

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Rooftop Solar Panel Installation and Operations

City of Highland Park, IL

Water Treatment Facility, Half Day Road Reservoir Facility, and Highland Park Country Club
(Minimum Scope)

**AMENDED MARCH 10, 2021 – AMENDED RFQ DUE DATE TO
MONDAY, MARCH 22**

RFQ Published	Monday, February 8, 2021
Questions Due Date	Monday, March 1, 2021
RFQ Due Date	Monday, March 12, 2021 <u>Monday, March 22, 2021</u>
Anticipated Interviews	Week of April 5, 2021
Anticipated RFP Issuance Date	Friday, April 30, 2021

Contact Person: Rob Sabo, Assistant City Manager

Email: rsabo@cityhpil.com

Telephone: 847.926.1004

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. General Information**
 - 2.1 Project Description
 - 2.2 Project Scope
 - 2.3 Role of the City
 - 2.4 Responsibilities of the Contractor
- 3. Request for Qualifications**
 - 3.1 Submissions
 - 3.2 Questions
 - 3.3 Contents of Submittals of Qualifications
 - 3.4 Selection Committee
- 4. Terms of Response**
 - 4.1 Evaluation Criteria
 - 4.2 Response Form Template

1. Introduction

The City of Highland Park is issuing this Request for Qualifications (“RFQ”) in search of firms who have the necessary qualifications as set forth in this RFQ to be pre-qualified to bid on selected **solar photovoltaic (PV)** projects.

Following the completion of the RFQ, the City will review submitted qualifications and will seek cost proposals from a short list of pre-qualified firms. e. Following evaluating the costs proposals, a selected firm will be invited to enter into a Professional Services Agreement (“PSA”). Please see attached sample of the PSA, no deviation on the contract terms will be allowed. The City Council has the ultimate authority to approve any proposal and to authorize execution of the negotiated agreement for the City.

2. General Information

2.1 Project Description

Through this RFQ, the City intends to pre-qualify selected firms and then enter into a PSA with a preferred firm for Solar PV installation.

Specifically, the purpose of this RFQ is to solicit qualifications from firms to design, procure, install, test, commission, and provide maintenance services for solar photovoltaic (PV) power generating system(s) (“PV System(s)”) and battery storage, if feasible, at one or more of the sites identified in this RFQ.

The City aims to move as quickly as practicable and identify, through this RFQ, the most qualified respondent that: (1) meets the needs of the City; (2) demonstrates a thorough understanding of current or pending Illinois solar energy policies, legislation, and/or regulation, to include but not limited to, state solar net metering rules; (3) understands Highland Park permitting and zoning regulations; and (4) can demonstrate successful implementation of comparably sized projects with municipal or other non-residential entities, in Illinois.

2.2 Project Scope

The minimum scope proposed by the City for this RFQ are roof-mounted or ground-mounted PV systems for each City property indicated in the table below:

Site	Address
Water Treatment Facility	10 Park Ave., Highland Park, IL
Half Day Road Reservoir	1100 Half Day Rd., Highland Park, IL
Highland Park Country Club	1201 Park Ave. W., Highland Park, IL

Firms are responsible for determining appropriate size of solar installation at respective locations.

2.3 Role of the City

To facilitate the preferred firm in the execution of the Project(s), the City will endeavor in their best ability to:

- Provide reasonable access to the above-noted municipally-owned properties and buildings, as necessary, to obtain data (whether required or reasonably requested by the preferred firm);
- Grant the firm sufficient access and occupancy rights to undertake the Project at the premises.
- Provide access for the assessment of sites and, for those sites selected for development, the installation, maintenance, and ongoing operation of the System;
- To the extent reasonable and appropriate, provide information/assistance to the firm in securing any remaining permits for the Project, including but not limited to City Council approvals; and
- Cooperate with the firm to the extent reasonable and appropriate on remaining issues with respect to site assessment, access, and facility construction and interconnection.

