



# **Request for Proposal**

---

FY 2026 Community Capital  
Competitive Grant Process

RFP # 25-083

---

Wake County, North Carolina  
Procurement Services  
P.O. Box 550  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Proposals are due:  
**September 10, 2025 by 2pm EST**

# Table of Contents

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 County Background
- 1.3 Community Capital Program Background and Overview
- 1.4 Impact Fund (for Emerging, Smaller Nonprofits)
- 1.5 Total Funding Available
- 1.6 Proposed Schedule

## **2.0 General Requirements**

- 2.1 Eligibility
- 2.2 Matching Requirements and Funding Limits
- 2.3 No Lobbying or Contact Provisions

## **3.0 Detailed Submittal Requirements**

- 3.1 Proposal Format
- 3.2 Executive Summary
- 3.3 Section 1: Community Need
- 3.4 Section 2: Project Scope
- 3.5 Section 3: Financial Plans
- 3.6 Section 4: Performance Reporting
- 3.7 Section 5: Organization Background
- 3.8 Attachments

## **4.0 Evaluation of Proposals**

- 4.1 Evaluation Team
- 4.2 Evaluation Criteria

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

Wake County invites proposals from 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations for the FY2026 Community Capital Grant Program. This competitive grant process funds eligible capital investments that address critical, countywide needs through sustainable, community-driven solutions. Projects must align with County priorities and demonstrate long-term viability without requiring annual County financial support for operations or daily functions.

## 1.2 County Background

Wake County has over 1.2 million residents, making it the most populous county in North Carolina. The county continues to grow quickly, adding about 66 people each day. Located in central North Carolina, Wake County covers 857 square miles. It includes 12 municipalities, with Raleigh serving as its county seat and largest city, and Cary being the second largest. For fiscal year 2026, Wake County Government approved a general fund budget of \$2.1 billion and employs more than 5,000 benefit-eligible full-time positions.

The Wake County Board of Commissioners has seven members, each representing a specific district but elected by all voters in the county. The current commissioners are:

- District 1: Don Mial (Vice Chair)
- District 2: Safiyah Jackson
- District 3: Cheryl Stallings
- District 4: Susan Evans (Chair)
- District 5: Tara Waters
- District 6: Shinica Thomas
- District 7: Vickie Adamson

In April 2024, the Wake County Board of Commissioners approved the county's first comprehensive strategic plan, which features six key focus areas and 24 goals. For more information about the County's strategic plan, please visit [wake.gov/strategic-plan](https://wake.gov/strategic-plan).

## 1.3 Community Capital Program Background and Overview

In FY 2002, the Board of Commissioners launched a Community Capital Projects process to assist non-profits address critical community issues through capital investments. The competitive process aims to accomplish the following goals:

1. Strengthen Wake County's capacity to form partnerships across public, nonprofit, and for-profit sectors.
2. Address critical countywide needs in a financially sustainable and effective way; and,
3. Promote sustainable financial strategies that tackle countywide issues, allowing nonprofits to enhance their fundraising efforts and resources to provide effective services.

Starting in 2021, most funding for Community Capital grants is made possible through voluntary contributions by our partners at the Wake County Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board.

In June 2025, the Board of Commissioners instructed County staff to start the FY 2026 Community Capital grant process. Wake County uses a request-for-proposal process to solicit projects, with all proposals competing for available funding. An evaluation team, made up of County staff with diverse expertise and one community representative, will review and score each eligible proposal to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioners are expected to receive staff recommendations by November 10, 2025, and to

consider approving the actual grant awards on December 1, 2025. All dates are tentative and subject to change.

Moving forward, the Board of Commissioners intends to facilitate the Community Capital competitive grant processes every two years, depending on funding availability and appropriations, in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes.

#### **1.4 Impact Fund (for Emerging, Smaller Nonprofits)**

Starting in 2023, the County aimed to make capital grants more accessible to non-profits with limited resources by funding small capital projects. The County believes this approach makes critical resources more available to innovative, grassroots expertise, builds trust within the community, and opens opportunities for smaller non-profits to maintain a healthy level of competition.

