



Request for Qualifications
For
Engineering, Consulting and Design Services
For
Wilkes County
Water and Wastewater
Infrastructure Extension

Wilkes County, N.C.
Submission Deadline
4:00 PM, Monday, February 7, 2022

I. Project

Wilkes County is seeking statements of qualifications from professional civil engineering firms (the “Firm”, or “Firms”) to provide planning, engineering design, permitting, and bidding assistance which includes plans and specifications as well as construction contract administration and observation for the construction of a gravity sewer system line extension and a water line extension in Wilkes County and for other potential infrastructure services which may become necessary for full and proper execution of projects authorized for State Fiscal Recovery Fund (“SFRF”) and American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) purposes.

All services performed pursuant to the award of a contract resulting from this Request for Qualifications will be funded using funds appropriated to Wilkes County by the State of North Carolina. These funds have been appropriated from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund, which is part of the American Rescue Plan Act. As such, all awarded contracts will be subject to any and/or all Federal Requirements as required and codified by United States Code of Federal Regulations, noted in Section XI hereinbelow.

II. Scope of Services Required

In general, the Scope of Services will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Working and leading discussions with the appropriate entities for water and sewer line extension and connectivity, including assisting with the TRC approval process;
- Assisting Wilkes County with SFRF/ARPA funding requirements. Firm should have, and be able to demonstrate, successful experience with projects acquired under the Federal Uniform Guidance requirements;
- Assisting in acquiring property easements;
- Surveying services;
- State and local permitting processes as needed;
- Design services;
- Construction drawings;
- Assisting with the Wilkes County Bid process;
- Project oversight and inspections;
- Construction administration;
- Water line conveyance;
- Sewer line conveyance; and
- Project closeout.

III. Intent

The intent of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to have professional engineering firms specifically address the services required and provide the Owner with a well-considered response for

those services. It is anticipated that a contract will be negotiated with the successful engineering design firm properly licensed in the State of North Carolina on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional services required.

IV. Firm Qualifications

The selected engineering firm's assigned project staff must be experienced in all phases of planning, design, construction and regulatory compliance requirements of similar public facilities, have extensive knowledge of the regulations governing the design and construction in the State of North Carolina, and have a proven capability to effectively and efficiently produce a successful project consistent with, and meeting the needs of, the goals outlined by Wilkes County.

V. Proposal Format

Proposals should be organized into the following Sections:

A. Professional Qualifications

B. Involvement with Similar Projects

C. Proposed Work Plan

D. Legal Status of Consultant

E. References

F. Attachments

The following describes the elements that should be included in each section of the proposal and the maximum points that may be awarded during proposal evaluation. The evaluation panel may revise, add to, or remove these elements as it deems appropriate, and/or redistribute the points for each element to ensure adequate evaluation.

A. Professional Qualifications - 25 points

1. Include Letter of Interest. State the full name and address of your Firm and, if applicable, the branch office or other subsidiary element that will perform, or assist in performing, the work hereunder. Indicate whether it operates as an individual, partnership, or corporation. Include information showing it is licensed to operate in the State of North Carolina.
2. Include the name of executive and professional personnel by skill and qualification that will be employed in the work. Show where these personnel will be physically located during the time they are engaged in the work. Indicate which of these individuals you consider key to the successful completion of the project. Identify only individuals who will do the work on this project by name and title. Resumes and qualifications are required for all proposed project personnel, including all subcontractors. Qualifications and capabilities of any and all subcontractors must also be included.
3. Explain and support experience working with Federal Uniform Guidance.
4. Include list of positions and standard hourly rates.
5. State history of the firm, in terms of length of existence, types of services provided, etc. Identify the technical details that make the firm uniquely qualified for this work.

B. Projects Listing - 25 points

The written proposal must include a list of current similar projects including brief description, size, cost, staff involved, etc. The proposal listing must also include descriptions of three (3) past projects of similar size and scope, including size, cost, staff, completion period, etc.

List of projects on which the Firm assisted with compliance with Federal Uniform Guidance during bid process, including type & size of project, value, and the firm participation and experience in working with Uniform Guidance.

Projects listing must exhibit experience in the project area and indicate proven ability in implementing similar projects for the firm and the individuals to be assigned to this project.

C. Proposed Work Plan – 30 Points

Provide a detailed and comprehensive description of how the Firm intends to provide the services requested in this RFQ. This discussion shall include, but not be limited to: how the project(s) will be managed and scheduled, how and when data will be delivered to the County, communication and coordination, the working relationship between the Firm and County staff, and the Firm's general philosophy in regards to providing the requested services.

