

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES
FOR CITY OF LANCASTER
COLUMBUS STREET & WILSON AVENUE SEWER SEPARATION PROJECT

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to request a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) to select a qualified engineering firm to complete the engineering services required to design and construct a minimum of 1,150 feet of mainline storm sewer within or along North Columbus Street, Wilson Avenue, and adjacent alleys just west and south of Forest Rose Cemetery within Lancaster, Ohio. Because the services are professional services, because qualified consulting engineering efforts could reduce the overall project cost, and because the quality of the public improvements depends on the qualifications of the consultant, selection of the engineering consulting firm will be based upon a predetermined set of weighted criteria as outlined herein.

BACKGROUND

In 2014 the City completed the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) Phase II to address combined sewer overflows (CSOs). The Phase II LTCP identifies various proposed projects that the City would need to construct to come into compliance with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) CSO policy by 2035. One project identified in the Phase II LTCP was the installation of 24-inch storm sewers in Wilson Avenue and adjacent alleys to allow the disconnection of catch basins from the combined sewers in that area. Another project identified was the installation of a 24-inch storm sewer in North Columbus Street to allow the disconnection of catch basins from the combined sewer on that street.

This project will ultimately involve the disconnection of ten (10) total catch basins from the existing combined sewer and reconnection into the separate storm sewer system. The catch basins to be separated include the following: five (5) within Wilson Avenue between North Columbus Street and North Broad Street; two (2) within the alley north of Wilson Avenue between North Columbus Street and North Broad Street; and three (3) within North Columbus Street at the entrance of Forest Rose Cemetery between Baltimore Road and Marks Avenue. The installation of additional catch basins within the project area may be considered as part of the project scope as well, if warranted to mitigate any existing drainage issues. The Compliance Schedule in the City's NPDES permit with OEPA requires that construction on the Wilson Avenue portion of the project begin no later than September 1, 2027 and that the project be completed by no later than September 1, 2028. The Columbus Street portion of the project is not identified on the City's Compliance Schedule.

The City reserves the right to move forward with the design and construction of the anticipated improvements as part of either one project or two separate projects. If the

City elects to split the improvements into two projects, the improvements to the Wilson Avenue area will occur first and within the timeframe identified in the “Schedule” section below.

The Ohio Department of Transportation has scheduled Columbus Street (State Route 158) to be paved in 2027.

FUNDING

The City has not determined funding for the construction of this project but anticipates utilizing the Ohio Water Development Authority and/or local funds.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following are the primary evaluation criteria and the anticipated weights the City plans to utilize to select the best qualified engineering firm. The right to change this criteria and the weights assigned is retained by the City throughout the selection process. Selection is very subjective in many areas and the decision of the City Administration will be final and not subject to re-evaluation by the firms submitting an SOQ.

A) Stability & Responsibility - Weight Factor 4

Such considerations as length of time firm has been in business, length of time principals have been with firm, financial responsibility, insurance coverage (including the firm’s commercial general liability and professional liability coverage limit amounts), ability to be bonded, etc. will be included in this area.

B) Project and Design Approach - Weight Factor 7

The firm’s outline of their approach to the Project, including information gathering and survey, preliminary studies and design, final design, coordination with City Departments, bidding, construction administration, etc. will be included in this area.

Proposed design phase milestones for completion of the Engineer’s services including completion dates or durations in calendar days for programming, schematic design, design development and construction documents, as well as an anticipated timeline for the construction and close-out phases of the Project, will be included in this area. Provide a detailed narrative demonstrating the firm’s ability to manage the Project schedule.

Describe the steps the firm will take to coordinate design and construction work on the Project with the City and contractor with respect to scheduling the Project, maintaining the construction schedule, and close-out of each stage of the Project.

The City also requests an overview of the firm’s quality control methods or review procedures.

C) Design Ability - Weight Factor 7

Such considerations as ability of firm to complete the required work in-house, ability of firm to utilize full time staff to complete work, range of firm's staff in the technical areas needed for the design associated with the Project, subcontractors needed to complete the Project including education and technical training/experience, current workload and availability of the firm and personnel assigned to the Project team, the available equipment and facilities, the team's ability to perform the required professional design services competently and expeditiously (i.e., are resources currently available or committed to other projects), etc. will be included in this area.

