



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
FOR  
PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES

**BERTIE COUNTY**

106 Dundee Street  
Windsor, NC 27983

[John.rawls@bertie.nc.gov](mailto:John.rawls@bertie.nc.gov)

Date Issued: Friday, December 19, 2025

Date Due: January 21, 2026

Administered By: John Rawls, Emergency Services Director

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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▪ <b>Advertisement</b> .....	<b>3</b>
▪ <b>Project Overview</b> .....	<b>4</b>
▪ <b>Scope of Work</b> .....	<b>4</b>
▪ <b>Project Schedule</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Milestones .....	5
▪ <b>Evaluation Criteria</b> .....	<b>6</b>
▪ <b>Submittal Instructions</b> .....	<b>7</b>
▪ <b>Submittal Requirements</b> .....	<b>8</b>
▪ <b>Terms and Conditions</b> .....	<b>9</b>
▪ <b>Additional Information</b> .....	<b>11</b>
▪ <b>APPENDIX A</b> .....	<b>12</b>

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)**  
**Bertie County, NC**

Bertie County seeks qualifications from qualified architectural firms to provide professional architectural design services for multiple Fire/EMS facilities funded under the County's \$5.5M Emergency Management Grant. The full RFQ, including scope of work and submission requirements, is available on the Bertie County website at <http://www.co.bertie.nc.us/>.

Contact for Questions and Submissions:

John Rawls  
Emergency Services Director  
Bertie County  
106 Dundee Street  
Windsor, NC 27983  
Email: [John.rawls@bertie.nc.gov](mailto:John.rawls@bertie.nc.gov)  
Cell: 252-724-1675

Responses to this RFQ must be received no later than: 5:00 P.M. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026.

Bertie County reserves the right to reject any offer for failure to comply with all requirements of this notice or of any of the contract documents; however, it may waive any minor defects or informalities at its discretion. Bertie County further reserves the right to reject all offers or award a contract which, in its judgment, is in the best interest of the County. All Minority, Woman and Small Businesses are strongly encouraged to apply.

**December 19, 2025**

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**Professional Architectural Design Services**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

## INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

Bertie County seeks qualifications from architectural firms to provide professional design services for multiple Fire and EMS facilities funded by the County's 2024 Emergency Management Grant. Projects include two new facilities in the Lewiston-Woodville and Merry Hill/Midway communities, as well as the renovation and expansion of the existing Merry Hill/Midway Fire Department facility to accommodate additional apparatus bays, equipment, and staff quarters. The resulting plans will be used by the County to procure construction services in later phases.

## PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm will provide architectural design services for multiple Fire and EMS facilities funded under Bertie County's 2024 Emergency Management Grant. Projects include new substations and facility expansions in priority areas identified for improved response times, hazardous-materials mitigation, and increased emergency shelter capacity. The firm will prepare permit-ready construction documents and material specifications across all required disciplines, including architectural, structural, civil, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, and site planning. All work must comply with applicable North Carolina building codes and regulatory requirements.

Bertie County will provide available reference materials, site information, and any conceptual documentation developed to date. The selected firm is responsible for independently evaluating all background materials, addressing code requirements and design enhancements, and producing complete design documents suitable for permitting and public bidding.

Note: This RFQ is limited to architectural design services. Construction administration, project management, and owner's representative services are not included. All resulting plans, specifications, and design documents will become the property of Bertie County for subsequent construction procurement.

### Proposed Sites

- Lewiston Woodville, NC – site to be determined
- Merry Hill/Midway Fire Station – 109 NC-45, Merry Hill, NC 27957
- Merry Hill/Midway Substation – site to be determined

See Appendix A for images.

