

**Montgomery County Public Schools
Division of Facilities Management
Department of Planning and Construction
45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 4300
Rockville, Maryland 20850**

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
Architectural Services**

SCOPE OF WORK:	Architectural Services
PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Special Projects and Major Capital Projects
ISSUE DATE:	January 9, 2026
PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING:	January 13, 2026 (@ 10:00 am - Virtual)
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION DUE:	January 19, 2026 by 5:00 pm
PROPOSAL DUE DATE:	January 29, 2026 @ 2:00 pm
Board of Education Approval:	March 26, 2026

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. INTENT

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is soliciting qualifications for architectural services associated with two categories: Special Projects and Major Capital Projects, to be included in its Fiscal Year 2027–2032 Capital Improvements Program.

Prior submissions will no longer be reviewed and considered for upcoming projects after December 31, 2025. If a firm has submitted in the past, a new statement of qualifications shall be submitted in response to this RFQ.

Offerors shall clearly identify the category or categories for which they are submitting a response. Offerors responding to more than one category shall submit a separate proposal for each category.

Successful offerors will be placed on a list of prequalified firms (short list) based on the evaluation of their proposals. The number of prequalified firms on the short list will be determined by MCPS after evaluation of proposals. Inclusion on this list makes a firm eligible to receive project-specific Request for Proposals (RFPs) at a later date. MCPS reserves the right to remove a prequalified firm

from the short list for cause, including but not limited to, repeated poor performance on MCPS projects, insolvency of the firm, or subsequent debarment by the State or federal government. MCPS also reserves the right to issue a new RFQ to solicit additional prequalified architectural firms in the event the existing short list does not provide adequate resources to meet MCPS's needs.

Offerors shall not rely on information obtained from any source other than MCPS Department of Planning and Construction (DPC). It is the responsibility of offerors to check for addenda on the MCPS website and eMaryland Marketplace before the proposal due date.

Offerors may not contact any Board Member, Elected Officials, or member of the Evaluation Panel regarding this solicitation until the contract is awarded. Any such attempt may be considered by MCPS as an effort to obtain an unfair advantage and could result in rejection of the Offeror's proposal.

Offerors are responsible for understanding this solicitation. To that end, prospective offerors may submit questions to the MCPS DPC.

- Questions must be in writing and submitted via email.
- Questions must be received in DPC by 5:00 pm, January 19th, 2026. Questions received after this date will be answered only if time permits.
- Responses to questions and clarifications will be issued as addendum and posted to MCPS website and eMaryland Marketplace.
- Oral communications from MCPS are not binding.

All requests for information shall be referred to Shiho_C_Shibasaki@mcpssmd.org, with a copy to Construction@mcpssmd.org - contact shall only be by email.

1.2. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR

Montgomery County Public Schools
Department of Planning and Construction
45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 4000
Rockville, Maryland 20850

1.3. TERMS OF PREQUALIFICATION

Firms placed on the Prequalified List will remain eligible for a period of three (3) years, with the option for MCPS to grant up to two (2) one-year extensions.

1.4. PROJECT CATEGORIES

- **Category One - Special Projects:** Projects with a construction value of \$5,000,000 and under. The Scope of Work includes but is not limited to the design of interior building renovations, ADA compliance projects, restroom renovations, small building additions, relocatable classroom placement, small site buildings, security vestibules and program modifications to various MCPS facilities, including permit and the state submissions and approvals.
- **Category Two - Major Capital Projects:** Projects with a construction value greater than \$5,000,000, to include new schools, major building additions and renovations, and replacement schools for all phases of projects including but not limited to permit and the state submissions and approvals.

1.5. PROPOSAL RESPONSES

The RFQ responses shall be delivered to Montgomery County Public Schools, Department of Planning and Construction, 45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 4000, Rockville, Maryland 20850, with one hard copy and one electronic copy, no later than 2:00 p.m., January 29, 2026.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES

2.1. ARCHITECTURE FIRM RESPONSIBILITY

The architecture consulting firm shall provide a licensed professional architect on the project throughout all phases of its work. The scope of services will be set forth in AIA Document B101-2007 Standard Form of Agreement between Owner and Architect/Engineer, as modified by MCPS or AIA Document B132-2009 Standard Form of Agreement between Owner and Architect/Engineer, Construction Manager-Adviser 2009 Edition as modified by MCPS. MCPS emphasizes the design and construction of these projects is a collaborative effort between MCPS and the architectural firm. Interpersonal communication skills are extremely important and are as much a requirement and qualification as any service set forth herein.

The scope of services requested under agreements awarded under this RFQ include professional services of an architectural nature as well as incidental services that members of those professions may logically or justifiably perform. Firms selected to respond to a project-specific RFP shall assemble appropriate sub-consultants, or demonstrate proven

in-house capabilities, in the following specialty areas to provide technical assistance for the development of the required project.

