



**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
For  
ENGINEERING SERVICES  
City of Sumter, South Carolina  
Master Planning for the Pocotaligo Wastewater Treatment  
Plant  
RIA Grant #P-24-5025**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to solicit proposals from qualified engineering firms for professional engineering and related services for the development of a Master Plan for the Pocotaligo Wastewater Treatment Plant (PWWTP) owned and operated by the City of Sumter, SC (City). The City is seeking the services of an experienced professional engineering consultant to conduct an assessment of the existing PWWTP facilities and processes and develop a Master Plan that identifies future rehabilitations, upgrades, and expansions required to meet projected demands for the next 20 years. The City will receive proposals from interested firms until **2:00 p.m. August 8th, 2024**, at the location stated below. Submittals received after this deadline will not be considered. The complete submittal must include 1 original, 3 copies and 1 color pdf must be delivered to the City using this link: [www.sumtersc.gov/departments/purchasing/rfp-rfq](http://www.sumtersc.gov/departments/purchasing/rfp-rfq). Submittals must be in a sealed package, clearly marked on the outside addressed to:

The City of Sumter  
Attn: Purchasing  
Department  
21 N. Main St  
Sumter, SC 29150  
RFQ #01-24/25 Pocotaligo WWTP Master Plan

## Background

The Pocatigo Wastewater Treatment Plant is the primary treatment facility of the City of Sumter. PWWTP receives and treats wastewater from residential, commercial, and industrial users located in the City's service area and discharges treated effluent in compliance with NPDES Permit # SC277707 to the Pocatigo River. The PWWTP was originally constructed in 1977 with a capacity of 6.0 MGD and was expanded in 1988 to 12 MGD. The latest upgrade was completed in 2009 and PWWTP is currently capable of treating 24.0 MGD. The major unit processes at the PWWTP include the following:

1. Preliminary/Primary Treatment is comprised of screening and grit removal.
  - a. Screening – Prior to raw wastewater entering the influent pump station, three Vulcan bar screens with a single conveyor and wash press are used to remove larger solids.
  - b. Grit removal – Two Eutek systems plate settle type grit systems with slurrycup, grit snail, and added grit pumps provide the removal of grit and sediment.
  - c. The PWWTP does not currently have any mechanism that consists of chemical precipitation or coagulation-aided sedimentation in our treatment process.
2. Secondary Treatment is accomplished with aeration and clarification.
  - a. Aeration – The PWWTP has five rectangular basins, two basins serving as primary aeration basins followed by three basins serving as secondary aeration basins. The primary aeration basins are aerated and mixed using ceramic fine bubble aeration diffusers and three centrifugal air blowers. The secondary aeration basins are aerated and mixed using membrane fine bubble aeration diffusers and three centrifugal air blowers.
  - b. Secondary Clarification – Clarification of activated sludge is accomplished in ten (10) circular tanks downstream from the secondary aeration tanks.
3. Tertiary Treatment includes chlorination/de-chlorination and re-aeration.
  - a. Chlorination/de-chlorination – The effluent from the secondary clarification tanks passes into the chlorination/de-chlorination structure where at the head of the structure chlorine is injected into the stream and mixed. Sulfur dioxide is then injected into the stream at the end of the structure.
  - b. Re-aeration is accomplished over the effluent weir and in the outfall ditch by subjecting the flow to several drops through grating structures.
4. Effluent Disposal – The effluent flow is discharged to the Pocatigo River.
5. Residual Handling includes sludge digestion, sludge dewatering, and sludge drying.
  - a. Sludge Digestion – Scum and waste activated sludge are pumped to one of two aerobic sludge digestion tanks for additional stabilization and thickening. Aeration is provided by fixed submerged discharged orifices with air supplied by two positive displacement blowers.

- b. Sludge Dewatering – Thickened sludge is removed from either of the two aerobic digesters and pumped to the Belt Filter Press Facility for dewatering at any of the three high solids presses. Liquid filtrate which drains from the sludge at the Belt Filter Press Facility is then returned to the influent pump station.
- c. Sludge Drying – Under normal operation, belt press dewatered sludge is conveyed to the sludge drum drying system for further processing. Final disposal of the dried sludge is by public distribution.

