



Request for Qualifications

Land Use Attorney

October 3rd, 2025

THE PROJECT:

Evansville Riverfront – Schematic Design
Evansville, IN

THE CLIENT:

Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (E-REP) and
Evansville Regional Development Corporation (E-RDC)
318 Main St., #400
Evansville, IN 47708

THE ARCHITECT:

Sasaki
110 Chauncy Street
Suite 200
Boston, MA 02111

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1.0 - PROJECT INFORMATION

1.1 - Project Schedule

- RFQ Release Date: October 3, 2025
- Pre-proposal Meeting (Virtual), Non Mandatory October 7, 2025
- Questions due by **5:00 PM CST**: October 9, 2025
- Questions Returned by **5:00 PM CST**: October 10, 2025
- Responses due by **5:00 PM CST**: October 17, 2025
- Interviews of selected respondents: TBD, 2025
- Selected respondent announced by: TBD, 2025
- Estimated Notice-To-Proceed (NTP) Date: Early November, 2025

Pre-proposal meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 7th at 3:00 PM CST via **Zoom** at the following link:

Join the meeting from your computer or smartphone:

<https://sasaki.zoom.us/j/97483313721?pwd=Vc0DSD0iFzMQN5w7QiUbAGzMgs0x1H.1&jst=2>

Password: 229550

Or join by telephone:

+1 720 928 9299 (US Toll)

+1 786 635 1003 (US Toll)

888 475 4499 (US Toll Free)

833 548 0276 (US Toll Free)

Meeting ID: 97483313721

1.2 General Instructions

1. Purpose:

This RFQ invites qualified firms to submit proposals for Land Use Attorney services for the Evansville Riverfront project. This work will advance the schematic design phase from the current program refinement phase and align technical requirements with project objectives as outlined in the ORVSP document. The following information is general in nature; please see Section 3.0 for more detailed information on the RFQ format and requirements.
2. Submission Deadline and Format:
 - Proposals must be submitted no later than the date and time indicated in Section 1.1. Late submissions will not be accepted.
 - Submit one electronic copy in PDF format via email to the RFQ coordinators at Brian Wethington (bwethington@sasaki.com) and Ashley Diekmann (adiekmann@evvregion.com)
 - All proposal components must be combined into a single PDF document.
3. Proposal Requirements:
 - Submissions must address all requested information as outlined in Section 3.2 of this RFQ.
 - The total page count for the proposal must not exceed **10 pages**. Appendices and required forms are not included in the page count.

- Formatting must follow the specifications detailed in Section 3.3.
- 4. Communication Protocol:
 - All questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted via email to the RFQ coordinator by the date and time indicated in Section 1.1.
 - Responses to all questions will be distributed to all registered respondents.
 - Respondents are prohibited from contacting any representatives of E-REP, E-RDC, or Sasaki outside of the designated point of contact regarding this RFQ.

1.3 General Conditions

1. Proposal Submission and Incorporation
 - All proposals, information, and responses from respondents must be submitted in writing and may be incorporated into the final agreement between Sasaki, the Regional Partners (see Section 1.5), and the successful respondent.
 - Respondents must clearly explain any conditions or assumptions in their response.
2. Clarifications
 - Respondents have a duty to seek clarification on any item in this RFQ that is unclear. All questions regarding the RFQ must be submitted via email to the RFQ Administrator by the specified deadline.
3. Obligations and Costs
 - The Regional Partners and Sasaki incur no obligation or liability by issuing this RFQ.
 - Any costs incurred by respondents in preparing and submitting a proposal or participating in selection activities are the sole responsibility of the respondent and are not reimbursable.
4. Evaluation and Notification
 - The Regional Partners will use their best efforts to notify respondents as soon as possible regarding whether their submission has been selected for further consideration.
5. Confidentiality
 - Unless required by applicable laws or regulations, proposals and the information contained therein will be treated as confidential and only shared for evaluation purposes.
6. Contract Negotiations
 - The successful respondent will be expected to prepare and execute a contract with terms mutually agreed upon with the Regional Partners and Sasaki, unless otherwise noted.
7. Scope and Fee Negotiation:
 - The selected consultant will be expected to negotiate the final scope of work and fee with terms mutually agreed upon with the Regional Partners and Sasaki, ensuring alignment with project goals and budget constraints.
 - The Regional Partners and Sasaki reserve the right to determine whether the negotiated scope and fee align with the project's requirements and priorities.
 - Participation in negotiations does not obligate the Regional Partners or Sasaki to finalize or enter into a contract for services. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Regional Partners reserve the right to terminate negotiations and proceed with another respondent or alternative approach.
8. Amendments and Cancellation

