



## **Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

### **Risk/Resilience Assessment & Emergency Planning Consulting Services**

December 4, 2019

# **1.0 Background**

## **1.1 Executive Summary**

The Public Utility District No. 1 of Skagit County, Washington (“District”) requests a Statement of Qualifications (“SOQ”) from qualified professional firms (“Consultant”) to conduct a risk and resilience assessment in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, and to write and deploy a comprehensive emergency action plan incorporating the assessment’s findings. This is intended to be a two-phase project with the assessment composing as phase 1, and subsequent emergency planning and related activities as phase 2.

The District currently has an emergency action plan last revised in 2019. This plan addresses the typical natural disaster hazards and threats to business continuity in accordance with prior existing regulations and emergency planning practices. The District owns 643 miles of piping, 1047.2 acres of land, over \$1.1 million in capital equipment assets, and another \$167.5 million in fixed capital assets and buildings. The hazards unique to the District or to water distribution and treatment include dam breach at Judy Reservoir, treatment plant failure, distribution system failure, and chlorine gas release.

The District is interested in performing a risk and resilience assessment to determine where weaknesses to natural and manmade threats exist. Examples of this scope include scrutinizing Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and security; the resilience of existing structures to threats such as fire, flooding and earthquake; and other threats. All data for the assessment will be gathered using a recognized standard such as AWWA J100 Methodology, RAMCAP, and/or the US EPA’s Vulnerability Assessment Tool 2.0 (VSAT 2.0).

## **1.2 Overview of Public Utility District No. 1 of Skagit County**

The District is a municipal corporation of the State of Washington, established in 1936 for the purpose of providing safe, efficient, reliable and affordable water service to the residents of Skagit County. The District is also authorized under state law to provide sewer services and wholesale telecommunication services. At the current time, there are no active sewer customers, but there are two wholesale fiber-optic customers.

The District currently employs approximately 82 FTEs, which include 72 employees working out of the main campus building on Freeway Drive, and another 10 employees at the water treatment plant. The District operates the largest water system in Skagit County, providing an average of nine million gallons of piped water to approximately 65,000 people every day. The District maintains over 600 miles of pipelines and has over 31 million gallons of water storage volume.

The cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley receive the majority of our water. Due to public demand for quality water, the District also provides service to unincorporated and remote areas of the county. The District’s service area includes part of Fidalgo Island at the west end of the county and extends as far east as Marblemount. From south to north, the District’s service area starts in Conway and extends north to Alger/Lake Samish.

## **2.0 Submittal Format**

### **2.1 General Submittal Requirements**

The SOQ shall be a single volume of double-sided pages, bound such that they lay flat when opened and shall be no longer than 15 pages (8.5x11 letter size format). Sections shall be indexed and tabbed for easy reference to the material contained within. The front cover, back cover, introductory letter, table of contents, and District submittal pages are not included in the page limit. Consultants must submit:

- One (1) hard copy; and
- Three (3) digital copies

The SOQ shall be signed in ink by an authorized representative of the Consultant. Signature on a submittal certifies that it is made without connection with any other person, firm or corporation making a submittal for the same goods and/or services and is in all respects fair and made without collusion or fraud. Signature on an SOQ also certifies that the Consultant has read, fully understands and agrees with all solicitation requirements, terms and conditions. No consideration will be given to any claim resulting from submittal without fully comprehending all requirements of the Request for Qualifications.

The District reserves the right to request any Consultant submitting an SOQ to clarify its submittal and to supply additional information deemed necessary to assist in the selection of a Consultant. The District also reserves the right to clarify, modify or alter any of the requirements herein. In the event of a material modification of the submittal requirements by the District, Consultants selected by the District may be given an opportunity to modify their SOQ in the specific areas that are impacted.

The District may cancel, reject in whole or in part any submittal, without liability incurred at any time after issuing a RFQ, if it is in the District's best interest to do so. Consultants responding to RFQs are responsible for all costs they may incur in connection with submitting SOQ, which includes, but is not limited to: submittal preparation, pre-proposal conference, if any, document submittal, travel, expenses, interviews, presentations, or evaluation of any related documents.

