

Town of Sylva - Request for Qualifications: Design and Construction of Pinnacle Park PARTF Improvement Project
Due August 30th, 2026



TOWN OF SYLVA, NORTH CAROLINA

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR DESIGN-BUILD OF PINNACLE PARK PARTF IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute (NCGS) §143-128.1A, the Town of Sylva (“Town” or “Owner”) is soliciting a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified Design-Build firms, or qualified submitters for Design-Build services for design and construction of New Trails at Pinnacle Park – Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Design-Build.

To be eligible for consideration, Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) should be delivered to the Sylva Municipal Hall by August 31st, 2026. Electronic submittals will be accepted. Electronic submittals must be sent to jscott@townofsylva.org.

Project Manager – **Jake Scott** jscott@townofsylva.org

PROJECT SITE AND GOALS:

The Town was awarded a PARTF grant in 2025 that included construction of new trails, rehab of existing trail sections, and additional site amenities at Pinnacle Park, located at 2174 Fisher Creek Road. This RFQ seeks to identify a qualified Design-Build firm capable of designing and constructing trails, viewing platform, benches, campsites, outdoor classroom, accessible trail section, accessible viewing platform, signage, trailhead kiosk, vault toilet, and parking lot improvements with a new stormwater feature.

The project will add a new trail segment (total of approximately 1.1 miles) to the trail system in the 1,529-acre Pinnacle Park, as well as rehabilitate existing trails (~30,000 Linear Feet/5.59 miles). The property is protected by a North Carolina Land and Water Conservation Easement agreement with joint oversight by the North Carolina Department of Cultural and Natural Resources and Mainspring Conservation Trust. The Town of Sylva manages the property.

RFQ SCHEDULE & PROJECT TIMELINE:

Deadline for proposal submission: **August 31, 2026**

Anticipated selection date: **September 14th, 2026**

Begin date for mobilization and prep work: **October 30th, 2026**

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The Project completion date: **October 30th, 2027**. Failure to complete by **October 30th, 2027** shall result in liquidated damages of \$50 per day.

PROJECT BUDGET; MAXIMUM TIME ALLOWED

The project budget is approximately \$682,646.00 The anticipated final project completion date is October 30th, 2027.

PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE:

The ability of the Submitters to deliver the project on time, within the criteria and constraints identified by this document, and pursuant to the requirements of the design-build statute are the primary factors for selection. This Request for Qualifications (this “RFQ”) provides general information on the services being sought, the submittal requirements, and anticipated timeline.

The intent of this RFQ is to select a design-build team through the Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) process to provide design and construction services for the Pinnacle Park PARTF Improvement Project.

Any submittal received after the specified time and date will NOT be accepted or considered. All submittals shall be sealed and marked as follows: “2026 PARTF Project – Pinnacle Park Improvement” and delivered to:

Jake Scott, Director of Public Works and Project Manager
Town of Sylva
83 Allen Street
Sylva, North Carolina 28779
jscott@townofsylva.org

The Project will be funded with a combination of local and grant funds, thereby requiring that the Submitters adhere to all pertinent federal, state, and local requirements, including compliance with E-Verify and the Iran Divestment Act, and not be on the Companies that Boycott Israel List, created by the N.C. State Treasurer pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 147-86.81.

This RFQ is issued to solicit information, in the form of SOQs, that the Town will evaluate to determine which Submitters are the most highly qualified to successfully deliver the Project. Pursuant to NC General Statute 143-128.1A, the Town shall rank the three most highly qualified Submitters that submit SOQs based on the criteria included in the RFQ. Each short-listed Submitter that submits a proposal in response to the RFQ (if any) is referred to herein as a “Proposer.” The Town will award a design-build contract for the Project, if any, to the Proposer that is the most highly qualified, as determined by the Town.

QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS; ADDENDA

Questions and requests for clarification regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing to Town’s Project Manager. To be considered, all questions and requests must be received by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on **August 14th, 2026**. Addenda will be responded to with the primary contact on the SOQ, and posted on the Town of Sylva website by **August 20th, 2026**.

