



**Polk County, NC**

**Polk County Waterline Extension**

**Revised 1: March 20, 2026**

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS- ENGINEERING  
SERVICES SUBMITTAL PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS**

**OWNER:** Polk County, NC  
**RFQ NUMBER:** PC-2026-05  
**PROJECT:** Polk County Waterline Extension  
**FUNDING SOURCE:** EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant Program

**SUBMITTAL DEADLINE:** April 6, 2026 at 4:00 PM.

**SEND SUBMITTALS TO:**

**Hand Delivery:**  
Foothills Regional Commission  
ATTN: Jack Elliott  
111 West Court  
Street  
Rutherfordton, NC  
28139

**US Postal  
Service:**

PO BOX 841  
Rutherfordton, NC  
28139

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The Owner is issuing this request for qualifications (RFQ) to hire an Owner's Representative that will be responsible for completing all necessary engineering services on the following project:

The production of a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and Construction and Engineering contingent on the award of funding in accordance with the standards from the United States Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

Extension of the Polk County clean water system to extend down Peniel Road, Little Mountain Road, and Landrum Road. The extension is expected to include the installation of a 34,940 linear feet of Watermain; 14,880 linear feet down Peniel Road, 10,700 linear feet down Little Mountain Road, and 9,360 linear feet down Landrum Road.

## **2.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The full range of professional services will be further defined during project development, but may include the following: preliminary reports, design, bidding/negotiation, construction administration, resident project representation, property surveying, easement, surveying, geotechnical, special inspections, etc. All required federal contract provisions that are required by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and are applicable to the work conducted will apply.

## **3.0 SELECTION PROCESS | SCHEDULE**

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-64.31 and federal procurement guidelines, the Owner will utilize a qualifications-based selection process without consideration of fee proposals in the initial stages of selection. The selection process and schedule will be as follows:

**3.1** Advertisement - This RFQ will be advertised in *The Tryon Daily Bulletin*, the Polk County website, the Foothills Regional Commission website, and various listservs, and the RFQ will be made available to local consulting firms and those firms who have expressed an interest in the project.

**3.1.1** RFQ Package - This package represents the overall expectations of the Owner. Any changes or additional requests will be submitted to each interested party by addenda. Each firm that requests a package will need to provide a point of contact

*[email, phone, address]* and will be placed on a list of interested parties.

**3.1.2** Inquiries/Questions - Questions regarding the project or these requirements shall be directed to

**Jack Elliott, Senior Planner**

**Email: [jelliott@frcnc.gov](mailto:jelliott@frcnc.gov)**

**Phone: 828-429-6812**

**3.1.3** Inquiry/Submittal Deadlines - Any questions in regards to these RFQ submittal package requirements or related documents may be submitted 10 business days prior to the submittal deadline. The submittal deadline is shown at the beginning of this document. Clarifications and/or additional information will be provided to all interested parties by the Owner by addenda to this package.

**3.2** Short-list Selection and Interviews - The Owner's RFQ Selection Committee will evaluate the written submittals based on the criteria identified in Section 4.0 below and determine the best qualified firm for this project. The Polk County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive informalities as permitted by law.

**3.3** Fee/Cost Negotiations - Once the Owner has completed their evaluation, they will rank the most qualified firms in order. The Owner will attempt to negotiate reasonable fees with the most qualified firm. If such negotiations are not successful, the Owner will attempt to negotiate with the next most qualified firm until an agreement can be made.

#### **4.0 SELECTION CRITERIA**

The selection process shall be based on the qualification information exhibited in the written submittal, the interview process (if needed), and reference checks completed by the Owner. Firms will be evaluated on past performance and relevant experience/expertise with similar projects, the qualifications and experience of key project team members who will be actively involved in the work, and the specified details of their project approach. Key selection criteria for this project will include, but may not be limited to the following:

Relevant Experience:

1. Firm has little to no relevant experience with the generation of public sector-oriented Preliminary Engineering Reports (PERs).
2. Firm has limited relevant experience; may have worked on PERs but not primarily for public sector projects.

3. Firm has moderate relevant experience with public sector PERs; demonstrated capability but lacks breadth or depth.
4. Firm has significant experience with public sector PERs, with multiple completed projects showing strong competence.
5. Firm possesses extensive and demonstrated experience with the generation of public sector-oriented PERs, including a robust portfolio of similar work and a history of successful outcomes.

