

## UTILITY BILLING AND COLLECTION ASSESSMENT

EVENT NO. 4900

### SECTION II

#### SCOPE OF WORK

**2.0 Broad description of Project:** The purpose of this event is to receive proposals from qualified contractors for services for a comprehensive assessment of utility billing and collection services for the City of Savannah. Electronic submissions will not be accepted for this proposal.

#### **2.1 Scope of Services**

The successful proposer shall provide the following services using a statistically valid sample. Currently, there are approximately 71,451 active utility accounts.

##### 2.1.1 Task 1 – Audit Utility Billing and Collections

- A. Assess whether utility customers are being properly billed for utility services.
  - 1. Verify that usage and billing calculations are accurate.
  - 2. Determine whether utility bills are processed accurately and timely.
  - 3. Review adequacy and accuracy of meter reading process.
  - 4. Assess the city's ability to recover amounts owed.
- B. Assess whether customers are responded to within reasonable timeframes.
  - 1. Review potential causes of customer complaints.
  - 2. Assess consistent and equitable treatment of customers.
  - 3. Review adequacy of complaint investigations and that dispositions achieved were supported and reasonable.
  - 4. Provide recommendations to improve customer services levels.

##### 2.1.2 Task 2 – Evaluate Current Operations

- A. Conduct an operational audit of the utility billing function and provide recommendations for improvement.
  - 1. Assess the meter reading, leak detection services, billing, collections, and customer service functions.
  - 2. Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.
  - 3. Identify, define, prioritize and document core functions.
  - 4. Evaluate relationship between utility billing function and other city functions.
  - 5. Determine whether there are adequate job descriptions, optimized staffing levels and positions with respect to workload and overtime, appropriate span of management and supervisory oversight.
  - 6. Evaluate current staffing levels and positions and identify staffing

- levels necessary to maintain desired levels of services.
    - 7. Assess customer service levels and satisfaction.
    - 8. Evaluate effectiveness of customer communications practices and methods.
    - 9. Benchmark the city's performance against industry best practices and against other comparable agencies.
    - 10. Develop metrics by which to assess future operational and financial performance.
  - B. Review processes, procedures, controls, and performance measures for the administration and maintenance of City's utility accounts and related customer services.
    - 1. Review and evaluate the meter reading, billing and collection processes for efficiency and effectiveness
    - 2. Make recommendations on improving operations to provide for monthly billing of utility accounts
    - 3. Review and evaluate the processes for identifying and resolving exceptions
    - 4. Assess frequency of meter readings and associated processes
    - 5. Evaluate assignment of meter readers to routes (periodic rotation of meter readers on routes)
    - 6. Determine if proper internal controls are in place to comply with city policies and procedures
    - 7. Review customer payment plan policies and procedures
  - C. Assess the adequacy of technology, equipment and automated systems to support effective and efficient operations and meet desired levels of service.
    - 1. Assess adequacy of equipment utilized by staff involved in the meter reading, billing and collections processes and their data integration and/or interfaces.
    - 2. Identify and recommend industry trends and best practices for meter readers, customer service personnel, etc.
    - 3. Identify and recommend technology enhancements to achieve desired performance levels
    - 4. Evaluate the adequacy of the city's current automated billing and customer management system to meet the City's current and future operational needs
    - 5. Determine cost and staffing needs to move towards monthly billing as opposed to bi-monthly billing
    - 6. Review proposed timeline for accepting online payments and evaluate process

## 2.2 Deliverables

- A. Organizational analysis
- B. Review of job descriptions and staffing
- C. Audit of Meter Readings, Billings and Collections

- D. Operational analysis (including benchmarking to best practices and comparable agencies)
- E. Customer service evaluation
- F. Presentation of reports to internal decision makers and executive leadership (city manager, chief financial officer, agency directors)
- G. Presentation of reports to City Council

### **2.3 Proposal Format**

Proposals shall be submitted in the following format and include the following information:

- a) Cover letter stating the intent of the Proposer for this event. Cover letter must include acknowledgement of all addenda issued for this proposal. If addenda are not acknowledged in the cover letter, proposals will not be considered further.
- b) Detailed description of program review and auditing as requested.
- c) Fee Proposals in a separate, sealed envelope, per instructions in Section III and signed by responsible party.
- d) Proposed Schedule of Minority and Women owned Business Participation and Non-Discrimination Statement.
- e) Statement of Qualifications including resumes of key team members and at least three (3) projects of similar scope and focus.
- f) Proposed terms of agreement for services between the proposer and the client.