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Electronic submittals must be sent to Jake Scott, jscott@townofsylva.org. The Town reserves the right to revise this RFQ at any time before the SOQ due date. Such revisions, if any, will be published as addenda to this RFQ. The Town will use the following guidelines when responding to questions and requests for clarification and when issuing addenda:

- The Town will answer questions and requests for clarification and post the answers to the Town's website: <https://townofsylva.org> and any third party procurement sites used for publication and dissemination of this advertisement.
- For firms submitting SOQs prior to the deadline, any addenda or clarification will be sent by the project manager to the email address of the appropriate contact provided by the submitting firm.
- Any firm having submitted their SOQ prior to the issuance of any addendum to this RFQ shall be allowed to respond to the amended RFQ prior to the RFQ deadline as stated above.

MAJOR PARTICIPANT

As used herein, the term "Major Participant" means any of the following entities: all general partners or joint venture members of the Submitter; all individuals, persons, proprietorships, partnerships, limited liability partnerships, corporations, professional corporations, limited liability companies, business associations, or other legal entities however organized, holding (directly or indirectly) a 15% or greater interest in the Submitter; any subcontractor(s) that will perform work valued at 10% or more of the overall construction contract amount; the lead engineering/design firm(s); and each engineering/design sub-consultant that will perform 20% of the work.

TOWN CONSULTANT/TECHNICAL SUPPORT-THIRD PARTY

The Town retains the right to seek an outside consulting firm to provide guidance and advice on related financial, contractual, and technical matters related to the evaluation of responses, selection of the design-build firm, and execution of a contract with the successful firm.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Submitter's attention is directed to N.C.G.S. 14-234, which prohibits public officers or employees from benefitting from public contracts. The Submitter is prohibited from receiving any advice or discussing any aspect relating to the Project or the procurement of the Project with any person or entity with a conflict of interest.

The Submitter agrees that, if after award, a conflict of interest is discovered, the Submitter must make an immediate and full written disclosure to the Town that includes a description of the action that the Submitter has taken or proposes to take to avoid or mitigate such conflicts. If a conflict of interest is determined to exist, the Town may, at its discretion, terminate the design-build contract for the Project. If the Submitter was aware of a conflict of interest prior to the award of the contract and did not disclose the conflict to the Town, the Town may terminate the contract for default. The Town may disqualify a Submitter if any of its Major Participants belong to more than one Submitter organization. See above for additional information regarding this matter

CHANGES TO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Individuals and design-build firms as defined in N.C.G.S. 143-128.1B (including Key Personnel or Major Participants) and identified in the SOQ may not be removed, replaced, or added to without the written

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approval of the Project Manager, or designee. The Project Manager, or designee, may revoke an awarded contract if any individual or design-build firm identified in the SOQ is removed, replaced, or added without the Project Manager's, or designee's, written approval. To qualify for the Project Manager's, or designee's, approval, the written request must document that the qualifications of the proposed removal, replacement, or addition will be equal to or better than the individual or design-build firm provided in the SOQ. The Project Manager, or designee, will use the criteria specified in this RFQ to evaluate all requests. Requests for removals, replacements and additions must be submitted in writing to the Town's Project Manager as described above.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Submitter will be required to follow both North Carolina and Federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies

PROJECT SITE AND GOALS:

The Town was awarded a PARTF grant in 2025 that included construction of new trails, rehab of existing trail sections, and additional site amenities at Pinnacle Park, located at 2174 Fisher Creek Road. This RFQ seeks to identify a qualified Design-Build firm capable of designing and constructing trails, viewing platform, benches, campsites, outdoor classroom, accessible trail section, accessible viewing platform, signage, trailhead kiosk, vault toilet, and parking lot improvements with a new stormwater feature.

Project Description:

The Town of Sylva is seeking a qualified firm with an experienced trail crew to design, permit and construct the following:

- Trail Improvements (~29,548 Linear Feet/5.59 miles)- Prioritize Split Rock to the parking lot, Pinnacle road, and trail sections based off need and erosion
- New Hiking Trail (~5,940 Linear Feet/1.1 miles) See Exhibit A
- Rehabilitate Permeable Parking Area with parking stops, 1 Accessible Space and Stormwater Feature
- Campsite Improvements – Brush and enhance five existing primitive and two proposed campsites with steel fire rings, visible signage, hooks, and bear cables. Adhere to buffer requirements.
- Open-Air Outdoor Classroom including seating for group of 20-30 students or attendees
 - Stone benches constructed using native stone from the property, arranged in a semi-circle to create a classroom-like environment. Final design to be approved b upon contract award.
- Benches (4)
 - Constructed using native stone from the property. See attached photo
- Viewing Platform on Ridge
 - This is an overlook structure along a ridge with trail connection to newly constructed PARTF trail or improved existing trail. To be constructed of pressure treated lumber, appropriately sized materials, and in compliance with NC state building code. A maximum of 525 square feet in size, to be adjusted as landscape and budget dictate. Selected firm will work with and appropriate stakeholders on the final location. A pleasing view of either Pinnacle or Blackrock summits is required.
- Accessible Platform

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- To be constructed of pressure treated lumber, appropriately sized materials, and in compliance with NC state building code. A maximum of 350 square feet in size, to be adjusted as landscape and budget dictate.
- Signage at New Trails and Splits
 - Selected firm will coordinate with Town to match new signage with existing trail and wayfinding signage.
- Install approximately 10 missing signs along trails
 - Selected firm will coordinate with Town to match new signage with existing trail and wayfinding signage.
- Accessible Trail Section Renovation of existing Forest Therapy trail, including accessibility from parking area. Accessible platform constructed with view of Fisher Creek. Location to be determined by selected firm and Town upon contract award.
- Trash Receptable Area
 - Update site furnishings, must be weather and bear proof.
- Trailhead Kiosk with Stabilized Accessible Surface
 - New kiosk is to be constructed in the approximate dimensions of the existing structure. Must be constructed in such a fashion to offer ADA accessibility. It is to be constructed of pressure treated lumber with corrugated metal roofing material. Roofing color to be determined by Town after contract award.
- Gateway/Entrance Sign
 - Wayfinding signage at Fisher Creek Road and at Pinnacle Park entrance.
- Vault Toilet (1, Unisex, ADA accessible)
 - Design/Build by awarded firm. Associated signage to be included.
- Stacked Rock Wall at Parking Area (140 Linear Feet)
 - 140 linear feet X 4 feet high
- As-built site plan that meets PARTF requirements

Project Site:

The project is located in Pinnacle Park (2174 Fisher Creek Road), a 1,529-acre forested public park owned by the Town of Sylva. The new trail will be located in the location shown on the attached (Exhibit A), but the selected firm will determine the final layout based upon topography and sensitive habitat. Upon selection, Contractor will be supplied with an approved Avenza file (or equivalent, per request of Contractor) which contains the approved trail alignment shown in Exhibit A. These trails will be designated for hiking per the proposed mapping. The trails built in this project should follow the provided alignments as closely as possible, though some adjustments may need to be on the ground during trail flagging.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Please be aware that this project is primarily funded by the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), along with matching funds from the Town. This project is based on the availability of PARTF grant funding and the Town is responsible for grant reporting. All work completed by selected

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firm must be in compliance with PARTF grant requirements as well as the North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF), who holds a conservation easement on this property (Exhibit B).

Exhibit B details the conservation easement and deed restrictions on the property, which must be adhered to during trail construction. Please note that in this exhibit, North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund is now known as North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF), and The Land Trust for the Little Tennessee is now known as Mainspring Conservation Trust (MCT). MCT assists NCLWF in its monitoring of the conservation easement, and therefore NCLWF and MCT reserve the right to monitor the services of the firm during the length of this project, with the coordination of the Town. Additionally, the Pinnacle Park Foundation (PPF) does not hold a proprietary interest in the park, but PPF advises the Town on plans, uses, facilities, and activities in the park. The Town and PPF coordinate activities that enable the park to serve the public and enable the Town to comply with the requirements of the Conservation Easement. Representatives from PPF may be allowed to accompany the Town, NCLWF, MCT, or their assigns to monitor the Services of the firm.

The Pinnacle Park property is environmentally sensitive, and all care should be taken to limit the impact to the natural environment. Exhibit B is legally enforceable and protects the natural resources of the property, and it should be followed accordingly during all planning and construction on the property.

FIRM QUALIFICATIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Expertise. Firm shall have sufficient expertise and ability to complete the work in a professional manner. **The Major Participant performing the construction of the Firm must be a licensed General Contractor in the state of North Carolina.** This expertise must be demonstrated by past work identified in a portfolio and during project discussions. Portfolio should include photographs of past work.

