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## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR SOLAR  
DEVELOPMENT

APRIL 30, 2025

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REND LAKE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT  
11231 MARCUM BRANCH ROAD  
BENTON, ILLINOIS 62812  
(618) 439-4321

# **SECTION I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Rend Lake Conservancy District (RLCD) is inviting qualified firms to submit their qualifications to complete a solar feasibility study for various RLCD properties. The study will provide an in-depth analysis to identify the required planning, technical feasibility, and related services for the potential development of solar Photovoltaic (PV) installations on six (6) identified facilities. The information will be used to determine if further steps toward developing a project(s) is feasible and/or warranted.

This RFQ is seeking firms that have demonstrated experience in studying, planning, designing, cost estimating, scheduling, permitting, system monitoring, and maintaining similar complete solar PV systems. This proposal will be for the feasibility study only; should it be determined that the RLCD will move forward with project development, a separate RFP may be issued for design services and construction administration.

## **PROPOSED SCHEDULE**

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|----------------------------------|----------------|
| • Issue RFQ                      | April 30, 2025 |
| • Final date to submit questions | May 19, 2025   |
| • RLCD Due Date for Responses    | May 23, 2025   |
| • Proposals Due                  | May 30, 2025   |

## **PROPOSAL FORMAT**

Proposals shall be prepared in concise detail to permit the RLCD to evaluate your firm's understanding of the scope of this RFQ. In addition, your proposal should include:

- **Description:** A description of your firm. Include the name, size, legal status (corporation, partnership, etc.), professional registration/certification, major type of activity or areas of consulting. Please include any signatory agreements that may be in place with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and/or other trade unions.
- **Experience:** The RLCD is looking for a firm that has proven experience in developing similar types of solar projects. Include a list of similar projects that your firm has worked on in the past five years. Attach a separate sheet for each project, up to five (maximum) giving a brief description of each project, the firm's

participation, and a client contact reference and phone number. We are seeking firms that have the following experience:

- Experience performing solar energy site assessments including structural analyses.
  - Experience with economic analysis for governmental units that are tax-exempt.
  - Experience related to electrical engineering design. Relevant design experience should include industrial facilities with three phase low and medium voltages, and large induction alternating current (AC) motors.
  - Experience related to feasibility evaluation, preparing construction documents, or developing “Power Purchase Agreements” (PPA) for solar energy installations.
  - Experience with securing and managing state and federal incentives.
  - Experience with a range of installation methods to include ground-mounted, rooftop mounted, or solar canopies.
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- Organization and Staff Experience: Include an organizational structure of the project team, including any sub-consultants to be used for this project. Include the name of the principal in-charge of this project along with the name, occupation and title of the Project Manager who will oversee this project.
  - Implementation: Include a proposed timeline and schedule to develop and produce a feasibility study that addresses the PROJECT DESCRIPTION/SCOPE as described in Section II in this RFQ.
  - Fiscal Relationships: Identify any fiscal relationships your firm has with companies that sell, install, or operate solar energy systems or offer PPA services.
  - Fee Proposal: The RLCD is treating this RFQ as a qualifications-based selection process and will not be evaluating proposed fees as a selection criterion. An evaluation committee will review and score all proposals and interview the highest ranked firms. A final scope of work and fee proposal will be negotiated with the most-qualified firm.

## **EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked on the following criteria:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. Quality and responsiveness of the proposal      | 30% |
| 2. Project approach and understanding of project   | 30% |
| 3. Qualifications and experience of assigned staff | 30% |
| 4. Implementation plan and proposed schedule       | 10% |

Proposals will be evaluated by a team of RLCD employees. Depending on the number and quality of submitted proposals, the RLCD may conduct interviews of a short-list of firms. The RLCD reserves the right to accept or reject any, and all proposals. If RLCD and consultant agree to contract terms, a schedule of values to determine payment milestones will be negotiated. RLCD allows for monthly invoicing on net 30 terms.

Proposals will be received by the Rend Lake Conservancy District, 11231 Marcum Branch Road, Benton, Illinois, 62812; Attn: Gary Williams, General Manager, [gm@rendlake.org](mailto:gm@rendlake.org). Deadline for submittal is 4:00 PM, May 30, 2025. The RLCD will accept hard copy or email submittals in (.pdf) format. The RLCD reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any informality or technicality in any proposal in the interest of the RLCD. RLCD reserves the right to issue written addenda. All addenda will be emailed to respondents who register via [gm@rendlake.org](mailto:gm@rendlake.org).

## **SECTION II**

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION / SCOPE**

Once selected, the consultant will assist the RLCD to explore the feasibility of developing solar energy at several identified facilities that have the following energy usages. The RLCD and Consultant will enter into a standard Professional Services Agreement where the final scope will be defined.

Facility	Address	Load (kWh/year)
Water Treatment Plant & Admin Building	11228 Marcum Branch Road, Benton, IL	10,059,300
Rend Lake Event Center	14967 Gun Creek Trail, Whittington, IL	191,506
Seasons Lodge	12575 Golf Course Drive, Whittington, IL	217,120
Seasons Condominiums	12596 Golf Course Drive, Whittington, IL	281,178
Clubhouse & Restaurant/Golf Maintenance	12476 Golf Course Drive, Whittington, IL	157,200
Sewer Plant	511 E. Main Street, Ewing, IL	290,758

See **Appendix A** for monthly breakdown.