To implement this approach, the Community Capital competitive grant program creates a separate application track for smaller organizations, limits the maximum award to one organization per competitive round, and directs interested proposers to local technical assistance providers to help them develop a strong proposal.

The separate application track is called the "Impact Fund." The maximum grant award for this track is \$200,000 (compared to \$1,500,000 for Community Capital track proposals), and it requires less content in the application process. Specifically, the Impact Fund track does not need an alternatives analysis in the proposal. Eligible projects under the Impact Fund typically have lower total capital costs, usually \$25,000 or more, compared to larger Community Capital proposals, which generally cost \$100,000 or more and take over a year to complete.

Emerging, or smaller, non-profits are defined as organizations that:

- Average less than \$2.0 million in gross revenues over the past three fiscal years verified through publicly available Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 990 forms; and
- Have 25 or fewer full-time employees.

Non-profit organizations that meet this definition are not required to follow the Impact Fund, especially if they are applying for a larger grant through the competitive RFP process. In that case, these non-profits are expected to fulfill all requirements in the Community Capital track.

Technical assistance can take various forms and can be tailored to meet a non-profit's specific needs. Examples include training and education courses, one-on-one support, documentation and data help, application guidance, and other services. This assistance may involve a fee for the non-profit, and Wake County does not provide financial support for these services.

#### **1.5 Total Funding Available**

The fiscal year 2026 Community Capital process plans to award a total of \$7.0 million through the competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. About \$500,000 of this amount will be allocated to smaller capital projects that submit proposals following the Impact Fund criteria. The remaining \$6.5 million (approximately) will be available for community capital proposals from larger organizations. The distribution between Impact Fund projects and other community capital projects might change based on the number of proposals received, staff recommendations, and approvals by the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

#### **1.6 Proposed Schedule**

The table below outlines the proposed schedule for the RFP process. All dates are subject to change at the County's discretion. Any updates to the schedule will be promptly communicated to all prospective applicants.

Date	Action
August 5, 2025	Distribution of RFP
August 20, 2025, 1:00 pm	<a href="#">Pre-submittal meeting</a> (Microsoft Teams)
August 22, 2025 by 5:00 pm	Questions due in WC Bonfire Portal by 5:00 pm
August 27, 2025	Addenda issued to answer questions (if necessary)
September 10, 2025 by 2:00 pm	Electronic submittals due via WC Bonfire Portal by 2 PM EST
October 2025	Proposal presentations and interviews
November 2025	Board of Commissioners receives staff recommendations.
December 2025	Board of Commissioners considers approval of grant awards.

## 2 General Requirements

### 2.1 Eligibility

To qualify for funding through the Wake County Community Capital competitive grant program, proposers must meet all the following criteria:

- a. Non-Profit Status
  - Must be a nonprofit organization recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
  - Must be registered as a charitable organization with the North Carolina Secretary of State and remain in good standing.
- b. Service Area and Location
  - Improvements must be located within the geographic boundaries of Wake County.
  - The organization must offer services that benefit Wake County residents, either across the entire county or to specific populations within the county.
- c. Project Types
  - The Community Capital grant program will only cover capital expenses. The program will not fund ongoing or daily operational costs, nor does it cover fundraising and campaign expenses.
  - Projects may include:
    - Facilities and infrastructure with a useful life of ten years or more. Such projects usually cost over \$100,000 and take more than a year to complete (from planning to acceptance). Examples include, but are not limited to:
      - Construction, renovation, or expansion of facilities used for service delivery (e.g., community centers, clinics, shelters).
      - Permanent building improvements that enhance accessibility, safety, or service capacity.

