MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ACTION MEMORANDUM **AM No. 25-039**

SUBJECT: Award of proposal number 25-095P to Nvision Architecture, Inc. for the contract amount of $2,453,338.00 to Design Birchtree Charter School.

AGENDA OF: April 15, 2025

ASSEMBLY ACTION:

Approved under the consent agenda 4/15/25 - EMW

AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED: Present to the Assembly for consideration.

Route To:	Signature
Purchasing Officer	X Dustin Silva for RMK Signed by: Dustin Silva /3/2025
Public Works Director	Recoverable Signature X Tom Adams, PE Signed by: Tom Adams
Finance Director	Recoverable Signature X Cheyenne Heindel Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel
Borough Attorney	X Nicholas Spiropoulos Signed by: Nicholas Spiropoulos 4/4/2025
Borough Manager	X Michael Brown Signed by: Mike Brown /4/2025
Borough Clerk	Recoverable Signature X Lonnie McKechnie Signed by: Lonnie McKechnie

ATTACHMENT(S): Analysis Sheet (2p)
Scope of Services (8p)

SUMMARY STATEMENT: On December 9, 2024, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Purchasing Division issued a solicitation for proposals from qualified firms to design a new facility for Birchtree Charter School, a public school within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (MSBSD). Currently operating in a leased space, Birchtree seeks a permanent location to better support its Waldorf education model. Additionally, the project aims to prioritize low-maintenance and high-efficiency solutions where feasible.

The school's existing facility at 7000 E. Wonder Circle no longer meets its needs, as enrollment has grown from over 200 students in 2010 to more than 400 today. To address this, the school has been approved to relocate to a 68-acre parcel adjacent to Shaw Elementary School, offering ample space for improved traffic circulation and expanded outdoor learning

opportunities. The proposed facility will span approximately 49,000 square feet and accommodate up to 530 students from kindergarten through 8th grade, significantly reducing the current waitlist of 133 students.

Services purchased will support the Public Works Department in assembly district #4.

A five-member evaluation team, including three MSB Public Works employees and two MSBSD managers, assessed proposals in two phases. Phase 1 evaluated technical proposals on five criteria: Objectives & Services, Relevant Experience, Proposed Staff, Methods, and Management. The top three firms MCG Explore Design, Nvision Architecture, and ECI Hyer advanced to Phase 2, which focused on firm presentations. Presentations were scored on Design Vision, Stakeholder Integration, Functionality, Sustainability, and Team Dynamics. Nvision Architecture was selected as the most advantageous firm for the MSB.

In accordance with MSBSD Board policy 7220, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District approved the selection of Nvision Architecture during their April 2, 2025 regular school board meeting.

The completion date for this project is August 16, 2027.

In accordance with MSB 3.08.170(C), Administration requests a 5% ($122,666.90) change order authority to modify the resulting contract for reasons established under 3.08.170(B).

In accordance with MSB 3.08.170(B), Administration requests authority to modify the resulting contract completion date by 90 days for unforeseen circumstances.

The Public Works Department, Projects Division will be administering the contract with the support of MSBSD Facilities.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION: Approve the subject action memorandum.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
FISCAL NOTE
Agenda Date: April 15, 2025

SUBJECT: Award of proposal number 25-095P to Nvision Architecture, Inc. for the contract amount of $2,453,338.00 to Design Birchtree Charter School.

FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE)	FISCAL IMPACT **YES** NO
AMOUNT REQUESTED $2,453,338	FUNDING SOURCE School Capital Projects
FROM ACCOUNT # 400.000.000 4xx.xxx	PROJECT# 40006
TO ACCOUNT :	PROJECT #
VERIFIED BY: Recoverable Signature X Liesel Zanto Signed by: Liesel Weiland	CERTIFIED BY:
DATE: 4/3/2025	DATE:

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
Personnel Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land/Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING						
CAPITAL	2,453.3					
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

General Fund						
State/Federal Funds						
Other	2,453.3					
TOTAL	2,453.3					

POSITIONS:

Full-Time						
Part-Time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

PREPARED BY: _____ PHONE: _____

DEPARTMENT: _____ DATE: _____

Recoverable Signature

X Cheyenne Heindel

APPROVED BY:

Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel DATE: _____

AM No. 25-039

25-095P – Design Birchtree Charter School

Scoring Summary: Phase 2

	B - Phase 2: Presentation	B-1 - Design Vision and Approach	B-2 - Integration of Stakeholder Input	B-3 - Functionality and Flexibility	B-4 - Sustainability and Cost Efficiency	B-5 - Presentation Quality and Team Dynamics
Supplier	**/ 100 pts**	**/ 30 pts**	**/ 25 pts**	**/ 20 pts**	**/ 15 pts**	**/ 10 pts**
Nvision Architecture, Inc.	95.5 pts	30 pts	22.5 pts	18 pts	15 pts	10 pts
ECI Hyer Inc	64.5 pts	18 pts	20 pts	12 pts	9.3 pts	5.2 pts
MCG Explore Design	29.4 pts	7.8 pts	6.5 pts	8.8 pts	2.7 pts	3.6 pts

25-095P – Design Birchtree Charter School

Scoring Summary: Phase 1

	A - Phase 1: Technical Proposal	A-1 - Objectives and Services	A-2 - Relevant Project Experience	A-3 - Proposed Project Staff	A-4 - Methods	A-5 - Management
Supplier	**/ 100 pts**	**/ 24 pts**	**/ 22 pts**	**/ 19 pts**	**/ 18 pts**	**/ 17 pts**
MCG Explore Design	85.96 pts	21.12 pts	19.36 pts	16.72 pts	15.84 pts	12.92 pts
Nvision Architecture, Inc.	84.04 pts	17.28 pts	18.48 pts	17.48 pts	15.84 pts	14.96 pts
ECI Hyer Inc	77.4 pts	19.2 pts	14.96 pts	15.96 pts	13.68 pts	13.6 pts
Architects Alaska	74 pts	18.24 pts	17.6 pts	12.92 pts	13.68 pts	11.56 pts
Stantec Architecture, Inc	70.96 pts	18.24 pts	13.2 pts	12.92 pts	13.68 pts	12.92 pts
BDS	48.28 pts	14.4 pts	11.44 pts	9.12 pts	7.2 pts	6.12 pts

SCOPE OF SERVICES

25-095P, Design Birchtree Charter School

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants to provide professional Architecture/Engineering (A/E) services for the Birchtree Charter School.

Project Narrative

This project aims to construct a new facility for Birchtree Charter School, a public school within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. Currently leasing its space, Birchtree Charter School is seeking a permanent location to better support its Waldorf education model, which emphasizes nurturing the development of healthy, responsible, and creative individuals through hands-on, multi-sensory learning experiences.

Key elements of the school's design will include the use of natural materials, flexible spaces, ample natural lighting, artistic features, outdoor learning environments, community areas, quiet zones, and sustainability initiatives that integrate with the surrounding nature. Additionally, the project aims to be low-maintenance and high-efficiency where feasible.

The existing facility at 7000 E. Wonder Circle has become inadequate for the school's growth, which has expanded from over 200 students in 2010 to more than 400 today. The school has received approval to relocate to a 68-acre parcel adjacent to Shaw Elementary School, providing ample space for improved traffic circulation and enhanced outdoor learning opportunities. It is important that the new site development incorporates adequate on-site queuing for parent pick-up and drop-off, as the charter school is not mandated to provide bus services.

The proposed facility is anticipated to encompass approximately 49,000 square feet, accommodating up to 530 students from kindergarten to 8th grade. This increased capacity is expected to significantly reduce the current waitlist of 133 students.

This RFP is for Phase 1 – Schematic Design which includes site investigations and design work to complete the schematic design.

If approved and added by contract amendment future phases of work may include services for final design through construction administration.

