in Section V.

IV. CONDITIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

- A. All submissions, in response to this request, must meet the following conditions to be considered:
 1. Breakdown the proposal by the steps of necessary work

2. Proposals must be received by the date and time specified
 3. In order to be considered, applicants must submit a complete proposal
- B. The City of Gastonia is under no obligation to select any presented proposals
 - C. The City of Gastonia reserves the right to request additional information from all applicants
 - D. In the selection of the top respondent, the City of Gastonia reserves the right to request additional information

V. APPLICATION RANKING CRITERIA

- A. All submissions shall be initially reviewed to determine if they are responsive to the submission requirements. Those not meeting the minimum requirements set forth herein will be deemed non-responsive and will not be subject to further review
- B. The responsive submissions shall be evaluated on the following factors which are considered critical in the evaluation of the Request for Proposal prepared in response to this announcement:
 - Responsiveness to the RFP and the criteria
 - Proposed site equipment designs and concepts
 - Ability to replicate castle-theme
 - Project schedule
 - Overall play value of the proposed design and equipment
 - Ability to meet established budgets
 - Ability to put together a design and construction plan to perform all aspects of the Project
 - Possess appropriate certifications, licenses, and meet insurance requirements
- C. Demonstrated capability of the firm(s) to perform all of the work elements, review of comparable work and references, timely mobilization of staff and equipment, schedule for completion of services will be considered.
- D. Proposals will be reviewed by the City and a selection made based upon the following criteria:
 1. Proposed design approach and methodology (40%)
 2. Overall quality of the professional qualifications of the firm (30%)
 3. Previous project descriptions (including pictures and 2-3 references) (15%)
 4. Proposed schedule/timeline for completing identified tasks (15%)

Proposals will be evaluated using a standardized scoring system. Each criteria component will be assigned points ranging from 1 - 5 according to the extent to which the proposed system meets the stated requirements.

The points will be assigned as follows:

- 5 points: Fully meets
- 4 points: Meets with minor gaps (no compromise required)

- 3 points: Meets with moderate gaps (some compromise required)
- 2 points: Partially meets with significant gaps (compromise required)
- 1 point: Does not meet

The points for each criteria component will be multiplied by the percentage weight listed above and totaled.