

CITY OF JOLIET, IL

RFQ # 2817-0424



Request for Qualifications
Joliet Area African American Historic Context Study

DUE DATE: 4:00 PM, CST, ON FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2024

All communications related to this RFQ must be in writing and directed to the following contact: jbernhard@joliet.gov. The deadline to submit questions via email is 2:00 PM, CST, on Friday, May 10 2024.

Questions will be answered in the form of an addendum and posted on the City of Joliet's website at the link below for the listed RFQ #:

<https://www.joliet.gov/bids>

RFQ

Joliet Area African American Historic Context Study

1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Joliet announces a request for qualifications (RFQ) to prepare a historic context study that documents the history and culture of the Joliet area Black community to further illuminate the complex racial history of the greater Joliet area and the evolution of its neighborhoods. The context study will include traditional historical research as well as input from the Joliet area African American community. The final context study report will contain a comprehensive history of the Joliet area's African American community from the first residents through the late 20th century. It will also contain defined historical themes connected with the African American experience in Joliet.

1.1 PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to:

- document Joliet area Black history in an accurate narrative,
- acknowledge racial injustice using history,
- recognize historic properties important to the Black community,
- challenge misinformation about the Black experience,
- record Black voices for future generations, and
- place Route 66 history in context with the history of the south side and Black residents.

1.2 DESIRED PROJECT OUTCOMES

This study will not “sit on a shelf.” This project will result in community conversations and forge new or reestablish community partnerships around the history of diversity, equity and inclusion in Joliet. The information generated from this project will help ensure that the City and its partners are inclusive and equitable with long-range planning efforts. The final report will serve as an analytical framework for future historic resource surveys, nominations, and placemaking projects in the Joliet area's historically underserved communities occupied by African Americans and other people of color.

The City of Joliet also intends to launch the Joliet Comprehensive Plan around the same time as this project. The Joliet Comprehensive Plan - the first in over 50 years – must be based on an accurate understanding of the region's past in order for this Plan to realistically shape the Joliet area for years to come. In addition, the City is also managing the Interstate 80 Des Plaines River Bridge Community Plan, which targets a small area of the City that is affected by the forthcoming reconstruction of the Interstate 80 Des Plaines River Bridge and that has suffered from disinvestment since Interstate 80 was constructed through this neighborhood in the 1960s.

1.3 THE PROJECT AREA

The project area will not be strictly defined to ensure that additional resources and information that support the goals of this project may be included; however, generally the focus will be on all areas within Joliet Township and the Fairmont neighborhood in the southern part of Lockport Township. Notable Areas include the following neighborhoods: South side, East side, Bicentennial Bluffs, Forest Park, Fairmont, Manningdale, and Preston Heights.

1.4 PROJECT FUNDING

The City has an expected budget of \$75,000 for this project; however, the City will entertain cost alternatives during the process to finalize the overall project scope of work with the preferred consultant team. The project budget might be enhanced by additional City funding for the right project or by utilizing internal staff resources for some of the work production. Five governmental entities have committed funding for this project – City of Joliet, Joliet Township, Lockport Township, Will County, and the State of Illinois through a Certified Local Government Matching Grant administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and managed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Division. Acceptance of a Certified Local Government Matching Grant requires that the selected consultant team meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 BRIEF HISTORIC CONTEXT

During the first wave of the Great Migration, the South End was the initial neighborhood that Black southern migrants settled in the Joliet Area. As a city with a powerful industrial base and unrivaled transportation networks since its inception, notwithstanding its proximity to Chicago, Joliet was a destination for newly arrived Southern migrants, escaping increased harassment and bigotry in southern regions. The number of Black Joliet area residents grew exponentially in the following decades. An incredible resource from this period, the 1958-59 Brown Book Directory, provides a fascinating glimpse into Joliet’s Black community, centered around South Chicago Street (which was also the original alignment of Route 66). The Brown Book unequivocally demonstrates the economic vibrancy of the Joliet area Black community, particularly in the South End and south side, with numerous Black-owned businesses and social institutions. The Brown Book also makes clear South Chicago Street’s status as the Black community’s “Main Street.” See attachment A for a list of known research resources.

