

RFQ for Electric Engineering Services 15-year Capital Improvement Plan

Town of Winterville

2571 Railroad Street
Winterville, NC 28590

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town of Winterville ("Town") is issuing this Request for Statements of Qualifications (RFQ). The Town seeks statements of qualifications from interested, independent, established, and experienced electrical engineering consultant firms ("Firms"), to be received no later than Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at or before 2:00 pm.

The Town intends to engage a qualified engineering firm to facilitate the development of rate reviews, system valuation and potentially other associated financial analyses of the Town's facilities. Qualified firms shall be free from conflicts of interest arising from financial relationships with potential suppliers, constructors, financiers, or owners of related projects or products.

The Town shall be the sole judge of the qualifications and services to be offered and its decision shall be final.

1.1 Town Facilities and Energy Projects Background

The Town has a municipally owned electric distribution system serving approximately 8,000 citizens and is located in Pitt County, North Carolina. The Town's existing facilities include two substations and one transfer station. The Town is a member of Electricities in a Non-Power Agency capacity. The Town's peak consumption is approximately 16MW.

The Town of Winterville has been engaged in numerous projects, including new substation, and switching station construction, as well as rehab of its distribution system and expansion of its distribution system.

1.2 Solicitation Background

The Town plans to complete various projects during the next five-year period. As such, the Town desires to complete a 15-year Capital Improvement Plan.

The Town seeks the support of a Firm in the development and implementation of these projects. These projects and their development may include the following services and others consistent with municipal, state, and federal regulations:

- Develop a 15-year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Assist with expansion of Town's territorial agreement.

The Town intends to contract with a Firm that has the following minimum qualifications:

- A. Free from conflicts of interest arising from financial or other relationships with potential suppliers, constructors, financiers, or owners of related projects or products.
- B. Extensive experience in the successful development of in-depth financial analysis of rate structures and system valuations.
- C. Experience working with municipally owned electric systems.
- D. Knowledge and understanding of applicable rules, regulations, codes, and standards.
- E. Ability to provide timely, effective communication and support to the Town.

The Town intends to use the responses to this RFQ to assist in the possible selection of one or more Firms for the Town's electric projects. The Town will evaluate each Firm based on the information set forth in the Response submitted, together with other information available to the Town from any other sources. The Firm's ability to develop a rapport and working relationship with Town personnel will be considered. The Town will, at its own discretion, select one or more Firms after receipt of Responses; the Town also reserves the right to not select any Firm. The Town may also request that one or more Firms participate in an interview process or the Town may implement a combination of these and/or other methods for selection.

This RFQ is solely a solicitation for Responses. Neither this RFQ, nor any Response to this RFQ shall be deemed or construed to: (i) create any contractual relationship between Town and any Firm; (ii) create any obligation for the Town to enter into a contract with any Firm or other party; or (iii) serve as the basis for a claim for reimbursement for costs associated with submittal of any Response.

If the Town selects a Firm for its potential electrical projects, the Town shall have the right to negotiate any and all of the final terms and conditions of any agreement with the Firm and nothing in this RFQ or any Response shall be deemed or construed as a limitation of such rights.

1.3 Town Goals

The Town's desire is to achieve the following projects/goals with the assistance of the Firm(s) selected:

- A. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan that will direct the Town with expansion and growth over the next 15 years.
- B. Assist Town with direction to be proactive with design, and construction to execute the CIP plan.

1.4 Response Content

Each Response must be in writing and should be concise, well organized, and tailored to this RFQ. Each response shall demonstrate the Firms understanding of the Town's goals and the objectives. Firms will be evaluated based on the information submitted in accordance with this Section, 1.4, together with other information as may be available to the Town. Responses must include all of the information specified in this Section, 1.4, and be set forth in the same order as outlined below.

Response Evaluation Points: 10 points

- A. **Executive Summary:** Include an overview of the Response (maximum one page) describing the highlights of the Response, specifying the name, title, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of a single Firm representative to contact regarding the Response.

