

Si View Metropolitan Park District

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Farmland lease at Tollgate Farm Park
North Bend, King County

DEADLINE: *Wednesday, December 13th, 2023*

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Si View Metropolitan Park District (Si View) is committed to supporting the establishment and expansion of agriculture businesses operated by new and beginning farmers. Si View's Farmland Leasing Program works to make farmland and infrastructure accessible to groups who face barriers to accessing land.

The program aligns with the goals of Si View's Program Plan, King County's Local Food Initiative, Strategic Climate Action Plan, and Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan, and ensures that farmland under the jurisdiction of Si View is managed for both long-term production and natural resource conservation.

By providing a pathway to farmland for beginning farmers, the Farmland Leasing Program yields healthy food for the community and the economic benefits of new, thriving businesses in King County's local food system.

Si View manages our site with the following **objectives**:

- Support new and beginning farmers
- Provide land and infrastructure access for the establishment and growth of local agriculture businesses
- Incorporate management practices that conserve water, utilize alternative energies, and steward farm soils to maximize the short- and long-term farming potential

Si View's Agriculture Program is transitioning Tollgate Farm (~55 farmable acres in North Bend) from a single leaseholder to a shared space. Si View has and will continue to implement infrastructure improvements to maximize opportunities for new and beginning farmers to establish, develop, and expand their agriculture businesses.

Infrastructure improvements are ongoing and Si View seeks partners who are open to working collaboratively and adaptively as we make additional improvements over the coming years with the goal of creating a farm that can equitably provide farmland access and infrastructure to new and beginning farmers. Most of these planned improvements are funding dependent.

PURPOSE OF RFP

Si View is seeking lessees for 2024 that align with the district's objectives for Tollgate Farm. In 2024, we seek individual farm businesses to operate for two to five years on a portion of Tollgate Farm. The land

available to lease is at Tollgate Farm, 901 Bendigo Blvd N, North Bend, 98045; all or a portion of parcel numbers: 0423089013, 0423089038, 0423089014, 0423089037, 0423089017, 0423089016.

The selected applicant(s) will enter into a two to five-year lease agreement with Si View. The lease fee for the acreage is dependent on the farming operations but is a per acre price and paid annually. Lease holders are required to hold a \$1,000,000 liability insurance policy that names Si View as an additional insured.

Land Fees

Non Irrigated Crop Land	Pasture Land
\$350/acre annually	\$80/acre annually

Interested Farmers may select to use the Tollgate Barn to complement their agriculture operations for an additional fee. The Tollgate Barn is suitable for tool, seed, equipment and feed storage as well as a meeting site for workshops and outdoor programming, farm sales or CSA pick up. The Tollgate Barn is a shared space with other farmers. Exclusive use of the space for workshops or programming will require coordination with Si View staff.

Barn Use Fees

Storage	Storage/Stall Use/Livestock
\$125/month	\$250/month

Si View reserves the right to reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability. Final acceptance of any proposal will be conditional upon satisfactory negotiation and execution of the lease agreement.

ELIGIBILITY

Individual farm businesses must demonstrate at least 2 years of farming experience and provide a farm and business plan as outlined in the Proposal Contents.

TIMELINE

EVENT	DATE
1. RFP Release Date	10/27/23
2. Proposal Due Date	12/13/23
4. Notification and Award Date	12/20/23
5. Lease and Site Access Begin (after signing of lease by both parties)	1/15/24

CONTRIBUTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SI VIEW

To provide the land and infrastructure necessary for farm businesses, the following will be available to each of the selected applicants:

- Up to 3 acres for crop production, or up to 25 acres of pasture Farmland at Tollgate Farm, 901 Bendigo Blvd N, North Bend, WA; parcel numbers: all or a portion of parcel numbers: 0423089013, 0423089038, 0423089014, 0423089037, 0423089017, 0423089016
- Road access and locking gate
- Individually metered water use (produce washing, irrigation, watering animals)
 - a. Equipment to irrigate individual plots is provided by each farmer (see below)
- Key to bathroom (cleaned weekly April-November)
- Depending upon site conditions, Si View may provide initial soil disking/tilling
- Depending upon funding availability, and in coordination with all lessees at Tollgate Farm, additional infrastructure improvements may be provided
- Coordinate an annual pre-season meeting of all lessees at Tollgate Farm
- Oversight from Si View Facilities Supervisor and Operations Manager, who will guide high level site management issues and provide training on use of provided infrastructure
- Si View can provide business, and marketing support if running a program through Si View.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF SELECTED FARMER

