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Merced Irrigation District

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Merced Integrated Water Management Plan

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks consulting services for the development of an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) for the Merced Region (Region). The Region's proposed hydro-geologic boundaries were conditionally accepted by California's Department of Water Resources (DWR) through the Region Acceptance Process (RAP) on November 23, 2009 and was further authorized to pursue a grant to prepare the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan for the Region on July 7, 2010. The Region, as designated by DWR, lies within the San Joaquin River Funding Region. It is chiefly comprised of the Merced Groundwater Basin with components of the Merced River Watershed for its length that is north and contiguous with the Merced Groundwater Basin.

The RFP is advanced by the Merced Irrigation District (MID) on behalf of the Merced Area Groundwater Pool Interests (MAGPI), comprised of 15 municipal and agricultural water purveyors and special districts operating within Merced Groundwater Basin in eastern Merced county.

Merced County (County)

City of Atwater

Winton Water and Sanitary District

Planada Community Service District

Black Rascal Water Company

Stevinson Water District

Turner Island Water District

Lone Tree Mutual Water Company

City of Merced

City of Livingston

Meadowbrook Water Company

Le Grand Community Service District

Merced Irrigation District (MID)

Le Grand Athlone Water District

East Merced Resource Conservation District EMRCD)

The MAGPI group intends to develop an IRWMP (the Plan) that is the product of a collaborative, multi-stakeholder process that addresses water issues of the Region. Further, the MAGPI group expects that developing outreach processes will be a key activity in the Plan development.

Overview

The 15 MAGPI Partners each signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) forming an association in 1997. Three MAGPI member agencies formed the early core of the IRWM in order to pursue a planning grant from the DWR. These agencies are Merced County, the City of Merced, and the Merced Irrigation District.

The core group hosted public outreach efforts to assess the public interest in the Merced IRWM and further developed a list of interested parties. Initially, MAGPI meetings became the venue to discuss Merced regional acceptance process options. The preparation of the content and technical work of the RAP was completed by agency staff.

The Plan core group membership was approved by MAGPI members. A MAGPI member technical committee was formed to pursue funding from the State of California's Department of Water Resources (DWR), Proposition 84, Integrated Regional Water Management Program. A proposal for Planning Funds (PPF) for the Merced Integrated Regional Water Management Plan was submitted to DWR on September 28, 2010. DWR awarded the Merced IRWM \$719,010 on February 26, 2011 for Merced's IRWMP development. In addition to DWR funds, core group staff will contribute time to specific tasks as delineated in the PPF. MAGPI expects that the governance concepts outlined in the RAP submittal and the Plan will be observed as it relates to the Merced IRWMP collaborative effort.

Scope of Services

The successful proposal will produce an IRWMP for the Merced Area per DWR's latest requirements on IRWMPs, the Merced Region RAP, and this RFP.

The DWR approved IRWMP identifies the components of the Work Plan for bidding purposes. Note – Periodic assessments of the selected consultant(s) performance will be reviewed by the contracting authority to ensure the project is on time, within budget, and work product quality is acceptable. The IRWMP can be downloaded using (<http://www.mercedirwmp.org> under "Forms and Documents")

Schedule

A preliminary schedule of deliverables is provided in the IRWMP for bidding purposes. Note – Deliverable schedules, in part or whole, may require revision contingent upon DWR contract awards and timelines.

Roles & Responsibilities

Merced Irrigation District has issued this RFP and is acting as coordinating agency on behalf of the MAGPI group. Merced Irrigation District will handle contract administration and program management for the work performed under the contract that is subsequently awarded. Any additional work not included under the Scope of Work shall be authorized by Merced Irrigation District upon direction from the Core Group.

Consultant Qualifications

MAGPI seeks consulting services from firms that can demonstrate experience and expertise in regional and watershed planning, IRWM planning, stakeholder coordination, Disadvantaged Community outreach and the IRWMP grant application process. Firms must demonstrate knowledge of Merced area water issues and interrelationships; familiarity with San Joaquin River Basin water issues is desired.

Proposal Format

There is no page limit for the proposal; however, it should be focused and concise, without extraneous material. The proposal should be divided into sections as outlined below and presented in 12-point type:

Description of Services—identify those services that are needed to accomplish the scope of work and limit your description only to those services needed for the scope of work. Any suggestions, modifications or improvements to the proposed scope of work are encouraged.