- Civil Engineering
- Structural Engineering
- Mechanical, Plumbing and Electrical Engineering
- Life Safety (NFPA 1 and 101)

3. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following information must be furnished in the RFQ. Failure to include any of the items listed below may disqualify a firm's response. Offerors shall describe in detail and provide evidence supporting the qualifications requested below. Offerors shall format the proposal to align with the requirements requested in order below.

MCPS reserves the right to require that the architectural firm demonstrate that it has the skills, competence, responsibility, licensing, professional staff, financial capabilities, and other resources to satisfactorily perform the nature and magnitude of work necessary to complete the project for which they will be considered.

Application forms and supplemental information must be typed or printed. Information presented therein shall be clear, complete, accurate, and concise.

3.1. OFFEROR OVERVIEW

The offeror shall provide the following items outlined below:

- 3.1A** Letter of Transmittal – the offeror shall include a Letter of Transmittal, signed by the person authorized to legally bind the offeror to the proposal. The letter shall contain a brief executive summary that demonstrates an understanding of the scope of services and reasons why the offeror is best suited to provide the services.
- 3.1B** The firm must disclose whether it or its principals have done business and/or have been licensed in the State of Maryland to do business under any other name in the last 10 years. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of the Offerer.
- 3.1C** Firms must be licensed as an architectural firm as required by the State of Maryland (Business Regulation Article, Annotated Code of

Maryland) and shall submit proof of current business and professional licensing with their submission.

- 3.1D** Firms must provide a “Good Standing Certificate” from the General Accounting Division, Comptroller of Maryland and hold a current registration with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation.
- 3.1E** The Offeror must confirm that no officer, director or owner thereof is currently debarred pursuant to an established debarment procedure from bidding or contracting by any public body, agency or another state or agency of the federal government.

3.2. COMPANY BACKGROUND AND PROJECT EXPERIENCES

Brief but informative history of the firm. Include information as to type of work done, number of years in business, number of employees with breakdown between supervisory and non-supervisory. Specify a primary contact to include name, title, telephone number and e-mail address.

- 3.2A** The Offeror shall demonstrate general competence, geographic location of firm relative to MCPS, years of relevant experience, firm’s workload and capacity, Local school district experiences with phased and occupied projects, experience with Interagency Commission of School Construction (IAC), Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and Department of General Services (DGS) submission procedures, knowledge of local building and zoning codes, ADA Accessible requirements, IBC/NFPA Life safety codes, Maryland energy code/IECC, IGCC/Green Globe/LEED/Net Zero Ready, and financial stability.
- 3.2B** The Offeror shall provide 5-10 previous completed work projects that relate to either special projects and/or major capital projects. The scale and scope should be similar to the summary provided in section 1.4. The work samples shall be 1-2 pages max. Offerors shall include past performance on MCPS and similar public projects, especially budget and schedule performance.

3.3. KEY PERSONNEL

- 3.3A** Offeror is to identify qualified personnel who would be made available and assigned to the project, if the firm is selected.

3.4. APPROACH TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT

3.4A Offeror shall describe the firm's project management approach and team organization during programming, design, construction, and post-construction phases. The Offeror shall describe systems used for planning, scheduling, estimating and managing design and construction services. The Offeror shall describe the firm's experience on quality assurance, both during design and construction administration. Explain the proposed method and / or system used to control the construction cost, including change orders and claims/dispute resolution.

4. QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

- A. Offeror Overview [10 points]**
- B. Company Background and Project Experience [50 points]**
- C. Key Personnel [15 points]**
- D. Approach to Project Management [25 points]**

5. CONFIDENTIALITY/PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Offerors shall ensure the complete confidentiality of all information provided by MCPS and gathered in the development by offerors in the performance of the contract. The material gathered, used, and developed may not be provided to any other party without the expressed written approval of DPC. Firms should give specific attention to the identification of those portions of their response which they deem to be confidential, proprietary information or trade secrets, and provide any justification of why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by MCPS under the Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Title 10, Subtitle 6 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Firms must clearly indicate each and every section that is deemed to be confidential, proprietary or a trade secret. It is not sufficient to preface your submission with a proprietary statement.

6. MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Minority business enterprises are encouraged to respond to this notice. MCPS is committed to the success of its minority business program. Architectural firms responding to this notice agree that they will make a good-faith effort to have not less than ten percent of the value of work under this RFQ performed by minority or women-owned business firms, licensed in the respective discipline for the work performed, unless a formal waiver is requested and is granted.

7. NO OBLIGATION

This Request for Qualifications implies no obligation on the part of MCPS.

