

Request for Qualifications: John Muir Elementary School Playground Redesign Master Plan

INTRODUCTION

John Muir Elementary School is a classic 1991 brick building located in Seattle's Mt. Baker Neighborhood. Two blocks to the west the demographic changes to the commercial strip of Rainier Avenue South. Adjacent to the south side of the building is a large play area, the highest percentage of which is asphalt with wood chips covering the space beneath a newly designed and installed play structure. There is a grass playfield and a slightly inclined area covered with woodchips and recently constructed benches. Three large redwood trees tower over the upper play area. The entire play area is surrounded by an old chain-link fence. Streets and single-family residences lie on the northern, eastern, and southern borders and to the west is a multi unit apartment complex.

This is a neighborhood school that has seen tremendous growth in terms of enrollment (10% increase since 2005), PTA membership, and neighborhood support. This increased community involvement has accelerated interest in continuing the work that was begun in 2006 with the new play structure.

The PTA and Grounds Improvement Committee at John Muir Elementary School intend to complete a site master plan and landscape design for these school grounds. Integral to this plan is input from school families, staff, the school district and surrounding community. Our goal is to create an enriching and educational outdoor setting that benefits both the school and surrounding community, and that reflects the richly diverse population of John Muir Elementary.

SITE LOCATION

3301 South Horton Street
Seattle, WA 98144
Phone: (206) 252-7400

The school is located on the corner of 33rd Avenue South and South Horton Street, two blocks east of Rainier Avenue South.

PURPOSE

Our plan is to select a professional design firm experienced in a collaborative design process and to work in conjunction with that firm, developing a series of meetings and design charettes. Input from these charettes will be gathered from the school community including students, staff and parents, and the broader neighborhood community including neighbors, business owners, community groups, and other grounds users. The goals of this process are:

- To design a conceptual master plan for the southern play area site based on all community feedback.
- To prepare preliminary cost estimates and a model for implementing the design.

It is possible that the design firm may complete the construction documents including blueprints under a second phase contract if necessary.

SCOPE OF WORK

After choosing the design firm, they will create and administer a public consultation process. This will consist of a series of meetings, the form and content of which will vary. Design charettes with students will be held during class time and will provide age appropriate opportunities to talk about how they currently use the play area and what ideas they might have for the future. Meetings will also be held with staff to evaluate teaching and supervisory needs. Advertised public meetings and design charettes will be held at two separate times, during the evening and on the weekend to encourage greater participation by parents and community. The range of meeting times and styles will encourage input from individuals with differing skills and confidence levels.

When design alternatives have been developed they will be introduced to the school district and then presented to the school community for further comment. The final design proposal will be presented to the school and community at a public meeting.

The design firm and the Grounds Improvement Committee will establish the details of this process.

BUDGET

John Muir Elementary School has received a Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant from the city of Seattle. We anticipate design fees to be approximately 14,000.

TIMELINE

The timeline below is structured to accomplish the planning phase before the end of this school year. Upon completion of the plan we intend to apply for future grants for the construction phase. If granted, funds would be available in the 2008 – 2009 school year.

Visit parks and schools identified as exemplars.	Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Dec. 07 – Jan. 08
Advertise for LA'S, create assessment criteria.	Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Dec. 07
Interview top rated candidates	Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Week of Jan. 21, 08
Decision announced	Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Week of Jan. 28, 08
LA'S and committee meet with school district to receive input on timeline etc.	Grounds Improvement Committee Members and LA	Feb. 08
Meetings with staff and students to gather input.	LA and Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Feb. – Mar. 08
Organize community meetings to gather input.	LA and Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Mar. 08
Meet with School District to review draft proposals.	LA and Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Apr. 08
Public meeting to review draft proposals.	LA and Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Apr. 08
JMGIC meeting to review final proposal.	LA and Grounds Improvement Committee Members	Apr. – May 08
Public meeting for presentation of final proposal.	LA and Grounds Improvement Committee Members	May 08

SELECTION CRITERIA

Experience in similar projects including, but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extensive community consultation and involvement.• Demonstrated knowledge of native plant identification, design and management.• Incorporation of environmental education and sustainable design issues.• Demonstrated knowledge of health and safety issues (including accessibility) and their incorporation in open space design.	25 pts
Inclusion of public art elements.	5 pts
Production of coherent, functional and innovative designs.	15 pts
Experience in working with Seattle School District.	5 pts
Ability to produce high quality, successful projects on schedule and within budget constraints.	15 pts
References. (3)	15 pts
<i>Total Points Possible</i>	80 pts

The criteria above will be used to rank the RFQs. Top candidates will be interviewed. Final selection will be based on the interview.

APPLICATION

Please submit information in the following order. Refer to selection criteria when preparing application.

1. A brief description of the firm's qualifications and experience.
2. Resumes of key staff and a description of their roles.
3. A description of your vision of the project. What form would the public process take, how would the various meetings be facilitated, how do you imagine working with the Grounds Improvement Committee while staying within the time and budget constraints of the project?
4. References. (3) Contact name and phone number, email address, project worked on together.

INFORMATION DUE DATE

Please submit seven (7) copies of no more than 6 text pages. Additional photo/graphic pages are permissible. The requested information by (5:OOPM Wednesday January 9th) to:

Grounds Improvement Committee

ATTN: Sandra Eshleman
3301 South Horton
Seattle, WA 98144

CONTACT

Questions to: Sandra Eshleman
(206) 725-1910
sandraesh@hotmail.com