

# Maryland Department of Legislative Services

## Invitation to Submit Proposal For Study of State Park System

---

### Overview and Background

The Maryland Department of Legislative Services (DLS) is a nonpartisan agency of the Legislative Branch of State government. DLS provides professional staff support to the Maryland General Assembly.

***Great Maryland Outdoors Act:*** In August 2021, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House jointly appointed the State Park Investment Commission to investigate and make recommendations regarding overcrowding in Maryland State parks. The commission issued a [final report](#) in December 2021, which included 40 recommendations related to park capacity, maintenance, and staffing; funding for State parks; equity; and climate change. [Chapter 39 of 2022](#) (the Great Maryland Outdoors Act) built off the commission's work and implemented many of the commission's recommendations.

Chapter 39 made numerous changes to State law, including changes related to the following:

- **Funding** – Established a Park System Critical Maintenance Fund, a Park System Capital Improvements and Acquisition Fund, and a Great Maryland Outdoors Fund; and repealed and altered certain transfer tax repayment requirements.
- **Park Staff and Volunteers** – Required 100 additional permanent positions in the Park Service and \$12 million to fund the positions and related operating costs; required periodic staff adequacy and salary reviews; required the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to recognize specified staff as emergency services personnel; and required DNR to implement a volunteer management program.
- **Management of Parks and Park Infrastructure** – Required DNR to develop an asset management process for its infrastructure, take inventory of State land managed by DNR and develop a project prioritization process, conduct a survey of historical and cultural resources, and develop a five-year Capital Improvement Plan and a Comprehensive Long-Range Strategic Plan; increased the value threshold for capital project and maintenance procurements; replaced the Park Advisory Commission with a new Parks and Recreation Commission; and required the Department of Legislative Services to contract for an independent study of the State park system.
- **New Parks/Amenities and Other Considerations** – Authorized DNR to enter into agreements to establish or manage a partnership park; required DNR to establish specified

partnership parks, target certain areas for the location and establishment of new State parks or amenities, consider the impact of new amenities on the cultural and ecological capacities of existing State park areas, and recognize State forests, trees, and wetlands as major tools for addressing climate change; required the Maryland Park Service (MPS) to adopt certain design principles for crime prevention and improved access; and required all MPS projects to improve local water quality.

DLS seeks a consultant (hereinafter referred to as “offeror”) to conduct the study required under Chapter 39 and make related recommendations. The legislation requires the offeror to report its findings and recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Commission by December 1, 2023; however, DLS and the selected offeror may mutually agree to continue the collaboration beyond December 1, 2023.

## Scope of Services

Based on the requirements in Chapter 39, DLS seeks an offeror to conduct a study that, at a minimum, will include the following:

- (I) Whether the Park Service is producing outcomes consistent with its [mission of managing the State’s natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources to provide for wise stewardship and enjoyment by people](#);
- (II) The visitor experience for State parks, including:
  1. park access, including equity of access and adoption of universal design principles in programming, amenities, outreach, and web content;
  2. transportation, including parking availability and transit options;
  3. cleanliness;
  4. park capacity, including cultural and ecological carrying capacity; and
  5. whether facilities, amenities, or areas are closed, including whether closures are due to deferred maintenance;
- (III) How funding can be used to enable the Park Service to produce outcomes consistent with its mission, including:
  1. identifying options for and the potential of dedicated funding sources; and
  2. funding levels necessary to adequately staff the Park Service;
- (IV) How Park Service projects can support:
  1. climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency; and
  2. public health;
- (V) A preliminary analysis of DNR’s implementation of Chapter 39, including:
  1. development and implementation of the Electronic Asset Management System for Infrastructure, Facility Condition Index Assessment Process, Dedicated Asset Evaluation Team, DNR-managed land inventory, Maintenance Project Prioritization Process, and Historical and Cultural Resources Survey;

2. development of a five-year Capital Improvement Plan and a Comprehensive Long-Range Strategic Plan;
3. expenditures from the Park System Critical Maintenance Fund, Park System Capital Improvements and Acquisition Fund, and Great Maryland Outdoors Fund;
4. the hiring and deployment of additional DNR staff required by Chapter 39, including DNR's efforts to recruit and retain a diverse Park Service workforce; and
5. outreach to and engagement with volunteer networks and nongovernment organizations, including the implementation of the volunteer management program; and

(VI) Recommendations for addressing issues identified in the study.

The offeror is expected to solicit input from DNR and the Parks and Recreation Commission while conducting the study. On completion of the study, the offeror will present an overview of the offeror's findings and recommendations to DNR and the Parks and Recreation Commission. The offeror will consider any feedback provided by DNR and the Parks and Recreation Commission in preparing the recommendations and final report.

The offeror is also expected to maintain communication with DLS throughout the duration of the study and to provide monthly and as-needed status updates regarding the offeror's progress.

## **Proposal Submission**

Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation should follow the format below.