Joliet’s neighborhoods were very much shaped by housing discrimination, which was reinforced by the federal Home Owner’s Loan Corporation (HOLC). In the 1930s, the HOLC painstakingly surveyed and mapped nearly 200 American cities, including Joliet, with the stated purpose of stabilizing homeownership across the country. The Joliet map categorized Joliet neighborhoods into four groups. Those neighborhoods that the HOLC determined to have the highest mortgage lending risks were shaded red. The descriptions of Joliet’s “redlined” neighborhoods are not subtle, declaring the “colored section” near the downtown as a “detrimental influence.” The HOLC map essentially codified the exclusion of home sales to citizens of specific racial and ethnic groups, which has continued to have a deleterious effect on Black citizens inasmuch as homeownership is a critical factor in amassing generational wealth, and it has continued to have adverse ramifications for the specific neighborhoods in which Black citizens resided.

Following the end of World War II, the second wave of the Great Migration commenced. Black residents began moving into the Forest Park, Fairmont, Manningdale, and Preston Heights neighborhoods in addition to the South End and East Side neighborhoods. Beginning in the mid-1950s and running through the mid-1970s, the Joliet area saw several large-scale public and privately assisted housing developments constructed. Over time, the majority of these developments have become distressed as the result of poor design, overcrowding, disinvestment, and perpetuation of a racially and economically segregated living environments. As the Black resident population increased, confrontations over employment, business practices, education, and particularly housing boiled over, culminating in a visit to Joliet from one of the most iconic figures in history, Martin Luther King Junior, on June 4, 1965.

The construction of Interstate 80 in the 1960s had negative implications for the South End neighborhood and south side. The alignment of Interstate 80, which was completed in 1968, went through Joliet's ethnically and racially diverse working-class neighborhoods on the south side. The displacement of residents and the disruptions to the street network have had long-term economic implications for these areas of Joliet. The Illinois Department of Transportation is now in the process of rebuilding and realigning Interstate 80 through this area of Joliet.

This project also comes at a critical time as Joliet approaches the Route 66 Centennial in 2026. While Route 66, which went through Joliet's South End and south side, is now associated with a romantic view of free-spirited cross-country travel and vacation culture, period resources such as the Negro Motorist Green Book have challenged that rosy image and underscore that Black Americans did not partake in this freedom of travel, despite Illinois being a northern state. As the City and its partners move closer to the Centennial in 2026, it is imperative that we have a greater understanding of the complex history of Route 66.

3 SCOPE OF WORK

The selected professional consultant team will have the necessary qualifications to prepare a historic context study that documents the history and culture of the Joliet area Black community. The context study will include traditional historical research as well as input from the Joliet area African American community. Specific components of the project and tasks necessary to complete it are listed below. However, it should be emphasized that this list is not comprehensive, complete or final, but is representative of the scope of work the consultant team shall be qualified to complete. The consultant, in the preparation of a qualifications, should describe any additional services he or she believes are beneficial in meeting the project goals and objectives.

3.1 INTERNAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT & PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT

The selected consultant team will work directly with the City of Joliet's Historic Preservation Commission staff liaison who will be responsible for overall project grant management.

The selected consultant team will also work with a local steering committee comprised of influential and knowledgeable members of the community who can guide the preparation of the project. The awarded consultant shall work with the steering committee to identify key stakeholders, review the community

engagement strategy, establish a communication protocol, and identify and request key data needs. The steering committee will also review and comment on all drafts and final deliverables; guide preparations for a minimum of two public education events; and promote this project in the community. *This steering committee has been formed.*

3.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The selected consultant shall work with the steering committee and City staff to prepare a community engagement strategy that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion. This shall include the number and type of outreach activities, the intended outcomes, and the approximate timing of each activity. There shall be at least two public presentations on topics derived from the findings of this project. The City is seeking a creative strategy that may involve components not detailed below. This strategy should suggest historic research and public outreach tasks that other community partners could lead in an effort to maximize the engagement as well as the budget for this project. Such engagement will likely require coordination and/or consultation with staff and the steering committee for proper sequencing and non-duplication of effort in the successful completion of the historic context statement.

3.2.1 Webpage Assistance

The awarded consultant shall help maintain a project webpage that is available through the City's website: www.joliet.gov/blackhistory. The awarded consultant will be given a limited access account to the City's website, allowing the consultant to upload and make edits with the help of the city website coordinator.

