



Establishing New York's First State-Owned Veterans Cemetery

RFI # 2456

This RFI document is posted on the following websites:

New York State Office of General Services website:

<https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/bid-opportunities>

New York State Contract Reporter website: <https://www.nyscr.ny.gov>

New York State Division of Veterans' Services website: www.veterans.ny.gov

Responses to this RFI will be posted on the following website:

New York State Division of Veterans' Services website: www.veterans.ny.gov

Date of Issue: February 18, 2021

Response Submission Deadline: March 18, 2021, 2:00 P.M. (Eastern Time)

Submission and inquiries shall be made by e-mail to the following address:

Joel.Evans@veterans.ny.gov and copy sent to Paige.Corning@ogs.ny.gov

Please include "RFI # 2456 - Respondent's Name" in the subject line of your email.

This is a request for information to inform a study for the selection and establishment of the first New York State-Owned Veterans Cemetery.

Local Government Request for Information
(RFI) # 2456

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1. Introduction

The Division of Veterans Services (DVS) is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to obtain information from local governments who are interested in having New York State's first State Veterans Cemetery (Cemetery) be located within their political subdivision. Pursuant to Subdivision 2 of Section 365 of the Executive Law, DVS will utilize the responses received to develop a study that will be analyzed by a site selection committee to select a site for the Cemetery and application will be made to the federal government for funding. Upon the approval of the application for funding, DVS shall commence the process of construction and establishment of the Cemetery.

While New York State will own the Cemetery in fee simple absolute, the State seeks to engage in partnership with a local government who can provide the State with property and facilities that best address the specifications discussed below. The State looks forward to engaging in a business relationship with this entity to establish and sustain this dignified final resting place for New Yorkers who have defended our State and Nation with honor.

ONLY local governments who submit a response to this RFI will be considered eligible for consideration in establishing the first State-owned Veterans Cemetery.

2. Purpose and Objective

To identify potential site locations for establishing and sustaining New York State's first State-owned Veterans Cemetery, providing dignified interment of Veterans of the United States Military and their spouses as a final resting place that properly honors their service to our State and Nation.

Veterans and their families throughout New York State have long expressed their desire for a State-owned Veterans Cemetery that would serve as a final resting place for Veterans and their spouses. The National Cemetery Administration of the United States highlights New York State as a priority location for establishing and operating a State-owned Veterans Cemetery. The COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately brought this issue front and center, with Veterans and their spouses passing away at higher rates due to this deadly virus, underscoring the need for immediate action to accomplish this objective.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo paved the way to realizing this goal through his Veterans Day 2019 announcement committing to the establishment of New York's first State-owned Veterans Cemetery. We are now able to progress with the selection of the best available site for establishing this hallowed ground.

In order to accomplish this purpose, the DVS shall review and evaluate the RFI responses considering the following criteria:

- (i) The size of the land available;
- (ii) The number of gravesites that could be established upon this property;
- (iii) The number of interments that could occur annually upon this property;
- (iv) The types of interments that could occur upon this property (e.g., whether the site would be open for the interment of urns as well as caskets);
- (v) Transportation accessibility to the cemetery by Veterans, their families, and members of the public;
- (vi) The cost to New York State for acquiring this land, if any;
- (vii) The cost to New York State for constructing a cemetery upon this property;
- (viii) The cost to New York State for operating a cemetery upon this property, including but not limited to all staffing costs;
- (ix) The scalability of a cemetery upon this site for future growth and expansion;
- (x) The realistic potential for funding for a cemetery upon this site from federal, State, local, and private sector sources;
- (xi) The projected annual cost of maintenance for a cemetery upon this site;
- (xii) The population of Veterans and family members of Veterans who would be best served by this site, including but not limited to data about the average population age within a 75-mile radius of the site;
- (xiii) The mortality rate of the Veteran population for the area;
- (xiv) The current use and projected future use of any lands, public or private, surrounding the site;
- (xv) The topography of the land on which the cemetery would sit, including but not limited to geographic survey data of the proposed cemetery site;

- (xvi) The proximity of this site to existing cemeteries including but not limited to national Veterans cemeteries, county Veterans cemeteries, cemeteries that have plots devoted to Veterans, not-for-profit cemeteries and any other burial ground devoted to Veterans and any other type of burial grounds devoted to the interment of human remains that is of public record;
- (xvii) The ability of this site to conform to the operating requirements established and enforced by the National Cemetery Administration of the United States;
- (xviii) The realistic timeline from the date when the State acquires the land to the date when a functioning State Veterans Cemetery can open on the site, in compliance with all National Cemetery Administration requirements and all New York State requirements governing cemetery operations.

