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Town of Wendell Request for Proposals

Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan RFP# 677-PR26-04

Information related to this solicitation, including any addenda, will be posted to the North Carolina electronic Vendor Portal (eVP) at <https://evp.nc.gov/solicitations/>.

Provided below is a list of the anticipated schedule of events related to this solicitation. The Town of Wendell reserves the right to modify and/or adjust this schedule to meet the needs of the project.

All times shown are Eastern Time (ET):

RFP Process Summary	Date and time
RFP Advertisement Date	<i>March 11, 2026</i>
Pre-Submittal Conference (if applicable)	<i>N/A</i>
Deadline for Questions	<i>March 25, 2026 by 5:00pm</i>
Town Response to Questions (anticipated)	<i>March 30, 2026 by 5:00pm</i>
Submittal Due Date and Time	<i>April 8, 2026 by 3:00pm</i>

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Project Purpose and Background

The Town of Wendell provides public recreation to support a high quality of life for its citizens. Studies consistently show that ‘quality of life’ matters are highly valued by both residents and visitors, and well-planned parks, recreational programs and community events play a significant role in fostering community well-being and economic development. Goal 4 of the Town’s Strategic Plan-*Parks, Recreation, Special Events, and Culture* – focuses on establishing facilities, events, and programs that connect the community, promote healthy lifestyle opportunities, and culturally engage citizens and visitors.

To support this goal, the Town of Wendell is soliciting Proposals from qualified consultants to assist with developing an updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Town’s current master plan was adopted in 2019, and requires updating to reflect current conditions and standards, evolving community needs, and best practices in parks and recreation planning. Since the adoption of the plan, the Parks and Recreation Department has experienced significant growth and change, necessitating a comprehensive update to ensure alignment with current operations and future goals.

The updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan will serve as a guiding document for future development and redevelopment of the Town’s parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, and programs over the next ten (10) years. The plan should establish a clear road map for ensuring equitable access, connectivity, and proximity to high-quality parks, green spaces, recreation facilities, and programs throughout the community. The Town seeks a system-wide approach that includes the development of goals, policies and guidelines, as well as the prioritization of strategies based on existing and projected funding scenarios.

The Town’s current 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan is available for review at the following link:

<https://cms3.revize.com/revize/wendellNC/Documents/Government/Documents/Parks%20and%20Recreation%20Master%20Plan/Wendell-Comprehensive-Parks--amp--Recreation-Master-Plan-Compressed.pdf>

Scope of Work

Project Overview

The Town of Wendell is seeking a recreation planning consultant to provide professional services for updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The updated plan will guide the Town in meeting its recreation facility, programming and service needs over the next ten (10) years.

The selected Consultant will work closely with Town staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and other identified stakeholders throughout the planning process. The final Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan shall include, at a minimum:

- A comprehensive inventory of all existing parks, facilities, and amenities
- An assessment and analysis of current and future recreation needs
- Recommendations for facilities, programs, and policies
- An implementation strategy to guide phasing and prioritization

The final plan will be reviewed and presented to the Town’s Board of Commissioners for approval. Town anticipates completion of Master Plan update within a 12-month time frame or around early 2027.

TASK 1: Inventory and Assessment of Existing Programs, Parks, and Facilities

Consultant will compile a comprehensive inventory and assessment of existing parks, facilities, programs, and recreational services provided by the Town, as well as relevant services provided by other public, private, and non-profit organizations within the community.

Program and Service Evaluation

- Assess existing levels of recreation programs and services (public and private) to determine the adequacy of current recreation opportunities for residents of all ages, abilities, and interests.
- Evaluate current and projected service levels based on population growth, demographic trends, and industry standards.
- Analyze athletic program capacity relative to existing facilities, including field and court availability, scheduling constraints, and participation demand.

