



## Request for Qualifications

### Haywood County Project Development Planning

**Proposals due by 3:00PM EST on June 24, 2026**

*Issued by: Visit Haywood / Haywood County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA)*

*RFQ Issue Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2026*



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## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**\*\*PLEASE DIRECT ANY AND ALL CORRESPONDENCE AND QUESTIONS IN WRITING TO CORRINA RUFFIEUX ONLY\*\***

## **RFQ OVERVIEW**

The Haywood County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA), doing business as Visit Haywood, in partnership with Haywood County and the Towns of Canton, Clyde, Lake Junaluska, Maggie Valle and Waynesville, is soliciting proposals from qualified planning, landscape architecture, engineering, and/or multidisciplinary firms to provide professional services for preliminary design, cost estimation, and grant-ready project development throughout Haywood County.

HCTDA will serve as the contracting entity and project manager for this effort.

## **PROJECT PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to select a qualified firm (or team) to assist Haywood County and its municipal partners in advancing priority tourism-related recreational infrastructure projects from concept to implementation readiness. This represents a unique opportunity to both formulate a flood-resilient future and strategically enhance recreational offerings in a headwaters mountain county.

This effort is intended to move beyond site-specific planning toward a coordinated, county-wide approach to developing public assets that support outdoor recreation, water access, flood resiliency and community vitality. Selected priority sites will serve as an initial phase of work, with the expectation that this effort will establish a framework for future phases and long-term investment.

Specifically, the selected consultant will:

- Create a county-wide framework for the development of high potential parks, greenways and waterways
- Develop preliminary site designs for highest priority sites (5 sites minimum)
- Prepare preliminary construction cost estimates
- Identify phased implementation strategies that identify future opportunities
- Develop a strategy for activating and connecting flood-impacted properties
- Assemble grant-ready development materials; and
- Support coordination of stakeholder and public input

This effort directly supports implementation of the [Haywood County Destination Master Plan \(2026–2035\)](#), while building upon existing plans and recent recovery efforts.

In response to recent flooding events and resulting property acquisitions, this initiative seeks to evaluate how publicly owned lands, including former flood-impacted properties, can be transformed into resilient community assets that enhance resident quality of life, improve access to natural resources, and support economic vitality.

While the initial focus of this RFQ is on publicly owned properties, the selected consultant may be asked to identify broader connections and future areas of opportunity that could inform subsequent phases of work.

The ultimate goal is to create a clear, actionable pathway to implementation, positioning priority projects for funding and construction within a defined 12–24 month window.

## **BACKGROUND & CONTEXT**

In 2024, Haywood County adopted a 10-year Destination Master Plan (2026–2035) to guide strategic tourism development, infrastructure investment, and long-term destination stewardship.

The plan identifies priority initiatives focused on enhancing outdoor recreation, expanding water-based access, strengthening greenway connectivity, and investing in public assets that support both resident quality of life and visitor experience.

Concurrent with this planning effort, Haywood County and its municipalities have experienced significant flooding events in recent years, resulting in damage to properties located within floodplain and floodway areas, particularly along the Pigeon River and other waterways. As part of long-term hazard mitigation and recovery programs, certain properties have been or will be acquired through voluntary buyouts. While these actions improve public safety and reduce future risk, they also remove taxable properties from municipal rolls and create publicly owned parcels that may otherwise remain underutilized.

The intersection of long-term destination planning and post-disaster recovery presents a strategic opportunity. Publicly owned properties — including, but not limited to, those acquired through flood mitigation programs — can be intentionally leveraged to:

- Provide managed access to waterways
- Build critical linkages in a larger greenway/ waterway infrastructure
- Enhance flood-resilient public infrastructure
- Beautify and activate visible community spaces
- Strengthen community identity
- Support economic viability through thoughtful public investment

Not all sites evaluated under this project will be flood-impacted properties; however, resilience, recovery, and economic revitalization are important contextual drivers for advancing this work at this time.

This RFQ represents the next step in moving selected publicly owned sites from conceptual opportunity to implementation-ready projects through professional design, cost development, and grant positioning.