Project Schedule

The proposed project schedule is:

Professional Services Contract Award	March 2025
Schematic Design	July 2025
Design Development	TBD
Construction Documents	TBD
Bid Advertisement for Construction	TBD
Construction	TBD

Reasonable alternative timeframes may be proposed, accompanied by written justification.

Construction Budget

The total construction budget for this project is $21,740,000. The statement of probable construction cost (SPCC) may not exceed this amount including contingencies.

General

The Consultant shall provide services as identified and authorized by a sequentially numbered Notice-to-Proceed (NTP) issued by the MSB. Consultant shall not perform services or incur billable expenses except as authorized by a NTP.

All reports, plans, specifications, estimates and similar work products provided by the Consultant shall be prepared by or under the supervision of an Architect, Engineer, or Land Surveyor currently registered in Alaska.

The Consultant shall name individuals whom all services must be performed by or under the direct supervision of; replacement of or addition to the Project Staff named below shall be accomplished only by prior written approval of the MSB:

Project Responsibilities
Project Management
Architecture
Civil Engineering
Geotechnical Engineering
Landscape Architecture
Surveying
Structural Engineering
Electrical Engineering
Mechanical Engineering
Cost Estimating

All coordination and correspondence for the project shall be handled through or with the concurrence of the MSB Project Manager.

Consultant is required to maintain a schedule detailing project tasks and milestones. This schedule will show the interdependence and duration of the various design activities/contract tasks. The schedule will be the basis for performance measurements throughout the Project development and used to track Consultant progress and billings.

Billing

The Consultant must provide a monthly report addressed to the MSB Project Manager with each invoice that includes:

- Firm details and invoice information.
- Project name, contract number, and purchase order number.
- Sequentially numbered with a date range covered by the invoice.
- Project specifics, contract amounts, previous and current billings.
- Summary of work performed and planned activities for the next billing period.

The consultant is required to notify the Borough Project Manager when 75% and 90% of the authorized billing amount has been expended.

Final invoices must be clearly marked as "FINAL."

Guarantee

No guarantee is given that the Consultant will be required to provide all of the services detailed in this Statement of Services or that the Consultant will incur all of the costs estimated. Likewise, no guarantee is given that the Consultant will perform other services for the project beyond those defined in this contract.

Scope of Services

Based on a mutually agreed upon scope of services, schedule, and fee, Consultant's services may include, but not necessarily be limited to:

Phase 1 – Schematic Design

Task 1 – Project Management

The Consultant shall provide project management services focused on quality control and administration of the work. This includes preparing agendas and minutes for progress meetings, managing monthly invoices, and generating progress reports along with budget tracking. The Consultant will oversee its team and overall project activities in alignment with the Borough's direction to ensure that the project adheres to its schedule and budget.

The Consultant will also manage sub-consultants, maintain the project schedule and budget, anticipate and mitigate potential issues and delays, and coordinate with the MSB Project Manager to keep them updated on the project's overall progress. The A/E will interact with MSB and MSBSD staff to develop a design that meets all requirements, documenting and distributing meeting minutes for approval following each meeting.

Periodic progress meetings will be held at a frequency agreed upon between the Borough Project Manager and the Consultant. Review meetings will also be held at key project milestones, which include but are not limited to:

- Kick-off Meeting
- Preliminary Findings Meeting
- Education Specifications
- Schematic Design Review (35%)
- Design Development Review (65%)
- Construction Document Review (95%)

The Consultant shall designate one individual as the project manager and primary contact for the Borough. This individual will be responsible for maintaining clear lines of communication and will serve as the designated liaison for the MSB Project Manager. Additionally, this person will assist the MSB Project Manager in providing updates to interested stakeholders.

Task 2 – Site Investigations

The Consultant shall conduct site investigations necessary for the design of the new facility. These investigations will collectively provide critical data to support the successful design and construction of the new school. By thoroughly assessing the physical characteristics and environmental factors of the site, the Consultant will ensure that all relevant aspects are considered in the design process. These site investigations will facilitate informed decision-making and minimize potential risks associated with construction and site development. Each investigation will yield valuable insights that contribute to the overall feasibility and sustainability of the project, ultimately resulting in a facility that meets the needs of students, staff, and the community.

