

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Architectural / Engineering / Accessibility Design Services
Arkansas Municipal Auditorium – Historic Accessibility Improvements

Issued By: City of Texarkana, Arkansas

Project: Arkansas Municipal Auditorium Accessibility Planning and Design

Property Address: 216 Walnut Street, Texarkana, Arkansas 71854

Historic Status: Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

Proposal Due Date: October 14, 2026

1. INVITATION TO PROPOSE

The City of Texarkana, Arkansas is soliciting proposals from qualified and experienced licensed architects, engineers, accessibility consultants, or qualified multidisciplinary design teams to provide professional planning and design services for accessibility improvements at the historic Arkansas Municipal Auditorium, located at 216 Walnut Street, Texarkana, Arkansas 71854.

The selected consultant will assist the City in developing a historically sensitive accessibility improvement plan that addresses critical barriers to public access while preserving the architectural character and historic integrity of the Arkansas Municipal Auditorium.

The resulting planning and design documents will be used to establish reliable project costs, obtain future construction bids, identify funding needs, and support subsequent applications for Historic Preservation Restoration Grant (HPRG) funding and private donations.

The City seeks a consultant with demonstrated experience in historic properties, accessibility improvements, rehabilitation planning, and application of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Arkansas Municipal Auditorium is a historic public venue located at 216 Walnut Street in Texarkana, Arkansas. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and represents an important part of Texarkana's cultural and architectural heritage.

The auditorium has recently experienced renewed public activity through events such as the Elvis & Friends Concert and the Sandwiching in History Tour.

As public use of the auditorium increases, significant accessibility barriers have become increasingly apparent. Limited accessibility currently restricts the ability of residents, visitors, performers, staff, and other members of the public with mobility limitations to fully utilize the facility.

Certified Local Government grant funds from the State of Arkansas are available for this feasibility study.

The City of Texarkana recognizes that accessibility improvements must be carefully planned so that the building can better serve the entire community without compromising

its historic character, significant architectural features, historic materials, or important interior and exterior spaces.

The City therefore seeks professional assistance to evaluate existing conditions and develop feasible, historically appropriate accessibility solutions.

3. PROJECT PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this project is to develop a comprehensive, historically sensitive design plan for improving accessibility at the Arkansas Municipal Auditorium.

The planning effort shall:

- Identify existing accessibility barriers and deficiencies.
- Evaluate feasible solutions for providing vertical accessibility from the ground level to the auditorium space.
- Evaluate options for remodeling, reconfiguring, or adding accessible restroom facilities on the second floor.
- Identify potential impacts of proposed accessibility improvements on historic materials, features, spaces, and character.
- Develop conceptual and preliminary design solutions that balance accessibility, applicable codes, functionality, cost, and historic preservation.
- Establish sufficient design information to obtain reliable construction cost estimates and future contractor bids.
- Develop preliminary construction cost information that can be used to establish future funding targets.
- Identify improvements that may be appropriately phased as funding becomes available.
- Provide documentation that can support future HPRG grant applications and private fundraising efforts.
- Coordinate the proposed work with applicable Arkansas Historic Preservation Program requirements.

4. PROJECT MILESTONES

- The City will be under contract for consultant's services by October 20, 2026
- The consultant will begin work no later than December 1, 2026.
- A complete first draft of the study will be submitted to AHPP for review no later than April 16, 2027.
- A complete final draft of all deliverables will be submitted to AHPP for approval no later than May 21, 2027. When all deliverables are accepted as complete and correct by AHPP, the Contractor may invoice the City of Texarkana, Arkansas for the full cost of the project.

5. PRIMARY ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

The City has identified two primary areas requiring professional evaluation and design:

A. Vertical Accessibility

The consultant shall evaluate and develop historically sensitive options for providing a handicapped accessible route from the ground level to the auditorium space.

The evaluation should consider, as appropriate:

- Elevator options.
- Limited-use/limited-application elevator options.
- Vertical platform lift options.
- Ramp options where physically feasible.
- Modifications to existing circulation.
- New accessible routes.
- Potential locations for vertical-access equipment.
- Structural requirements.
- Mechanical and electrical requirements.
- Impacts to significant historic spaces and materials.

The consultant shall evaluate alternatives based upon accessibility, historic-preservation impact, constructability, cost, maintenance, code requirements, and long-term functionality.

B. Second-Floor Accessible Restrooms

The consultant shall evaluate the feasibility of remodeling existing second-floor restroom facilities and/or adding handicapped accessible restroom facilities.

The evaluation shall consider:

- Existing restroom configuration.
- Accessible clearances and turning areas.
- Accessible fixtures and accessories.
- Door and circulation requirements.
- Plumbing requirements.
- Mechanical requirements.
- Electrical requirements.
- Structural considerations.
- Potential impacts to historic materials and spaces.
- Feasible locations for improvements.
- Preliminary construction costs.
- Where multiple approaches are feasible, the consultant shall provide alternatives and identify the advantages, disadvantages, historic-preservation implications, and approximate costs of each.