### **2.4 Basis of Award**

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria and weight at a minimum:

- a) Proposer's qualifications and experience, including support capabilities and prior projects with similar scopes (*30 points*)
- b) Schedule (*15 points*)
- c) Fees (*20 points*)
- d) References (*20 points*)
- e) MWBE participation goals (*10 points*)
- f) Local vendor (Within the city limits of Savannah and has a City of Savannah Business Tax Certificate) participation (*5 points*)

Proposals shall be evaluated by a selection committee. The selection committee may, at its option, request interviews with any and all proposers to gather additional information to be used in the evaluation process. At the discretion of the selection committee these interviews may or may not be held on the premises of the City of Savannah. Any costs such as travel or preparation associated with the interview process will be borne solely by the proposers. Only the fee proposals of those deemed qualified will be opened.

Proposals must have scored a minimum of 52 out of the 65 available points allocated for proposer's qualifications and experience, schedule, and references to be deemed qualified to have their fees opened and considered.

## 2.5 Copies

One (1) unbound, printed, and signed original and three (3) identical, printed copies of the proposal and supporting documents must be submitted in response to the RFP. All responses must relate to the specifications as outlined.

## 2.6 Contacts

Proposers must submit proposals in accordance with the instructions contained in this RFP. All requested information must be submitted with the proposal. Instructions for preparation and submission of proposals are contained in this package. All questions regarding this request for proposal should be submitted in writing and emailed to the person listed on the summary event page.

## 2.7 Minority/Woman Business Enterprise Goals

The City of Savannah desires that this project have the strongest possible participation of minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs), which employ local residents and otherwise support the local economy. M/WBE firms must have a current certification as such by the City of Savannah or an approved certifying agency. Proposers should embrace this goal and demonstrate meaningful local M/WBE participation in the project as follows:

**2.7.1 Prime Contractor Level M/WBE Participation** – Meaningful MWBE participation may take the form of a teaming agreement, partnership, mentor-protégé relationship, joint venture or similar relationship wherein the M/WBE partner shares in a significant portion of management responsibility and profit-making potential.

Proposer shall:

- Provide names of M/WBE firms that are part of prime contractor bid team.
- Provide a copy of teaming, joint venture or other equivalent agreement(s) between parties on prime contractor bid team setting forth roles and responsibilities and profit-sharing arrangements.
- Describe roles and responsibilities of each company and its employees.
- Provide anticipated percentage of M/WBE/participation for each participant on the team.
- Provide letter of commitment from lead firm, addressed to the City of Savannah, regarding association with each participant on the prime contractor level team.
- Provide letters of commitment from each local M/WBE firm, addressed to the City of Savannah regarding association with lead firm.

**2.7.2 Subcontractor Level M/WBE Participation** - Proposer shall provide a written plan for how it will ensure that M/WBE firms have the maximum possible opportunity to participate in prime and second tier subcontracts that will be available in the completion of this project.

- The plan should include proposer’s best estimate of the percentage of M/WBE participation (based on subcontract values) it expects to be able to achieve in this project from subcontractors.
- The plan shall include estimated dollar amounts of subcontract values that are used to estimate an overall proposal from proposer.

**2.7.3** Points will be allocated based on each respondent’s proposed M/WBE goal, with the maximum points of four (4) being awarded to the respondent who submits the highest proposed M/WBE goal at the Prime Contractor level, and six (6) being awarded to the respondent who submits the highest proposed M/WBE goal at the subcontractor level. Points will be allocated to each respondent by using the following mathematical calculation:

- i. In the case of the award based on the Prime Contractor level:

$$\frac{\textit{Respondent's Proposed M/WBEGoal}}{\textit{Highest Proposed M/WBE Goal}} \times 4 = \textit{Weighted Score}$$

- ii. In the case of the award based on the Subcontractor level:

$$\frac{\textit{Respondent's Proposed M/WBEGoal}}{\textit{Highest Proposed M/WBE Goal}} \times 6 = \textit{Weighted Score}$$

No proposals will be deemed non-responsive due to this factor.