Facility Inventory and Condition Assessment

- Identify existing Town managed park and facility amenities (e.g., ballfields, courts, playgrounds, restrooms, shelters), including acreage of parks, and square footage of facilities.
- Evaluate existing facility condition, service level, remaining useful life, and estimated lifecycle costs.
- Identify ADA accessibility barriers at Town parks, facilities, and program services, and document compliance gaps.
- Identify and map existing trails, greenways, and natural areas used for recreation, open space and access. Document their condition, connectivity, and level of use.
- Identify vacant or underutilized land for future potential park system acquisition or development opportunities.

Staffing and Organization Review

- Review existing Parks and Recreation staffing, including maintenance and recreation divisions.
- Assess staffing levels, organizational structure, and operational capacity.

Benchmarking and Planning Review

- Provide a comparative overview of parks and recreation programs and service levels in peer municipalities similar to the Town in population size, growth rate, economic characteristics, and geographic context.
- Review and evaluate the Town’s 2019 Comprehensive Master Plan and its relevance to current parks and recreation needs and necessary adjustments for future development.

TASK 2: Town Demographics

The Consultant will analyze current and projected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics relevant to parks and recreation planning, including:

- Population composition and growth trends

- Age distribution
- Household characteristics
- Economic indicators
- Land use patterns and development trends

The analysis shall identify implications for parks, recreation programs, facilities, and service demand.

TASK 3: Community Input

The Consultant will design and implement a comprehensive community engagement program to gather meaningful input. Engagement activities include:

- A statistically valid or broadly representative Community Needs Survey assessing current participation levels, satisfaction with existing parks, programs, and facilities, unmet needs, priorities and willingness to fund expanded or enhanced services. Survey instrument and distribution method shall be reviewed and approved by the Town prior to implementation.
- Two (2) public workshops to gather community input, identify priorities, and discuss preliminary findings at key milestones in the planning process.
- Four (4) focus group interviews with key stakeholder groups

TASK 4: Funding Evaluation

The Consultant will identify and evaluate existing funding sources, practices, and funding levels for parks, recreation, and related services, including general fund support, grants, user fees and rental fees, dedicated funding mechanisms, and capital financing approaches.

The funding and financial analysis will assess the adequacy and sustainability of current funding relative to identified needs and proposed improvement.

TASK 5: Recommendations and Action Plan

Based on the inventory analysis and community input, the Consultant will develop a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Action Plan that includes:

- Recommended programs, facilities, and amenities
- Land acquisition strategies and facility development strategies, including priority locations and geographic recommendations for future park and facility development
- Prioritized capital improvement, facility renovation, and land acquisition projects with 5-year and 10-year implementation horizons
- Planning level cost estimates for proposed facilities and improvements
- Recommendations for recreation tourism and development opportunities
- Funding and financing strategies, (e.g., grants, bonds, land dedication ordinances, user fees, and impact fees)
- Staffing and operational recommendations aligned with proposed service levels

TASK 6: Deliverables

- Provide a comprehensive and complete Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan document in a digital (Word and PDF) and print-ready versions suitable for adoption and utilization for future Town planning directives
- Executive summary materials and documentation for presentation to Town Board

General Requirements and Deliverables

- All technical memoranda, reports, and certifications shall be submitted in electronic form to Wendell in Windows-compatible format (including both .pdf and Microsoft Office Word formats).
- The Town invites and encourages participation in this procurement process by minority or women-owned business enterprises (MWBE) in accordance with North Carolina General Statute §143-48.

Proposal Submittal Requirements

Electronic responses ONLY will be accepted through the [NC eVP website](#). Interested parties must be logged in to submit proposals electronically. Registration information is available at [NC Electronic Vendor Portal \(eVP\)](#). Proposals must be clearly marked with name of the submitting company, the RFP number and RFP title (**Your Company Name 677-PR26-04 RFP Name**). Proposers must submit one (1) electronic version, submitted as a viewable and printable Adobe Portable Document File (PDF). Submittals shall be a maximum of 20 pages total, not including cover page.

RFP Responses must be received no later than 2:00 P.M., Eastern Standard Time (EST) on April 8, 2026.

Any submittals received after the deadline by any delivery method will not be considered or evaluated.

Questions

Questions regarding the RFP shall be submitted in writing to **Jeff Polaski, Parks and Recreation Director** via email to: jpolaski@townofwendellnc.gov no later than **5:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EST), on March 25, 2026**. Indicate the RFP name in the subject heading of the email.

