

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

St. Helena Heritage Park  
Event Planning & Management Firm



**RFP Submittals Due April 30, 2021 by 3:00 PM**

Submit One Electronic Copy to:  
William Rouse  
City Manager  
City of Canal Fulton  
155 Market St. E.  
Canal Fulton, OH 44614  
330-854-2225  
330-608-0171

Electronic copies by flash drive or email to: [citymgr@cityofcanalfulton-oh.gov](mailto:citymgr@cityofcanalfulton-oh.gov)

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The City of Canal Fulton (“City”) hereby issues this Request for Proposal (“RFP”), inviting the submission of qualifications from individuals and/or businesses with the qualifications and expertise necessary to determine, plan and manage a series of community and economic events to be held in the City’s St. Helena Heritage Park (the Park). The Event Planner will be responsible for working with the City to identify the events and dates, and then manage all aspects of the event including planning, registration, sponsorships, labor/event management, logistics, vendor relations, budget management, programming, implementation and analysis. Only individuals that have resources in the region may respond to this RFP. The City’s intent is to vote and award the RFP to the most qualified bidder prior to the summer of 2021.

## **II. BACKGROUND OF THE CITY**

Located in the Northwest corner of Stark County, Ohio, Canal Fulton offers the advantages of living in a small historic city nestled alongside the Ohio & Erie Canal and the Tuscarawas River with the convenience of being just a short drive to the bigger metropolitan areas of Stark, Summit, and Cuyahoga counties. Canal Fulton is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has over eighty (80) sites including buildings and homes and has received national attention due to some of the paranormal phenomenon witnessed in some of the older buildings. Canal Fulton serves the surrounding rural area as an education, retail, and transportation center. In the 1990’s, communities along the Ohio-Erie Canalway began working together to reconstruct the old canal towpath into a multi-use trail. Now with most of this trail completed in Cuyahoga, Summit, and Stark Counties, Canal Fulton has become a destination for cyclists, hikers, equestrian, and bird watchers throughout the region. The Park and the Canal Fulton Canalway Center serve as a major trailhead for the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail and the Old Muskingum Hiking/Biking/Equestrian Trail. Tourism has become a major factor in Canal Fulton’s commercial life, with its many quaint shops lining Canal Street. Rides on the St. Helena III, one (1) of only four (4) working canal boats in Ohio, also draws tourists from across the state.