3. Pertinent Dates

Milestone	Date and Time
RFI Release Date	February 18, 2021
Respondent Questions Submitted to DVS and OGS	February 26, 2021 by 2:00 PM (Eastern)
DVS Issues Responses to Questions (Estimated)	March 5, 2021
RFI Response Due Date	March 18, 2021 by 2:00 PM (Eastern)

4. Inquiries

To ensure that Respondents fully understand the scope of this request and that responses are received in the proper format as outlined within this RFI, OGS and DVS will receive questions from Respondents. Please submit questions via email to Joel.Evans@veterans.ny.gov and copy to Paige.Corning@ogs.ny.gov.

All questions should cite the page, section, and paragraph number, where applicable. Please submit questions as early as possible following receipt of the RFI. The final deadline for submission of any questions/clarifications regarding this RFI is listed in Section 4 – Pertinent Dates. Questions received after the deadline may not be answered. DVS will post an addendum with all Questions and Responses on the OGS and DVS website on or about the date listed in Section 4 – Pertinent Dates.

RFI Responses must be received on or before 2:00 PM on the date indicated in Section 4 – Pertinent Dates via e-mail sent to Joel.Evans@veterans.ny.gov with a copy to Paige.Corning@ogs.ny.gov. Please include “RFI # 2456 - Respondent’s Name” in the subject line of your email. Respondents assume all risks for timely, properly submitted deliveries.

5. Submission of Response Forms

To facilitate the review of the responses, please provide the information using the RFI Response and Information Form (Attachment 1, detailed below).

- **Attachment 1 - RFI Response and Information Form**
Responses can only be made within the fillable cells. We would appreciate your responses being concise.

Respondents to provide DVS and OGS their business information.

- **Section 1.1 Respondent Information**
- **Section 1.2 Respondent Information — Specific to Solicitation**
- **Section 1.3 Respondent Information — Contracts with other Governmental Entities**

Respondents must respond to all questions within Attachment 1. Please do not leave blanks. Please **include cost estimates** in this response where asked to do so. While this is not a bid, cost information is pertinent to the evaluation and assessment of each potential site.

Please rename the PDF document titled “*Attachment 1*” with the following naming convention: “RFI # 2456 <Insert **Respondent’s** Name>.docx” and send your response electronically to Joel.Evans@veterans.ny.gov and copy to Paige.Corning@ogs.ny.gov **no later than March 18, 2021, 2:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time)**.

- The State will not be liable for any costs of work performed in the preparation and production of any RFI response. All responses to the RFI shall become the property of the State of New York.
- Respondents are requested to respond to all questions. This RFI is issued as a means for collecting information that will be compiled into a report of investigation and study conclusions. A response does not bind or obligate the Respondents or New York State to any agreement of provision or procurement of services referenced.
- Since this RFI is designed as a tool to collect information from local governments and any resulting agreement will be an intergovernmental agreement, it does not fall under the requirements of State Finance Law §§139-j and 139-k (the Procurement Lobbying Law) and there is no restricted period. However, DVS and OGS asks that Respondents direct questions and responses in writing to the e-mail addresses listed on the cover page.
- Confidential, trade secret or proprietary materials as defined by the laws of the State of New York must be clearly marked and identified as such upon submission by the local government. Marking the response as “confidential” or “proprietary” on its face or in the document header or footer shall not be considered by the State to be sufficient without specific justification as to why disclosure of particular information in the response would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the local government. Respondents intending to seek an exemption from disclosure of these materials under the Freedom of Information Law must request the exemption in writing, setting forth the reasons for the claimed exemption. The State’s receipt/acceptance of the claimed materials does not constitute a determination on the exemption request, which determination will be made in accordance with statutory procedures. Properly identified information that has been designated confidential, trade secret, or proprietary by the Respondent will not be disclosed except as may be required by the Freedom of Information Law or other applicable State and federal laws.
- The Respondent covenants that it presently has no interest, and shall not have any interest, direct or indirect, which would conflict in any manner with the performance of services required under any agreement resulting from this RFI. The Respondent agrees to notify the DVS promptly of any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest which could affect its performance of under any agreement resulting from this RFI and agrees to take action to resolve the conflict.
- DVS and its representatives shall have access to, and shall be permitted to conduct any due diligence with respect to any proposed site, upon receipt of prior permission for the same from the Respondent and shall use commercially reasonable efforts to avoid any unreasonable intrusion upon the site.
- The State reserves the right to have follow-up communications with individual Respondents who respond to the RFI. The State reserves the right to request RFI Respondents to present supplemental information clarifying their responses, either in writing or in formal presentation.
- The State reserves the right to reject all responses to this RFI.
- The State reserves the right to disqualify any Respondent whose conduct and/or submission fails to conform to the requirements of this RFI.