## **PROJECT GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The goal of this project is to advance selected publicly owned sites from conceptual opportunity to implementation readiness through professional planning, design refinement, and funding preparation.

In addition, this project should inform future phases of work by evaluating additional opportunities and connections across the county.

Specific objectives include:

### **1. Advance Public Infrastructure Readiness**

Develop clear, feasible, and professionally prepared conceptual designs for selected priority properties.

### **2. Improve Funding Competitiveness**

Prepare construction cost estimates, phased implementation strategies, and supporting documentation necessary to compete for state and federal funding programs.

### **3. Promote Resilient and Responsible Development**

Ensure site concepts incorporate floodplain considerations, environmental stewardship, public safety, accessibility, and long-term maintenance realities.

### **4. Enhance Waterway and Outdoor Access**

Strengthen managed access to rivers, greenways, and other outdoor assets in alignment with adopted plans and community priorities.

### **5. Support Economic Vitality and Quality of Life**

Position public infrastructure investments to contribute to long-term economic resilience, community vibrancy, and improved quality of life for residents.

### **6. Inform Future Phases and Opportunities**

Provide guidance on additional sites, connections, and areas of opportunity that may be considered for future phases of implementation, balancing community benefit, visitor experience, and resource stewardship.

### **7. Provide Clear Decision-Making Tools**

Deliver materials suitable for use by elected officials, municipal staff, grant reviewers, and the public.

The selected consultant will be expected to approach this work with an understanding of multi-jurisdictional coordination, fiscal responsibility, and the importance of aligning design concepts with realistic implementation pathways.

## SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected consultant (or consultant team) will provide professional planning, preliminary design, cost estimating, and funding preparation services for selected town- and county-owned properties in Haywood County that build toward a county-wide public recreational future.

The Consultant shall propose a methodology to accomplish the objectives of this project. While sequencing may vary, the scope is expected to address the following components:

### 1. Project Initiation & Review of Existing Plans

The Consultant shall:

- Coordinate with HCTDA and project partners to confirm priority public sites.
- Review adopted plans, planning documents, and relevant studies.
- Integrate available site data, including floodplain mapping, environmental constraints, and regulatory considerations.
- Develop a project work plan and schedule.

This effort must build upon — and not duplicate — existing adopted and ongoing planning efforts. Existing planning documents include, but are not limited to:

- Haywood County [Destination Master Plan](#)
- Haywood County [Greenway Plan](#)
- Haywood County [Recreation Plan](#)
- Pigeon River [Access Plan](#)
- Comprehensive Plan for [Maggie Valley](#)
- Waynesville Greenway [Feasibility Study](#)
- Other municipal recreation or land use plans currently adopted or in development:
  - Waynesville P&R Master Plan, estimated completion August 2026
  - Canton Recreation Plan, estimated completion September 2026

### 2. Site Evaluation & Feasibility

For each selected site, the Consultant shall assess:

- Physical characteristics and development constraints
- Floodplain and floodway conditions, easements, restrictions and deed restrictions
- Access, infrastructure, and utilities
- Regulatory and environmental factors
- Long-term maintenance considerations including budget and ownership responsibilities

The evaluation should clearly define realistic development parameters and site opportunities.

### **3. Preliminary Design Development (5 sites minimum)**

The Consultant shall prepare preliminary designs for each selected priority site. Site designs should:

- Be scaled and professionally prepared
- Include a site plan, 2-5 perspectival views and one locational mapping embedding the site in the broader county-wide system (typical sections for features as needed for construction clarity also welcome)
- Reflect feasible and implementable improvements
- Incorporate resilience, ADA compliance, and public safety considerations
- Be suitable for presentation and funding applications with alignments, major design features, contextual adjacencies clearly identified

The level of detail should support cost estimating and grant positioning.

### **4. Cost Estimating & Implementation Strategy**

For each preliminary plan, the Consultant shall provide:

- Preliminary construction cost estimates
- Logical phasing options that build out a county-wide conceptual plan
- Identification of scalable components

Cost information should be appropriate for grant applications and capital planning.

