City of Niagara Falls, New York

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RFP #2021-21

Information Technology Improvement Consultant Services
for the City of Niagara Falls, New York

Addendum I (Seven Pages)

Recently you received a copy of the above-referenced RFP. Section 1 allowed for the submission of written questions by August 16, 2021. The City received a total of forty three (43) questions. This addendum is a complete list of those questions, listed in the order they were received, and followed by the City's response to each. Some questions have had the verbiage adjusted so as to fit the question and answer format, but the substantive portions of the questions are unchanged. In cases where the same/similar question is asked multiple times, vendors are referred to earlier questions/answers to avoid duplication.

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1.   Is the $1,000 bid bond returned to any/all of the submitting vendors?

Yes. All vendors should expect to receive their bid bond back following the successful award and engagement of a vendor(s). The only exception would be if the selected vendor(s) failed to honor the terms of its proposal, in which case the bid bond would be forfeited to the City.

2.   Is there a budget for this project?

No, there is no minimum or maximum budget for this project at this time. The budget will be dependent on the selected vendor, the scope of work, the availability of funds and City Council approval.

3.   Does the City currently outsource its IT and/or does it have its own IT staff?

The City does not currently outsource its IT and has an in-house MIS Department that handles most IT matters.

4.   Does the City have a preferred IT vendor or vendors it works with?

No. The City does work with a number of qualified IT consultants and vendors on an as needed basis, but there is no preferred vendor or vendors.

5. **Can you provide a diagram / list of the current environment (i.e. size, complexity, what systems and/or apps are used)?**

The City has the following seven (7) sites with the listed quantity of employees:

City Hall, 745 Main St. Approx. 70 employees
Municipal Services Building, 1925 Main St. Approx. 150 employees
Community Development Department, 1022 Main St. Approx. 15 employees
Fire Department, 3315 Walnut Ave. Approx. 140 employees
Department of Public Works, 1785 New Rd., Approx. 60 employees
Niagara Falls Public Library (*telephone only*) 1425 Main St., 0 employees
Train Station, 825 Depot Avenue, 0 employees

The City uses the following systems:

IBM iSeries Power 9, AS/400 and homegrown apps
Lotus Notes Domino v.9
Microsoft Active Directory
MimeCast

The City utilizes the following desktop apps:

SentinalOne 4.7|Vigilant
Microsoft Office 2013
Adobe Acrobat 10/X

6. **Would you be willing to share your annual IT budget?**

For 2021, the MIS Department's budget is approximately $371,000. It is anticipated that this amount will increase for 2022 as the City is looking to make significant IT upgrades, however the 2022 budget will not be formally proposed by the Administration until sometime in the Fall and not adopted by the City Council until November or December. As such, the amount of the IT budget for 2022 is unknown at this time.

7. **Would the successful vendor be permitted to work and attend meetings remotely?**

The City anticipates that much of the scope of services and meetings would be accomplished remotely, but that some portion of the work may require an on-site presence. The City's preference is to award to a vendor that would be available for on-site work/meetings if it was in City's best interest to do so.

8. **Can you provide how many IT staff you have within the following domains: Infrastructure (Network, Systems, Storage), Applications, End user Computing (Desktop/Mobile), Data Management, Security, Help/Service Desk?**

Following the recent retirement of the MIS Director, the City has two (2) IT staff members currently jointly handling all of the above-listed domains. The titles of the two (2) staff members are Network Technician and Production Control Manager.

9.   **Do you have dedicated application development staff and SQL developers? If so, how many?**

      While the City previously had two (2) individuals performing these tasks, it does not currently have anyone doing so.

10.   **Do you have a continual operations improvement methodology in place within the technology organization currently (i.e., ITIL, Six Sigma)?**

      No.

11.   **Do you have an existing IT Service Management (ITSM) platform or Help Desk software in place and established currently (i.e., ServiceNow)?**

      No.

12.   **Do you do Change, Release, Asset, Config, or Knowledge Management?**

      The City only performs system user access management.

13.   **Do you have an existing Configuration Management Database (CMDB) that comprises an inventory of all your technology assets by configuration item?**

      No.

14.   **Do you have updated application dependency and mapping flow diagrams or documentation? IF so, how are you generating them and maintaining updates to them currently?**

      No.

15.   **Do you have an updated Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan? On a scale of 1-10, 10 being most confident, how comfortable are you in practical execution of those plans?**

      The City has a disaster recovery plan but not a dedicated business continuity plan. On a scale of 1-10, the comfort level regarding the practical execution of the disaster recovery plan is a 7.

16.   **Do you have a Ransomware Preparedness and Ransomware Incident Response Plan?**

      The City current monitors for ransomware attacks with a service called Vigilant as part of Sentinel One. It is also working with its new insurance provider to update both the preparedness and incident response plan, but would welcome input from the successful consultant with respect to both.

17.   **Is there a current IT security framework(s) you have aligned to (i.e., NIST, CMMC, FISMA, ISO)? If so, which framework(s) and how often is that posture maturity to the framework(s) being assessed?**

      No. N/A.

18. **What platforms are you using for Identity Access and also Privileged Access Management policy and controls?**

    S2 Netbox door access at City Hall and Municipal Services Building;

    Manned Security posts at City Hall, Municipal Services Building, Department of Public Works and Train Station

    Network: MS-AD at all WAN locations where desktops are present.

19. **What are the top 3 operational support challenges you feel take up too much of your critical IT staff's time currently?**

    Desktop computer hardware and software service support; backup/storage and retrieval of data; and legacy technology repairs, upgrades and replacement

20. **Do you utilize any public cloud services currently? (ie. AWS, Azure, Google GCP) If so, which and do you utilize IaaS, PaaS and SaaS services or mix of all?**

    No. N/A.