## **III. BACKGROUND OF THE ST. HELENA HERITAGE PARK**

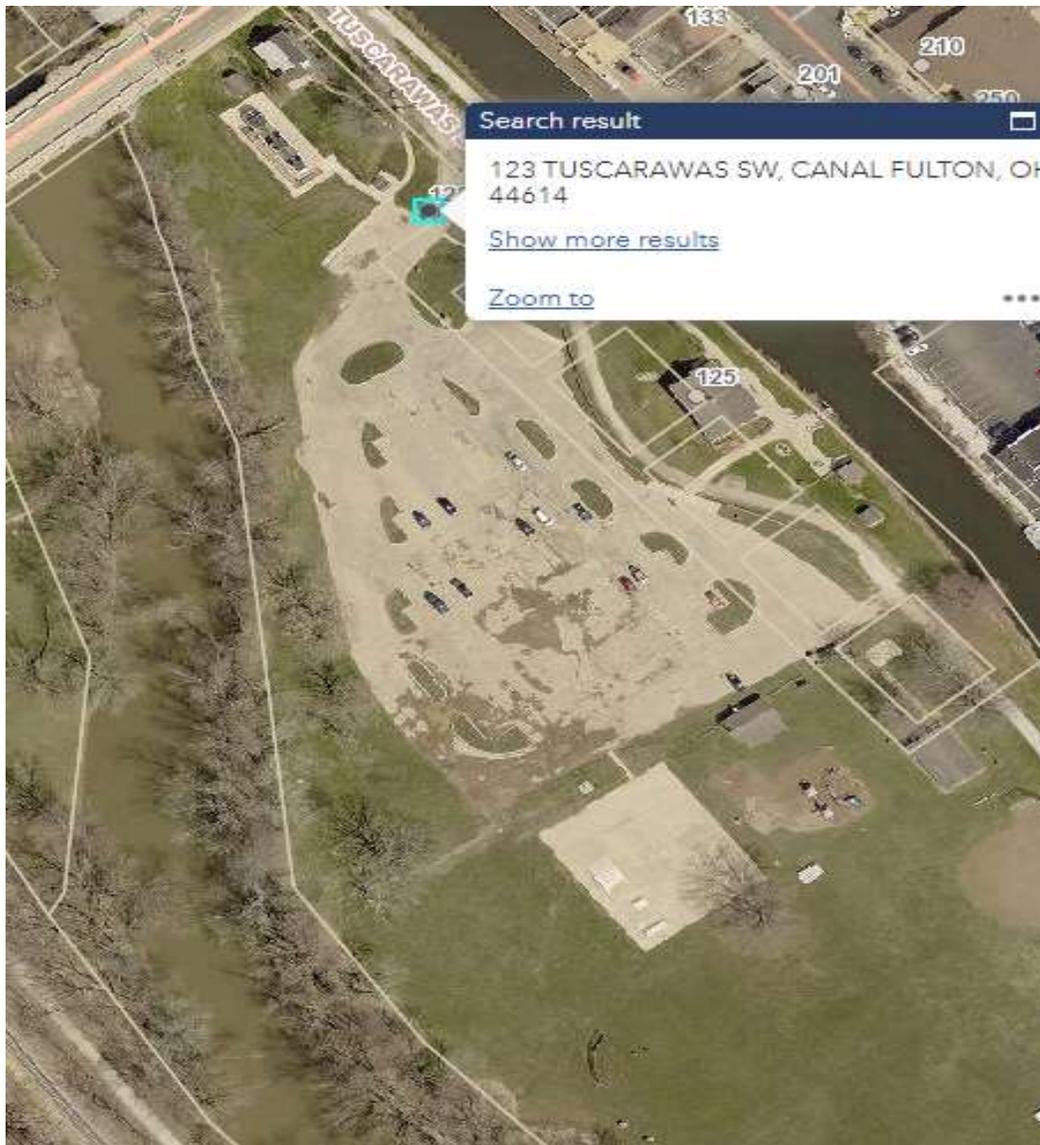
The St. Helena Heritage Park is located at 123 Tuscarawas St NW Canal Fulton, OH 44614, and can be viewed as parcel number 9580161 on the Stark County Auditor’s GIS system. The Park is roughly 16 acres in size and serves as the home to the City’s Canalway Center, the St. Helena III which is an operating canal boat, and the St. Helena II which is a replica museum canal boat. The Park also serves as a major Trailhead for the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath trail, and has a children’s playground, several baseball and soccer fields, and a pavilion for family gatherings. The Park also is used for the annual Olde Canal Days festival in mid-July, which is a three-day celebration of Canal Fulton’s heritage and includes numerous fair rides, food vendors, musical acts, fireworks and other forms of entertainment.

The St. Helena III Canal Boat departs from the Park and is pulled by two draft horses for a one-hour ride down the Ohio & Erie Canal. Boat crew members are dressed in clothing similar to that

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of the original canal boat era and a historian on board provides information on the history of the canal, the boat and the area. During the trip, the canal boat passes the McLaughlin Dry Dock where the St. Helena III was originally built and is stored for the winter. At the far end of the cruise the boat reaches the Lock IV turning basin which is one of the few remaining, intact locks along the Ohio & Erie Canal. Visitors are invited to view a thirty-minute video of "Our Canal Heritage" in the Canalway Center prior to their ride. In addition to regular passenger rides, the St. Helena III offers private charters, theme cruises, and dinner cruises.

The Park's size (16 acres); strategic location on the Ohio & Erie Canal and Towpath trail, near the historic downtown, and a 15-minute drive from Clay's Park; the tourist attraction of the St. Helena II & St. Helena III Canal Boats; and the infrastructure to host major events like the Olde Canal Days festival, make the Park an ideal prospect for hosting additional and unique events throughout the year. The following are some pictures taken over the years of features in the park.









#### IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City desires to partner with an Event Planner to determine, plan and manage a series of community events to be held in the Park. Examples of events that could be proposed include, but are not limited to, a series of flea and farmers markets, rib cookoffs, festivals, car and tractor shows, and various wintertime activities. The Event Planner will be responsible for working with the City to identify the events and dates, and then manage all aspects of the event including planning, registration, sponsorships, labor/event management, marketing, logistics, vendor

relations, budget management, programming, implementation and analysis. The City's goal for the Event Planner is to create a fun, inviting atmosphere in the Park that helps celebrate the City's history, promote the downtown businesses located next to the Park, and promote an additional tourism market in the City.

