

# Northampton County Workforce Housing Development Request for Qualifications

*October 3, 2023*

***Request for Qualification Deadline: October 20, 2023***

***Candidate Pool Selection: October 27, 2023***

***Request for Proposal Deadline: December 31, 2023***





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## INTRODUCTION

Northampton County (the “County”) is pleased to announce a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) development opportunity (hereafter referred to as the “Project Site”) located in Jackson, North Carolina. The County seeks experienced affordable housing development teams meeting the qualifications described in this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) that have demonstrated their ability to design, build, and manage quality workforce housing projects. This RFQ seeks creative proposals that best serve the public good, meet local workforce housing needs and ensure the best public use of valuable County assets. While the dates and schedule stated in this RFQ represent the County’s preferred timetable, they shall not be considered binding upon the County. In addition, the submission of a proposal in response to this RFQ shall not be binding upon the County nor construed as a contract with or commitment by the County.

### ***The Project Site***

Northampton County Parcel (No. 02-02361)

NC Highway 305 (north of the Town of Jackson)

10.01 Acres

Map Reference: Plat Book 46, Page 198, Northampton County Registry



## BACKGROUND

In 2021, the County adopted the 2040 Northampton County Comprehensive Plan which includes in-depth considerations and analysis of demographics, economy, and infrastructure (reference [http://www.northamptonnc.com/how\\_do\\_i\\_\(faq\)/ordinances\\_and\\_policies.php#revize\\_document\\_center\\_rz822](http://www.northamptonnc.com/how_do_i_(faq)/ordinances_and_policies.php#revize_document_center_rz822)). As noted in this plan, County leadership recognizes that part of the County's growth must include housing that meets the needs of the current and future workforce. Recent data shows that the Household Median Income level in Northampton County is among the lowest of all North Carolina counties, ranking 95<sup>th</sup> among the State's 100 counties. In 2021, per Census data, Household Median Income stood at \$62,891 for the State of North Carolina and \$39,764 for Northampton County. These income figures reflect circumstances where many households have difficulty finding and securing housing within affordable ranges. As Northampton County moves into the future, with promising prospects for job growth, attention is needed to support initiatives aimed at increasing the County's inventory of affordable housing in locations with proximity to potential job growth.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The primary goal for this Project Site is to attract and retain skilled labor resources through quality and affordable housing opportunities.

### ***Development Objectives***

The County seeks knowledgeable, financially sound and experienced developers of workforce housing that will meet the current and future needs of those earning between 80% and 120% of the County's median family income of \$39,764, which would include most of the County's employees, public law enforcement officers and schoolteachers. The County will also require that at least 20% of the units are affordable for workers who earn less than 80% of the median income.

The County understands that financial constraints and other factors may preclude the development to include only workforce housing. To support developers' access to other funding streams, the development could have some mix of housing including workforce, market rate and/or federally subsidized affordable housing for those households earning less than 80% of area median income. Some units may be reserved for and/or generally available to special needs households, including seniors, disabled adults, homeless or at-risk households or other types of households.

### ***High-Quality Development with Community Engagement***

Development of the Project Site must include high quality design, materials and construction. The architectural character must meet community expectations by seeking community input on the project's physical and aesthetic look. The Project should be attractive, functional and compatible with the character of the immediate area and larger community.

### ***Sustainable & Energy Efficient with Universal Design***

The County expects that the Project will achieve sustainability and energy efficiency goals that exceed the minimum requirements of the North Carolina State Building Code. The Project should use environmental conscious and sustainable principles in project design and construction. The Developer should consider Universal Design features to allow accessibility for all. Additionally, to the extent possible, the Project should follow Best Management Practices to limit negative environmental impacts.

### ***Timeline***

The County seeks to have the Project Site developed as soon as is practicable. RFQs will be assessed on the practicality of timeliness and the Developer's demonstrated adherence to time schedules, as well as its ability to obtain all necessary plan approvals, financing and construction commitments so that construction may commence as soon as possible.

## **EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

The Northampton County Board of Commissioners has ultimate responsibility for determining the responsiveness of the proposals and selection on a pool of qualified development companies with the assistance of County staff and consultants, as needed. There is no guarantee that the County will select any of the respondents to develop the Project and any proposals shall be submitted at the proposer's sole risk and cost. County staff will evaluate qualifications received by the submittal deadline based on the applicants' qualifications to address the goals and objectives of this RFQ. Staff evaluations will be advisory to the County Manager, but shall not limit the County's discretion in final selection of a Developer, and may not be appealed by the proposers or any other party for any reason.