D) Proximity to Site and Familiarity - Weight Factor 3

The firm's location and proximity to the site for purposes of site visits and attending meetings with the City. The SOQ shall identify the location of the home office at which each member of the proposed Project team primarily works.

E) Experience and Quality of Work - Weight Factor 6

Such considerations as other similar combined sewer separation projects completed by the key personnel of the firm, examples or descriptions of similar work, references from satisfied clients, results of previous projects, etc. will be included in this area. Specifically:

1. Past Performance Based on References – Past performance as reflected in evaluations of previous and current clients for which the firm has provided or is providing similar services; please include a list of two (2) relevant projects involving similar services performed by the firm during the past five years. Include the following information for each project:
 - a. Project owner, name of project, and location;
 - b. Detailed description of the project, including size of project (e.g., in linear feet) and project delivery model (e.g., general contractor, construction manager at risk, design-build, etc.);
 - c. The initial scheduled completion date and the actual date services were completed or the current anticipated completion date;
 - d. Construction budget, change order amounts, and actual construction cost;
 - e. The firm's assigned team members for the project;
 - f. Other relevant information about the project and the firm's services;
 - g. The name, mailing address, and phone number of the client's project manager;
 - h. The name and mailing address of the general contractor; and
 - i. The name and phone number of the general contractor's project superintendent.
2. Past Performance with City – Describe the firm's past experience with the City, if any.

3. The responding firms are also requested to provide a proposed Project team that will most likely work on this Project. Members listed should include personnel from the partner-in-charge down to the engineer-in-training level. Sub-professional level employees not providing a significant role on the Project do not need to be included. A resume for each member of the team is needed and should detail relevant experience, length of service with the firm and job duties during his/her tenure, educational background, and professional background.
4. The City requests that the responding firms list their proposed sub-consultants and sub-consultants' role(s) on the Project. A detailed SOQ is not needed from each sub-consultant, but information showing the sub-consultant is an established competent firm with a good reputation in the field for which it will be used needs to be submitted.

F) Legal Claims and Change Order History - Weight Factor 3

1. Specific information about any legal claims asserted against the firm or its professional liability carrier within the last five years, including the resolution of the claim(s).
2. Specific information about any legal claims asserted by the firm within the last five (5) years, including the resolution of the claim(s).

While the City understands that there may be reticence to reveal too much information related to legal claims asserted against or by the firm – especially those still pending – the City asks responding firms to provide as much information as they feel they reasonably can or should in order to demonstrate that the firm is not party to an inordinately higher number of lawsuits and/or associated with projects that have experienced major issues due primarily to design errors/omissions. Your firm's score in this category may be adversely affected if you choose to provide minimal to no information for the above two criteria.

3. Any statistics kept internally on change order history, project completion, and budget considerations, recognizing that each change order is unique as to its causes. The City is interested in information that will show consideration of budget requirements and minimal changes during construction due to design errors/omissions.
 - a. Specifically, the City is looking for this information as it pertains to the construction contracts of the projects designed by your firm. We are NOT looking for this information as it relates to the engineering design contracts you possess with other clients.

G) Demonstration of Interest - Weight Factor 1

Such considerations as adequateness of material supplied to permit evaluation, quality of presentation, cooperation, concern, etc. will be included in this area.

SUBMITTALS

The City will accept SOQs until **4:00PM, local time, on Friday, February 20, 2026** at the City of Lancaster Stormwater Department, 121 East Chestnut Street, Suite 100, Lancaster, OH 43130. Either a hard copy submission or an electronic submission is acceptable.

Each firm who provides a hard copy submission of the SOQ shall submit a total of five (5) copies in a sealed envelope clearly marked on the outside “Statement of Qualifications for Professional Engineering Services, City of Lancaster Columbus Street & Wilson Avenue Sewer Separation Project.” Whether the SOQs are dropped off in person or sent via mail, they must be received by the Stormwater Department at or before the time identified above to be considered.