#### Team Qualifications:

1. Team is clearly inexperienced and unqualified; lacks the credentials and experience necessary for the project.
2. Team possesses some relevant experience, but lacks demonstrated competency or has limited qualifications.
3. Team appears adequately qualified with appropriate credentials, but lacks a strong record of proven performance.
4. Team appears well qualified with relevant education and experience, and has demonstrated competence on similar projects.
5. Team is fully qualified, highly experienced, and possesses excellent educational and professional credentials relevant to the project.

#### Project Management Approach:

1. Team has no standardized approach and appears disorganized; lacks a clear project management structure or methodology.
2. Team possesses a general approach, but it is somewhat vague, inconsistent, or underdeveloped.
3. Team presents a clear and structured approach, but it lacks evidence of successful implementation or testing.
4. Team demonstrates a fully defined and clearly articulated project management approach, with appropriate tools, timelines, and accountability structures.
5. Team presents an excellent, well-documented, and proven project management approach, with a strong track record of success on similar projects.

#### Speed of Delivery:

1. Team cannot meet the expected timeline of delivering Preliminary Engineering Reports (PERs) within one month.
2. Team expresses uncertainty about meeting the one-month timeline and provides no clear plan for on-time delivery.
3. Team indicates a possible ability to meet the timeline, but with some reservations or lack of demonstrated capacity.
4. Team confirms it can deliver PERs within the expected one-month timeline with a clear and feasible plan.
5. Team demonstrates the ability to consistently deliver PERs on or ahead of the one-month timeline, with a proven track record or built-in efficiencies.

## **5.0 SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

**All costs for development of the written submittal and the oral presentation (if needed) are entirely the obligation of the submitting entity and shall not be remunerated in any manner by the Owner.**

**The submittal shall be provided on 8.5” x 11” paper with a maximum of 25 pages (not including front or back covers, table of contents and cover letter). Four (4) hardcopies of each submittal will be needed. The below outline shall be followed as a template for the report and the overall information that is expected with each submittal:**

- A brief history of the firm, including general background, knowledge of and experience working with relevant agencies and programs;
- Related experience in managing federally-funded local projects, in particular recent experience;
- A description of work performance and experience with similar projects including a list of at least three references from past local government clients, with information describing the relevancy of the previous performance;
- Describe which specific parts of the Scope of Work the service provider proposes to perform and which parts shall be completed by subcontractors;
- Describe the capacity to perform the chosen Scope of Work activities as well as resumes of all employees who may be assigned to provide services if your firm is selected, identifying current employees and proposed hires; and
- A statement substantiating the resources of the service provider and the ability to carry out the scope of work requested within the proposed timeline.

## **6.0 MISCELLANEOUS REQUIREMENTS**

6.1 Insurance - The Owner will expect the following insurance coverage during the life of the potential contract: Professional Error & Omissions, Automobile Liability, Commercial General Liability, Worker's Compensation, etc. with minimum limits of \$1,000,000.00.

6.2 Additional Information - The owner reserves the right to request additional information or clarification of information provided in the response without changing the terms of this RFQ.

6.2 Confidentiality - In general, documents that are submitted as part of the response to this RFQ will become public records and will be subject to public disclosure. North Carolina General Statutes Section 132-1.2 and 66-152

provide a method for protecting some documents from public disclosure. If the architectural/engineering consultant firm follows the procedures prescribed by those statutes and designates a document "confidential" or "trade secret", the Owner will withhold the document from public disclosure to the extent that it is entitled or required to do so by applicable law.

- 6.3 Federal and State Requirements – This solicitation is for services that will be funded by Economic Development Administration (EDA) and The State of North Carolina and therefore all contracted consultants and subconsultants must be eligible to receive federal funds as provided by 2 CFR 200.
- 6.4 Statement of Conflicts of Interest - (if any) the service provider or key employees may have regarding these services, and a plan for mitigating the conflict(s). Note that the Owner may in its sole discretion determine whether a conflict disqualifies a firm, and/or whether or not a conflict mitigation plan is acceptable.
- 6.5 System for Award Management - Service provider and its Principals, may not be debarred or suspended nor otherwise on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM). Include verification that the service provider as well as its principals are not listed (are not debarred) through the System for Award Management ([www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov)). Enclose a printout of the search results that includes the record date.
- 6.6 Contracting with small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms - Polk County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs), minority-owned, women-owned, and small businesses are encouraged to participate. Small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to participate in this RFQ. If the awarded vendor is a prime contractor and may use subcontractors, the following affirmative steps are required of the prime contractor:
- 1) Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;
  - 2) Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
  - 3) Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises;
  - 4) Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises;
  - 5) Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) of the Department of

Commerce.

