



Procedures for Selection of Professional Service Providers

October 1, 2025

I. Background

The City of Sunbury recognizes the need for specialized technical expertise in various projects and seeks assistance from professional service providers ("consultants") to complete the required work efficiently and effectively. To ensure fairness, transparency, and compliance with the laws and regulations of the State of Ohio, the City has established a Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) process. This process aligns with the legal and ethical standards governing professional services procurement and adheres to the Charter of the City of Sunbury.

Quality-Based Selection (QBS) is a procurement method that prioritizes the qualifications and expertise of service providers over cost considerations in the initial selection phase. This process is widely recognized for its ability to secure high-quality professional services, particularly in engineering, architecture, and other technical fields. The primary objective of QBS is to identify and engage the most qualified consultant based on their experience, technical expertise, and ability to meet the City's specific project needs.

II. Selection Process

A. The City employs two primary methods for selecting consultants:

1. Open Solicitation and Competitive Selection (Traditional QBS Process)

- This method involves publicly soliciting and advertising for Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) from interested consultants. Through a structured evaluation process, the City assesses the qualifications of each firm and selects the most qualified firm/team to undertake the project.

2. On-Call List Selection

- To streamline procurement for smaller projects and reduce solicitation costs, the City maintains an On-Call List of pre-qualified consultants categorized by specific service areas. When a need arises, firms are selected directly from the relevant category of the On-Call List, ensuring efficiency while maintaining quality standards.

B. The selection procedures incorporate flexibility regarding submission requirements, evaluation criteria, and the composition of the Selection Committee, enabling a tailored approach that aligns with project-specific needs.

III. Open Solicitation and Request for Statements of Qualifications (SOQs)

A. For professional services contracts exceeding \$200,000, the City issues a Request for Statements of Qualifications (RFSOQs), also referred to as a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Notices of RFQs are published on the City's website to attract qualified consultants.

B. Consultants must submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) package, adhering to the guidelines specified in the RFQ.

C. A Selection Committee evaluates the submitted SOQs, scoring and ranking them based on responsiveness, expertise, and alignment with the City's requirements.

D. The City may:

1. Directly select the highest-ranked consultant based on SOQ evaluations.
2. Shortlist at least three top-ranked firms for further assessment, which may include:
 - o Submission of technical proposals
 - o Presentations and interviews
 - o Any additional elements deemed beneficial to the selection process
3. The Selection Committee will aggregate scores and rankings to determine the most qualified consultant.

E. The City retains the right to reject all submittals and either re-advertise or employ alternative selection strategies as deemed appropriate.

IV. On-Call List Development and Management

A. The City solicits SOQs every three years to establish an On-Call List, advertising the opportunity on its website. The solicitation occurs in even-numbered years, with the list finalized by December 30, becoming effective from January 1 of the following year for a three-year term. Firms may request to remain on the on-call list for one additional cycle without updating their SOQs.

B. The On-Call List is categorized based on anticipated service needs, including but not limited to:

- Roadway and Multi-Modal Transportation
- Traffic Engineering and Street Lighting
- Sanitary and Wastewater Systems
- Water Distribution Systems
- Stormwater Management
- Environmental Studies
- Construction Administration and Inspection
- Architectural and Structural Engineering
- Surveying, GIS, and Geotechnical Services
- Telecommunication and Fiber Systems
- Right-of-way, Easement, and Land Acquisition/Appraisals
- Plan Review and General Consulting Services

C. Consultants must submit detailed SOQs addressing firm qualifications, relevant experience, key personnel, grant award/application history, and a commitment to timely service delivery. Include a cover letter with the list above for the categories in the submittal. An *asterisk may be placed next to no more than four categories to highlight areas of expertise and/or local central Ohio office staff specialties. SOQs shall highlight this emphasis in the examples provided. The City may choose to remove this designation for any reason.

D. The Selection Committee reviews and scores submissions, selecting firms for the On-Call List. Assignments are negotiated at the time of need, with a contractual fee limit of \$350,000 per three-year term.

E. The City reserves the right to extend a firm's placement on the On-Call List for one additional three-year period if deemed beneficial, without requiring resubmission of SOQs.

V. On-Call Assignments

A. Level 1 Assignments (< \$75,000):

- The City may directly select a consultant from the On-Call List or employ alternative selection methods.

B. Level 2 Assignments (\$75,000 - \$200,000):

- The City selects at least three consultants to submit technical proposals for review by the Selection Committee.
- Based on evaluations, the highest-ranked consultant is selected, or further assessments (presentations/interviews) may be conducted.

VI. Selection Committee

The Selection Committee comprises at least three members, including a Director/Department Head and the City Administrator or Assistant City Administrator. The City Administrator or designee provides final approval of selections. Other departments may decide to follow a QBS process similar to this document, therefore designating their own selection committee.

VII. Contract Negotiations

Upon selecting the most qualified consultant, the City negotiates contract terms, scope, and fees. If an agreement cannot be reached, negotiations move to the next highest-ranked firm.

VIII. Contract Modifications

Amendments to existing contracts secured through this process are considered compliant with QBS best practices and City procurement policies.

IX. Compatibility with Other Selection Processes

Consultants on the On-Call List may participate in open solicitations. Conversely, consultants with existing contracts may seek On-Call List inclusion.

X. Institutional Oversight

Following consultant selection, the City Engineer or Selection Committee Chairperson documents the selection process, including scoring records. This information is retained by the Finance Department and the project file for transparency and accountability.

XI. Emergency Provisions

In emergencies requiring immediate action, the City Administrator and City Engineer may bypass the standard QBS process to protect public safety. The City Administrator must notify City Council within 30 days of contract execution.
