

## CRWD Professional Services RFQ Information Session Recording Transcript March 6, 2025

### Nate Zwonitzer 0:00



Great. Well, thanks. Welcome everyone.

Thanks for taking some time out of your morning to learn more about Capitol Region, watershed districts, professional services pool.

My name is Nate Zwonitzer.

I am the district's planning projects and grants division manager.

I'm also joined by Rachel Funke, who works in the division as well.

We're going to walk you through our professional services pool this morning.

Our division is the one that probably does the the most contracting for professional services out of our organization.

And so we're happy to share.

The process for applying for the pool as well as some upcoming work. We'll do some introductions and I'll provide some background on the organization and then Rachel will walk you through the procurements and contracting process and requirements for submitting your. So qss to be in our 2020.

52026 pool and then we'll have some time at the end to for questions and answers.

So again, my name is Nate Zwonitzer.

I am the planning projects and Grant's division manager.

I've been with the organization for about 12 years now.

And our role in the planning projects and grants division is pretty self-explanatory.

We do a lot of the watershed district planning work.

At Sub watershed scale natural resources inventories, flood mitigation planning, and a variety of other things. We also administer many of the district's grant programs, which provide our partners and the public with technical and financial resources to get water quality improvement projects.

In the ground and I'll hand it over to Rachel to do a quick introduction.



### Rachel Funke 1:33

Yeah. Hi everybody.

My name is Rachel Funke.

I'm a water resource project manager.

Like Nate mentioned, I'm in our planning projects and grants division.

And have been with the district for about 5 years now.

And Nate mentioned AQ and A at the end, but if you have questions along the way to one of us will kind of be monitoring the chat or if you want to raise your hand or just unmute yourself, feel free to ask questions along the way too.



### Nate Zwonitzer 2:06

And you can of course also send questions via e-mail.

We'll talk about the timeline for that process as well as us providing responses a little bit later.

So yeah, I'll provide a little background on Capitol Region Watershed District, if you're

not familiar with watershed districts, I'm I'm guessing many of you are. They're a little bit unique to the state of Minnesota, where a special purpose unit of local government formed in 1998 through a partition of concerns by concern citizens. We lived around Como Lake.

They were concerned with the water quality of the lake and not seeing any action being taken so through a petition through to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, the Capitol Region Watershed District was formed and like many watershed districts, our mission is to protect, manage and improve.

Our local water resources.

Our budget for 2025 is \$16.3 million.

Decent chunk of that is for a specific capital improvement project, but generally our budget is around the 12 to \$15 million range annually. We have a board of five managers who are all appointed by Ramsey County Commissioners.

Our watershed district is completely within Ramsey County, so we only have Ramsey County commissioners appointing our board and we also have a Community advisory committee who is responsible for weighing in and advising our board on issues concerning.

The communities that we serve, we currently have 24 staff and that'll be bumping up a little bit as we get into the active field season. We have typically will have a couple seasonal staff as well as a couple of interns that we host through the city of.

St. Paul's right track program.

Our district is 41 square miles, so we're actually one of the smaller watershed districts in the state. But we are one of the most populous with a population of around 250,000 people. That comes out to around one in 20 Minnesotans live in our.

Watershed District we cover portions of five cities, including Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Roseville, Maplewood, and a decent chunk of city of Saint Paul.

We have 5 lakes.

Two of them are considered, you know, pretty significant recreational destinations in Como, Lake and Lake MC Carrons in Roseville, and another part that's unique about our watershed district is we're 42% impervious surface, almost half of the surface in our watershed district is covered by pavement or.

Rooftops. We also have over 500 miles of storm sewer, including the Trailbrook Storm Sewer Interceptor, which is a Six Mile 100 plus year old.

Storm Tunnel that services a large portion of the city St.

Paul, as well as the outfalls from Como, Lake and Lake MC Carrons.

Most of our work is dictated by our watershed management plan, which is a 10 year plan. We're currently approaching the halfway mark. Our current plan that goes from 2021 through 2030.

The plan contains some themes for the work that we do, land and water resources, inventory highlights, priority issues for the term of the plan as well as goals and an implementation plan.

And some estimated cost that go along with that as you can imagine with a 10 year plan, things change as as we advance the plan, we're particularly seeing a lot of changes with cost in the last few years so.

I'll talk about that as one of our themes of of adaptive management and this watershed management plan we look at as it's really a guide for the work that we do, but it can change our, our actual the actual work that we do from year to year it.

Can change a little bit.

So I just want to touch on some of the themes of our watershed management plan and because I think it does a really nice job of highlighting the variety of work that we do as well as some of our key priorities.

So I'll talk a little bit 1st about bring water back and rain as a resources. Two of two of our themes and then that's an effort that we're taking to to shift from seeing rain as a waste product that needs to be moved away as quickly as Poss.

And trying to view it as a resource, something that can be used. So we look at, we're doing a lot of projects that try to capture rainwater and use it for another purpose, irrigation or or flushing toilets, trying to make it, um.

Make it so that people aren't using or looking at it as something that just needs to be disposed of immediately.

We're also trying to bring water back so when we are doing storm water management practices, our priority as much as possible is to do water quality improvement projects at the surface or or try to recreate historic water features as a way to.

