

**Township of
Middletown Sewerage Authority
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Technology Consulting Services**

ISSUE DATE: 10/11/2024

DUE DATE: 10/30/2024

RESPONSE LOCATION:

Middletown Sewerage Authority

Attn: Paul Thomson

100 Beverly Way

Belford, NJ 07718

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I. Disclosure Notice

The Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority (referred to as the "Authority") is soliciting written proposals for an IT Consultant to assist the Authority. The Authority invites proposals from Vendors that have had experience in technology consulting in sewerage authorities and other organizations of similar size and complexity in the region, and that have the staff capacity and expertise to do so for the Authority.

The Authority solicits this request for proposal pursuant to New Jersey State Statutes and the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(f). Vendors supplying any product or rendering any service by a public utility must be subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Utilities or the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in accordance with tariffs and schedules of charges.

*The Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority will only accept hard copy submissions. All submissions must be received by **10 am on October 30, 2024**. All proposal components & Pricing should be included in a sealed envelope (in hard copy submission) and labeled "Technology Consulting RFP Response". Failure to comply will result in disqualification.*

Mail or Hand Deliver To: Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority

Attn: **Paul Thomson**

100 Beverly Way

Belford, NJ 07718

All Hand Delivery must provide (1) USB Drive in a sealed envelope and one sealed printed copy.

Vendors are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring departments except as specified in this Request for Proposal ("RFP"), and no other Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question or inquiry concerning this RFP. Vendors may contact the contact (**Paul Thomson, PThomson@tomsanj.com**) only via the terms specified in this RFP. It is required that any responses to the RFP will remain in effect for a period of 90 days from the deadline for submission of proposals or until it is formally withdrawn, a contract is executed, or this proposal is canceled, whichever occurs first.

The Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time prior to the date the responses are due. Any such amendment will be sent via email to participating bidders and email will be the sole method used for notification of changes. All documents, including bids, submitted to the Authority become the property of the Authority. They will be received and are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Law.

The Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority will base its decision criteria upon the items listed in section II F. The responses will be evaluated by a cross-functional and departmental committee

representing those departments directly impacted by the result of the RFP. The awards will be voted on this committee and the Executive Director will have the final approval and signing authority. The Authority and its committee members reserve the right to accept or reject any and all proposals received as a result of this RFP to waive minor informalities or technical deficiencies, and to contract for some, all, or none of the products and services as a result of this RFP. The Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority further reserves the right to negotiate with any or all qualified Vendors and to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if it is in the best interest of Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority. The Authority also reserves the right to accept any proposal that it may deemed to be in the best interest of the Authority and to negotiate the terms and conditions of any proposal leading to execution of a contract.

This RFP does not commit the Authority to any specific course of action. The Authority reserves the right to not select any Vendor or purchase any goods and services resulting from this RFP and does not commit the Authority to approve a Statement of Work ("SOW"), pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a Vendor's response to this RFP, or to procure or contract for products or services. While the Authority has used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation of information in this RFP, the information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline for Vendors. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve Vendors from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP. To the extent that materials and supplies are used or incorporated in the performance of this Contract, for the Authority the Vendor is considered an exempt purchaser. The tax-exempt number is 22-1819523. The Vendor shall be responsible for paying all other taxes and tariffs of any sort, related to the work.

II. RFP Overview & Instructions

A. Overview

Municipalities often require the expertise of IT consultants for various reasons, ranging from implementing technological advancements to ensuring efficient delivery of public services. Any Consultant hired by the Township may be asked to assist in the following areas:

Digital Transformation Initiatives: Municipalities are increasingly embracing digital transformation to modernize their operations and services. Assess current systems, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies for implementing new technologies to streamline processes and enhance citizen experiences.

Cybersecurity Enhancements: With the growing threat of cyber-attacks, municipalities need robust cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive data and critical infrastructure. Conduct security assessments, implement cybersecurity best practices, and provide training to municipal staff to mitigate risks and strengthen defenses against cyber threats.

Infrastructure Upgrades: Aging IT infrastructure can hinder the efficiency and reliability of municipal operations. Evaluate existing infrastructure, recommend upgrades or replacements, and oversee the

implementation of new hardware, software, and networking solutions to improve performance and reliability.

Data Management and Analytics: Municipalities generate and collect vast amounts of data that can be leveraged to make informed decisions and improve service delivery. Assist in developing data management strategies, implementing data analytics tools, and creating dashboards and reports to extract actionable insights from data.

Compliance and Regulatory Requirements: Municipalities must comply with various regulations and standards related to data protection, privacy, accessibility, and more. Help ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, conduct audits, and implement measures to address compliance gaps.

Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Recovery: IT systems play a crucial role in emergency response and disaster recovery efforts. Assist municipalities in developing and testing disaster recovery plans, implement redundant systems and backup solutions, and ensure continuity of operations during emergencies or natural disasters.

Specialized Expertise: Municipalities may require specialized expertise for specific projects or initiatives that their in-house IT staff may not possess. Provide niche expertise in areas such as GIS (Geographic Information Systems), smart city technologies, IoT (Internet of Things) deployments, and more.

Cost Savings and Efficiency Improvements: Help municipalities identify cost-saving opportunities and efficiency improvements through process optimization, automation, and strategic use of technology. By optimizing IT resources and workflows, municipalities can achieve cost savings and improve service delivery without sacrificing quality.

Training and Capacity Building: Provide training and capacity building for municipal staff to enhance their technical skills and knowledge. This empowers municipal employees to effectively use and manage IT systems, troubleshoot common issues, and adapt to technological changes, ultimately improving overall organizational performance.

Advisory Services: Serve as trusted advisors to municipal leadership, providing strategic guidance on IT investments, technology roadmaps, and long-term planning initiatives. Their expertise and insights can help municipalities make informed decisions that align with their goals and objectives.

Any Vendor finding ambiguity, inconsistency, or error shall promptly notify the Township of such. Vendor requiring clarification or interpretation of the proposal document shall do so in writing by email to the contact person for this proposal, **(Insert Primary Contact person here)**, as identified in section B and by the Question Deadline listed below. Correction and/or additions to the proposal document will be done by addendum. All other corrections, interpretations, or changes made to the proposal document in any manner will not be binding.

The Authority will not accept any stipulations or other exceptions to the terms stated in this RFP, unless such stipulations are deemed to be in the best interests of the Authority, as determined solely by the Authority. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon.

The proposals require a written response. If you would like to attach documentation to support your answers, please do so. However, a summary answers should stand on its own. The quality of the response to the RFP will be viewed as an example of the Vendor’s capabilities.

The RFP asks questions about functionality, approach, and pricing. If you require any clarification, provide the questions in writing via email by the below Question Deadline to PThomson@tomsanj.com.

Only existing services will be considered. Services under development, in planning, or at beta test will not be considered. However, Vendors can include additional information about future developments or plans under separate attachment.

B. Schedule of Events & Format

Schedule of Events

Activity	Date
RFP Released	10/11/2024
Vendor Questions Deadline	10/21/2024
Township Responses Provided	10/24/2024
Proposal Due Date	10/30/2024
Evaluation of Proposals	10/31/2024- 11/22/2024
Selected Vendor Announced	11/29/2024
Implementation	Jan 2 nd , 2025

Proposals are due **no later than 10am. EST, 10/30/ 2024**. Late responses will not be considered.

All submitted proposals will be considered the property of the Authority and should include copies of product descriptions for the proposed equipment.

Along with your submittal, name one person to be the coordinator for your RFP response and for any clarification activities, which might be necessary.

Contact Name:

Company:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Fax:

C. Contract

The proposal should include a contract for all proposed services. If the Vendor does not wish to submit an actual contract with the proposal, due to different alternatives proposed and pending choices from those alternatives, a sample contract should be submitted with the proposal. Authorities standard T&Cs may apply and need to be addressed with Vendor finalists. All finalists are expected to adhere to New Jersey Law and its contracting terms.

D. Confidentiality

All material submitted by The Authority must be treated as confidential and cannot be used for any other purpose than the response to this RFP. Information submitted by any Vendor will be considered confidential to The Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority and will not be used for any other purpose than evaluating Vendor responses.

E. Selection Process & Evaluation Criteria

A number of factors will influence the Authorities decision in selecting the product and Vendor providing it. The Authority will select the most responsive and responsible Vendor responding, taking into consideration their experience, staff capacity, references, and plan implementing the proposed service as well as the proposal price. The winning proposal will be the one which is deemed most advantageous to the Authority, as determined by a combination of the overall evaluation criteria and the price information.

The Authorities evaluation criteria will be based upon the standards of Highly Advantageous, Advantageous, Not Advantageous, and Unacceptable. The following ratings will be used to measure the relative merits of each proposal. Those proposals that do not meet those requirements will be judged unacceptable.