- The Regional Partners and Sasaki reserve the right to amend this RFQ at any time prior to contract award and will notify all respondents of any changes.
 - The Regional Partners and Sasaki also reserve the right to cancel the RFQ at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.
9. Cost and Pricing Requirements
- Final scope and fee proposals will be negotiated pending selection of the most qualified applicant(s). The scope and fee proposal must include a single quoted cost that covers all expenses, including items like travel, proposed subcontractors, and printing.
 - Hourly rates or fees for additional services beyond the scope of work should be quoted separately.
10. Meetings and Communications
- All meetings related to the respondent selection process will be conducted via Zoom unless otherwise noted.

1.4 - Project Background:



Diagram 1 - Conceptual Design Plan, September 2025

The ***Ohio River Vision and Strategic Plan*** (ORVSP) focuses on revitalizing the Evansville Region's riverfront and nearby communities, leveraging the Ohio River as a core asset to enhance economic vitality, quality of life, and regional identity. The plan emphasizes reconnecting communities with the river through new parks, public spaces, and trail systems, as well as infrastructure improvements to support and develop a more extensive multimodal connectivity throughout the region. The ORVSP document recommendations include transforming key downtown areas in Evansville, Mt. Vernon, and Newburgh, along with integrating ecological resilience, and addressing community priorities through extensive stakeholder engagement and innovative urban design strategies.

This project - the Evansville Riverfront Schematic Design - will focus on advancing the vision established in the ORVSP by refining key components of the riverfront's transformation. This phase will continue to progress from the current, ongoing programmatic refinement and into the 100% Schematic Design for Great Bend Park, the reconfiguration of Riverside Drive, the extension of the Walnut Street green infrastructure, the development of additional sports courts, and the integration of adjacent development opportunities. The overarching goal is to create a cohesive urban-riverfront district that prioritizes multimodal access, ecological resilience, and dynamic public spaces.

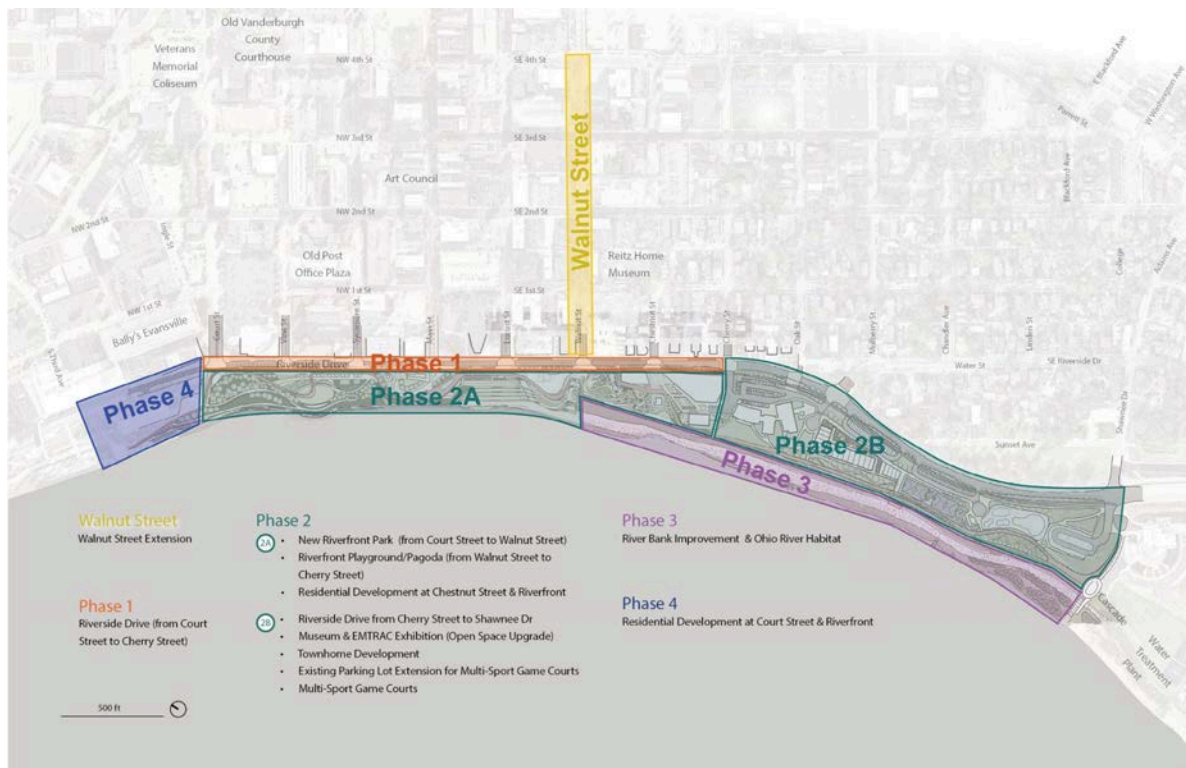


Diagram 2 - Conceptual Phasing Plan - Updated, March 2025 - from ORVSP Summary Report, May 2024