Response Evaluation Points: 10 points

- B. **Firm Information:** Specify or provide all of the following information:
 - Legal name and address of Firm.
 - Name and address of the Firm's principal place of business.
 - Firm's legal form of entity (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, joint venture, etc) and state of incorporation or other organization. If Firm is a joint venture or partnership, identify all members of the joint venture or partnership and provide all information required pursuant to this Paragraph C for each member.
 - Firm's engagement model and fee structure (including process, scope, and commitment points).
 - Evidence that Firm is authorized to conduct business in the State of North Carolina.
 - If company is a subsidiary or affiliate of another company or companies, identify such other company or companies.

Response Evaluation Points: 15 points

C. Firm's Relevant Qualifications and Experience: Provide all of the following information, as applicable.

Please mark "N/A" only if such information/experience is non-existent:

- Number of years Firm and/or staff have been engaged in electrical engineering.
- Number of qualified electrical engineers and financial analysts on staff available to support Town projects.

Response Evaluation Points: 15 points

D. Project References: Provide three (3) references related to similar engineering services provided in the last five years, including for each:

- Customer name and contact information.
- Exact role Firm or Firm's employee(s) performed for project.
- Type of project.
- Location of project.
- Date performed.

Response Evaluation Points: 15 points

E. Proposed Firm Team: Provide all of the following information:

- Name of Firm's project managers and a description of such person's experience as relevant to the Town's proposed projects.
- Names of team members who would be dedicated to the Town's electrical projects.
- Roles and responsibilities of team members, including an organizational chart.
- Brief description of team's ability to implement a successful project (history, performance of similar scope of services, etc.).
- Resumes for key members of the Firm's proposed team, including key personnel of any subcontractors that Firm proposes to use (resume package may be submitted as an attachment to the Response).
- Describe each circumstance in which the Firm ever had a contract terminated for cause or convenience and include the reasons for termination.

Response Evaluation Points: 10 points

F. Firm's History: Indicate whether there has been, within the preceding five years, any occurrence of the situations described below and, if yes, then describe in detail the circumstances surrounding each such situation and the outcome. Failure by a Firm to disclose any such situations may result in a determination that the Firm is ineligible to bid on, contract for, or perform any work in connection with any future Town projects.

Each Firm must disclose each of the following:

- Debarment (of either the Firm or any of its principal officers or owners) by any Federal, State, County, Municipal or other local agency.
- Involvement as a party in any litigation, arbitration or mediation associated with an energy project (not including any action filed to validate a transaction).

- Any convictions of the Firm or any of its principal officers or owners for violation of any Federal or State antitrust law (e.g., bid rigging, collusion, or otherwise restricting competition between bidders) or other law relating to bidding or performance of public works.
- Determination by a governmental or public authority, which became final or unappealable, that the Firm or any of its principal officers or owners: (i) knowingly concealed any deficiency in the performance of any contract or project; (ii) falsified any information or made deceptive or fraudulent statements in connection with any contract or project; or (iii) willfully disregarded applicable laws, regulations, rules or contractual requirements in connection with any contract or project.
- The Firm has filed any claims and/or lawsuits against any public agencies in connection with any contracts or projects of such public agencies and, if yes, identify the public agency and describe the nature and the outcome of such claim and lawsuit.

Failure by a Firm to disclose any such claims and/or litigation may result in a determination that the Firm is ineligible to bid on, contract for, or perform any work in connection with Town projects.

Response Evaluation Points: 10 points

G. **Work Samples:** Provide two (2) sample work products of Capital Improvement plans that you firm has developed. Provide two products where Firm engineered complex distribution systems in undeveloped territory.

Response Evaluation Points: 15 points

H. **Fee Schedule and Reimbursable Expenses:** Respondents shall state their proposed hourly rates offered on a time-and-materials basis.

1.5 Additional RFQ Information

A. **Schedule of Events:** The Town anticipates the schedule of events in connection with this RFQ will be as set forth below. However, the Town reserves the right, in its sole discretion and at any time prior to entering into an agreement, to alter its anticipated schedule as related to this RFQ or any project.

Event Anticipated Dates:

- RFQ Available: Saturday, May 17, 2025.
- Deadline for Request for Information (RFI): Friday June 13, 2025 at or before 12:00 pm.
- Response for RFI: Wednesday, June 18, 2025.
- Responses Due: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at or before 2:00 pm.
- Interviews: Through Thursday, July 10, 2025.
- Recommendations to Council: August 4, 2025.