Definition of Ratings:

Highly Advantageous – Proposal excels on a specific criterion.

Advantageous – Proposal fully meets the evaluation standard that has been specified.

Not Advantageous – Proposal does not fully meet the evaluation standard, is incomplete, and/or unclear.

Unacceptable – Proposals that do not meet the minimum requirements.

1. Vendor Experience

Bidders must state the number of years the company has been in the business of providing technology consulting services. A minimum of three years of experience in this business is required. The Vendor with the most thorough responses, and positive feedback in the areas below and section III will be considered highly advantageous for the Vendor.

- Years of business experience
- Years of experience providing consulting services
- Project Management expertise
- Verifiable quality of service provided by Vendor to area customers
- References; be sure to include repeat business customers

2. Project Management

The proposal must detail the Vendor's project management methodology and approach, which will be taken if selected. Vendors must describe two projects that they have completed by or before the issue date of this RFP. The description must include the customer's name, the start and end dates, the approximate dollar value, the purpose of the project, phases of the project, and the outcome. The two projects must be representative of the references supplied in your response and references will be asked about Vendor's ability to demonstrate project management skills.

Please note that the Authority will select the Vendor based upon the best overall solution, value, and favorable responses, and is not obligated to select the lowest price bidder. Selected Vendor must work within the scheduling parameters as defined by the respective participating Authorities department implementations.

F. Discrimination in Employment and Affirmative Action

The Vendor shall not discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, religion or physical or mental handicap. The Vendor agrees to comply with all applicable Federal and State statutes, rules and regulations discrimination in employment including: Title VII of the Civil Right Act 1973 and all relevant administrative orders and executive orders.

G. Indemnification

The contractor agrees to indemnify and save the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority, harmless against any and all damages, costs and expenses which it may suffer or pay out of reason of any claims, actions, rights of action, in law or equity, arising out of performance of the work and resulting from injuries or damage occurring to, or caused in whole or in part by the contractor and any of his/her officers, employees or representatives or firm directly or indirectly engaged by the contractor.

H. Contractor's Insurance

The Contractor shall furnish evidence to the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority that, with respect to the operations he performs, he carries Contractor's Public Liability Insurance providing for a limit of not less than a monetary value of \$1,000,000 for all damages arising out of bodily injuries or death in any accident, and Contractor's Property Damage Liability Insurance providing for a limit of not less than a monetary value of \$1,000,000 for all damages arising out of injury to or destruction of property, subject to that limit per accident a total (or aggregate) limit of a monetary value of \$1,000,000 for all damages arising out of injury to or destruction of property during the policy period. Such property damage and public liability insurance must cover all the various types and items of work that are to be undertaken, including the operation of motor vehicles, by the Contractor or his/her agents or employees in connection with the performance of services under this Agreement, whether or not the motor vehicles are owned by the Contractor, hired or otherwise. Such public liability and property damage insurance shall be carried at the Contractor's expense and must carry a clause or rider reflecting the Contractor's agreement to assume the cost of defense and indemnify and save harmless the Owner, together with its officers, employees and agents, from all suits, loss, costs or damage arising out of or attributable to claims related to the work. If any part of the work is sublet, similar insurance shall be provided by or in behalf of the subcontractors to cover their operations.

Each insurance policy and each certificate of insurance shall name the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority as an additional insured and shall contain the stipulation that no cancellation of such insurance, whether by the insurer or by the insured, shall be valid unless written notice thereof is given by the party proposing cancellation to the other party and to the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority at least fifteen days prior to the intended effective date thereof, which date shall be expressed in said notice. Notice of cancellation sent by the party proposing cancellation by certified mail, postage prepaid, with a return receipt of the addressee requested, shall be sufficient notice.

The Contractor expressly acknowledges that neither he/she nor his/her agents, employees or subcontractors are entitled to coverage or will be covered under any insurance policy in the name of the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority or any department, agency or body thereof.

I. Compliance with Labor Laws

The Contractor shall comply with all applicable federal, state and/or local laws, regulations or ordinances governing the employment of labor in the performance of services under this Agreement.

J. Assignment

The contractor may not enter into subcontracts without prior written permission from the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority; the existence of any subcontracts shall not release or reduce the contractor liability for any breach of contract.

K. Severability

If any term or condition of the contract is found to be legally invalid, that finding will not affect the enforcement of the remainder of the contract upon which the invalid portion has no effect.

