

# **Alleghany County Water District Policies & Procedures**

## **Policy # 601 Selection & hiring of private consulting services**

It is the Policy of Alleghany County Water District (ACWD) to utilize a consistent method for hiring professional services of private architectural, landscape architectural, engineering, environmental, land surveying, or construction project management firms. The purpose of this method is to ensure that firms are selected based upon demonstrated competence and professional qualifications per California Government Code 4526.

These procedures are intended to assure that private services are engaged based on demonstrated competence and qualifications for the types of services to be performed and at a fair and reasonable price. Furthermore, these procedures shall assure maximum participation of small business firms, as defined by the Director of General Services pursuant to Section 14837.

These procedures specifically prohibit practices which might result in unlawful activity including, but not limited to, rebates, kickbacks, or other unlawful consideration, and also prohibit government agency employees from participating in the selection process when those employees have a relationship with a person or business entity seeking a contract.

### **Procedures:**

#### **Procedure 601.1 Appoint Selection Committee**

The ACWD Board of directors shall appoint a selection committee, to consist of no more than two board members, at least one water operator and the general manager or project manager. (If the district has a general engineer, the engineer will also be on the committee.)

The committee shall be authorized and responsible for carrying out or delegating the applicable procedures in this Policy and shall make a final hiring recommendation to the board of directors.

#### **Procedure 601.2 Prepare the Request for Proposals**

Follow the guidelines provided in Exhibit A to prepare the RFP.

#### **Procedure 601.3 Publish a legal notice**

Prepare a public notice to advertise the Request for Proposals (See Exhibit B for guidance) Publish the notice in at least one local newspaper of general circulation. Send the notice to local engineering firms which have been successfully utilized by county public works directors for design of water projects within the past ten years. Area professional engineering organizations and water associations may also have lists that can be utilized.

#### **Procedure 601.3 Rank the firms**

After the submittal deadline, the Selection Committee shall rank the potential firms based on consistent scoring criteria. (See Exhibits C and D for Evaluation Criteria and Reference Check samples).

**Scoring criteria** The table below (or something similar) should be used to score each firm, using a numeric value of 0 to 10 with 0 being the worst or not applicable and 10 being excellent. Individual selection committee members should score the firms then discuss differences in scores to arrive at an agreed upon final score. This method encourages discussion between committee members. The weight of each scored item in relation to the others shall be determined by the selection committee prior to scoring.

Criteria	Score	Notes
Qualifications and experience		Examine resumes and past jobs
References		Contact references and document see exhibit
Travel time to Alleghany		Best score would be an hour or less travel time
Availability		Include a question about availability & workload
Specialized qualifications		If any are needed or desired include them in RFP
SMALL Business “yes” or “no”	Yes/no	This is a “yes or no” answer.
Fair and Reasonable fees?	Yes/no	Lowest bidder is not a deciding factor, but fees must be determined to be “fair and reasonable”. Funding sources can help with this aspect.

Based upon an evaluation of the initial proposals received, lesser-qualified firms can be disqualified, leaving a short-list of three to five firms for further consideration.

The short-listed firms should be officially notified that they have been selected for further consideration. As a courtesy, the water system should also send a letter of thanks to those firms not selected for further consideration (See Exhibit E for Sample Memo to “Short-Listed” Firms for an Interview)

**Procedure 601.4 Interview the “short listed” firms**

Once the “short list” is ready interviews need to be scheduled. This can be done in person or remotely. The interview process shall utilize a standardized form and set of questions to help ensure that the firms are ranked consistently, using consistent criteria. Based upon the results of the interviews the selection committee shall choose the best qualified firm for the job.

See exhibit F for supplemental information and guidance.

**Procedure 601.5 Contract Preparation**

Once the best qualified firm is chosen by the committee, a draft contract for services shall be drawn up and reviewed by ACWD’s attorney.

The final contract for services must be approved by ACWD’s Board of Directors prior to execution. Board approval in the form of a Resolution is preferred.

NOTE: Exhibits are examples only and do not represent required formats.