Project Approach—provide a detailed discussion of the project as your firm understands it, indicating the critical factors required for success. Discuss the approach to be taken to the project, providing detailed discussion of activities related to both planning and stakeholder outreach.

Statement of Qualifications—discuss the firm’s qualifications to perform the tasks described in the scope of work, especially as they relate to the firm’s experience in regional and watershed planning, IRWM planning, stakeholder coordination, conflict resolution, Disadvantaged Community outreach and IRWMP grant application. Demonstrate that the firm has the qualifications needed to support the project approach that it recommends.

Firm Experience—describe the firm’s experience on similar projects, providing in-depth discussion of experience in the IRWM planning arena.

Project Team—identify staff that will be on the project team and the role that each will play. Include each individual’s professional qualifications, work experience and direct experience with IRWM planning. Identify whether professionals are firm staff or contracted staff.

Budget—provide estimated fees, including materials, professional services, travel, profit, and all other costs and expenses for the proposed project. Include an itemized fee schedule, as the basis for all proposed services. Firms are reminded of the budgetary pressures under which public agencies operate and are encouraged to hold hourly rates to competitive levels. Fees shall be submitted separately in a sealed envelope and marked “Budget Proposal for the Merced IRWMP”. All envelopes will be opened and reviewed as part of the evaluation process.

Schedule—provide a schedule with milestones for completing the tasks identified in the scope of work. The schedule should include any tasks not under the consultant’s direct control.

Authorization—provide the firm’s commitment to the proposal, its cost and schedule by way of an authorized signature.

References—provide five references with contact information for which work has been completed within the last five years. Of the five references, at least three shall be IRWMP-related projects.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined below. In evaluating proposals, MAGPI emphasis will be on demonstrated experience, rather than description of concepts.

- Responsiveness to the RFP
- Project approach and technical understanding
- Understanding of Merced Area Water Management Region water issues
- Completeness and implementability of the project
- Ability to complete tasks in the scope on schedule
- Experience and qualifications of the assigned individuals in preparing similar projects
- Experience and qualifications of the firm in the following:
 - Stakeholder projects
 - Regional planning

- Water quality
- Salts and nutrients
- Climate Change
- Interaction and rapport with the Disadvantaged Community/s
- Data acquisition and analysis
- DWR grant application process
- Project management qualifications of the firm and staff with respect to:
 - Committee coordination
 - Facilitation techniques and skills
 - Demonstrated completion per schedule
 - Cost and schedule
 - Coordination and reporting
 - Conflict resolution
- Evaluation of cost will be based on:
 - Clarity and completeness of the breakdown of costs and explanation
 - Appropriateness of proposed fee structure and anticipated value and quality of services received
 - Total cost compared to the value of products and services

Selection Process

The Core Group on behalf of MAGPI will carefully review all proposals and select as many as five firms for in-person interviews. Criteria for the selection include but are not limited to, consideration of the consultant's qualifications and IRWMP experience, the consultant's understanding and approach to the project, and the negotiated fee for services.

Because this matter concerns a personal services contract, MID as the lead agency reserves the right to award the contract to the firm, which, in its sole judgment can best accomplish the desired results and may accept a bid that is not the lowest bid. MID may reject all proposals, if it so chooses.

Accuracy

Proposals that are incomplete, irregular or conditional may be rejected by MID.

Consultant Selection Schedule

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| May 11, 2011 | Window of opportunity for submitting email questions regarding RFP and Scope of Work. |
| May 15, 2011 | An email with all questions and answers will be sent to all firms. |
| May 31, 2011 | Proposals due |
| June 6, 2011 | First screening, resulting in invitation to interviews or elimination from process |
| June 13, 2011 | Conduct interviews |
| June 20, 2011 | Identify first choice, negotiate time and fee schedule |
| June 23, 2011 | Obtain MAGPI approval |
| June 30, 2011 | Execute agreement |

Submittals

Proposals shall be submitted by 4:00 p.m. on Friday May 31, 2011 and delivered to:

Hicham Eltal,

Merced Irrigation District, Deputy General Manager
744 West 20th Street
Merced, CA 95340

Please submit five written copies and five in CD format. Questions relating to the RFP or Scope of Work may be directed to Crystal Alves at (209) 722-5761 or via email at calves@mercedid.org