Instructions for Completion of Request for Proposal for Engineering Services: Guidelines

Purpose of guidelines

This guide is designed to put your rural community, general improvement district, or local government in control of identifying the most cost-effective solutions to your infrastructure needs. While you will work with several partners, including financing and technical assistance agencies, one of the most critical decisions you will make is selecting the engineer or engineering firm that will prepare your Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and Environmental Report (ER). These reports evaluate feasible alternatives for addressing your infrastructure challenges by comparing construction costs, operational and maintenance considerations, and each option's ability to meet both current and future demands.

Your eventual project decisions will be based on the alternatives presented in a well-developed PER and ER. The guidelines provided here help consulting engineers understand your community's needs so they can determine whether their experience and qualifications align with the work required. By asking engineers to describe their capabilities in specific ways, you will be better able to assess their suitability and willingness to collaborate with your community given its size, financial position, and goals.

We recommend issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) solely for the PER and ER, rather than combining those services with design and construction. This approach allows you and your selection committee to thoroughly review the reports, choose the best alternative, and coordinate with funding partners on available loan and grant options. Although the engineer who completes the PER and ER may also be the right choice for subsequent design and construction, issuing a separate solicitation later ensures you retain the flexibility to select the most qualified firm for each project phase.

Instructions

1. All items printed in *italics* require completion by you, the entity which is making the request for proposals. Several of them are blanks which are to be filled in with the name of your entity, for example 'Lander County', or 'Silver Springs General Improvement District', and the type of project, for example 'wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal'.
2. Background information — It is important that you give an adequate amount of background information to allow the engineer to examine alternatives likely to meet your needs. A tour for interested firms may be useful.
3. Scope of work — You will need an adequate number of copies of the PER/ER for all members of your selection committee, as well as for your technical assistance and financing agency representatives.
4. Submittal of proposals and advertising the RFP — The complexity of the project dictates the amount of time which should be allowed for response to the RFP, but in no case should the response time be less than two weeks, with a more reasonable amount of time being at least 30 days.

   An effective method for advertising your RFP is to distribute it through channels that engineering firms routinely monitor. In addition to sending the RFP directly to firms with whom you have successfully worked in the past, as well as those recommended by colleagues in other rural communities, it should also be posted on widely used digital platforms. These may include your organization's website, statewide or regional procurement portals, and professional association websites commonly accessed by engineering professionals. While you may still choose to place a legal notice in a newspaper with broad circulation in nearby metropolitan areas, relying on digital posting ensures broader reach, greater accessibility, and alignment with current industry practices.

5. Evaluation criteria — you may have additional important factors that should be considered by engineers responding to this RFP, if so, you should describe them in (h) in terms of the engineer demonstrating experience or evidence of competence in those areas.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Guidelines

Preparation of Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and Environmental Report (ER)

For projects seeking funding from Nevada Division of Environmental Protection State Revolving Fund

Purpose

The community of *(Community name)*, Nevada, intends to seek financial assistance from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection to address its (water, sewer, solid waste, or storm waste water) infrastructure needs. To support this effort, the community must obtain a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and an Environmental Report (ER) prepared by a qualified Nevada-licensed civil engineer. The community seeks to select the most qualified engineering firm through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The firm selected will be responsible for preparing a PER/ER that provides the technical information necessary for the community to make informed decisions that protect public health and support orderly growth and economic prosperity.

Background information

To be completed by the community - briefly provide the following information:

- *Location of community*
- *Population*
- *Number of families or households in community*
- *Describe the existing water, sewer, solid waste, storm waste water system (number of service connections, type of treatment systems, etc.) and current problems*
- *Recent growth trends*
- *Community's economic base*
- *Other community information as applicable*

Scope of work

The scope of work includes preparation of a PER and ER to address the community's (water, sewer, solid waste or stormwater) needs. The PER should thoroughly examine all reasonable alternatives and evaluate options that will improve cost-effectiveness in both construction and long-term operations, such as sharing services with neighboring utilities. The scope of work also includes preparation of an ER that assesses environmental factors associated with each alternative reviewed in the PER. Detailed requirements for the PER

are outlined in USDA RUS Bulletin 1780-2 at Preliminary Engineering Reports for the Water and Waste Disposal Program | USDA. Procedures for assessing environmental impacts are described in RUS Instruction 1794.

The contractor or engineer will provide the community with at least *(fill in)* copies of the final PER and ER. The selected engineering firm must complete the PER/ER within 75 to 90 days, with the exact schedule negotiated between the community and the firm based on the project's complexity.

Project area

The primary project area is the *(community site or service territory of utility district)*.

Note: If the applicant wishes for a larger region to be addressed that must be stated here. If a larger area is identified, include the following sentence: "*Sufficient information and analysis should be given to determine whether proposed service to this larger area is feasible, cost effective and practical*."

Project contact

Give name, address, phone number, fax number and email address of the person responsible for receiving proposals.

Submittal of proposals

Proposals must be submitted to the *(insert appropriate official, such as GID Chairman)* by 5:00 p.m. *(date)*, at *(mailing and physical addresses)*. The proposal shall be placed in a sealed envelope marked clearly, "Response to RFP for (*water/sewer/solid waste/storm waste water*) project".

Evaluation criteria

All proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

a) Technical qualifications of the engineering firm
b) Technical experience with similar projects — demonstrate by providing references with contact information and dates of all similar projects completed in small rural communities in the last five years.
c) Ability to complete the PER in timely manner — demonstrate by providing a listing of key staff including engineering, community relations, financial expertise, and construction management who will complete this project, along with brief resumes or evidence of their experience in working with similar projects.

d) Experience with listed and multiple funding sources — demonstrate by providing list of projects completed within the last five years that utilize one or more of these funding sources.
e) Expertise in designing facilities that reflect modest design, simple operational requirements, and economical cost of operation.
f) Evidence of engineering firm's ability to provide a complete and thorough PER that complies with RUS Bulletin 1780-2.
g) Evidence of firm's ability to design a project appropriate for the community's size, financial strength, and ability to repay the proposed indebtedness and operational costs.
h) (*Additional criteria of community - fill in*)

Selection process

Out of all proposals received by the community, it is expected that the three best will be selected for final consideration. *(Determine if selection will be made on submitted information or interview will be needed)*

(The engineering firms under consideration will be notified as to time, date, and location of these interviews for the community's selection committee to ask specific questions to each candidate and evaluate their responses.)

Note: Prospective engineering firms are advised that no obligation or commitments are incurred by the community in announcing this Request for Proposal. It is the intention that *(community)* after appropriate evaluations and interviews, will select the best qualified engineering firm and enter into an agreement for such services to complete a PER/ER. The Agreement for Engineering Services to prepare the PER/ER will utilize the prescribed format of the funding agency. At the option of the community, the selection process may include the future utility system design, inspection, and construction management in addition to the completion of the PER/ER.