



October 11, 2024

To All Bidders:

Subject: **Bid No. CR-8291-W5, SQL Database Administration & Consulting Services / DoIT**

ADDENDUM NO. 1

To Whom It May Concern:

With reference to our bid request relative to the above subject, please refer to the changes/modifications/clarifications to the original proposal request.

• **PLEASE SEE BELOW QUESTIONS RECEIVED AND RESPONSES FROM CITY**

1. Could the City please confirm if vendors can use commercial references?
Commercial references are acceptable, but public sector references are preferred.
2. Could the City please confirm if vendors can use ongoing contracts as references?
Yes, ongoing contracts can be used as references.
3. Could the City please confirm if vendors can use subcontractor experience and references?
Yes, but we would prefer experience as the lead consultant.
4. Could the City please clarify whether vendors are allowed to submit their own pricing format in addition to the City's required format?
No, please provide pricing as noted in the RFP.
5. Under Section Instruction to Proposer, point 5, could the City please clarify if vendors have to provide all the team members who will be performing the work?
Yes, information about the primary resource and secondary resources must be submitted. The primary resource must be named.
6. Under Section Instruction to Proposer, point 6, could the City please clarify if vendors can provide commercial case studies/projects, to suffice this requirement?
Commercial case studies are acceptable, but they must be similar to the City of Worcester in at least one of the ways listed.



7. Could the City please confirm that the format that vendors have to follow to create the technical response is "Instruction to Proposers" plus the references? If not, could the City please clarify the format for vendors to write the technical response?

There is no specific format. Proposers must address each criteria as noted and include all required forms and separate price proposal.

8. Could the City please confirm how many case studies vendors have to provide with the technical response?

Vendors should provide a minimum of two similar engagements.

9. What versions of SQL Server are currently in use, and are there any plans for version upgrades in the near future?

We are currently running multiple versions of SQL Server.

10. Can the City provide more details on your current VMware infrastructure and how it interacts with SQL Server instances?

Our SQL servers run on Virtual machines, VMware does not otherwise interact with SQL.

11. What are the most critical SQL Server workloads or applications that require high availability (HA) and disaster recovery (DR)?

Databases serving public facing applications, our public safety RMS and GIS are most critical.

12. How frequently are SQL Server patches currently applied, and what are your off-hours maintenance windows for patching and upgrades?

We are patching monthly, the Wednesday evening after patch Tuesday. Critical zero day patches are applied as needed during non-business hours.

13. Does the City have any SQL Server clusters or Always On availability groups in place, and what is the current strategy for SQL Server failover during maintenance?

Not currently, but we have discussed Always On as a potential fit for some of our most critical data.

14. Can the City provide an overview of your current SQL Server performance monitoring tools and processes?

SQL monitoring tools are currently maintained by our SQL consultants.

15. What is the City's current strategy for database backups, including frequency and retention periods, and are you using any specific tools for monitoring and performing backups?

Weekly fulls, daily differentials, and frequent logfile backup are currently performed using SQLAgent.



16. Are there any known performance bottlenecks or challenges with SQL Server that the City wants to prioritize in this support engagement?
Not at this time, but we would like stay on top of issues and make improvements whenever possible.
17. Can the City provide details about the size and complexity of your SQL Server databases, especially in relation to the maintenance plan?
We have over 400 databases, most small. Largest is nearly 1TB. Many require collaboration with vendors to define or fine tune maintenance plans. Otherwise, we are open to expert recommendations on maintenance and best practices.
18. Does the City currently have SQL Server replication in place, and what are the specific replication models (transactional, merge, snapshot) being used?
Some transactional replication between servers.
19. What are your expectations regarding Active Directory group and login creation, and does the City have predefined policies for database security, user roles, and permissions?
Based on the needs of specific databases, we would create groups to be used for logins, which would be assigned to the proper roles. While we do strive to standardize, there would be a discussion for each database.
20. Are there any specific SQL Server development needs (e.g., stored procedures, queries, indexing) that the team should focus on improving or assisting with?
Based on monitoring and troubleshooting, we are looking for advice and implementation of any improvements to SPs, queries, indexes, etc.
21. Does the City expect the vendor to deploy any on-site resources to complete any tasks in the project or it is possible to go for completely remote resources?
The work will be mostly remote, with on-site support as needed, within 4 hours for emergency purposes, with hours used to be consumed from the contracted hours. All travel related expenses are to be incurred by the vendor.
22. Can bidders utilize a hybrid resource model (on-site, remote, off-shore) to accomplish the project?
All work must be performed within the United States.
23. What is the timeline and budget for this opportunity?
The timeline is one-year, with two options to renew.
24. Could the City please kindly grant an extension for the due date submission?
No.