**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS  
Professional Architectural Design Services  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**PROJECT SCHEDULE/MILESTONES**

Bertie County intends for this project to proceed on an accelerated schedule. Firms should propose realistic timelines consistent with the fast-track expectations outlined below. All dates are approximate and subject to adjustment based on the contract award date.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Target Duration</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>RFQ Release</b>	Day 0	RFQ posted publicly on Bertie County webpage.
<b>RFQ Response Deadline</b>	4 weeks	All proposals must be received by the County.
<b>RFQ Evaluation</b>	1 week	Selection Committee evaluates submittals, may request clarifications.
<b>Contract Award</b>	1 week	Notification to selected firm and contract execution.
<b>Project Kickoff/ Review Reference Drawings</b>	1 week	Architect reviews reference documents, and County-provided background materials.
<b>Preliminary / Schematic Design</b>	1–2 weeks	Develop initial plans for each facility, including layout, bays, utilities, and interior spaces.
<b>County Review of Preliminary Plans</b>	Concurrent	County staff review preliminary plans; feedback incorporated immediately.
<b>Final Construction Documents (Permit-Ready)</b>	3–4 weeks	Architect produces complete code-compliant construction documents suitable for bidding and permitting.
<b>County Review &amp; Final Revisions</b>	1 week	Final adjustments based on County comments; submission of final plans.
<b>Final Deliverables</b>	N/A	Complete permit-ready construction documents delivered.

**Notes for Firms:**

- Conceptual or reference drawings provided by Bertie County are included for guidance only. The selected firm is responsible for developing construction documents meeting all applicable North Carolina building codes and regulatory requirements.
- Timeframes should account for County review periods and necessary coordination with regulatory authorities.
- Firms should propose any adjustments to the schedule that would help accelerate delivery without compromising quality or compliance.

**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS  
Professional Architectural Design Services  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**PROPOSAL PACKAGE EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The considerations below, with their weighted scores, will be utilized for selection of the firm. Selection will be made after thorough review conducted by a Bertie County panel. Actual interviews may be conducted after review of the initial responses by interested firms.

1. The firm’s recent experience, knowledge, and familiarity in the design of similar fire station expansions, public safety facilities, apparatus bay additions, or comparable public-sector building projects. Evaluation will also consider the firm’s ability to integrate owner design preferences. **25%**
  
2. The experience and credentials of the staff to be assigned to this project. Emphasis will be placed on staff who have successfully delivered similar projects within established budgets and with minimal change orders attributable to design. **20%**
  
3. Clarity and completeness of the firm’s approach to delivering the required architectural services. **20%**
  
4. Demonstrated capacity to deliver fast-track work. Evaluation focuses on current workload, staffing resources, and historical performance meeting aggressive design timelines. **25%**
  
5. The firm’s ethical and professional standing and satisfactory performance on previous contracts including a positive client relationship, commitment to the project budget and sufficient supervision of the construction project. **10%**

**Additional Notes:**

- Price will not be considered in the selection process; however, Bertie County reserves the right to terminate negotiations with the selected firm and proceed to another firm if fee discussions fail.
- Selection will be based on the entirety of the information submitted.
- Bertie County reserves the right to award projects in a manner that best serves the County’s interests

**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS  
Professional Architectural Design Services  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

All proposals should be submitted to:

John Rawls  
Emergency Services Director  
Bertie County  
106 Dundee Street  
Windsor, NC 27983  
Email: John.rawls@bertie.nc.gov

**Title on Package:** Request for Qualifications Submittal – *Professional Architectural Services for Bertie County Fire & EMS*

**Submissions are due by:** Wednesday, January 21, 2026 no later than 5:00 P.M.

Each firm is solely responsible for the timely delivery of its Proposal Package. No Proposal Packages will be accepted after the deadline. Firms accept all risks of late delivery of Proposal Packages regardless of fault.

**Questions:** All questions or requests for information must be submitted in writing via email to Emergency Services Director, John Rawls at john.rawls@bertie.nc.gov. All questions must be submitted by Friday, January 16 2026, to allow the County to issue addenda if necessary. Only written clarifications or revisions issued as addenda on the Bertie County website <http://www.co.bertie.nc.us/> are binding. Firms are responsible for monitoring the website for addenda and must acknowledge receipt of all addenda with their submission.

**Proposal Package Format:** Firms are responsible for monitoring the website for addenda and must acknowledge receipt of all addenda with their submission. Please limit the package to twenty-five (25) pages, 8.5” x 11”. Front and back printing is acceptable; each side counts as a page. Cover letters, table of contents, and tab dividers (if any) do not count toward the page limit. Please provide one (1) original bound and two (2) bound hard copies of the qualification packages, as well as one (1) .pdf copy of the qualification package sent to john.rawls@bertie.nc.gov.