The portfolio shall demonstrate Firm's relevant experience by listing **five (5) most recent projects** with the identification of the following trades provided:

- Natural surface trail design
- Natural surface trail construction
- Vault Toilet Construction/Installation
- Environmental Permitting
- Erosion control and drainage

These projects should also be accompanied by contact information (name, address, phone number, email address) of each project owner's primary point of contact. Portfolios should be limited to 35 single sided pages.

Project Schedule. Firm shall provide an approximate project schedule detailing how all project work will be accomplished.

PTBA Membership. Firm shall be a current member of the Professional Trail Builders Association (PTBA) in good standing (or equivalent) to be eligible for consideration.

Design-Build Experience. Firm shall provide evidence of design-build experience for natural surface trails.

BONDING REQUIREMENTS

Provide a letter from a surety or insurance company stating that the Submitter is capable of obtaining performance and payment bonds covering the Project in the amount of 100% of the construction contract amount, in accordance with N.C.G.S § 44A-26, conditioned upon faithful performance of the contract in accordance with the plans, specifications and conditions of the contract. Such bond(s) shall be solely for the protection of the contracting body that is constructing the project. Letters indicating “unlimited” bonding capability are not acceptable. The surety or insurance company providing such letter must be authorized to do business in the State of North Carolina.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Firm agrees to maintain, on a primary basis and at its sole expense, at all times during the life of this contract the following applicable coverages and limits. The requirements contained herein, as well as the Town’s review or acceptance of insurance maintained by Firm, are not intended to and shall not in any manner limit or qualify the liabilities or obligations assumed by Firm under the contract.

- Commercial General Liability – Combined single limit of no less than \$1,000,000 for each occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate. Coverage shall not contain any endorsement(s) excluding nor limiting Product/Completed Operations, Contractual Liability, Cross Liability, or Personal and Advertising Injury Liability.
- Automobile Liability – Limits of no less than \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit. Coverage shall include liability for Owned, Non-Owned and Hired automobiles. In the event Contractor does not own automobiles, Contractor agrees to maintain coverage for Hired and Non-Owned Auto Liability, which may be satisfied by way of endorsement to the Commercial General Liability policy or separate Auto Liability policy. Automobile coverage is only necessary if vehicles are used in the provision of services under this Contract and/or are brought on a Town of Sylva site.
- Umbrella or Excess Liability *Preferred but not required* – Firm may satisfy the minimum liability limits required above under an Umbrella or Excess Liability policy. There is no minimum Per Occurrence limit of liability under the Umbrella or Excess Liability, however, the Annual Aggregate limits shall not be less than the highest ‘Each Occurrence’ limit for required policies. Contractor agrees to endorse the Town of Sylva as an ‘Additional Insured’ on the Umbrella or Excess Liability unless the Certificate of Insurance states the Umbrella or Excess Liability provides coverage on a ‘Follow-Form’ basis.
- Worker’s Compensation & Employers Liability – Firm agrees to maintain Worker’s Compensation Insurance in accordance with North Carolina General Statute Chapter 97 and with Employer Liability limits of no less than \$1,000,000 for each accident, each employee, and policy limit. This policy must include a Waiver of Subrogation. Proof of coverage must be provided to the Town of Sylva.

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- Additional Insured – Firm agrees to endorse the Town as an Additional Insured on the Commercial General Liability. The Additional Insured shall read Town of Sylva as its interest may appear.
- Certificate of Insurance – Firm agrees to provide Town of Sylva a Certificate of Insurance evidencing that all coverage, limits, and endorsements required herein are maintained and in full force and effect, and Certificates of Insurance shall provide a minimum thirty (30) day endeavor to notify, when available, by Contractor's insurer. If Contractor receives a non-renewal or cancellation notice from an insurance carrier affording coverage required herein or receives notice that coverage no longer complies with the insurance requirements herein, Firm agrees to notify the Town within five (5) business days with a copy of the non-renewal or cancellation notice, or written specifics as to which coverage is no longer in compliance. The Certificate Holder address should read:

Town of Sylva
83 Allen Street
Sylva, NC 28779

All primary insurance carriers must be authorized to do business in North Carolina.

