

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
James Blackstone Memorial Library Facilities Building Condition Assessment

The historic James Blackstone Memorial Library (Library), located at 758 Main Street, Branford, Connecticut, is seeking qualified professionals to provide a Facilities Building Condition Assessment (Study) to determine the condition of the Library, and propose specific maintenance projects needed to ensure the upkeep of historical portions of the library, renovated areas, and underlying infrastructure systems.

The firm must demonstrate they have the capability and capacity to work closely with Library personnel and the Building and Grounds committee, as well as with Branford Town (Town) departments to provide the required services as outlined in this RFQ document. The specific deliverable is a comprehensive Study detailing required maintenance, capital projects, and possible remediation and abatement projects, along with cost estimates to address any other needs which are identified through the Study. High priority issues for the study include water infiltration into the building, air quality, and any possible hazardous materials abatement needs.

QUALIFICATIONS SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

RFQ proposals are to be submitted in a sealed envelope showing the name and address of the proposers, and be clearly marked "SEALED RFQ for James Blackstone Memorial Library Facilities Building Condition Assessment." The Library will accept one print copy and a digital copy on a thumb drive. Submissions must be received by Katy McNicol, Library Director, at James Blackstone Memorial Library, located at 758 Main Street, Branford, Connecticut no later than **July 30, 2025 at 4 PM**. Submissions received after that time and date will not be accepted.

Questions regarding this RFQ should be requested in writing to Katy McNicol, Library Director, at kmcnicol@blackstonelibrary.org by July 18, 2025. Any explanation regarding the meaning or interpretation of this RFQ must be requested in writing, with sufficient allowance of time for receipt of reply before the time submissions are due. Any such explanations or interpretations shall be made in the form of addenda to the documents and posted for all prospective respondents, who shall be responsible for obtaining such addenda and who shall submit all addenda with their submission. Oral explanations and interpretations made prior to the submission shall not be binding.

The James Blackstone Memorial Library reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals; to waive any informalities; to negotiate and award a contract that it determines best meets their needs and best serves the interests of the Library and the Branford community.

KEY EVENT DATES

Advertisement of RFQ	July 9, 2025	Submission of Qualifications	July 30
Deadline for Questions	July 18	Awarded (Not Definite)	August 18
		Commencement of Work	September 2, 2025

There will not be a public opening of this bid.

MBE's, WBE's and SBE's ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

THE LIBRARY

The James Blackstone Memorial Library opened its doors in 1896. It is an architectural icon that sits on an extraordinary park-like property in the center of Branford. Today, Blackstone remains a community hub. It addresses the needs and wants of Branford residents for social activities that are attached to learning opportunities by providing a supportive gathering place where people feel connected to, and welcomed in, our community. Both the Library and the Town of Branford are committed to navigating the maintenance challenges associated with preserving the architectural beauty of this historic building while continuing to evolve its physical space for modernity. *Blackstone is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Employer.*

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Library staff, with the support of members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee (Committee) and assistance from the Branford Town engineering department, work together to develop a list of Building and Grounds projects that consists of on-going maintenance items and more major maintenance needs and projects that could require significant capital funds. Potential projects that have been identified that fall under the latter category include addressing water infiltration issues, new HVAC system, and possible hazardous materials abatement issues.

The Library is seeking a comprehensive Facilities Building Condition Assessment Study to help the Town and Library develop financial plans for required short- and long-term maintenance, capital projects, and remediation and abatement projects for the Library. High-priority issues already identified are listed below and shall be included and highlighted within the Study:

- Water infiltration
 - Water infiltration is causing trim and walls to deteriorate in several locations. Flat roofs, gutter systems, penetrations, and exterior masonry walls shall be investigated for possible means of infiltration.
 - The Library's Dome roof is approaching the end of its expected lifespan. At this time, there are no apparent leaks from the Dome roof. However, an assessment of the Dome shall be provided when evaluating water infiltration leaks from other roofs.
 - Water/moisture content in the lower level is causing deterioration under the carpet on the ground level. This problem was first identified in the Fall of 2023, five years after the 2018 renovation of this space. A thorough assessment is needed to identify the cause, and recommendations for moisture mitigation.
- Abatement
 - Identify all potential sources of hazardous materials requiring abatement.
 - Areas of focus include floor tiles, lighting ballasts, and paint.
- HVAC Mechanicals
 - All mechanical equipment shall be assessed for maintenance needs and/or useful life. This critical infrastructure equipment also needs to be assessed as part of air quality assessment, and to determine timeline for replacement. Energy efficiencies and life-cycle costs shall be considered in recommendations.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The scope of the consulting services shall include the following: a thorough evaluation and inspection by the firm's staff including architects, engineers and consultants to determine the physical condition of the building, infrastructure systems, air quality, potential hazards, etc.