**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS**  
**Professional Architectural Design Services**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

If your firm would like to be considered for providing the required services for Bertie County, please provide the following:

1. Cover letter (1 page) expressing interest in providing these services. The letter should address what makes the firm/team uniquely qualified to provide these services. The cover letter must also acknowledge any addenda issued as a part of this project. All addenda will be issued via the Bertie County webpage <http://www.co.bertie.nc.us/>.
2. Project Approach (max 10 pages) Describe your firm's approach to producing bid-ready documents for each identified facility, including methods for ensuring compliance with NC building codes, ADA requirements, and applicable municipal and fire-station standards.
3. Project Team & Organization (1 page + resumes) Include an organizational chart identifying the key personnel that will be assigned to the project, including the lead architect and supporting staff. This should be a single page organization chart.
4. Location & Capacity Provide the office location of the lead architect and any offices where work will be performed.
5. Resumes for project team members. These should be concise (1 page each) for key members only, highlighting relevant fire station / municipal projects (limit projects to past 5 years).
6. Project Summary Table of all example projects included above, showing original project budget estimate, actual original contract amount, change order amounts and final adjusted contract amount. Scope changes may be noted to explain additions or deletions to the original bid scope.
7. Anticipated Project Schedule Provide an anticipated schedule for architectural services, including estimated timeframes
  - a. Review of reference information;
  - b. Preparation of preliminary plans and specifications
  - c. Coordination meetings with County staff;
  - d. Preparation of final documents suitable for permitting;
  - e. Delivery of final documents ready for public bidding

\*\*\*NOTE: Time should be built in at each benchmark for cost estimates during design phases.
8. Subconsultants Identify any subconsultants proposed and the services each firm would provide.
9. Licensure and Professional Standing Provide the firm's North Carolina architectural license number and applicable licensure for any subconsultants. Disclose any material professional claims or disciplinary actions within the past five (5) years.
10. Insurance Firms shall acknowledge their ability to meet the insurance requirements outlined in the Terms and Conditions. Certificates of insurance will be required prior to contract execution.



**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS  
Professional Architectural Design Services  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**Non-Discrimination**

Bertie County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or genetic information. Any firm submitting qualifications affirms that it complies with all applicable federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws and will not discriminate in the performance of services under any resulting contract.

**Non-Collusion**

By submitting a response, the proposer certifies that the qualifications package is submitted independently, without collusion, fraud, or any other intentional misconduct with any other firm or individual. The proposer certifies the submission was not prepared in consultation or agreement with any competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.

**Governing Law & Venue**

Any contract resulting from this RFQ shall be governed by the laws of the State of North Carolina. Any legal actions or proceedings arising from the contract shall be brought in a court of competent jurisdiction in Bertie County, North Carolina.

**Acceptance or Rejection of Responses**

Bertie County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all qualifications, to waive minor informalities or technicalities, and to award the contract in the best interest of the County. The County may request additional information from any proposer if necessary for clarification.

**E-Verify Compliance**

In accordance with Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes, the selected firm must certify that it and any subcontractors comply with the E-Verify requirements. Submission of qualifications constitutes such certification.

**Conflict of Interest**

The proposer affirms that no officer, employee, or agent of Bertie County has any financial or personal interest in the firm or in the services being proposed. Any potential conflict of interest must be disclosed.

**Withdrawal of Qualifications**

Responses may not be withdrawn after the RFQ submission deadline. All submissions shall remain valid for thirty (30) days from the due date unless extended by mutual written agreement.

**Services Performed and Indemnification**

The selected firm shall perform all services at its own risk and shall indemnify and hold harmless Bertie County, its officers, agents, and employees from and against any claims, damages, losses, or expenses—including attorney's fees—arising out of or resulting from the firm's performance of services, except to the extent caused by the County's sole negligence.

**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS**  
**Professional Architectural Design Services**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**Independent Contractor Status**

The selected firm shall be an independent contractor and not an employee or agent of Bertie County. As such, the firm and its employees are not entitled to County benefits such as insurance, retirement, or workers' compensation coverage.

**No Verbal Agreements**

Bertie County will not be bound by any verbal agreements. Only written agreements, amendments, and contract documents approved by the County are enforceable.

