



NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) FOR THE DESIGN-BUILD  
SERVICES FOR A CLIMBING WALL RECONSTRUCTION  
AT THE CHAPEL HILL COMMUNITY CENTER

**RFQ: P26-117R**

**Date: January 15, 2026**

Pursuant to N.C. General Statute 143-128.1A, the Town of Chapel Hill is soliciting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified design-build teams interested in providing professional design and construction services for the reconstruction of the climbing wall at the Chapel Hill Community Center. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) provides complete information on the services being sought, the submittal requirements, and the timeline.

Submittals are due by 2:00 pm on February 3, 2026. Please email submittals to Lenore Bishop, Purchasing and Contracts Manager at [lbishop@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:lbishop@townofchapelhill.org) with a subject line of **“Design-Build of Climbing Wall project at The Chapel Hill Community Center.”**

Questions concerning this Request for Qualifications must be submitted in writing no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 22, 2026, to Kevin Robinson, Senior Manager of Planning & Park Operations, via e-mail at [krobinson@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:krobinson@townofchapelhill.org). All responses to submitted questions will be published in the form of an addendum on the Town’s website at [Bids: Current](#) under the Project Title, by 5:00 P.M. on January 26, 2026.

If you have any questions concerning the bidding procedures, please contact the Purchasing Division at (919) 969-5022.

***The Town of Chapel Hill reserves the right to reject any and all submittals received as a result of this solicitation, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities, or to cancel the RFQ in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the Town of Chapel Hill.***

## **1.0 Background Information**

The existing climbing wall at the Chapel Hill Community Center facility has been in service for almost 40 years. The Town seeks a high-quality, structurally sound, and aesthetically appropriate climbing wall that complies with all relevant safety codes. The integrated team approach of design-build promotes accountability for overall project outcomes. The selected design-build team will be expected to attend and lead one community input meeting at the Chapel Hill Community Center, perform demolition and removal of existing climbing wall structure, design and construct a new climbing wall system, including bouldering, top-rope, and lead climbing zones, and structural reinforcements if required. The Town also expects customization for users of varied skill levels and Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA) accessibility, as well as installation of crash pads, belay anchors, route-setting holds, and climbing surface finishes that will comply with all applicable local building codes and climbing safety standards (e.g., Advancing Standards Transforming Markets (ASTM), Climbing Wall Association (CWA)).

The Town is looking for a team that is familiar with working in the municipal government setting and has installed at least ten (10) climbing walls in municipal gyms. The Town of Chapel Hill has always been proud of its climbing wall and looks to continue to highlight this facility for years to come.

The Town is seeking a design-build team to provide the technical expertise and regulatory guidance to assess, design, and construct a new climbing wall. The team will perform an assessment of the existing conditions to undertake initial design work and estimate to provide an opinion of probable costs for conceptual designs. These concepts would then be presented to Town Staff to determine the most desirable, viable, and cost-effective approach. Upon concurrence of the design concept, the design-build team would proceed with design plans and permit submission packages. As permitting is completed, the team will develop the construction documents. The selected vendor will prepare the construction documents, develop the construction plan, manage the permitting requirements, and perform construction administrative assistance for the project.

### **Project Site:**

Chapel Hill Community Center, 120 South Estes Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

### **Anticipated Project Budget:**

Parks and Recreation estimates an approximate Budget of up to \$800,000.00, inclusive of all design, permitting, materials, labor, and contingencies. This project is not Federally funded.

### **Anticipated Project Schedule:**

The Town hopes to have the wall constructed during the dates of March 16 through June 1.

## **2.0 Scope of Work:**

### **Project Scope:**

- Attend and lead one community input meeting at the Chapel Hill Community Center
- Demolition and removal of existing climbing wall structure
- Design and construction of a new climbing wall system, including bouldering, top-rope, and lead climbing zones
- Structural reinforcements if required
- Customization for users of varied skill levels and ADA accessibility
- Installation of crash pads, belay anchors, route-setting holds, and climbing surface finishes
- Compliance with all applicable local building codes and climbing safety standards (e.g., ASTM, CWA)
- Ability to conduct site assessments, cost estimating, and project scoping exercises to provide the basis of design
- Ability to perform the necessary surveys and inspections, utility locations, evaluate existing conditions, and review available records and reports to determine any required design, regulatory, or constraints
- Ability to produce multiple alternative basic conceptual designs in discussion with Town staff to determine the most cost-effective and dynamic design
- Ability to provide cost estimates at all phases of design development so that the proper funding is requested, budgets are developed, and reimbursement thresholds are maintained
- Ability to prepare a complete set of signed and sealed construction documents (drawings, materials specifications, materials testing requirements, etc.) as the Engineer of Record. Construction documents must meet all applicable Federal, State, and local ordinances
- Ability to prepare and submit all required federal, state, or local permit applications and packages to be able to perform the construction installation of the project
- Ability to prepare a complete construction package
- Ability to provide Construction Administration services, such as responding to requests for information or other construction-related questions, construction material submittal review and approvals, progress payment, and change order review and approvals, as well as attendance at regularly scheduled Owner and Contractor team progress meetings throughout the course of construction
- Ability to coordinate and work with any regulatory agency that may be applicable to the design of the project
- Ability to work closely with Town staff and all other relevant officials and stakeholders throughout the entire design and construction process of the project