### **5. Grant-Ready Project Development**

For selected priority projects, the Consultant shall prepare materials to position projects for competitive funding opportunities, which may include:

- Supporting arguments, especially embedding into a larger, county-wide conceptual plan
- Refined cost summaries or opinion of probable cost at 30% where possible
- Graphics and documentation
- Identification of potential funding sources

The Consultant will not be responsible for full grant administration unless separately contracted.

### **6. Stakeholder & Public Engagement**

The Consultant shall propose an engagement strategy appropriate to the project, including coordination with:

- The Advisory Committee
- Participating municipalities and Elected Officials
- Community stakeholders

The proposal shall identify how engagement will be incorporated into the work plan.

## **General Parameters**

- Plans must establish a realistic, actionable path to implementation, including clearly identified next steps, positioning projects for near-term funding and construction readiness.
- Designs must be consistent with applicable floodplain regulations, easements and any restrictions associated with hazard mitigation or buyout programs.
- The work must advance and refine, not duplicate, existing planning efforts.
- Deliverables shall be provided in digital format suitable for public presentation and funding submission.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE**

April 22, 2026	RFQ Published
May 20, 2026	Vendor Questions Due
June 3, 2026	Responses to Questions Published
June 24, 2026	Proposals Due, 3:00pm EST
August 4, 2026	Advisory Committee Interviews Finalists
August 26, 2026	Recommendation on partner to hire made to full BOD
September 1, 2026	Contract Start Date

## **GEOGRAPHY**

There are no geographic restrictions upon the location of service providers allowed to submit responses. All service providers, however, must demonstrate their ability, recommended plan and commitment to serve the account, regardless of location. Any costs associated with travel to complete the project should be included in the cost proposal.

## **CONFLICT(S) OF INTEREST**

The proposer must declare and provide details of any actual, potential or perceived conflict(s) of interest.

## **PUBLIC RECORD**

Proposers should be aware that the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority is required by law to make its records available for public inspection. The Proposer, by submission of materials, acknowledges and agrees that the HCTDA may disclose these materials.

## **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals must be clear, concise, and responsive to this RFQ. Submissions that do not address the requested information may be deemed non-responsive. Proposals shall include the following components in the order listed:

### **1. Cover Letter**

Signed by an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and including the firm name, primary contact information, a brief statement of understanding of the project, and confirmation of the firm's ability to meet RFQ requirements.

### **2. Firm Qualifications & Experience**

Provide an overview of the firm and relevant experience in public-sector planning and design, including parks, recreation, greenway, river access, or outdoor infrastructure projects, and experience in floodplain or resilience-sensitive environments (if applicable). Include descriptions of at least three (3) comparable projects completed within the past ten (10) years, including client name and location, services provided, project budget (if available), funding sources (if applicable), and reference contact information.

### **3. Project Team**

Identify the proposed Project Manager (clearly designated), key personnel and their roles, and any subconsultants. Include brief resumes or qualification summaries for key team members.

### **4. Project Approach**

Describe the proposed methodology for completing the scope of services, including approach to implementation readiness, integration with existing adopted plans, stakeholder engagement strategy, and development of preliminary construction cost estimates and funding-ready materials.

### **5. Schedule**

Provide a proposed timeline with key milestones.

### **6. Fee & Cost Information**

Firms shall not provide total project cost estimates or fee proposals for this project.

Instead, provide general information regarding the firm's cost structure, including typical hourly rates by staff level, standard billing practices, and examples of fee structures or unit costs from comparable projects. Firms may also describe how project scope, complexity, or number of sites may influence overall cost.

### **7. Insurance & References**

Confirm ability to provide required insurance coverage and include contact information for at least three (3) professional references.

