

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Strategic Plan Development



**5400 Ox Road
Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039**

April 2, 2026

NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



Strategic Plan Development

April 2, 2026

- The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks) is requesting proposals to assist in the development of a 5-year Strategic Plan to guide the agency's growth and development.
- Sealed proposals for services can be mailed or submitted in person to NOVA Parks, 5400 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 and must be received no later than 5p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2026. Proposals must be clearly marked "RFP – Strategic Plan Development." Proposals may also be e-mailed to ExecutiveOffice@nvrpa.org by the same date and time listed above.
- Any questions about the request for proposals must be submitted in writing by e-mail to Executive Director Justin Wilson at ExecutiveOffice@nvrpa.org. All questions must be submitted no later than April 24, 2026.

Proposal Timeline

RFP Release	April 2, 2026
Questions Due	April 24, 2026
Final Proposals Due	May 1, 2026, 5 p.m.
Interview Schedule <i>(If Necessary)</i>	Week of May 18, 2026
Agreement Finalized	End of May 2026
Work to Begin	June 1, 2026

Introduction and Background

The next strategic plan for NOVA Parks (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority) will lead us into our 8th decade of service to the region. We require an experienced partner to assist in crafting an aggressive vision for unique visitor experiences, entrepreneurial growth, and fostering a supportive and high-performing culture for our team.

NOVA Parks is a governmental agency supported by six political subdivisions. In the late 1950s, the Northern Virginia Planning District Commission and a group of residents from several local jurisdictions came together to protect Northern Virginia's rich heritage of woods, meadows, lakes and streams from the threat of suburban sprawl. These residents, working with their local governments, Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, organized under the Virginia Park Authorities Act in 1959 as the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

With a dual mission of providing unique experiences and advancing land conservation, NOVA Parks is an agency with a legacy of innovation. With 37 parks across more than 12,500 acres in the suburbs of Northern Virginia, NOVA Parks operates public parks in the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax.

We innovate to advance our dual mission, both through expansion and enhancement. NOVA Parks generates 89% of our operating funds from entrepreneurial park operations, drawing on a culture rarely found in a public-sector agency. The culture is supported by an annual performance bonus system that is tied to quantitative goals. The bonus pool derives from net revenue (profit) from the previous year's annual performance and is awarded to full- and part-time staff. In this way, NOVA Parks, while it is governmental, operates as an employee-owned company.

A few noteworthy characteristics of NOVA Parks include:

- A \$43M annual operating budget and \$57M (5-year) Capital Budget
- Full-time staff of 152, year-round part-time staff of 202 (FTE), and peak summer employment of over 1,000
- Led by a 12-person Board of Directors appointed by each of our 6 member jurisdictions
- A capital endowment that supports major investments and strategic growth initiatives
- The 45-mile W&OD Trail is one of the most popular trails in the US, with between 2-3 million visits a year
- Three holiday light shows visited by 500,000 users a year
- Four event venues that host 500 receptions a year, with internal catering operations
- A 3-story ropes course unique to the Mid-Atlantic region
- Five Waterparks
- Five Civil War Battlefields
- Five waterfront/marina parks
- Three golf courses
- A botanical garden and a botanical preserve

- 15 miles of shoreline on the Potomac River and 25 miles of shoreline along the Bull Run/Occoquan Rivers
- A nascent mitigation-banking program that has generated new revenues across our parks

Summary of Project

NOVA Parks invites proposals from qualified individuals or organizations to assist its Board of Directors and staff in the creation of a new 5-year strategic plan that will define this next era of our organizational evolution. This process will assimilate input from our Board of Directors, staff, customers, and jurisdictional partners to craft a plan and a set of specific, measurable objectives that will realize the strategic direction.

This plan will incorporate organizational vision, mission and values, including analysis of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and a definition of key performance indicators.

We desire a plan that incorporates the input of our staff and Board to ensure the organic support that will help drive implementation. Engagement with the NOVA Parks Board of Directors and full-time staff will occur with on-site and virtual sessions. We expect the new strategic plan to be adopted by our Board of Directors in the spring of 2027.