### **2.2 Performance Period**

It is the District's desire to complete the first phase of the project within twelve (12) months from the signing of an agreement, and the second phase within six (6) months from completing the first phase and reporting completion to the EPA.

### **2.3 Submittal Delivery/Closing Date**

Submittals with all required information must be submitted to Doug McConnell, Contracts Administrator, either by hand delivery to 1415 Freeway Drive, Mount Vernon, WA or by mail to PO Box 1436, Mount Vernon, WA 98273-1436 by Monday December 16, 2019 at 3:00 pm Pacific Time. Submissions received by the District after the closing date and time will not be opened.

### **2.4 Questions Regarding the Request for Qualifications**

There will only be one point of contact for inquiries during the RFQ process. The contact point is the District's Contracts Administrator Doug McConnell, (360) 848-2169, or by email at [mcconnell@skagitpud.org](mailto:mcconnell@skagitpud.org). Any questions or issues that may arise regarding the scope, the RFQ process, and/or the award process shall be directed to Doug McConnell. Responses to such inquiries shall be given in writing via an addendum to all parties who have obtained the RFQ documents from the District.

***NOTE: In order to receive an addendum, Consultants must contact Mr. McConnell to be placed on the communication list regarding this RFQ.***

## **2.5 Organization of Submittal**

Submissions should be prepared and organized in a clear and concise manner, and must include all information required by this RFQ. Headers, titles, or tabs should be used to identify required information. The submittal shall include the following at a minimum:

### Introduction

- Introductory letter indicating the Consultant's interest in offering these services to the District and highlighting its qualifications to perform this engagement. Also include the availability of the firm to complete all components of the project and any desire to change the proposed schedule.
- Firm name, authorized contact person, address, telephone number, and email address.
- Table of Contents of SOQ

### Consultant Experience and Workload

- A description of Consultant's experience in conducting risk and resiliency assessments and developing emergency response and other plans with assessment findings incorporated into the document.
- A description of similar projects the firm has completed. For each project, provide:
  - Name, address and telephone number of the client
    - Summary of the firm's role/responsibility in the projects along with the deliverables.
    - Budget and actual project cost
    - The elements of the projects that are similar to the project described in this RFQ.
- A description of the Consultant's experience in working with public agencies, including working and communicating with an elected board of commissioners.

### Personnel Experience

- Provide an organization chart showing all proposed team members and describing their responsibilities for this project. Include professional qualifications of each member of the project team.

- Describe any portion of the work that will be performed by a subcontractor, and information about the professional qualifications of proposed subcontractors.

#### Project Approach and Schedule

- Provide a write-up on the specific tasks listed in the Scope of Work and your approach on how you will complete these, given the District's needs. Include proposed dates and milestones, keeping in mind the EPA's deadlines.
- Proposed project management, communications approach, and informational flow for this project.

#### Local & Industry Experience

- Provide a summary describing the Consultant's working knowledge and relationships with other local municipalities and agencies that provide water; or that plan for or who respond to emergencies that involve wide-reaching utility services. Consideration will be given to working relationships with FEMA, EPA, and emergency services departments from Skagit County and other Washington governmental agencies.

### **3.0 Project Requirements**

To achieve the desired results, the District will require the project to complete the following:

#### Phase 1

1. Gather critical infrastructure data, identify threat scenarios, develop risk and resiliency scores, and develop/evaluate risk mitigation measures.
2. Record developed data into a report format, and/or enter the data into the VSAT 2.0 risk and resiliency assessment tool. Regardless of recording method, a report must be generated that identifies areas of improvement and risk mitigation strategies that will be incorporated into the emergency response plan that will follow in phase 2.
3. Report completion of the risk and resiliency assessment to EPA.

#### Phase 2

1. Compile and publish a comprehensive emergency response plan.
2. Employee job aids for emergencies (flip books) and other tools based on emergency response plan.

