

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Muscatine Art Center – A department of the City of Muscatine, Iowa
Landscape Design-Build Services – Historic Japanese Garden

Deadline for Submission: November 30, 2021 – midnight central time

Project Organizer: Muscatine Art Center

Contact: Melanie Alexander, Director, Muscatine Art Center

1314 Mulberry Avenue, IA 52761, 563-263-8282 or malexander@muscatineiowa.gov

Budget Range: \$150,000 to \$225,000

INTRODUCTION

This RFP requests bid proposals from qualified parties presenting their qualifications, capabilities and costs to provide historic landscape design and build services for the Muscatine Art Center. The Muscatine Art Center's property, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was originally owned by Laura Musser McColm who had a Japanese Garden installed on the grounds around 1930. The historic Japanese Garden occupies approximately 0.35 acres and features three tiers, a system of water features, and extensive rockwork. In 2019, a Historic Landscape Preservation Plan for the Japanese Garden was developed to serve as the guiding document for returning the garden to its historic condition. The Muscatine Art Center is seeking a landscape design-build firm or project team to carry out the historic landscape plan as described below. This project is funded in part by federal funds from the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Project and must follow federal preservation guidelines for cultural landscapes. The selected contractor will collaborate with the Muscatine Art Center staff and preservation consultant Heidi Hohmann, Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture at Iowa State University, to protect and repair historic features, remove inappropriate vegetation, replace structures, reconstruct rockwork, and introduce new trees, shrubs, and plants. Proposals must take into account the nature of this project including advance planning, communication with the consultant and staff, and the review process associated with the grant and the historic nature of the landscape.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS (form provided on page 6)

1. Application Form with signature and list of two references
2. Project Plan and Timeline. Provide a description of your proposed overall project approach and a project schedule for implementing your approach within the proposed project timeline.
3. Detailed Budget for design and construction.
4. Qualifications. Provide a description of the firm that indicates why the project is a good fit for your team and demonstrates the ability to complete projects of similar scope, size, and purpose. Include relevant information on the professionals/key staff who will oversee the project. If applicable, provide a list of sub-contractors and their qualifications.
5. Images of prior projects, preferably of historic gardens or public spaces (limited to 8 images, file size not to exceed 10mb)

PROJECT GUIDELINES: HISTORIC LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION

Because this property is on the National Register and funded by federal grants, this project must be conducted in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>) and the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscape-guidelines/index.htm>) The complete Historic Landscape Preservation Plan (HLPP) with site/concept plans is provided and will serve as the basis for the renewal of the garden in this contract. Please review the document to ensure understanding of the scope and nature of the project; the approximate project area is shown on Figure 1 on page 4 of the HLPP.

The key historic and character-defining of the features of the garden that this project must protect and re-establish are

1. Design of the space as a tiered garden with distinct upper and lower spaces.
2. Bold rockwork – large fieldstones and volcanic stones – much of it on the slopes.
3. A circulation system of paths.
4. A system of water features.
5. A variety of vegetation.
6. A sense of enclosure.
7. A variety of small-scale features of Japanese style.

This project will begin after a systematic investigation of the archaeological potential of the area, currently under contract. Archeological investigation will involve shovel testing where possible to determine if there are archaeological deposits that pre-date the garden, including possible evidence of prehistoric and/or early historic Native American occupation. The investigation will also include several small (50 x 50cm) tests to help identify any intact garden features from the original 1929-30 design. Information revealed and archeological resources discovered during this investigation may, respectively, need to be accommodated and protected during the reconstruction of the garden.

PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

Muscatine Art Center staff will obtain bid proposals from qualified landscape firms and, after reviewing bid proposals and qualifications with Consultant Heidi Hohmann, will select the landscape firm following the City of Muscatine's processes and financial policies. The selected firm will enter into a contract with the Muscatine Art Center / City of Muscatine. This contract will specify the role of the Consultant and project requirements with specific language about meeting Secretary of the Interior's standards. Once the contract is signed, Hohmann, Muscatine Art Center staff, and the landscape firm will hold a kickoff meeting to review the Historic Landscape Preservation Plan, discuss processes/methods, communication, timelines, overarching project goals, and specific standards for historic cultural landscapes. Hohmann and the landscape firm, with input from the Muscatine Art Center team, will develop a detailed implementation plan and layout techniques for protecting historic features throughout the project.