6. HISTORIC PRESERVATION REQUIREMENTS

All proposed improvements shall be developed with preservation of the Arkansas Municipal Auditorium's historic character as a fundamental project requirement.

The consultant shall utilize the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as a guiding framework for evaluating and developing proposed improvements.

The consultant shall seek to:

- Retain and preserve historic character.
- Avoid unnecessary removal or alteration of historic materials and features.
- Preserve distinctive materials, finishes, features, spaces, and craftsmanship.

- Repair historic features rather than replace them when feasible.
- Use compatible materials and design where replacement is necessary.
- Minimize the visual and physical impact of new accessibility improvements.
- Ensure that new work is compatible with the historic building.
- Consider the reversibility of interventions where practical.
- Avoid unnecessary impacts to significant historic spaces and architectural features.
- The consultant shall identify historic features potentially affected by each proposed accessibility solution and recommend strategies for avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating adverse impacts.
- The consultant shall coordinate with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) as appropriate and identify anticipated preservation review, documentation, or approvals associated with the proposed work.

7. EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The selected consultant shall conduct an on-site assessment of the Arkansas Municipal Auditorium and all areas affected by the proposed accessibility improvements.

The assessment shall include, as applicable:

- Existing entrances and routes of travel.
- Ground-level access.
- Vertical circulation.
- Existing stairs and changes in elevation.
- Auditorium access.
- Existing restrooms.
- Second-floor conditions.
- Doorways and corridors.
- Significant historic architectural features and materials.
- Structural conditions affecting proposed improvements.
- Building systems affecting accessibility.
- Other conditions relevant to the project.
- The consultant shall document existing conditions through appropriate measurements, photographs, drawings, and written observations.

8. DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

The consultant shall develop alternatives where appropriate rather than assuming a single solution at the outset.

For major accessibility components, alternatives should include:

- Description of the proposed solution.
- Preliminary plans or diagrams.
- Historic-preservation considerations.
- Accessibility and code considerations.
- Structural considerations.
- Mechanical/electrical/plumbing considerations.
- Constructability.
- Advantages and disadvantages.

- Preliminary construction cost.
- Long-term maintenance considerations.
- Consultant's recommended option.
- The City expects the consultant to identify the alternative that provides the best overall balance between accessibility, historic preservation, functionality, cost, and feasibility.

9. PRELIMINARY DESIGN DOCUMENTS

The consultant shall prepare planning and design documents sufficient to communicate the recommended improvements and establish a reliable basis for future construction pricing.

Documents may include:

- Existing-condition plans.
- Conceptual floor plans.
- Preliminary accessibility plans.
- Vertical-access concepts.
- Preliminary restroom plans.
- Building sections or elevations where appropriate.
- Accessibility route diagrams.
- Preliminary details.
- Photographic documentation.
- Historic-preservation impact diagrams.
- Preliminary specifications or outline specifications.
- Opinion of probable construction cost.
- Phasing recommendations.
- The level of documentation shall be sufficient to allow the City to obtain meaningful construction estimates and advance the project toward future construction documents and competitive bidding.

10. COST ESTIMATE AND FUNDING

The consultant shall prepare a preliminary opinion of probable construction cost for the recommended improvements.

Costs should be separated, where practical, into logical components, including:

- Vertical accessibility improvements.
- Elevator/lift equipment and installation.
- Structural modifications.
- Second-floor restroom improvements.
- Plumbing.
- Mechanical systems.
- Electrical systems.
- Architectural finishes.
- Historic-material repair.
- Accessibility-related improvements.
- General construction.

- Other identified project components.

Where alternatives are presented, separate preliminary cost estimates shall be provided.

The cost information will be used by the City to establish realistic funding targets and pursue future HPRG grants, private donations, and other funding opportunities.

11. PHASING

The consultant shall evaluate whether the proposed improvements can be implemented in logical phases if full project funding is not immediately available.

If appropriate, the consultant shall identify:

- Recommended priority improvements.
- Subsequent phases.
- Estimated cost of each phase.
- Dependencies between phases.
- Preservation considerations associated with phasing.

12. FINAL DELIVERABLES

At the conclusion of the project, the consultant shall provide the City with a final planning document containing, as applicable:

- Existing-condition documentation.
- Accessibility assessment.
- Historic-preservation assessment.
- Recommended accessibility solution.
- Alternatives considered.
- Conceptual/preliminary plans.
- Vertical accessibility plans.
- Second-floor restroom plans.
- Preliminary specifications.
- Preliminary construction cost estimate.
- Phasing recommendations.
- Recommended implementation strategy.
- Identification of additional investigations needed before construction.
- Documentation useful for future HPRG grant applications.
- Information useful for private fundraising.
- Electronic copies of all final documents.

13. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

The selected consultant or consulting team shall demonstrate:

- Appropriate professional licensure in Arkansas for services proposed.
- Experience working with historic buildings.
- Experience with accessibility improvements in existing buildings.
- Experience with historic rehabilitation planning.
- Experience preparing construction cost estimates.
- Knowledge of applicable accessibility requirements and building codes.

- Experience coordinating with historic-preservation agencies or commissions.
- Experience with public-sector and/or grant-funded projects.
- Ability to coordinate architectural, structural, accessibility, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing considerations as required.
- Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged where the project requires architectural, structural, engineering, or specialized accessibility expertise.
- The contractor responsible for survey and documentation services funded under this agreement shall have at least one (1) qualified individual who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards below in History and/or Architectural History and/or, when applicable, Archaeology or Historic Landscape Architecture.

The Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualification Standards

The Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards were defined and officially adopted in 1983 (48 FR 44716, September 29) by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and the Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualification Standards were expanded and revised in 1997 (62 FR 33708, June 20) in response to amendments in the National Historic Preservation Act, but were not formally adopted for federal regulatory purposes. See <https://www.nps.gov/articles/sec-standards-prof-quals.htm> for more information.

The 1997 revisions update the professional qualification standards written in 1983 and add definitions for seven other historic preservation disciplines that appear in the National Historic Preservation Act.

The 1997 version also provides guidance on how to measure qualifying credentials that was lacking in the 1983 Standards. In the 1997 version, this information is provided in a standardized format that provides examples of the academic degrees, work and academic products, and professional activities that would qualify a professional in a particular discipline.

Because the 1997 Standards give the clearest description of the current understanding of what a qualified professional is in each of the disciplines described in the National Historic Preservation Act, AHPP uses them as guidance on judging the qualifications of contractors or consultants working on projects funded by AHPP's CLG grant agreements. It is important to note that these are not intended to be requirements for ALL consultants or contractors working on a project, lead as well as entry-level. However, each project must contain a person in a lead, responsible project role with the requisite expertise.

14. PROPOSAL CONTENT

Proposals shall include:

A. Letter of Interest

- A brief statement describing the firm's interest in the project and understanding of the City's objectives.

B. Qualifications

- Description of the consultant's qualifications and relevant experience.

C. Project Team

- Names, roles, qualifications, licenses, and experience of key personnel.

D. Comparable Projects

- Examples of relevant historic-preservation, accessibility, public-building, and grant-funded projects.

E. Project Approach

- Description of the proposed methodology for assessment, alternatives, design development, historic-preservation review, cost estimating, and final documentation.

F. Schedule

- Anticipated schedule from notice to proceed through completion.

G. References

- At least three professional references for comparable projects.

H. Fee Proposal

- A detailed fee proposal identifying costs for:
 - Existing-condition assessment.
 - Accessibility assessment.
 - Conceptual design.
 - Design alternatives.
 - Cost estimating.
 - Meetings and coordination.
 - Final documentation.
 - Reimbursable expenses.
 - Optional services.

15. SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight
Historic-preservation experience	25%
Accessibility/existing-building experience	20%
Qualifications of project team	15%
Understanding and approach	15%
Public/grant-funded project experience	10%
Comparable projects and references	5%
Schedule	5%
Fee proposal	5%
Total	100%

The City reserves the right to request clarification, conduct interviews, negotiate with the highest-ranked proposer, reject any or all proposals, and waive minor informalities as permitted by applicable procurement requirements.

16. ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

Proposals Due: October 14, 2026
Proposal Evaluation: October 15, 2026
Consultant Selection: October 16, 2026
Contract Execution: October 20, 2026
Notice to Proceed: November 2, 2026
Conceptual Design/Alternatives: April 16, 2027
Final Planning Package: May 21, 2027

17. PROJECT GOAL

The goal of this project is to allow the Arkansas Municipal Auditorium to serve a broader segment of the community while protecting the historic character that makes the facility an important cultural resource for Texarkana.

The City seeks a practical and preservation-sensitive solution that will:

- Improve public accessibility.
- Provide a functional accessible route to the auditorium.
- Address second-floor restroom accessibility.
- Preserve significant historic features and materials.
- Establish reliable construction cost information.
- Provide a clear roadmap for future implementation.
- Support future HPRG and private funding requests.
- Allow the auditorium to remain an active and inclusive community venue.

The City recognizes that accessibility and historic preservation can be successfully integrated through thoughtful planning, careful design, and appropriate treatment of historic materials and spaces.

ALL PROPOSALS SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 14, 2026 BY MAIL, EMAIL OR BY HAND TO:

CITY OF TEXARKANA, ARKANSAS
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