### **4.0 Scope of Work**

The District is seeking a planning consultant to provide services to assist the District in the assessment of the risks to the District's infrastructure due to emergencies of natural and manmade origin, and to develop a comprehensive emergency response plan with the assessment's findings incorporated into the language and use of the plan. This is intended to be a project with two distinct phases: an assessment phase and a planning phase. The assessment phase must be completed prior to December

31, 2020. The planning phase must be completed 6 months after the first phase is reported complete to the EPA, but no later than June 30, 2021. The specific scope of services for the work under this contract will include the following:

### **Phase One – Risk & Resiliency Assessment**

Using a recognized standard (AWWA J100, RAMCAP, or VSAT 2.0), compile the data required by the EPA to complete the assessment. The deliverable for Task one shall be a draft and final report of the findings and risk mitigation strategies. Upon completion of those reports, their completion must be reported and certified to the EPA, beginning the 6-month countdown when the final emergency response plan is to be completed.

The assessment must include considerations for:

- Risks to the system from malevolent acts and natural hazards;
- The resilience of the pipes and constructed conveyances, physical barriers, source water, water collection and intake, pretreatment, treatment, storage and distribution facilities, electronic, computer, or other automated systems (including the security of such systems) which are utilized by the system;
- The monitoring practices of the system;
- The financial infrastructure of the system;
- The use, storage, or handling of various chemicals by the system; and
- The operation and maintenance of the system.

### **Phase Two – Composing the Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan**

Using the EPA’s template (available at [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-07/documents/190712-awia\\_erp\\_template\\_instructions\\_kab\\_508c\\_v6.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-07/documents/190712-awia_erp_template_instructions_kab_508c_v6.pdf)) and the District’s existing emergency response plans as a guideline, develop a comprehensive emergency response plan that incorporates the findings of the risk and resilience assessment. This plan must include the following elements:

- Strategies and resources to improve the resilience of the system, including the physical security and cybersecurity of the system;
- Plans and procedures that can be implemented, and identification of equipment that can be utilized, in the event of a malevolent act or natural hazard that threatens the ability of the community water system to deliver safe drinking water;
- Actions, procedures and equipment which can obviate or significantly lessen the impact of a malevolent act or natural hazard on the public health and the safety and supply of drinking water provided to communities and individuals, including the development of alternative source water options, relocation of water intakes and construction of flood protection barriers; and

- Strategies that can be used to aid in the detection of malevolent acts or natural hazards that threaten the security or resilience of the system.

The deliverable for Phase Two shall be a draft and final emergency response plan that is actionable and that the District can deploy.

## **5.0 Evaluation of Proposal**

### **5.1 Method of Evaluation**

A panel of District staff members will review the submission based on the criteria listed below and make a recommendation for award. Proposals shall be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Consultant Experience and Workload (25 points maximum)
  - Experience and qualifications of the Consultant in performing risk and resilience assessments and developing emergency response plans. Provide a description of success with similar projects. (20 points)
  - Experience with public sector clients and a board of elected officials, including community engagement. (10 points)
  - The Consultant's ability to incorporate this project into its present workload. (5 points)
2. Experience of the Personnel Assigned to the Team (20 points maximum)
  - Consideration will be given to the individual qualifications of the team members identified in the proposal, including experience with system-wide risk and resilience assessments and the development of emergency response plans.
3. Project Approach and Schedule (10 points maximum)
  - This includes a demonstrated understanding of the objectives, scope and purpose of the contract, with a specific explanation of how the consultant proposes to achieve the District's goals. Innovative suggestions that may increase the value of the Consultant to the District will also be considered.
4. Local & Industry Experience (35 points maximum)
  - The Consultant's working knowledge and experience of Skagit County and Washington State emergency planning operations, water utility hazards and risks, and the local relationships between the utility and emergency response sectors.
5. Interview (10 points maximum)
  - Consultants may be requested to take part in an interview to answer questions from the District's review panel.

The panel may make a recommendation at the appropriate level for a contract award. Upon approval of this recommendation, District staff will coordinate with the selected firm to complete the attached Agreement for Professional Services.

## **5.2 Tentative Evaluation Schedule**

The schedule of events set out herein represents the District's best estimate of the schedule that will be followed.

Release of RFQ	December 4, 2019
Last Date for Request for Clarifications	December 16, 2019
Closing Date of RFQ	December 16, 2019
Responses Evaluated	January 13, 2020
Possible Interviews	January 16 to 22, 2020
Finalize Scope of Work, Negotiations and Contract Execution	February 3, 2020