Only emailed questions will be addressed and answered. The issuance of such written responses is the only official method by which interpretation, clarification, or additional information will be given by the Town. Only requests answered by formal written responses will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect. No information, instruction or advice provided orally or informally by any Town personnel, whether made in response to a question or otherwise in connection with this RFP, shall be considered authoritative or binding. No personal inquiry or marketing meetings will be conducted or allowed. Respondents shall be entitled to rely *only* on written material contained in an Addendum to this RFP.

An addendum will be released with answers to any submitted questions and will be posted to the [NC eVP website](#).

Proposal Submittal Format and Contents

The instructions below provide guidance and information for respondents to prepare and submit concise responses to this RFP. The purpose is to establish the format and contents of the proposal so that responses are complete, contain all essential information, and can be easily evaluated.

Proposal Format

Proposals should be presented in a well-organized and concise manner. The Proposal should be no longer than 20 pages in length. Covers, resumes, Certificates of Insurance, and tabs will not be counted towards the page limit. The Town may reject as non-responsive at its sole discretion any submittal that does not provide complete and/or adequate responses or departs in any substantial way from the required format.

Proposal Content

The following items must be addressed in the submission:

1. **Introductory Letter:** Respondents shall submit a clear and concise response identifying the following information:
 - a. Name of the Firm
 - b. Primary contact person working on the Town's behalf and their contact information
 - c. The Firm's contact information
 - d. Why the Town should select the Firm for this work
 - e. Acknowledgement of any RFP Addenda (if applicable)
2. **Qualifications and Experience:** Respondents shall submit examples of similar projects with work of similar scopes and website links to any similar plans they have prepared. Of particular interest are engagements involving communities that have characteristics similar to the Town of Wendell. Examples should include details on technical approach and management, methodology, schedule, deliverables, quality assurance and control and will explain how the respondent attained successful completion on similar projects. If Respondent is teaming with other qualified firms, including sub-consultants, ensure the cited examples include previous collaborations.
3. **Project Approach and Schedule:** A detailed description of how the Firm proposes to approach the scope of work outlined in this RFP to prepare the Parks and Recreation Plan. This plan should include customization or innovative ideas for the proposed course and sequence of actions or tasks including proposed methodologies, techniques, time needed to complete sequences and schedule of project milestones to plan adoption. Provide a breakdown and description of tasks assigned per project team member. Describe the hierarchy of project management. Include scope of work intended for sub-consultants, if applicable.
4. **Project Team(s):** Provide an organization chart of the project team specifying the dedicated project manager, key personnel, and sub-consultants assigned to the team and the availability of backup personnel that will support this project. Include resumes with a brief summary identifying roles and responsibilities and general qualifications (i.e. professional registrations, certifications, and/or licenses) of each team member including sub-consultants and disciplines appropriate to the project as well as education and availability of work, and experience. Please do not list Firm staff that are not directly working on this project team. If more than one project manager or team is

desired, please include this information and describe why this is necessary and how each team will interact with the Town.

5. Example Projects with References: Provide at least three (3) references related to experience in preparing Master Plan document for public agencies. Include the name of each project, a brief description, and the primary contact information of the reference that will be used by the Town to obtain information about the project team's performance.
6. Identifications of Lawsuits and Administrative Claims or Fines: Consultants must identify all lawsuits administrative claims or fine proceedings the Consultant has been a party to in the past five (5) years. Include any fines levied by any governmental unit relating to the proposed work in this RFP such as fines from the EEOC, Department of Labor, or other units of government.
7. Fee Proposal: Submit with the proposal, a preliminary proposal of fees for services as a "not to exceed" total fee, in a spreadsheet format to include breakdowns of the phases and the costs for each. The consultant is free to format tasks/milestones under each phase as deemed appropriate based on experience and understanding of the project. Also include the hourly rates (for the lead firm and all sub-consultants), and any other applicable fees or expenses. Fees shall be subject to negotiation between the consultant that best meets the requirements of the RFP and the Town, reflecting the final scope of services.