This phase will focus on refining the Ohio River Vision Strategic Plan (ORVSP) schematic design for Great Bend Park (Phase 2A), incorporating existing flood protection into functional and aesthetic design elements. Enhancements to pedestrian and cyclist connectivity will be prioritized along Riverside Drive (Primarily in Phase 1, between Court Street and Cherry Street, with additional considerations in Phases 2B and 4) through lane reduction and reconfiguration while also improving the motorist experience by increasing parking availability, optimizing signal timing, and enhancing the Downtown grid. The overarching goal is to create a more balanced and efficient transportation network. Additionally, the four-block project on Walnut Drive will extend the recently completed streetscape interventions from SE 4th St. and complete the bicycle connection to Riverside Drive.

The schematic design process will also explore the development potential of three key parcels (integrated as part of phases 2A, 2B, and 4) while enhancing cultural and recreational opportunities throughout Phase 2. When completed, the project will create vibrant mixed-use spaces that seamlessly integrate with one another along the

Evansville Riverfront. By blending innovative urban design, stakeholder collaboration, and strategic land use planning, the schematic design phase will establish a framework that strengthens the connection between Downtown Evansville and the Ohio River.

1.5 - Regional Partners:

This project will be overseen by the following organizations, to be known as “Regional Partners”:

The **Evansville Regional Economic Partnership (E-REP)** – which serves as the regional and local economic development organization and engages in traditional chamber of commerce efforts. E-REP oversees the Regional Development Plan and manages \$95m received from the State of Indiana’s READI plan for regional development for SWIRDA. More information is at www.evansvilleregion.com.

The **Downtown Evansville Economic Improvement District (EID)**– formed in 2018 as Indiana’s largest business improvement district, the EID provides services and benefits to Downtown Evansville’ central business district funded by an annual assessment on properties that benefit from its services. Additional information is online at www.downtownevansville.com.

The **Evansville Regional Development Corporation (E-RDC)** is a nonprofit property development organization created to accelerate the growth in the Evansville Region as part of a regional population and revenue growth strategy.

The **Southwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (SWIRDA)** brings together a representative from each regional county and is the formal applicant for the READI program. It is a quasi-governmental organization.

Additional community partners, such as the City of Evansville or the Evansville Water and Sewer Utility, including those from adjacent counties and neighborhoods abutting the riverfront, will be involved through a steering committee. A need exists as well to conduct public outreach and hold community sessions to fully understand the riverfront goals and desires of regional residents, visitors, property owners, units of government and other stakeholders

1.6 - Prime Consultant and Additional Subconsultants

Sasaki, serving as the prime consultant for this project, brings a nationally recognized expertise in urban design, landscape architecture, and multidisciplinary planning. Under an existing Master Services Agreement with the Regional Partners, Sasaki will lead the schematic design phase, ensuring integration of the design vision, technical expertise, and stakeholder engagement. Sasaki’s role includes overall project coordination, providing strategic direction, and collaborating closely with all subconsultants to deliver a comprehensive approach to the Evansville Riverfront project.

To help ensure technical rigor, economic feasibility, and comprehensive project execution, the additional following subconsultants are anticipated to support the

design team during the schematic design phase:

Current Sub Consultants:

- Civil Engineering, H/H Modeling - Morley
- Transportation and Traffic - Lochmueller
- Traffic - Gewalt Hamilton
- Environmental Analysis - Meristem
- Geotechnical Engineering - Patriot Engineering
- Surveyor - Morley

September/October 2025:

- Structural Engineering
- Economic Planning and Development
- Marketing and Branding
- Cost Estimation
- Land Use Attorney
- Park Programming and Operations

November/December 2025

- Tree Inventory and Assessment
- Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Engineering (MEP)

2.0 SCHEMATIC DESIGN BASIC SERVICES

2.1 - Overview

The schematic design phase for the Evansville Riverfront project represents a critical step in translating the visionary concepts outlined in the Ohio River Vision and Strategic Plan (ORVSP) into implementable designs.

