

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Accounting Services

The City of Hiawassee (City) is requesting proposals from Certified Professional Accountant individuals or firms for accounting services. Services provided through this contract will assist City to perform full chargebookkeeping including preparing for and participating in an annual yearly audit from July 1– June 30. If requested, services also may include training financial management staff, adapting and strengthening internal controls, and updates to the existing financial system.

The CITY has a municipal budget of \$15 million, 6 QuickBooks funds, 2 banks (each with 7 or 8 accounts), 3 current and 1 approved GEFA loan (project is going out to bid in June) and a staff of 21 - when fully staffed - (5 police officers, 4 Water Treatment, 3 Water Distribution, 1 Waste Water, 1 Meter/Maintenance, 7 Administration) Plus 5 Council members.

I. SCHEDULE

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|----------------------------|--|
| May 17, 2022 | Request for Proposals issued |
| June 1, 2022 by 2 pm | Deadline for notice of interest |
| June 3, 2022 by 1 pm | Questions due |
| June 6, 2022 by 5 pm | Response to questions posted to www.hiawasseega.gov |
| June 13, 2022 by noon | Proposals Due |
| Week of June 13 – 17, 2022 | Review proposal |
| June 23 and 24, 2022 | Interviews |
| July 6, 2022 | Anticipated Contractor Notification |
| July 7, 2022 | Contractor begins transition |
| June 30, 2023 | Contract Review |
| June 30, 2024 | Contract Review |
| June 30, 2025 | Contract Review |

Proposals must be clearly marked “Accounting Services Proposal” and delivered via email to Bonnie Kendrick, City Clerk, clerk@hiawasseega.gov

Proposals received after the submittal deadline will not be considered.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

CITY requesting multiple required services as well as optional services that may be requested by CITY. The service period begins June 20, 2022, and is expected to extend through June 30, 2025 and include audit preparation and participation. Two (2) additional one-year service extensions may be approved based on performance. Services during June 2022 primarily will be cross training on CITY’s system with

its current accounting services provider.

REQUIRED SERVICES

1) Perform Accounting Services. Typical services include, but are not limited to:

- ~~Payroll including tax and benefit payments and reporting. Preparation of all yearend reports including but not limited to 1099s, 1096 and W2s. Tracking historical vacation and paid time off. CITY issues payroll bi-weekly and generally uses direct deposit. CITY currently has 21 employees and 5 Council Representatives.~~
- Reconciling cash accounts, bonds, loans, intergovernmental accounts, and others when necessary.
- Review and reclassify transactions as necessary (G/L accounts).
- Based upon consolidated balances and individual fund balances, provide monthly financial statements and a monthly financial report (sample will be provided) for the Mayor and Elected Officials. Financial reports must be prepared, reviewed, and updated, if necessary, by the fourth Tuesday of each month (April financials ready by the fourth Tuesday in May).
- ~~Participate in monthly Council meetings as requested to report on finances; meetings are at 6 pm on the Monday one week prior to the Council Workshop meeting. The Council meets on the first Tuesday of each month.~~
- Update the financial system as needed to improve performance and to accommodate changing requirements.
- Entry and update of budgets in QuickBooks for all funds.
- Preparation and negotiation of the indirect cost proposal, working closely with the Mayor and City Clerk.
- Work with CITY's Mayor and City Clerk to:
 - identify where internal controls should be strengthened,
 - document modifications to internal controls and administrative procedures affected by accounting services, and
 - identify policies and procedures that CITY should develop or update.
- Assist in preparing other reports as requested by the mayor.
- Assist with cross-fund expenses (i.e., Workers Compensation).
- Other duties as necessary.

2) Prepare for and Participate in CITY's Annual Audit. Typical services include, but are not limited to:

- Assemble and prepare documents required by the auditor.
- Verify and, if necessary, reconcile revenues and expenses.
- Prepare and submit schedule of federal expenditures within 45 days of fiscal year end.
- Reconcile year end expenses and bank statements.
- Reconcile payroll taxes with reporting.
- Update equipment inventory (CITY IT staff will conduct the inventory).
- Update depreciation schedule.
- Prepare list of year-end accounts payable and accrued expenses.