25. Is the utilization of subcontractors permitted by the City for this project?
No, all work must be performed by employees of the vendor.
26. Could the City please clarify if is it allowed to use digital signatures?
Yes, digital signatures may be used on proposal forms.
27. Could the City please disclose the allocated budget for this contract?
No, the city does not disclose budget for RFPs of this nature.
28. Is there any incumbent associated with this project? If so, please disclose the name.
Yes, incumbent is Straight Path Solutions, LLC
29. Could the City kindly clarify if the Certificate of Insurance (COI) needs to be addressed with the proposal response?
No, but must be included with any contract between vendor and City.
30. If the resources we provide at the time of proposal submission are not available at the time of a potential contract award, could firms replace them with equally qualified resources?
No.
31. Could the City please confirm that we can fill out proposal forms electronically?
Electronic signatures are acceptable, but hard copies of the proposal must be delivered as noted.
32. Does the City accept remote resources to work on the project?
See 21.
33. Is there a page limit for the proposal response?
No limit.
34. Does the City accept offshore resources to execute the project?
All work must be performed within the United States.
35. In case firms are submitting confidential information in the response, is it required to provide a redacted version?
Proposal submissions are subject to FOIA requests.
36. Could the City please provide the estimated date of the project execution?
November 1
37. Section General Conditions, "A certified check or bid bond made payable to the "City Treasurer, City of Worcester" in the amount of N/A_ must accompany this proposal."
Could the City please confirm that there is not a bid bond requirement?
There is no surety or bonds required.
38. Could the City please confirm if there is not a set-aside goal?
There is no subcontracting goal as we desire to work with a single source for this service.



39. Under the section Submission of Proposal, "A sealed package containing the original, 3 copies, plus 1 PDF copy on USB drive of the proposal..." Could the City please clarify if vendors should submit 3 copies for both the Technical Proposal and 3 copies for the Price Proposal?

Only one original copy of the price proposal is required

40. Could the City please confirm what is meant by "Qualified in Massachusetts"? Should vendors be registered or have a license to do business in the City?

Vendors must be able to conduct business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

41. Is it mandatory to have an office in the City or in Massachusetts? If so, can vendors fulfill this requirement through a subcontractor?

It is not required to have an office in the City or Massachusetts.

42. Is it Mandatory to add the Surety company information?

See 37.

43. Could the City please confirm if pages 9 to 11 should be included in the proposal response? If so, in which section should they be added?

Yes, these forms must be included with the technical proposal response.

- A. Is there currently an incumbent vendor providing these services to the City of Worcester?

See 28..

- B. Could you please clarify the expected experience for the firm and the assigned resources? If there are specific experience criteria or benchmarks that haven't been mentioned, we would appreciate your guidance on this.

We are looking for firms focused on SQL database administration, with experience in high availability and disaster recovery options. We are also looking for experience with migrating and operating in the Cloud, and would prefer experience with Azure.

- C. Is there a specific format that proposals must adhere to? If so, could you please provide details or guidelines, such as the required number of pages? Additionally, do you require candidates' resumes to be included in the proposal?

No specific format. Yes resumes must be submitted as noted.

- D. Do you have a preference for remote, hybrid, or in-person work arrangements? Is it compulsory for personnel to work on-site at your location?

This would be primarily a remote work arrangement, with on-site support as needed, within 4 hours for emergency purposes, with hours used to be consumed from the contracted hours. All travel related expenses are to be incurred by the vendor.



- E. The RFP states that proposals must be submitted in two separate packages. Could you confirm if this means one package for the Technical Proposal and another for the Price Proposal, and whether any specific labeling is required?

Yes, one package for technical and one package for price proposal

- F. Apart from municipalities and public sector organizations, do you also accept references from private sector clients? This will help us provide a more comprehensive overview of our capabilities.

We will accept references from private sector clients, but are seeking a firm with a positive track record of working with municipalities and public sector organizations.

- G. Can you provide further clarification on how you envision the system for collecting performance and error-related events from SQL server instances? What specific metrics or details would you like us to include in our proposal?

We are looking to gather performance data to identify slow or costly queries, deadlocks, blocking, missing indexes, and other relevant metrics from all SQL servers/instances. We would also like to be able to monitor operating system stats as well: CPU, memory, disk, etc. to proactively avoid unnecessary bottlenecks and issues. In the event of a problem, or performance degradation, the tools used should provide a comprehensive view of processes, queries, etc. running on the server in question for troubleshooting purposes and to aid in recommended adjustments. Data should be viewable in both a real time and a historical perspective. We are open to both agent and agentless solutions.

- H. Could you please elaborate on how the evaluation criteria will be applied? Specifically, what aspects will be weighted more heavily in the scoring process?

The evaluation criteria is listed in the RFP. Each criterion will be weighted equally.

- I. Is there flexibility in the proposed number of monthly hours? If so, how can we best align our offer with the City's operational needs?

We are looking for a fixed price contract for 100 hours over a year. The number of hours in a month may vary.

- J. Will there be an opportunity for proposers to receive feedback on their submissions, particularly if their proposals are not selected?

No, the city does not provide debriefing sessions. Evaluation may be available once a contract is awarded.

- K. Is the City of Worcester seeking local vendors for this RFP, or are proposals from firms in other states also welcome?

Vendors from other states are welcome, but in the event of an emergency, would need to be able to be on-site within 4 hours.

Bidders are requested to acknowledge and/or include this addendum with submission. All other terms, conditions, and specifications remain unchanged.

Very truly yours,

Christopher J. Gagliastro - Purchasing Director