- Durable equipment with a useful life of three years or more, such as, but not limited to:
  - Medical or laboratory equipment
  - Commercial-grade kitchen appliances
  - HVAC, mechanical, plumbing and/or security systems
  - Technology infrastructure (e.g., servers, network hardware)
  - Vehicles, if used to deliver direct services to residents
- d. Organizational Readiness
  - Must demonstrate the organizational capacity to manage capital projects, including proper oversight, financial management, and maintenance.
  - Must have site control (own, lease, or have a documented plan to acquire or control the site where improvements will be made).
    - ~~Long-term leases of at least ten years may be considered on a case-by-case basis if the County's investment stays within the cost share limits throughout the entire lease period.~~ Short-term leases or rentals are not eligible.
- e. Financial Standing
  - Must submit audited or reviewed financial statements for the two most recent fiscal years. If the organization does not have audited or reviewed statements, alternative documentation as outlined in Section 3.8 of this RFP (including completed Audit Form, notarized treasurer letter, and board meeting minutes) is acceptable.
  - Must not be in arrears on any federal, state, or local taxes or reporting requirements.
- f. Compliance and Reporting
  - Must agree to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, including building codes and procurement requirements.
  - Must commit to reporting requirements and allow site visits or audits as required by Wake County Government, as stipulated in a future funding agreement.

## 2.2 Match Requirements and Funding Limits

The maximum grant award under this program is capped depending upon the proposal evaluation track, including:

- Impact Fund Proposals: The maximum grant award for this evaluation track cannot exceed \$200,000 or 40% of the eligible project expenses, whichever is less.
- Community Capital Proposals: The maximum grant award for this evaluation track cannot exceed \$1,500,000 or 40% of the eligible project expenses, whichever is less.

Applicants can request funding up to the maximum amount; however, the actual award might be less than what is requested, depending on available funds, proposal quality, and the evaluation process, including the review of eligible project costs by the evaluation team.

Proposals must demonstrate at least a 60% match, which can be through cash or in-kind contributions. The County's grant funds are meant to be the "last dollars in" or pledged,

indicating that all other matching funds, including the proposer's cost-share match, must already be secured or available. Pre-award expenses incurred before the grant award date can qualify toward the proposer's matching share if properly documented and eligible. However, the County's funds will only be disbursed after all match requirements are met and documented.

The evaluation team will review the proposal's financial plan to determine which capital expenses are eligible for full consideration. Usually, eligible capital expenses include costs related to purchasing, improving, or extending the useful life of physical assets such as facilities or durable equipment, and they do not cover ongoing operations or maintenance.

Based on previous competitive processes, expenses that are ineligible and excluded from match consideration include staff salaries, service contracts, short-term leases, daily operating costs, and expenses related to fundraising or campaigns.

For grants awarded by the Wake County Board of Commissioners, the proposer must enter into a contract or funding agreement, a process managed by County staff. The funding agreement outlines the proposer's responsibilities regarding the pledged funds, including invoicing, documentation, and reporting requirements.

Grant funds under this program are accessible on a reimbursement basis only. Awarded organizations must incur and pay for eligible project expenses upfront and then submit reimbursement requests to the County. Funds cannot be provided in advance, and expenses incurred before the award date or outside the approved project scope are ineligible for reimbursement. However, expenses incurred prior to the award date may count toward the Proposer's matching share.

The process for submitting reimbursements will be outlined in the funding agreement or contract for awarded proposals. The actual disbursement of grant funds depends on complying with its requirements and the County staff's ability to review and approve payment requests.

The Proposer must retain ownership of the assets, either directly or through another eligible, not-for-profit organization approved by Wake County Government, for their entire useful life. Assets funded with Community Capital grant funds cannot be sold or transferred to private equity or private ownership.

### **2.3 No Lobbying or Contact Provisions**

To ensure a fair and competitive process and maintain the integrity of the RFP process, proposers are **not allowed to lobby, share information, or contact any elected County Commissioner** or individuals involved in evaluating proposals regarding projects in an organization's proposal responding to this RFP.

The 'no contact' provision applies from the RFP issuance to approximately November 10, 2025, or when staff presents funding recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. Violations of the no lobbying or contact provision may result in a written warning and/or rejection of the proposal.

# 3 Detailed Submittal Requirements

## 3.1 Proposal Format

Proposers shall prepare their proposals following the instructions outlined in this section. Proposals should be clear and concise, offering a straightforward description of the Proposer's ability to meet the RFP requirements. The utmost attention should be given to accuracy, completeness, and clarity of content.

