

Town of Oak Ridge, NC
Request for Proposals
Municipal Water System Operation, Maintenance, Billing, and Customer Service

Date Issued: May 8, 2020

Date Due: June 2, 2020

Direct All Inquiries to:

Bill Bruce, AICP

Town Manager

Town of Oak Ridge

336-644-7009

bbruce@oakridgenc.com

The Town of Oak Ridge is currently soliciting proposals from qualified companies to contract operations, maintenance, billing, and customer service of its municipal water system.

Background and Purpose

Several years ago, the Town of Oak Ridge entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Guilford County and the Towns of Stokesdale and Summerfield to explore the feasibility of a regional water system. That study, funded by a grant from the State, was conducted by Timmons Associates. The study was completed in 2019, at which time the Town of Oak Ridge determined that proposed costs to implement a regional water system were prohibitive and determined to pursue an alternate path for the provision of municipal water.

In June of 2019, the Town contracted with Envirolink Inc. to assist the Town in preparing financial models to determine the feasibility of using community wells to provide municipal water. The Town subsequently adopted ordinances requiring developers of all new subdivisions of thirty lots or more to construct community wells and distribution systems to Town standards and dedicate those systems to the Town. The Town may also consider the purchase of existing community wells and distribution systems that conform to municipal standards. Presently the Town does not own or maintain any assets related to a municipal water system though it is anticipated that the Town may purchase existing systems and/or new systems will be constructed and dedicated to the Town during this contract period.

Consequently, The Town is seeking a company to provide complete operations, maintenance, and billing services for all future Town owned wells and customers. The Town has adopted Water Rules, a Water System Management Plan, and other documentation required for state approval. Application to the state will follow the successful negotiation of a contract with an operator.

Scope

The selected company will be responsible for the tasks outlined below. These tasks represent initial expectations of the Town; however the final scope may be discussed and negotiated with the selected company:

Operation and Maintenance of wells (all components) and the associated distribution system to include:

- Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all systems and provide documentation to the Town. Ensure SOPs are followed and provide documentation of compliance. It is anticipated that each well site be visually inspected by the company at least once every 48 hours.
- Provide all equipment, materials, and personnel to perform all services herein.
- Provide all reporting to NCDEQ and properly maintain records, as required by law. Coordinate with the agency, as applicable, for site visits and information requests.
- Provide water quality testing, documentation, and reporting as required and properly maintain records, as required by law.
- Ensure well systems, including all components, are working properly and provide continuous service. Perform repairs as necessary.
- Ensure distribution system is properly working and provide continuous service. Perform repairs as necessary.
- Monitor the distribution system for leaks, breaks, valve failures, and other issues in need of repair. Perform repairs as necessary.
- Monitor chemical systems and levels and ensure proper dosage is being maintained.
- Maintain chemical systems, as applicable, and ensure such systems remain in proper working order. Order and coordinate the fill of chemicals, as required.
- Routinely test and ensure site safety equipment is in proper working order.
- Frequently exercise isolation valves at each facility and within the distribution system (every 6 months or less).
- Coordinate with electrical power provider, as applicable and as required to maintain all operations, and ensure prompt payment of invoices.
- Maintain all sites and easements, as applicable. This may include routine lawn maintenance, driveway maintenance and repair, fence maintenance and repair, site lighting, and security maintenance and repair as applicable.
- Provide 24-hour remote monitoring, and response if necessary, for all well systems. In the case of emergency, company shall provide staff onsite within one (1) hour from notification.
- Provide scheduled routine maintenance on all well components as recommended by the manufacturer as applicable.
- Develop testing protocol and perform routine performance testing on each well system to include annual testing at a minimum. Should performance testing indicate issues, investigate and develop recommendations for corrective action.
- Maintain a Capital Improvement Plan for each separate well system and coordinate annually with the Town.
- Maintain record drawings of all systems. Additionally, maintain and update system maps on a periodic basis (minimum annually).

Emergency repairs of wells (all components) and the associated distribution system to include:

- Develop and maintain an emergency response plan. Provide copies of the plan to the Town.
- Provide 24-hour monitoring of all systems. In the event of an emergency, ensure personnel are on site within 1 hour of notification.
- In the event of an emergency, perform the following:
 - Alert customers of the situation and issue a boil water notice, if applicable.
 - Alert the media, if applicable.
 - Coordinate with NCDEQ and local officials, as applicable.
- Provide temporary water supply for customers if outage will extend beyond 12 hours.
- Brief the Town on all emergency situations.

Operation and Maintenance of future interconnects to include:

It is anticipated that future interconnection of well systems may be implemented. With these interconnections, provide the following:

- Frequent exercising of isolation valves (every 6 months or less).
- Operation and maintenance procedures as described in Sections above apply to interconnections.

Operation and Maintenance of additional future wells and distribution systems to include:

It is anticipated that well systems will be added in the future. For each added system, provide operations and maintenance as described above for the additional systems. Operation and maintenance procedures as described in Sections above apply to future wells and distribution systems.

Customer Billing to include:

The Town has adopted rules governing the billing and collections for water services. The selected company will be expected to conform to these rules. They can be found on the Town's website at www.oakridgenc.com.