- **Facilities Evaluation.** Evaluate the current physical condition and need for improvement. The following shall be included:
 - Meet with Library and Town representatives to discuss existing concerns and priorities.
 - Collect existing data from staff and any other available sources.
 - Evaluate the existing condition of building systems including structural (masonry, iron materials, roofing, subfloors), electrical, mechanical, HVAC, etc. Identify any areas that need short- and long-term attention.
 - Prioritize recommendations and develop capital budgets for each.
 - Produce draft reports including a multi-year capital plan and building systems rating report.
 - Present draft reports to Library and Town, Building and Grounds Committee, and Board of Trustees.
- **Facilities Condition Assessment.** The report shall identify ongoing maintenance policies, and procedures which could be improved or implemented to avoid or reduce current or future capital costs. It shall also present a comprehensive study of the physical condition of the Library building and cost of repairs and code compliance along with prioritization of all needed repairs. Any needed replacement of large cost items such as roofs over the next 15-year period shall be included. The plan shall include an executive summary, architectural renderings, plans, photographs and other supportive documentation. The building condition assessment shall include the following for each asset:
 - Facility structure/system.
 - Written condition analysis for each structure/system evaluated.
 - Scope of recommendations.
 - Resources required to accomplish the work.
 - Timeline for recommendations (i.e., capital plan).
 - Schedule for each project.
 - Cost of each project.
- **Building Systems Rating Report.** The following systems and sub-systems shall be included:
 - Site- pavement, sidewalks, grounds, entries, drainage, site lighting.
 - Roofing and roof drainage systems.
 - Exterior- doors, walls, windows, fire escapes, masonry, woodwork, stairs, railings.
 - Interior- flooring, tile work, stairs, storage areas, book repository, doors/hardware, casework/millwork, ceilings, lighting.
 - HVAC- boilers, furnaces, air conditioning systems, exhaust systems, controls, energy management systems
 - Plumbing- water distribution, drainage, fixtures.
 - Electrical – distribution, technical/IT infrastructure, intercom, telephone, elevators, generators.
 - Fire, Security- alarms, detection, fire protection.

SELECTION CRITERIA/QUALIFICATIONS

The Library and Branford Town will base its evaluation of responses to this RFQ based on the selection criteria outlined below, which are not necessarily in order of importance. Firms deemed as satisfying the selection criteria will be notified via email and will be given sufficient notice of a date and time for an interview. A short list of up to four (4) Consultants will be asked to submit fee proposals. The Library and Town is not bound to select the Consultant who proposes the lowest fees and costs. The Library and Town reserves the right to negotiate fees with the selected Consultant.

Selection Criteria:

- The Consultant's understanding of the work as evidenced by the quality of the response submitted.
- The background and experience of the Consultant in providing the services requested and past successful history of assignments.
- The demonstrated effectiveness of the Consultant's proposed service delivery system to ensure quality service and timely completion of services in an efficient manner.
- The background, education, qualifications and relevant experience of key personnel and any sub-consultants or subcontractors to be assigned to this contract, especially those of the day-to-day project manager and other staff that would work with the Library and Town on a regular basis.
- The appropriate licenses in the State of Connecticut, held by Consultant's staff and sub-consultants and sub-contractors.
- References attesting to the quality of similar services performed.
- Any other factor or criterion that the Library and Town, in their sole discretion, deems or may deem relevant or pertinent for such an evaluation.
- Ability to provide an insurance certificate listing the James Blackstone Memorial Library and the Town of Branford as an additional insured.

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Selection of a firm/consultant for this project will be based primarily on the qualifications of the firm. A short list of qualified firms satisfying the Selection Criteria will be asked to attend an interview with Library personnel and the Building and Grounds committee to learn more about their proposal and firm.