All responses to this RFP must be received electronically no later than September 10, 2025, at 2:00 PM EST and submitted in the Wake County Bonfire (or Euna Procurement) Portal. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted.

The Proposal should be organized into the following major sections with tabs for each section:

Order	Section Title	Word Limit
1	Title Page	Not applicable
2	Letter of Transmittal	600
3	Bid Sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See attachment A in the RFP materials, document to be completed by the Proposer.</li> </ul>	Not applicable
4	Table of Contents	Not applicable
5	Executive Summary	1,200
6	Section 1: Community Need	1,200
7	Section 2: Project Scope	5,000
8	Section 3: Financial Plans	2,400
9	Section 4: Performance Reporting	1,200
10	Section 5: Organization Background	2,400
11	Attachments	Not applicable

Instructions for each section of this RFP response are provided in the subsequent sections. Keep your response focused on relevant details and avoid including marketing or sales information.

Formatting requirements include:

- Use standard, readable fonts (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri)
- The minimum font size in the proposal body is 10.
- Spacing may be single-spaced, 1.15, or 1.5.
- Minimum margins are 1 inch on all sides
- Include project title, organization name, and page numbers on each page in the header and/or footer.
- Attachments:
  - There are no format requirements for attachments; however, all attachments must be readable when printed, including PDF files.
  - There are no limits on the number of attachment files.

### 3.2 Executive Summary

This section should provide a brief overview of the community capital project proposal. The executive summary must, at a minimum, introduce the organization, identify the community need that will be addressed, the proposed capital project, estimated costs, and the grant amount requested from Wake County. It should emphasize what makes the proposal unique and well-suited to meet the County's needs.

The executive summary should also include the primary contact person for the RFP proposal. Contact details should include a name, title, a valid email address, and a phone number.

### 3.3 Section 1: Community Need

This section should describe the specific community needs your project addresses. Use facts, data, or evidence to demonstrate why this need is significant and urgent. Be clear about who will benefit, including the size and characteristics of the population that the proposed project will serve.

Wake County has identified priority needs in our community for the Community Capital RFP process. Should the proposed project address one of these needs, detail the connection between the project and the need. Priority needs include:

- Access to healthcare
- Behavioral health crisis prevention and recovery
- Food security
- Homelessness services
- Housing services.

### 3.4 Section 2: Project Scope

The section should describe the project scope of the recommended solution provided in the proposal. The County may, at its discretion, ask the Proposer to supply additional information that supports or clarifies the proposal.

The project scope should detail the following:

- **Project Description:** Provide a detailed overview of the proposed capital project. It should also include data that clearly links the project to solving the countywide need or problem. Explain what will be built, renovated, or purchased with the requested funds. Include the project's location, purpose, main features, and how it will address the identified need. If relevant, mention square footage, types of equipment, or key components.
- **Alternatives Analysis (not required for Impact Fund submissions):** Summarize the different approaches considered to address the identified need. Explain why the selected project is the best solution and how your organization is uniquely positioned to implement it. If other options were not pursued, describe the limitations or challenges that made them less feasible.
- **Collaboration:** Outline any partnerships with public agencies, private organizations, or nonprofits that will strengthen the project. Include how these collaborations boost effectiveness, efficiency, or impact.

- **Equity and Access:** Explain whether your project will reach or help populations that face barriers to services or resources. These populations may include underserved, historically marginalized, or disadvantaged individuals in the community.
- **Project Timeline and Readiness:** Provide a schedule for implementation and key project milestones. Clarify whether the project is ready to start and if land acquisition, design, permitting, and financing are secured. If not yet prepared, outline the necessary steps to move the project forward. This should cover both actions already taken and future steps.

Any site plan approvals, zoning variances, and business licenses needed for the Project should be noted, along with the status of these activities. For new facility projects, proposers are encouraged but not required to include a zoning verification letter for the project site from the local planning authority and to attach the letter.

The table below provides an example of how to present a project timeline. A more detailed timeline may be included as an attachment.

