

Request for Proposal





Utility Billing Software

Request for Proposals

General Information

The City of Pleasanton is a community of 68,755, situated within the Tri-Valley Region of the Bay Area in Northern California.

The City provides a high quality and dependable potable water supply to the residents and businesses of Pleasanton. The City also provides round the clock sewer and storm drain service and maintenance for the community.

The Utility Billing Division of the Operations Services Department (OSD) performs the billing for water and sewer accounts. It is a combined bill that is processed weekly, among eight separate meter reading/billing cycles and results in a bi-monthly billing cycle per customer. Portable hydrant meters (about 50-60 accounts) are billed monthly based on mail-in meter reads. Total accounts within the current system include over 22,500 residential, commercial, and irrigation accounts. There is currently a 3-tier billing structure for residential water customers, with plans to add a fourth tier in 2010.

Daily payment postings and billings are accomplished as tasks on a master calendar within the current billing system. This is a manual remittance process where payment stubs are scanned and posted to each individual account through the calendar task.

The meter reading software/hardware is provided by Datamatic of Plano, Texas. Radio – AMR - technology and is utilized to read an estimated 7,500 water meters. The remaining water meters are read manually. A Backflow Prevention Device program is also being administered for approximately 2,500 devices.

Project Summary

The OSD desires a Utility Billing/Management software application that will meet current core functions and future needs of the OSD and will integrate all aspects of utility services, including maintain accounts, billing, and collection; interface with AMR, Datamatic meter reading system, service order processing, and cash register/payment interface.

Additionally, the City desires to implement newer technologies and processes such as: browser based client software, Internet customer access, running relational database Microsoft SQL 2005 (or newer), and the integration of desktop productivity tools - Microsoft Office Suite.

At the end of this request for proposal process (RFP), the OSD will enter into a professional services agreement with the vendor that provides the best value for the utility billing solution and meets all the specifications of this RFP, including any options selected by the OSD.



If you have any questions about this proposal, please contact:

Allen Hammond
Information Technology Manager
City of Pleasanton
123 Main St.
Pleasanton, CA 94566
Office: 925-931-5084
E-Mail: ahammond@ci.pleasanton.ca.us

Project Purpose

It is expected that the technologies shall assist Utility Billing in a variety of utility management functions including, but not limited to:

- Replacement of the legacy Utility Billing software application, with a system that receives responsive support and exhibits a software maturation process that will integrate new technologies and processes as they become available in the industry.
- Improvements to reporting functions.
- Automation and streamline of the utility billing processes
- Web-based functions for customer account access via City web site.
- Real-time access on customer account activity, to include activity performed with web functions
- Provides a user friendly comprehensive system
- Data collection, reporting and record keeping – assisting staff by reducing time and increasing efficiency in generating required reports.
- Greater customer convenience – web access and efficient client software for CSR.
- Ability to incorporate e-mail with billing and customer service
- Ability to rapidly incorporate, new and unique rates.
- Separate billing for customers with multiple accounts.
- Meter inventory

Current Software/Hardware

The current Utility Billing system is BillStar running on a Dell PowerEdge 2950 Server (XEON 5130 (2) – Duo 2.0GHz CPU, 4GB RAM, 280GB HD RAID). The system is based on Microsoft SQL Server 2005. Approximately 10-15 users accessing BillStar via LAN, by PC technology with specifications at the minimum; an Optiplex GX620 (Pentium D – 3.4GHz, 2GB, 40GB HD, Integrated DVMT Video w/ 19" FPD). Where possible, the City would like to make use of existing hardware, however the need for Servers and Personal Computers that shall assure the maximum use of the software outweighs the desire to use existing hardware.

Please address your recommendations for hardware to meet the performance needs of the Utility Billing Software. The City requires computers that optimize the performance of the technologies and ensures the longest useful life of the machines.

The City shall have 8 workstations dedicated to the access and use of the application. In addition to, a desire to access the system from remote locations by supervisors, and other personnel who may need access. All workstations shall include a minimum of 19" monitor size.

Response and Performance Expectations

The submitted proposal must follow the rules; address all categories and performance dimensions within this RFP. Failure to complete and address all functional criteria and specifications may result in rejection of a proposal.

Before submitting a proposal, vendors shall examine the specifications in order to understand all existing conditions and limitations. The vendor shall indicate in the proposal the total sum to cover the cost of all items included in the RFP.

Executive Summary

Provide a concise overview describing proposed solution

Description of Organization and Qualifications

Provide a description of the major business functions, history, and organizational structure of the Organization. Include a profile of the location of all offices, staffing and services provided and specify the office or location of the personnel that will be assigned to the City's account.

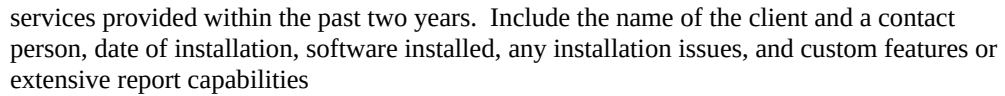
Specify the number of years the Vendor has been in public sector software business. Provide a brief statement of the company's background demonstrating longevity and financial stability.

