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CITY OF TIFFIN, IOWA

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

FIRE STATION SITE EVALUATION, PLANNING, AND DESIGN SERVICES

Issue Date: September 16, 2026

Pre-submittal Meeting Date: October 5, 2026 at 9:00 a.m., Tiffin City Hall

Questions Due: October 9, 2026

Statement of Qualifications Due: October 16, 2026

Review of Submittals: October 19, 2026

Potential Interviews of Finalists: Week of November 2, 2026

Anticipated Selection Date: November 17, 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Tiffin is seeking Statements of Qualifications from qualified architectural/engineering firms interested in providing professional services related to the evaluation, planning, and potential design of a new fire station facility.

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to identify and select a highly qualified professional team with demonstrated experience in fire station planning and design, site evaluation, and related architectural and engineering services.

The selected firm will initially assist the City in evaluating the two potential sites the City currently owns and determining the feasibility and suitability of those sites for a future fire station. Based upon the City's needs, available funding, and subsequent direction from the City Council, the selected firm will also be retained to provide conceptual planning, architectural design, help with engineering, construction documents, bidding assistance, and construction administration services.

The City is seeking a professional team that understands the unique operational, safety, staffing, equipment, apparatus, and community-service requirements associated with a modern fire station.

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Tiffin is evaluating options for the future location and development of a fire station to serve the community.

The City desires to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of two potential sites before making a final determination regarding the location and development of the facility. The evaluation is expected to consider the operational requirements of the Fire Department, emergency response considerations, site characteristics, zoning and land-use requirements, utility availability, traffic and access, development constraints, estimated development costs, and opportunities for future consolidation and expansion.

The City may proceed with all, some, or none of the services identified in this RFQ, depending upon the results of the site evaluation, project priorities, funding availability, and City Council direction.

III. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City's primary objectives are to:

1. Evaluate the suitability and development potential of the two identified fire station sites.
2. Identify site constraints, opportunities, and potential development costs.
3. Determine the ability of potential sites to accommodate current and future Fire Department operational needs.
4. Develop a preliminary understanding of facility space requirements and functional relationships.
5. Identify appropriate site access, apparatus circulation, parking, emergency response, and public access considerations.
6. Evaluate opportunities for future facility expansion.
7. Develop conceptual alternatives and preliminary cost information.
8. Assist the City in determining the most appropriate site and facility approach.
9. If authorized by the City, proceed with architectural and engineering design of the selected fire station project.
10. Develop a facility that is functional, efficient, durable, maintainable, and responsive to the long-term needs of the community.

IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following scope represents the City's anticipated needs. Responding firms may recommend modifications, additions, or alternative approaches based upon their experience with similar projects.

A. Project Initiation and Information Gathering

The selected firm shall:

- Meet with City representatives, Fire Department personnel, and other appropriate stakeholders.
- Review existing Fire Department operations, staffing, apparatus, equipment, and anticipated future needs.
- Establish project goals, priorities, assumptions, and evaluation criteria.
- Develop a project work plan and anticipated schedule.

B. Fire Department Needs Assessment

The selected firm shall assist the City in identifying the operational and functional requirements of the proposed facility, including, as appropriate:

- Fire apparatus and emergency vehicle requirements.
- Number and type of apparatus bays.
- Apparatus circulation and maneuvering.
- Administrative and office space.
- Training and meeting areas.
- Public access and potential community-use areas.
- Kitchen, dining, and common areas.
- Sleeping and restroom facilities, as appropriate.
- Storage requirements.
- Equipment and gear storage.
- Decontamination and support areas.
- Mechanical, electrical, communications, and technology requirements.
- Building maintenance and operational considerations.
- Future staffing, apparatus, and service needs.
- Potential future expansion.

The firm should identify any additional facility components or operational considerations it believes should be addressed during the planning process.

C. Site Evaluation and Feasibility

For each site identified by the City, the selected firm shall evaluate, as applicable:

- Site size and configuration.
- Existing land use and zoning.
- Geotechnical considerations.
- Topography and drainage.
- Existing structures and site improvements.
- Utility availability and capacity.
- Water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater considerations.
- Electrical, gas, communications, and other utilities.
- Street access and roadway conditions.
- Emergency vehicle access and circulation.

- Traffic considerations.
- Proximity to major roadways and response routes.
- Apparatus ingress and egress.
- Public and employee access.
- Parking requirements.
- Site visibility and public accessibility.
- Adjacent land uses.
- Setbacks and other zoning requirements.
- Environmental considerations.
- Floodplain and stormwater considerations.
- Easements and other known site restrictions.
- Opportunities and limitations for future expansion.
- Compatibility with surrounding development.
- Preliminary site development costs.
- Other factors affecting the suitability of each site.

The firm shall identify significant risks, limitations, or additional investigations that may be necessary before the City proceeds with a particular site.

