REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
Siloam Springs Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan

Main Street Siloam Springs, Inc. is soliciting statements of qualification from planning and design consultants to create, with guidance from the Master Plan Steering Committee and the City of Siloam Springs, a Siloam Springs Downtown and Connectivity Master Plan.

SOLICITATION SCHEDULE
Request for Qualifications Released          Friday, September 13, 2013
Responses for RFQ Due                         Monday, October 7, 2013

All submissions must be received no later than 5:00 PM on Monday, October 7, 2013. Five (5) paper copies of submissions are required plus one complete submission in a PDF format on a CD. Please place proposals in an envelope or box clearly labeled “Consultant Services Qualifications for Siloam Springs Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan” and send or deliver to:

Meredith Bergstrom
Executive Director
Main Street Siloam Springs
116 S. Broadway, Ste. 2
Siloam Springs, AR 72761

Questions and clarifications regarding this RFQ may be made by calling 479.524.4556.

CONSULTANT TEAM
The Consultant team should include but not be limited to:
- Urban Designer (Project Manager)
- Urban Design/Landscape Architect
- Economist/Real Estate Market Analyst
- Transportation Consultant/Specialist

DOWNTOWN & CONNECTIVITY MASTER PLAN BRIEF
The Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan will provide a 5-7 year phased implementation plan for improvements to the downtown core as a district and in its relative connectivity to other major assets in Siloam Springs. The purpose of the plan is to address downtown revitalization as an economic development strategy that will drive wellness and quality of life improvements in Siloam Springs. Specific aims are to:

1. Sustain and continue the preservation and development of downtown Siloam Springs through infrastructure and facility planning, and complementary programming.

2. Improve Siloam Springs’ built environment through addressing Sager Creek as a major asset and planning for a more walkable downtown core.

3. Connect downtown to other major assets in Siloam Springs.
**CONTEXT**

Siloam Springs is a community of over 15,000 that sits at the foothills of the Ozarks, just east of the Oklahoma border. The fifth largest of a series of municipalities that comprise the growing region of Northwest Arkansas, Siloam Springs is best known for being the home of several large manufacturers and the growing private liberal arts college John Brown University. In 2012, Smithsonian Magazine named Siloam Springs on its list of the top 20 Best Small Towns in America due to its preserved small town allure, stable economy, and reinvestment in downtown development. The downtown was established in the 1880s as a resort attraction, based on the medicinal springs that fed Sager Creek. Today the most unique quality of downtown Siloam Springs is still the interaction between the built environment and the natural one: Sager Creek winds around relatively well-maintained historic buildings with three historic parks.

Just eight years ago, vacant or underused buildings lined the majority of the downtown streetscape. Since that time, 19 new businesses have opened and sustained their businesses downtown, adding a net of 75 new jobs in the community. In 2011, Siloam Springs became a fully accredited Main Street program through the National Main Street Center, and the Main Street program continues to grow its impact on downtown development. Strong local industries, a unique and energetic downtown core, beautiful park areas, City Lake to the north, more than 8 miles of walking trails and an anticipated Illinois River Kayak Park to the south provide great benefit to Siloam Springs residents.

Siloam Springs needs a dynamic and thoughtful vision for its future growth and economic vibrancy that leverages these great assets. There is great potential for Siloam Springs to become a leader among small towns across America in its preservation and development of a vibrant urban core, and in its commitment to walkable environs for its residents. The proposed master plan will help achieve that potential.

Main Street Siloam Springs is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that is facilitating the development of this master plan, in close collaboration with the City of Siloam Springs. Main Street Siloam Springs’ vision is for downtown to be a vibrant destination where the community springs to life. Its mission is to lead the community initiative for the revitalization of downtown into an economically vigorous commercial center and a gathering place for hospitality, arts and entertainment; all within a carefully maintained historic district.

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Main Street Siloam Springs’ Master Plan Steering Committee will work with the chosen Consultant Team to help guide the development of a plan that incorporates an economic analysis, form-based code recommendations, and other short, medium and long term recommended action steps. The plan should at all times consider walkability and ways to leverage connection to current assets in the city, which specifically include: John Brown University, the Illinois River Kayak Park (opening December 2013), the “Dogwood Springs” Trail System (currently providing eight miles of semi-contiguous paved trail), City Lake to the north, and the new development area of the Siloam Springs High School and Siloam Springs Regional Hospital.

1. **Research and Economic Analysis** – The chosen Consultant Team will research the current context of Siloam Springs and the downtown, with specific reference to Forward Siloam Springs: the Siloam Springs 2030 Comprehensive Plan. This Master Plan serves as a complementary document to the goals outlined there. Other prior planning documents such as the 2006 Downtown Parking Study should also be studied, and interviews with specific downtown stakeholders and a close working relationship with City planning staff will provide invaluable resources and context for the Master Plan.
The chosen Consultant Team is expected to conduct an economic analysis of the geographic planning area (map provided as an attachment). This economic analysis should specifically address the retail environment of downtown, real estate values and context, traffic patterns, historic resources, and future opportunities. The economic analysis will serve as the foundation for later project recommendations.

