



**City of Tacoma
Environmental Services
Passive Open Space Volunteer Management
RFP Specification No. ES21-0546F**

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

All interested parties had the opportunity to submit questions in writing by email to Dawn DeJarlais by August 8, 2021. The answers to the questions received are provided below and posted to the City's website at www.TacomaPurchasing.org. Navigate to *Current Contracting Opportunities / Services / Supplies*, and then click *Questions and Answers* for this Specification. This information IS NOT considered an addendum. Respondents should consider this information when submitting their proposals.

Question 1: Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer 1: The Open Space Program would allow a contractor not based in the U.S. to perform the duties outlined in the scope of work, provided they have sufficient local staff to lead in-person events.

Question 2: Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

Answer 2: The contractor must have a local office as the Volunteer Manager must be able to have regular in-person meetings with the City at restoration sites within Tacoma. The Volunteer Manager must meet the habitat stewards at the restoration sites located within Tacoma for planning and training purposes.

Question 3: Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer 3: The Contractor must have a local office as the Volunteer Manager must be able to lead weekly in-person restoration events and provide in-person hands-on training events in Tacoma.

Question 4: Can we submit the proposals via email?

Answer 4: Yes. Proposals can be submitted via email. Maximum files size is 35 MB. Multiple emails may sent for each submittal.

Question 5: This is a large contract and some organizations would have to hire staff to be able to fulfill the contract, which means they cannot provide that Volunteer Manager's resume in their proposal. Likewise, there is sometimes unexpected turnover. Can you provide some guidance on this as the criteria in the RFP appears strict around these requirements?

Answer 5: The City would consider contracting with an organization that does not currently have a staff member to fill the role of the Volunteer Manager. In that situation, the City would want to be involved in the hiring process for the Volunteer Manager and have equal say with the contractor in selecting the person to be hired since the City works closely with this person. The organization applying should still include the resumes/qualifications of all staff that would be involved in the contract and describe how their staff would train and prepare the Volunteer

Manager for this position. When the City hired the last contractor, we used a process very similar to one described above. Organizations should make it clear in the application process that the City will be involved in selecting the Volunteer Manager should someone need to be hired once the contract is awarded.

Question 6: If the work party is led by a habitat steward, do they pick up the tools?

Answer 6: Yes, there is a centralized storage facility the stewards have access to and they pick up the tools for each event.

Question 7: What if the steward can't drive, how do they pick up tools?

Answer 7: This is a great equity question, and that is something we would need to work out. Most likely, since there is often more than one event each weekend, the Volunteer Manager would already be accessing the tools and could drop them off to the habitat steward on-location.

Question 8: How many habitat stewards currently need to be supported?

Answer 8: We recently lost half of our stewards, and I believe there are only 4 stewards currently for the 9 sites.

Question 9: Were any stewards added during COVID?

Answer 9: No, all of our stewards had been on-boarded prior to COVID, and one steward has been with us for about 4 years. We didn't recruit any new stewards during COVID, since we didn't add any new sites.

Question 10: Is the Volunteer Manager position the main point of contact for the habitat stewards?

Answer 10: Yes.

Question 11: Are work party events cancelled if there are less than 5 volunteers at a steward led event, and why?

Answer 11: In general, yes. Every event costs the City a certain amount of money and having events with less than 5 volunteers often doesn't balance out against the cost to the City. There are exceptions to this that occur on a case by case basis.

Question 12: Do we bid on swag and what's included?

Answer 12: Yes, swag should be included in the bid. We typically give all the Green Tacoma Day volunteers something like t-shirts or a beanie and all the stewards an additional gift that is a little nicer, like rain gear or plant books.

Question 13: Are plants and other restoration materials supplied by the City?

Answer 13: Yes, plants and other materials like garden cover plastic, erosion control blanket, pins, etc. are usually purchased by the City and provided to the contractor given sufficient notice. If this isn't possible, these items would be directly reimbursable and should not be included in the bid.

Question 14: How the current recording system work and what does is the time involved?

Answer 14: We use a Collector Application specifically developed for our volunteers that is easy to use. Data can be collected on-site using a cell phone in less than 10 minutes. Most of the data is entered using drop down menus and either drawing the work area on the map or walking around the work area while streaming in the app. We only have one account for the volunteer program and it's at the discretion of the Volunteer Manager to share the password with stewards. The stewards can either enter the data themselves or provide the data to the Volunteer Manager to upload. It takes less than 30 minutes to learn the program. Also, the app is valuable because the volunteers can see everything our Washington Conservation Corps have done in the area along with anything previous volunteers have done in the area.

Question 15: Is it up to the contractor to do the front end tracking?

Answer 15: Yes, the contractor can use whatever system they're comfortable with to track registration and liability waivers and for promoting events.

Question 16: Is the City open to having teams of stewards for a site?

Answer 16: Yes, that's fine. At one time we had a site with 3 stewards and we've had people steward two sites as well.

Question 17: Have you received feedback on challenges the stewards have faced or why they've moved on?

Answer 17: Stewards have mostly stepped down for general life reasons, such as going back to school and moving out of state. One steward stepped down because of COVID, and may return once things calm down. Another steward, who had been stewarding a site for several years felt burnt out. We previously had 8-10 stewards for all 9 sites.