Responses will be evaluated on the clarity, thoroughness, and content of their responses to the above items.

D. Legal Status of Consultant – 10 Points

Must include all litigation or other legal action taken against Firm or that Firm was involved in within the last five years and indicate disposition of each case.

E. References – 10 Points

A complete list of client references, minimum of Three (3), must be provided for similar projects recently completed. It shall include the firm/agency name, address, email, telephone number, project title and information, and contact person.

F. Attachments – No point value

Must provide, with submission, a copy of firm's standard proposed contract. This contract will be reviewed and revised as necessary to meet Federal, State and County legal requirements. Submission of a qualifications statement in response to this Request for Qualifications denotes acceptance of all necessary revisions. Failure to do so will be grounds for rejection.

VI. Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process

1. Wilkes County intends to select the most qualified firm(s) on the basis of best overall qualifications package that, in its sole opinion, is most advantageous to the County.

2. An Evaluations Committee (the Committee) will be appointed to evaluate each qualifications package. The Committee will identify strengths, weaknesses, deficiencies and risks associated with each Firm according to the above-described criteria and point system (A through E).

3. A proposal with all the requested information does not guarantee the proposing Firm to be a candidate for additional consideration. The Committee may contact references to verify material submitted by the Firm.

4. The ranking of proposals and recommendation of any Firm is the sole responsibility of the Committee. Selection may be based solely on the individual merits of one Firm depending on the findings and opinion of the Committee or the Committee may choose to create a short-list of firms for further evaluation and consideration.

5. The Committee, at its sole discretion, may choose to schedule interviews with any, all, or none of the selected Firms. If interviews are to be held, selected Firm(s) will be given the opportunity to bring in their interview team to discuss their qualifications, past experience and proposed work plan in more detail.

The Firm's interview team must include the Firm's project team members expected to complete a majority of work on the project, but no more than six members. The interview shall consist of a presentation of up to thirty minutes (length will be provided by the Committee) by the Firm, including the person who will be the project manager on this contract, followed by approximately thirty minutes of questions and answers. Audiovisual aids may be used during the oral interviews. The Committee may record the interviews for review. Interviewed Firms will then be re-evaluated according to the above criteria (A through E), and adjustments to scoring made as appropriate.

6. Manager/Board Approval and Contract Negotiation/Execution: The Committee's recommendation of the highest rated Firm will be presented to the County's Manager or Board for approval and authorization to begin negotiations for an agreeable contract and fees. If after discussion and negotiation, a mutually agreeable agreement and fee is not successful, negotiations will be terminated and the County may enter into negotiations with the second highest rated firm, and so on.

7. All Firms who submit SOQs will be notified of the selection results.

VII. Project Timeline

The proposed key activities and milestone dates for the project include:

Activity Milestone Date

RFQ Announced and Distributed 12/16/2021

Deadline for Respondent Questions 1/7/2021

Proposal Submission Deadline 2/7/2022

Firm interviews and site visits, if needed TBD – 2022

Recommendation for approval TBD – 2022

Necessary Selected Firm Notification and Contract Negotiation TBD – 2022

VIII. Submission of Proposal Packages

1. Qualifications Submittals shall include one (1) complete qualifications package in hardcopy, 8 1/2" x 11", side bound (or single stapled – left upper corner) with Table of Contents and reference tabs for key sections. Submittals shall not exceed sixteen (16) pages single-sided, or eight (8) pages double-sided (**Front/back covers, table of contents, tab pages and photographs are excluded from these page totals).

AND

2. One (1) electronic copy on USB Drive or DVD/CD (No SD Cards).

To be considered, submissions must be received at the following address no later than 4:00 PM Monday, February 7, 2022:

If delivered in person or by FedEx/UPS/USPS:

Wilkes County
Attn: County Manager/ Wilkes County Wastewater Infrastructure Extension
110 North Street
Wilkesboro, North Carolina, 28697

IX. General Conditions of the Request for Qualifications

A. Any and all cost incurred by respondents in preparing or submitting a statement of qualifications for the project shall be the respondents' sole responsibility.

B. All submissions, responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to this RFQ will become the property of Wilkes County when received.

C. Wilkes County reserves the right to: accept or reject any and all submissions received in response to this Request for Qualifications; cancel the RFQ process at any time; request additional information or clarification of information provided in a response without changing the terms of the Request for Qualifications; elect not to proceed with any of the respondents; modify the scope of the work; re-solicit RFQs; or choose not to award for any reason.