## RESPONSE GUIDELINES

- Proposals must be submitted on or before June 24, 2026, before 3:00 pm Eastern Standard Time for consideration. **Late proposals will not be accepted.**
- Response must be dated and signed by principal of firm.
- The team must be available to present in person, if required. Any costs associated with participation in interviews or presentations shall be the responsibility of the proposer.
- Please submit your proposal via Email, WeTransfer or another file-sharing means to:  
Corrina Ruffieux, Executive Director

[Corrina@VisitHaywood.com](mailto:Corrina@VisitHaywood.com)

## EVALUATION & SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated by HCTDA staff in coordination with participating municipal and county representatives. An Advisory Committee will assist in the review process. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

### 1. Relevant Experience (25 Points)

- Experience with public-sector planning and design
- Parks, recreation, river access, greenway, or outdoor infrastructure projects
- Work within floodplain or resilience-sensitive environments
- Demonstrated advancement of projects to funding and implementation
- Experience working with Land and Water Fund or similar easement/restriction requirements

### 2. Project Team Qualifications (15 Points)

- Qualifications of proposed Project Manager and key personnel
- Ability to coordinate multi-disciplinary teams

### 3. Project Approach & Methodology (35 Points)

- Understanding of project objectives
- Clear, practical, and implementation-focused methodology
- Integration with existing adopted plans
- Strategy for stakeholder engagement
- Approach to advancing projects to funding and construction readiness

### 4. Implementation Readiness (20 Points)

- Experience preparing projects for competitive grant funding
- Ability to develop reliable planning-level cost estimates
- Demonstrated ability to move projects from concept to construction

### 5. Schedule (5 Points)

- Realistic timeline and milestone management

### Total Possible Points: 100

HCTDA reserves the right to request clarifications, conduct interviews, negotiate scope and fees with the highest-ranked firm, or reject any or all proposals. Following selection, HCTDA will enter into negotiations with the highest-ranked firm to establish a final scope of services and fee. If an agreement cannot be reached, HCTDA reserves the right to terminate negotiations and proceed to the next highest-ranked firm.

**APPENDIX**

***Sample county-owned properties for potential consideration as part of this project.***

**Haywood County 2007 Mitigation Acquisition List; CWMTF**

County-owned properties acquired through the Hazard Mitigation buyout program in 2007 were placed under a CWMTF Conservation Easement (acreage in green). The two in yellow are not subject to CWMTF.

<b>Leased Properties -No Active Leases</b>				<b>Co. Maint. Properties</b>			
<b>Parcel</b>		<b>Address</b>	<b>Acr.</b>	<b>Parcel</b>		<b>Address</b>	<b>Ac r.</b>
8637-42-2023	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	71 Suttles St.	0.34	8637-42-1209	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	22 Suttles St.	0.24
8637-41-1887	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	101 Suttles St.	0.33	8637-42-0139	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	40 Suttles St.	0.27
8637-31-9991	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	102 Suttles St.	0.25	8637-42-1058	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	55 Suttles St.	0.72
8637-72-9116	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3531 Broad St.	0.55	8637-42-0123	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	58 Suttles St.	0.22
8637-81-3827	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3627 Broad St.	0.37	8637-52-0314	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	21 Levi St.	0.38
8637-81-6407	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3692 Broad St.	0.52	8637-42-8188	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	50 Levi St.	0.36
8637-81-8436	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3734 Broad St.	0.21	8637-51-1861	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	116 Glance St. (Park)	2.00
8637-81-9425	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3744 Broad St.	0.32	8637-72-6224	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	39 Spruce St.	0.19
8637-81-1808	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3589 Broad St.	0.74	8637-52-4482	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3063 Broad St.	2.19
8637-82-1097	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	41 Mtn. View St.	0.42	8637-62-9354	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3355 Broad St.	0.54
8637-82-2158	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	59 Mtn. View St.	0.31	8637-72-2255	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3415 Broad St.	0.22
8637-42-4248	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	2886 Broad St.	0.67	8637-72-5194	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3469 Broad St.	0.25
8637-72-6089	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3491 Broad St.	0.23	8637-81-5862	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3661 Broad St.	0.21
8637-72-7150	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3501 Broad St.	0.22	8637-81-5992	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	47 Bonner St.	0.19
8637-72-7265	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	34 Spruce St.	0.46	8647-01-1535	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	3989 Old Clyde Rd.	0.24
8637-72-9326	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	66 Spruce St.	0.08	8637-82-3193	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	66 Mtn. View St.	0.20
8637-72-6333	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	49 Spruce St.	0.22	8637-82-1420	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	41 Joyce St.	0.32
8637-72-5332	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	93 Spruce St.	0.28	8637-82-0974	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	309 Thickety Rd.	1.30