**** Attachment 1: RFI Respondent Response & Information Form follows on subsequent pages ****

Attachment 1

RFI # 2456 - Respondent Response & Information Form

Please complete all questions herein. Do not leave blanks.

Section 1.1: Respondent Information

Respondent Name:

Respondent Address:

New York State Vendor ID Number (if none, write “none”):

Name of Respondent’s Primary Point of Contact:

Address of Respondent’s Primary Point of Contact:

Telephone Number of Respondent’s Primary Point of Contact:

E-mail Address of Respondent’s Primary Point of Contact:

Section 1.2: Respondent Information — Specific to Solicitation

Size of the land available for purchase (in acres):

Number of gravesites that could be established upon this property:

Number of interments that could occur annually upon this property:

Describe the types of interments that could occur upon this property (e.g., whether the site would be open for the interment of urns as well as caskets):

Describe the transportation accessibility to the cemetery by Veterans, their families, and members of the public:

State the estimated cost to New York State for acquiring this land, if any, and describe the rationale that was used to provide this cost estimate:

State the estimated cost to New York State for constructing a cemetery upon this property and describe the rationale that was used to provide this cost estimate:

State the estimated annual cost to New York State for operating a cemetery upon this property, including but not limited to all maintenance costs and staffing costs, and describe the rationale that was used to provide the cost estimate:

Describe the scalability of a cemetery upon this site for future growth and expansion:

Describe the realistic potential for funding for a cemetery upon this site from federal, State, local, and private sector sources:

Discuss the population of Veterans and family members of Veterans who would be best served by this site, including but not limited to data about the average population age within a 75-mile radius of the site:

Describe the mortality rate of the Veteran population for the area:

Describe the current use and projected future use of any lands, public or private, surrounding the site:

Describe the topography of the land on which the cemetery would sit, including but not limited to geographic survey data of the proposed cemetery site:

Describe the proximity of this site to any existing cemeteries including but not limited to national Veterans cemeteries, county Veterans cemeteries, cemeteries that have plots devoted to Veterans, not-for-profit cemeteries and any other burial ground devoted to Veterans and any other type of burial grounds devoted to the interment of human remains that is of public record :

Discuss the ability of this site to conform to the operating requirements established and enforced by the National Cemetery Administration of the United States:

The realistic timeline from the date when the State acquires the land to the date when a functioning State Veterans Cemetery can open on the site, in compliance with all National Cemetery Administration requirements and all New York State requirements governing cemetery operations:

In addition to answering all of the questions stated above, a complete RFI submission responding to this query must include the following items:

- (1) A detailed map of the site where the Respondent proposes to locate the State's first State-Owned Veterans Cemetery, including all potential transportation routes to, from, and within the proposed site;*
- (2) A detailed historical description of the site, including all prior known uses of the land; and*
- (3) The most recent Environmental Impact Assessment conducted for the proposed site, together with any information that has changed in the period since that Environmental Impact Assessment took place.*

Section 1. 3: Respondent Information — Other Comments

Please provide any additional information deemed necessary for the State to know about the proposed site. This is not a section to reiterate information already provided. The only information that should be provided here is information that is not listed or described in any of the responses provided above. Please confine responses to a maximum of 2,000 words. Any response beyond this word limit will not be considered.