

# Proposal Evaluation Summary for Spring Lake Park Reserve Cultural Landscape Management Plan

## Consultant Services Description

Prepare a Cultural Landscape Management Plan for Spring Lake Park Reserve. Cultural landscape management is inseparable from the natural environment. Native plants that once thrived across southern and central Minnesota evolved alongside Dakota people, carrying deep connections to food and foraging, medicine, and storytelling. Equally important, the cultural landscape remains significant to the lifeways of living Indigenous communities today. Reflecting this, the Cultural Landscape Management Plan will address three intertwined topic areas:

1. Stewardship of Indigenous sites within Spring Lake Park Reserve
2. Recommendations for culturally appropriate restoration and management of the natural landscape
3. Strategies to strengthen relationships between living Indigenous communities and the park's cultural landscape

Across all three areas, the plan will explore opportunities for partnership with Indigenous communities.

## Scope of Consultant Services

The consultant team will prepare a cultural landscape management plan that addresses the stewardship of the Indigenous cultural landscape, with focus on management of Indigenous cultural sites, restoration, reintroduction, and management of culturally important vegetation, and programming to connect the Indigenous community to the park. The plan will build upon the foundation provided in the master planning process and subsequent projects, both in the documents and recommendations, and the engagement with Indigenous communities completed as part of these processes.

The scope includes four main phases: 1) project start up, 2) establish cultural significance and landscape management areas, 3) explore partnership opportunities, and 4) development of the cultural landscape management plan.

To ensure Indigenous voices, perspectives, and narratives guide this project, the consultant team will include Indigenous representation, consult Tribal Historic Preservation Officers from the Prairie Island Indian Community, Upper Sioux Community, Lower Sioux Indian Community, and Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, consult with stakeholder groups and topic area experts as needed, and integrate of results of Indigenous engagement in previous projects.

## Deliverables

All labor, materials, transportation, tools, supplies, equipment, meetings, coordination, stakeholder engagement, approvals, etc. necessary for the successful completion of Spring Lake Park Reserve Cultural Landscape Management Plan, executive summary, and appendices as necessary.

## Schedule

The planning process is expected to be completed on or before June 30, 2028.

## Consultant Selection Summary

Request for Proposals (RFP): The RFP for consultant services was released on March 15, 2026. The RFP was posted on the Dakota County Website and was distributed via email to consulting firms with sustainable trails expertise to ensure awareness of the RFP. A base budget of \$250,000 - \$300,000 was identified in the RFP. Four proposals were submitted to the County by the due date of April 21, 2026. The proposals were from: Quinn Evans Architects, Inc. (Quinn Evans), Full Circle Indigenous Planning and Design, LLC (Full Circle), Tetra Tech, Inc., and Grey and Pape, Inc.

## Review Team and Process:

The four proposals were scored by a review team consisting of five Dakota County staff from the Office of Planning and the Parks Department. Review team members independently scored and ranked each proposal. The review team met on April 23, 2026, to discuss the proposals and share individual member evaluations. The top two scoring consulting teams were selected for interviews. Interviews were held on May 8, 2026, with Quinn Evans and Full Circle Indigenous Planning and Design. The review committee met to reach consensus directly after completion of interviews.

## Evaluation Criteria:

The proposals were evaluated and ranked based on the seven criteria included in the RFP and listed below. All criteria were weighted equally.

1. Understanding the Scope of Work: Completeness of proposal and expressed understanding of the project scope, objectives, and complexity.
2. Proposed project approach: approach to work, deliverable timeline, and ability to satisfy all requirements of this RFP.
3. Project team's experience with cultural landscape management plans.
4. Project team's experience working with Indigenous communities associated with the Upper Mississippi River Valley.
5. Qualifications of key personnel and experience with similar projects. Professional competency of members in all project aspects, proven innovative approaches, knowledge of issues and background associated with the project. Successful teams will include experience in Indigenous engagement, cultural landscape management, and traditional ecological knowledge.
6. Performance of the team members and the consulting firm with successful delivery of recent similar projects.
7. Responsiveness: Compatibility between consultant and the key participants, general attitude, and ability to communicate.

## Evaluation Results:

The project requires expertise in multiple areas: centering Indigenous voices, cultural landscape management, traditional ecological knowledge, and programming to connect the Indigenous community

and park visitors to the park’s cultural landscape. Qualifications to deliver each element were important in differentiating the proposals.

The Quinn Evans proposal was ranked the highest proposal by the staff selection committee based on past experience with similar projects, knowledge of Dakota County, Indigenous partners included as part of the consulting team, and team assembled to address the specific needs of the project.

### Summary of Proposed Costs

<u>Firm</u>	<u>Proposal Fee</u>
Quinn Evans Architects, Inc.	\$293,111
Full Circle Indigenous Planning and Design, LLC	\$299,840
Tetra Tech, Inc.	\$299,878
Grey and Pape, Inc.	\$300,000

### Recommendation

Staff recommends that Quinn Evans be awarded a contract for the Spring Lake Park Reserve Cultural Landscape Management Plan. The recommendation is based on the team’s qualifications, project understanding, and experience with similar projects.