

NEW HANOVER COUNTY
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
NORTHSIDE GROCERY STORE DESIGN SERVICES



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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**NEW HANOVER COUNTY
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
NORTHSIDE GROCERY STORE DESIGN SERVICES**

Section 1 Project Summary

New Hanover County, located in Wilmington, NC, is soliciting qualification submittals from a highly qualified architecture/engineering firm design a small-scale, full-service affordable grocery store on a 2.5-acre lot located at 900 North 10th Street in the Northside Community of Wilmington, NC. The site is located within a USDA designated food desert and a full-service grocery store will satisfy a critical need in the community.

Section 2 Instructions

2.1 Schedule

Advertisement	Tuesday, March 19, 2024
Deadline for Questions	Friday, April 5, 2024, by 5:00 PM EST
Answers to Questions	Tuesday, April 9, 2024
Deadline for Submissions	Wednesday, May 1, 2024, by 5:00 PM EST
Notification if Selected for Interview	Friday, May 10, 2024
Interviews	Wednesday, May 29, 2024
Contract Awarded and Execution	June 2024

2.2 Statement of Qualifications Instructions

2.2.1 Submit Statements of Qualifications via email to Sara Warmuth at swarmuth@nhcgov.com. Include RFQ Northside Grocery Store Design Services in the subject line of the email. The successful firm must have the capability of receiving and submitting all documents in an electronic format. Also, the successful firm must have Internet access for browsing and receipt of electronic documents via email. The deadline for Receipt of Qualification Statements is **Wednesday May 1, 2024 5:00 PM EST**.

2.2.2 Statements of Qualifications received after the time and date for closing will not be accepted.

Submitted Statements of Qualifications are not subject to public inspection until a contract is awarded and executed. Statements of Qualifications will be evaluated, and firms may be contacted for interviews which may be conducted by phone or in person.

Instructions for submitting Statements of Qualifications and complete requirements may be obtained by visiting the County at <https://finance.nhcgov.com/purchasing-solicitation/open-and-closed-bids>.

New Hanover County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Statements of Qualifications and to make the award which will be most advantageous to the County.

2.3 Communications: After the release date, all communications between the County and prospective respondents regarding this RFQ shall be in writing. Any inquiries, requests for interpretation, technical questions, clarifications, or additional information shall be directed to **Sara Warmuth, Chief Facilities Officer** by emailing swarmuth@nhcgov.com. All questions concerning this RFQ should reference the section number and page. Questions and responses will be compiled and shared with all interested Respondents known to the County and posted as an addendum. **All questions shall be received no later than Friday, April 5, 2024, at 5:00 PM, EST.**

Respondents may not have communications, verbal or otherwise, concerning this RFQ with any personnel or boards from New Hanover County, other than the person listed in this section. If any vendor attempts any unauthorized communication, the proposal will be rejected.

2.4 Intent to Submit: All Respondents who intend to submit a Statement of Qualification on this project should send an email to swarmuth@nhcgov.com including pertinent contact information. This will ensure that you receive all addenda issued for this RFQ; if applicable.

2.5 Addendum: Any changes to the RFQ will be issued by addenda and sent by email to all respondents that have notified the County of their intent to submit a Qualification Package. The addenda will also be posted on the County's website at <https://finance.nhcgov.com/purchasing-solicitation/open-and-closed-bids>.

2.6 Minor Deviations: New Hanover County reserves the right to allow or disallow minor deviations or technicalities should the County deem it to be in the best interest of the County. New Hanover County shall be the sole judge of what is to be considered a minor deviation or technicality.

2.7 Evaluation and Interviews: Statements of Qualifications will be evaluated, and oral interviews may be requested as part of the evaluation process. If interviews will be conducted, the County will contact Respondents by email to make arrangements.

2.8 Incurred Cost: New Hanover County is not liable for any cost incurred by any firm prior to an award. Costs for developing a response to this request for qualification packages are entirely the obligation of the respondent and shall not be chargeable in any manner to New Hanover County.

2.9 Binding Agreement: No agreements with any selected Respondent shall be binding until a contract is signed and executed by the authorized County official and authorized representatives of the firm.

2.10 Minority Participation: It is the policy of New Hanover County that minority/women business enterprises shall have maximum opportunity to compete for and participate in its procurement and contracting activities. In this regard, the County has established an overall annual goal of 10% for minority/women business enterprise participation in its various procurement contracts. The County and its contractors shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the award and performance of its contracts.

2.11 Additions and Deletions: The County reserves the right at its sole discretion to increase, decrease, or delete any portion of this agreement contract at any time without cause, and if such right is exercised by the County, the total fee shall be adjusted accordingly. If work has already been accomplished on the portion of the contract to be increased, decreased, or deleted, the contractor shall be paid for the correct portion on the basis of the estimated percentage agreed upon by the County, the contractor, and the contract manager upon completion of such portion.