Candidates selected for the qualified developer pool will be invited to submit detailed proposals and, if successful, enter into an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the County. The ENA will allow the selected Developer reasonable time, with possibility for limited extension of the term under certain circumstances, to complete its due diligence on the Project Site (including surveys, environmental and suitability studies), conduct initial community outreach and other predevelopment tasks, prepare conceptual designs, and, once the due diligence phase has ended, apply for building permits for the project. If federal funding is included in the proposal's financing plan, the agency providing those federal funds will be required to complete federal environmental review under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). Following Commissioners' approval of the ENA, the selected Developer will be authorized to work with County staff to conduct due diligence predevelopment activities. The County reserves the right to request additional information from applicants, reject any and all submittals, waive any irregularities in the submittal requirements, or cancel, suspend or amend the provisions of this RFQ at any time.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Submittal Requirements***

Submissions shall include the following:

1. **Experience:** Briefly describe the overall experience of the Company as it relates to workforce and/or affordable housing development. Provide a list of current and prior development projects. Include the project location, number of units, number of affordable units, number of years under company's management (if applicable), name and address of the property owner and current vacancy rates. Also, include the Company's specific roles and responsibilities in the project to include site planning, engineering, construction, financing, and post-construction management.

Consideration will be given to the capacity and experience of the development and

management team, including:

- A proven track record of developing and maintaining workforce and affordable housing projects inside or outside of the County and North Carolina, with preference given to non-profit organizations who have completed similar projects;
- The applicant's experience maintaining long-term affordability for projects and/or programs; and
- Evaluation of the creditworthiness and fiscal management of the Developer to ensure acceptable financial capacity.

2. **Project Description:** Provide a preliminary narrative description of the general development concept proposed for the selected Project Site, addressing the details noted in the *Project Objective* and *Site Description* Sections of this RFQ, such as unit mix, target clientele, financing plan, timeline etc. Describe how the proposed concept addresses the objectives listed in this RFQ. Renderings or graphic portrayals of the proposed project and/or preliminary site plans may also be included.

### ***Submittal Deadline***

By 5:00pm EST on **October 20, 2023**, proposals must be delivered electronically:

Northampton County Economic Development Commission

Attn: Derrick Bennett, Economic Development Director

Email Submittal: [derrick.bennett@nhcn.net](mailto:derrick.bennett@nhcn.net)

[Julian.phillips@nhcnc.net](mailto:Julian.phillips@nhcnc.net)

### ***Legal Matters***

All legal rights and obligations between the Developer, if any, and the County will come into existence only when a Contract is fully executed by the parties and approved by the Commissioners. Each respondent to this RFQ agrees that the preparation of all materials for submittal to the County and all presentations are at the respondent's sole cost and expense, and the County shall not, under any circumstances, be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by a respondent. In addition, each respondent agrees that all documentation and materials submitted with their proposal shall remain the property of the County.

### ***Public Records***

All documents submitted in response to this RFQ will be considered public and will be made available to the public upon request. Proposals received may be posted on the County's website as part of the review process. Do not submit any information to this RFQ that you wish to keep confidential.

### ***Equal Opportunity***

The non-discrimination clause contained in Section 202 (Federal) Executive Order 11246, as amended by Executive Order 11375, relative to Equal Employment Opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex or national origin, and the implementing rules and regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor, are incorporated herein. The applicant agrees not to discriminate against any employees or applicant for employment because of physical or mental handicap in regard to any position for which the employees or applicant is qualified. The applicant agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment and otherwise treat qualified handicapped individuals

without discrimination based upon their physical or mental handicap in all employment practices. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-48, the County encourages small contractors, minority contractors, physically handicapped contractors, and women contractors to submit proposals in response to this RFQ.

***Compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act***

All transactions regarding this Project shall be done in compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141-3144, and 3146-3148) and the requirements of 29 C.F.R. pt. 5 as may be applicable. The Developer shall comply with 40 U.S.C. 3141-3144, and 3146-3148 and the requirements of 29 C.F.R. pt. 5 as applicable. Contractors are required to pay wages to laborers and mechanics at a rate not less than the prevailing wages specified in a wage determination made by the U.S. Secretary of Labor. Additionally, contractors are required to pay wages not less than once a week.

***Indemnity***

The successful Developer shall indemnify and hold the County, its agents and employees, harmless against any and all claims, demands, causes of action, or other liability, including attorney fees, on account of personal injuries or death or on account of property damages arising out of or relating to the work to be performed by the successful Developer hereunder, resulting from the negligence of or the willful act or omission of the Developer, its agents, employees and subcontractors.

**CONTACTS AND RESOURCES**

All questions regarding the RFQ can be addressed to the following individuals.

Derrick Bennett, Economic Developer – [derrick.bennett@nhcnc.net](mailto:derrick.bennett@nhcnc.net)

Julian Phillips, County Manager - [Julian.Phillips@nhcnc.net](mailto:Julian.Phillips@nhcnc.net)