8637-72-3351	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	127 Spruce St.	0.15	8637-82-7505	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	441 Thickety Rd.	0.17
8637-72-2384	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	161 Spruce St.	0.28	8637-24-1520	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	230 Weaver Dr.	0.96
8637-82-2313	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	Joyce St.	0.3				
8637-82-2571	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	30 Joyce St.	0.38	8657-92-0742	Canton City Limits	10 Clay St., Canton	0.1
8637-82-3208	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	87 Mtn. View St.	0.27	8637-82-7071	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	Broad.Mtn. View St.	3.88
8637-82-4226	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	88 Mtn. View St.	1.12	HMPG Grant 1490-0018			
8628-42-7275	Haywood County	198 Riverview Dr.	0.31	All other NC HRA 2005 2A27-3HAY			
8628-42-8170	Haywood County	228 Riverview Dr.	0.62	<b>CWMTF Project No. 2006A-014 Required</b>			
8628-41-9389	Haywood County	2626 Crabtree Rd.	0.21	*Property NOT included in conservation ease.			
8637-24-7189	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	840 Hyder Mtn. Rd.	0.57	<b>Canton (CHAF Prop/no easement)</b>			
8656-24-9352	Haywood County	83 Waters Pt.	2.68	<b>NOTE: CWMTF Conservation Easment Deeds</b>			
8644-83-1976	Haywood County	446 Mundy Field Rd.	0.42	<b>DB: 781 PG:246-265</b>			
8645-41-4072	Haywood County	45 Max Thompson Rd.	1.1	<b>DB: 814 PG:1747-1766</b>			
8645-40-5725	Haywood County	52 Max Thompson Rd.	0.21	<b>DB:818 PG:1615-1633</b>			
8637-81-6869	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	48 Bonner St.	0.19				
8637-81-7856	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	Off Bonner St.	0.17				
8627-87-2888	Haywood County	803 Richland Crk Rd.	0.22				
8637-72-9522	Clyde City Limits/ETJ	E. Broad St./Joyce St.	1.39				
8656-44-1954	Haywood County	334 Brookside Dr.	1.12				
8656-44-0807	Haywood County	335 Brookside Dr.	1.36				
8644-77-9817	Haywood County	970 Max Thompson Rd	7.75				

### Haywood County Tropical Storm Fred Mitigation Acquisition List

Address	City	Pin#	Disaster ID	Notes
113 Mountain View St	Clyde	8637-82-3457	4617	
421 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-9498	4617	
472 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-8246	4617	
494 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-7158	4617	
1657 Asheville Highway	Canton	8677-11-1292	4617	
1925 Asheville Highway	Canton	8667-91-6698	4617	In process of acquiring
9701 Cruso Rd	Canton	8654-71-6706	4617	
28 Birch St	Canton	8656-69-8993	4588	
3014 Broad St	Clyde	8637-52-0397	4588	
3715 Broad St	Clyde	8637-81-8628	4588	
40 Morgan St	Clyde	8637-42-5128	4588	
69 Levi St	Clyde	8637-52-0035	4588	
3711 Broad St	Clyde	8637-81-7784	4588	
66 Morgan St	Clyde	8637-42-5048	4588	
3643 Broad St	Clyde	8637-81-4826	4588	
355 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-6596	4588	
371 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-7633	4588	
330 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-7300	4588	
383 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-8742	4588	
349 Mundy Field Rd	Canton	8644-74-9477	4588	
337 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-6457	4588	
406 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-8428	4588	
14 Birch St	Canton	8656-69-9971	4588	
338 Hidden Valley Cir	Canton	8644-69-7369	4588	
36 Ark Park	Canton	8645-40-3579	4588	
2856 Broad St	Clyde	8637-42-2331	4588	In process of acquiring