NOVA Parks has grown through effective strategic planning. Our previous plan periods were 2007-2012, 2012-2017, 2017-2022 and now 2023-2027. Through these four plans, the agency has grown its revenues exponentially and added thousands of acres of new parkland.

Reference resources:

- [2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#)
- [2025 Annual Report to the Community](#)
- [6-month Comparison Performance Scorecard](#)

Strategic Planning Scope of Services

- The Consultant is expected to work closely with NOVA Parks leadership, facilitating the entire process and providing expertise and advice throughout including:
 - Developing a work plan to guide project activities and communication.
 - Meetings with the NOVA Parks Board two to three times during the process, including leading a strategic planning retreat in fall 2026.
 - Conducting (4) strategic planning sessions to take place at NOVA Parks locations with sub-groups of staff (approximately 12 total meeting hours).
 - Conducting (10) stakeholder interviews with elected officials, appointed officials and organizational partners.

- Working with (4) to (5) staff groups virtually to help with drafting, revising, and editing plan sections, goals and objectives (approximately 30 hours).

General Proposal Information

In accordance with the Virginia Public Procurement Act and NOVA Parks' Small Purchase Procedures, NOVA Parks is requesting competitive sealed proposals for the services outlined.

NOVA PARKS RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY TECHNICALITIES AT ITS OPTION WHEN IN THE BEST INTEREST OF NOVA PARKS.

Questions about the RFP

Any questions about the RFP must be submitted in writing by e-mail to Executive Director Justin Wilson at ExecutiveOffice@nvrpa.org. All questions must be submitted no later than April 24, 2026. Please reference the specific section that is the subject of your question. NOVA Parks will respond to each question in writing. Questions submitted after the above deadline may not be answered.

Selection and Award Process

Based on the results of the preliminary evaluation of the proposals received, the highest rated vendor(s) may be asked by NOVA Parks to make a presentation to a selection committee.

NOVA Parks will select the top-rated proposal and then enter into negotiations, in an effort to arrive at a mutually acceptable agreement and contract. In the event the negotiations are successful, a contract will be offered in accordance with NOVA Parks' contracting procedures.

The award of contract may be made to the responsible vendor whose proposal is most advantageous to NOVA Parks, taking into account the minimum requirements and the evaluation criteria for the proposals. The award of a contract will be made based upon criteria inclusive of, but not limited to, price.

Evaluation Criteria

- Responding firm's experience in completing work of a similar size and scope.
- Specific qualifications of the primary staff who will manage, supervise, and provide services, including previous experience with projects of similar size and scope.
- Proposer's project management methodology and experience.
- Client references.
- Implementation schedule.
- Value of services proposed.

Proposal Submittal

- Company Background and Statement of Qualifications
 - Main office address, when organized, main point of contact, email, and phone number.
 - Provide a statement of qualifications indicating the ability to fulfill the scope of the RFP and understanding of NOVA Parks' requirements.
 - A list of the key staff who will work on this project and what role they will be playing, along with resumes that provide their background and expertise.
- Proposed Approach, Work Plan and Implementation Schedule
 - Outline specific elements as requested in the RFP and how each will be completed.
- Client References
 - List a minimum of (5) client references. Please include the organization's name, address, contact person, email address, phone number, and a brief description of the project.
- Cost Proposal
 - Non-binding Fee Estimate with travel expenses listed separately from the consulting fees. NOVA Parks will provide meeting space, supplies, and food and beverage services. As such, cost proposals should not include these items.
 - While the pricing information provided in responses will be non-binding prior to the execution of a written agreement, such information will be assessed during the evaluation of the responses and the ranking of proposals. Any inaccurate, misleading or incomplete information, including withdrawn or altered pricing, could adversely impact any such evaluation, ranking or contract award.
- Other Requirements
 - List any requirements outside of the normal scope of work that will be required by the Offeror or NOVA Parks.