This design-build project seeks to both reestablish the garden's historic character and preserve the garden's extant historic features. The overall goal of the garden work is to reproduce the appearance and feeling of the garden as seen in photographs from the 1930s. Based on the recommendations in the Historic Landscape Preservation Plan (HLPP) the project work will entail the following:

Revised Entry Sequence. The garden's current entry sequence denies the garden's original entrance from the front door of the historic home and instead orients visitors to the lower-level parking lot. This entry sequence will be revised as shown in Option 2 (Figure 5, page 32) in the Historic Landscape Preservation Plan. This option adds a pathway to honor the original entry and provides better universal and ADA access. Following the Secretary of Interior's guidelines for alterations/additions for new use, the design and construction of the entry will also be compatible with the historic character of the garden.

Stonework Repair and Replacement. The garden's dry-laid boulders and the rocky slopes and tiers they create are a key feature of the garden and need to be made visible. Accumulated mulch/soil will be removed from the garden to reveal its characteristic rocky character. In places, especially in the area around the pond, new stones will be added to match those lost over time to create the appearance of rocks shown in historic photographs.

Planting Renewal. A new planting plan will be provided for the garden. This plan will remove the non-historic, out-of-scale white pines and will remove and replace other evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs and perennial plantings as well, while retaining any significant historic plants. The new planting plan will be based on plants, plant forms, and plant locations identified in historic photos. Following guidelines, historic genus, species, and cultivars will be preferred and provided as much as possible. Any substitute materials will recreate plantings' historic appearance in "habit, form, color, texture, bloom, fragrance, scale, and context."

Water feature repair. Re-establishing the garden's water system is an important part of the project. The water feature is comprised of a large pond on the top tier of the garden through a concrete stream to the garden's middle tier and then into the lower tier of the garden, where it flows to another pond and then drains into the sewer system. Currently, the feature's pump is inoperable, and the staff only runs the water for special occasions. The condition of streams and ponds as well as the underground pipes will be evaluated and documented and then a new system using modern plumbing technology should be proposed for this feature. The goal of treatment is to return function, promote water conservation, and maintain the feature's original appearance. The extant concrete streams and ponds should be repaired if possible, but if found to be overly unstable, might be reconstructed to match the original based on photographs and documentation.

The design of the stones around the upper pool and as the edging along the streams and lower ponds will be replaced to match historic conditions and photographs. When possible, existing edge stones should be re-used in their historic locations, but it is likely new stones will be needed to replace missing stones. New stones should match existing stonework in form, color, geology, and texture as much as possible. It will be essential to consider how the other work (tree removals, planting,) will be sequenced around the repair of the concrete streams and ponds.

Garden Features and Ornaments. The garden has small-scale features, such as the original concrete lanterns, which need to be protected, and bronze cranes which the Muscatine Art Center is having replicated to be placed in their historic locations. A few, such as the current Torii gate marking the entrance to the garden and the bridges over the water feature, must be reconstructed. The current Torii gate is a rough reproduction (circa 1983) of the original. Because it is in poor condition, it should be removed and replaced in kind with a new reproduction and create a reproduction based on the one seen in historic photos. Likewise, the existing red footbridges with rails over the streams found within the garden's center slopes and upper section date to recent years. These are not historic and interfere with the character of the garden. The footbridges therefore need to be replaced to more closely match the bridges seen in photos in scale, form, and materials. Another missing structure that needs to be replaced is a small shrine seen in historic photos.

Finally, the wooden handrails on the concrete steps were not part of the original garden, but are needed to accommodate the garden's function as a public space. The extant wood railings should be replaced with simple, thin, and elegant black cast iron or powder-coated steel railings that recede visually. (Please note that the white pergola structure will remain and its replacement is not part of the project)

In addition to the Historic Landscape Preservation Plan, the Muscatine Art Center has an archive of historic photos that will serve as important visual resources for the design of the project. The contractor will also have access to numerous newspaper clippings from the period as well as video taken in the garden in 1936. These historic materials will be used to make design decisions and install new vegetation and/or stonework where these are missing. The contractor will consult these historic documents in making appropriate decisions about the garden, while also following the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.