2.4 Responsibilities of the Preferred Firm

The preferred firm is responsible for designing, procuring, installing, testing, commissioning, and maintaining solar power electric generation facilities (“PV System”) and Battery Storage, if feasible, with guaranteed on-site electricity generation at the sites identified in this RFQ. The preferred firm is also responsible for managing a Power Purchase Agreement (“PPA”) by which the City may utilize the solar output or on-bill credits of the PV System for City electricity at the property at which such PV System is installed.

In addition, the preferred firm will be responsible for:

- Securing all required Utility permits and approvals; local permits will be obtained by the City in cooperation with the contractor.
- Protecting the integrity of roofs and walls that are attached or system are placed on.
- Implementing the projects without interfering with the ongoing activities at the project sites.
- Securing an assurance of net metering eligibility at no cost to the City.
- All other responsibilities, as outlined in the executed agreement.

3. Request for Qualifications

3.1 Submissions

All Statements of Qualifications shall be received no later than **5:00 PM on Friday, March 12, MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2021**. Please submit an electronic pdf of the response to this RFQ via email to:

Rob Sabo

Assistant City Manager
City of Highland Park
rsabo@cityhpil.com

3.2 Point of Contact for Questions

All questions and inquiries concerning this RFQ must be submitted in writing no later than the date and time provided on the cover of this RFQ. Inquiries will not be answered directly.

Questions should be sent to Rob Sabo, Assistant City Manager, via email at rsabo@cityhpil.com.

The City will issue an addendum via the City Website (https://www.cityhpil.com/government/bid_rfp/index.php), which will address the written questions submitted by the deadline. This and other addenda will be posted on the City website. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to check the website prior to the submittal deadline to ensure that the Respondent has received all addenda issued by the City.

3.3 Contents of Submittal of Qualifications

1. Cover letter and introduction, including name, phone number, and email address of the person authorized to represent the company regarding all matters related to this Request for Qualifications.
2. A description of the firm, including brief history, number of employees, and their disciplines, location, years in business, etc.
3. A general statement indicating how the firm envisions being able to provide timely services to the City.
4. Resumes of key personnel to be performing services for the City.
5. A list of minimum of five (5) Solar PV projects completed or currently working on within the last three (3) years.
6. Information on the firm's current and projected workload and its ability to meet the flexible and time sensitive needs of the City.
7. List any current public or private projects being worked in the City of Highland Park and any past work performed for any governmental entity whether local, state, or federal.
8. Contact information for five (5) references relative to similar services.

3.4 Selection Committee

A Selection Committee will review the Submittals. Qualified respondents will be provided with a copy of the RFP when one is issued.

The following criteria will be considered in the selection process:

1. Experience and qualifications of firm with municipal engineering generally, and specifically the City of Highland Park and/or similarly sized and staffed municipalities.
2. Qualifications of the key personnel assigned to perform the engineering services.
3. Knowledge of City operations, methods, and philosophy.
4. Ability to provide continuity of personnel and timely, flexible services.
5. Geographical location.
6. Project references.

3.5 Right To Reject

The City of Highland Park reserves the right to reject any and all RFQs or RFPs, to waive any informality, to request interviews of firms prior to award and to select and negotiate the contract services in the best interest of the City.

4. Terms of Response

The Selection Committee will review each submittal and, if chosen for the shortlist, the respondent will be contacted for the RFP. Provided in 4.1 is a list of services that the qualified respondents will be required to perform and be responsible for if they are selected following the RFP process.

4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Complete Responses will be evaluated in terms of the reasonableness of the claims and commitments made, the completeness of the information provided, conformance with the requirements of and the instructions provided in this RFQ, and the Respondent's ability and willingness to satisfy and to exceed the specifications and conditions set forth in this RFQ.

Although the Selection Committee will consider all factors which reflect on each Respondent's ability to meet the City's goals, significant evaluation emphasis will be placed on the following: (1) the Respondent's understanding of the current solar policy and regulatory context in Illinois; (2) the demonstrated performance capability of the Respondent and its team to successfully complete PV projects.