3.2.2 Public Presentations

The Consultant will support the public engagement / public education aspects of the project by delivering a minimum of two public presentations on topics derived from the findings of this context study. The City of Joliet staff will be responsible for identifying and scheduling the venue for these presentations. City staff and the steering committee will be responsible for marketing and promoting these events.

3.2.3 Oral History Guidance

The City anticipates engaging students enrolled at the University of St. Francis and Lewis University as well as volunteers to assist with the collection of oral histories. The selected consultant shall assist with confirming desired deliverables from this effort as well as provide quality assurance review of historic resource documents prepared by University students and volunteers to ensure a high standard of project deliverables.

3.3 CONDUCT GENERAL AND FOCUSED HISTORIC RESEARCH AND PREPARE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

The consultant shall undertake general and focused historic research leading to the preparation of a historic context statement. The final context statement document will include:

- a comprehensive history of the Joliet area's African American community from the first residents through the late 20th century;
- associated places connected to this history (some places or areas may no longer be extant but will need to be included);
- defined historical themes connected with the African American experience in Joliet;

- a framework for evaluating historic integrity, acknowledging that properties possessing significant social-cultural associations might not meet standard architectural design integrity registration criteria;
- recommendations for future historic resource surveys, nominations, policies and placemaking projects as well as preliminary recommendations for how the information generated from the context study can be disseminated to actualize project goals and objectives;
- an Excel-based database of places (extant and non-extant); and
- a comprehensive bibliography.

Anticipated historic themes will likely include African American settlement patterns over time, occupational characteristics, development of civic and social institutions, development of the community's business and professional sectors, social and economic status of the African American community and the dynamics of structural racism present in Joliet over time, and the fight for civil rights, equality, and full inclusion.

3.4 LIMITED INTENSIVE-LEVEL HISTORIC RESOURCE DOCUMENTATION

Limited intensive-level historic resource documentation shall be conducted to the extent feasible (potentially with University history students and/or other volunteer assistance). Findings shall be incorporated into the final context statement report. Deliverables may include survey forms or Excel-based database.

3.5 PROJECT TIMELINE

The City desires to start this project in late June 2024 and have the project substantially completed by November 2025 to allow time to coordinate and plan additional Route 66 Centennial activities in 2026. All project deliverables shall be submitted by December 31, 2025. Section 5.8 of this RFQ provides further details of the estimated timeline.

3.6 DELIVERABLES

- Bi-monthly project updates submitted to the City's Staff Liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Draft and Final Digital copies of any Excel databases prepared for this project.
- Draft and Final Digital copies of any Survey Forms prepared for this project.
- Draft and Final Digital copies of the Joliet Area African American Historic Context Study report, including a comprehensive bibliography.
- Digital copies of all presentation materials (PowerPoint, handouts, etc.)
- All digital submittals should be high-resolution files. Transmittal may be performed electronically or by a USB drive.
- High-resolution digital copies of all photographs. Pictures should be submitted in a jpg format.

4 RFQ SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

To achieve a uniform review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparability, it is required that the qualifications be organized in the manner specified below. Qualifications shall not exceed thirty (30) pages in length (including letter of transmittal, resumes, and title page(s)). Information in excess of those allowed will not be evaluated or scored. One page shall be interpreted as one side of a single-lined, typed, 8 ½" x 11" piece of paper. To be considered for selection, submit the following information in keeping with the following format. Please submit two (2) 8 ½" x 11" paper copies and one (1) copy on USB drive of the qualifications.

4.1 LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Reference the RFQ, the name of your team, address, telephone number(s), and name of contact person with their email address.

4.2 STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

4.2.1 Summary of Qualifications

A summary of your qualifications as well as a brief description of the firm(s), location of office(s), years in business and areas of expertise, and staff size.

4.2.2 Project Understanding

A brief narrative stating your understanding of the project.

4.2.3 Key Staff

Key staff including a description of their abilities, qualifications, and experience. Attach resumes of key staff to be assigned to this project. Include a proposed project management structure and organizational chart. Include the professionals and sub-consultants the team anticipates utilizing, delineate their roles, and include information regarding their qualifications and experience. The selected consultant team will need to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards.