B. **Addenda to RFQ:** The Town in its discretion may, at any time, issue one or more addenda to this RFQ and the Town will provide such addenda to each Firm that is known by the Town to have received a copy of this RFQ. Each Firm is solely responsible for and must, in its Response, acknowledge each addendum that it has received. The Town will send each addendum to the last known addresses of the Firms, but in no event shall the Town be responsible or liable for any failure of a Firm to receive any such addendum.

- C. **No Guarantee of Award of Contract:** This RFQ does not create any obligation whatsoever, either expressed or implied, for the Town to award any contract to any Firm or other party. The Town at all times retains the sole and absolute right to select the Firm that best meets the Town's needs, or to not select any Firm based on Responses to this RFQ. *The award of any contract to a Firm is subject to approval by the Governing Board of the Town ("Board").*
- D. **Privacy:** The Town will open and review Responses privately to assure confidentiality and to avoid disclosure of the contents to competing Firms prior to and during the review, evaluation, and negotiation process. However, the Town may, upon applicable request, disclose any Response to the extent it is a public record in accordance with North Carolina law.
- E. **Confidential Information:** It is understood that information submitted in response to this RFQ and subsequent presentations may contain technical, financial, or other data that would constitute trade secrets, the public disclosure of which possibly could injure the Firm's competitive position. To the extent the Firm reasonably determines that information in its Response constitutes trade secrets in accordance with applicable law, the Firm may seek to protect such trade secrets from disclosure by specifically identifying the pages of its Response that contain such information by properly marking such pages and inserting the following notice in its Response:

SAMPLE NOTICE: *[Insert Firm name]* believes that information on page(s) of this Response identified by an asterisk (*) or marked along the margin with a vertical line constitute trade secrets, disclosure of which possibly could injure the competitive position of *[insert Firm's name]*. *[Insert Firm's name]* requests that such information be used only in connection with evaluation of the Response or otherwise in connection with any agreement entered into by *[insert Firm's name]* and the Town, but *[insert Firm's name]* understands that disclosure may nonetheless occur to the extent the Town determines disclosure is proper in accordance with federal, state and/or local law. The Town may disclose or use any information included in a Response that is not so marked and made subject to such notice. In the event the Town receives a request for information that is properly identified and for which notice is given in accordance with the foregoing, the Town will advise the Firm of the request. If the Firm objects to disclosure of such information, the Firm, within a reasonable time, but in no event in excess of five (5) business days, shall submit to the Town a detailed statement indicating the reasons the Firm believes disclosure is not proper in accordance with Federal, State and/or local law. The Town will review such statement in determining whether disclosure is proper in accordance with applicable law. If the Firm requests that the Town resist disclosure of such information, the Town may agree to such request if the Town determines that requested information likely is exempt from disclosure pursuant to Federal, State or local law, but subject to the Firm in each such event agreeing to assume responsibility for and to pay any and all costs incurred by the Town, including, without limitation, attorney fees and expenses. The Town will exercise reasonable care in applying the requirements of this Paragraph E, but in no event shall the Town be responsible or liable for any damage or injury that may result from any disclosure that may occur of information the Firm believes constitutes a trade secret.

- F. **Ownership of Documents:** All Responses and other materials submitted in response to this RFQ shall become the property of the Town of Winterville.
- G. **Responsibility for Costs:** Each Firm (and not the Town) shall be responsible for any and all costs that it incurs in connection with this RFQ, including, without limitation, costs associated with preparation and submission of a Response, and expenses associated with travel to any presentation, interview or other meeting. In no event will the Town reimburse any Firm for any such costs or expenses.
- H. **Modification or Withdrawal of Response:** A Firm may at any time withdraw its Response by providing written request for withdrawal to the Town. At any time prior to the deadline for submittal of Responses specified in this RFQ, a Firm may modify its Response by submitting the modified Response together with a written request to withdraw the original Response and replace it with the modified Response.
- I. **Insurance Requirements:** The Town will require the selected Firm have insurance in effect at all times during the term of the resulting agreement and the Firm provide certificates of insurance indicating the Town, its employees, agents, and consultants as additional insured, and copies of policies as evidence that the insurance is in effect. The applicable insurance requirements and limits will be established by the Town during negotiations with the Firm.
- J. **Unethical Behavior:** By submitting a Response, a Firm shall be deemed to represent and warrant that neither it nor any of its agents or other representatives gave or offered to give any gratuity (in the form of entertainment, gifts, or otherwise) to any Town officer or employee with the intent or goal of obtaining favorable treatment with respect to the selection of a Firm for the Town's electrical projects. If the Town determines that a Firm has breached or violated such warranty, the Town may terminate any agreement with such Firm, in whole or in part, and the Firm shall be responsible and liable for any associated losses and/or damages incurred by the Town. The rights and remedies of the Town pursuant to this paragraph are not exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies the Town may have pursuant to law or contract.