X. Confidentiality of Documents

North Carolina General Statute Chapter 132, Public Records, governs the accessibility of records compiled by NC Governmental Entities. In general, all documents submitted in response to this Request for Qualifications are subject to public disclosure unless specifically excepted by North Carolina General Statute §132-1.2 and §66-152 which provide definitions and protection of certain documents and information from public disclosure that constitute a “trade secret,” provided it meets the specific conditions as outlined in §132-1.2(1)a-d.

Wilkes County will attempt to withhold from public disclosure, or redact documents or information, designated “confidential trade secret” that clearly meet the conditions of NC G.S. §132-1.2(1)a-d to the extent that it is entitled or required to do so by applicable law. Regardless, Wilkes County shall not be held responsible for any information that is released nor shall Wilkes County be held responsible for nor pay any penalty or expense in relation to information so released.

Any submission marked “confidential” or “trade secret” in its entirety may be rejected at the sole discretion of Wilkes County.

XI. Federal Contracting Requirements

The following Federal Contracting Requirements shall be incorporated into the Service Contract between the County and the Contractor. Capitalized terms not defined in this Attachment shall have the meanings assigned to such terms in the Contract. All references to the “Contractor” or “Company” or “Vendor” or “Provider” shall be deemed to mean the Contractor so named in the agreement.

This Contract will be funded in whole or in part with federal funding. As such, federal laws, regulations, policies and related administrative practices apply to this Contract. The most recent of such federal requirements, including any amendments made after the execution of this Contract shall govern the Contract, unless the federal government determines otherwise. This document identifies the federal requirements that may be applicable to this contract. The Contractor is responsible for complying with all applicable provisions, updates or modifications that occur in the future relating to these clauses.

To the extent possible, the federal requirements contained in the most recent version of the Uniform Administrative Requirements for federal awards (Uniform Rules, or Guidance) codified at 2 CFR Part 200, including any certifications and contractual provisions required by any federal statutes or regulation referenced therein to be included in this contract are deemed incorporated into this contract by reference and shall be incorporated into any sub-agreement or subcontract executed by the Contractor pursuant to its obligations under this Contract. The Contractor and its sub-contractors, if any, hereby represent and covenant that they have complied and shall comply in the future with the applicable provisions of the original contract then in effect and with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, executive orders, and rules and local policies and procedures, as amended from time to time, relating to Work to be performed under this contract.

Drug Free Workplace Requirements

Drug-free workplace requirements in accordance with Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 (Pub 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D). All contractors entering into federal funded contracts over \$100,000 must comply with Federal Drug Free workplace requirements as Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.

Contractor Compliance

The Contractor shall comply with all uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirement for federal awards.

Conflict of Interest

The Contractor must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the County of Wilkes or pass through entity in accordance with federal policy.

Access to Records and Reports (applies to all contracts regardless of contract amount).

The Contractor must maintain an acceptable cost accounting system. The Contractor agrees to provide the County, the Grant Agency Administrator, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their authorized representatives access to any technical specifications, books, documents, papers, and records of the Contractor which are directly pertinent to this contract for the purposes of making audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcriptions.

The Contractor agrees to permit any of the foregoing parties to reproduce by any means whatsoever or to copy excerpts and transcriptions as reasonably needed.

The Contractor agrees to provide the Grant Agency Administrator or his authorized representatives access to construction or other work sites pertaining to the work being completed under the contract.

All Contractors and their successors, transferees, assignees, and subcontractors acknowledge and agree to comply with applicable provisions governing Department and FEMA access to records, accounts, documents, information, facilities, and staff.

No Obligation by Federal Government (applies to all contracts regardless of contract amount)

The County and the Contractor acknowledge and agree that, notwithstanding any concurrence by the Federal Government in or approval of the solicitation or award of the underlying contract, absent the express written consent by the Federal Government, the Federal Government is not a party to this contract and shall not be subject to any obligations or liabilities to the County, the Contractor, or any other party (whether or not a party to that contract) pertaining to any matter resulting from the underlying contract.

The Contractor agrees to include the above clause in each subcontract financed in whole or in part with federal assistance. It is further agreed that the clause shall not be modified, except to identify the sub-contractor who will be subject to its provisions.

Any questions concerning this RFQ should be directed to John Yates, County Manager (jyates@wilkescounty.net) or phone 336-651-7346.