Describe internal performance metrics used to quantify key customer support responsiveness, such as: Issues resolved on first call, average time to reach issue resolution, etc.

Provide the following background information on the proposed Utility Billing software: Original Development, date of first release, date of most recent release.

Experience on similar projects

Summaries or brief descriptions of a minimum of three projects performed which are most related to requirements of this project. Limit descriptions to those most relevant to this project and most representative of the firm's capabilities. References must be for goods and



This proposal shall include a detailed schedule, identification of a project manager, team members and key personnel with resumes attached for all personnel involved.

Describe the approach and resources needed to implement the proposed software. Attach a proposed implementation schedule with key activities and estimated milestones

Provide training that will properly prepare City Information Technology staff in the administration, management and any planned and unplanned maintenance.

OSD cannot accept the technologies until it has validated that the vendor has met all requirements stated in this RFP. The vendor shall provide all labor and supervision for the installation and testing.

All software shall pass the tests described below or have OSD declare that the objectives of the tests have been met by field operations.

- Free from operational defects, which affect performance.
- Compliant with the specifications.
- Delivered and accounted for. This includes all media, documentation, training, and support items.

Warranty and Post Implementation Support

The vendor must warranty timely response and remediation of technical problems. If there is a system failure or other problems, OSD needs to be assured that the vendor shall respond immediately to correct problems so that the service is not disrupted in any way.

The following maintenance issues should be responded to:

- Describe all support resources available. The vendor should provide support during OSD business hours that is capable of solving any software-related problem.
- Supply a copy of the maintenance agreement that is proposed.
- What shall the maintenance cover in terms of software and coverage dates?
- What services will the City receive with the maintenance program?

Upgrades

It is expected that upgrades shall be available to allow the OSD to take advantage of improvements in both software and hardware capabilities. The vendor shall provide regular upgrades to the software from date of implementation. Please describe the upgrade process.

Pricing

Provide detailed pricing of all cost associated to fully implement a successful operation of an Utility Billing System; to include cost of Application Software license fees, modification costs, Implementation, Training, Hardware, add-on 3rd party Software, annual maintenance, Travel, Data Conversions, and any other anticipated costs.

Scope of Work

The City is interested in purchasing proven technologies and contracting with companies with excellent track records.

OSD desires an integrated system and is interested in purchasing technologies (as needed), and the related services that shall ensure a fully functioning set of technologies meeting the required specifications. The vendor shall be responsible for all aspects of the installation.

Vendor will perform an import/conversion of data from legacy system.

Functional Criteria and Specification Requirements

Respond to all aspects of the functional specifications and criteria that follow. Include a copy of the software licenses.

OSD shall utilize proven technologies and products. The Functional Specification is for a Utility Billing and Management System.



Each function must be fully integrated into the OSD to allow for maximum flexibility. The City requires a product that is based in the Windows platform. The contractor must keep up with the latest appropriate version of Windows.

Any deviations from the specifications or exceptions must be clearly noted in your proposal. OSD shall entertain other options and recommendations if they can improve upon the current requirements.

Vendors are instructed to review and respond to each Functional Criteria and Specification Requirement in this RFP, by indicating each item with one of the following responses:

Fully Compliant: Indicates that the vendor's standard software meets and/or exceeds the requirement

Modification/Custom Software: Indicates that a software modification or custom software is required to meet and/or exceed this requirement. If there is a cost associated with this, list the dollar amount.

Not Available: Indicates that the vendor software does not and cannot meet this requirement.

General

- Integrate with General Leger and Accounts Payable for posting of bills, receipts, adjustments and refunds. Note: General Ledger uses Mitchell Humphrey software.
- The ability to allow customers via the internet (City's website) to view and make payments on utility bills, request service and process customer account changes
- Comprehensive utility reports that have the ability to be customized for specific UB users and departments
- Integrate with cashiering system. Note: Cashiering System is Active.
- The ability to completely interface with our current Collection company (Collection Bureau of America)
- On line validation and editing of customers, addresses, service locations, meters
- Ability to have a "Central Name File" that contains all persons having a financial relationship with the City.
- Ability to look at all monies owed from a single inquiry from all applications generating receivables
- Be a business process oriented application with customizable workflow.