Exhibit A SAMPLE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Alleghany County Water District

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**PROJECT NAME**

FOR

One or two sentence description of scope (for example Prepare plans and specifications)

Release Date:

PROPOSALS DUE:

**Alleghany County Water District  
PO Box 860  
Alleghany, CA 95910**

**Phone: 530-287-3204**

(note: email is the best method of contact)

**Email: [alleghanywater@gmail.com](mailto:alleghanywater@gmail.com)**

**Website: [alleghanywater.org](http://alleghanywater.org)**

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**ATTACHMENTs (maps, plans etc)**

## **SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION**

Alleghany County Water District (ACWD) is a small public utility whose mission is to:

## **SECTION 2 – SCOPE OF WORK**

### **General:**

(Summary of Scope of Work goes here)

The work shall comply with the requirements of all of the following, without limitation, and this RFP and any subsequent contract as incorporated herein by reference:

1. Federal laws
2. State laws
3. Sierra County laws

The Contractor shall obtain and maintain the following minimum insurance during the entire performance period. Before beginning on-site operations, the Contractor shall submit to ACWD evidence of insurance coverage. Certificates of insurance shall contain a thirty (30) day cancellation notice.

### **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

1. Contractor shall procure and maintain during performance of the contract and for the full period allowed by law, surviving the termination of Contract, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property, which may arise from or in connection with its performance.

#### **A. Minimum Scope of Insurance**

Coverage shall be at least as broad as:

1. Insurance Services Office ("ISO) Commercial General Liability Coverage Form No. CG 20 10 10 01 and Commercial General Liability Coverage – Completed Operations Form No. CG 20 37 10 01.
2. ISO Form No. CA 0001 (Ed. 1/87) covering Automobile Liability, Code 1 "any auto" or Code 8, 9 if no owned autos and endorsement CA 0025.
3. Worker's Compensation Insurance as required by the Labor Code of the State of California and Employers Liability Insurance.
4. Errors and Omissions liability insurance endorsed to include contractual liability.

B. Minimum Limits of Insurance: No less than

1. General Liability: \$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury and property damage. If Commercial General Liability Insurance or other form with a general aggregate limit is used, the general aggregate limit shall apply separately to the work performed under this work sought by this RFP, or the aggregate limit shall be twice the prescribed per occurrence limit.
2. Automobile Liability: \$1,000,000 combined single limit per accident for bodily injury and property damage.
3. Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability: Worker's compensation limits as required by the Labor Code of the State of California and Employers Liability limits of \$1,000,000 per accident.
4. Errors and Omissions liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

C. Deductibles and Self-Insured Retentions

Any deductibles or self-insured retentions must be declared to and approved by ACWD.

D. Other Insurance Provisions

The policies are to contain, or be endorsed to contain, the following provisions:

1. General Liability and Automobile Liability Coverages
  - a. ACWD, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers are to be covered as additional insureds as respects; liability arising out of activities performed by or on behalf of the Contractor, products and completed operations of the Contractor, premises owned, occupied or used by the Contractor, or automobiles owned, hired or borrowed by the Contractor for the full period of time allowed by law, surviving the termination of the Contract. The coverage shall contain no special limitations on the scope-of-protection afforded to ACWD, its officers, officials, employees or volunteers.
  - b. The Contractor's insurance coverage shall be primary insurance with any insurance or self-insurance maintained by ACWD, its officers, officials, employees or volunteers shall be in excess of the Contractor's insurance and shall not contribute with it.
  - c. Any failure to comply with reporting provisions of the policies shall not affect coverage provided to ACWD, its officers, officials, employees or volunteers.
  - d. The Contractor's insurance shall apply separately to each insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought, except with respect to the limits of the insurer's liability.
2. Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability Coverage

The insurer shall agree to waive all rights of subrogation against ACWD, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers for losses arising from Contractor's performance of the work.

### 3. Professional Liability Coverage

If written on a claims-made basis, the retroactivity date shall be the effective date of a Contract awarded pursuant to this RFP.

### 4. All Coverages

Each Insurance policy required by this clause shall be endorsed to state that coverage shall not be suspended, voided, canceled by either party, reduced in coverage or in limits except after thirty (30) days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the City.

#### E. Acceptability of Insurers

Insurance is to be placed with admitted California insurers with an A.M. Best's rating of no less than A- for financial strength, AA for long-term credit rating and AMB-1 for short-term credit rating.

