

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
COUNTY OF JACKSON**

**COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND
RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

December 2024



JACKSON COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Prepared by:

County of Jackson, NC

Parks and Recreation Department

Deadline for RFQ Submittal Question Date: 5:00 P.M., December 6, 2024

RFQ Submittal Date: 3:00 P.M., December 20, 2024

INTRODUCTION

The County of Jackson is seeking a qualified Recreation Planning Consultant to prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to be adopted. This plan will be used as a guide to meet the County's recreation facility and service needs over the next 10 years.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This contract will encompass all aspects of recreation planning including collection of data, analysis of existing services and facilities in the County, coordination of staff and public input, goals and policy formulation, document preparation (including maps and visual enhancements), implementation plan, cost analysis, and presentation to the County. The Parks and Recreation Department Director will support the successful consultant and will be responsible for reviewing and recommending changes as the consultant develops the plan.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The consultant shall complete standard tasks necessary for the development of a 10-year Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan that is in conformance with the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund requirements for grant submittal and other necessary tasks that may arise.

Consultant shall provide supporting maps, graphs, and charts to illustrate data as needed.

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

- Consultant will compile a comprehensive inventory and assessment of existing recreational programs, parks, and facilities provided throughout the community by other private and public organizations, in addition to those provided by the County.
 - The inventory should evaluate existing levels of recreation and program services within the County (both public and private) to determine adequacy of current recreation opportunities for all County residents. Recreation inventory should be assessed to evaluate current and future service levels.
 - The inventory shall identify existing trails, greenways, and natural areas that the County is using for access, recreation, and open space purposes.
 - The inventory shall identify land that can serve as potential park system acquisitions for County parks or recreation facility development opportunities within the community.
 - The inventory shall identify County ADA access barriers to parks, facilities, and services.
- For parks and recreation facilities managed by the County, the consultant will identify existing amenities (e.g. ballfields, courts, restrooms, playgrounds, etc.) The amenities shall be further evaluated to identify their existing condition, service level, and lifecycle cost estimates.
- The consultant should review existing staff, parks maintenance division, and recreation division, and provide an evaluation of current staffing levels and organizational structure.
- The consultant should provide an overview of Parks and Recreation programs run by

counties of a similar nature (population, wealth, and location) to Jackson County.

TASK 2: County Demographics

- Provide an evaluation of current and projected demographic and sociological factors pertinent to Jackson County, including composition of the population, population projections and trends, economic factors, and land use patterns.

TASK 3: Community Input

- Create and conduct a community needs survey to determine specific desires of the public in reference to Parks and Recreation.
 - Community Needs Survey shall be approved by the County.
 - The survey shall determine current levels of participation and public satisfaction with existing programs and recreation facilities and the public's willingness to fund expanded programs and services.
- Two (2) public workshops to engage the public and solicit input and priorities for parks, recreation, and facility services.
- Four (4) focus group interviews
- Work Session with County Commissioners

TASK 4: Funding Evaluation

- Consultant shall identify and analyze existing funding practices, sources of funds, and funding levels for parks, recreation, and services.
- Evaluate current funding stability.
- Programs and rental fee study analysis.

TASK 5: Recommendations

- The consultant should develop an action plan based on the survey, public meetings, and data collected. The action plan shall include program opportunities, facility needs, land acquisition, and recommendations for specific areas of the County where facilities should be located. Action plan shall include:
 - Priorities for capital construction, facility renovations, and land acquisition based on 5-year, 10-year, and a longer term.
 - Recommendations for facilities and programs related to recreation tourism and economic development.
 - Analysis of the costs to construct or renovate any facilities.
 - Recommendations concerning methods of financing projected needs including, but not limited to, grants, bond referendums, land dedication ordinances, user fees and impact fees.
 - Staffing analysis

DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables will be due to Jackson County:

- Ten (10) copies of the final comprehensive master plan and one (1) electronic copy

Final Comprehensive Master Plan Format

- Plan document shall be in an 8.5" x 11" format with 11" x 17" map fold-outs if needed. The master plan document shall be well-organized and soft cover bound.
- Electronic copies of all maps, which can be edited by staff.
- Format all materials for seamless placement on the County webpage.

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS RESPONSE FORMAT

The Statement of Qualifications should follow the format outline in this section. Submittals shall not exceed 20 pages including front and back cover, dividing tabs, and cover letter. Page count does not include dividing tabs if used. All pages shall be 8.5" x 11".

Cover Letter: The cover letter should be a clear and concise introduction to identify the firm's primary contact person for the SOQ and summarize why the County should select your firm for this project.