4.3 PREVIOUS PROJECT EXPERIENCE

4.3.1 Summary of Project Experience

Consultant team shall identify and provide summaries of previous project experience, including the status or outcome of these projects. Provide references and contact information for a minimum of three (3) relevant projects of similar scope and scale which demonstrate pertinent experience.

4.3.2 Examples of Previous Work

Consultant team must provide a minimum of two (2) and up to five (5) DIGITAL examples of previous work. Teams may attach a page listing other projects and project locations within the qualifications but only two to five examples should be included on the USB. The pages for the examples that are submitted will not be counted towards the total for the 30-page RFQ response submittal. If the City wishes to see other examples, those should be provided to the City upon request.

4.4 PROJECT SPECIFIC APPROACH AND TIMELINE

Consultant team shall describe a project approach of work based on its understanding of the project. The team shall expand on the project scope if appropriate to accomplish the overall objective of the project and provide suggestions that will enhance the results or usefulness of the project. The City has an expected budget of \$75,000 for this project; however, the City will entertain cost alternatives during the process to finalize the overall project scope of work with the preferred consultant team. The project budget may be enhanced by additional funding for the right project or by utilizing internal or local staff resources for some of the work production. The consultant team must also present a project timeline and proposed milestones.

5 RFQ SUBMITTAL, EVALUATION PROCESS, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

5.1 SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

Qualifications must be received by the City of Joliet by **4:00 PM, CST, on Friday, May 17, 2024**.

Acknowledgement of any possible addenda must be included with the Qualifications submittal packet.

Respondents have two submittal options:

Option 1: Qualifications submitted via email in PDF format to Jayne Bernhard at jbernhard@joliet.gov using the subject line: Joliet Area African American Historic Context Study – RFQ # 2817-0424

Option 2: Qualifications submitted via USB drive by mail to Jayne Bernhard at the following address:

City of Joliet
Attn: Joliet Area African American Historic Context Study – RFQ # 2817-0424
Jayne Bernhard, Historic Preservation Commission Liaison
150 W. Jefferson Street
Joliet, IL 60432

The City of Joliet will not accept qualifications received after the RFQ submittal deadline. Neither the Historic Preservation Commission Liaison nor the City of Joliet shall be held responsible for the non-opening of qualifications not adequately addressed and identified in accordance with these instructions, except as otherwise provided by law.

The City of Joliet reserves the right to reject any and all qualifications and has the right in its sole discretion to accept the qualifications it considers the most favorable to the interests of the City of Joliet. In the event that all qualifications have been rejected, the City further reserves the right to seek out new qualifications when such procedure is deemed reasonable and in the best interest of the City of Joliet. The City of Joliet also reserves the right to terminate the selection process or project at any time without prior notice.

The City of Joliet shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the applicant, including, but not limited to, expenses associated with the preparation of the submission, any meeting required during the selection

process, presentations or interviews, preparation of the cost statement, or final contract negotiations. All responses to the Request for Qualifications will become the property of the City of Joliet.

5.2 ADDENDA

Questions will be answered in the form of an addendum and emailed to all vendors registered on the CONSULTING RSS feed on the City of Joliet website at:

<https://www.joliet.gov/government/departments/finance/purchasing/bids-proposals/consulting>

Therefore, although you can download these documents at the City of Joliet website, please be sure to register with the RSS to have the addendums emailed to you. Changes and clarifications posted in the form of addenda to the RFQ may occur prior to the RFQ submission deadline. These will be posted at:

<https://www.joliet.gov/bids>. Those submitting qualifications have sole responsibility to seek, obtain and properly consider Addendums. Acknowledgement that the Addendums have been reviewed shall be indicated on the Submitter Information Page.

5.3 WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

A respondent may withdraw their submission before the final submission date by sending a written notification of its withdrawal, signed by an agent authorized to represent the agency. In addition, the respondent may submit a new qualifications submission before the final submission date or submit a sealed written modification or addition to the qualifications submission before the final submission date. Offered changes in any other manner, oral or written, will not be considered. Final qualifications submissions cannot be changed or withdrawn after the time designated for receipt, except for modifications requested by the City of Joliet after the date of receipt and following oral presentations.

5.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

The content of all qualifications will be kept confidential until the finalists are publicly announced. At that time, only the selected finalist qualifications will be open for review. After the award of the contract, all qualifications will become public information.