- Reconcile deferred grant revenue and refundable advances from funders.
- Reconcile of net assets classifications.
- Participate in audit field work and respond to questions and requests from the auditor.
- Post audit journal entries
- Complete other duties as necessary.

3) Other Services (as requested by CITY)

- Advise CITY on adapting and strengthening internal controls.
- Provide input into documentation of administrative procedures as they relate to financial system management.
- As appropriate, train CITY financial staff to operate the financial system successfully.
- Insure the updated financial system is operating as intended if run by CITY staff for an additional 1-year period beyond the advertised 3-year term of this contract.
- File various reports as required by different governmental agencies
- Assist with responses to open records requests for financial data as needed.

The successful contractor will work with CITY’s Mayor and City Clerk. The City Clerk will complete financial system hard copy filing, provide receipts for credit card transactions, scan payables to contractor as needed, mail payments if hard copy checks are issued, and complete other clerical work associated with finance. The full scope of the City Clerk’s assistance will be negotiated between CITY and the successful contractor.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Milestones

Working with CITY’s City Clerk,

- ~~Prepare invoices for grants and agreements monthly or as otherwise required by specific grants, agreements, and contracts. Prospective contractors should note that the current contractor estimates 60% of month-end close and invoicing activities are transferring QuickBooks invoice information to funder required invoice documents.~~
- prepare monthly financial statements for the Council at least one week prior to the Council’s monthly Work Session.
- Begin transition from CITY’s current service provider beginning **July 7, 2022**.
- perform all accounting services beginning **June 1, 2022**.
- prepare for the audit by October 1st of each year. Participate in the audit; field work generally is completed in September with the audit delivered in October. CITY’s audit must be completed and submitted to agencies by December 31st annually.

Requirements

The majority of work may be performed remotely. Some work at the CITY office initially would facilitate interaction with staff. CITY anticipates this work will require a minimum average of 24 hours of services weekly with the majority of the work occurring in the second and third weeks of the

month. CITY aims to have timesheets approved by the fifth of each month to facilitate month end close.

CITY requires 1-hour, weekly check-ins with the accounting contractor at minimum for the first six months of the contract. A regular time will be arranged between CITY and the contractor as part of contract signing.

These check ins provide the contractor and CITY with focused opportunities to ask questions and discuss challenges and/or emerging issues. The check ins supplement regular email and/or telephone conversations. Check ins will transition to bi-weekly after the contractor is operating the financial system successfully.

CITY's financial information system must meet requirements in 2 CFR Part 200, requirements for State of Georgia grantees and contractors, other applicable laws and requirements, and best management practices.

III. PROPOSALS

CONTENTS & SUBMISSION

Scope of Services

Proposals should describe:

- how the contractor intends to carry out the services described, including any changes to the scope of work described in Section III of this RFP recommended by the contractor.
- how the contractor intends to transition services from CITY's current provider, including any assistance required from the current accounting contractor.
- the firm's expectations of and process for communicating with CITY.
- any software/programs proposed for use, such as for payroll processing, online bill pay, alternative to QuickBooks, whether the firm or CITY will provide the software/programs, and how CITY employees will be trained on the software/programs. At minimum, CITY employees must have access to QuickBooks or equivalent for purposes of real-time project/program budget tracking.
- the scope of assistance required from the Mayor and City Clerk.
- whether the firm will be completing FY22 audit preparation activities or whether the firm wishes CITY's current accounting contractor to close the FY22 books and prepare for audit.
- anticipated work to be completed at the CITY office versus remote work, including the type of work to be performed remotely, describe anticipated work times (days of the week and hours work will be performed), and other information that may affect CITY's interaction with the contractor.