A. Survey

The scope of services for the school design project includes comprehensive surveying. This will involve a topographic survey that generates one-foot contour intervals to accurately capture existing site features such as contours, vegetation, structures, and utilities. Additionally, the survey will establish property boundaries and any easements, with a boundary survey conducted to verify legal limits.

The survey will also encompass the right-of-way for adjacent roadways, ensuring adequate space for designing the driveway and necessary improvements. Existing utilities, both underground and aboveground, will be located within and adjacent to the site, and any wetlands present will be delineated.

Deliverables will include a basemap in PDF and AutoCAD format, along with the survey field notes.

B. Geotechnical Investigation

A geotechnical investigation will be conducted, involving soil test pits and borings to determine soil types, stratification, and properties at various depths. Laboratory testing of soil samples will assess compaction, shear strength, and consolidation characteristics.

The investigation will provide details on the appropriate foundation type based on the results, including potential mitigation strategies for issues such as soil settlement or groundwater concerns. It will also outline excavation parameters, slope stability measures, and any necessary ground improvement techniques tailored to the site's soil properties and the proposed building.

Groundwater elevations will be documented and included in the findings to inform onsite septic design and determine the requirements for gravity or pressurized systems. Deliverables will consist of both a draft and a final comprehensive geotechnical report summarizing the results and providing design and construction recommendations.

C. Traffic and Circulation Study

The Traffic and Circulation Study will evaluate current traffic patterns, access points, and safety considerations to inform the design of driveway locations, drop-off and pick-up areas, parking, and overall site circulation.

The consultant will estimate vehicle volumes during pick-up and drop-off times and design appropriate on-site queuing to prevent traffic backups on existing and future roads, taking into account total build-out and projected school enrollment. This study is essential for ensuring the school layout supports safe and efficient access for students, parents, and staff.

The A/E will provide an exhibit illustrating traffic circulation into, through, and out of the school site during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. Deliverables will include both a draft and a final Traffic and Circulation Study, summarizing findings and offering design recommendations.

D. Utility Investigation

A utility investigation will assess the capacity and availability of essential utilities, including water (well), septic systems, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications, to support the new facility. This investigation will confirm that the necessary infrastructure is in place to effectively accommodate the school's needs.

Deliverables will include both a draft and a final memo summarizing the findings and providing design recommendations.

Task 3 – Design

The primary focus is to design a facility with a learning environment that will facilitate the schools educational program needs. The facility shall include classrooms, secure rooms, security/video systems, emergency bi-directional amplifier (BDA), library, fixed display boards, flexible spaces, administrative spaces, food preparation and gymnasium. Designing surrounding areas to include parking lots, street/traffic access, adequate onsite traffic circulation and queuing, bus loops, drainage and stormwater facilities, fencing, lighting, landscaping, athletic fields and playground equipment will also be a responsibility of the design firm. Additionally, the selected firm may aid in facilitating the selection of fixtures, furniture, and equipment (FF&E).

The selected firm will be required to perform all calculations, studies, research and code analysis to be in full compliance with state laws governing the practice of architecture and engineering. The A/E will produce new drawings and specifications and a statement of probable construction cost (SPCC) with updates at each phase of design. All work must be in full compliance with the most recent MSBSD Facility Design Criteria Manual, current International Building Codes, as well as all other pertinent federal, state and local codes.

The Designer will advise Borough and School District Staff on facility systems and design to ensure that systems and designs are selected that suit the new school requirements. The Designer is also responsible for making recommendations on maintaining systems and will select systems suitable for local conditions and ease of maintenance.

The Designer will interact with the Design Advisory Committee consisting of Borough and MSBSD Staff to develop a design that meets the school requirements. The Designer will document and distribute meeting minutes for approval after each design meeting. Meetings will be held at times and locations that are convenient for Borough and School District Staff.