#### F. Verification of Coverage

Prior to performing services under a contract awarded in response to this RFP, the Contractor shall furnish ACWD with Certificates of Insurance and with original Endorsements effecting coverage required by this Agreement. The Certificates and Endorsements for each insurance policy are to be signed by a person authorized by that insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. The Certificates and Endorsements are to be on forms provided or approved by ACWD. Where by statute, ACWD's Workers' Compensation - related forms cannot be used, equivalent forms approved by the Insurance Commissioner are to be substituted.

G. Subcontractors. Subcontractors must either be covered, as provided above, by Contractor's insurance policies or provide proof, satisfactory to ACWD, that they have equivalent coverage.

## **SECTION 3 – SERVICE TO BE PROVIDED**

The ACWD intends to retain a qualified and committed professional engineering firm/team to provide services required for (project description with a list of tasks goes here)

**SECTION 4 – BACKGROUND** Provide project background here.

## **SECTION 5 - PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Short project description goes here Preliminary Project Description: prepare a brief written description of the project. This helps interested engineering firms decide whether they are capable and qualified to perform the services needed. When the preliminary project description is properly written and communicated, it saves time, money and effort for both the water system and the interested firms.

The preliminary project description should include:

- The project name or identification and planned location
- Project description, including intended size, function, capacity and other general requirements. Is the project a renovation or modernization? Will it involve demolition, additions, new construction, or specialized studies?
- Preliminary project budget and anticipated funding sources.
- Key schedule milestones
- Unique requirements or restrictions such as zoning or known environmental problems.
- Special services to be provided by the engineering firm, such as feasibility studies, design, construction management, etc.

## **SECTION - 6 RFP SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

Please prepare your proposal in accordance with the following requirements:

(page limits if desired can be inserted here)

1. Transmittal Letter: The proposal shall be transmitted with a cover letter describing the firm's/team's interest and commitment to the proposed project. The letter shall state that the proposal shall be valid for a 90-day period and should include the name, title, address and telephone number of the individual to whom correspondence and other contacts should be directed during the contractor selection process. The person authorized by the firm/team to negotiate a contract with ACWD **MUST** sign the proposal and be identified in the proposal. Address the cover letter as follows:

Alleghany County Water District  
PO Box 860  
Alleghany, CA 95910.

2. Project Understanding: This section shall clearly convey that the Contractor or Consultant understands of the nature of the work, including coordination with and approvals from ACWD.

3. Approach and Management Plan: This section shall provide the firm's/team's proposed approach and management plan for providing the services.

4. Qualifications and Experience: The proposal shall provide the qualifications and experience of the contracting team (project name here) Please emphasize the specific qualifications and experience



from projects similar to this project for the Key Team Members. Key Team Members are expected to be committed for the duration of the project.

5. Work Plan and Schedule: (fill out as appropriate to the scope of work)

6. References: The Firm must provide at least three references (names and current phone numbers) from recent work (previous five years) similar to the **(Project name)** and shall include a brief description of each project associated with the reference as well as the role of the identified team member.

7. Cost Proposal: A cost proposal should be submitted titled "NAME OF PROJECT" Contractor or Consultant Cost Proposal." The cost submittal should indicate the number of anticipated hours/costs by the Project Manager and Key Team Members. The estimated level of hours/costs for other staff can be summarized in general categories. NOTE: Hours/costs for each sub-Contractor shall be included in the cost proposal. Also, please include a list of personnel positions proposed for performance of the services and the hourly salary range of each classification (including sub-Contractors)..

Submittal of Proposals: Proposals should be emailed in PDF format to: [alleghanywater@gmail.com](mailto:alleghanywater@gmail.com)

**Proposals due: TIME AND DATE**

Any questions related to this RFP shall be submitted, by email to ACWD General Manager, [alleghanywater@gmail.com](mailto:alleghanywater@gmail.com). Questions shall be submitted before TIME AND DATE.