If electronic submission is chosen by a responding firm, all members of the City’s selection committee will be provided a printed copy of the SOQ in color on 8.5” x 11” paper, but we will not be able to guarantee the quality of the photos, figures, or anything else included in the SOQ. Electronic SOQ submissions must be sent via email to Stormwater Manager Steven Wellstead, P.E. at swellstead@lancasterohio.gov and must appear in the Inbox at or before the time identified above to be considered. The subject line of the email shall be identified as “Statement of Qualifications for Professional Engineering Services, City of Lancaster Columbus Street & Wilson Avenue Sewer Separation Project.”

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The City retains the option of rejecting or accepting any SOQ, at the City’s sole discretion. Firms submitting an SOQ will be evaluated and ranked in order of their qualifications for the Project, subject to the City’s absolute right to stop the process and refrain from entering into any contracts. The individual Project teams from select firms may be asked to meet with City representatives to present the firm’s qualifications and proposed approach for the Projects before final ranking and selection is made. If this occurs, the individual team members that will be involved with the Project must attend such meeting.

Upon selection of the firm determined to be most qualified to provide the requested services for the Project, the City reserves the right to negotiate the price for services to be provided with such firm.

Should a firm be selected and the City can not negotiate a contract with the selected firm ranked best qualified, the City shall inform the firm in writing of the termination of negotiations and enter into negotiations with the firm ranked next best qualified. If negotiations again fail, the same procedure shall be followed with each next best

qualified firm selected until a contract is negotiated. However, the City retains the right to reject every SOQ and initiate the process of obtaining a new SOQ from qualified engineering firms at a later date.

The successful engineering firm shall have no property interest or rights under the Agreement until the Agreement is executed by the Owner.

STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

The specific format of the SOQ shall be per the responding firm's judgment. In general, the SOQ shall be organized in a manner that will facilitate the evaluation of the responding firm under the criteria stated herein. It is desirable that the responding firm's SOQ specifically address each evaluation criteria. The City **strongly recommends** that the SOQ be separated into tabbed sections which correspond to the subsections provided in the Evaluation Criteria section of this RFQ. Additional information over what is listed for each criteria that is deemed relevant may also be submitted.

SCHEDULE

The City of Lancaster anticipates selecting its firm for the Project by the end of March 2026 and having contracts signed by the end May 2026. The City wants the design of the project completed by no later than January 2027 so a public bid opening can occur in February 2027 and the first phase of the project, at a minimum, can be fully constructed by no later than November of 2027. Responding firms shall keep this timeline in mind for their SOQ and ensure that they will have the resources available to meet this timeline.

MODELING

ARCADIS has developed a sewer system model that is the basis for the City's decisions related to the combined sewer system. If modeling is needed during design, the selected engineering firm will be expected to work with ARCADIS modelers as needed.

INTERVIEWS

The City will **NOT** be holding a pre-submittal meeting for this project. The City reserves the right to conduct face-to-face interviews with any, all, or none of the responding firms. In the event the City selection committee deems interviews necessary to select the best firm, the City will establish a meeting at a mutually acceptable time. In such cases, the City selection committee will meet with key members of the firm's proposed project team. It shall be the selection committee's sole decision on whether any interviews are held and with which firms interviews are held.

NOTICE OF POLICY

It is the policy of the City of Lancaster that all original design documents, construction tracings, reports, studies, and other data produced as a direct result of the services performed under the contract shall become the property of the City of Lancaster. Any copyrighting of material produced as a result of the services performed shall be in the City of Lancaster's name. Where licensed material is incorporated as an integral component of the services provided, the firm shall register the City as a licensed user and shall provide the City with one complete copy of the licensed material.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

All SOQs and subsequent Proposals received in response to the procurement documents will become the property of the City and will not be returned. Note that all information submitted in response to this RFQ is a public record, which will be made available for inspection as required by ORC 149.43 upon request at the conclusion of the selection process. Respondents recognize and agree that the City will not be responsible or liable in any way for any losses that the Respondent may suffer from the disclosure of information or materials to third parties.

Each engineering firm submitting qualifications or any other information as part of this selection process is responsible for all costs associated with preparing the submission and participating in the selection process.

The City may reject any or all qualification statements received or cancel this process at any time for any reason and the City will have no liability for taking such action. The City reserves the right to waive minor variations in the selection process.

Questions on the project should be directed to Stormwater Manager Steven Wellstead, P.E. at swellstead@lancasterohio.gov or (740) 681-5070 EXT 1311.

Advertised on January 16, 2026