



City of Richland Center
450 S. Main Street
Richland Center, WI 53581
608-647-3466

Request for Proposal – Planning Services for the Operational Structure of the Symons Recreational Complex in Richland Center, WI

Issue Date: 08/5/2025

Proposal Due Date: 08/26/2025

1. Introduction

The City of Richland Center invites proposals from qualified consulting firms to provide planning services for the comprehensive evaluation and recommendation of a sustainable future operational structure of the [Symons Recreational Complex](#). This initiative aims to identify an operational model that reduces reliance on public subsidization while enhancing community benefit. This project is funded by an Innovation Planning Grant awarded through the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

2. Project Background

The Symons Recreational Complex, located in the City of Richland Center, is a vital community fitness facility offering diverse programs and amenities for all ages, including an indoor pool. Since its establishment in 1987, the Complex has served Richland County residents through a collaborative partnership between the City of Richland Center and Richland County. The City and County jointly and equally fund the facility, with operational oversight provided by the Natatorium Board. As a highly valued community asset, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Symons Recreational Complex is a high priority.

The Complex's long-term sustainability is challenged by its reliance on City and County subsidies. In a continued effort to make the complex more sustainable, the City is exploring new ownership and management models. The goal is to find a long-term solution that improves services, optimizes facility usage, and eliminates the need for public subsidies. To achieve this, the City is open to exploring alternatives, such as transferring services to other entities like the Richland School District or the YMCA, or establishing a public-private partnership.

3. Scope of Work and Requested Services

The selected consultant will:

A. Conduct a Comprehensive Assessment

- Analyze historical and current facility usage data, including program participation, attendance trends, underutilized areas, user demographics, and peak usage periods.
- Review financial data, including revenues, operating expenses, maintenance costs, and staffing expenditures, to assess the facility's fiscal performance.
- Conduct a comparative analysis of at least three (3) similar recreational facilities, focusing on their operational models, funding structures, programming, and financial performance. These facilities should offer relevant insights into potential alternative models.
- Design and administer a statistically relevant community survey to gather resident input. The survey should aim to understand current satisfaction, unmet needs, desired programming, willingness to pay for services, and perceptions of potential operational changes. The survey may be online and/or in-person, targeting a representative sample of at least 100 City residents and 100 County residents, encompassing both current users and non-users

B. Perform Review & Analysis

- Initial Review of existing reports/studies related to the operations and strategic planning.
- Conduct a comprehensive SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for the current operational model and each proposed alternative operational model.
- Review the space needs assessment of the facility, considering current utilization, community demand, and potential for expanded or new programming.
- Evaluate current marketing strategies, including their reach, effectiveness, and alignment with community engagement goals and potential revenue generation.
- Develop robust multi-year financial models and perform feasibility analyses for each proposed alternative operational model, including projected revenues, expenses, capital investments, and subsidy requirements.
- Identify, collect, and synthesize key operational and financial data from all relevant stakeholders (e.g., City, County, Symons Foundation, School District, current management, etc.).
- Create clear project maps, visual exhibits, and data visualizations to effectively communicate findings and recommendations.

C. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

- Conduct a project kick-off meeting with stakeholders (City, County, Natatorium Board, Symons Foundation, School District, and other potential partners) to establish project goals, roles, and communications protocols.
- Facilitate at least three (3) structured working sessions with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle for data validation, to discuss findings, explore operational models, vetting preliminary findings, and refining recommendations.
- Facilitate at least one (1) community focus group session to gather resident feedback on the complex's services, potential changes, and perceptions of different operational models.
- Facilitate at least one (1) public presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations to gather broader community feedback before finalization.

D. Deliverables

- **Inception Report/Project Definition Summary:** A detailed document submitted shortly after project kick-off, summarizing the consultant's understanding of the project, refined work plan, key milestones, communication plan, and initial data collection strategy.
- **Multi-year Financial Projections:** Detailed financial projections (e.g., 5-10 years) for the current operational model and each proposed alternative model, including revenue streams, operating expenses, capital expenditure requirements, and projected public subsidy needs.
- **Draft Comprehensive Project Report with Preliminary Recommendations:** A detailed written report presenting all assessment findings, analysis (SWOT, space needs, marketing), financial models, and preliminary recommendations for operational models, including their pros, cons, and potential impacts.
- **Final Comprehensive Project Report Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback:** The final, polished report incorporating all feedback received during stakeholder and community engagement sessions, presenting the recommended operational model(s) with robust justification.
- **Presentation of Findings, Recommendations, and Implementation Strategy:** A professional presentation (to City Council, County Board, and other key stakeholders as determined by the City)

summarizing the project's findings, presenting the recommended operational model(s), and outlining a clear, actionable implementation strategy with defined steps, timelines, resource requirements, and key performance indicators (KPIs).

4. Budget

The total budget available for this project is \$62,000. This amount must cover all associated costs, including overhead, reporting requirements, and travel expenses. The contract will be awarded as a fixed fee agreement. Proposals must clearly demonstrate the ability to complete the project within the designated budget.

5. Proposal Requirements

Interested consultants must submit:

- **Executive Summary:** A concise overview of your proposal, highlighting your understanding of the project, proposed solution, and key qualifications.
- **Cover Letter**
- **Approach and Work Plan:** Describe your firm's understanding of the project objectives and proposed methodology for achieving them. This should include a detailed work plan outlining all tasks, sub-tasks, deliverables, and a clear description of how your approach addresses the specific challenges and goals outlined in this RFP (e.g., reducing subsidies, enhancing community benefit). Include strategies for data collection, stakeholder engagement, and analysis.
- **Proposed Project Schedule with Key Milestones:** A detailed timeline showing all major tasks, deliverables, and proposed meetings, demonstrating your ability to complete the project within a proposed timeframe.
- **Firm Qualifications and Relevant Experience:** Provide an overview of your firm's history, expertise, and relevant experience in similar municipal planning, recreation facility assessment, financial modeling, and organizational restructuring projects. Highlight experience with public-private partnerships or transfers of services.
- **Project Team and Resumes of Key Personnel:** Include resumes for all key personnel who will be directly involved in the project, detailing their roles, relevant experience, and qualifications.
- **Fee Proposal (Itemized by Major Tasks/Phases):** A fixed-fee proposal detailed by major project tasks or phases, demonstrating how the proposed cost aligns with the \$62,000 budget and provides value. Include all anticipated expenses (travel, materials, etc.).
- **References from Similar Municipal Planning Projects:** Provide at least three (3) professional references from clients for whom you have completed similar projects, including client name, organization, title, email, and phone number.

6. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Understanding of Project and Methodology (20%)
- Relevant Experience and Qualifications (25%)
- Proposed Work Plan and Timeline (25%)



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- Fee Proposal and Alignment with Budget (20%)
- References and Past Performance (10%)

7. Submission Instructions

Please submit one (1) electronic copy in PDF format to:

Darcy Perkins
Municipal Services Specialist
City of Richland Center
Email: darcy.perkins@richlandcenterwi.gov

Please name the file using the following convention: [FirmName]_SymonsRFP_Proposal.pdf

Submission Deadline: 08/26/2025 - Proposals must be received by 4:00 PM CST on the due date. Late submissions will not be considered.

The City of Richland Center reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities, and to award the contract in the best interest of the City. Notification of selection is *tentatively* scheduled for 09/03/2025.