Qualifications	Unacceptable	Not Advantageous	Advantageous
Management & Performance Capabilities (30%)			
Project Team Capabilities	Incomplete or unclear.	Little information provided on general reputation and performance capabilities of the project team.	Complete, credible, and comprehensive. Respondent demonstrates superior reputation and performance capabilities.
Project Team Structure and Roles	Incomplete or irrelevant.	Project team not clearly defined and/or not fully relevant for project of this scope.	Project team well defined, thoughtfully assembled, and appropriate for project of this scope.
Local Presence	No current or planned local presence among project team members.	Unclear or little local presence among key project team members.	Key project team members located locally.

Demonstrated Expertise of Personnel	Resumes not provided or show little relevant expertise among project personnel.	Resumes provided show some expertise among project personnel.	Resumes provided show superior level of relevant expertise among project personnel.
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Qualifications	Unacceptable	Not Advantageous	Advantageous
Experience & Project References (30%)			
Permitting	Incomplete.	Complete. Lacks detail or conveys a lack of experience, expertise, or understanding of permitting requirements and processes.	Complete. Respondent demonstrates superior understanding of permitting requirements and processes.
Construction and Testing	Incomplete.	Complete. Lacks detail or conveys a lack of experience and/or expertise.	Complete. Respondent demonstrates superior experience and/or expertise. Respondent clearly describes equipment quality and related factors.
Service and Maintenance	Incomplete.	Complete. Lacks detail or conveys a lack of experience and/or expertise.	Complete and comprehensive. Respondent demonstrates superior understanding of the most advantageous operations and understanding protocols for projects of this scope.
Experience with Municipalities	None.	Little or irrelevant.	Demonstrated experience implementing solar / solar + battery storage projects with Illinois municipalities.
References	Negative or unrelated or not relevant to the proposal	Positive.	Positive. At least three reference projects are similar in size and scope to the City's project.

Qualifications	Unacceptable	Not Advantageous	Advantageous
Project Approach (10%)			

Level of Effort Required by City	Unclear or incomplete.	Complete. Respondent requires comparatively high level of effort from local officials and/or staff during project design & construction.	Complete. Level of effort required of local officials and/or staff is competitive.
Quality of Products	Unclear or incomplete.	Complete. Respondent provides little detail or anticipates using comparatively low-quality products.	Complete and clear. Respondent anticipates using comparatively high-quality products.
Statement on Time for Performance of Contract	Incomplete.	Complete.	Complete, credible, and competitive.
Agreement	Not provided.	Some terms and conditions provided.	Complete preferred template agreement provided.

Qualifications	Unacceptable	Not Advantageous	Advantageous
Method for Guaranteeing Electricity Generation (15%)			
Method of Determining Energy Generation	Incomplete or non-compliant.	Complete and compliant, but lacking detail.	Methods for monitoring, measurement, and verification of solar energy generation, electricity consumption, and calculation of energy savings conform to the most recent standards established by the Federal Department of Energy

Qualifications	Unacceptable	Not Advantageous	Advantageous
Pricing Methodology (15%)			
Pricing Methodology	Incomplete.	Complete. Lacks detail or conveys a lack of experience and/or expertise.	Complete. Respondent demonstrates willingness to engage in transparent negotiations and outlines the degree of transparency and/or granularity that the Respondent is amendable to during negotiations.

Next Steps	Incomplete.	Complete. Lacks detail or conveys a lack of experience and/or expertise with net metering in Illinois.	Complete and thoughtful response. Respondent provides thoughtful recommendations for next steps, and availability of net metering services.

4.2 Response Form Template

Respondents are encouraged to provide a response that specifically addresses each of the items below *in the order that they are listed*. The City of Highland Park looks favorably upon responses that provide thorough, detailed responses and follow the format below.