The current average daily flow for May 2024 is approximately 9.90 MGD with peak flows upwards of 12.6 MGD. The following pollutants were the influent and effluent concentrations for 2023:

| Parameter              | Influent       |               | Effluent       |               | Permitted |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
|                        | Annual Average | Maximum Month | Annual Average | Maximum Month |           |
| BOD (mg/L)             | 142.7          | 210           | 2.8            | 3.0           | 10        |
| TSS (mg/L)             | 82             | 120           | 4.7            | 7.0           | 30        |
| TKN (mg/L)             | 24             | 29            | 0.05           | 0.2           | MR        |
| NH <sub>3</sub> (mg/L) | 15.5           | 21.2          | 0.2            | 1.47          | 1-3       |
| TP (mg/L)              | 3.0            | 3.0           | 2.2            | 3.1           | MR        |

## Scope

The project scope includes, but is not limited to, evaluation of the current and projected influent flows and loads at the PWWTP, overall existing plant capabilities, current and future permit analysis, and the identification of needed future plant rehabilitation/improvements/expansion needs.

The City currently anticipates that the scope will generally include the following elements, subject to further discussion and recommendations from the Consultant:

1. Wastewater Treatment Master Plan
  - a. Design Criteria
    - i. Influent Flow and Loading Projections
    - ii. Analysis of Existing and Future Effluent Permit Conditions
2. Plant Analysis
  - a. Process evaluation of major unit processes
    - i. Condition assessment
    - ii. Capacity assessment
  - b. Alternatives Analysis of major unit processes (if required)
    - i. Consideration of Alternatives to Further Expand Permitted Capacity or Improve Operational Efficiency

3. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Development
  - a. Rehabilitation/Upgrades CIP
  - b. Expansion CIP
4. Cost Estimates and Prioritization
5. Report of assessment activities, findings, and recommendations

The City may also elect to include other related services in the scope of work. A decision on any additional related components will be made after selection, and the City will work with the selected firm on the additional scope item(s) at that time.

### **Submittal/Selection Criteria**

The proposals should include the following sections:

1. Project Team (Weighted 33%)
  - a. Organizational Chart
  - b. Proposed Subconsultants
  - c. Brief Biographies for Key Team Members
2. Experience (Weighted 33%)
  - a. Provide up to five (5) projects which are similar in type and scope to this proposed project
3. Approach (Weighted 34%)
  - a. Provide detailed schedule outlining scope of services to complete this specific proposed project within the grant period timeline. Grant must be closed out by November 19, 2025.

The proposals shall be no more than 25 pages total, front and back (i.e., 50 pages). The last day for questions on the RFQ is July 22, 2024. Questions must be submitted via email to Cathryn Poplin at [cpoplin@sumtersc.gov](mailto:cpoplin@sumtersc.gov). Any addendum will be posted to the City of Sumter's procurement website. Receipt of all addenda must be acknowledged in the response to this RFQ.

This is a qualifications-based selection. Cost is NOT a factor in the ranking of firms to provide services herein. DO NOT include any reference to consultant costs in the RFQ response. Any RFQ response with any discussion of cost will be disqualified.

### **Proposal Evaluation/Interviews**

The City will evaluate the firms in order of the most qualified, based on demonstrated competence and qualifications to perform the services.

The City will conduct a fair and impartial evaluation of all proposals that are received in accordance with the provisions of this RFQ. The City will appoint a selection committee to perform the evaluation. The award will be made to the highest rated respondent based on the cumulative scores of the selection committee.

The City reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a Consultants qualification package or to obtain additional information. All Consultants firms/teams who submit qualification packages will be notified of the selection committee's choice.

The City may choose to conduct interviews for "short-listed" Consultants as part of the selection process, with interviews generally consisting of presentations by the Consultants and time for questions from the selection committee.