The Consultant Team will also lead at least three public design sessions to maintain an open process of community input in the Master Plan. Specific interviews with community and downtown stakeholders are also expected.

**Deliverable(s):** Economic analysis report, summary of public input

2. **Form-Based Codes** – The Consultant Team should make recommendations about the implementation of form-based codes within the downtown area as a tool for encouraging a sustainable urban environment. This should initiate the transformation process of the Master Plan and facilitate immediate steps toward the further implementation of the plan. Form-based codes should encourage mixed use preservation and infill projects and inspire healthy development patterns for the future of the City of Siloam Springs.

**Deliverable(s):** Form-based code recommendations

3. **Specific Urban Design Emphases** – Upon completion of sufficient research and economic analysis, the Consultant Team should expect to focus on these four geographic emphases to create an effective master plan that responds to the specific current needs of downtown Siloam Springs. These are not listed in order of importance, but rather in order of what naturally builds upon itself.

**Downtown Streetscape Improvements:** Based on the traffic and parking observations, recommendations should be made as to potential improvements, parking areas, and signage. Other improvements should suggest consistency throughout the downtown’s aesthetic with specific relation to pedestrian and bicycle usage. As Downtown Siloam Springs has a beautiful natural heritage, trees and wildlife should be considered as a resource to protect and encourage.

**New Library Site/Twin Springs Park:** The recent relocation of the Siloam Springs Regional Hospital and demolition of the old structure has created a large piece of land directly south of Twin Springs Park in downtown Siloam Springs, which includes an important historic home (The “Moss House”) also owned by the City but currently vacant. The natural plateau of this land overlooking Twin Springs Park and Broadway Street is an important component of future development of this site. A portion of this land has been allocated for a new Siloam Springs Public Library. Recommendations should be made as to site treatments that create a visual and convenient pedestrian/bicycle connection between the two sites. Other usages for this connecting space should be researched and recommended, possibly including a farmers market location or pavilion, amphitheater space and other potential uses. The spring itself along Sager Creek here should be analyzed and a plan made for restoring this site for visitors’ visual enjoyment.
East Main Street Corridor: E. Main Street as highlighted on the map suffers from lack of infrastructure despite a vibrant business community. The downtown naturally extends into this roadway that serves as major entry from Hwy 412 into downtown. Infrastructure improvements that will connect this corridor to downtown should be planned, with specific attention to bike and pedestrian usage and connection to downtown.

“Sager Creek Greenway” and further connectivity: Sager Creek runs throughout downtown Siloam Springs, and currently a trail system stops and starts at the edges of downtown Siloam Springs. Plans to connect this trail through downtown should be considered. Trail connections to the Illinois Kayak Park to the South and City Lake to the North should also be addressed.

Deliverable(s): With these four emphases in mind, the Consultant Team will work to complete a master plan for the project area that examines at a minimum the following:

• Establish the “Vision” and Goals Statement
• Prepare Site Analyses and Context
• Prepare alternative concepts design including themes and materials. This includes plans, sketches, sections, and photographic examples to illustrate the character of the site.
• The Consultant Team will produce a site plan, cross sections and elevations that illustrate the intent of the design and how the recommendations will be implemented. Illustrative maps, design sketches and illustrations where possible are helpful.

4. Digital Rendering of Master Plan – The Consultant Team will generate a digital rendering of the master planning area as a method of illustrating the design intent for the project. Use a variety of software to generate a model of the project locations and a rendering of the Master Plan. A compelling visual document that shows renderings of the site and whose text body explains the implementation process will enable local leaders, property owners and residents to better view and understand the design recommendations, their potential and benefits and the impact of design on surrounding properties.

Deliverable(s): Digital rendering of the project master plan and a compelling visual document that can be distributed and displayed

IMPLEMENTATION
The Consultant Team should pay close attention to realistic implementation strategies for each recommendation/project/improvement listed above. Based on the master plan prepared, the team will prepare a detailed budget that defines the cost for all work associated with the envisioned project. This will include the cost for land acquisition, design, permitting, construction, operations and management.

Describe a list of potential funding sources that can be used to build elements of the project and prepare a forecast of potential economic benefits that could be derived from completion of the project.

Deliverable(s): Implementation strategies that include summary of budget, funding sources and economic benefits.
PROJECT MANAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

In addition to the specific services detailed below, the Consultant Team shall coordinate with Main Street Siloam Springs the documented scope of services contained herein, participate in conference calls, and provide timely invoicing and reporting of project progress.

The Consultant Team will take a lead role in all public forums, workshops, meetings, and hearings. Consultants may contract with sub-consultants on the Master Plan, but a lead consultant must be identified and must take responsibility of all deliverables.