FIRM REQUIREMENTS

Backcountry Protocol. Firm's crew shall be familiar with backcountry operation and safety protocols and be familiar and adept at leave no trace practices.

What Firm Provides. Firm shall provide the necessary permits, supervision, equipment and tools to perform specified trail construction on identified trails and sites, including fuel for any mechanized equipment or tools and any and all personal protection and safety equipment required.

Public Safety. Some trail work will be completed on or near trails open to the public. Work sites should be signed and care should be taken to alert trail users and ensure safe passage through or around active work sites. Firm shall ensure that reasonable precautions are taken to protect the public at all times where work is being performed.

Fees for Licenses, Permits and Insurance. All costs for required licenses, permits, and insurance shall be borne by the firm.

Permits. All applicable permits are to be obtained by the submitting firm prior to commencement of the work.

Safety Signage. Firm shall post temporary trail closure signs when work includes use of heavy equipment, felling trees, or otherwise poses a safety risk to users.

Work Stoppage. Firm shall, if notified, stop work on all or certain sections of the project due to weather conditions, evidence of archeological sites, or sensitive species.

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COMPARISON OF SOQ's:

Proposal Submittals must include all of the following in order to be determined responsive to the Owner's invitation:

- **Budget:** Firm must demonstrate ability to complete project within the PARTF grant budget.
- **Project Schedule:** The firm's proposed timeline and approach to executing the project.
- **Portfolio:** The expertise and experience of the design-build firm including demonstrations of previous collaborative efforts.

EVALUATION AND RANKING OF FIRM SUBMITTALS

For the purpose of selecting and evaluating submitted SOQs, a review committee, will score submissions. The evaluation criteria will be given the following relative weights. The weighted scoring below shall consider both company and individual team member experience. The scoring sheet is available for viewing in Exhibit F.

EXHIBITS

A: Site Plan Map
B: Pinnacle Park Conservation Easement
C, D : Application for Payment and Change Order Forms
E: Concept Images
F: Pinnacle Park PARTF Scoring sheet
G: Parking Lot Conceptual Rendering
H: Addenda if Necessary

RETAINAGE:

A 5 percent retainage is required until the job is 50 percent complete at which time it drops to zero, unless the project has issues with schedule or performance.

The Town of Sylva reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

DESIGN-BUILD TEAM DECLARATION STATEMENT

(Include a signed copy of this form in the submitted Statement of Qualifications)

1. We (the submitting Design-Build entity) certify that each licensed design professional who is a member of the design-build team, including subconsultants, was selected based upon demonstrated competence and qualifications in the manner provided by N.C.G.S. § 143-64.31.
2. We certify that our Design-Build entity's "Designer(s) of Record" have current North Carolina Architectural and/or Engineering license(s) as appropriate for their portion of the design work.
3. We certify that our Design-Build entity's "Builder" has a current North Carolina Contractor's unlimited license, and sub-contractors required to be licensed as may be required.
4. We certify that our Firm/Company will have and maintain liability insurance coverage for a total of \$1 million/occurrence and \$2 million/general aggregate for commercial general liability, and not less than \$1 million per claim for commercial business automobile liability.
5. We certify that we will have coverage for professional liability and errors and omissions by all Designer(s) of Record/Design Professionals of not less than \$1 million per claim.
6. We certify that our Firm has sufficient bonding capacity to provide Labor and Material Payment and Performance bonds with coverage of each equal to the total cost of the Project as required by N.C.G.S. 143-128.1A(f).
7. We certify that our Firm can and will obtain a Builder's Risk Insurance Policy for this Project with coverage equal to the total cost of the Project.
8. We certify that our Firm/Company/Personnel have/has no potential or actual conflicts of interest to report and that no relationships, transactions, circumstances, or positions held are believed to contribute to any such conflict of interest.
9. I hereby certify the information set forth in this declaration is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

(Authorized Signature, Title, Design-Build Entity Name and Date)

By signature on this Declaration, Submitters certify they comply with:

- a) The laws of the State of North Carolina, the applicable portion of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government.
- b) All terms and conditions set forth in this RFQ.
- c) A condition that the SOQ submitted was independently arrived at, without collusion, under penalty of perjury.
- d) That their bids, if applicable, will remain open and valid for at least 60 days.