**Insurance Requirements**

The selected firm shall maintain insurance coverage at its own expense for the duration of the contract, including:

- *Commercial General Liability*: \$1,000,000 per occurrence, naming Bertie County as an additional insured.
- *Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions)*: Minimum \$1,000,000 per claim.
- *Workers' Compensation*: As required by the State of North Carolina.
- *Employers' Liability*: Not less than \$1,000,000 per accident and per disease category.
- *Automobile Liability*: Minimum \$1,000,000 per accident, covering owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles.

Certificates of insurance shall be provided to Bertie County prior to contract execution.

**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS  
Professional Architectural Design Services  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RFQ

**Selection Committee**

A Selection Committee will evaluate the information submitted. Interviews with short-listed firms are anticipated, but are not mandatory. Please do not contact any other Bertie County staff member other than the designated contact person; Emergency Services Director, John Rawls, regarding the project contemplated under this RFQ while this RFQ is open and a selection has not been finalized. Any attempt to do so may result in disqualification of the firm's submittal for consideration.

**Public Records**

All materials submitted in response to this RFQ become the property of Bertie County and are subject to public disclosure under North Carolina public records law, except for information that qualifies as a "trade secret" under N.C.G.S. 66-152.

Firms wishing to designate portions of their submission as trade secret must:

1. Submit such materials in a separate, sealed envelope clearly labeled: *"Trade Secret – Confidential and Proprietary. Do Not Disclose Except for Evaluation Purposes."*
2. Mark each page within the envelope with the same designation.

Bertie County may share properly-designated trade secret materials with staff, officials, and third-party evaluators involved in the selection process. Firms who mark their entire submission as trade secret may be deemed non-responsive.

**Clarification of Submittal**

Bertie County reserves the right to obtain clarification of any item in a firm's proposal or to obtain additional information.

**Conditions and Reservations**

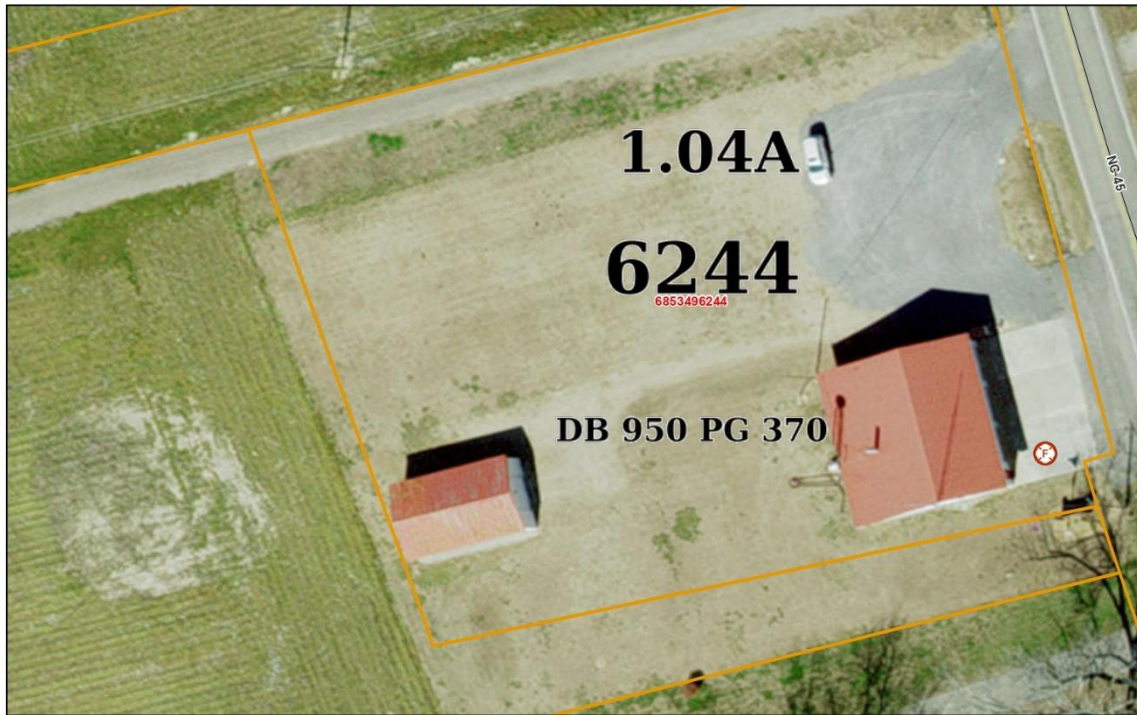
Bertie County anticipates selecting one (1) firm but reserves the right to request substitutions of consultants if necessary. The County may reject any or all submissions, waive informalities, or re-advertise if deemed in the County's best interest. Submission of Qualifications shall not be construed as a contract or a commitment to enter into agreement. Bertie County is not responsible for any costs incurred in preparing responses or participating in this RFQ process. No contractual obligation exists until a final written contract is executed by both Bertie County and the selected firm.