8. LATE PROPOSAL

Late proposals will not be accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the offeror to ensure that their proposal is submitted on or before the date and time specified in the solicitation. Late proposals will be immediately rejected and returned unopened or destroyed at the offeror's request.

9. INCLEMENT WEATHER

If the office building (address above) is closed due to inclement weather, proposals shall be due on the next business day that the building is open. The originally scheduled proposal opening time shall remain the same regardless of the opening day.

The closing of schools does not constitute the closing of the office building. Please check the MCPS website for an inclement weather alert.

10. REJECTION/CANCELLATION OF RFQ

This solicitation is subject to cancellation when determined by DPC to be in the best interest of MCPS. MCPS may reject any or all proposals when determined by DPC to be in the best interest of MCPS.

11. EXCEPTIONS

If an offeror is uncertain about the meaning or intent of any part of the RFQ, or if the offeror takes exception to any terms of the RFQ, the offeror shall request clarification from MCPS or amendments to the RFQ terms before the request for information due date. Failure by the offeror to timely request clarification or RFQ amendments shall be construed as full acceptance of the RFQ terms and conditions as stated.

12. EVALUATION PROCESS

12.1. The DPC will initially review each proposal submission. Offerors whose technical proposals are determined to be not responsive, or offerors determined to be not responsible, shall be rejected and timely notified.

12.2. Qualified proposals shall be evaluated by a selection committee in accordance with the scope of services, application requirements, and evaluation criteria contained herein.

- 12.3.** The selection committee, after an initial review of the proposals, may elect to conduct discussions for the purpose of ensuring the complete understanding of MCPS requirements and the offeror's technical proposal.
- 12.4.** DPC may request discussions with all offerors or a subset of the highest ranked offerors based on preliminary scores.
- 12.5.** Offerors must confirm in writing any substantive oral clarification of, or change in, their proposals made during discussions. Any such written clarification or change then becomes part of the offeror's proposal.
- 12.6.** Upon completion of these processes, the selection committee will make a recommendation to the Board of Education of Montgomery County about which offeror is selected as the prospective awardee.
- 12.7.** The recommendations are based on the responsible offeror(s) whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to MCPS and the highest evaluated scores considering the evaluation criteria set forth in the RFQ.
- 12.8.** Upon approval of the Board of Education, the unsuccessful offerors will be notified and offered the opportunity to be debriefed. The debriefing will be limited to a summary of deficiencies in the offeror's proposal. Competing proposals will not be discussed.

13. PROPOSAL WITHDRAWAL

A proposal may not be withdrawn after it is submitted to MCPS unless the offeror makes a written request to DPC before the time set for receipt of proposals, or if MCPS fails to award or issue a notice of intent to award, or the offeror provides clear and convincing evidence that a mistake in the proposal has been made, and only then with the approval of the MCPS Procurement Office.

14. COST OF PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

MCPS accepts no responsibility for any expense incurred in the proposal preparation and presentation requirements, if any. Such expense is to be borne exclusively by the offeror.

15. COOPERATIVE PURCHASING

In accordance with State Finance and Procurement Article, Sect. 13-110, Maryland Annotated Code, Contractor may extend the terms of any contract resulting from this RFQ to public bodies, subdivisions, school districts, community colleges, colleges, and universities, including nonpublic schools and nonprofits. The Contractor agrees to notify MCPS of those entities that request to use any contract resulting from this bid and provide usage information to MCPS, if requested.

Montgomery County Public Schools assumes no authority, liability, or obligation, on behalf of any other public or non-public entity that may enter into a cooperative agreement associated with the contract resulting from this RFQ.

16. PROTESTS

Protest procedures are governed by the Board of Education of Montgomery County and in accordance with the Montgomery County Public Schools Procurement Manual.

17. BUSINESS REGISTRATION

To be eligible for contract award, businesses must be properly registered and in good standing with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation.

18. SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Offeror must agree to be in compliance with Maryland laws related to registered sex offenders and criminal background checks.

19. IRREGULARITIES

MCPS reserves the right to waive any minor mistakes in the solicitation or proposal. MCPS reserves the right to negotiate or modify any element of the solicitation to ensure that the best possible arrangements for achieving the stated purpose are obtained.

20. eMARYLAND MARKETPLACE ADVANTAGE REGISTRATION

Firms are required to register on eMaryland Marketplace Advantage at <https://procurement.maryland.gov> within five days following notice of award. Maryland law requires local and state agencies to post award notices on eMaryland Marketplace Advantage. This cannot be done without the firm's self-registration in the system. Registration is free. Failure to comply with this requirement may be considered grounds for default.

MCPS recommends that all interested offerors register with eMaryland Marketplace Advantage regardless of the outcome of this RFQ because it is a valuable resource for bid notification for school districts, and State, county, and municipal agencies throughout Maryland.