- Provide billing and collection services for all customers.
- Provide meter reading services for each connection.
- Provide an annual audit of water produced versus water sold.
- Maintain electronic records of accounts and make available to the Town if requested.
- Provide monthly statements of account and associated invoices. Offer these services by hard copy (mailed) or electronically through a website.
- Collect monthly payments from each customer. Provide options for check (mail), check or credit by phone, and/or online payment at website.
- Provide monthly statements to the Town with respect to revenue, expenses, and collections.
- Coordinate late fees and shutoff policies with the Town.
- Provide information on potential shut off notices with the Town for approval.

Customer Service related to the water system to include:

- Provide a dedicated customer service representative(s), via phone, to assist customers with issues, billing, new accounts, account maintenance, etc. This service should be available at minimum of 8 hours per day Monday thru Friday.
- Provide a monitored customer service email address and provide a response within 24 hours from receipt of email.
- Provide a 24-hour monitored call number that can be used after hours and in case of emergencies
- Provide periodic surveys, annually at a minimum, to customers with regard to service, water quality, and water pressure. Coordinate the survey and share the results with the Town.

Period of Service

The Town intends to enter into an agreement with the selected company for a term of 3 years with the option of additional renewals, though other proposed terms will be considered. It is the intent to evaluate terms of the agreement prior to execution of the contract.

Submittal Requirements

Submit 6 hard copies and one electronic copy in PDF format of the completed proposal to:

Bill Bruce, AICP
Manager
Town of Oak Ridge
P.O. Box 374
8315 Linville Road
Oak Ridge, NC 27310

Proposals must be enclosed in a sealed envelope or package and clearly marked with the name of the submitting company and RFP title. All proposals must be received no later than the date and time noted in the schedule. Proposals received after this date will not be considered. Requests for clarification or questions must be received by the time and date shown in the schedule. All requests and questions should be directed in writing via email to Town Manager Bill Bruce (bbruce@oakridgenc.com). Requests and questions received after the due date will not be entertained. All communications of any nature regarding this RFP with any Town Staff, other than as noted in this document, elected Town officials, and/or selection committee members is strictly prohibited and could result in disqualification.

RFP Schedule

Task	Milestone Date
Issue RFP	May 8, 2020
Pre-Proposal Meeting	2:00 PM May 19, 2020
Last Day for Questions	5:00 PM May 22, 2020

Proposals Due	5:00 PM June 2, 2020
Town Evaluation	June 2 - July 6, 2020
Notification of Selected Company	Week of July 6, 2020
Tentative Contract Award	August 2020

Submittal Format

All responses must follow the format below and include the requested information. The Town may reject any response as non-responsive, in its sole discretion. Total proposal length shall be limited to (20) twenty pages (10 pages front and back).

1. Cover Letter

Provide an introduction letter summarizing the unique qualifications of your company and why you are the right choice to operate the Town of Oak Ridge water system. The letter should be presented on your company’s letterhead and signed by an authorized representative of the company who has authority to enter into a contract with the Town. Include the name, address, phone number, and email address of the main point of contact for this solicitation.

2. Company Background and Experience

- a. General - Provide company background to include the following:
 - i. Point of contact with address, phone number, and email address
 - ii. Office location and address from which services will be provided
 - iii. Company year founded
 - iv. Company ownership and management structure
 - v. State licensure information
 - vi. The selected company may be requested to provide proof of financial stability including audited financial statements.
- b. History of similar work - Provide detailed information regarding the company's experience with similar projects. Provide the following information for at least 5 similar systems/programs over the past 5 years (preference will be given to projects that are local):
 - i. Program/system description
 - ii. Location
 - iii. Dates of service
 - iv. Size of system (number of wells, capacity of wells, line sizes, population served, etc.)
 - v. References with contact information
 - vi. Cost per connection
 - vii. Billings per year (avg)
 - viii. Repair and upgrade costs per year (avg)
- c. History of litigation and/or notices of violation - Provide details of all current litigation and notices of violation within the past 5 years.
- d. Additional information - Provide any additional information that is relevant to this proposal.

2. Program Team Background and Experience

- a. Provide the names for each proposed team member along with their role in performing the contract.
 - b. Provide a resume for each team member to include at minimum the following:
 - i. Background and experience
 - ii. Applicable license information
 - iii. Experience with systems similar to the Town's system
 - iv. Office location
 - v. Other pertinent information
3. Program Understanding and Approach
- a. Provide a comprehensive narrative demonstrating the company's understanding and approach to implementing, operating, maintaining, expanding, and billing for the system.
 - b. Provide anticipated response times to emergencies.
 - c. Provide information on accessibility and how calls are handled after hours
 - d. Provide information on billing, collections, and treatment of delinquent accounts
 - e. List and explain the company's expectations of the Town for the duration of this contract
 - f. Describe the specific challenges the Program Team and Company see in completing the scope of work and how they plan to address those challenges.
4. Cost Information
- a. Provide a narrative on your general approach to determining cost for service.
 - b. For comparison purposes, provide a cost and cost breakdown for all services for the following. Present the information on an anticipated cost per connection on an annual basis and be inclusive of all scope items presented above. List all assumptions made and do not include capital costs or emergency repair costs.
 - i. 1 well, 30 customers
 - ii. 2 wells, 50 customers
 - iii. 4 wells, 80 customers

Proposal Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Company Background and Experience	25%
Project Team / Individual Experience	25%
Understanding and Approach	25%
Cost	25%

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked in order of choice. After review and ranking, contract negotiations will begin with the selected company. If negotiations are unsuccessful, the Town will pursue negotiations with the next company. The Town shall not be bound or in any way obligated until

both parties have executed a contract. The Town reserves the right to delay or cancel the award of this contract.