1. Individual Consultant or Firm Information
 - a. Firm's legal name, address, and contact information
2. Recreation Planning Consultant Experience:
 - a. Description of Consultant/Firm's prior experience, including similar projects in mountain communities and experience in North Carolina conducting public meetings/gathering community input from the past 5 years. For each project, include size of community, location, and name of local official knowledgeable regarding the firm's performance.
 - b. Description of firm's experience working with and securing PARTF and other funding sources. If applicable, provide examples of previous projects to demonstrate the firm's experience securing funding.
 - c. Resumes that show the experience and technical competence of individual staff members who are assigned to this project.
 - d. Six recent project references
3. Consultant/Firm Capability
 - a. Description of Consultant/Firm's current work activities,
 - b. Consultant/Firm's anticipated availability during the term of the project.
4. Schedule
 - a. Indicate a proposed schedule with milestones.
5. Project Approach
 - a. Include a description of how your firm plans to implement and move forward with our Plan.

Please submit three (4) hard copies of the Statement of Qualifications

Qualifications due by 3 p.m. December 20, 2024

Responses should submit package by either mail or hand delivery to:

- a) Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department
Department Attn: Michael Hopkins
88 Cullowhee Mountain Road, Cullowhee, NC 28723
- b) Responses must be received no later than **3:00 P.M. EST on Friday, December 20, 2024**. Respondents mailing their statements must allow sufficient time for delivery of their submittal by the time and date specified. Late responses will not be accepted.
- c) Submittals sent by facsimile or email will not be accepted.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCEDURE:

Submittals deemed responsive to the requirements of this RFQ will be evaluated by a committee and scored in accordance with Jackson County's internal evaluation criteria. Qualifications will be evaluated on a competitive basis using the following criteria:

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| 1. Qualifications of Firm or Individual Consultant | 10 points |
| 2. Experience and Reputation of Planning Team | 20 points |
| 3. Experience with Recreation Planning in Mountain Communities | 20 points |
| 4. Public involvement strategy | 20 points |
| 5. Experience with PARTF, CAMA funding | 10 points |
| 6. Experience with recreation operations/management | 10 points |
| 7. Experience conducting public meetings and gathering public input | 10 points |

The selection committee will score the received Statement of Qualifications and may conduct interviews. The County of Jackson reserves the right to negotiate a scope of services and price proposal with the best qualified firm(s). If a scope and fee cannot be reached, the County may negotiate with the next most qualified firm. The advertising of this RFQ does not assure award. The County reserves the right to modify responses, in whole or in part, and otherwise reserves the right to waive irregularities or cancel the RFQ.

The County reserves the right to reject any and all submittals either in whole or in part. The County also reserves the right to (1) amend, modify, or withdraw this solicitation; (2) revise any requirement of this solicitation; (3) require supplemental statements or information from any responsible party; (4) extend the deadline for submission of responses hereto; (5) negotiate or hold discussions with any firm and to correct deficient responses which do not conform to the instructions herein; (6) cancel, or reissue in whole or in part, this solicitation, if the County determines in its sole discretion that it is in its best interest to do so; and, (7) extend the term of any agreement on terms consistent with this procurement.

The County of Jackson is an Equal Opportunity Employer and invites the submission of qualifications from minority and women-owned firms and other historically underutilized businesses.

RESTRICTIONS ON COMMUNICATION:

1. Respondents are prohibited from communicating with elected County officials and their staff regarding the RFQ, RFP, Statements of Qualifications, or Proposals from the time the solicitation has been released until the contract is posted as a County agenda item.

Respondents are prohibited from communicating with County employees, or any outside County consultant(s) assisting in the solicitation process, from the time the solicitation has been released until the contract is awarded. These restrictions extend to “thank you” letters, phone calls, emails, and any contact that results in the direct or indirect discussion of the solicitation and/or Qualification Statement/Proposal submitted by Respondents. Violation of this provision by Respondent and/or its agent may lead to disqualification of Respondent’s submittal from consideration. Exceptions to the restrictions on communication with County employees include:

- a) Respondents may submit written questions concerning this RFQ to the Staff Contact Person listed below until no later than **5 p.m., EST, on Friday, December 6, 2024.** Questions received after the stated deadline will not be answered. It is suggested that all questions be sent by electronic mail to:

Michael Hopkins
Director, Parks and Recreation Department
County of Jackson
michaelhopkins@jacksonnc.org

Respondents may provide responses to questions asked of them by the Staff Contact Person after responses are received and opened. During any interviews, verbal questions and explanations will be permitted. The County reserves the right to exclude any persons from such selection committee meetings as it deems in its best interests.