# APPENDIX A

**Proposed Location (1):** Expansion/Renovation of Merry Hill VFD

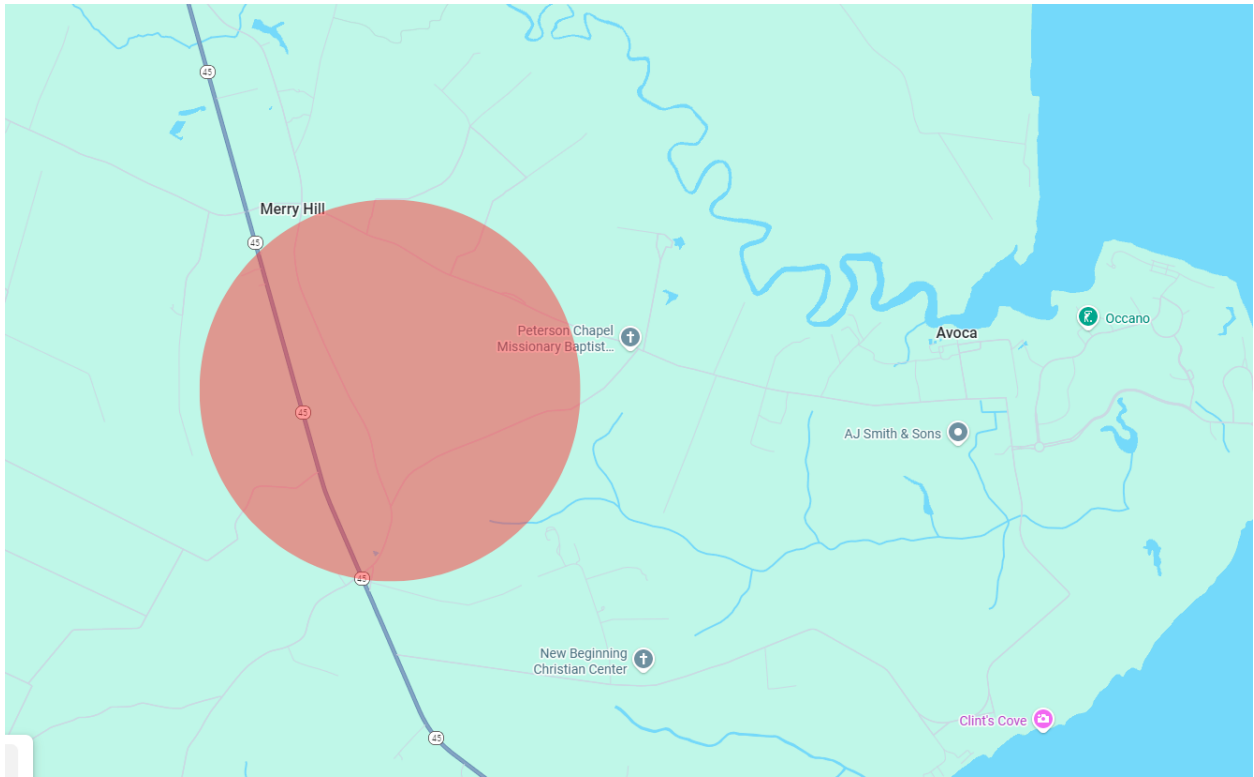
109 NC-45, Merry Hill, NC 27957

Merry Hill/Midway VFD



**Bertie County, NC | Fire & EMS  
Professional Architectural Design Services  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**Proposed Location (2):** Substation in Merry Hill/Midway  
*site location TBD*



**Proposed Location (3):** Construction of Fire Station in Lewiston-Woodville  
*site location TBD*