1.6 Submittal Requirements

- A. **Response Length:** A Response must be no more than 10 double-sided pages including resume materials. The 10 double-sided page submittal total does not include sample reports. The font size of the text included in a Response must not be less than 11 points.
- B. **Number of Copies:** Each Firm must submit one (1) digital copy and four (4) hard copies of its Response.
- C. **Method of Delivery:** Provide digital copy by email to ron.mills@wintervillenc.com and anthony.bowers@wintervillenc.com as described in 1.6.A above to the Town prior to the due date and time. The e-mail subject line of the Response should be specified as "Response Regarding RFQ for Electrical Engineering Services." Hard copies shall be submitted to:

Town of Winterville
Attn: RFQ Response for Electric Engineering and Financial Analysis Services
2571 Railroad Street
P.O. Box 1459
Winterville, NC 28590

- D. **Responsibility for Delivery of Responses:** Each Firm shall be solely responsible for ensuring that its Response is received by the Town prior to the deadline specified in this RFQ. The Town will not be required to consider any Response received by the Town after the submittal deadline specified in this RFQ.
- E. **Deadline for Submitting Responses:** The deadline for submitting Responses to this RFQ is the date and time set forth In Section 1.5, Part A of this RFQ.

1.7 Requests for Information (“RFI”) Regarding This RFQ

- A. **RFIs:** Questions regarding this RFQ should be set forth in writing and sent via e-mail to Ron Mills, Electric Utility Director, at ron.mills@wintervillenc.com and Anthony Bowers, Assistant Town Manager, at anthony.bowers@wintervillenc.com. The e-mail subject line of each such question should be specified as “Question Regarding RFQ for Electrical Engineering Services.”
- B. **Authorized person to receive RFIs:** No other persons are authorized to receive questions relating to this RFQ, and the Town shall have no obligation to respond to questions sent to any other person or entity. In its discretion, the Town may disregard the Response of any Firm that, in connection with this RFQ, contacts any other Town representative including, without limitation, any member of the Town’s Governing Board, Town staff member, Consultants, Managers, etc.
- C. **Responses to RFIs:** The Town will, to the best of its ability, respond to RFIs regarding this RFQ. The Town will send each question and response to the last known e-mail addresses of the Firms known by the Town to have received this RFQ, but in no event shall the Town be responsible or liable for any failure of a Firm to receive any such question and response.
- D. **Deadline for RFIs:** The deadline for submitting questions regarding this RFQ is as listed in Section 1.5.A above. The Town, in its discretion, may determine not to respond to questions submitted after the deadline or may extend the deadline for submittal of Responses so that all Firms will have the benefit of responses to questions submitted after the deadline.

1.8 Evaluation, Award and Agreement

Statements of Qualifications Evaluation:

The evaluation of statements of qualifications will include but may not be solely limited to the preceding criteria. The Town’s Evaluation Committee will determine which, if any, statements of qualifications are in the Town’s overall best interest to accept. During the evaluation process, the Town may request additional information, clarifications, explanations, and answers from any respondent. The Town may request any or all respondents to participate in a presentation and/or interviews in regard to their qualifications. The invited respondents must be available for the presentation and/or interviews within seven (7) days of the request, unless another date has been agreed upon.

The Town reserves the right to conduct negotiations with any number of respondents, as determined by the Town, for entering into contract agreements.