

Summary of RFQ: A county in search of builders



Bernalillo County RFQ 15-27-NH, Round 2 Executive briefing October 2026

October 9th 2026 | Albuquerque metropolitan area

The central proposition. Bernalillo County is not simply buying a discrete development service. It is assembling a recurring pool of private and nonprofit development partners able to bring specific sites, financing and execution capacity to affordable and mixed-income housing projects. The distinction matters: qualifying creates an opportunity for future collaboration, not an automatic project award or funding commitment.

What the county wants

The request for qualifications (RFQ) seeks co-development arrangements involving land acquisition, new affordable housing, mixed-income or mixed-use schemes, turnkey construction, subdivision, and the rehabilitation or preservation of existing housing. Respondents must identify a particular property or properties and explain the proposed co-development activity; a generic résumé alone may be considered non-responsive. All projects must be in Bernalillo County and include a unit matrix showing the number of households served at income levels at or below 120% of area median income (AMI).

Its policy aims extend beyond the number of units: preserve affordability, use public assets responsibly while retaining County ownership, encourage sustainable design and local economic participation, engage communities, and sustain viable operations over time. The RFQ also calls for continuity of parking and County-facility operations where relevant. A selected developer would negotiate a Joint Development Agreement, ground lease or comparable arrangement setting out roles, fees, ownership and risk.

The developer carries much of the burden

The envisaged partner may be responsible for assembling and controlling sites; underwriting demand and feasibility; obtaining zoning, permits and environmental clearances; managing architects, contractors and consultants; securing debt, equity and public subsidies; supervising construction; and arranging property management and long-term regulatory compliance. Possible capital sources include low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC), tax-exempt bonds, conventional loans, private equity and government grants or loans. HUD and Moving to Work requirements, state procurement rules and local ordinances apply.

How bidders will be judged

Evaluation category	Weight
Development team and past performance	30 points
Concept and partnership approach	25 points
Financial capacity, ownership and risk allocation	25 points
Legal standing, compliance and contracting readiness	20 points

Minimum experience is five years of satisfactory real-estate development work. The County prefers a deeper LIHTC record—at least five completed tax-credit developments operating for more than three years, including one for at least five years—but describes that record as a preference rather than an absolute threshold. Financial statements, audited or compiled within the past two years, must demonstrate solvency and an ability to absorb development risk.

The calendar and the paperwork

Milestone	Date / requirement
Optional online briefing	October 19, 2026, 9:00am (as stated in RFQ)
Written questions due	October 28, 2026, 10:00am
County answers scheduled	November 10, 2026
Round 2 qualifications due	November 17, 2026, 4:00pm local time
Evaluation and notices	Evaluation December 14; status notices December 2026

Applications must be lodged electronically through the County's Bonfire portal (<https://bernco.bonfirehub.com>), with searchable, unencrypted PDF files. The technical response may run to 400 pages, excluding specifically listed forms and a one-page qualifications summary. Required uploads include the technical qualifications, signed submittal letter (Appendix C), campaign-contribution disclosure (D), unfair-business-practices disclosure (E) and pay-equity form. The County advises allowing at least 24 hours for upload; it will not accept late portal submissions. Only one response is permitted per offeror.

What prospective partners should notice

The strongest submission will combine a controlled or credibly obtainable site, a defensible unit and income mix, a financing plan with realistic development economics, and a clear proposal for who owns what and who bears which risks. The County explicitly values its own protection through guarantees, assurances and sensible risk allocation. Qualification is only the first hurdle: no specific amount of public investment, land contribution, unit-production target or guaranteed development contract is offered in these materials.

There are some procedural pitfalls. Procurement questions must go to the designated manager rather than elected officials or committee members; failure to supply required disclosures can disqualify a bid. The County can reject responses, revise submission rounds or cancel the RFQ; any eventual agreement is subject to appropriations. Applicants should monitor formal addenda, particularly as the RFQ contains some inconsistent cross-references to section numbers and uses differing portal names.

Bottom line. For developers with a suitable site and the balance sheet to deliver it, this is an opening to negotiate with a public-sector partner. For firms without a defined project or credible financing, it is a much less compelling invitation.

Source: Bernalillo County, RFQ 15-27-NH (Round 2), October 2026; accompanying letter of interest and Bonfire opportunity notice. Procurement contact: Nate Hopkins, nhopkins@bernco.gov, (505) 527-2331.

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