2.12 Right to Reject: The County reserves the right to reject any and all qualification packages with or without cause, to waive technical errors and informalities, or to accept that qualification packages or combination of qualification packages which in the County's sole and absolute judgment best serves the public interest.

2.13 No Public Opening: Qualification packages shall **NOT** be publicly opened. Submitted Statements of Qualifications are not subject to public inspection until contract is awarded and executed. Qualification packages that are received by telephone, facsimile, telegram, or mail are not acceptable and will be rejected.

2.14 Pricing: No fee proposal is to be included in the qualification package. This solicitation is for qualifications only.

2.15 Conflict of Interest: The award hereunder is subject to provisions of State Statutes and/or County Ordinance. Respondents must disclose with their qualification packages the name of any officer, director, or agent who is also an employee of New Hanover County. Further, all respondents must disclose the name of any County employee who owns, directly or indirectly, any interest in the respondent's firm or any of its branches.

Any Firm placed under contract with the County must further notify the County in writing within five (5) days of their discovery of a potential conflict of interest and make such continuing disclosure throughout the term of the contract. A full disclosure shall include a description of the action that the Firm has taken, or proposes to take, to avoid or to mitigate such conflicts of interest. The County may terminate the contract if the County deems such

termination to be in the best interest of the County or may terminate the Firm's assignment to a project based upon its assessment of potential conflict.

2.16 License/Certifications: The successful vendor will be required to secure, at its expense, the proper occupational license and/or any other license required of the applicable work being performed. Proof of license and/or certification may be required prior to award. The respondent shall comply with all federal and state laws, county and municipal ordinances and regulations in any manner affecting the performance of the work. The respondent shall state its occupation license number and expiration date.

2.17 Insurance: Responders to this solicitation shall show appropriate insurance coverage levels for providing the types of services described above. Upon selection, the selected firm shall provide specific insurance certificates naming New Hanover County as an additional insured for the required insurance categories of coverage as outlined below:

- Commercial General Liability and if necessary, Commercial Umbrella Liability insurance with a total limit of not less than \$1,000,000 for each occurrence for bodily injury and property damage.
- Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability as required by the general statutes of the State of North Carolina. Employer's Liability shall not be less than \$1,000,000 for each accident for bodily injury by accident, \$1,000,000 for each employee for bodily injury by disease, and \$1,000,000 policy limit.
- Applicable Business or Personal Auto Liability with a limit not less than \$1,000,000 each accident.
- Professional Liability with a limit not less than \$1,000,000.

2.18 Trade Secret Confidentiality: According to General Statutes 132 - 1.2, trade secrets contained in a bid may be kept confidential if the bidder, at the time the bid is submitted, designates that is secret and requests that it be kept confidential. Any information considered to be confidential should be placed in a separate section and clearly marked "Confidential."

Marking the entire proposal confidential may be grounds for rejection of proposal.

2.19 Certificate of Authority: Subject to several statutory exceptions, a business entity incorporated or organized in a state other than North Carolina must obtain a certificate of authority from the North Carolina Secretary of State prior to transacting business in the State. See G.S. 55-15-01(a) (business corporations); G.S. 55A-15-01(a) (nonprofit corporations); G.S. 57D-7-01(a) (limited liability companies); G.S. 59-902(a) (limited partnerships); G.S. 59-91(a) (registered limited liability partnerships); G.S. 55B-16(a) (professional corporations). When the requirement applies, the foreign entity transacting business in the State is responsible for obtaining a certificate of authority—not the domestic (i.e., North Carolina) corporations, public entities, or individuals with whom the foreign entity might contract.

2.20 E-Verify: Pursuant to Session Law 2013-418, Bidder shall fully comply with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security employee legal status E-Verify requirements for itself and all

its subcontractors. Upon execution of contract, County requires an affidavit attesting to Bidder's compliance. Violation of the provision, unless timely cured, shall constitute a breach of contract.

Section 3 Background and Scope

New Hanover County, located in Wilmington, NC, is soliciting qualification submittals from qualified architecture/engineering firms to provide professional services for the design and permitting of an approximately 8,000 square foot, full-service, grocery store in the Northside Community of Wilmington, NC. We are looking for a firm who can develop a community-centric, cost-effective design that provides innovative opportunities for store operations. NHC has partnered with Seven Roots, an operational support organization for grocers and co-ops on the interior layout and operations plan for the store. Seven Roots will work closely with the chosen architect/engineering firm on store functionality, interior fixtures, and equipment. The business-related operations will be run by a local non-profit, the Northside Food Co-op.

Selected firm will work closely with Seven Roots to design the site plan, including entry and egress, parking, refuse collection and receiving, along with the shell building for the grocery store. Selected firm will work with Seven Roots to coordinate the interior design. The project will include all necessary meetings to receive community input of design sufficient to assist the team on any required rezoning by the City of Wilmington. Selected firm will also be responsible for all permitting to develop a shovel-ready project, that is complete for bidding and construction.