The following is a partial list of expected tasks to be detailed in the final contract with the selected consultant:

- Initial meeting with the Master Plan Steering Committee chairs to review and refine the project scope and schedule, as well as schedule initial meetings and begin the process of data compilation.
- Obtain and review existing plans, maps and other documents relevant to the project.
- Meet with the Siloam Springs Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan Steering Committee for regular updates.
- Conduct meetings with key elected officials and stakeholders. The purpose of these meetings will be to obtain input and guidance as it relates to the Master Plan process to obtain opinions on the future of the community from a wide cross-section of individuals and to complete a consensus building process for the future and the community’s goals for development.
- Conduct periodic review meetings (either in person, via telephone, or via email) with Master Plan Steering Committee chairs to discuss project status.
- Plan and manage a diverse public participation process program, including, but not limited to: at least three public design sessions, website materials, and other outreach mechanisms.
- Provide materials for our website that provide information on the Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan, such as draft documents, maps and other useful information to the public.
- Conduct topic-specific focus groups as necessary.
- City of Siloam Springs planning staff will assist in providing GIS maps and materials as available; however, the selected consultant may be required to provide supporting information.
- Develop goals, objectives, implementation strategies, as well as benchmarks to measure implementation progress
- Analyze the consistency of current City of Siloam Springs ordinances and policies in relationship to the goals and objectives developed through the Master Planning process and create an implementation program.
- Draft elements are to be completed and submitted to the Siloam Springs Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan Steering Committee for review, comment, and approval based upon a schedule developed at the beginning of the planning process.
- Prepare a “Public Draft” document and present draft to the Master Plan Steering Committee, Main Street Siloam Springs Board of Directors, and City of Siloam Springs Administration.
- Prepare a “Final Draft” document and make a final presentation at (at least two) public meetings to secure adoption of the Siloam Springs Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan.
STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATION

All statements of qualification should include the following as minimum submission requirements in materials that demonstrate experience in performing projects of this scale and complexity:

Documentation shall include the following:

- Identification of the firm/team responding to the RFQ. **If a team of firms is proposed, the lead firm shall be identified.**
- Location of the headquarters office of the lead team shall be indicated, as well as the location of each lead/firm team member office where work on this project will be performed.
- A brief description of each firm/team member shall be provided along with a list of major services offered by each firm/team member and a summary of their experience.
- A summary demonstrating the firm’s/team’s qualifications to satisfy all the areas identified in the “Scope of Work” section described above.
- A work plan, including an explanation of the methodology to be followed to perform the services required. Work plan shall include a proposed schedule for the number of hours/percentage of time allocation associated with each task.
- A representative list of clients with contact names.
- A representative list of at least 3 projects of a scale and complexity similar to this project, to include: project location, description, cost, date of implementation, services provided by your firm for the project, and a client contact name.

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION OF QUALIFICATIONS:

The following factors will be used in evaluating each consultant’s qualifications:

- Experience and knowledge in developing similar plans by consultant personnel who will be directly involved with the project;
- Ability to complete the plan within the given timeframe;
- Ability to maintain communication on plan development;
- Ability to involve partners and stakeholders in the planning process;
- Ability of the firm to perform the proposed work;
- Ability to deliver a project relative to the allocated budget.
- References.

SELECTION PROCESS & TIMELINE:

The Siloam Springs Downtown & Connectivity Master Plan Steering Committee will conduct the selection process as follows:

September 13, 2013: RFQ issued
October 7: Completed RFQ due by 5:00 p.m.
October: Review RFQs, follow-up interviews, solicit RFPs from select consultants
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Late October/ Early November: RFPs/presentations, consultant selection, contract negotiation

November /December 2013: Start project, host at least 3 public design sessions

May 2014: Draft plan ready for review

June: Host at least 2 presentations of the plan

By June 31: Seek formal adoption of the finalized plan by Main Street Siloam Springs and City Board of Directors

CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS:
Main Street Siloam Springs expects to select a consulting firm from the qualifications submitted, but reserves the right to request substitutions of firms. Main Street Siloam Springs also reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFQ, to advertise for new responses, or to accept any response deemed to be in our best interest. A response to this RFQ should not be construed as a contract or an indication of a commitment of any kind on the part of Main Street Siloam Springs, nor does it commit either to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a response to this request or for any cost incurred prior to the execution of a final contract.

Upon selection a Professional Service Contract shall be prepared, negotiated and fully executed before work is initiated. Main Street Siloam Springs reserves the right to terminate the contract for its convenience, and it further reserves the right to dismiss any part or all of the contracted team when, in Main Street Siloam Springs’ opinion, the project is not moving as scheduled or is hindered in any way by the actions or personalities of team members.

ATTACHMENTS
1) Map of geographic planning area
   Legend: Red lines = Downtown Planning Area
   Pink lines = East Main Street Corridor (“Tie In Area”)
   Yellow lines = Major entries to Downtown Planning Area