



**Columbus Rural Fire District Fire Station Expansion & Modernization RFQ**  
June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Columbus Rural Fire District #3 is soliciting Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for architectural and related engineering services to provide professional design services for the **expansion and modernization of the Columbus Fire Station, Administration building and maintenance building and possibly the Park City Fire Station**

*Submittals must be received by email to [rcowger@columbusfirerescue.com](mailto:rcowger@columbusfirerescue.com)*

***no later than 10:00 AM Mountain Time on June 30, 2026***

**Project Background**

Columbus Fire Rescue provides fire suppression, EMS, technical rescue, and wildland fire response to the City of Columbus and a large surrounding rural service area in Stillwater County, Montana. Grant funding has been awarded to support a comprehensive improvement project.

The existing fire station has the following deficiencies:

- Was not designed for modern apparatus, staffing, or life-safety needs.
- Lacks adequate space for apparatus bays, training, decontamination, PPE storage, and administration.
- Needs improvements for health, safety, and operational efficiency.

The project anticipates remodeling parts of the current station, at 944 E Pike Ave, and remodel of an existing building to create the administration building located just across the street from the fire station and potential additions onto the district's maintenance building. Remote stand-alone small un-manned stations may be included along with possible remodel of the Park City Fire Station. The total budget for the project is **approximately \$3,500,000.00**.

## **Project Goals**

The selected architect will support CFR in delivering a facility that:

- Improves response readiness and firefighter safety.
- Supports career and volunteer staffing.
- Provides separate clean/dirty circulation and decontamination.
- Provides for adequate ventilation and exhaust removal.
- Accommodates modern apparatus and future growth.
- Includes community/training space.
- Is architecturally compatible with the community.
- Meets all applicable building, fire, accessibility, and energy codes.
- Is deliverable within the awarded grant budget and timeframe.

## **Anticipated Project Scope**

The architect will provide services that may include:

- **Design:**
  - Review and provide recommendations on the concept CFR has developed.
  - Schematic Design
  - Design Development
  - Provide renderings and 3D modeling as needed to convey design intent
  - Construction Documents
  
- **Support Services:**
  - Cost estimating and control throughout all phases.
  - Value engineering support.
  - Coordination with Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) and permitting through all AHJ's.
  - Support for environmental and procurement documentation as required by federal funding.
  - Assistance responding to grant-related design conditions.
  - Site visits.
  - Public Bidding/Alternative Project Delivery.
  - Construction Administration.
  - Construction delivered via competitive bid or CM/GC (to be determined).

**Note:** This project is funded in part by Federal Community Project Funding and must comply with all applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to 2 CFR 200, applicable Buy America/Build America provisions, and related grant conditions.

### Estimated Schedule (Subject to Change)

| Activity   | Date                    |
|--|-------------------------|
| RFQ Issued   | 6/11/2026               |
| Project/Site Walk Through (Optional)                               | 6/23/2026 at 10:00 A.M. |
| Submittals Due   | 6/30/2026 at 10:00 AM.  |
| Shortlist / Interviews   | 7/08/2026               |
| Architect Selection<br>begin negotiations with highest ranked firm | 7/13/2026               |
| Construction Start   | TBD                     |

*Attendance at the site walk is optional and not required for submission*

## **Submittal Requirements**

1. Cover letter / Statement of interest.
2. Description of firm's relevant experience with projects of similar size and scope.
  - a. Fire stations or public safety facilities (especially rural or volunteer-based).
  - b. Projects funded with federal or state grants.
  - c. Projects delivered within constrained budgets.
3. Firm's specific experience with programming, designing and completing projects of similar scope and size on time and on budget.
  - a. Experience designing for firefighter health and safety.
4. References and contact numbers from previous representatives of projects completed of similar size and scope. Minimum of three (3) public-sector clients.
5. Proposed staff and relevant experience.
  - a. Principal In Charge
  - b. Project Manager
  - c. Lead architect
  - d. Key consultants (structural, mechanical, electrical, civil)
  - e. Fire station or emergency-services experience of team members and consultants
6. Firm's current workload and its ability to focus on this project.

## **Selection Process**

Late Submittals will not be accepted. Submissions will be assessed by a selection committee. A maximum of three (3) candidates with the highest numeric scores may be invited to interview.

### **Numerical Evaluations (per MCA 18-8-204):**

1. Experience, especially with projects of similar size and scope in this region: **35%**
2. Key team member qualifications and experience with similar projects: **30%**
3. Capability to meet time and project budget requirements: **20%**
4. Location: **5%**
5. Recent and current work for Columbus Fire and Rescue: **5%**
6. Current and projected workloads: **5%**

**Negotiation:** After interviews, the final scope and compensation will be negotiated with the highest-ranked firm. If negotiations are unsuccessful, they will terminate and start with the second-ranked finalist, and so on.

**Waiver of Interview:** Depending on the number and quality of submittals, the Fire District reserves the right to make the selection based on the submittal information alone and may decline to conduct the interview stage.

## **Submission Instructions**

RFQs shall be submitted electronically in PDF format,  
Email subject line shall read: 'Fire Station RFQ – "Firm Name"'

Sent to:

rcowger@columbusfirerescue.com

Rich Cowger, Fire Chief

Columbus Fire Rescue

406-321-1180 (cell)

*Submittals must be received no later than:*

**10:00 AM Mountain Time on June 30, 2026**

The fire district reserves the right to reject any or all submittals received, to waive informalities, to evaluate the proposals submitted and to accept the proposal that best serves the interests of the fire district. The District will not be responsible for any costs incurred in responding to this RFQ. All submittals become the property of the District and may be subject to public disclosure under Montana public records law.