**2.8 Qualifications**

Each proposer shall submit a summary of their qualifications and experience per Section 2.3, including professional references and previous projects similar to this in scope and focus. Additional information such as agency brochures, resumes, etc. may be submitted as appropriate.

**2.9 Schedule**

Each proposer shall submit a proposed time schedule for the project.

**2.10 Fees**

Proposer shall submit fees in a separate, sealed envelope based on the detailed listing in Section III of the RFP. Fee proposals and hourly rate sheets shall not be included in the body of the proposal. Provide hourly fees for services not specifically shown in the scope of services that may arise during the project.

**2.11 Insurance Requirements**

**2.11.1 Comprehensive General Liability**

Contractor shall carry comprehensive general liability on an occurrence form with no “x, c, or u” exclusions with the following minimum limits:

- Each occurrence - \$1,000,000
- Damage to Rented Premises - \$50,000
- Medical Expense - \$5,000
- Personal & Adv Injury - \$1,000,000
- General Aggregate - \$2,000,000
- Products – Completed Ops. Aggregate - \$2,000,000

General aggregate shall apply on a per project basis.

Contractor will provide a Certificate of Insurance reflecting required coverage.

A waiver of subrogation endorsement to the policy in favor of the City shall also be provided and attached to the certificate.

A (30) day notice of cancellation in favor of the City must be endorsed to policy and attached to the certificate.

### **2.11.2 Workers Compensation**

Contractor shall carry a workers compensation policy including all statutory coverage required by Georgia state law.

Minimum employers liability limits:

- \$500,000 each accident
- \$500,000 each employee (disease)
- \$500,000 policy limit (disease)

Contractor will provide a Certificate of Insurance reflecting required coverage.

A waiver of subrogation endorsement to the policy in favor of the City shall also be provided and attached to the certificate.

A (30) day notice of cancellation in favor of the City must be endorsed to policy and attached to the certificate.

### **2.11.3 Umbrella/Excess Liability**

Contractor shall carry an umbrella/excess liability policy which must follow form over underlying policies: general liability, auto liability and employer's liability.

Minimum limits: \$1,000,000 per occurrence  
\$1,000,000 aggregate

Contractor will provide a Certificate of Insurance reflecting required coverage.

Waiver of subrogation endorsement to the policy in favor of the City shall also be provided

and attached to the certificate.

A (30) day notice of cancellation in favor of the City must be endorsed to policy and attached to the certificate.

#### **2.11.4 General**

All insurance shall be placed with Georgia admitted carriers with a current Best's rating of A (minus), X, or better. Any modifications to specifications must be approved by the City

Any modifications to specifications must be approved by the City.

**2.12** Proposer acknowledges that by submitting a proposal for this event, it is waiving any right to insist upon the inclusion of any exculpatory provisions in the parties' contract. The City will not enter into any contract that contains exculpatory provisions in favor of proposer.

#### **2.13 Acknowledgement of Addenda**

Vendor is responsible for determining and acknowledging any addenda issued in connection with this RFP. Addenda must be acknowledged in order for proposals to be considered.

**SECTION III**

**FEE PROPOSAL**

Fee proposals shall be submitted on this form in a separate sealed envelope clearly marked Fee Proposal for Utility Billing and Collection Assessment, RFP Event No. 4900, and include the name of the proposer. Fee proposals will only be opened after the initial evaluation, pursuant to Section 2.4, if the proposer is deemed to be qualified. Fee proposals will then be evaluated in relation to the qualification points awarded to determine the overall best proposal in terms of fees and qualifications. Electronic responses will not be accepted. Fee proposals and hourly rate sheets shall not be included in the body of the proposal. Fee proposals must include all travel and related expenses.