### 3.0 Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) Content:

It is the design-build team's responsibility to clearly describe its qualifications in response to this RFQ. Organization, conciseness, and thoroughness of the response will be critical to the Town's evaluation of the submittals. The Statement of Qualifications shall not exceed fifteen (15) pages in length, including the cover page and the table of contents, and shall be situated on 8'1/2"x11" sheets. Any Statement of Qualifications containing more than fifteen (15) pages will not be considered.

The Statement of Qualifications should include the following information:

- Executive Summary: Include the lead firm name, contact person, address, email, and phone number.
  - Describe the understanding of the requested services and the firm or teams' approach for this RFQ's scope of services.
  - Qualifications and experience related to the scope, including specific experience with similar types of projects. Preference will be given to submitting firms that demonstrate:
    - Familiarity with modern construction techniques and relative costs for climbing wall design options
    - Experience designing and constructing climbing walls in large gyms
    - Familiarity and experience in applicable federal, state, and local permitting
  - Brief explanation of the project team selection which shall consist of either of the following:
    - A) List of the licensed contractors, subcontractors, and design professionals whom the design-builder proposes to use for the project's design and installation,
- OR**
- B) an outline of the strategy the design-builder plans to use for open contractor and subcontractor selection based upon the provisions of Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.
- Relevant experience providing similar services to the Town of Chapel Hill and/or to other municipal clients.
- Organizational Chart and Key Personnel: The organizational chart shall identify the lead principal who will be responsible for the work; project team members; and team members employed by sub-consultants and contractors who would be assigned to the project.
  - The SOQ shall include key team members' roles for this project and their resumé/ qualifications with emphasis on related experience; their approximate percentage of time that would be dedicated to this project; and their office locations.
- Describe the program that will be used to maximize minority and women business participation, including pre-qualification procedures. List proposed subcontractors and outline specific outreach efforts that your firm will take to notify minority and women owned firms of opportunities for participation. Indicate the minority participation goal expected for this project. If a firm is a Small, Minority, or Disadvantaged Business please include certification(s).
- Identification of potential conflicts of interest, independence issues, or biases associated with the scope of work.

- References from at least three other clients that have had similar types of projects designed by firm and constructed recently. References shall include the date, type, and cost of services performed and contact information for all references.

#### 4.0 Submittal Requirements:

##### 4.1 Electronic Delivery:

The Statements of Qualifications must be submitted as a PDF file attached to an email message and sent to [bishop@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:bishop@townofchapelhill.org) with the following inserted in the "subject" line of the email: "Design-Build of Climbing Wall Project at the Chapel Hill Community Center."

Please note that the emailed proposals must be received by the specified deadline according to the internal clock of the Town of Chapel Hill's server receiving the proposal. **Please do not submit paper copies.**

##### 4.2 SOQ Format:

Firms are required to prepare their SOQ in accordance with the instructions outlined in this part and elsewhere in this RFQ. To be eligible for consideration, the submitted SOQ must include the following:

- Cover letter stating the intentions of the proposal. Submittal must be signed, certifying that the individual is authorized to offer the submittal on behalf of the consultant.
- Table of Contents
- SOQ content per Part 3.0 above
- A listing of all services available in response to the proposal

For the purposes of consideration, the Town of Chapel Hill requires that all firms:

- Possess qualifications and experience related to the scope, including specific experience with engineering and design services, regulatory support, and permit acquisition for municipal climbing wall design and construction.
- Possess any necessary licensing to conduct work, as outlined in the scope, in the state of North Carolina.

## 5.0 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process:

The Town will seek to negotiate a contract, a general scope of services, a fee schedule, etc., with the highest-ranked design-builder team under G.S. 143-64.31. If unable to reach an agreement, the Town of Chapel Hill will terminate negotiations and commence negotiations with the second highest-ranked design-builder team.

Each SOQ will be evaluated on the team's responsiveness to the requirements of this SOQ. Evaluation Criteria will include, but are not limited to the following:

- Qualifications of the firm(s) and experience on relevant and recent (within the last 5 years) projects providing similar services. 35%
- Qualifications and experience of key personnel, project manager, and staff that will be leading the project. 25%
- Demonstrated understanding of the Town's goals and purposes for this project, specific management approach, and the firm's ability to offer the breadth and quality of services required for this project, including minority and women business enterprise participation. 20%
- Demonstrated understanding of local conditions, permitting process, and proven experience delivering projects within budget and schedule. 10%
- Degree of familiarity of the firm with the project's requirements and stated approach to the project. 10%

A committee selected by the Town of Chapel Hill will review and rank the submittals and make the selection by consensus with their review committee. Interviews are not anticipated, but the Town reserves the right to shortlist up to (3) firms and request an interview.