Project Action	Start Date	Finish Date
Study and Analysis of the Project		
Site Identification		
Land/Site Acquisition		
Architectural/Engineering Studies		
Facility Construction		
Equipment Purchase		
Other (describe)		

### 3.5 Section 3: Financial Plans

The section should describe the financial elements of the recommended solution provided in the proposal. The County may, at its discretion, ask the Proposer to supply additional information that supports or clarifies the proposal.

The financial plan section should detail the following:

- **Project Capital Budget:** Submit a detailed and realistic capital budget that matches the project's scope. The proposal should only include funding for the current project phase and exclude any previous phases. List all funding sources and expected expenses. Indicate who prepared the budget and whether it takes into account inflation.

The proposal must include a clear project expenditure schedule and a summarized budget plan. If applicable, a detailed budget summary can be attached as an additional document. The table below provides an example of how to present a summarized budget plan.

Expenditure	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	Total
1. Planning and Design				
2. Land Acquisition/Right of Way				
3. Construction				
4. Equipment / Furnishings				
5. Other				
6. Contingency				
Total				

- **Leveraged and Secured Funding:** List all other funding sources for the project, indicating whether each is secured (on-hand), pledged (committed), or pending (e.g., under review or in fundraising). For confirmed sources, include evidence of commitment supporting your proposal as attachments. The county funding should be the final amount required to start the project. Demonstrate the need for County capital investment for the project's success.
- **Operating and Maintenance Plan:** Develop a clear and practical plan for maintaining and operating the project upon completion. Explain how staffing, maintenance, and operating costs will be covered during the required post-completion period, without additional County funds.
  - Note: Impact Fund projects are expected to sustain operations for at least 5 years, while Community Capital projects are expected to last 10 years.

### 3.6 Section 4: Performance Reporting

This section explains how the Proposer will assess impact. Describe your methods for tracking and reporting the project's outcomes. Include any tools, metrics, or historical data you plan to use to measure success. Indicate whether an evaluation plan is already in place or will be developed after the project is completed.

### 3.7 Section 5: Organization Background

Use this section to describe additional information about the organization submitting the proposal. The organization background section should include the following:

- **Background and History:** Summarize your organization's mission, experience, and capacity for managing capital projects. Highlight any similar past projects. Confirm that your organization is in good standing with federal, state, and local governments, and disclose any relevant legal or management issues.
- **Project Team:** Specify the proposed project team, including who is responsible for each key role. Attach organization charts illustrating communication lines and levels of authority, along with resumes of the project team members.
- **Board Composition:** Provide a current list of your Board of Directors. Boards should represent community diversity and act as independent overseers of the organization. A local leadership presence is preferred.
- **Disclosures:** If applicable, disclose any litigation or governmental or regulatory actions pending against the Proposer. Also, describe any contractual relationships with other organizations that could be a conflict of interest or may appear to be conflicts of interest in partnering with Wake County to deliver the capital project.

### 3.8 Attachments

Proposers may attach any documents that support the project. There are no format requirements for any attachments, and no limits on the number of attachment files. All attachments must be readable if printed, including PDF attachments.

Required attachments include:

- Attach the most recent copy of IRS Form 990 or the relevant tax return.
- Attach a copy of the most recent audit and management letter.

- If your organization does not have an audit, review, or compilation, then attach the following:
  - A completed Audit Form (Attachment B) with figures from year-end financial statements.
  - A notarized letter from your treasurer verifying the accuracy of the statements.
- Approved minutes of the three most recent board meetings.
- Attach a list of all staff positions, titles, and salaries for the entire organization. Include all administrative staff. If the organization operates on a statewide or national level, provide information for the local chapters.
- If applicable and available, key project team member resumes may be attached.
  - If applicable, include an organizational chart showing communication lines and levels of authority for project team members.

Other attachments may include:

- If applicable and available, and if the project involves the design and construction of a new building, building expansion, or renovation, include scaled floor plans, site plans, elevations, or artistic renderings of the proposed building improvements.
- If applicable and available, and if the project involves a facility, proposers are encouraged but not required to include a zoning verification letter for the project site from the local planning authority.
- If applicable and available, provide a detailed budget summary that provides additional information supporting the capital project expenditure plan.
- If applicable and available, and if other funding sources are confirmed in the financial plan(s), include evidence of commitment supporting your proposal as attachments.
- Any material, including letters of support or endorsement from clients, that demonstrates the Proposer's ability to execute the community capital project.

