



## Request for Qualifications for Design Services

**Project:** Pit Area Stormwater Improvements  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Distributed:** 09/29/2023

**Closing Date:** 10/17/2023 @ 3pm

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The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) is soliciting submittals from firms interested in providing design services for the Pit Area Stormwater Improvements project.

### I. Project Description and Schedule

Situated between Lenoir Dining Hall, Daniel's Student Stores, the House Undergraduate Library, and the Frank Porter Graham Student Union, the Pit is the center of student life on campus. The sunken courtyard space is an iconic landscape that operates as both a vital circulation corridor, as well as a vibrant and dynamic public square for student events, demonstrations, and informal gatherings. While physical adjacencies to academic, student affairs, and commercial programming help define its use and character, it has its own material and physical characteristics that make it a unique and cherished space on campus. The Pit's brick paving and distinct grade change are undeniable characteristics of the space, but the two mature oak trees that occupy the center are arguably its most critical and cherished feature. The two trees provide much needed shade and relief in what is otherwise an entirely brick plaza, and work to connect this landscape to the larger forested canopy that defines the rest of the Historic Campus.





While the Pit is essential to the daily rhythms of student campus life, the space needs repair. The existing stormwater and subgrade drainage systems are failing, and the sunken courtyard suffers from flooding and ponding after minimal rain events. While these issues have been known for years, the full repair work necessary would require terminally damaging the existing trees. Removing these critical elements from the space would substantively change the visual, spatial, and programmatic character of the Pit, so any repair was on hold until the trees entered a period of irreversible decline.

With this repair work now on the horizon, the University is looking to hire a design firm to assist in providing design services for the redevelopment of the Pit. While the primary scope of work is to provide a design that addresses the immediate drainage issues on-site, the first stage of the project is to look more holistically at the Pit area and its immediate adjacencies and study opportunities for further improvement. While still honoring the existing material and physical characteristics of the space, how could the Pit be redesigned/reimagined to strengthen visual and physical connections within the existing quadrangle? In what ways and forms can the Pit better enable and support social gathering and modern student programming needs? How can the design foster a more sustainable and ecologically dynamic relationship between stormwater and planting? The initial phase of the project will seek to answer these questions and through this study help further refine and determine the full scope of work.

This project has received funding for preliminary design. A construction budget and a total project budget will be established during this initial design phase. A selection committee has been established and will make a recommendation to the UNC-CH Board of Trustees. Following Board approval, the selected team will submit a fee proposal for Advance Planning services. It is the intent of UNC-CH to continue with full design services with the selected design team once full project funding has been approved.

The anticipated designer selection schedule is shown below:

<b>Designer Selection Schedule</b>	<b>Estimated Dates</b>
Advertise RFQ	09/29/2023
Pre-submission Meeting (Zoom) @ 2pm	10/05/2023
Pre-submission Questions (Deadline @3pm)	10/10/2023
Submittals Due to UNC (Deadline @ 3pm)	10/17/2023
Designer Shortlist Notification	10/18/2023
Interviews (Format TBD)	10/25/2023
Board of Trustees Approval	10/26/2023
Project Kick-Off	Early January 2024

## II. Existing Strategic Plan, Master Plans and Design Guidelines

The UNC-CH Campus Master Plan was developed to provide a framework to support decisions regarding the physical campus in relation to the overall University Strategic Plan, Carolina Next (<https://carolinanext.unc.edu/>)

The [Campus Master Plan](#) and [University Design Guidelines](#) will be guiding documents for the design of this project.

UNC-CH is in the process of developing a comprehensive Landscape Framework Plan for the campus. While not complete at this time, a version of this document will be ready to share by January 2024 and should be a key resource in guiding the development of the project.



### III. Project Scope

The design team shall:

- Assist in coordination of University stakeholders, including Student Affairs, Auxiliary Services, Facilities Planning and Design, Construction Management, Facilities Services, Environment Health and Safety, Energy Services, and other University support services.
- Prepare Contract Documents in compliance with provisions of current applicable NC Building Codes.
- Respond to comments as part of the SCO review process for Capital Planning Projects.
- Prepare Cost Estimates, Project Schedules, and Site Logistics Plans.

### IV. Design Team

The University expects prospective design teams and the individuals identified as members of those teams to have demonstrated experience in projects of similar type, size, and complexity. Design proposals should demonstrate the team's ability to design projects that are sympathetic to and supportive of the existing campus context and neighboring land-uses/programming.

This project will require a design team with expertise across multiple disciplines, though qualification submissions should focus on the core disciplines of landscape architecture and civil engineering. Design teams are free to include other professional disciplines and/or consultants that they deem necessary to successfully complete the work. Submissions should clearly identify key personnel who will have primary responsibility for the project and day-to-day communications with the university's project team.

### V. Submittal Review Process

**There will be a virtual (Zoom) pre-proposal meeting at the date and time listed in the table above.** Interested designers will be able to discuss the project with the UNC Facilities project manager. Zoom meeting details are included below:

<https://unc.zoom.us/j/91092729176>

Meeting ID: 910 9272 9176

**All pre-submission questions are due by the date and time listed in the table above.** All questions should be emailed directly to the UNC Facilities project manager identified at the end of this document.

**All submittals are due on the date and time listed in the table above.** A Selection Committee will convene on the **date listed in the table above** to discuss the Design Teams' submittals and determine a short list for interviews. The Project Manager (Daniel Widis) will then notify the short-listed firms and provide additional information for the interview phase.

**Designer Interviews will be scheduled per date(s) listed in the table above.** The format of the interview will consist of an in-person presentation by the design team that is followed by a question-and-answer session. Each design team is expected to have present the person(s) from their firm(s) who will be responsible for leading the execution of this project. Additional details related to the interview process will be provided after shortlisting. Following the interviews, the Selection Committee will issue recommendations, in priority order, for the selection of the design team. This list will be present on **the date listed in the table above** to the University's Board of Trustees for approval.



## VI. Submittals

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill seeks letters of interest from firms who have recent experience with similar projects. Submissions should utilize an SF-330 (Part I) format. The submittal must include descriptions of *(based on 01 NCAC 30J .0303 SELECTING CRITERIA)*:

1. Specialized or Appropriate Expertise in the type of project.
2. Past Performance on similar projects.
3. Adequate staff and Proposed Design & Consultant Team for the project.
4. Current Workload and State Projects awarded.
5. Proposed Design Approach for the project including design team and consultants.
6. Recent experience with Project Costs and Schedules.
7. Construction Administration capabilities.
8. Proximity to and familiarity with the area where project is located.
9. Record of successfully completed projects without major legal or technical problems.
10. Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) participation & utilization in proposed team structure; and who/how HUB designers were utilized on previous projects.
11. The team's recent experience with the NC State Construction Office (SCO).
12. Include current SF-330 Part II of lead firm and each proposed consultant.
13. Any other criteria which the Selection Committee shall deem appropriate to this specific project scope of work.

To fairly evaluate the submittals and to better utilize the Selection Committee's review time, we request that only pertinent information relating to the specific selection criteria listed above be provided in an Executive Summary with supporting material to follow in the submittals. UNC-CH does not limit the quantity of pages for proposals.

**Note: (1) one electronic PDF file of the submittal is required.**

Please contact only the Facilities Planning Project Manager for any matters related to this submittal. No other University staff, The University's Board of Trustees, or any University officials are to be contacted other than the project manager listed below. All questions and project submittals shall be directed to:

Daniel Widis, RLA  
University Landscape Architect  
Facilities Planning and Design  
[widis@unc.edu](mailto:widis@unc.edu)





2019 Campus Map/Master Plan