The financial structure will require the Event Planner to pay the City rent for the use of the Park to host the events. The Event Planner can then recoup their cost and earn profit from the event ticket sales, sponsorships, fees, advertising and/or other proposals. The City reserves the right to approve/deny each event and proposed revenue generation method on an event-by-event basis. Specific duties of the Event Planner include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Pre-Event**

- Work with City to craft event plan, timeline and work plan with detailed goals, objectives and tactics
- Provide comprehensive planning, coordination, logistics development, event management, production services, registration management
- Create a plan to identify and meet staff/volunteer needs
- Develop and implement marketing and communications plans; ensure timely execution of all activities associated with the event (letters, tickets, advertisements, signs, etc.)
- Work with City to design and implement park/theme layout, food/beverage options and to promote event
- Create day-of-event timeline, production schedule, and run-of-show
- Manage your own budget expenses and revenue
- Investigate vendors required to produce the event, negotiate and contract with those needed, and manage vendor relationships
- Booth/exhibitor/vendor activity coordination and management
- Meet regularly, as required, with City Manager or designee, to provide updates on progress, issues or Park related matters

**Day-Of**

- Attend event
- Direct day-of management, including Park preparation, award winner coordination if a contest event, registrations, and various trouble-shooting
- Manage event staff/volunteers

**Post Event**

- Post event wrap-up; including Park clean-up and post event meeting with City Manager or designee

## V. SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUESTED

### A. City will provide:

- i. Administration oversight through City Manager or designee
- ii. Parks Maintenance & Support

### B. Event Planner will provide:

- i. A registered business in the State of Ohio with documentation and an Employer Identification Number
- ii. The business shall have a minimum general liability coverage of \$1,000,000
- iii. A supplemental event(s) liability coverage rider policy is mandatory
- iv. A listing of previous business/event planning experiences

## VI. RESPONSE CONTENTS

The Event Planner, in its proposal, shall, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Professional Experience. The Event Planner should describe its experience, including history and experience with business/event planning services.
2. The Event Planner should describe the qualifications of staffing/oversight to be assigned to the events. Descriptions should include:
  - i. Background and prior experience of the individual(s) with respect to the required experience listed above.
3. Rent Structure. The Event Planner will pay the City rent for the use of the Park. This rent can be structured as a fixed amount per year, a fixed amount per event, or a percentage of sales. The Event Planner's proposal should state their preferred rent structure and amount.
4. The Event Planner's proposal should include a high-level business plan that addresses proposed dates of operation and types of events to be held in the Park. If the Event Planner is proposing that the City renovate the Park to make an event work, this should be noted in the plan.
5. The Event Planner's proposal should include three business and/or personal references.

## VII. RESPONSE SUBMISSION

Responses to this RFP shall be submitted with one (1) complete electronic copy in PDF format. All costs incurred in the preparation of the response shall be the responsibility of the Event Planner and will not be reimbursed by the City of Canal Fulton.

It is the responsibility of the Event Planner to ensure that the response is received by the City of Canal Fulton, by the date and time in this RFP. Late responses will not be considered. RFP Submittals Due April 30, 2021 by 3:00 PM.

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William Rouse

City Manager

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## **VIII. RIGHT TO REJECT**

The City of Canal Fulton reserves the right to reject any and all responses, or parts thereof received in response to this RFP; waive formalities, technical deficiencies and irregularities; or otherwise solicit new responses if some other manner of negotiation better serves its interests, and to award an agreement in a manner that best serves the interest of the City. An agreement for the accepted response will be drafted based upon the factors described in this RFP.

## **IX. NOTIFICATION OF AWARD**

It is expected that a decision will be made within approximately 30 days of the closing date for the receipt of responses. Upon conclusion of final negotiations, all Event Planners submitting responses to this RFP will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful firm, if any. It is expected that the contract will be for twenty-four (24) months and subject to termination upon delivery of written notice of no less than 60 days.

## **X. PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

Following review and selection of top firms, the City will request personal interviews with those selected. Responses will be reviewed in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Experience of the firm in providing similar types of services
2. Resources available immediately to meet the City's needs
3. Experience of the individual identified to serve as main manager
4. Response from references
5. Interview results, if conducted
6. Demonstrated communication skills including accurate and effective listening, speaking and writing abilities
7. Other relevant professional experience, skills and proficiencies

## **XI. QUESTIONS**

All questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail to [citymgr@cityofcanalfulton-oh.gov](mailto:citymgr@cityofcanalfulton-oh.gov) no less than five (5) business days prior to the scheduled due date of the response.