



Request for Qualifications

Marketing & Branding Consultant

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 Marketing & Branding 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.

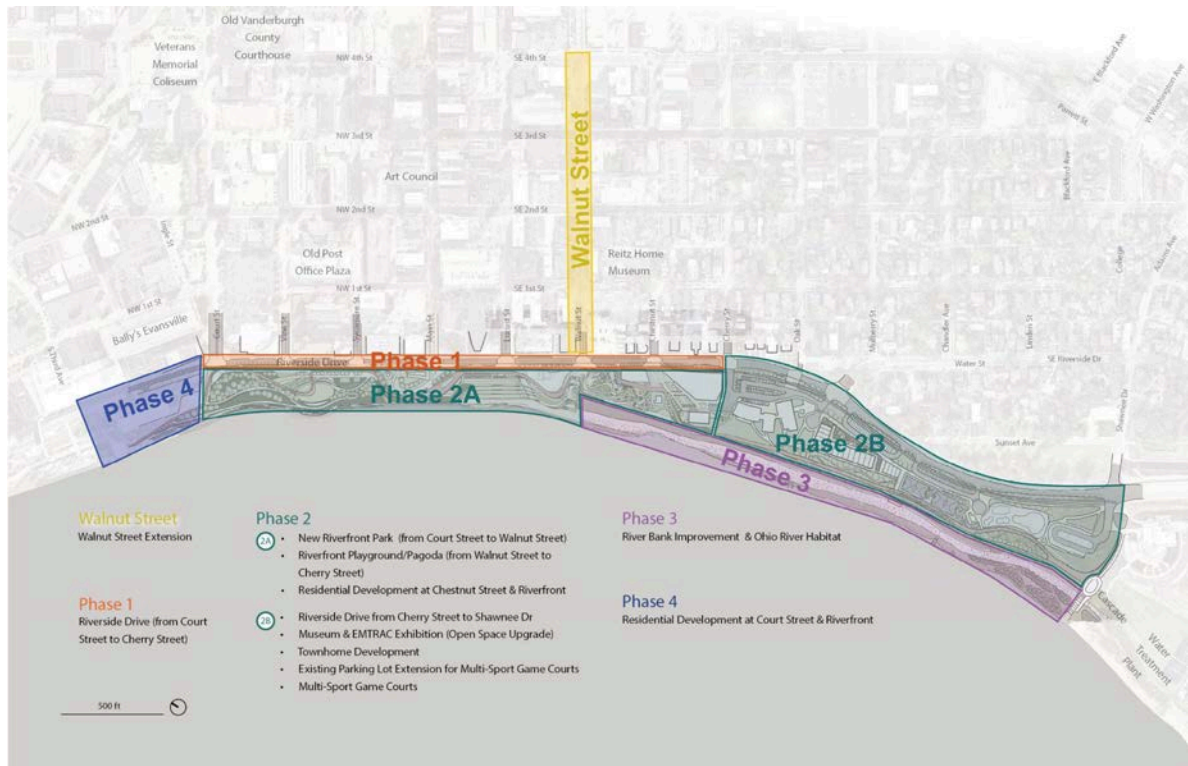


Diagram 2 - Conceptual Phasing Plan - Updated, March 2025 - from ORVSP Summary Report, May 2024

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 Marketing & Branding Consultant will play a key role in positioning the Evansville Riverfront as a transformative civic and economic project. Building on the Ohio Riverfront Vision and Strategic Plan (ORVSP), the consultant will create a unified identity and storytelling framework that resonates with residents, funders, developers, and regional/national audiences.

This work will establish the project's identity, articulate its values, and develop storytelling tools that can be used to engage residents, attract funders, and position the riverfront as a transformative regional destination. The scope is intended to move beyond graphic design alone, providing a fully integrated approach to naming, messaging, visual identity, and launch strategy.

Building upon the region's existing "E is Everyone" identity. Just as "E is Everyone" unites Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Posey Counties and the three municipalities under a shared message of inclusivity, the Riverfront brand must connect to that narrative while establishing its own distinct identity as the visible and vibrant front door of the region. The riverfront should be branded not only as a park but as a regional destination, an economic catalyst, and the civic heart of the River Vision.

2.2 - Scope of Services

Task 1: Discovery and Regional Alignment

The consultant will conduct a discovery process that reviews past efforts, including the Ohio River Vision and Strategic Plan (ORVSP), “E is Everyone,” the current riverfront schematic design, and other initiatives aimed at engaging stakeholders across the three counties and three municipalities, ensuring the riverfront brand resonates regionally. This task will ground the branding effort in local values while extending its reach to broader audiences.

- Review the “E is Everyone” campaign and identify opportunities for alignment.
- Conduct stakeholder interviews across counties and municipalities.
- Summarize key themes, values, and aspirations to inform brand development.

Task 2: Naming and Brand Identity Development

The consultant will propose a name and visual identity system that harmonizes with the inclusive tone of “E is Everyone” while establishing the riverfront as a standalone destination. The identity should be designed for versatility across digital, print, and physical applications.

- Develop naming concepts tied to regional identity.
- Create logo, color palette, typography, and graphic elements.
- Produce brand guidelines for consistent use across platforms.

Task 3. Messaging Framework and Narrative

The consultant will prepare a messaging framework that situates the riverfront within the broader regional story of inclusivity, vitality, and pride. This framework should be adaptable for multiple audiences and contexts.

- Define a core narrative that ties the riverfront to “E is Everyone.”
- Establish message pillars (economic, cultural, ecological, social).
- Draft adaptable talking points for residents, funders, developers, and visitors.