The City of Sumter reserves the right to reject any and all submissions or any parts thereof and to waive any irregularities or minor informalities in any submission or in the procurement process and to make a contract award in the best interest of the City of Sumter. No submittal preparation expense will be paid by the City of Sumter in response to this solicitation.

Upon authorization, the selected qualified firms will be asked to submit a fee proposal to begin contract negotiations for a fair and reasonable price.

This project is being funded in whole or in part by a state grant from the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA). All RIA grant requirements will apply to the contract. More information about program requirements can be found in the RIA State Grant Project Management Procedures found at [ria.sc.gov/resources/forms-documents](http://ria.sc.gov/resources/forms-documents). Per RIA guidelines, any contract negotiated as a result of this procurement process will require approval from RIA prior to award/execution.

## **Proposed Procurement Timeline**

Release date for RFQ – July 8, 2024

Final Date to receive written questions/clarifications – July 22, 2024

RFQ Closing Date – August 8, 2024

Completion of selection committee review and recommendation – August 28, 2024

Grant Close-out – November 19, 2025

## **Protest Procedures**

Any respondent who is aggrieved in connection with the prequalification of contractor may protest to the appropriate procurement officer. The protest setting forth the grievance shall be submitted in writing within five (5) calendar days after such aggrieved persons know or should have known of the facts giving rise thereto, but in no circumstance after ten (10) calendar days of notification of the contractor prequalification.

The appropriate procurement officer shall have the authority, prior to the commencement of an administrative review as provided in this article, to settle and resolve a protest of an aggrieved proposer or subcontractor, actual or prospective, concerning the solicitation or award of the Agreement. This authority shall be applied in a manner consistent with regulations or laws governing the procurement of supplies, services, and construction for the City.

If the protest is not resolved by mutual agreement, the appropriate procurement officer shall issue a decision in writing within ten (10) calendar days. The decision shall state the reasons for the action taken.

A copy of the decision rendered under Part 3 of this section shall be mailed or otherwise furnished immediately to the protestant and any other party intervening.

A decision under Part 3 of this section shall be final conclusive, unless fraudulent, or unless any person adversely affected by the decision requests a review in writing, setting forth the grievance to the City Manager with ten (10) calendar days of the decision. The protestant may also request an interview with the City Manager.

The request for a review shall not stay the agreement unless fraudulent.

## **Proprietary/Confidential Information**

All materials and written qualifications submitted pursuant to this RFQ shall become the property of the City of Sumter and will not be returned. All respondents must visibly mark as "CONFIDENTIAL" each part of their submission that they consider containing proprietary information the release of which would constitute an unreasonable invasion of privacy. All unmarked pages will be subject to release in accordance with law. Marked pages will not be disclosed if they are deemed to meet the requirements under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, S.C. Code Section 30-4-10, *et seq.* Respondents should be prepared, upon request, to provide justification of why such materials should not be disclosed in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Respondents shall promptly notify the City of Sumter in writing of all potential conflicts of interest for any prospective business association, interest, or other circumstance, which may influence or appear to influence the respondent's judgment or quality of services being provided hereunder. Such written notification shall identify the prospective business association, interest, or circumstance, the nature of work that such a person may undertake and request an opinion of the City of Sumter as to whether the association, interest, or circumstance would, in the opinion of the City of Sumter, constitute a conflict of interest. By responding to this solicitation, the respondent certifies that it has no conflict of interest with any employee, agent, elected official or officer of the City of Sumter or any other conflict as may be set forth herein.

## **Collusion**

More than one submission from an individual, firm partnership, corporation, association, or related parties under the same or different names will not be considered. If the City of Sumter believes that collusion exists among respondents, all submissions from the suspected firms will be rejected. "Related parties" means respondents or the principals thereof, which have a direct or indirect ownership or profit-sharing interest in another respondent.

Respondents shall comply with all local, state, and federal directives, orders, and laws applicable to this RFQ and any resulting contract.

By responding to this RFQ, respondents certify that the response is made without previous understanding, agreement, or connection with any person, firm or corporation making a submission for the same item, and they certify the knowledge that this would constitute an illegal action.