**ALL PROPOSERS MUST BE REGISTERED SUPPLIERS ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE TO BE AWARDED AN EVENT. PLEASE REGISTER AT WWW.SAVANNAHGA.GOV. ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED ON THIS FORM.**

Total Cost for Utility Billing and Collection Assessment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SUBMITTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSER: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code

FAX: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code

CONFIRM RECEIPT OF ANY ADDENDA ISSUED FOR THIS BID:

ADDENDUM \_\_\_\_\_ #  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

I certify this bid complies with the General and Specific Specifications and Conditions issued by the City except as clearly marked in the attached copy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorization Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**INDICATE MINORITY OWNERSHIP STATUS OF BIDDER (FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES ONLY):  
CHECK ONE:**

\_\_\_\_\_ NON-MINORITY OWNED  
\_\_\_\_\_ AFRICAN AMERICAN  
\_\_\_\_\_ HISPANIC  
\_\_\_\_\_ WOMAN (non-minority)

\_\_\_\_\_ ASIAN AMERICAN  
\_\_\_\_\_ AMERICAN INDIAN  
\_\_\_\_\_ OTHER MINORITY Describe \_\_\_\_\_



## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The bidder certifies that:

- (1) No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or otherwise discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, or gender in connection with any bid submitted to the City of Savannah or the performance of any contract resulting therefrom;
- (2) That it is and shall be the policy of this company to provide equal opportunity to all business persons seeking to contract or otherwise interested in contracting with this company, including those companies owned and controlled by racial minorities, cultural minorities, and women;
- (3) In connection herewith, we acknowledge and warrant that this company has been made aware of, understands and agrees to take affirmative action to provide such companies with the maximum practicable opportunities to do business with this company;
- (4) That this promise of non-discrimination as made and set forth herein shall be continuing in nature and shall remain in full force and effect without interruption;
- (5) That the promises of non-discrimination as made and set forth herein shall be and are hereby deemed to be made as part of and incorporated by reference into any contract or portion thereof which this company may hereafter obtain and;
- (6) That the failure of this company to satisfactorily discharge any of the promises of non-discrimination as made and set forth herein shall constitute a material breach of contract entitling the City of Savannah to declare the contract in default and to exercise any and all applicable rights and remedies including but not limited to cancellation of the contract, termination of the contract, suspension and debarment from future contracting opportunities, and withholding and/or forfeiture of compensation due and owing on a contract.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF M/WBE PARTICIPATION**

All M/WBEs listed **must be certified as a minority-owned or women-owned business** by the City of Savannah or a federally-recognized or state-level certifying agency (such as USDOT, State DOT, SBA 8(a) or GMSDC) that utilizes certification standards comparable to the City of Savannah **prior** to the due date of this bid. **Other business certifications that do not specify majority woman or minority ownership may not be substituted.** **Proof of M/WBE certification from the certifying agency is required to accompany the bid.** A firm that has submitted an application for M/WBE certification but has not been certified is not qualified as a certified M/WBE and will not be recognized as such during the City’s evaluation process. To expedite verification, please provide accurate phone numbers for all M/WBEs listed and ensure firms understand contact will be made following bid submittal.

Name of Proposer: \_\_\_\_\_ Event No. \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Unless certified through the City of Savannah M/WBE Program, proof of M/WBE certification must be attached for all firms listed.**

Name of M/WBE Participant	Name of Majority Owner	Telephone	Address (City, State)	Type of Work Sub-Contracted	Estimated Sub-contract Value	MBE or WBE	Certified ? (Y or N)	Certifying Agency? (City of Sav. or Other)
					%			
					%			
					%			
					%			
					%			
					%			

MBE Participation Value: \_\_\_\_\_ % WBE Participation Value: \_\_\_\_\_ % M/WBE Participation Value: \_\_\_\_\_ %

**The undersigned will enter into a formal agreement with the M/WBE Subcontractors/Proposers identified herein for work listed in this schedule, conditioned upon executing a contract with the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah.** The Prime’s subcontractor that subcontracts work must enter into a formal agreement with the tier subcontractor identified herein for work listed in this schedule. The Prime may count toward the goal any tier of M/WBE subcontractors and/or suppliers that will be utilized in the contract work. However, when an M/WBE subcontracts part of the work, the value of the subcontracted work may **only** be counted toward the goal **if the tier subcontractor is an M/WBE.** Any work an M/WBE firm subcontracts to a non-M/WBE firm **will not count toward the M/WBE goal.** It is the responsibility of the Prime contractor to advise all M/WBEs of this requirement and to ensure compliance by subcontractors.

**Joint Venture Disclosure**

If the prime bidder is a joint venture, please describe the nature of the joint venture, the level of work and the financial participation to be provided by the Minority/Female joint venture firm in the space provided below.

