



Landrum Area Fire and Rescue District Audit Firm RFQ/RFP
POSTED ON MARCH 19, 2018
PROPOSAL #2018-03-01

Introduction

The Landrum Area Fire and Rescue District (the District) is pleased to offer an opportunity to qualified firms to respond to this invitation to provide audit services reflective of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards to the special purpose district that provides fire protection and medical emergency services within the established geographical boundaries of the service area.

Audit Firm Submittal Requirements

The District welcomes responses to the RFQ/RFP in a format the audit firm believes best expresses the qualifications of the audit team. It is required, however, that the submittal package clearly include the elements described in this section. The teams' responses should be developed to clearly communicate the respondent's approach for conducting the District's financial audit.

RFQ/RFP Submittal Requirements

All submittals shall include the content/elements listed below and shall be submitted in the following form:

- Six (6) printed, bound copies,
- One (1) unbound original with original signatures, and
- One (1) electronic copy on a USB flash drive

RFQ/RFP Submittal Content

- Executive Summary* – An Executive Summary should identify the team members, highlight the team experience in projects of this size and type and outline the team's objectives and approach to the District's audit. The summary should identify the person who will serve as the principal point of contact with the District and will be authorized to make representations on behalf of the entity. The summary should also include some statement or letter attesting to the response's accuracy.
- Approach* – This section should outline the team's approach to examining and assessing the District's financial records to accurately conduct the audit. The approach should include a preliminary schedule from project initiation to completion, as well as an estimated project cost, including a "not to exceed" amount.
- Audit Firm Entity* – Audit firms will provide the roles and responsibilities of each proposed team member. The primary team member information should include the company name; legal status; company or corporation number; company address including zip code; full names of company officers and their addresses, including zip code.

Firms will also provide names and addresses of all categories of consultants to be included.

- D. *Previous Audit Experience* – Audit firms responding to this solicitation must demonstrate significant participation and success in projects of this type. Experience working with a public entity is desirable and should be featured as part of any response to this solicitation. Submittal information on previous projects should include project description, project references, a statement regarding the duration of the audit team’s involvement and identification of principal team members and roles. References for previous projects should include the principal representatives, roles, and contact information including phone numbers.

Audit Firm Selection Criteria and Procedure

Selection Process

The District recognizes the time and expense that typically goes into preparing responses to public agency RFQs and RFPs. Therefore, the District has designed a selection process to focus on the factors that the District will use to assess potential audit firms and to manage the process so that the proposals are evaluated promptly. The selection process will include this initial RFQ/RFP submittal followed by presentations from a short list of selected firms. The purpose of the initial RFQ/RFP phase will be to identify a short list of firms who have the qualifications, experience, resources, and the necessary understanding to conduct a thorough audit of the District’s financials based on GASB standards. After the short list stage, additional information may be requested of firms considered to be necessary by the District to make a qualified selection. After review of this data, the Selection Panel will interview qualified candidates and make a selection. The specific components of the selection process are further discussed below.

- A. In the first stage of the process, interested audit firms will submit documentation in response to this RFQ/RFP. Written submittals delivered by the deadline will be reviewed and evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria for Qualifications included herein.
- B. During the second stage, members of the District’s selection panel will evaluate the submittals. At their discretion, they may contact references and industry sources, investigate previous projects and current commitments, interview some or all of the references, and take any other information into account in their evaluation of the responses. The District also reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from respondents. Based on their evaluations, a list of the best-qualified firms (“short list”) will be selected by a District Selection Panel.
- C. In the final stage, the District will submit a request for additional information to those selected for the “short list” of audit firms. The purpose of this phase is to provide more specific information regarding their approach and plan and for the proposed project. This stage is intended to give the firm an opportunity to provide a realistic framework for its project approach. After review of the additional RFQ/RFP materials by the District’s Selection Panel, those best-qualified audit firms will be invited to an interview.

After the interviews, one audit firm may be awarded the right to enter into an agreement with the District to begin the project. The selected firm and the District will develop a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the business terms proposed.

Criteria for selecting the successful audit firm is set forth in the next section.

Schedule for Firm Selection

The following is a schedule for the selection process:

1) RELEASE OF RFQ/RFP – March 19, 2018

2) PRE-SUBMITTAL CONFERENCE CALL – March 26, 2018

Interested audit firms will have the opportunity to attend a pre-submittal conference call on March XX, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. The conference call dial-in number and password will be provided to firms who register for the call. All interested audit firms are strongly encouraged to register for and dial in to the call. Firms may register with Chief Warren Ashmore at warren.ashmore@landrumfire.com.

3) SUBMITTAL DEADLINE – APRIL 19 2018

Submit to: Landrum Area Fire and Rescue District
Attn: Chief Warren Ashmore, PROPOSAL ENCLOSED
200 N. Trade Ave
Landrum, SC 29356

4) SELECTION PANEL REVIEW OF SUBMITTALS/SHORT LISTING April 20, 2018

5) REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO SHORT LIST April 23, 2018

6) RESPONSE TO ADDITIONAL MATERIAL REQUEST April 26, 2018

7) INTERVIEWS WITH DISTRICT SELECTION PANEL April 30, 2018

Audit Firm Selection Criteria

Responses will be evaluated based on the firms' pricing and ability to meet the performance requirements of this proposal. Responses will be assessed to determine the most comprehensive, competitive, and best solution for the District based on the criteria below.