D. Site Comparison and Recommendation

The selected firm shall develop a consistent methodology for comparing the potential sites.

The evaluation should identify the relative advantages, disadvantages, risks, opportunities, and anticipated costs associated with each site.

The firm shall provide a written recommendation identifying the site or sites it believes best meet the City's stated objectives.

The recommendation should be based on objective criteria and should clearly explain the basis for the recommendation.

E. Facility Programming and Conceptual Planning

Following the site evaluation and, if authorized by the City, the selected firm shall develop preliminary facility programming addressing:

- Recommended building size.
- Functional areas and space requirements.
- Apparatus bay configuration.
- Administrative areas.
- Staff support areas.
- Public areas.
- Storage.
- Training and meeting spaces.

- Site circulation.
- Parking.
- Outdoor operational areas.
- Future expansion opportunities.

The firm shall develop conceptual plans and/or diagrams sufficient to communicate the proposed facility approach.

F. Conceptual Design

If authorized, the selected firm shall develop conceptual design alternatives addressing:

- Building configuration.
- Site layout.
- Apparatus circulation.
- Building orientation.
- Major building systems.
- Exterior appearance.
- Interior functional relationships.
- Sustainability and energy considerations.
- Future expansion.
- Preliminary construction costs.

The City may request multiple conceptual alternatives for consideration.

G. Cost Estimating

The selected firm shall provide preliminary opinions of probable construction cost at appropriate stages of the project.

Cost information should identify, to the extent reasonably possible:

- Site development.
- Building construction.
- Mechanical systems.
- Electrical systems.
- Communications/technology infrastructure.
- Apparatus-related improvements.
- Furnishings and equipment, where applicable.
- Design and professional services.
- Contingencies.
- Other significant project costs.

The City expects cost estimates to be updated as the project develops.

H. Design Services

If authorized by the City, the selected firm may be retained to provide architectural and engineering services through the design and construction phases, including:

- Schematic design.
- Design development.
- Construction documents.
- Architectural services.
- Civil engineering.
- Structural engineering.
- Mechanical engineering.
- Electrical engineering.
- Plumbing design.
- Fire protection systems.
- Communications and technology coordination.
- Landscape architecture, if appropriate.
- Surveying.
- Geotechnical coordination.
- Code and accessibility review.
- Energy-efficiency considerations.
- Permitting assistance.
- Construction cost estimating.

I. Bidding and Construction Administration

If authorized by the City, depending on the construction project delivery method or procurement approach selected, additional services may include:

- Preparation of bidding documents.
- Assistance with advertising and bidding.
- Response to bidder questions.
- Addenda.
- Bid evaluation.
- Recommendation for award.
- Construction administration.
- Construction observation.
- Review of pay applications.
- Change order review.
- Submittal review.
- Project meetings.
- Punch-list development.
- Final inspection.
- Project closeout.

V. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Responding firms must demonstrate the following minimum qualifications:

1. The firm must be legally qualified to provide the professional services identified in this RFQ.
2. Architectural and engineering services must be performed by professionals appropriately licensed in the State of Iowa.
3. The firm must demonstrate successful experience with public-sector projects of similar size, complexity, and scope.
4. The firm should demonstrate specific experience with fire stations, emergency services facilities, public safety facilities, or comparable operational facilities.
5. The firm must have sufficient qualified personnel to perform the required services.
6. The firm must demonstrate the ability to coordinate architectural, civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and other required disciplines.
7. The firm must demonstrate experience working with municipal officials, governing bodies, department heads, and public stakeholders.
8. The firm must demonstrate the ability to develop realistic project schedules and cost estimates.
9. The firm must identify any anticipated subconsultants and describe their qualifications.
10. The firm must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Preference may be given to firms demonstrating substantial experience with fire station projects and projects involving site selection or feasibility analysis.

VI. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Statements of Qualifications should be concise and should provide the following information:

1. Cover Letter

Provide a letter identifying the firm, the firm's primary contact, and the firm's interest in the project.

2. Firm Profile

Provide:

- Firm name and location.
- Year established.
- Ownership structure.
- Number of employees.
- Relevant areas of expertise.

- Iowa office location(s), if applicable.
- Iowa professional registrations/licenses.

3. Relevant Project Experience

Provide information on **at least three** projects demonstrating experience relevant to this project within the last 5-7 years.

For each project, provide:

- Project name and location.
- Client.
- Project size.
- Construction cost.
- Scope of services provided.
- Completion date/status.
- Project team members.
- Description of similarities to the proposed project.
- Client contact information.

At least one project should preferably involve a fire station, emergency services facility, public safety facility, or similar municipal facility.

4. Proposed Project Team

Identify the individuals who would be assigned to this project, including:

- Project manager.
- Lead architect.
- Civil engineer.
- Structural engineer.
- Mechanical engineer.
- Electrical engineer.
- Other key personnel.
- Proposed subconsultants.

