

TO:	Cumberland County Commissioners
FROM:	Bill Trufant, Facilities Director
DATE:	November 6, 2023
SUBJECT:	New Unified County Office Building Design Award

Requested Action:

Award the Design and Renovation proposal for the New Unified County Office Building located at 27 Northport Drive in Portland to Professional design firm WSP

Background & Purpose of Request:

Cumberland County's physical space needs for staff and operations have long exceeded available resources, in particular for staff based at the County Courthouse. These space challenges have been significantly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees in some offices are required to share workspaces, cycling in and out of the office on a rotating schedule because there is not enough room to provide everyone with a workspace. Many other employees who are not able to work remotely are sharing workspaces that are far too small for the number of people working there, and are incapable of providing the necessary space and airflow to reduce the spread of airborne pathogens. The County seeks to redesign a newly acquired County-owned office building. This newly renovated building will achieve several critical goals for Cumberland County: first and foremost, it will create enough physical space across County-owned properties for all employees to work safely. Second, it will allow County employees to be sited more effectively - the new building will consolidate Executive Staff, the Registry of Deeds, Public Health, the Emergency Management Agency and Regional Assessing together on the same campus. Third, the new building will create tax offset opportunities for County taxpayers, by eliminating the need to pay rent in a few large spaces in Downtown Portland, and increasing the opportunity for revenue at the County-owned garage on Newbury Street.

Cumberland County released an RFQ for Professional design firms to assist the County with its plan to design and renovate the newly acquired 27 Northport Drive Property. The County sought firms that have experience with design, construction management, administrative support and traditional project delivery methods.

The County received five proposals from the following firms: Gawron/Turgeon, Oakpoint Associates, Dirigo Architecture, WSP, and CHA. The selection team consisted of Sandra Warren, Compliance & Audit Manager, Travis Kennedy, Director of Public Affairs, and Bill Trufant, Facilities Director. The group evaluated all firms based on qualifications, overall experience with this type of project, along with cost control and corresponding references outlined within the proposals presented to the team. Upon review of all submissions, the team selected two firms to move forward for in person interviews and presentations. Those firms were WSP and CHA.

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Upon meeting with the firms noted above, both reflected significant insight into the County's needs and outlined their desire to work with the County. CHA has completed a number of projects that were comparable in size and highlighted their unique modern office design model. WSP, on the other hand, demonstrated extensive experience with designing and renovating existing government buildings and highlighted their ability to work with public funding constraints. They also have provided examples of a number of recent design and renovation projects that closely resembled what the County is trying to conduct at our Northport Drive building.

Funding Amount and Source:

Cumberland County will use Funding from the American Request Plan under the Revenue Loss Category. The Revenue Loss Category allows Cumberland County to spend ARPA dollars on Government Services, which includes administrative facilities so long as funds are not used in a way that would conflict with or contravenes the purpose of the American Rescue Plan Act Statute.

Effective Date: 11/14/23

Attachments:

(Please list out any Attachments you're including)

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