Section 4 Format for Statements of Qualifications

Submitted qualification documents must include the following information:

- A. Introduction (2 pages maximum): The content of this section shall be at the discretion of the Design Firm.
- B. Firm Background (3 pages maximum): This section should provide information on the Firm's background and experience with grocery development projects including the Firm's previous experience with similar projects. The Firm's background should include: the number of years that the company has been in existence; the number of years the Firm has been involved with similar projects, including design, permitting, and construction oversight of projects.
- C. Statement of Qualifications (4 pages maximum): This section should demonstrate the project team's overall technical expertise and experience in grocery store design. The Firm should demonstrate that the firm and specifically, the assigned project managers and key personnel have a thorough understanding of the regulatory requirements affecting the siting, design, permitting, and construction of similar facilities within the southeastern US or the state of North Carolina. In addition, the

firm and the assigned project managers and key personnel should illustrate their understanding of the various design and construction standards of similar facilities.

- D. **Project Management (2 pages maximum):** The Firm should describe the organizational structure and "chain of command" of the Firm's proposed project team and the project management methods that are most appropriate to perform the contract services. The discussion should include methods for communicating with team members, schedule controls, cost controls, quality assurance protocols, and any other appropriate management considerations. Building construction experience to include knowledge of internal and external features and components required for a functional grocery store, permitting and expediting experience should also be included.
- E. **Past Performance - References (3 pages maximum):** The Firm's past performances on contracts will be evaluated. The Firm must list a minimum of three (3) separate and verifiable clients. Include project title, client name, address, current contact and telephone, performance period from start to finish, and a brief description of projects.

Section 5 Selection Criteria:

Weighted specific criteria, among other factors, will include:

A. Firm Experience: 50 Points

- Company's history & experience in grocery design.
- Overall qualifications of project managers and key personnel

B. Project Management: 30 Points

- Firm experience in North Carolina and Wilmington specifically; especially as it relates to zoning and permitting.
- Past performance of cost control techniques employed by the firm as demonstrated by the ability to establish accurate project construction budget and design to this budget as evidenced by the low bid amount.

D. Client Evaluations: 10 Points

E. Proposed Project Schedule: 10 Points

Section 6 Forms

1. Minority Form

2. E-Verify Form

(Submit with your Response)

Minority & Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program Form

A. Authorized Representative

I HEREBY AFFIRM THAT:

I am [name] _____, [title] _____,
and the duly authorized representative of [Business Name] _____
and that I possess the legal authority to make this statement on behalf of myself and the
Business for which I am acting.

B. Affirmation Regarding MWBE Program Acknowledgement and Compliance

I FURTHER AFFIRM THAT:

I am aware of and intend to comply with the County's MWBE Program. As such [check one]:

_____ The Business is certified as a woman- or minority-owned business by an accepted agency. (Attach proof certification)

_____ The Business is a woman- or minority-owned business but has not been certified by an accepted agency. (Attach document of ownership such as articles of incorporation, current business license, K-1 of the most recent business tax return.)

_____ The Business is not a woman- or minority-owned business; however, the bidder acknowledges the MWBE policy and if it should become necessary to subcontract some portion of the work at a later date or obtain materials or services in conjunction with this solicitation, the bidder will institute good faith efforts to comply with all requirements of the MWBE program in providing equal opportunities to MWBEs.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

E-VERIFY FORM

(To be submitted with your response)

STATE OF _____

COUNTY OF _____

AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE WITH N.C. E-VERIFY STATUTES

I, _____ (hereinafter the "Affiant"), duly authorized by and on behalf of _____ (hereinafter the "Employer") after being first duly sworn deposes and says as follows:

1. I am the _____ (President, Manager, CEO, etc.) of the Employer and possess the full authority to speak for and on behalf of the Employer identified above.

2. Employer understands that "E-Verify" means the federal E-Verify program operated by the United States Dept. of Homeland Security and other federal agencies, or any successor or equivalent program used to verify the work authorization of newly hired employees pursuant to federal law.

3. Employer employs 25 or more employees, and is in compliance with the provisions of N.C. General Statute §64-26. Employer has verified the work authorization of its employees through E-Verify and shall retain the records of verification for a period of at least one year.

Employer employs fewer than 25 Employees and is therefore not subject to the provisions of N.C. General Statute §64-26.

4. All subcontractors engaged by or to be engaged by Employer have or will have likewise complied with the provisions of N.C. General Statute §64-26.

5. Employer shall keep the State of North Carolina informed of any change in its status pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina Statutes.

This ____ day of _____, 20____.

Signature of Affiant

Printed Name and Title

State of _____

County of _____

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____,
20____.

Notary Public:

(SEAL)

My

Appointment

Expires:
