

Request for Proposals

**Professional consulting services
for the
Northwestern Water & Sewer District**



**Improvements to existing IT
infrastructure
and ongoing IT support**

**Northwestern Water & Sewer District
PO Box 348
12560 Middleton Pike
Bowling Green, OH 43402
www.nwwsd.org
August 2007**

Project:

Northwestern Water & Sewer District hereby solicits proposals to enhance the District's existing IT infrastructure and to provide ongoing support and maintenance for that infrastructure.

Background:

Northwestern Water & Sewer District is a regional water and sewer district chartered under section 6119 of the Ohio Revised Code. Organized in 1994 to take over the water distribution and sanitary sewer collection operations of the Wood County Sanitary Engineer, the District's mission is to provide reliable, high-quality water and sewer service to our customer base in townships and municipalities in and around Wood County, Ohio. By combining systems to share operation and maintenance costs, the District is able to provide professional management and experienced service personnel throughout our service area. This enables smaller townships and municipalities to comply with state and federal mandates in an efficient, economically viable manner. At present, the District serves approximately 19,000 customers with a staff of about 45 full-time employees. We operate over 300 miles of water distribution lines and roughly 225 miles of sanitary sewer collection lines. Annual revenue is about \$5,000,000.

Our existing IT infrastructure includes 4 Windows-based servers, 2 non-Windows servers, and roughly 30 desktop PCs, connected by a gigabit Ethernet network. Our external internet connection consists of a wireless link supporting 768kps up/down. Our principal enterprise-level software systems include i-nHANCE (Harris Computing) for utility billing, EDEN (Tyler Technologies) for financial management, GBA Master Series for asset management and work order management, and ArcGIS (ESRI) for geographic information systems. We also maintain MS Exchange Server for email and scheduling, and MS Project Server for project management. Most of the IT infrastructure is located at the District office, but in the near future we expect to establish one satellite office with a Cisco VPN connection to the District network. Mobile systems include 9 notebook computers containing GIS data and scanned images of construction drawings for water and sewer lines. We also maintain an extensive AutoCon radio telemetry system managed by InTouch software, and we anticipate adding an additional telemetry system by early next year.

In March and April of 2007, the District contracted with an outside consulting firm to provide an assessment of our existing IT network and to conduct an independent review of the system architecture and server configuration. The relevant findings of that analysis are given in the Appendix to this document, which is available to interested parties by direct request to the District. In general, those findings can be divided into two broad categories. First, the review recommends a number of specific fixes and improvements to the District's existing IT system. Second, the report identifies a number of ongoing maintenance and support needs. The purpose of this RFP is to select a provider of IT support services to address both sets of issues.

Scope of Work:

The project is divided into two phases. The first phase will address the specific improvements to the existing server and network configurations recommended in the consultants' report. The second phase of the project will be ongoing IT support and maintenance services into the future. Respondents to this RFP should provide separate cost and time estimates for each phase. Our preference is to contract with a single vendor for both phases of the project, but we will consider proposals to perform just one phase.

Phase 1 – This phase of the project should address the items backgrounded in tan in the Appendix. All such items should be addressed, but the most significant areas of concern include the following:

1. Configuration of the DMZ
2. Upgrade and configuration of anti-virus system
3. Configuration of Exchange server, including setting up brick-level backups
4. Configuration of WINS/DNS domains

Phase 2 – This phase of the project should address the items backgrounded in green in the Appendix, but the primary goal is to establish a long-term partnership between the District and an outside vendor for ongoing IT support and maintenance. This support should include the following:

1. Day-to-day troubleshooting of hardware and software issues on the District's servers, PCs, and network. This support should extend to peripheral devices such as monitors, keyboards, mice, UPS units, printers, external hard drives, etc.
2. Timely repair of significant failures
3. Logging and reporting of requests for technical assistance
4. Comprehensive patch management for servers, PCs, and other network equipment
5. Regular maintenance for servers, PCs, and other network equipment, including regular review of system logs to identify security and maintenance issues
6. Development and maintenance of user documentation for systems and applications
7. Record-keeping related to hardware purchases and warranties
8. Input and advice on implementation of new capabilities and systems
9. Input and advice on preparation of annual IT plans and budgets

Schedule:

The deadline for receipt of proposals is September 28, 2007 at 5:00 PM. We hope to finish the review process and reach a decision on a vendor or vendors by the end of October. As part of the review process, we may invite some respondents to visit the District office for additional discussions and interviews. We anticipate that work on Phase 1 will be complete by the end of 2007, and that a support contract for Phase 2 will also be in place by the end of 2007.

RFP submittals and requested information

Respondents should contact Gavin Smith (see the contact information below) to request a copy of the Appendix, which provides the detailed findings of the IT assessment.

Submittals should include the following information:

1. *Approach* – provide a general statement of the firm’s approach, with particular emphasis on distinguishing characteristics or services.
2. *Methods and strategic plan* – describe the plan and methods for carrying out the scope of work
3. *Qualifications* – include a profile of the firm’s qualifications for performing the work. Areas of interest here include vendor certifications and depth of staff, with particular emphasis on certifications, numbers of engineers, and physical locations of technical support personnel.
4. *References* – contact information for customers who can speak to the quality of the firm’s work on similar projects. Preferably, some of the referenced work will be in the public sector.
5. *Schedule of fees and costs* – provide a listing of fees and costs associated with each phase of the project.
6. *Detailed description of support services* – include a detailed breakdown of the terms of the support package, including days and hours of coverage, remote monitoring and troubleshooting capabilities, response times, call logging and reporting resources, etc.
7. *Additional information* – any additional information the consultant deems relevant.

Please direct five copies of your submittal to:

Gavin Smith
GIS/IT Administrator
PO Box 348
12560 Middleton Pike
Bowling Green, OH 43402

The deadline for receipt of submittals is September 28, 2007 at 5:00 PM.

Please direct requests for clarification or additional information to Gavin Smith at the above address or at telephone 419.354.9090 or at email gsmith@nwwsd.org.