BUDGET

The budget should align with the project plan description and address costs for the following areas:

- Design and Planning; Construction Document & Planting Plan Development
- Construction of Entry Sequence
- Repair of Water Feature
- Rockwork on Slopes/Terraces
- Rockwork along the Streambed
- Reconstruction of Small Scale Structures (Torii gate, shrine, bridges)
- Metal Railings
- Removal of Trees/Stump Grinding (include method of protecting structures during tree removal)
- New Plants

POST AWARD PROCESS

After reviewing bids with the preservation consultant, the Muscatine Art Center team will select the contractor following the City of Muscatine's processes and financial policies. The selected firm will enter into a contract with the Muscatine Art Center / City of Muscatine. This contract will specify the role of the Consultant and project requirements. Once the contract is signed, Muscatine Art Center staff, the preservation consultant, and the landscape firm will hold a kickoff meeting to discuss and finalize processes/methods, communication, schedule, overarching project goals, and specific standards for historic cultural landscapes as described in the Historic Landscape Preservation Plan. The contractor, with input from the Muscatine Art Center staff and preservation consultant, will finalize the proposal into a detailed implementation plan, including protecting historic features throughout the project.

PROPOSED PROJECT TIMELINE

November 30, 2021 – Deadline for Proposals from Landscape Firms

December 17, 2021 – Notification of Selection of Landscape Firm

January 2022 – Kick-Off Meeting with Landscape Firm

February – March 2022 – Design Phase

March 2022 – Archaeological Work

April 2022 Begin Construction Phase

October 2022 – Planting of Trees and Shrubs

November 2022 – Creation of Initial Punchlist

May 2023 – Installation of Remaining Plants

May 20, 2023 – Completion of Tasks on Final Punchlist

QUESTIONS / ONLINE MEETING

Interested parties may submit questions to Melanie Alexander. Questions must be received by November 8th via email to malexander@muscatineiowa.gov or mailed to Muscatine Art Center, 1314 Mulberry Avenue, Muscatine, IA 52761. Within 48 hours of receipt of a question, an email will be sent to confirm receipt. If a confirmation email is not received, please call 563-263-8282.

Responses to questions will be shared during an online meeting scheduled for November 17th at 10:30 a.m. Please join using Go To Meeting. For those not able to participate on November 17th, the online meeting will be recorded and made available by request. Notify Melanie Alexander if you wish to receive the link for the recorded meeting.

Japanese Garden Landscape RFP
Wed, Nov 17, 2021 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/664024677>

You can also dial in using your phone.
United States: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:+16467493122)

Access Code: 664-024-677

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/664024677>

SUBMISSION

Materials in response to the RFP are due by midnight central time on November 30, 2021, submitted by email to Melanie Alexander, malexander@muscatineiowa.gov. A confirmation email will be sent within 48 hours of receipt. If a confirmation email is not received, the landscape firm shall be responsible for confirming receipt by phoning Melanie Alexander at 563-263-8282.

EVALUATION of PROPOSALS

Proposals received by the stated deadline will be reviewed by the Muscatine Art Center staff, the consultant, and select professional staff with the City of Muscatine. Firms that can demonstrate the ability and commitment to implement the project while being mindful of the garden's historic nature will be considered eligible for consideration. The review panel will determine eligibility by evaluating content of the proposal, past projects, and references. From these eligible firms, the company with the most competitive proposal will be selected.

NOTIFICATION

When the contract is awarded, all applicants will receive notification by email. The Muscatine Art Center and the City of Muscatine reserve the right to change, modify, or revise the Request for Proposals, in part or whole, at any time without prior notice.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Muscatine Art Center
Historic Japanese Garden
Deadline: November 30, 2021 at midnight central time

Firm Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City/ State/ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Website: _____

Social Media: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The above signed applicant proposes to provide services in accordance with the RFP for the Historic Japanese Garden at the Muscatine Art Center. Required application attachments: project plan including a description of your proposed overall project approach and a project schedule for implementing your approach within the proposed project timeline, detailed budget for design and construction, discussion of your qualifications, and images of past work (limited to 8, not to exceed 10mb total).

Reference #1

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State/ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Work Completed: _____

Reference #2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State/ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Work Completed: _____