For this schematic design phase, the Land Use Attorney will provide specialized legal services to establish the foundation for development on parcels currently held as public land within the Evansville Riverfront project area. A critical legal issue is that the original 1819 and 1830 plats dedicated the land between Riverside Drive and the Ohio River as open public space. The 1830 plat specifically states that the strip should “forever be kept open” and that “no permanent building should ever be erected.” This dedication was upheld by the 1940 Court of Appeals of Indiana (City of Evansville v. Evansville Boat Club), which ruled that while the land may be used as a park or roadway, permanent structures or leases for private use cannot occur unless the land is formally vacated through statutory proceedings.

Because these restrictions pose the most significant legal hurdle to creating viable development parcels, the Land Use Attorney’s role is to guide the City and its partners through the processes needed to ensure legal compliance and enable development that aligns with the Ohio River Vision and Strategic Plan.

2.2 - Scope of Services

Task 1: Legal Research and Due Diligence

The consultant will conduct comprehensive legal research to confirm the governing restrictions on riverfront parcels, including title, deed, and dedication reviews. This task establishes the baseline understanding of legal constraints and opportunities.

- Review plats, deeds, and case law governing the riverfront parcels.
- Review applicability of 1819/1830 dedications and 1940 Court of Appeals ruling. Provide a framework for the process to vacate or convert land for uses as shown in schematic design.
- Conduct title/deed review and prepare vesting memos with legal descriptions.
- Identify state/federal statutes affecting dedicated parkland or rights-of-way.

Task 2: Vacation and Land Conversion Strategy

The consultant will identify and manage the statutory pathways to vacate or otherwise clear restrictions on dedicated parcels so they may be redeveloped as indicated on schematic design documentation. This includes drafting and processing required legal instruments and guiding the City through public processes.

- Prepare a legal roadmap for vacating dedicated parcels or rights-of-way.
- Draft ordinances, resolutions, and filings for statutory vacation.
- Guide the City through APC, City Council, and public hearings.
- Coordinate with Levee Authority, USACE, and other agencies on restrictions.

Task 3: Development-Ready Legal Framework

The consultant will create template agreements and legal structures to enable public-private development of the parcels once restrictions are cleared. This framework will ensure alignment with public interests and the broader governance and financing strategies.

- Draft template real estate instruments (e.g., ground leases, development covenants, easements).
- Provide guidance on disposition/transfer agreements.
- Advise on zoning, overlays, or variances required for intended development.

Task 4: Platting & Subdivision of Development Parcels

The consultant will prepare preliminary and final plats, legal descriptions, and dedication statements to establish development-ready parcels. The process will include coordination with APC, City Engineer, and Vanderburgh County for approvals and recording.

- Prepare preliminary and final plats for development parcels.
- Draft legal descriptions, dedication statements, and lot configurations.
- Coordinate signatures, mylars, and recording with Vanderburgh County.
- Shepherd plats through APC, City Engineer, and City Council approvals.

Task 5: Easements & Encumbrances

The consultant will prepare easements and related encumbrances to support utilities, public access, drainage, and flood-control requirements. This task ensures long-term functionality of the riverfront development parcels.

- Draft and record access, utility, drainage, levee/flood-control, and public access easements.
- Prepare easement exhibits and negotiate terms with agencies/utilities.

Task 6: Zoning / Overlay Support

The consultant will advise on zoning or overlay changes needed to implement the project vision. Where necessary, the consultant will prepare and file variance or special exception applications, including supporting documentation.

- Advise on necessary zoning or overlay amendments.
- Prepare variance/special exception applications.
- Support staff reports, notices, and public hearings.

2.3 - Deliverables

1. Parcel Legal Feasibility Report (dedication restrictions, case law, legal options).
2. Vacation & Conversion Roadmap (step-by-step plan).
3. Draft Legal Framework Documents (ordinances, template agreements, covenants).
4. Preliminary and Final Plats with legal descriptions and dedication language (recordable).
5. Easement documents and associated exhibits (recordable).
6. Zoning or variance applications and supporting documentation.

2.4 - Coordination & Integration

The Land Use Attorney will collaborate with:

- Sasaki (Prime Consultant)
- Client team (E-REP and E-RDC)
- City of Evansville (City Legal, Area Plan Commission, City Engineer, City Council)
- Vanderburgh County Recorder and Auditor
- Levee Authority and USACE (as applicable)
- Utility providers and other stakeholders

2.5 - Summary of Required Services

In conclusion, the selected Consultant shall provide legal services to establish the foundation for riverfront parcel development by:

- Address historic restrictions from the 1819/1830 plats and 1940 Court of Appeals ruling.
- Guide statutory vacation and conversion processes.
- Prepare preliminary and final plats and secure subdivision approvals.
- Draft easements and encumbrances to support infrastructure and public access.
- Provide development-ready legal frameworks for disposition and agreements.
- Coordinate with local/state/federal agencies, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.