Technical Qualifications

- 1) A description of the firm, including addresses of all offices proposed for involvement in this project, structure of the firm, size of the firm, number of years the firm has been in business, and the firm's experience with municipal government and state and federal grants.
- 2) A statement of the firm's financial stability and ability to complete all services.
- 3) A list of people who will work on the contract, including names, education, professional licenses, registrations or certifications, relevant experience (resumes are acceptable), and role in the contract. CITY must affirm use of any staff not identified in the proposal to ensure staff qualifications are similar to staff proposed through the contractor's proposal.
- 4) Examples of relevant past experience. Contractors demonstrating relevant experience with municipal government, job cost accounting, payroll services, state and federal grant requirements especially 2 CFR Part 200, and indirect cost proposal preparation will be highly competitive.
- 5) A minimum of three references. The references should include service description, contact person, phone number, and address of reference at minimum. References should demonstrate the experience of the staff proposed to work under the CITY contract. CITY reserves the right to check references beyond those provided by the contractor. The quality and relevance of references as it relates to services required under this RFP will be considered more competitive than an excess of references.
- 6) Proof of insurance. The selected contractor will be required to add CITY and its officers and employees as an additional insured for services performed.

Cost Proposal

This is a three-year contract with yearly review. Therefore, rates in the proposal should reflect annual costs for a 3-year contract period, to include 4 yearly site visits. Proposals must provide hourly rates with estimated hours by staff and projected expenses above the annual proposal amount for site visits beyond the expected 4 visits yearly or a flat rate for site visits plus trip and mileage.

Submission Requirements

Proposals must be submitted electronically to clerk@hiawasseega.gov. Materials should be addressed to:

Bonnie Kendrick, City Clerk
City of Hiawassee
50 River Street
Hiawassee, GA 30546

The CITY assumes no responsibility and no liability for costs incurred relevant to the preparation and submission of the proposal or any other costs prior to issuance of a contract.

Proposals received after due date and time will not be considered.

Upon submission, all proposals become the property of the CITY. The expense of preparing, submitting, and presenting a proposal is the sole responsibility of the contractor. The CITY retains the right to

reject any and all proposals received, to interview or not interview any or all firms responding to this RFP prior to selection, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if it determines such action to be in the best interest of the CITY or that of eligible parties. Reasons for cancellation or rejection will be provided to all registered vendors in writing. This solicitation in no way obligates the CITY to award a contract.

EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Completeness and responsiveness of submission.
2. Scope of Work Format and Contents (10%):
 - a. Is the proposal written in concise language understandable to a non-technical audience?
 - b. Is the proposal well organized and easily navigable?
3. Qualifications (60%): To what degree:
 - a. do the personnel to be assigned to this project have the necessary qualifications to conduct this work?
 - b. do the personnel to be assigned to this project have experience with state and federal grants, job cost accounting, indirect rate cost proposal development, and financial management?
 - c. does the contractor have a proven record of successful completion of similar work within time and budget constraints?
 - d. are communication skills responsive to CITY's needs?
 - e. do the assigned staff demonstrate success working together with each other as a team if multiple staff will be used to serve this contract?
4. Cost Proposal (10%):
 - a. Is the cost proposal thorough and clearly linked to the proposed scope of services?
 - b. Are rates and costs reflective of an efficient level of effort necessary to complete the task, compensation reflective of level of expertise, materials appropriate to the task and expectations of quality, and overall reasonable costs as accepted in the industry?
5. References (20%):
 - a. Which types of services has the contractor provided to the reference?
 - b. How satisfied was the reference with the contractor's interactions with it?
 - c. How satisfied was the reference with the contractor's technical expertise, ability to meet deadlines and budgets, reporting, communication, and overall value and quality of work?
 - d. How did the contractor demonstrate value-added expertise?
 - e. Was the reference satisfied with how the contractor dealt with problems that arose? Give an example.
 - f. What, if any, challenges did the reference experience with the contractor?
 - g. How does this contractor compare with others the reference has worked with?
 - h. Would the reference recommend the contractor for providing the described Scope of Services and desired qualifications?

Proposals will be evaluated by a selection committee consisting of the CITY City Clerk, CITY Council Representative Nancy Noblet and CITY Council Representative Amy Barrett. CITY's current accounting services contractor may review proposals and provide insights based on their experience with CITY as a customer and CITY's financial management system.