5.5 SUBMITTAL COMMUNICATIONS

All questions and communications related to this RFQ must be in writing and directed to Jayne Bernhard, staff liaison to the Joliet Historic Preservation Commission by email at jbernhard@joliet.gov.

5.6 EVALUATION PROCESS

The City of Joliet will evaluate all qualifications and rank them on the basis of the scoring and weighting system outlined below. The highest ranked qualifications will be invited for an interview, which will account for 15% of the overall selection process. The final selection will be based on the total of all evaluators' scores. This project receives federal funds and requires compliance with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

5.7 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The criteria to consider during evaluations, and the associated point values, are as follows.

- Quality of qualification submittal (5%)
- Qualifications of consultant team and experience of proposed staff (35%)
- Examples of previous work and references (20%)
- Project understanding (10%)
- Approach to scope of work and realistic, measurable deliverables (15%)
- Interview (15%)

5.8 ESTIMATED RFQ AND PROJECT TIMELINE

- Issue RFQ: week of April 8th, 2024
- Questions due in writing: Friday May 10, 2024 by 2:00 PM, CST
- Submittal Deadline: Friday May 17, 2024, by 4:00 PM, CST
- Interviews with 3-5 selected consultant teams: Week of June 3rd and June 10, 2024
- City Council Approval of recommended consultant team: June 18 or July 2, 2024
- Project Initiation: June-July 2024 (approx.)
- Project Draft Deliverables submitted November 14, 2025
- Project Deliverables submitted: December 31, 2025
- Project payments and reporting completion (by the City of Joliet): January 30, 2026

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
SUBMITTER INFORMATION PAGE**

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS PAGE WITH YOUR EMAIL OR MAIL SUBMITTAL FOR THE RFQ

The executing of this Submitter Information Page certifies understanding and compliance with the total Request for Qualifications submittal.

Submitter (Person, Organization, Business or Company): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Daytime Telephone #: _____ After Hour Telephone #: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Daytime Telephone #: _____ After Hour Telephone #: _____

Acknowledgement that all Addendum have been reviewed: Y /N _____

Signature of Submitter or Authorized Agent: _____

Date: _____

Attachment A – Research Resources

“Movements: the Great Migration and Organizing for Civil Rights in Joliet 1910-1975”

- The Joliet Area Historical Museum completed this 6-panel “banner” exhibit in 2023, which can travel to various locations.

“Reclaiming the Narrative: Restoring Black Voices to the Story of Joliet.”

- The Lewis University History Center partnered with Second Baptist Church, Mount Zion Baptist Church, The National Hook-up of Black Women Joliet Inc., and Warren-Sharpe Community Center with this project which ran from January 2022 through May 2023
<https://www.lewisu.edu/HistoryCenter/index.htm>
- Through this project, a core collection of documents, including organizational histories, papers, and images that represent the organizations’ histories was compiled and made publicly available through CARLI Digital Collections.
https://collections.carli.illinois.edu/digital/collection/lew_jolbh/search

Redlining Maps

Home Owner’s Loan Corporation Joliet Map, 1937. Map and subarea descriptions are available here:
<https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining>

Brown Book Directory

1958-59 Brown Book Directory, which was published by Joliet’s only Black newspaper The Negro Voice (later known as the Black Voice and then simply The Voice).

“History of Fairmont,” 2012, Sara Ellis

Relevant City Sponsored Plans (Existing hyperlinks included)

[Joliet Downtown Plan 2015](#)

[Route 53 Corridor Plan 2014](#)

[Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice 2014](#)

[Old Joliet Prison Redevelopment TAP Report 2012](#)

[Quality of Life Plan: for the 4th and 5th Council Districts 2007](#)

[Near West Side Neighborhood Plan 2007](#)

[Joliet City Center Development Plan 1990](#)

[Southwest Neighborhood Plan 1980](#)

[Northeast Neighborhood Plan 1979](#)

[Southside Neighborhood Plan 1978](#)

[Southeast Neighborhood Plan 1978](#)

[South Chicago Street Revitalization Plan 1978](#)

[Cathedral Area Plan 1975](#)

[Master Plan 1959](#)

[City Plan of Joliet 1921](#)