Task 4. Communications and Collateral Design

The consultant will design communications materials and environmental graphics that bring the brand to life in both physical and digital contexts. Materials should connect fundraising and engagement efforts with the on-the-ground visitor experience of the park. These materials should reflect regional pride while also appealing to external audiences. The consultant will work with the Sasaki team to:

- Create presentation decks, fact sheets, and brochure templates
- Develop fundraising pitch collateral and digital/social media templates.
- Design environmental graphics and signage concepts integrated with Sasaki’s park design, including wayfinding, interpretive elements, and donor recognition opportunities.
- Provide adaptable design templates for temporary installations, event branding, and seasonal activation.

Task 5. Launch and Rollout Strategy

The consultant will prepare a launch strategy that introduces the riverfront brand to the public and reinforces its connection to “E is Everyone.” The rollout should be phased to align with project milestones and regional events. The consultant should work with the client and the Sasaki team to:

- Recommend public launch events and activations.
- Develop a social and digital media strategy.
- Provide a communications timeline that aligns with the project phases.

2.3 - Deliverables

The Marketing and Branding Consultant will provide the following deliverables:

1. A brand identity toolkit (logo, guidelines, templates)
2. A messaging and narrative guide
3. Communications and fundraising collateral
4. Environmental graphic concepts integrated into the park design

Together, these deliverables will ensure that the Evansville Riverfront brand extends the regional identity into the built environment, positioning the riverfront as a lasting symbol of inclusivity, pride, and shared investment.

2.4 - Coordination & Integration

The Marketing and Branding Consultant will collaborate with:

- Sasaki (Prime Consultant)
- Client Group (E-REP, E-RDC) & City Department (City of Evansville Communications staff)
- Regional and local partners and stakeholders, like:
 - Branding/Tourism groups (E-REP, Explore Evansville, etc.)
 - Community/Cultural Partners
 - Fundraising/Philanthropic Entities
 - Event/Programming operations (Downtown EID, festivals, etc.)

2.5 - Summary of Required Services

In conclusion, the selected consultant shall be responsible for creating a comprehensive branding and communications strategy for the Evansville Riverfront that:

- Aligns with the region’s identity by building on the existing “E is Everyone” brand and engaging stakeholders across the three counties and three municipalities.
- Develops a distinctive name and visual identity system for the riverfront, including logo, color palette, typography, and brand guidelines.
- Creates a messaging framework and narrative that positions the riverfront as a regional destination and civic heart, adaptable for residents, funders, developers, and visitors.
- Designs communications materials for fundraising, marketing, and public engagement, including brochures, presentations, digital templates, and social media assets.

- Integrates environmental graphics and signage concepts into Sasaki's park design, ensuring the brand is experienced in the physical public realm through wayfinding, interpretive elements, and donor recognition.
- Prepares a launch and rollout strategy with events, media outreach, and donor engagement that aligns with project milestones and reinforces the connection to "E is Everyone."

2.6 - Additional Services

The complexity and dynamic nature of the Evansville Riverfront project may necessitate additional services beyond the scope outlined in this RFQ. These services could arise from evolving project needs, unforeseen site conditions, or additional regulatory requirements identified during the schematic design phase.

To address these potential needs, the project team will establish a structured process for developing and approving future task orders. This process will ensure that additional services are clearly defined, scoped, and budgeted in alignment with the project's objectives and regulatory obligations. Each task order will be issued through transparent communication and mutual agreement between the client, Sasaki, and the selected consultants. Task orders will include specific deliverables, timelines, and cost estimates, providing a flexible yet accountable framework for accommodating project evolution without compromising schedule or budget integrity. This approach underscores the project's commitment to adaptability and collaboration, ensuring all emerging needs are effectively managed to support the vision of a resilient and vibrant riverfront. The following items are anticipated potential additional services.

1. Wayfinding & Signage Package
 - Develop detailed design, placement, and specifications for permanent wayfinding and environmental graphics, with optional oversight of fabrication and installation.
2. Social Media Playbook & Content Strategy

Create a social media voice, posting guidelines, and calendar templates.
Provide sample posts and branded assets for launch campaigns and ongoing engagement.
3. Photography & Videography Packages
 - Commission a library of professional photos and videos of the riverfront, renderings, and events for future communications.
 - Develop short promotional videos highlighting the brand launch and milestones.

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, 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 with the following content:

- **Project Understanding & Creative Approach, Schedule, and Work Plan**
Provide a summary of the firm's understanding of the Evansville Riverfront project goals, audiences, and communications objectives. Outline the proposed approach to discovery, naming, brand identity, messaging, collateral, environmental graphics integration, and launch strategy. Describe how the brand will connect to "E is Everyone" while establishing a distinctive identity for the riverfront. Include anticipated risks and strategies for meeting schedule milestones.
- **Key Personnel & Team Structure**
Identify the project manager and key team members, noting their roles, responsibilities, and availability to support the project timeline. Provide resumes in an appendix. Highlight relevant expertise in brand strategy, naming, visual identity, messaging/content, and environmental graphics/wayfinding integration.
- **Relevant Experience & Qualifications**
Provide a concise overview of the firm's qualifications and relevant portfolio. Highlight experience in district-scale place branding, naming, identity systems, messaging frameworks, and environmental graphics/wayfinding. Include examples of projects for riverfronts, parks, or mixed-use civic destinations. Provide three references for projects of similar scope.
- **Evansville & Indiana Locality**
Identify any staff located in or with significant experience working in Evansville or Indiana. Highlight familiarity with local processes, partners, and audiences.
- **Letter of Transmittal**
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 branding and communications for complex, multidisciplinary civic projects, including naming, identity, messaging, collateral design, and integration with environmental graphics/wayfinding.

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 Marketing & Branding consultant.

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.