The A/E will be responsible for all aspects of the design including, but not limited to, Educational Specifications, architectural, civil, landscape design, structural, mechanical, electrical, food service, acoustical, permitting, all utility planning, cost estimates and coordination through utility installation/connection. Services may include construction administration throughout the duration of the construction contract, permitting, project drawings to include construction and record drawings, O & M manuals and on-site representation, record drawings, special inspections, warranty period support and inspection.

The Designer shall participate in reviews to ensure the project design conforms to applicable code requirements of agencies having jurisdiction and will make any changes required to the Construction Documents for issuance of all permits and legal authorizations required for construction. The Designer shall, on behalf of the Borough, investigate required permits, file the required documents and secure/pay all permits and authorizations required for construction during the design of the project.

The Designer shall assist the MSB Project Manager and MSBSD Superintendent in presenting documents during the design phases of the project for the Design Advisory Committee, School Board, Public Works Director, and Borough Assembly reviews as required.

A. Education Specifications
   The selected firm will be responsible for writing the Educational Specification for the school, incorporating input from MSBSD staff. The specification must receive approval from the MSBSD Superintendent. The design of the school will adhere to the requirements outlined in the approved Educational Specification. Experience in writing educational specifications and designing educational facilities will be considered when evaluating proposals.

B. Schematic Design
   The selected architecture/engineering (A/E) firm shall provide Schematic Design Documents for the new facility, developed in accordance with the approved Educational Specifications, a mutually agreed-upon schedule, and the established construction budget. The Schematic Design will include a detailed site plan that illustrates the layout of the site, encompassing landscaping, parking, and access points, demonstrating how the facility integrates with the surrounding environment, including drainage and maximizing cut/fill balance.

   Building plans must outline the layout of each level, highlighting key areas such as classrooms, common spaces, administrative offices, and support facilities. Cross-sectional views and exterior elevations will depict the building's height, massing, and architectural style.

   The A/E will also prepare a written report detailing the preliminary selections of major building systems, including structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as construction materials. This report will address sustainability, energy efficiency, and compliance with relevant building codes. Additionally, an initial Statement of Probable Construction Cost (SPCC) will be provided for review and approval.

The A/E shall submit digital documents in searchable PDFs and AutoCAD formats along with five printed copies of the report, drawings, and the initial SPCC for review and approval. All submissions should be organized clearly, emphasizing clarity and detail to facilitate effective feedback from stakeholders.

The A/E shall present the schematic design to both the School Board and the Assembly.

Phase 2 – Final Design Through Construction

Phase 2 Services are NOT anticipated to be included in the initial award. The MSB reserves the right to add these services by amendment.

C. Design Development

The Designer shall provide Design Development Documents based on the approved Schematic Design, adhering to the mutually agreed-upon schedule and construction budget. A PDF copy and up to five hard copies of the drawings will be submitted for review and approval, along with product samples that illustrate the finished products. The Design Development Documents will detail the agreed-upon systems, including markings, logos, coverage, product specifications, sub-surface preparation, and drainage systems. All systems will be manufacturer-approved, where applicable, to ensure warranty inclusion. The A/E will coordinate with electrical and mechanical engineers to ensure proper placement of connections for systems and FF&E. This coordination will ensure that all elements are accurately reflected across all sheets (architectural, electrical, mechanical, etc.) in the construction documents. Engage with utility companies for service designs for all utilities required for the facility.

The A/E shall present the design development to the School Board.

D. Construction Documents

The Designer shall provide Construction Documents based on the approved Design Development Documents and an updated Statement of Probable Construction Cost (SPCC). These documents will detail the requirements for the construction of the project and include drawings and specifications that establish the quality levels of materials and systems required.

During the development of the Construction Documents, the Designer shall assist the Borough in preparing bidding information. The Designer will compile these elements alongside the Borough's standard bidding requirements and forms, ensuring that the specifications adhere to the standard Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) Master Format and that no single-source specifications are included in the design without written justification

The Designer shall submit a comprehensive Statement of Probable Construction Cost to the Borough, advising of any adjustments to previous estimates resulting from design changes, modifications in requirements, or general market conditions.