If any changes are made to this RFP, an ~~addendum~~ revised RFP will be issued to contractors expressing interest and providing CITY with contact information. Alternative delivery methods may be arranged by request. A contractor may correct, modify, or withdraw a response to this RFP via written notice received by CITY prior to the submission deadline. Modifications must be submitted electronically and clearly labeled "Modification No. ___". Each modification must be numbered in sequence and must reference the original RFP.

After the opening of responses to this RFP, a contractor may not change any provision of the response in a manner prejudicial to the interests of CITY or fair competition. If a mistake and the intended correct wording are clearly evident on the face of the response document, the mistake will be corrected to reflect the intended correct meaning and the contractor will be notified in writing. Contractors may not withdraw responses to this RFP so corrected. A contractor may withdraw an opened response to this RFP if a mistake is clearly evident on the face of the response document, but the intended correct wording is not similarly evident.

CITY reserves the right to seek clarification of any statement submitted, conduct interviews with contractors, and to select a contractor that is best able to address the services requested and promote the public interest.

CITY reserves the right to examine all aspects of responses submitted, tangible and intangible. CITY reserves the right to withdraw this Request for Proposals, and/or to advertise for new submissions at any time if it is in the best interest of the CITY to do so. A contract will be awarded as deemed to be in the best interest of the CITY.

Pursuant to State of Georgia Laws, anyone in any matter relative to the procurement of services who intentionally makes a material statement that is false, omits or conceals a material fact in a written statement, submits or invites reliance on a material writing that is false, submits or invites reliance on a sample or other object that is misleading, or uses any trick, scheme or device that is misleading in a material respect will be subject to sanction pursuant to the laws of the State of Georgia.

IV. STANDARDS AND DELIVERABLES

1. Except for appendices, all reports are to:
 - a. be presented for ease of readability by the average citizen;
 - b. include charts, graphs and other graphics as appropriate;
 - c. include executive summaries or abstracts suitable for broad distribution;
 - d. include a glossary of technical terms, and a list of references or citations for all sources of

data and information.

3. All documents must be provided in digital form (Microsoft Office format for report text and PDF format for full report). Images (photos, maps, drawings, graphics, etc.) shall be provided as separate files for use by CITY.
4. All written reports must be provided double-sided.
5. Copies of all reports and documents, including drafts, should be provided to CITY no less than one week prior to any scheduled review, discussion or submission.
6. All data, databases, reports, programs and materials, in digital and hard copy formats, created as part of this effort shall become the property of the CITY.

V. CONTRACTING PROVISIONS

Contract Completion

Performance under the scope of work must be completed by the dates indicated in Section I.

Payment

The amount and timing of payments will be determined during contract negotiations. Requests for payments shall be made directly to the CITY, and payments made shall be 100 percent of the amount requested and approved. CITY anticipates making payments within 30 days of invoicing.

Ownership of Material

All rights, titles to and ownership of the data, material, and documentation resulting from this contract project and/or prepared for the CITY pursuant to a contract between CITY and the selected contractor shall remain with the CITY.

Compliance with State and Federal Laws

All contractors must comply with any and all applicable laws, statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations, and/or requirements of federal, state, and local governments and agencies thereof, which relate to or in any manner affect the performance of this agreement. CITY receives funding from numerous state and federal agencies. Those requirements imposed upon the CITY as a recipient or subrecipient of federal funds are thereby passed along to the contractor and any subcontractors, and those rights reserved by the state or federal government are likewise reserved by the Central Georgia Regional Planning Commission.

All contractors and any subcontractors must carry adequate insurance coverage and must affirm being an equal opportunity employer. Contractor shall comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (See Primer for Small Business at <https://www.ada.gov/ta-pubs-pg2.htm>). Contractors are already obligated to meet federal ADA requirements; CITY is highlighting these requirements as part of its equity and inclusion efforts.

The City of Hiawassee is an Equal Opportunity Employer.