

# OCONEE JOINT REGIONAL SEWER AUTHORITY REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

## Professional Services

### PROJECT #2024-06 Assessment and Design for Replacement of Existing Dewatering Equipment



**SOQ SUBMITTAL DUE DATE/TIME: October 3, 2023 at 2:00 PM Local Time**

Advertisement Date	On or before September 15, 2023 at 12:00 pm Local Time
Pre-submittal Conference (optional)	September 21, 2023 at 10:00 am Local Time OJRSA Operations & Administration Building 623 Return Church Rd., Seneca, SC 29678
Deadline for Inquiries	September 27, 2023 at 4:00 pm Local Time
Submittal Deadline	October 3, 2023 at 2:00 pm Local Time
Interviews (if necessary)	To be scheduled for week of October 16, 2023
Project Award (anticipated but subject to change)	November 6, 2023 OJRSA Board Meeting
Begin Project	Upon notification of Notice to Proceed by OJRSA

# **Request for Qualifications**

## **Description of Project**

The Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority (hereafter referred to as “Owner” or “OJRSA”) is requesting a Statement of Qualification (“SOQ”) from firms (hereafter “Firm” or “Firms”) interested in providing an engineering evaluation and recommendation for new dewatering equipment at the Coneross Creek Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). OJRSA is requesting Engineering Services to design and assist with the selection of dewatering equipment to replace the existing belt filter press, which is approaching 30 years in operation and is beyond its useful life.

OJRSA will select one professional Firm with experience in wastewater treatment process engineering to fully complete the project. The contract method will be a standard professional services contract and will be delivered on a lump sum basis.

OJRSA was recently awarded a South Carolina Infrastructure and Investment Program (SCIIP) grant administered by the Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA). This project will meet all RIA documentation requirements.

## **Background and System Information**

The OJRSA system consists of the Coneross Creek Water Reclamation Facility (“WRF”, permitted at 7.8 million gallons per day), approximately 65 miles of gravity sewer, 15 pump stations, 24 miles of force mains, and three permanent flow monitoring structure.

## **Scope**

The selected Firm is responsible for evaluating alternatives and making a recommendation for new dewatering equipment, as well as selection of a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR). Evaluation of existing infrastructure will be necessary to determine if it can be re-used with new dewatering equipment, and if not, what improvements will be necessary. The Firm must present information within its SOQ as to how they intend to meet requirements of deliverables as stated in the following section of this RFQ. It is important to note that OJRSA reserves the right to amend the selected Firm’s scope to include design-phase services and construction-phase services as needed.

## **Deliverables**

- Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) with conceptual cost estimates.
- Present findings with a recommendation for proceeding to OJRSA staff and Board of Commissioners.
- With assistance from OJRSA, development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) or Request for Bids (RFB) to replace existing belt filter presses with equipment approved by OJRSA in PER. NOTE: OJRSA prefers RFP for CMAR delivery method but it will be necessary for method to comply with South Carolina Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP) requirements.
  - If CMAR is selected, assist with selecting contractor to perform task.
- Estimated project schedule for construction.

## **Pre-Submittal Conference**

An optional Pre-submittal Conference will be held on Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 10:00 am Local Time at the Oconee Regional Joint Sewer Authority Operations & Administration Building, located at 623

Return Church Road, Seneca, SC 29678. Representatives of all interested parties are encouraged to be present to discuss the Project.

### **Project Start Date**

*Approximate project start date is December 1, 2023.* The actual project start date shall depend upon approval by the OJRSA Board of Commissioners for the Owner to execute a satisfactorily negotiated agreement with the selected Firm as well as approval of contract and other necessary documents by RIA. The actual start date is subject to negotiation and receipt of all necessary documents stated within this RFQ, however, the project will need to begin no later than December 12, 2023 unless expressly authorized by OJRSA.

### **Project Milestones and Completion Dates**

**It is important that this project must be completed on time to comply with terms of the SCIIP grant for project implementation. Dates listed below are subject to change based on RIA review and other unforeseen circumstances outside the control of OJRSA.**

- Contract for Review by OJRSA and RIA: By November 9, 2023
- Contract Execution: Upon approval by RIA
- Kickoff Meeting: No later than December 12, 2023
- Drafts of PER and CMAR RFP: By March 6, 2024
- Finalization of PER and CMAR RFP: By March 27, 2024
- Begin Detailed Design Services: By April 3, 2024<sup>1</sup>
- Advertise CMAR RFP on SCBO: By April 3, 2024
- Receive and Review CMAR Proposals: By April 30, 2024
- Select CMAR for Board Approval: By May 22, 2024
- Finish Detailed Design Services: By November 1, 2024<sup>1</sup>
- Award Construction Phase of Project: By December 2, 2024
- Issue Notice to Proceed to Begin Construction Phase: After SC RIA Review of project and approval for Notice to Proceed to be awarded (estimated timeframe is four weeks following receipt of draft contract documents). Note: This phase is not to be considered as part of this solicitation for services. The OJRSA, at its sole discretion, may or may not extend engineering services to the selected firm for detailed design and Construction Administration/Construction Inspection at a later date.

### **Statement of Qualifications**

Interested, qualified Firms are requested to submit a detailed SOQ and experience in the conduct of similar work per the selection criteria/guidelines provided in this RFQ. All statements of qualification contain the following, at a minimum (NOTE: if required as an appendix, these pages shall not count in the maximum page counts):

1. Introduction (*Maximum 1 page*): This section shall include a cover letter signed by an authorized representative of the offering Firm. The Table of Contents shall follow the cover letter. (NOTE: A Table of Contents does not count in the maximum page requirement)
2. Firm information (*Maximum 2 pages*): This section shall include the office location(s) where the work will be performed out of and business structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation).
  - a. Total number of staff and current/future workloads of the Firm.
  - b. State any conflicts of interest your firm or any key individual may have with these projects.

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<sup>1</sup> As stated previously, the Owner reserves the right to add these services to the Firm's contract at a later date.

- c. List any unresolved claims or disputes.
3. Firm Experience and Qualifications (*Maximum 4 pages*): Describe the Firm-wide qualifications and resources specific to this RFQ that will be available to support the performance of the work.
    - a. Include up to 10 projects completed within the last 10 years in which your Firm provided wastewater treatment process engineering services similar to the services requested in this RFQ, including at least three (3) that were specific to dewatering of biosolids (sludge) at wastewater treatment facilities at least 10 MGD in size. For the three (3) dewatering-specific projects, the submitting Firm must have been the engineer of record. Please include the following information:
      - i. Owner name, project name, and location
      - ii. General description of the project
      - iii. Month/year awarded / month/year completed (or date of anticipated project completion). *If the project was not completed on time as stated when it was initially awarded, indicate the reason(s) why and how much additional time was necessary to finish.*
      - iv. Total fees for planning and engineering services provided
      - v. List of change orders, scope changes, etc. and the reason for the changes. Include fees or deducts associated with the changes.
      - vi. Firm's role in the project (work for which the Firm was responsible)
      - vii. Nature of the utility (regional wastewater conveyance and treatment system, retail collection system, etc.)
      - viii. Owner reference and contact information (phone / email)
      - ix. Project team members who worked on the project
  4. Project Team and Resources (*Maximum 4 pages*): Briefly describe the project team and include the following information:
    - a. An organizational chart showing staff available to work on the project, including office locations. As appropriate, provide brief résumé summaries for key staff that will have responsibility for the work. Full staff résumés are not required.
    - b. Experience and qualifications of both the Project Manager and the key project team members that are relevant to the services to be performed.
    - c. Identify proposed subconsultants utilized as part of your team and their role(s) in your approach to the project.
    - d. Current and projected workload of the project team.
    - e. Experience with SCIIP-funded project administration. If the Firm has limited or no experience with SCIIP, include information regarding how it will comply with and track SCIIP requirements.
  5. Project Approach (*Maximum 4 pages*):
    - a. Describe your company's general approach in executing the project, utilizing previous experience and highlighting specific characteristics that would differentiate your approach from other Firms.
    - b. Include estimated project schedule from beginning of RFQ tasks through the completion of construction.
    - c. Describe how the project will be managed.
    - d. Estimated project schedule for services requested in RFP as well as beyond to project completion (as noted in Deliverables section of this RFQ). Include a Gantt chart indicating the estimated schedule for all phases.

### **Selection Criteria**

Applicants are encouraged to organize their submissions in such a way as to follow the general evaluation criteria listed below. Information included within the SOQ may be used to evaluate your Firm as part of any criteria regardless of where that information is found within the SOQ. Information obtained

from the SOQ and from any other relevant source may be used in the evaluation and selection process. Submittals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Past performance with OJRSA, the cities/towns of Seneca, Walhalla, Westminster, and West Union, and Oconee County.
2. Professional Qualifications: Technical expertise and competence, including education, registration, and years of experience of individuals with similar projects who will be assigned to this project.
3. Previous experience regarding quality of projects and demonstrated history of executing successful projects of similar scope.
4. Demonstrated Firm's ability to meet time and budget requirements.
5. Demonstrated experience in projects where key personnel have experience, accuracy, availability, and ability to work together as a team.
6. Creativity and insight related to the project.
7. Current and projected workloads of the Firm and the project team specifically.
8. Overall compliance with the RFQ requirements.

