BURKE COUNTY GOVERNMENT · OPIOID RESPONSE DEPARTMENT

ARCHITECTURAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES

# Facility-Based Crisis Center

Vendor Selection & Recommendation for Approval

Presented by Katie Samuels · Opioid Response Department To the Board of County Commissioners · 722 E. Union Street, Morganton

RFQ-2026-0518

July 2026

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WHY BURKE COUNTY NEEDS THIS

## Today, a crisis means the ER or the justice system — neither built for built for stabilization

One year of data from UNC Health Blue Ridge's Emergency Department, July 2024–June 2025:

**1,060+**

behavioral health & substance use ED visits visits — 860 psychiatric, 200 overdose/adverse reaction

**33,648**

hours spent boarding in the ED awaiting behavioral health placement — over 1,400 days total

**39–58**

average hours per ED stay — 43 hrs for psychiatric evals, 58 hrs for overdose patients

**312**

psychiatric EMS calls in six months, among 11,758 total EMS calls countywide

Without a local option, individuals in crisis are frequently transported to facilities more than an hour away — increasing cost and delaying treatment.

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THE VALUE OF THE FBC

## A diversion model, not just a facility




**Goal:** redirect appropriate individuals to a structured stabilization setting that improves outcomes while reducing strain on hospitals, law enforcement, and emergency services.

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THE VISION & OUR PARTNERSHIP

## A community solution, built through partnership

Burke County brought together Partners Health Management, UNC Health Blue Ridge, emergency services, law enforcement, and community stakeholders to strengthen the county's behavioral health crisis continuum — resulting in a 16-bed Facility-Based Crisis Center.

### Burke County Government

- Project sponsor and local lead
- Property owner
- Responsible for procurement and capital project oversight
- Responsible for long-term ownership of the facility

### Partners Health Management

- Fiscal administrator for the state capital allocations
- Project partner
- Provides technical assistance and behavioral-health expertise
- Coordinates with the state (DMH/DD/SUS) on capital funding

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HOW THE PROJECT IS FUNDED

## Two state capital sources, no local capital dollars

**~$6.5M**

total capital funding secured

SOURCE 1
**NC General Assembly allocation**

SOURCE 2
**DMH/DD/SUS capital allocation**
Awarded to complete the project

FUNDS COVER

- Property acquisition
- Architectural & engineering services
- Building renovation
- Medical equipment
- Furnishings
- Technology
- Security systems
- Licensure preparation

Remaining funds, if any, may support allowable startup and implementation costs.

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WHAT WE ARE BUILDING

## A licensed 16-bed crisis stabilization facility

**16**
crisis beds (voluntary & IVC capable)

**~6,800**
sq ft single-story building, with possible expansion

**Design-Bid- Build**
project delivery method

**722 E. Union Street**
Morganton, NC — purchased for $865,000




MUST MEET

DHSR licensure & physical-plant rules · NC Medicaid Clinical Coverage Policy 8A · State-Funded FBC service definitions · ligature-resistant, trauma-informed design

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HOW THE FIRM WAS SELECTED

## A qualifications-based selection

Per N.C. practice for professional design services, firms are evaluated and ranked on **qualifications** — experience, team, and approach. and approach. Fees are negotiated only after a firm is selected.

| Apr 27 | May 4 | May 18 | Late May | Jun 23 | Tonight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **RFQ Issued** | **Questions Due** | **Submittals Due** | **Committee Scoring** | **Shortlist Interviews** | **Recommendation** |
| Posted publicly on burkenc.org/Bids | Answers posted to all firms | Six firms submitted qualifications qualifications | Five-member panel scored each firm each firm | Top three firms interviewed | Approval to begin negotiations |

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WHAT THE COMMITTEE SCORED

## Six evaluation criteria

Each panelist scores **1–5** Five reviewers · 150
150 points maximum

**01**
### Project Approach & Understanding
Grasp of FBC design, DHSR coordination, cost & schedule risk schedule risk

**02**
### Relevant Experience
Healthcare, behavioral health, secure & adaptive-reuse projects

**03**
### Team & Personnel Qualifications
Licensed staff, subconsultants, roles and certifications certifications

**04**
### Schedule & Capacity
Proposed timeline, milestones, and capacity to deliver deliver

**05**
### References
Three similar projects completed within five years

**06**
### Overall Quality of Proposal
Completeness, clarity, and responsiveness to the RFQ RFQ

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ROUND 1 · WHO REVIEWED THE PROPOSALS

## A multi-stakeholder review panel

Five reviewers independently scored all six proposals — bringing together county leadership, the regional health system, and the behavioral-health managing organization that will operate alongside the center.