At the 95% design review stage, the Designer shall submit a PDF and up to five copies of the project narrative and drawings, including sections, elevations, and typical construction details, along with the updated SPCC for review and approval by the Borough and School District staff. The A/E shall present the 95% design to the School Board and the Assembly.

After receiving approval, the Designer shall prepare the final Construction Documents in both searchable PDF and AutoCAD formats.

Task 4 – Permitting

The A/E shall, on behalf of the Borough, investigate required permits, file the necessary documents, and secure all permits and authorizations needed for construction and occupancy during the project design, including payment of any associated fees. This includes permits for both the building and site development, such as Fire Marshal and driveway permits.

Budgetary estimates (allowances) for permit fees shall be included in the fee proposal. Any remaining balance after fees are paid shall be credited back to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Task 5 – Competitive Construction Bidding

The Borough will provide general and supplementary conditions, along with proposed contract forms. All other construction documents will be supplied by the design firm. Bid documents will be published electronically by the Borough.

The Designer shall participate in a pre-bid conference for prospective bidders and will prepare responses to their questions in Borough format. Any clarifications or interpretations of the bid documents will be provided in addenda, which the Borough will distribute.

If the initial bidding results in prices exceeding the approved SPCC, the Designer will collaborate with the Borough on redesign and re-bidding at no additional cost, ensuring prices align with the approved SPCC or are acceptable to the Borough.

The Designer will assist in evaluating bids, while the Borough will handle the Contract Award and Notice to Proceed.

Task 6 – Construction Administration

The A/E shall perform construction administration for the contract between the Owner and Contractor in accordance with the General and Supplementary Conditions of the Contract for Construction. The A/E will utilize software to track and submit construction documents, pay applications, submittals, and other relevant construction administration documents that require approval or tracking.

The A/E's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Manage Weekly Progress Meetings: Conduct weekly meetings with the Owner and General Contractor, producing minutes for each session.
- Define Roles and Responsibilities: Establish clear roles and develop a construction management plan.
- Maintain Submittal Logs: Develop and maintain logs for submittals and shop drawings, ensuring they are complete, accurate, and meet project requirements. Review all submittals within 15 calendar days.
- Conduct Inspections: Perform periodic inspections, including electrical/mechanical rough-ins, weekly quality assessments, substantial completion, final inspections, and end-of-warranty checks.
- Coordinate Testing and Inspections: Manage project testing and special inspections, reviewing test reports and providing recommendations as needed.
- SWPPP Reviews and Inspections: Conduct reviews and inspections related to the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).
- Review Change Order Requests: Evaluate change order requests from the General Contractor for legitimacy and make recommendations. Maintain a change order log tracking status and total costs.
- Respond to Contractor Inquiries: Address contractor questions within 15 calendar days. Track and maintain a log of DCVRs, directives, field memos, RFIs, RFQs, etc.
- Review Payment Requests: Check payment requests for completeness and accuracy, making recommendations to the Owner (Borough Project Manager).
- Represent the Owner: Act as the Owner's representative with permitting agencies and utility companies.
- Provide Progress Documentation: Regularly supply progress photos and videos.
- Conduct Tours with Officials: Organize and lead tours for officials with concurrence of the Borough Project Manager

- Prepare Punch Lists: Collaborate with the Owner to prepare punch lists and monitor their completion by the General Contractor.
- Commissioning and Training: Manage, track, and support building commissioning and owner training.
- Coordinate Project Closeout: Collect all closeout items, including as-built drawings, operation and maintenance manuals, and warranties. Assist in resolving contract issues, warranties, and bonds at project closeout.

The A/E shall gather Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Manuals based on approved submittals from the Contractor, including a separate section for warranty data. Specifications will require four (4) hard copies of the manuals and a searchable PDF format. The A/E will also provide four (4) hard copies of record drawings based on red-line drawings and other data supplied by the Contractor, in the latest version of AutoCAD and searchable PDF format. The A/E shall collect and approve all closing documents necessary for project completion on behalf of the Borough.