Price quoted must be held firm for 90 days after the RFP is due.

Evaluation Method

Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria. Criteria shown under each of the five (5) considerations are to be addressed in the Proposal:

1. Firms Qualifications and Experience: The Firm's experience in similar work (preparing municipal comprehensive parks and recreation plans, include strategies for citizen participation and public engagement) and the record of successful results of that work period consideration will be given to the Firm's capacity to take on additional work, demonstrate understanding of the Town's goals and purposes of this project, specific management approach, how well the Firm's organization structure shows sufficient depth of its present workload, approach to managing the Town's budget and time, and the Firm's ability to offer the breadth and quality of services required for this project.
2. Project Approach and Understanding: The proposed approach for performing the work for this project, that demonstrates the ability to deliver high-quality results and understanding of the scope of work for this project and project deliverables. Ideas that are innovative, cost effective, or demonstrate overall improvements that are feasible for the project will be given weight.
3. Experience of the Personnel Assigned to this Project Team: A Firm provides the resources but the individuals assigned to a project are how the job gets done. The Town will give considerable weight to the individual qualifications of the project team members who will be assigned to do a majority of the work on the project. Consideration will include the project manager's individual qualifications, experience, and location, with which key personnel will be assigned to the project, and any sub-consultants' individual experience, qualifications and location.
4. Example Projects with References. Quality and relevance of listed projects within the last five (5) years with involvement of the proposed staff.

5. Fee Proposal: Cost effectiveness.

Criteria	(a) Weight	(b) Score (0-3)	(a) x (b) Weighted Score
Firms Qualifications and Experience	30%		
Project Approach & Understanding	15%		
Assigned Project Team Experience & Qualifications	15%		
Example Projects with References	15%		
Fee Proposal	25%		
Final Score			

Score Points

0- Missing or Does Not Meet Expectation

2- Meets Expectation

1- Partially Meets Expectation

3- Exceeds Expectation

Selection Procedures

The Town will review the proposals, and all the information provided in the submittal packages. A selection committee comprised of Town staff will be convened to review the proposal packages. Respondents that are deemed competitive by the Town may be asked to attend an interview and should make themselves available for a presentation of their proposal to the selection committee. Each Firm will be responsible for all costs (e.g. travel and presentation materials) related to the presentation.

The selected Firms will be notified by the Town and will enter into contract negotiations for receiving this work. If no agreement can be reached with the selected Consultants, the Town will negotiate with the next qualified Firm.

The Town reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals, to waive any and all informalities and/or irregularities, if it is deemed to be in the Town’s best interests to do so. The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the items in the proposal, and to award the contract in whole or in part and/or negotiate any or all items with individual firms if it is deemed in the Town’s best interest. Moreover, the Town reserves the right to make no selection if proposals are deemed not in the best interest of the Town.

The Town also reserves the right to delay the award of a contract or to not award a contract.

Minimum Requirements for Contract Execution

All proposal packages and materials submitted hereunder become the exclusive property of the Town. This request for proposals is neither a contractual offer nor a commitment to purchase services. The Town assumes no contractual obligation as a result of the issuance of this request, the preparation or submission of a proposal by a Consultant, the evaluation of proposals, or final selection. All submissions may be kept by the Town and may be disclosed to third parties at the Town's discretion.

Negotiating with Offerors

A professional services agreement will be negotiated with the selected Consultant based on the proposed scope of work, deliverables, project schedule, fee schedule, and project team as outlined in their proposal.

The Town reserves the right to award a contract, based on initial offers received from Consultants without discussion and without conducting further negotiations. The Town may also, at its sole discretion, have discussions with Consultants and the Town may enter into negotiations separately with such Consultants. The Town shall not be deemed to have finally selected a Consultant until the contract has been successfully negotiated and signed by all parties.

Responsibility for Costs

The Consultants shall be fully responsible for all costs incurred in the development and submission of this submittal. Submittal documents should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise description of the Consultants' capabilities to satisfy the requirements of their request. Emphasis should be placed on the completeness and clarity of content. Selected Consultants may be asked to present in person the substance of their response to Town staff if necessary. All costs of such presentations shall be borne solely by the Consultant.