In order for a qualifications package to be responsive to this RFQ, package must include all the requested information below, organized with the following sections:

1. Letter of Transmittal: Signed by a principal of the Firm, not to exceed two pages, describing the Firm, team, qualifications, and why it is the best Firm for this project.
2. Firm Profile: General Information about the prime Firm.
3. Project Team: Provide detailed resumés of the individual team members directly assigned to this project, describing their role, responsibility, and experience with similar projects in Connecticut. Resumes should be included from both the prime Firm and all outside consultants to be utilized by the prime Firm. Include an overall project organization chart indicating the lines of responsibilities.
4. Understanding of the Project: Describe your understanding and your process in performing the required tasks to complete this project, and any critical issues that could affect a successful outcome.
5. Relevant Experience and References: Describe recent relevant experience including experience related to the following:

- Submit a list of all library-related projects your firm currently has in progress or has previously worked on, including the status of each. Describe your experience with historic buildings. If you do not have previous library experience, list any comparable projects *with historic state buildings*.
 - For your last five library (and/or relevant comparable historic state) projects, provide the following:
 - Name of project
 - Client contact
 - Owner's total initial budget
 - Scheduled completion date
 - Actual completion date (if project is in progress this may not be known)
6. Project Timeline: Provide an estimated project timeline required to complete this study. The conceptual study schedule should indicate key milestones and time frames in which the Firm expects to review all aspects of the facility infrastructure, develop design solutions, develop cost estimates, and provide the final deliverable to be presented to the Library.
 7. Litigation Statement: Firm shall disclose if it has defaulted on a project similar to this project in the last five (5) years or if it is currently involved in any pending litigation or arbitration (resolved or unresolved).

Submissions that do not comply with all the above requirements may be deemed unresponsive and may result in the submission being incomplete.

FEE PROPOSALS

Fee proposals will be requested of the shortlist of finalists developed from the evaluation of the submitted qualification packages. Fee proposals are not required as part of the qualification packages from this portion of the solicitation process.

Tax Exemptions: The James Blackstone Memorial Library is exempt from Federal Excise taxes and Connecticut Sales and Use taxes. The selected firm shall avail itself of these exemptions.

SELECTION PROCESS

An initial evaluation of the submitted qualifications packages will be made by the Committee and a short list of up to four (4) finalists will be established. Evaluations will be based upon the following basic criteria (in no particular order of priority): completion of projects of similar size and complexity as this project in Connecticut, the Firm's organizational chart for management and execution of project including resumes/experience of key personnel and consultants, performance on past library/historic building projects, the Firm's approach to performing the various elements of work involved in this project, and references provided. Firms selected for an interview should allow approximately forty-five minutes for the oral presentation and a question and answer session.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND AWARD

The Committee will recommend contract and award of the project to the selected Firm based on submitted qualifications, fee proposals (from the established short list), and interview results the Committee feels is the most responsible, responsive, and qualified to perform the project. The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or any portion thereof, to waive technicalities, and will award the project to the firm as deemed to best serve the public interest. The Library is not obligated to select the lowest Bidder. After negotiations are completed, the Committee shall seek approval from the Library to prepare a final contract for the project based on criteria established in this solicitation, provided the final proposal fulfills the project goals, all financial and technical risks are removed, and all documents submitted meet legal requirements. Should all criteria be met and all approvals are secured, the Library will enter into a contract with the selected firm.

FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Selected Consultant agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment in the performance of this work with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment due to race, sex, age, religion, national origin, or other condition proscribed by State or Federal law.

STANDARD FORM OF CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

The Library intends to enter into a contract with the successful firm(s) to perform the tasks as outlined in the Scope of Services. The contract will include and incorporate the provisions of this Request for Qualifications and the successful consultant's proposal.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/ADDENDA

Additional information is available to provide prospective respondents with some helpful context for this project:

- ❖ More information about the library can be found at www.blackstonelibrary.org.
- ❖ The James Blackstone Memorial Library Architectural Tour is posted at: <https://www.blackstonelibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Architectural-Tour-2020new.pdf>
- ❖ 2025 Building and Grounds Projects can be found at <https://www.blackstonelibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/2025-JBML-Building-and-Grounds-Projects.pdf>
- ❖ 2018 Building plans can be found at <https://www.blackstonelibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/16.108-James-Blackstone-DD-Drawings-4.21.17.pdf>
- ❖ The library's strategic plan can be viewed at: <https://www.blackstonelibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/PUBLIC-JBML-Strategic-Framework-10-8-final.pdf>