The selected lessee will:

- Commit to a 2-5-year lease at the appropriate rental rate, which includes potable and irrigation water
- Adhere to water use requirements, which include:
 - a. Not exceeding allocated daily and seasonal limits for irrigation water and potable water
 - b. Maintenance of provided infrastructure, if authorized by Si View to do so
- Provide a point of contact for coordination with Si View
- Utilize a majority of the leased plot for agriculture production for commercial market outlets
 - a. Examples may include but are not limited to food, flowers, honey, pumpkin patch.
- Be responsible for expenses associated with managing leased plot, which includes providing equipment, soil amendments, and sprinkler/drip irrigation supplies
- Be capable of meeting the requirements of the lease agreement (including but not limited to maintenance of farm grounds and shared infrastructure, annual communication about soil amendments or other inputs used on the site)
- Receive written approval from Si View before making any infrastructure improvements
- Be interested in working collaboratively with Si View and other Tollgate Farm leaseholders to achieve the District's program and site objectives
- Attend and participate in a Si View led pre-season coordination meeting with all lessees at the farm
- Provide a short annual report (written or scheduled conversation) to Si View staff sharing information about their farming season including crops grown, animals raised and markets served, identified challenges, and plans and needs for the upcoming year.

How to Apply

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The following information will help us understand what you are proposing to do on the farm.

Proposals must be in writing and sent to Travis Stombaugh at TStombaugh@siviewpark.org or mailed to:

Si View MPD
C/O Travis Stombaugh
PO Box 346
North Bend, WA 98022

Each proposal should address the following, in the order presented. Aim for a maximum of 6 pages total:

1. Introduction: provide an introductory section that includes:
 - the identification of the business entity, including the name, address, telephone number, Washington UBI (if you have obtained one), and details of the entity's business structure (i.e., corporation, partnership, LLC). If you are a sole proprietor, please identify your best business address and contact information
 - name, title, address, and telephone number of a contact person during the proposal evaluation period
2. Vision: a brief description of your long-term vision for your farming enterprise and at least 3 goals to be achieved by the end of your 2-5 years on Tollgate Farm
3. Operational Plan: Please include a narrative description of your plan for managing and operating a portion of Tollgate Farm. This narrative should at a minimum include information about:
 - your plans for operating at Tollgate Farm—when and how you will begin, what your priorities will be, production plans (type and quantity of products), will you have any employees or business partners.
 - your planned agricultural practices, which may include composting, fertilization, irrigation, tilling, and crop rotation
 - equipment you have available and will be using.
 - infrastructure and farm improvements that you think are necessary to support your farm(s)
 - how you will know you are successful, using quantifiable measures such as pounds of produce grown, net income, number of different markets sold to, boxes of food delivered
 - any other details you feel will contribute to Si View's understanding of your capacity to operate the farm
4. Marketing and Business Plan: Please include a short description or list of your plan for marketing items produced on Tollgate Farm including:
 - current farm product marketing experience
 - your target market outlets or customers
 - avenues through which you anticipate distributing and selling your produce.

- plans for expansion and improvements over the 2 to 5-year lease term (i.e., what are your plans for year 1 and how do you see your business growing over the subsequent years?)
5. Statement of Experience and Qualifications: Please provide a narrative description of your business entity's operating history and qualifications such as :
- how many years in business
 - any previous experience leasing farmland
 - where you have farmed in the past
 - how big of a farm have you operated, managed, or worked on
 - previous formal or informal training
 - your experience farming in collaboration with others
 - strengths as a farmer or businessperson
 - any experience you have had farming on a site where road access and infrastructure is shared.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by Si View staff based on the evaluation criteria shown in the table below. Proposals in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the lease agreement between Si View and the successful applicant.

Evaluation Criteria (See <i>Proposal Contents</i> list above for details)	Maximum Points
Quality and Practicality of Vision	10
Quality/Practicality of Operational Plan	20
Quality/Practicality of Marketing and Business Plan	15
Experience and Qualifications	20
Individual Farm Business: home of at least one of business owners in one of the Opportunity Areas	5
Total	70

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding this advertisement may be submitted by email or phone to Travis Stombaugh (TStombaugh@siviewpark.org) or 425-831-1900.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals in response to this advertisement will be accepted until 12:00 pm on December 13th, 2023. Responses submitted after this deadline will not be reviewed.

Responses should be submitted electronically to:

Travis Stombaugh, Si View Metropolitan Park District, TStombaugh@siviewpark.org