



**Request for Proposals (RFP) – Lenoir County Government
Non-profit Merger, Restructuring, and Program Evaluation Consultant**

Proposal Submission Deadline – 5:00 pm March 25, 2026

Lenoir County will receive proposals herein described. The County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. All changes to the terms, conditions, or specifications stated in this RFP shall be issued through formal addendums and posted on the County's website.

Section 1. Purpose

Lenoir County seeks proposals from qualified consultants to evaluate the feasibility, structure, and implications of consolidating four local, foundational nonprofit organizations under a single nonprofit organizational framework. The organizations contemplated in this analysis include:

- Lenoir County Tourism Development Authority (TDA)
- Kinston–Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber)
- Kinston Community Council for the Arts (KCCA)
- Downtown Kinston Revitalization (DK)

The conceptual merger would consolidate these entities under one nonprofit umbrella organization governed by a consolidated board and led by a single executive director. Each organization would retain its distinct mission, programmatic focus, and any legal, contractual, or financial restrictions, operating as functional divisions or departments within the larger entity.

The intent of this exploration is to determine whether such a structure could increase operational efficiency, reduce administrative duplication, strengthen financial sustainability, and amplify community impact while preserving the core missions of each organization. This study is intended to provide an objective analysis and does not presuppose consolidation as the preferred or required outcome.

The selected consultant will be expected to evaluate feasibility, assess organizational, governance, legal, and financial implications, propose potential models for consolidation or partial consolidation, and provide recommendations to the City of Kinston and Lenoir County regarding any direct local government support that may be necessary to successfully implement and sustain a consolidated structure.

Section 2. Submission Requirements

1. **Deadline.** All applications are due to Lenoir County by 5:00 pm on March 25, 2026. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.
2. **Format.** Proposals may be submitted in electronic or hard copy format.
3. **Contact Information.** For questions regarding this RFP, please feel free to contact the Lenoir County Planning Department via phone at 252-559-2260 ext. 7249 or via email at adam.short@lenoircountync.gov.

Please submit hard copy proposals to:

Lenoir County Administration
c/o Adam Short
PO Box 3289
Kinston, NC 28502

Please submit electronic copies to:

adam.short@lenoircountync.gov

Section 3. Scope of Work

The selected consultant will be expected to deliver the following services:

- 1. Stakeholder Input.** The consultant shall engage a broad and representative range of stakeholders to understand current operations, effectiveness, challenges, and perspectives regarding potential consolidation. Stakeholders may include, but are not limited to:
 - Board members of each organization
 - Executive leadership and key staff
 - Organizational constituents and partners
 - Community volunteers
 - Community members impacted by the organizations' missions

As part of this process, the consultant shall establish a steering committee composed of organizational leadership and City and County administration. The steering committee will serve in an advisory capacity and assist in refining the stakeholder list, identifying key issues, and providing feedback throughout the project.

- 2. Organizational Assessment.** The consultant shall evaluate each organization individually, including mission alignment, program effectiveness, governance, staffing, administrative capacity, and operational practices. This assessment should identify areas of overlap, redundancy, complementarity, and potential risk, as well as opportunities that may be enhanced—or diminished—through consolidation or shared-service arrangements.
- 3. Feasibility study.** The consultant shall conduct a feasibility study to determine whether consolidation of all four organizations is legally, operationally, and financially practicable. If full consolidation is determined to be infeasible, the consultant shall assess alternative scenarios, including partial mergers, shared governance models, or shared-service arrangements.

At a minimum, the feasibility analysis shall address:

- a.** Whether consolidation is legally and operationally possible;
- b.** The advantages, disadvantages, and risks of consolidation for each organization;
- c.** Governance considerations, including board composition, fiduciary responsibilities, and legal implications;
- d.** Financial structure, including funding restrictions, liabilities, sustainability, and compliance under a consolidated model.
- 4. Recommended Organizational Models.** Based on the findings of the assessment and feasibility analysis, the consultant shall propose one or more recommended organizational models. Recommendations shall clearly identify assumptions, constraints, implementation considerations, and potential barriers, and may differ from the conceptual framework described in this RFP if warranted by the analysis.
- 5. Governance and Staffing Structure.** To the extent feasible, the consultant shall propose a recommended governance, staffing, and reporting structure for any recommended consolidated or partially consolidated organization, including board composition, executive leadership, staffing roles, and functional divisions.
- 6. Financial Analysis and Local Government Support.** The consultant shall analyze existing funding sources, contractual obligations, and financial constraints for each organization and model the

financial implications of consolidation. The City of Kinston and Lenoir County anticipate that some level of public-sector financial involvement may be necessary to ensure long-term viability.

The consultant shall evaluate:

- Potential efficiencies or cost savings;
- Funding gaps and transition costs;
- Options and levels of local government support;
- How public funding at varying levels could address existing constraints while maintaining compliance with legal, contractual, and funding requirements.

Section 4. Anticipated Deliverables

The consultant shall be expected to provide, at a minimum, the following deliverables:

- Project work plan and refined timeline
- Stakeholder engagement summary
- Organizational assessment findings
- Feasibility analysis report, including alternative scenarios
- Financial analysis and funding scenarios
- Recommended governance and organizational model(s)
- Draft final report for review and comment
- Final report and executive summary
- Presentation of findings to Non-profit Organization Leadership, the City-County Joint Working Committee, the City of Kinston City Council, and the Lenoir County Board of County Commissioners

Section 5. Project Schedule

The County anticipates that the project will be completed within approximately six to eight months following execution of a professional services agreement. Proposers should include a detailed project timeline identifying key milestones, stakeholder engagement points, and anticipated delivery dates for major deliverables.

Section 6. Proposal Content and Format

All proposals, at minimum, must include the following:

1. **Letter of Transmittal.** A letter introducing the firm, including name, address, and a brief summary of qualifications. The letter must identify the primary project contact.
2. **Executive Summary.** A concise summary demonstrating the proposer's understanding of the project, the proposed approach, and the qualifications of the firm and project team.
3. **Relevant Experience and Qualifications.** A detailed description of the firm's experience with projects of similar scope and complexity, particularly nonprofit mergers, consolidations, shared-service arrangements, or organizational restructuring involving legal, financial, and political considerations. Include representative project examples.
4. **Project Team and Management Capacity.** Identification of key personnel, their roles, and a description of the firm's capacity to manage and complete the project effectively.

5. **Cost Proposal and Project Timeline.** A detailed cost proposal including hourly rates, estimated hours, and a total not-to-exceed cost. Proposers shall provide a justification of costs and a proposed project timeline aligned with the scope of work and deliverables.
6. **Conflicts of Interest Disclosure.** A statement identifying any current or prior relationships with any of the four organizations, their board members, or staff that could be perceived as a conflict of interest.
7. **References.** At least three references from recent clients for similar work, including a brief description of each referenced project.

Section 7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following weighted criteria:

1. Demonstrated experience and successful completion of relevant projects – 40%
2. Demonstrated project understanding, proposed approach, timeline, and capacity – 30%
3. Reasonableness of cost proposal and rate structure – 20%
4. References – 10%

Section 8. Terms and Conditions

1. Selection of the consultant is subject to approval by the City of Kinston City Council and the Lenoir County Board of County Commissioners.
2. All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are considered public records in accordance with North Carolina law.
3. The City of Kinston and Lenoir County reserve the right to reject any or all proposals, to negotiate with the selected firm, and to issue a new or modified RFP.