The outcome will be a legally sound pathway for converting public riverfront land into development-ready parcels, enabling private investment while safeguarding the public interest.

2.6 - Additional Services

Additional services may be required as the project evolves, including judicial actions, title insurance underwriting, or condemnation proceedings. These will only be undertaken if specifically authorized by the client through a separate task order process.

3.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

3.1 – General Requirements

Proposals shall be clear, concise, and not exceed ten (10) pages in total length (excluding cover page, cover letter, section dividers, and resumes). All submissions must be provided electronically as a single PDF file. Page size should be 8.5" x 11"; 11" x 17" fold-out pages may be included but will count as two pages.

3.2 – Proposal Submission Contents

Submissions must be organized and clearly labeled according to the following structure.

- **Project Understanding & Approach, Schedule, and Work Plan**
Provide a summary of the firm's understanding of the Evansville Riverfront project goals, challenges, and legal context. Outline the proposed approach to addressing historic public-dedication restrictions, structuring the vacation/conversion process, preparing plats and easements, and coordinating with public bodies and regulatory agencies. Include commentary on anticipated risks, schedule alignment, and strategies to meet tight project timelines.
- **Key Personnel & Team Structure**
Identify the project manager/lead attorney and key staff, noting their roles, availability, and accessibility to support the project schedule. Provide resumes in an appendix. Highlight relevant experience in Indiana municipal law, statutory vacations, platting and subdivision, zoning/variance processes, and representation before public bodies.
- **Relevant Experience & Qualifications**
Briefly describe the firm's size, locations, and areas of expertise. Highlight relevant Indiana project experience, including statutory vacations, platting/subdivision approvals, easements, zoning/variance proceedings, and redevelopment agreements. Emphasize prior work with the City of Evansville, Vanderburgh County, APC, or similar Indiana jurisdictions. Provide three references for projects of similar scope.
- **Evansville & Indiana Locality**
Identify any staff located in or with significant experience working in the Evansville region or Indiana. Highlight knowledge of local procedures, agencies, and regulatory processes.
- **Letter of Transmittal (1 page, not scored or counted)**
A one-page introductory letter summarizing qualifications and affirming commitment to the project schedule and goals. Must be signed by an authorized representative.

3.3 – Evaluation Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee composed of representatives from E-REP, E-RDC, and Sasaki. Evaluation will focus on demonstrated expertise in Indiana land

use and real estate law, statutory vacations, platting/subdivision, easements, and redevelopment agreements for complex public-private projects.

Evaluation Criteria (Total 50 pts):

- Project Understanding & Approach, Schedule, and Work Plan - 20 pts
- Key Personnel & Team Structure - 15 pts
- Relevant Experience & Qualifications - 10 pts
- Evansville & Indiana Locality - 5 pts

The selected firm must either be an active member of E-REP, or join as a member, prior to contracting.

3.4 – Shortlisting and Interviews

Based on proposal evaluations, shortlisted firms may be invited to interviews. Discussions will focus on methodology, collaboration, and capacity to address project challenges.

3.5 – Final Selection

The selection committee will rank respondents and negotiate scope, fee, and terms with the selected Land Use Attorney.

4.0 - SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

To ensure subconsultants can provide comprehensive proposals aligned with the project's needs, the following information is included as supplemental information:

1. Project Background and Vision:

The following documents are available for download from the [E-REP Website](https://www.evansvilleregion.com/river-vision-plan-reveal/) (<https://www.evansvilleregion.com/river-vision-plan-reveal/>):

- Ohio River Vision and Strategic Plan (ORVSP):
Comprehensive planning document outlining the vision, goals, and recommendations for revitalizing the Evansville Riverfront and surrounding region.
- Evansville Riverfront Master Plan Summary:
Highlights of the master plan concepts for Great Bend Park, Riverside Drive reconfiguration, and adjacent mixed-use development opportunities.

1. Project Schedule:

The scope for this work is to progress the master plan design from its current 10% Schematic Design through 100% Schematic Design. All work must be completed by the end of April, 2026. Once completed, the schematic design package for the entire project will be utilized to further define specific areas of the project that will progress into an implementation phase under a separate contract.

2. Draft Contractual Terms and Conditions:

A draft of the key terms and conditions governing the subconsultant's engagement will be shared as part of the interview process for shortlisted firms. This will cover payment terms, confidentiality requirements, dispute resolution procedures, and any other critical contractual obligations.