This project is being re-solicited due to not receiving three submittals with the first solicitation. In accordance with the General Statute requirements, after the second solicitation, the Town may consider the submittals received even if the number is less than three.

## 6.0 Other Requirements:

The selected design-builder must provide bonds under Article 3 of Chapter 44A, which requires performance and payment bonds for 100% of the contract amount for each contract more than \$50,000 on projects costing over \$300,000.

## 7.0 Estimated Project Schedule:

The SOQ, subject to the conditions made a part hereof, will be accepted until 2:00 P.M. EST on February 3, 2026, for furnishing services described herein.

A tentative timeline is provided below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
1/15/2026	Distribution of RFQ
1/22/2026	Questions due in writing by 5:00 P.M. to Kevin Robinson at <a href="mailto:krobinson@townofchapelhill.org">krobinson@townofchapelhill.org</a> .
1/26/2026	Answers to questions received will be published by 5:00 P.M. on the Town website at <a href="#">Bids: Current</a> under the Project Title.
2/3/2026	Proposals due by 2:00 P.M. (See <i>Electronic Delivery</i> below)
2/10/2026	Selection and Notification

## 8.0 Insurance:

### **Proof of insurance is not needed at the time of SOQ submittal.**

All insurance companies should be authorized to do business in North Carolina (NC). The successful firm shall procure and maintain during the life of the contract the following insurance coverage:

**Worker's Compensation:** Coverage to apply for all employees for statutory limits in compliance with the applicable state and federal laws. The policy must include employer's liability with a limit of \$100,000 for each accident, \$100,000 bodily injury by disease each employee and \$500,000 bodily injury by disease policy limit.

**Commercial General Liability:** Shall have minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence combined single limit for bodily injury liability and property damage liability. This shall include premises and/or operations, independent contractors, products and/or completed operations, broad form property damage and explosion, collapse and underground damage coverage, sudden and accidental pollution losses, and a contractual liability endorsement.

**Business Auto Policy:** Shall have minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence combined single limit for bodily injury liability and property damage liability. This shall include: owned vehicles, hired and non-owned vehicles and employee non-ownership.

**Professional Liability Insurance:** The selected firm will be required to furnish proof of professional liability insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.

The Town may require additional insurance coverage based on the nature of the project.

**Special Requirements:** The Town of Chapel Hill is to be named as an additional insured on the Commercial General Liability policy.

Current, valid insurance policies meeting the above requirements shall be maintained for the duration of the project. Renewal certificates shall be sent to the Town of Chapel Hill thirty (30) days prior to any expiration date. There shall also be a 30-day notification to the Town in the event of cancellation or modification of any stipulated insurance coverage. Certificates of Insurance on an Accord 25 (8/84) or similar form meeting the required insurance provisions shall be forwarded to the Town of Chapel Hill. Wording on the Certificate of Insurance which states that no liability shall be imposed upon the

company for failure to provide such notice is not acceptable. Original policies or certified copies of policies may be required by the Town at any time.

Hold Harmless: The Contractor agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Town of Chapel Hill from all loss, liability, claims or expense (including reasonable attorneys' fees) arising from bodily injury, including death or property damage to any person or persons proximately caused in whole or in part by the negligence or willful misconduct of the Contractor except to the extent same are caused by the negligence or misconduct of the Town.

## 9.0 Licensing:

NC Licensing Requirements – All individuals and firms working on this project shall be appropriately licensed under the NC laws governing their trades.

## 10.0 Philosophy Statement:

The primary function of Town of Chapel Hill facilities is to establish space and an atmosphere whereby the Town staff has the support and tools to provide excellent service to the public and other Town staff. Design and construction of the space are undertaken in a manner consistent with community and organizational values, environmental and fiscal sustainability, and open and accessible government while encouraging engagement and collaboration for all who enter those facilities. We desire our facilities to be friendly, welcoming, and safe for all.

## 11.0 Goals:

1. **Safe**: Town facilities are safe spaces that encourage employee wellness. Construction materials and design protect employees from health and human threats
2. **Functional**: Space is designed around user needs.
  - a. *Dedicated Space*: Facilities also have adequate space for specific needs like training that is not used for other purposes.
  - b. *Security*: Functions that require security and privacy are appropriately separated from non-secure areas.
3. **User-oriented**: Facilities are designed to be consistent with the Town staff's adopted "RESPECT" value statement and include a user-friendly layout that is straightforward and easy to navigate. Public areas are attractive, inviting spaces that convey professionalism and functionality.
4. **Adaptable**: New facilities or reconfigurations of existing space are designed for present and future needs. Consideration is given to potential growth and future organizational needs. Design reflects the day-to-day use of a facility as well as special and unique situations.