### Burke County Government

COUNTY LEADERSHIP

**Dr. Katie Samuels**
Opioid Response Director

**Hugh Sandoe**
Burke County Government

### UNC Health Blue Ridge

REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM PARTNER

**Dr. Anthony Frank**
UNC Health Blue Ridge

### Partners Health Management

BEHAVIORAL-HEALTH MANAGING ORGANIZATION

**Dr. Paul Holden**
Partners Health Management

**Jamie Sales**
Director, Network Operations

ROUND 2 — A separate interview panel — **Brian Nieft** (Finance), **Katie Samuels** (Opioid Response), **Jamie Sales** & **Dr. Paul Holden** (Partners), and **Hugh Sandoe** (County Manager's Office) — then interviewed the top three firms.

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ROUND 1 · INITIAL PROPOSAL REVIEW

## Six firms, ranked by proposal review score

Five reviewers · six criteria **150 points** maximum

| FIRM | APPROACH | EXPERIENCE | TEAM | SCHEDULE | REFERENCES | QUALITY | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 **Holland & Hamrick Architects** INTERVIEWED | 22 | 23 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 24 | **141** |
| 2 **CPL** INTERVIEWED | 23 | 25 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 21 | **130** |
| 3 **Atriax, PLLC** INTERVIEWED | 23 | 23 | 23 | 18 | 19 | 22 | **128** |
| 4 **1919 Architects** | 20 | 17 | 21 | 22 | 19 | 19 | **118** |
| 5 **Masters Architecture, PLLC** | 21 | 21 | 20 | 19 | 14 | 20 | **115** |
| 6 **Sizemore Group** | 21 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 16 | 20 | **115** |

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ROUND 2 · SHORTLIST INTERVIEWS, JUNE 23, 2026

## The top three firms were interviewed

Each firm presented and answered questions on FBC design experience, DHSR coordination, schedule, and the Union Street site.
**Brian Nieft** (Finance), **Katie Samuels** (Opioid Response), **Jamie Sales** & **Dr. Paul Holden** (Partners), and **Hugh Sandoe** (County

RANK 1 **117**/125

### Holland & Hamrick Architects

Deep behavioral-health & secure-facility portfolio; strong command of DHSR review, adaptive reuse, and sightline/ligature requirements.

RANK 2 **109**/125
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### CPL

Broad institutional healthcare experience and capacity; capacity; strong overall proposal and references.

RANK 3 **106**/125

### Atriax, PLLC

Strong NC presence and team; solid approach and experience across the evaluation criteria.

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COMMITTEE & STAFF RECOMMENDATION

## Holland & Hamrick Architects

The top-ranked firm — and the strongest fit for a licensed Facility-Based Crisis Center.
Crisis Center.

- Top-ranked in both rounds — 141 of 150 in review, 117 of 125 in interviews
- Direct behavioral-health, crisis, and secure-facility design experience
- Perfect 25 / 25 on references; top marks on schedule, capacity, and overall quality
- Interview confirmed command of schedule, sightlines, and clinical workflow

EVALUATION SCORE

**141**/150

Rank #1 of 6 firms

22 · 23 · 23 · 24 · 25 · 24

points by criterion · out of 25 each

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FULL PROJECT TIMELINE

## Roughly 18–24 months to opening

Tonight's vote covers Phase 3. Phases 0–2 are already complete.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| P0 | Planning, funding, partnership & needs assessment | Completed |
| P1 | Property acquisition & due diligence, 722 E. Union St. | March 2026 |
| P2 | RFQ for architectural & engineering services | June 2026 |
| P3 | **Board approval & contract execution with A&E firm** | **July 2026** |
| P4 | RFQ for clinical design & operational readiness consultant | Sept 2026 |
| P5 | Schematic design | Sept 2026 |
| P6 | Design development | Nov 2026 |
| P7 | Construction documents | Feb 2027 |
| P8 | Bidding, permitting & DHSR plan review | May 2027 |
| P9 | Construction & renovation | July 2028 |
| P10 | Operator RFP and selection | May 2028 |
| P11 | Licensure, staffing, training & operational readiness | Aug 2028 |
| P12 | **Facility opening** | **Sept 2028** |

Dates are estimates and subject to change as design and permitting proceed.

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LONG-TERM IMPACT

## A cornerstone of Burke County's behavioral health system system

- Local alternative to emergency departments
- Reduced behavioral health boarding in hospitals
- EMS and law enforcement diversion support
- Expanded crisis stabilization access
- Better transitions into ongoing treatment
- Serves adults across Burke County & the region

Joins the BEAR Team, Recovery Court, low-barrier medication-assisted treatment, and other opioid-settlement initiatives in one comprehensive behavioral health system for Burke County.

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FOR BOARD ACTION

# Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with the top-ranked firm ranked firm

MOTION

Authorize staff to enter negotiations with **Holland & Hamrick Architects** for architectural and engineering services under services under RFQ-2026-0518, on a negotiated scope of services and fee.

→ **If negotiations succeed**
Contract returns to the Board for final approval and award.

→ **If negotiations fail**
Per QBS, staff proceeds to the next-ranked firm.