Executive Summary

Provide an executive summary introducing the Respondent and all known subcontractors.

i. Management & Performance Capabilities (30%)

- a) Describe the general reputation and performance capabilities of the project team and explain how these characteristics translate to providing a PV system that best meets the City’s goals for this project, as outlined in this RFQ.
- b) Provide a list of entities that comprise the project team, including all known subcontractors, and identify each party’s role.
- c) Provide the number of full-time personnel employed by the Respondent and approximate number of personnel to be providing services.
- d) Describe the Respondent’s proximity to the City of Highland Park, and how this will influence the Respondent’s ability to perform the required services.
- e) Provide resumes of key project team members.

ii. Experience & Project References (30%)

- a) Describe relevant project team experience in and capabilities to provide the services requested in this RFQ. Summarize the relevant experience of the party(ies) responsible for the following:
 - a. Design & Engineering
 - b. Permitting
 - c. Installation
 - d. Operations & Maintenance
 - e. Energy Data Monitoring & Reporting
- b) For the party(ies) responsible for design work, describe their experience designing projects similar in scope to this project.
- c) Describe the experience the Respondent has had with roof-mounted and wall-mounted solar photovoltaic and battery storage installations, particularly on municipal or commercial buildings.

- d) For the party(ies) responsible for permitting work, describe their experience permitting projects similar in scope to this project.
- e) For the party(ies) responsible for installation work, describe their experience installing projects similar in scope to this project.
- f) For the party(ies) responsible for the maintenance of the PV system(s) over the life of the system, describe their experience maintaining projects similar in scope to this project.
- g) Identify the number of MW (DC) capacity that the respondent has developed: (1) in total, and in Illinois. If providing numbers for more than one firm on the project team, provide numbers per firm.
- h) Provide detailed project information for five (5) reference projects of comparable scope to this project that Respondent has implemented within the last five (5) years. If possible, please highlight any examples of roof-mounted projects with Illinois municipalities. For each reference project, please provide the following:
 - a. Location
 - b. System capacity
 - c. Current status (pre-construction, in construction, operation, etc.)
 - d. Customer name and contact information. *It is understood that the City may contact any or all of the above references regarding the project and personnel performance as part of the RFQ submittal review process.*

iii. Project Approach (10%)

- a) Please prepare a preliminary project approach with the following:
 - a. System capacity (kW DC)
 - b. Estimated output (kWh), Year 1
 - c. Describe the design considerations the Respondent has used to maximize the expected amount of solar electricity produced for each site, including equipment selection, shading, spacing, azimuth, tilt and inter-row shade spacing.
 - d. Discuss the proposed mounting system.
- b) What engineering studies will the respondent, if selected, conduct to design the system and prepare a price proposal? Summarize the level and depth of the information and resources that will be required of the City during the engineering studies.
- c) Discuss the quality of the system components that the Respondent anticipates using in any PV System installed pursuant to this RFQ. Discuss available warranties, insured warranties, etc. for all major system components, including solar modules, inverters, automated reporting system, and mounting system, anticipated to be used for this project.
- d) Statement on Time for Performance of Contract
 - a. Briefly summarize the estimated timeline for any project(s) to be developed pursuant to this RFQ, including the duration of the contract.
- e) Agreement
 - a. Provide a preferred template agreement for the City's consideration.

iv. Method for Guaranteeing Electricity Generation (15%)

Note: Methods for monitoring, measurement, and verification of guaranteed energy shall conform to the most recent Performance Measurement & Verification Protocol (IPMVP) and standards established by the Federal Energy Management Program of the U.S. Department

of Energy.

- a) Describe preferred methodology for setting a guaranteed output (e.g., guaranteed output = 100% of expected annual output).
- b) Describe Respondent's standard measurement and verification procedures, including reporting frequency, reconciliation methods, and timing.

v. Pricing Methodology (15%)

- a) At what point in contract negotiation process would the Respondent be willing to negotiate pricing with the City? What qualifications would the Respondent need to put around that price?
- b) Summarize the level of transparency and granularity that the Respondent is willing to provide in negotiations. Provide examples of the specific costs and/or assumptions that the Respondent is willing to share with the City.
- c) Describe any other factors that demonstrate how your project team and approach will provide the best value to the City.