- A. A one-page letter of introduction which includes the following:
  1. date of proposal submission;
  2. offeror's full legal name;
  3. contact person and phone number(s);
  4. offeror's full business address;
  5. Social Security or Federal Tax Identification number; and
  6. date on which the offeror is prepared to begin work and indication of availability to continue beyond December 1, 2023.
- B. A summary of the offeror's experience and ability to provide the Scope of Services as required by DLS.
- C. A detailed description of how the offeror proposes to accomplish the scope of work as stated in the Scope of Services.
- D. The number and types of staff the offeror proposes to use under the contract, including individual resumes for key personnel describing the individual's relevant education and experience.

- E. A proposed schedule identifying any milestones for any draft and final deliverables, along with an estimate of the number of hours anticipated to complete each milestone.
- F. Either the proposed total contract estimated costs or proposed hourly rates and justification for rates and estimated hours needed to complete the contract.
- G. A list of references and points of contact, including an indication of similar services or projects the offeror provided for the reference.

Proposals must be submitted electronically, with files attached in PDF format, to Jeremy D. Baker, Senior Policy Analyst with DLS, at [Jeremy.D.Baker@mlis.state.md.us](mailto:Jeremy.D.Baker@mlis.state.md.us). Questions or inquiries may also be emailed to Mr. Baker.

The successful proposal will be selected by DLS based on the materials submitted. Offerors may be invited to appear in person or virtually to present their proposals to DLS staff and to respond to questions regarding their proposals and qualifications. Offerors may also be required to refine aspects of their proposals subsequent to presentation.

## **Solicitation Schedule**

Issue Date: September 1, 2022

Proposals Due: October 3, 2022, no later than 5:00 p.m.

Anticipated Contract Commencement (approximate): January 1, 2023

Anticipated Contract Completion: December 31, 2023

## **Attachments**

### **Attachment A – Background Source List**

This attachment provides web links to background material on the Maryland Park Service, including information on recent legislative changes, long-term planning, strategic investment, funding, and critical maintenance.

### **Attachment B – Expectations for Proposals**

This attachment provides additional information on criteria that DLS will use to evaluate proposals submitted under this RFP.

# Attachment A

## RFP for Study of State Park System Background Source List

---

The following links provide background material on the Maryland Park Service, including information on recent legislative changes, long-term planning, strategic investment, funding, and critical maintenance.

### State Park Investment Commission:

Final Report:

[2021 - Final Report of State Park Investment Commission.pdf \(maryland.gov\)](#)

Meeting Minutes:

[Committees - State Park Investment Commission \(maryland.gov\)](#)

Meeting Recordings:

[Search - Media \(maryland.gov\)](#)

Under “Years” dropdown menu select “2021,” then select “Other” tab.

### Great Maryland Outdoors Act

[2022 Regular Session - Senate Bill 541 Chapter \(maryland.gov\)](#)

### Maryland 2019–2023 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan

[2019-2023\\_Maryland-LPRP.pdf](#)

### Maryland Park Service 2016 Strategic Park Investment Plan

[2016\\_61\(rev\).pdf \(state.md.us\)](#)

### Maryland Park Service FY 2018–2020 Funding Report

[2018\\_67a.pdf \(state.md.us\)](#)

### Maryland Park Service 2019 Critical Maintenance Report

[2019\\_88-89\(DNR\).pdf \(state.md.us\)](#)

# Attachment B

## RFP for Study of State Park System Expectations for Proposals

---

### Quality and Availability of Staff

- There is a single individual proposed as the main liaison to the Department of Legislative Services who is a senior member of the company.
- There is a qualified backup liaison in the event that the chief liaison is not available.
- The proposed team has an appropriate mixture of senior and junior staff with adequate qualifications to carry out the work.
- Key members of the team are not over-committed to other projects and will generally be available on an ongoing basis through the contract period.
- The number of team members or subcontractors is able to expand on short notice in response to unanticipated surges in workload.

### Firm's Proven Ability

- The proposed team has expertise in the parks and recreation field, demonstrated through a combination of education, professional certifications, prior experience consulting for government agencies, or any other relevant qualifications.
- The firm has experience conducting park planning reports.
- The firm has strict quality control mechanisms and procedures.
- The firm demonstrates understanding of state park operations and best practices and their implications for a quality state park system.
- The firm has demonstrated capacity to develop client-friendly state park planning models.

### Familiarity with the Maryland State Park System or Other Complex State Park Systems

- The proposal demonstrates knowledge and familiarity with the Maryland State Park system, its various strategic and individual park management plans, its funding mechanism, and its recent history.
- The proposal demonstrates knowledge and familiarity with recent State park reforms in Maryland (*i.e.*, the work of the [State Park Investment Commission](#) and [Chapter 39 of 2022](#)).
- The proposal demonstrates an understanding of how Maryland's State Park system compares to that of other large state park systems.
- The proposal demonstrates an understanding of other state park plans.

## **Relevant Experience**

- Members of the proposed team have experience working with large state park plans and with legislative and/or executive bodies.
- Members of the proposed team have appeared before legislative and/or executive bodies to present findings from their work.
- The firm provides examples and references that attest to the high quality of the firm's work.