**SECTION 7 - EVALUATION OF Contractor Or Consultant**

The proposals will be evaluated and scored on a point system basis using the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and specific experience.
2. Project understanding and approach, including an understanding of ACWD approval and coordination processes.
3. Experience with similar types of projects.
4. Satisfaction of previous clients.
5. Schedule and capacity to provide qualified personnel.
6. Preference shall be given to small businesses and those within a closer drive time to Alleghany.
7. Proposed fees must be fair and reasonable, but firm selection shall not be predicated on the lowest fees.

**SECTION 8 – SELECTION PROCESS DATES**

ACWD will rank the proposals on (date) and notify the firms that have been selected for interviews. A courtesy notice will be sent to the firms not chosen for interviews.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
RFP Issued	
Deadline for Clarifications/Inquiries	
Deadline for Proposal Submittal	
Award of Contract (tentative)	
Issue Notice to Proceed (tentative)	

**ATTACHMENT 1 – MAPS, PLANS ETC can be included as attachments**

PUBLIC NOTICE SAMPLE

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**ENGINEERING FIRM CONSULTANTS**

**(Project Name) RFP**

Alleghany County Water District (ACWD) in Sierra County, California is requesting Proposals provide (include all that apply) [construction plans, specifications, bid documents including assistance with the bid process, contract administration, construction oversight, and inspection services] for one project consisting of

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*(Provide brief description, including:  
Description of the project  
Location of project  
Purpose of the project / What does project accomplish  
Section process for the project)*

Request for \_\_ packets may be obtained at (Location), through the (Title of Person or Department responsible for distribution of RFP or RFQ). All proposals must be received at (Location Name), (Street Address for Submittal), no later than (Time AM/PM), on (Day of Week), (Month, Date, Year). (suggest using email or the district's website)

ACWD reserves the right to reject any or all (Proposals) received.

If you have any questions please contact (Name), at (Phone Number, Extension) or (email)

## **Exhibit C**

### **Sample Evaluation Criteria**

The primary considerations are *relevant experience* in the types of services needed and *demonstrated ability to serve in a timely and effective manner*. The basic criteria you will be evaluating during the evaluation process include:

**Knowledge** – The engineer should have specialized education or training in the aspect of public water system planning or engineering that the small water system needs.

**Experience** – The engineer should have professional engineering experience with similar water system projects for a similar size system. If your system has a specific issue, such as a violation of Maximum Contaminant Level, then the engineering firm selected should have specific knowledge and experience with the treatment technologies available to remove such contaminants.

**Ability to Serve** – The engineer should demonstrate that sufficient uncommitted time and other resources are available to perform the services within the time needed by the water system

**Communication** – The engineer should demonstrate the ability to communicate in a thorough and timely manner as needed to keep the water system fully and satisfactorily informed.

**References** – the engineer should provide three or more references from previous clients for water system engineering performed. In addition to a contact person, you may want to ask for information about the type of project, the year the project was undertaken, the total actual versus estimated cost of the project, and the name of the engineer in charge of the project.

Each firm that submitted a statement of qualifications should be evaluated based on its experience on similar projects, expertise of its key professional staff, its physical resources and facilities for conducting the necessary engineering work, references, and factors unique to the project scope, such as experience with contaminant removal treatment, seismic safety design, past performance on similar projects etc.

**Exhibit D**  
**Sample Reference Check**

This form is designed for the Selection Committee to check references of "short-listed" firms.

Project \_\_\_\_\_  
*(for which the selection is being made)*

Engineering Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
*(for which the reference check is being conducted)*

Reference Information:

Water System \_\_\_\_\_ Project Referenced \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Person Contacted \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the scope of this firm's services? (soil investigations, design work, construction phase services, studies, other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was this firm's Project Manager or primary contact? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When was the project completed? \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS**

**CIRCLE ONE**

- |  |       |         |      |
|--|-------|---------|------|
| 4. Was the project completed on time?  | YES   | NO      |      |
| 5. Was the project completed within budget?  | YES   | NO      |      |
| 6. Did this firm and you (the owner) work well as a team?  | YES   | NO      |      |
| 7. Did this firm cover all of the project's requirements?  | YES   | NO      |      |
| 8. Would you use this firm on a similar project in the future?                                     | YES   | NO      |      |
| 9. Do you or your system have a personal relationship with<br>this engineering firm key personnel? | YES   | NO      |      |
| 10. How would you rate this firm's qualifications and fee structure?                               | POOR  | AVERAGE | GOOD |
| 11. What is your overall evaluation of this firm based on your experience?                         | _____ |         |      |
| 12. Other questions/comments?  | _____ |         |      |