### **TECHNICAL ANALYSIS & RISK ASSESSMENT**

- Your firm shall determine what portions of the sites could be used for a solar PV system, as well as any risks associated with a PV installation on-site including the feasibility of installing rooftop and/or ground- mount solar PV systems.
- Perform fieldwork to collect information and review existing conditions to include but not limited to the following:
  - Accessibility for maintenance
  - Shading
  - Roof Condition
  - Electrical
  - Vandalism risk
  - Structural considerations
- Solar irradiance and the need or benefit of solar tracking and/or energy storage devices shall be evaluated.
- Technical analysis of the existing site electrical infrastructure and any risks or requirements for upgrades shall be determined. Potential interconnection points shall be identified.

- Since funding source may include Federal grants which encourage “buy-American”, including but not limited to the Build America Buy America Act (BABA), the availability and performance of American-made components shall be determined.
- Identification of principal project risks (including but not limited to system underperformance, electrical safety, supply constraints, procurement timeline and severe weather impacts) and potential mitigation strategies shall be determined and reported.
- Your firm should present alternative installation techniques that could mitigate problems with site placement or building structural deficiencies such as solar canopies over parking areas.

## **CURRENT ENERGY USAGE & ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

- Your firm shall evaluate current energy usage, power needs, and usage profiles to define an optimal solar PV project size for each site.
- The analysis shall verify system square footage requirements and include a business and economic case to move forward.
- Identify and recommend potential sources of external funding or incentives that could be used to support a solar PV project(s).
- The energy analysis shall include estimated annual potential for photovoltaic energy production (kWh), the estimated financial value of the energy generated, estimated upfront cost for the photovoltaic system after any applicable incentives, eligible funding sources, and/or grants, operating and maintenance costs, and payback analysis for each installation option.
- Economic analysis must use reasonable performance expectations and include lifetime degradation.
- All costs and infrastructure needs for safe system installation and grid connectivity of any potential sites identified for a photovoltaic system shall be addressed.
- Front-of- or behind-the-meter alternatives, as well as ownership options, shall be evaluated and compared.
- Financial analysis should cover current federal incentives and how the current regulatory environment at local/state/federal levels may affect future incentives.

## **REVIEW & COORDINATION**

- Your firm shall review and report applicable federal, state, county and city regulations and statutes, as well as local utility requirements,

pertaining to photovoltaic systems, including a review of PPAs in Illinois.

- Your firm will need to engage the local energy providers (Ameren and Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperative) early in the process to understand current utility tariffs and programs for renewable energy installations, as well as interconnection requirements with the utility.
- An overview of the interconnection, Environmental Assessment, permitting and procurement processes shall be provided, along with an estimated timeline for a PV project at each site.

### **CONSULTANT DELIVERABLES**

- Identify and summarize the RLCD's options regarding ownership of the solar infrastructure.
- Provide a tentative timeframe to complete the study.
- Present preliminary study to RLCD staff for review and comment.
- Compile study results in a report and present the findings and recommendations to the RLCD Board of Trustees.

### **RLCD RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To review and provide input on the consultant's preliminary and final concepts in a timely manner.
- To make available to the consultant any drawings and specifications of previous projects.
- Make payments for design services within 30 days of receiving invoice.

## **PUBLIC RECORDS AND REQUESTS FOR CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT:**

Submittals of Qualifications become the property of the RLCD and will not be returned, including late submissions. All submittals of qualifications will be open to the public under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") (5 ILCS 140) and other applicable laws and rules, unless Offeror requests in its Submittal of Qualifications that the RLCD treat certain information as confidential. A request for confidential treatment will not supersede the RLCD's legal obligations under FOIA. The RLCD will not honor requests to keep entire submissions confidential. Offerors must show the specific grounds in FOIA or other law or rule that support confidential treatment. Regardless, the RLCD will disclose the successful Offeror's name, the substance of the Offer, and the price upon final contract award, if requested. If Offeror requests confidential treatment, Offeror must submit one additional copy of the Submittal of Qualifications with proposed confidential information redacted. In a separate attachment, Offeror shall supply a listing of the provisions identified by section number for which it seeks confidential treatment, identify the statutory basis under Illinois law for exemption from public disclosure, and include a detailed justification for exempting the information from public disclosure. Offeror will hold harmless and indemnify the RLCD for all costs or damages associated with the RLCD defending Offeror's request for confidential treatment. Offeror agrees the RLCD may copy the Submittal of Qualifications to facilitate evaluation, or to respond to requests for public records. Offeror warrants that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party.



<b>APPENDIX A</b>							
	<b>Admin &amp; WTP</b>	<b>Event Center</b>	<b>Lodge</b>	<b>Condos</b>	<b>Clubhouse</b>	<b>STP</b>	<b>STP Aerators</b>
<b>March</b>	838,800	13,260	12,000	19,899	5,760	6,999	47
<b>April</b>	792,900	5,551	12,160	14,358	9,240	2,643	46
<b>May</b>	812,700	4,933	16,640	19,259	14,280	1,087	29,768
<b>June</b>	864,900	7,364	20,800	27,295	17,760	3,029	41,399
<b>July</b>	836,100	7,003	21,920	22,056	18,600	2,411	37,394
<b>August</b>	928,800	6,258	22,080	20,509	16,320	1,720	36,209
<b>September</b>	800,100	4,839	20,640	21,618	15,120	1,559	39,991
<b>October</b>	810,900	7,247	15,200	14,367	11,640	15,27	36,606
<b>November</b>	774,900	13,800	13,760	15,070	9,840	2,502	23,227
<b>December</b>	866,700	33,727	23,680	34,507	15,240	7,190	52
<b>January</b>	889,200	49,137	21,440	41,291	13,800	7,997	49
<b>February</b>	843,300	38,387	16,800	30,949	9,600	7,261	45
<b>12 Month kWh Total</b>	10,059,300	191,506	217,120	281,178	157,200	45,925	244,833
<b>Monthly Average</b>	838,275	15,959	18,093	23,432	13,100	3,827	20,403