21. **What is your standard platform for business user productivity and collaboration (ie. 0365, G Suite, etc.)?**

    The City does not have a standard platform.

22. **Considering the circumstances regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, what is the City's expectation for onsite vs remote work?**

    Please see the Response to Question #7.

23. **Can the City provide an IT organizational chart? If a chart cannot be provided, can the City provide staffing levels and job titles within the IT department?**

    Please see the Response to Question #8.

24. **Does the assessment include an evaluation of the City's applications from an IT operations and support perspective (as opposed to functional)?**

    Yes.

25. **Can the City provide quantities for the IT infrastructure components including servers, network and end user devices to be included in the assessment scope?**

    The City has approximately fifteen (15) standalone servers across five (5) locations: City Hall, Municipal Services Building., Community Development Department, Fire Headquarters and Department of Public Works.

    There are six (6) nodes on WAN, approximately 300 total desktop computers (Dell Optiplex, Lenovo ThinkCentres, 2 Lenovo Minis); Approximately 5 Dell Latitude Laptops and 14 Samsung Active Pro Tablets.

26.   **What is the estimated quantity of departments/stakeholders to be interviewed during the assessment?**

The City is comprised of fifteen (15) departments, and each department will need to be interviewed.

27.   **Does the City have an IT strategic plan? If yes can this be provided?**

The City has an IT strategic plan. The City does not intend to provide copies of same to all vendors, rather the City will provide it to the successful vendor at the onset of the project to allow the successful vendor to assist City in the most efficient way possible.

28.   **Our professional services liability insurance provides coverage for the services rendered, is this enough for the City's purposes or is a performance bond required for this RFP?**

The RFP requires a performance bond only from the successful vendor. Vendors not wishing to submit a performance bond if awarded may take exception to that requirement and offer some other form of security, but in doing so, the vendor assumes the risk that the City will reject its submission for failure to meet the requirements of the RFP.

29.   **Is there an expected timeframe for the completion of the assessment and delivery of the final report?**

The City expects that the successful vendor will commence the assessment as soon as practicable after being awarded the contract, and will work diligently to complete and deliver the final report. Once an award is made, the City and vendor will jointly determine the schedule for the assessment and delivery of the final report.

30.   **Pertaining to "Scope of Work" item #4, is it the City's expectation the selected vendor will provide a cost for project management services in their RFP submission? If yes, is a time & materials with a not-to-exceed cost acceptable?**

The City expects that vendors will provide a cost for project management services. As set forth in the RFP, the City is open to a variety of cost structures, including a time & materials figure with a not-to-exceed cost structure. The City will utilize the submitted cost proposal as part of its overall scoring of the proposals received, and vendors should note that total cost is a significant portion of the scoring herein.

31.   **Pertaining to "Scope of Work item #4, given the unknown nature of the projects to be undertaken by the City following the assessment, is it acceptable for the selected vendor to provide project management services costs once the portfolio of projects is determined by the City following the assessment?**

Unfortunately the City is unable to accept proposals structured in the manner suggested. Vendors wishing to be considered for project management services should include a cost proposal that takes into account the unknown scope of projects the City will undertake. Availability of funds and City Council approval will dictate which projects the City can/will undertake, and it is impossible to determine those amounts at this time.

32. **Can you provide a diagram of your network and infrastructure?**

See the Response to Question #5.

33. **Please indicate the number of data centers in use by the City of Niagara Falls**

The City has two (2) data centers.

34. **Please indicate the number of External Cloud Providers such as AWS, Google Drive, MS Azure, other.**

None.

35. **Please indicate the number of End Users accessing the City of Niagara Falls systems**

The City has approximately 550 full time employees, but not all employees access the systems. At any given time, the number of end users ranges from 350 to 450 depending on need.

36. **Please indicate the number of City Employees and Officials to meet with to determine current and future needs.**

Please see the Response to Question #25.

37. **Please indicate the number of departments accessing the City of Niagara Falls systems**

Please see the Response to Question #25.

38. **Are applications in scope or out of scope. If in-scope, how many major applications are in scope?**

Applications are included in the scope, but it is anticipated that they will be minor (as opposed to major) applications limited to single department functionality.

39. **What will the work location model be: onsite vs. remote?**

Please See the Response to Question #7.

40. **Would the vendor be allowed to work and attend meetings remotely?**

Please See the Response to Question #7.

41. **Would the vendor be expected to conduct a physical site walkthrough?**

It is the City's expectation that a physical site walkthrough will need to be conducted, however, City is open to plans/proposals that offer an alternative method of conducting the assessment.

42. **For a full comprehensive assessment report, please confirm that these areas should be added to the scope of a response:**

    A.   **Assessment of status of physical security, cyber security, cyber security training, threat/incident management**

        The City does not anticipate these items being included in the assessment.

    B.   **Assessment of network infrastructure: VPN, nodes, locations (remote vs onsite)**

        This portion of the assessment is mandatory as one of the City's primary goals of this project is to enable secure remote access.

    C.   **Assessment of Help Desk Operations (L1/L2/L3)**

        The City is not requiring an assessment of help desk operations as part of the response. However, if the successful vendor and City agree, after the assessment is completed, that this item needs to be addressed, it will be discussed at that time as a possible additional service to be added to the scope of services.

43. **Can we please provide exceptions to the insurance requirements, e.g. coverage amounts?**

The RFP requires insurance that meets the City's standard insurance requirements only from the successful vendor. Vendors not wishing to provide insurance that meets said requirements may take exception to that requirement and offer some form of insurance, but in doing so, the vendor assumes the risk that the City will reject its submission for failure to meet the requirements of the RFP.

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All other terms, conditions and specifications remain the same. Please sign where indicated below and attach this addendum to your submission.

_____   _____

(Authorized Signature)   (Company)