**Exhibit E**

**SAMPLE MEMO TO "SHORT-LISTED" FIRMS FOR AN INTERVIEW**

TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Engineering Firm)*

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Water System)*

PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

RE: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SHORT-LISTED  
FIRMS

Congratulations! Your firm has been chosen to be interviewed by our Selection Committee.  
Please find the following attached:

Copies of \_\_\_\_\_ for your information and review  
*(name of studies, reports, or site map)*

Each firm will be allowed approximately 45 minutes to present their qualifications and answer questions. At the completion of the interviews, the committee will rank the firms. The firm deemed to be most qualified will then be invited to define the scope of work and negotiate contract terms. If contract terms cannot be reached, the firm deemed the next most qualified will be invited for scope definition and contract negotiation.

A tour of the site (if appropriate) will be held on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Date) a.m./p.m.*

Interviews will be held at \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Location)*

The date and time of interview is: \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Date) a.m./p.m.*

Confirm arrangements with \_\_\_\_\_ at ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Contact name) (Phone number)*

## Exhibit F

### Sample Interview Questionnaires & supplemental advice

- What experience does your firm have in working with water system such as ours?
- What other water system have you worked with in the state?
- Are you familiar with our situation and the local area to know some of the particular needs we have?
- What is the design philosophy of your firm? Are you willing to look at innovative and/or alternative designs?
- What do you see as your duty as part of this project? Are there specific or itemized services that you do not provide? Detail services you will provide in addition to design plans and specifications.
- Are you familiar with the various funding programs in the state for water as they relate to water system/special districts? What has been your experience in working with these funding agencies before? Has your firm assisted water system/special districts with grant writing and the application preparation? What has been success rate of those applications?
- Who specifically in your firm would be working directly with our board? Have they worked with other water system /special districts?
- What other projects are you currently working on that could take precedence and time away from our project? Is your firm under any time constraints for this year?
- How much of the work on our project would be subcontracted?  
If we select your firm, would it be acceptable for the firm to accept liability for the design of the project?
- If we select your firm, would it be acceptable for the firm to accept liability for the design of the project? If so, what would you have to do to assume that liability?

## Exhibit F supplemental information

By interviewing representatives of each of the short-listed firms, the water system selection committee has the opportunity to compare each firm's interpretation and understanding of the project. The interview provides an important insight into each engineering firm's management style and communications abilities. When the firms are invited to the interview, request the staff who will be working on the project attend. It helps to know the individuals who will be working with your system and what the philosophy of the engineering team members will be toward the project. For example, if the firm's president attends the interview, but will not actually work with your water system during your planning, design, and construction phases, you may not have the outcome anticipated if you rely on the committee impression of the president.

It is helpful for the water system to conduct a tour of the project prior to the interview. The firm can better prepare their proposals in preparation for the interview. If site visits are provided, each firm should be given equal opportunity for a tour prior to the interview.

The following are suggested guidelines for setting up and conducting the interviews:

- Allow approximately one hour for each interview and at least 15 minutes between interviews. Set time limits for firm's presentation (e.g. 30 to 40 minutes) and allow 10 to 15 minutes for questions from the committee. The time allowed for interviews should be tailored to the complexity of the project
- Schedule all of the interviews on the same day if possible. This enables the committee to compare all of the interviewed firms while information is fresh in their minds and ensures consistent interview scoring
- Ask each candidate firm the same questions (*see Exhibit G for Sample Interview Questionnaires*). This will give the committee members a better feel for differences or similarities in the approach and ability of each engineering firm
- The water system should not discuss fees for professional services during the interview process

### ***Final Ranking Process:***

It is critical that evaluation of the short list of firms be as fair and impartial as possible. For this reason the selection committee should rate each firm by using a standard form that lists the significant selection criteria.

The selection committee chairman should notify the firm that is rated most highly overall that it has been selected to receive the contract, pending agreement on the scope of service and the fee for those services. The other short-listed firms should be notified of the final ranking, as well.