L. Waiver

If the Authority waives the breach of a specific term or condition of the contract that does not mean it waives any other breaches. Breaches of contract may only be waived in writing.

M. Fees, Permits, Licenses

The contractor shall be responsible for obtaining any required permits, licenses, or inspections and for payment of any associated fees. If there are Authority permit fees, they will be waived.

N. Governing Laws

The laws and statutes of the State of New Jersey shall govern the contract.

O. Non-Collusion Statement

The signer of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP certifies that his proposal has not been arrived at collusively or otherwise in violation of the laws of the United States and the State of New Jersey.

III. Vendor Background

A. Company Information

1. List your company's legal name, address, and telephone number.
2. How long has your company been in business?
3. Please list any certifications and/or state contracts your company currently holds.
4. How long has your company or division been providing Consulting services?
5. How many employees do you have?
6. How many customers do you have consulting experience with?
7. What differentiates your organization from other Consulting organizations?
8. Please provide your company's financial standings if a publicly traded organization.

B. References

Provide a minimum of three references for customers with operations similar to ours. One reference should be in the NJ area. Include contact names, telephone numbers, and addresses and brief summary of how they are utilizing the service?

Please submit references for projects of similar scope and complexity. Minimum requirements for this criterion include:

- A minimum of two (2) projects performed for Authority clients

Please provide the following information with its reference projects:

- Customer name and location
- Contact person(s): name, title and telephone number
- Brief description of the services you provided

The Authority may make any investigations as it deems necessary to determine the ability of Vendors to perform the work, and Vendors shall furnish the Authority all such information and data for this purpose as the Authority may request.

IV. Project Management

A critical component of the Authorities evaluation of the Vendor will be the team of individuals that the Vendor proposes. The Vendor shall identify and appoint competent and experienced Consultants and partners/sub-contractors/third party providers during the entire engagement.

The Vendor shall clearly describe escalation procedures available to the Authority. Once the key project team members have been assigned and accepted, the Authority will reserve the right to approve any proposed substitutions.

All Vendor employees and sub-contractors' employees are subject to CORI background checks.

The Vendor shall not rely on Authorities staff for support in excess of normal project participation. The Authority will supply points of contact to coordinate the Authorities resources that will participate in the project. Authority staff participation is expected to include providing access to facilities, providing documentation, attendance at project meetings, and coordination among Authorities departments. The Vendor shall clearly identify any Authority resources it requires.

V. Technology Consulting Requirements

A. General Requirements

Relevant Experience: Consultants must have experience working with municipalities or similar public sector organizations. Understanding the unique challenges and requirements of the Authorities IT systems is essential.

Knowledge of Local Regulations: Consultant should be familiar with relevant local regulations, compliance standards, and data protection laws that govern township operations.

Technical Expertise: The consultant should have expertise in relevant IT domains such as network infrastructure, cybersecurity, software development, database management, and cloud computing.

Understanding of Township Operations: The consultant should have a clear understanding of township operations, including administrative processes, public service delivery, and community engagement, to provide tailored IT solutions.

Problem-solving Skills: The consultant must have the ability to analyze complex IT problems, identify root causes, and develop effective solutions that meet township objectives.

Communication Skills: Effective communication is crucial for conveying technical information to non-technical stakeholders, collaborating with township staff, and providing status updates on IT projects.

Project Management Abilities: The consultant should be capable of managing IT projects from inception to completion, including scoping, planning, resource allocation, budgeting, and risk management.

Collaboration with Township Staff: The consultant will need to collaborate with township staff, including IT personnel, department heads, and elected officials, to understand requirements and foster a team-oriented approach.

Alignment with Township Goals: Any proposed solutions by the consultant must align with the township's strategic goals, priorities, and budget constraints to maximize value and impact.

Documentation and Reporting: The consultant will assist in providing clear documentation of project plans, progress reports, and deliverables to ensure transparency, accountability, and knowledge transfer.

Local Presence or Accessibility: The consultant must have a local presence.

VI. Pricing

A. Pricing

Please provide a detailed description of your pricing model as it would pertain to the services being requested by the Township. Please submit any supplemental documentation, quotes, proposals, pricings documents, etc. along with the description provided below.

**Rates should include all fees and a list of available ancillary features should be included at the end.*

B. Discounts

Please provide details regarding discounts applied and being offered.

Thank you for your time and participation in this RFP process.