## 12.0 Open Records:

Information submitted to the Town of Chapel Hill is public information and is available upon request in accordance with the North Carolina Public Information Act. As provided by North Carolina statute and rule, the Town will consider keeping confidential the trade secrets which the Bidder does not wish to be disclosed. For such information, the Bidder must mark each page in boldface at the top and bottom

as “CONFIDENTIAL”. In spite of what is labeled as a trade secret, the determination whether it is or not will be determined by North Carolina General Statutes 132-1.2(1).

### **13.0 Preparation Costs:**

The Town of Chapel Hill will not pay any cost associated with the preparation, submittal, presentation, or evaluation of any statements of qualification.

### **14.0 Additional Terms and Conditions:**

All proposals and other material submitted become the property of the Town of Chapel Hill. The Town of Chapel Hill reserves the right to add terms and conditions during contract negotiations. These terms and conditions will be within the scope of the SOQ and will not affect the proposal evaluations.

#### Contract Period:

The contract resulting from this SOQ shall be effective for the fiscal years 2026 - 2029.

### **15.0 Minority and Women Owned Enterprises:**

Firm shall make a good faith effort to ensure that, whenever possible, subcontracts are awarded to minority and women’s business enterprises in accordance with Town policy. See General Conditions for additional information. The verifiable percentage goal for minority business participation for this project is 10%. The Town, as awarding authority for projects, and the contractors and subcontractors performing the contracts awarded, shall cooperate and in good faith do all things, legal, proper, and reasonable to achieve the goal of ten percent (10%) for participation by minority businesses in each project.

### **16.0 Prohibited Contract Terms:**

In no event shall there be any of the following unless Town’s express prior written agreement is obtained: (1) any limitation on, or disclaimer of, implied or express warranties or the liability of Contractor; (2) any limitation of damages, including a limitation on consequential damages; (3) any requirement for arbitration or for mandatory mediation; (4) any requirement that Town officials or employees keep information confidential or any requirement that records be kept confidential by the Town, unless the requirement for confidentiality meets the requirements of the Public Records Law.

### **17.0 E-Verify Compliance:**

The Contractor shall comply with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes. If any subcontractors are used, they also must comply with these requirements. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute § 143-133.3 (c)(2), contracts solely for the purchase of apparatus, supplies, materials, and equipment are exempt from this E-Verify provision.

## 18.0 Design-Build Team Declaration Statement:

Include a signed copy of this form in the submitted Statement of Qualifications appendix section.

1. We (the submitting Design-Build entity) certify that each licensed design-build team member including design professionals and sub-consultants included in this submittal was selected based upon demonstrated competence and qualifications in the manner provided in the State of North Carolina's General Statute on procurement of construction services (G.S. 143-64.31.)
2. We certify that our Design-Build entity's "Designer(s) of Record" have current North Carolina Architectural and/or Engineering license(s) as appropriate for their portion of the design work.
3. We certify that our Design-Build entity's "Builder" has a current North Carolina Contractor's unlimited license.
4. We certify that our firm/company will have and maintain liability insurance coverage for a total of \$1 million/occurrence & \$1 million/general aggregate for commercial general liability, and not less than \$1 million per claim for commercial business automobile liability.
5. We certify that we will have coverage for professional liability and errors and omissions by all Designer(s) of Record / Design Professionals of not less than \$5 million per claim
6. We certify that our firm has sufficient bonding capacity to provide Labor and Material Payment and Performance bonds with coverage of each equal to the total cost of the project.
7. We certify that our firm can and will obtain a Builder's Risk Insurance Policy for this project with coverage equal to the total cost of the project.
8. We certify that our firm/company/personnel have/has no potential or actual conflict of interest to report and that no relationships, transactions, circumstances or positions held are believe to contribute to any such conflict of interest.
9. I hereby certify that the information set forth in this declaration is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

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*(Authorized Signature, Title, Design-Build Entity Name and Date)*

By signature on this Qualification, responders certify that they comply with:

- a. The laws of the State of North Carolina
- b. The applicable portion of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964
- c. The Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the regulations issued there under by the federal government
- d. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government
- e. All terms and conditions set out in this RFQ
- f. A condition that the Qualification submitted was independently arrived at, without collusion, under penalty of perjury
- g. That their bids, if applicable, will remain open and valid for at least 120 days.

If any responder fails to comply with sections [a] through [g] of this paragraph, the Town of Chapel Hill reserves the right to disregard the Qualification, terminate the contract, or consider the Firm/Team in default.