- A. Demonstrated experience of the audit firm and its members in the successful conduct of financial audits based on GASB standards.
- B. Demonstrated ability of the audit firm to implement projects of comparable size and scope in a timely manner.
- C. A firm's understanding to meet the District's objectives for the audit.
- D. Establishment of clear lines of responsibility within the audit firm on which the District can rely during project negotiation and implementation.
- E. Other factors as appropriate.

Terms and Conditions

Audit Proposal Opening and Award

Audit proposals shall be publicly opened and only the names of the responders will be disclosed at the proposal opening. No decision will be made until the District has had ample time to review each proposal. However, an award will be made at the earliest possible date. Proposals, whether mailed or hand delivered, must be received and time/date stamped by the closing time and date indicated on the Request for Qualifications/Request for Proposals. Proposals received after the closing time/date will not be accepted. By submission of a proposal, you are guaranteeing that all goods and services meet the requirements of the solicitation during the contract period.

Rights Reserved by the Landrum Area Fire and Rescue District

- A. This RFQ/RFP is not a contract or a commitment of any kind by the Landrum Area Fire and Rescue District. The District reserves the right to select a limited number of proposals for interviews or to select without conducting interviews. The District reserves the right to disqualify any submission which does not completely comply with the submission requirements. The District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, any portion thereof, and waive any technicalities. Accordingly, the right is reserved to make awards in the best interest of the District. Integrity, reputation, experience, and past performance will be heavily weighted in proposal evaluation. This solicitation does not commit the District to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal, or to procure or contract for goods or services listed herein.
- B. The District reserves the right to waive any instructions to Responders, General or Specific Terms and Conditions, specifications, or technicalities when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the District to do so. The District shall not be responsible for any verbal information given by any employees of the District in regard to this proposal.

Responder Responsibilities

- A. Each responder shall be fully acquainted with the conditions relating to the scope and restrictions attending the execution of the work under the conditions of this proposal. It is expected that this will sometimes require on-site observation. The failure or omission of a bidder to be acquainted with existing conditions shall in no way relieve the bidder of any obligations with respect to this proposal or to any contract as a result of this proposal.
- B. The responder shall sign his proposal correctly or the proposal may be rejected. Errors should be crossed out, with corrections entered and initialed by the person signing the proposal. No proposal shall be altered or amended after the specified time for opening. If the proposal shows any omissions, alteration of form, unauthorized additions, a conditional proposal, or any irregularities of any kind, the proposal may be rejected. Physical copies of proposals will be accepted on 8.5" x 11" paper. Proposals, amendments thereto, or withdrawal requests received after the advertised time for proposal opening, shall be void regardless of when they were mailed.
- C. Responders must, upon request of the District, furnish satisfactory evidence of their ability to furnish products or services in accordance with the terms and conditions of these specifications.

The District reserves the right to make the final determination as to the responder's ability to provide the products or services requested herein.

- D. In the interest of a fair, equitable selection process, audit firms shall not have or obtain any prohibited conflicts of interest. The District reserves the right to require the firm to provide information regarding such conflicts should it appear to the District that such conflict or conflicts may exist.
- E. The qualifications of the firm and each member of its team are important criteria in the selection process. After selection, the firm will not be allowed to substitute any members of its team without prior approval by the District. The District, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept or reject proposed changes to the audit team.
- F. All facts and opinions stated within this RFQ/RFP and in all supporting documents and data, including, but not limited to, data and projections, and anticipated dates, are based on the best available information from a variety of sources at this time. No representation or warranty is made with respect thereto. The selected audit team will be responsible for accepting or verifying the accuracy for all information presented herein and conducting all feasibility analyses required to undertaking the project.
- G. All information submitted by the respondents in regards to this RFQ/RFP will become the property of the District and will become public documents. Respondents can request that information they believe to be proprietary in nature remain confidential; however, the District has sole discretion over this matter. All materials deemed confidential or proprietary by the respondents can be marked "confidential." Given the uncertainty of Public Record Law, the District, its consultants, attorneys, etc. will be held harmless in case of disclosure, required, accidental, or otherwise.
- H. All submitted materials in response to the RFQ/RFP shall remain valid for a period of six months from the date of submission.

Waiver

By submitting a response to the RFQ/RFP, each respondent expressly waives any and all rights that it may have to object to, protest, or judicially challenge the following:

- A. The site inspection;
- B. The solicitation, including, but not limited to the Conditions of the Request and Selection Procedure selections of the RFQ/RFP; and
- C. The RFQ/RFP evaluation and award process, including but not limited to the qualifications of the audit firms, evaluation of initial proposals, selection of finalists, evaluation of responses to the RFQ/RFP, and/or other aspects of the audit firm selection and award.