Instructions to Offerors

- AMENDMENT OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: The Offeror shall acknowledge receipt of a request for proposals amendment by signing and returning the document by the specified due date and time.
- FAMILIARIZATION WITH SCOPE OF WORK: Before submitting a proposal, each Offeror shall familiarize him/herself with the scope of work outlined in the request for proposals, laws, regulations, and other factors affecting contract performance. The contractor shall be responsible for fully understanding the requirements of the subsequent Contract and otherwise satisfy him/herself as to the expense and difficulties accompanying the fulfillment of contract requirements. The submission of a proposal will constitute a representation of compliance by the Offeror. There will be no subsequent financial adjustment, other than that provided by the subsequent Contract, for lack of such familiarization.

Preparation of Proposal

- The proposal shall be signed by a person authorized to submit an offer. An authorized signature shall constitute an irrevocable offer to sell the goods and/or service specified herein. Offeror

shall submit any additional requested documentation, signifying intent to be bound by the terms of the agreement.

- It is the responsibility of all offerors to examine the entire request for proposals package and seek clarification of any requirement that may not be clear, and to check all responses for accuracy before submitting a proposal. Negligence in preparing a proposal confers no right of withdrawal after due date and time.
- NOVA Parks will not reimburse the cost of developing, presenting, submitting, or providing any response to this solicitation.
- Offeror must list any subcontractors to be utilized in the performance of the services specified herein. For each subcontractor, details on their respective qualifications must be included.

Proposal Format and Requirements

- If submitted by mail or in person, an original and (2) copies of the proposal should be submitted.
- The sections of the submittal should be clearly identifiable and should include a minimum of the following sections:
 - Company Background and Statement of Qualifications
 - Proposed Approach, Work Plan, and Implementation Schedule
 - Client References
 - Cost Proposal
 - Other Requirements

Failure to include the requested information may have a negative impact on the evaluation of the offeror's proposal.

General Terms and Public Record

- All proposals submitted in response to this request for proposals shall become the property of NOVA Parks and shall become a matter of public record available for review subsequent to the award notification.

Confidential Information

- Any confidential information submitted should be marked as such. NOVA Parks is obligated to abide by all public information laws. If an Offeror believes that any portion of a proposal, offer, specification, or correspondence contains information that should be withheld, a statement advising of this fact should accompany the submission, and the information shall be so identified wherever it appears. NOVA Parks shall review all requests for confidentiality and may provide a written determination to designate specified documents "confidential", or the request may be denied. Price is not confidential and will not be withheld.
- If the confidential request is denied, such information shall be disclosed as public information, unless the offeror submits a formal written objection.

Certification

- By signature on the offer or cover letter accompanying the submittal documents, Offeror certifies:
 - The submission of the offer did not involve collusion or other anti-competitive practices.
 - The Offeror shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment in violation of Federal or State law.
 - The Offeror has not given, offered to give, nor intends to give at any time hereafter, any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip, favor, meal or service to a public servant in connection with the submitted offer.
 - The Offeror hereby certifies that the individual signing the submittal is an authorized agent for the Offeror and has the authority to bind the Offeror to the Contract.

Where to Submit Proposals

- In order to be considered, the Offeror must complete and submit his/her proposal by mail or in person to NOVA Parks, 5400 OX Road, Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039 no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday May 1, 2026, or by e-mail to ExecutiveOffice@nvrpa.org by the same date and time listed above.

Late Proposal

- Any proposal received after the submission deadline as noted above will not be accepted or considered. The time of receipt shall be determined as the time the proposal is received by NOVA Parks. Offerors are solely responsible for ensuring that their proposal and supporting documents are received by NOVA Parks by the submission deadline. Offerors may request written confirmation of receipt of their bid.

Withdrawal of Proposal

- At any time prior to the specified solicitation due date and time, an Offeror may formally withdraw the proposal by written letter or e-mail, from the Offeror or a designated representative. Verbal withdrawals shall not be considered.

Discussions

- NOVA Parks reserves the right to conduct discussions with Offerors for the purpose of eliminating minor irregularities, informalities, or apparent clerical mistakes in the proposal, in order to clarify an offer and assure full understanding of, and responsiveness to, solicitation requirements.

Proposal Results

- The name(s) of the successful Offeror will be available upon request.