### **Selection Process**

The OJRSA will accept submittals that include, at a minimum, the items identified in this RFQ. The anticipated selection process is as follows:

1. Representatives designated by the OJRSA Executive Director shall serve on the SOQ review panel. The panel may request additional information from one or all applicants.
2. OJRSA may, at its discretion, conduct interviews with one (1) or more Firms based on information submitted in the RFQ. The purpose of the interview, if conducted, shall be to gain additional information to adequately evaluate the qualifications based on the criteria identified in the Selection Criteria.
3. OJRSA review panel shall recommend one Firm to the Board of Commissioners for approval to enter into contract negotiations with. This approval is non-binding and is contingent upon agreement on factors including, but not limited to, cost.
4. The selected Firm will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with OJRSA. A professional services contract will be negotiated with the selected Firm. Should OJRSA and the selected Firm not reach an agreement, OJRSA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to release that Firm and move to the next qualified Firm and proceed with negotiations.
5. Written notification of the selected Firm will be sent to all Firms that submitted qualification statements.

### **General Terms and Conditions**

Proprietary/Confidential Information: The Firms are asked for any restrictions on the use of data contained in their responses and told that proprietary information will be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and policy of the OJRSA. All proprietary/confidential information must be clearly marked as "Proprietary/Confidential"; however, it may be necessary for the OJRSA's to decide if information designated by the submitter in the RFP is indeed confidential in terms of compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. In such cases, OJRSA counsel specializing in the state's Freedom of Information Act shall make final determination as to whether the documents meet the requirements to remain confidential.

### **South Carolina Domicile Requirement**

This project does not have a domicile requirement.

## **Background Check**

OJRSA reserves the right to conduct a background inquiry of each Firm which may include the collection of appropriate criminal history information, contractual business associates and practices, employment histories, and reputation in the business community. By submitting proposals to the OJRSA, the Applicant consents to such an inquiry and agrees to make available to the OJRSA such books and records as the OJRSA deems necessary to conduct the inquiry.

## **Insurance**

Firm agrees to maintain and keep in force during the life of this Agreement, with a company or companies authorized to do business in South Carolina, Errors and Omissions Liability Insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000. Certificates for such policies shall be provided by the Firm's insurance agent or broker to OJRSA within ten (10) working days from the date of award with the OJRSA listed as additional insured on the policy. Firm will provide OJRSA a minimum of thirty (30) days advance notice in the event of the insurance policies or insurance policy is canceled. Subconsultants approved by OJRSA to perform work on this project are subject to the requirements in this section.

## **Determination of Responsibility**

The OJRSA may make such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the ability of a Firm to provide full performance as outlined in their submittal. The Firm will furnish the OJRSA all such information and data for this purpose as the OJRSA may request. The OJRSA reserves the right to reject any Firm if the evidence submitted by or investigation of such Applicant fails to satisfy the OJRSA that such Applicant is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of a Contract.

## **Rights Reserved by OJRSA**

The OJRSA reserves the right to amend its evaluation criteria at any time during the process.

The OJRSA, in its sole discretion, may utilize an independent review member or team. A review and evaluation of the responses contained in the previous section will serve as a basis of selection of the Firm judged best suited to meet the OJRSA's goals for the site and ask them to submit more detailed information.

The OJRSA reserves the right to reject any or all submittals; to waive any informality or irregularity not affected by law; and to evaluate, in its absolute discretion, the proposals submitted. The OJRSA may interview Firms as part of this selection process. Proposals should be complete as initially submitted.

The OJRSA reserves the right to amend the selected Firm's scope to include design-phase services and construction-phase services as needed.

## **Submittal Requirements**

Applicants must submit one (1) scan-ready original, three (3) bound copies, and one (1) electronic version of the SOQ package marked "Project #2024-06 RFQ: Assessment and Design for Replacement of Existing Dewatering Equipment," to the OJRSA **no later than 2:00 pm Local Time on Tuesday, October 3, 2023**. The submittal should not exceed 15 pages (not including table of contents and other items that are to be located in the appendices). The pages shall be 8½-inches by 11-inches except for drawings or tables that may be submitted on pages not exceeding 11-inches by 17-inches, folded to 8½ inches by 11 inches.

**LATE SUBMITTALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

It is the Applicant's responsibility to verify the receipt of the submittal. Electronic submittals must be received in PDF format.

Any questions regarding this RFQ should be submitted by way of email to Kyle Lindsay at [info@ojrsa.org](mailto:info@ojrsa.org). Responses will be provided via email to all Firms requesting to receive them; they will also be posted under the Opportunities tab on the OJRSA website ([www.ojrsa.org](http://www.ojrsa.org)) as an addendum. Any representations made over the phone or in verbal conversations are non-binding and should be secured in writing through email.

Questions shall be addressed to and the RFQ shall be submitted to:

Email: [info@ojrsa.org](mailto:info@ojrsa.org) to Kyle Lindsay

Address: Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority  
Project #2024-01  
623 Return Church Road  
Seneca, South Carolina 29678