Account/Customer Maintenance

- User definable work flow process for: New Account Set Up, Move-In/Move-Out Process, New Service Set Up, Account Inquiry
- Ability to provide for user defined customer and account classification codes (i.e., residential, commercial, etc.).
- Ability to record Move-in and close dates for an account
- Ability to record unlimited notes for an account
- Provide for billing an unlimited number of services (metered or non-metered) per service location
- Ability to send bill to one customer on the account and late notices and shut off notices to a different customer on the account
- Ability to record unlimited contacts (spouse, tenant(s), alternate billing addresses, etc)
- Ability to track information through system by customer. Must be able to view all accounts that customer has had, current status of accounts and outstanding balance and have ability to drill down to account detail.
- Ability to view the outstanding total balance on an account as well as the balance broken down by service type, current balance and previous balance
- Ability to define an unlimited number of user-defined and maintained rate tables for each service
- Ability to define an effective date for rate tables
- Ability to define service rates that are based on flat fees, consumption based, consumption based with demand, per unit charge, percentage based or user-defined formula
- Ability to base charges for non-metered services such as sewer on water consumption from customer's water consumption.
- The system must provide the ability to base sewer charges that are dependent on water consumption on winter averages.
- Ability to define distribution of fees to multiple general ledger accounts based on user-defined account type, fee category, service type
- Ability to define through table entry, an unlimited number of service types and add, change and delete service types as required

- Ability to establish "alerts" (cash only; lien exists; e.g.) on customer accounts with the following characteristics: All alerts are user definable, Unlimited number of alerts may be defined, Each alert has unique start and stop dates, User may define screens where alerts will appear
- Ability to associate a service location with a parcel number
- Ability to identify the number of dwelling units at a service location
- Ability to track information through system by location. Must be able to view: History of all accounts at that location, Current status of accounts, Outstanding balance, Drill down to detail
- Precise exception checking for routes completed
- Comprehensive calendar task manager with the ability to schedule daily tasks, billing, shut offs, payments, etc
- The ability to add files, pictures , notes to specific customer accounts
- The ability to store and apply gate codes for all accounts within our database while interfacing that info with Datamatic
- The ability to maintain existing directions on field services
- The ability to maintain unlimited history on a specific customer account or location
- The ability to run queries on accounts based on specific fields or missing fields
- The ability to internally audit accounts within the billing database looking for accounts that were initially set up incorrectly and currently have conflicting info

Meters

- Ability to identify multiple meters at a service location
- Ability to view a history of all meters that have been installed at the service location.
- Ability to maintain meter attribute data including: Meter Number, Route, Sequence, Installation date, Begin Service Date, End Service Date, Services attached to the meter, Status, Free Form Comments, Current Account Number, Current Service Address, Unlimited User Defined Fields, Documents, Remote Documents,
- The ability to provide a faux meter edit using the file export from Datamatic
- Ability to define read types

Billing

The City desires to partner with the vendor during the implementation, but all design, data conversion, software installation, and training will be provided by the vendor. The City may provide or facilitate the following services

- Provide work space for the contractor
- Provide the necessary computers
- Ensure that staff is available for all phases of planning, implementation, and training
- Provide data in electronic format
- Provide proper implementation support

A response to this RFP must include the following information:

- The name, address and telephone number of your company.
- Identification of the individuals and/or vendors comprising the team for this project and what specific role each will take in completing the work and their physical location.
- A summary of your experience completing similar projects completed within the past two years. Please provide examples of the design, equipment and results of these projects. Also include any names, addresses and phone numbers of clients involved with these projects.
- A detailed work plan describing your approach to design, installation, testing and training. The description should, at a minimum, include subcontractors, and a project schedule.
- Describe your training program.
- Provide detailed warranty and support information.
- A detailed listing of fees and costs to complete the project with separate costs for equipment and labor and on-going maintenance fees.

Vendors may include the following supplemental material

- You may provide any material not specifically required as supplemental information. Additional material may include the following and should be provided in the Appendix to the RFP:
 - Additional reports, photos and/or descriptions of similar projects you have completed.
 - Promotional material describing your firm and its services.
 - Additional references.
 - Manufacturer's literature.

Selection Criteria

Contract award will be based on pricing, performance and maintenance requirements. The following criteria shall be used to evaluate the proposals.

- The proven ability of the technology to meet the OSD's objectives and experience in similar installations with Utility Billing software and other technologies
- Understanding of the project and responsiveness to the RFP
- The track record (ability) of the Vendor to meet the implementation schedule
- The track record of the vendor to support their products and services
- Staff assigned to project
- Cost

The City anticipates working with the most qualified vendor during the selection and post selection stage of the Project in order to assure the system design and equipment fully meets the City's needs. As a result, final cost of the system may vary from the submitted cost.



Submission Information

Four hard copies and an electronic copy on CDROM of the response to the RFP must be submitted on or before December 15, 2009, at 2:00pm PST. Responses can be delivered by mail, or in person to:

*City of Pleasanton
City Clerk Office
P.O. Box 520
123 Main St.
Pleasanton, CA 94566
Attention: Allen Hammond
RE: Utility Billing Software System*

It is the responsibility of the respondents to ensure that their responses arrive by the due date/time, regardless of method of submission. Note: fax copies or email copies of the response to the RFP will not be accepted.

Schedule of Activities

Please note that dates are subject to change based on City of Pleasanton needs.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Date</u>
RFP Issue Date	November 2, 2009
Proposal Inquiry Deadline	November 16, 2009
Response in Writing, to Questions	November 23, 2009
RFP Submission Deadline	December 15, 2009
Discussions with Finalists	Week of January 11, 2009
Anticipated Award of Contract	January 25, 2009