Joint Venture Firms	Level of Work	Financial Participation

Printed name (company officer or representative): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Minority/Women Owned Business Office is available to assist with identifying certified M/WBEs. Please contact the M/WBE Office at (912) 652-3582. The City of Savannah’s certified M/WBE registry is posted on its website @ [www.savannahga.gov](http://www.savannahga.gov).*

## Developing a Strong M/WBE Participation Plan

### *Key facts every bidder/proposer needs to know prior to developing their M/WBE Participation Plan:*

1. All bidders/proposers must submit a “Proposed Schedule of M/WBE Participation” which identifies the minority and/or woman-owned companies that have agreed to participate in the project if awarded. All companies listed on the form must be certified as either minority-owned and controlled or woman-owned and controlled. The City does not accept a company’s “self-identification” as minority or woman-owned.
2. **Proof** of M/WBE certification from the certifying agency is required to accompany the bid; and certification must have been completed by the City of Savannah, a federally-recognized or a state-level certifying agency (USDOT, State DOT, SBA 8(a) or GMSDC) utilizing certification standards comparable to the City of Savannah.
3. The certification must have been approved prior to the due date of this bid. A firm that has submitted an application for certification but has not been certified will not be counted toward the M/WBE goal.
4. The M/WBE Office **will be contacting all M/WBE firms** included in the bidder’s M/WBE Plan to confirm each: a) was contacted by the bidder/proposer; b) performs the type of work listed; and c) agreed to participate.
5. To expedite the verification process, bidders/proposers need to: provide accurate phone numbers for all M/WBEs listed; ensure M/WBEs know to expect to be contacted by phone and email; request M/WBEs be accessible during the critical period before bid-opening; and advise M/WBEs that City staff **must** receive the M/WBE’s confirmation that the firm agreed to participate in the bid/proposal in order for the prime contractor to receive credit toward their proposed M/WBE participation goals.
6. If a proposed M/WBE cannot be confirmed as certified, performing the type of work described or agreeing to participate, the bidder/proposer will be notified and given a pre-determined period to submit a correction. If an M/WBE still cannot be confirmed or replaced, the proposed percentage of participation associated with the unverified M/WBE firm will **not be counted** and **will be deducted** from the overall proposed M/WBE goal.
7. Any tier of M/WBE subcontractors or suppliers that will be utilized in the contract work may count toward the MBE and WBE goal **as long as the tier subcontractors/suppliers are certified M/WBEs**. Work that an M/WBE subcontracts to a non-M/WBE firm does not count toward the M/WBE goal.
8. M/WBEs must perform a “**commercially useful function**” which is the provision of **real and actual work or products**, or performing a distinct element of work for which the business has the skills, qualifications and expertise, and the responsibility for the actual management and supervision of the work contracted.
9. Per the *Proposed Schedule of M/WBE Participation* “the undersigned (bidder/proposer) will enter into a formal agreement with the M/WBE Subcontractors/Proposers identified herein for work listed in this schedule, conditioned upon executing a contract with the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah.” **This signed commitment is taken seriously by the City**, so do not list M/WBEs you do not plan to utilize. Any proposed changes must be pre-approved by the M/WBE Office, be based on legitimate business-related reasons, and still meet the M/WBE participation goals per the City’s contract.
10. A bidder who is a certified M/WBE may count toward the goal the portion of work or services on a City contract that is actually performed by the M/WBE, including: the cost of supplies/materials purchased or equipment leased for contract work, fees for bona fide services such as professional or technical services, or for providing bonds or insurance specifically required for the performance of a City contract.
11. If awarded the contract, the MWBE Office **will be reviewing your company’s subcontracts, invoices and payment records** to substantiate the completion of work and payment of M/WBEs. If the prime contractor is an M/WBE that is being included in its M/WBE goal, the prime contractor must maintain records **that will be inspected** to prove the portion of work performed, cost of work, and payments to the prime company.
12. Most bids for goods and materials do not have specific MWBE goals established for the contract. If no goals are include in the scope of work or General Specifications, you are not required to submit MWBE participation but encouraged to do so when the opportunity is available. The City maintains this information for statistical purposes only and it is not reflected in the award decision.