Public Records and Submitted Proposals from the Consultant

Records received by the Town in response to a bid solicitation or a request for proposals are public records and subject to public inspection and copying. Some bid records are public as soon as received by the Town, others become public at bid opening and others at bid award.

The Public Records Law (N.C.G.S. 132-1 et seq.) authorizes the Town to withhold from public inspection and copying legitimate and properly marked "trade secrets" if a record meets all of the following conditions:

1. It is a "trade secret" as defined in G.S. 66-152(3);

2. It is the property of a private person as defined in G.S. 66-152(2);
3. It is disclosed or furnished to the Town in connection with a bid or proposal;
4. It is marked as “confidential” or as a “trade secret” at the time of its initial disclosure to the Town, then the Town may withhold that particular trade secret from a public record inspection request.

If as a part of the Consultants’ bid or proposal, Consultant submits to the Town any record, or portion of a record, that the Consultant considers to be a “trade secret” meeting the definition contained in G.S. 66-152 (2), the Consultant shall clearly mark the particular record, or portion of the record, that meets the definition of trade secret as TRADE SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL TRADE SECRET. In the event the Town receives a public records request for records the Consultant designates as trade secret, the Town will notify the Consultant and give the Consultant the opportunity to, within one week of such notification, confirm in writing that the specific record, or portion of record, that the Consultant designated as trade secret meets their requirements of the general statute, and the reasons for and to indemnify the Town in the event a challenge is brought for their withholding of a record based on Consultant having designated a trade secret. The Town will only withhold the record if both conditions have been fulfilled to the Town's satisfaction.

Consultant Qualifications

Consultants shall be required to submit evidence that they have relevant experience and have previously delivered services similar to those required.

Consultants may additionally be required to show that they have satisfactorily performed similar work in the past and that no claims of any kind are pending against such work period no submittal will be accepted from any contractor or Consultant who is engaged in any work which would impair their ability to perform for finance this work or from any Consultant with outstanding claims pending for work of a similar nature, either completed or in progress. No submittal will be accepted from, nor will a contract be awarded to, any Consultant who is in arrears to the Town upon any debt or contract, or who is in default, as surety or otherwise, upon any obligation to the Town, or is deemed to be irresponsible or unreliable by the Town.

The Consultant must have the financial ability to undertake the work and assume professional liability. The Firm must have an adequate accounting system to identify costs chargeable to the project.

Conflict of Interest Statement

By submission of a response, the Consultant agrees that at the time of submittal it has no interest (including financial benefit, commission finder's fee or any other remuneration) and shall not acquire any interest, either direct or indirect, that would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of the Consultant’s services, and will not benefit from an award resulting in a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest shall include holding or retaining membership, or employment, on a board, elected office, department, division or bureau, or committee sanctioned by and/or governed by the Town. Consultants

shall identify any interests, and the individuals involved, on separate paper with their response and shall understand that the Town, in consultation with legal counsel, may reject their proposal.

Changes in Personnel

Changes to personnel on project teams, particularly a project manager, are to be avoided wherever possible. If during the contract negotiation phase the Consultant requests to make a change to any personnel listed within the Consultant's submitted proposal, the request to the Town must be made in writing and detailing the proposed replacement personnel, resume, and reasons as to why the poor replacement is needed. The Town will consider the request and may, or may not, accept the new personnel changes. If the Town denies the Consultant's request for a change in personnel, the Consultant will be required to confirm in writing that the personnel submitted within the Consultant's original proposal will perform the work, or the Town will no longer consider the Consultant as the best qualified Firm, and may enter into contract negotiations with the next most qualified Consultant.

Execution of Proposal

By submitting this proposal, the potential consultant certifies the following:

- This proposal is signed by an authorized representative of the firm.
- The potential consultant has read and understands the conditions set forth in this RFP to include any addenda and all attached exhibits and agrees to them with no exceptions.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Firm Name: _____

Email: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____