Provide relevant qualifications and experience for each key team member.

5. Approach to the Project

Describe the firm's proposed approach to:

- Site evaluation.
- Fire Department needs assessment.
- Stakeholder involvement.
- Facility programming.

- Conceptual planning.
- Cost control.
- Schedule management.
- Public-sector coordination.
- City Council communication.
- Risk identification.
- Future expansion planning.

6. Project Schedule

Provide an anticipated schedule for the initial site evaluation and planning phase.

7. References

Provide at least three references for comparable projects.

8. Conflicts of Interest

Identify any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

9. Additional Information

Provide any additional information the firm believes demonstrates its ability to successfully complete the project.

VII. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The City intends to use a qualifications-based evaluation process.

Statements of Qualifications will be reviewed by an evaluation committee designated by the City.

The City may invite selected firms to participate in an interview or presentation before making a final selection.

The City reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from any responding firm.

Following evaluation and ranking, the City intends to negotiate a scope of services and fair and reasonable compensation with the highest-ranked firm.

If the City is unable to reach an agreement with the highest-ranked firm, the City may terminate negotiations and enter into negotiations with the next highest-ranked firm.

VIII. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SCORING

Statements of Qualifications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Category	Points
Relevant Fire Station/Public Safety Facility Experience	25
Qualifications and Experience of Proposed Project Team	20
Understanding of the City's Project and Scope	15
Site Evaluation and Planning Approach	15
Approach to Project Management, Communication, and Stakeholder Engagement	10
Experience with Municipal/Public Projects	5
References and Past Performance	5
Overall Quality and Completeness of Submittal	5
TOTAL	100

Cost/fee information will not be used as an evaluation factor in ranking firms for architectural and engineering services.

IX. EVALUATION SCORING SHEET

Firm: _____

Evaluator: _____

Category	Weight	Score	Weighted Score
Fire Station/Public Safety Facility Experience	25	___	___
Proposed Project Team	20	___	___
Understanding of Project	15	___	___
Site Evaluation & Planning Approach	15	___	___
Project Management/Communication	10	___	___
Municipal/Public Project Experience	5	___	___
References/Past Performance	5	___	___
Quality & Completeness	5	___	___
TOTAL	100		_____

Scoring Guidance

Rating	Description
5	Exceptional
4	Very Good

3	Good/Adequate
2	Below Expectations
1	Poor
0	Does Not Address Criterion

Evaluators may use the following calculation:

Weighted Score = (Rating ÷ 5) × Available Points

Example: A rating of 4 on a 25-point criterion would result in:

4 ÷ 5 × 25 = 20 points

X. CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

Following completion of the evaluation process, the City intends to begin negotiations with the highest-ranked firm regarding the scope, schedule, and compensation for the services to be provided.

The initial contract may address site evaluation and planning services. At the City's discretion, subsequent phases of architectural and engineering services may be authorized through amendments, additional agreements, or other appropriate contracting mechanisms.

The City does not guarantee that all services identified in this RFQ will be authorized.

XI. CITY RIGHTS

The City reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all Statements of Qualifications.
- Request clarification or additional information.
- Modify or amend this RFQ.
- Cancel the RFQ process.
- Conduct interviews.
- Select a firm based upon qualifications.
- Negotiate with the highest-ranked firm.
- Terminate negotiations with any firm.
- Negotiate with the next highest-ranked firm if an agreement cannot be reached.
- Modify the scope of services.
- Award only those services determined to be in the City's best interest.

The issuance of this RFQ does not obligate the City to enter into a contract with any responding firm.

XII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Statements of Qualifications shall be limited to **a maximum of 25 pages**, excluding resumes, project sheets, and required forms.

Submit an electronic copy in PDF format to:

Doug Boldt
City Administrator
City of Tiffin
dboldt@tiffin-iowa.org
319-545-2572

Statements of Qualifications must be received no later than:

October 16, 2026, by 4:30 p.m.

Late submissions may not be considered.

XV. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this RFQ shall be submitted in writing to:

Doug Boldt
dboldt@tiffin-iowa.org

Questions must be received by **October 9, 2026**.

Responses to substantive questions may be distributed to all firms that have expressed interest in the RFQ.

XIV. CONCLUSION

The City of Tiffin appreciates the interest of qualified firms in assisting the City with this important community project. The City is seeking a professional team that can provide thoughtful, practical, and fiscally responsible guidance while helping the City evaluate its options and plan for a fire station that will effectively serve the community for many years to come.

The selected firm will be expected to work collaboratively with City staff, Fire Department personnel, City Council, and other stakeholders throughout the planning and potential design process. The City's goal is to develop a clear understanding of its facility and site needs and to establish a sound foundation for future decisions regarding the location, design, and construction of a fire station.