## 4 Evaluation of Proposals

### 4.1 Evaluation Team

The County has formed an evaluation team consisting of Wake County staff and one community representative to oversee the review process. This team will assess and score the proposals, conduct Proposer presentations, and provide recommendations to the Board of Commissioners.

The team comprises members with a broad range of expertise and experience, and represents the following County departments:

- Behavioral Health
- Budget and Management Services
- County Manager's Office
- Community Services
- Cooperative Extension
- Facilities, Design and Construction
- Internal Audit

- General Services Administration
- Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization
- Public Health
- Social Services

Proposers are advised to review Section 2.4 of this RFP titled “No Lobbying or Contact Provisions”.

## **4.2 Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals submitted under this RFP will undergo a two-phase review and evaluation process to ensure that all awarded projects meet program goals and align with County priorities. In addition, proposals may be eligible for one bonus point for projects that address a county-identified priority need. The following subsections describe each evaluation phase and the bonus point opportunity.

### ***Phase 1: Eligibility Review***

In the first phase, County staff will review each proposal to determine whether it meets the minimum eligibility requirements for consideration. Proposals that fail to meet these requirements will not be considered for Phase 2.

Eligibility criteria include:

- The proposer is a legally recognized non-profit organization.
- The proposed project aligns with the County’s definition of a capital project, as outlined in this RFP.
- The requested funding amount does not surpass the maximum grant award limit for this program.
- Documentation is provided to show that other matching funds are secured or committed.

Only proposals that satisfy all four of these minimum requirements will move on to the second phase for further review.

### ***Phase 2: Proposal Evaluation***

In the second phase, an evaluation panel will review and score eligible proposals against the following criteria:

- **Unmet Community Need:** The proposal recognizes and tackles a major unmet need within the countywide community.
- **Demonstrates the need for county capital investment:** The proposal offers a strong reason why county investment is crucial for the project’s success.
- **Alternatives Analysis:** The proposal considers alternative approaches and explains why the selected approach is preferred.
- **Community Partnerships and Collaboration:** The project promotes strong collaborations with other organizations, thereby increasing its impact and effectiveness.
- **Equity and Access:** The project encourages fair access to services and tackles obstacles faced by historically underserved or marginalized populations.
- **Project Timeline and Readiness:** The proposed schedule is practical and aligns with the program goals and available funding.

- Expenditure Budget and Funding Sources: The budget is clear, realistic, and demonstrates a sustainable mix of funding sources, including those beyond County funds.
- Operating Plan: The organization has a practical, viable plan for sustaining the continued operation and maintenance of the capital assets after completion and does not depend on future County funds to support operations.
- Mechanism to Track and Measure Success: The proposal includes measurable outcomes and a plan to monitor and report progress and results.
- Organizational Structure and Background: The organization's history, governance (including board structure), and leadership show its ability to manage the project and funds responsibly.
- Ability to Execute the Project: The proposal shows the organization's technical, financial, and administrative capacity to successfully complete the project.

For scoring purposes, the evaluation team will assign weights to the evaluation criteria before reviewing any submitted proposals. The County will not distribute or share the criteria weights with proposers until the RFP process is complete.

***Bonus Point for Priority Needs***

Wake County has identified specific priority needs for the Community Capital RFP process. Proposals that clearly demonstrate how the proposed project addresses at least one of the following priority needs will receive an additional bonus point during the evaluation process:

- Access to healthcare
- Behavioral health crisis prevention and recovery
- Food security
- Homelessness services
- Housing services

To be considered for the bonus point during the phase two evaluation, proposers must clearly detail the connection between the proposed project and the identified priority need(s) within the narrative section of the application. Proposals that do not include a clear and compelling explanation of this connection will not receive the bonus point, even if the project relates to one of the listed areas. Bonus points do not compound—meaning that no proposal will receive more than one bonus point even if the project addresses more than one priority need.