Help people in this urban environment regain that connection to the water resources that were here historically.

Climate change and resilience is another really critical theme.

We're especially, you know, in the last five years or so have seen some really significant changes in, in our climate that's driven by climate change.

So we are actively trying to figure out what that means for the work that we do and how we can do our work better to create more resilient projects.

Increase the resilience in our resources and our communities.

Innovation is another really important theme.

We're fortunate to have a board of managers that really encourages us to think outside the box and they're OK with us taking some calculated risks and knowing that not everything is going to work out exactly as planned. But we really take it upon ourselves again with the dire.

Of our board to take those risks and really try to advance our field of stormwater management.

Adaptive management is one I mentioned earlier.

As we get more information, we are more than happy to pivot if we think the the information that we're collecting calls for it.

So we have in in our in our projects, in our planning efforts, adaptive management is a key part of all of that. Continuous continuously collect information and will shift if needed.

Community equity is really important to our organization. We're in addition to being one of the most populous watershed districts. We are also one of the most diverse.

Between a wide variety of cultures and and languages and socio economic statuses.

We're making some really significant efforts to try to reach as many communities as possible and ensure that our programs and offerings.

Are distributed to those communities equitably.

Partnerships is another key theme. We don't own any land other than where our building sits. So we require or re rely on partnerships to find the space to do some of these key.

Water quality improvement projects and that could be as small as partnering with an individual residential property owner to help them figure out what they can do on their property or working with the city of Saint.

Paul, on a redevelopment project like the Highland Bridge Redevelopment or the Old

Ford site.

And the last two themes.

Quality of life and recreation.

Are are somewhat self-explanatory too. I mean, without healthy ecosystems, healthy water resources.

You can really see a decline in in the value that people see in in their communities. So the work that we do to improve those resources, we really see as an opportunity to give people access to good recreation opportunities and improve their quality of life. If so, those are key themes in a little bit of information on on how we view them and apply them to the work that we do.

And I'm gonna hand it over to Rachel to talk a little bit more about our request for qualifications process.

 **Rachel Funke** 10:16

Great. Thank you, Nate.

And I see a few folks still in the lobby, if you don't mind.

Kind of admitting them as as we go here. Thank you.

 **Nate Zwonitzer** 10:25

You bet.

 **Rachel Funke** 10:28

So.

We crwd has a pool of consultants from which we select.

For inclusion and request for proposals, those projects come up, so this pool is updated every two years and as projects kind of land on our plate, we select three to five consultants from that pool based on their experience and credentials that we think might be a good fit.

For that project.

So but being added to that pool doesn't guarantee that a firm will be selected for a contract, but it allows us to be able to add you to our mix of of consultants that we might include.

In an RFP.

Here are a few numbers to help kinda paint a picture of that a little bit more so for our 2023 to 2024 professional services pool, we had 36 consultants who are on our list and we average about 6 to 10 new projects or.

RFPs a year, last year we sent out.

10 RFPs to consultants and.

The contract amount for these projects can vary a lot.

But I would say generally, they're usually under \$100,000.

And maybe a typical kind of ballpark amount for.

For a study or kind of our midlevel project would be about \$50,000.

But again, there's a pretty wide range in in the scale of projects that we take on.

So digging into our statement of qualifications requirements, this is.

A.

A recap of what is in the request for qualifications.

This document that you either saw on e-mail or on our website. However you found that.

But thought it would be good to go over the main points again. So in Section 1.

We're looking for, you know, a maximum of three pages that includes a description of your firm's overall qualifications, key personnel and a current fee schedule for those staff.

Section 2 and three.

I have separate sides for, but I'll just briefly mention here that Section 2 has a A1 page limit and Section 3 is one page per service area.

So diversity, equity and inclusion, you know Nate mentioned this earlier with some of our themes, but it is an important value for our organization.

We have a adii plan that was developed in 2020.

That's on our website and it was LinkedIn, the.

Request for qualifications as well, but when we know for this.

For this so Q, we would like to see how your firms efforts aligned with crwds diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

Whether that includes your firm's operations, you know, subcontractors, you might work with hiring processes.

And we leave it pretty open-ended for you to describe the work that you.

Do at your firm.

And for each RFP that we send out for a specific project.

Will evaluate firms based on how they weave DI efforts into that specific project.

So we try to consider adve firm or a firm that we haven't sent a request for proposals to before.

And for each of our projects as well.

So these are the 11 service areas that we're looking for.

Firms that have experience in in these categories.

The examples of relevant work or recent work I think are what we pay.

A lot of attention to when we're trying to decide what which consultants to include and I request for proposals.

So focusing on those is probably a good idea.

Some of these service areas are a little bit different from what they've been in past years. If you provided a statement of qualifications before, so review those closely.

We tried to combine some of the service areas that.

Felt really similar and.

Added a couple more based on.

Upcoming work that we might see in the next couple years here.

I might pause here just for a second because there might be some questions on these service areas.

I'll give it a second if you wanna unmute.

Or again, you can ask at the end too.

**AB** Alicia Bock 16:05

Hi there I have a question about #10 with the Brownfields and environmental assessments and environmental impact studies.

I was wondering if that's solely focused on, you know, contamination issues or if you're

also looking for experience more broadly in doing, you know, EAS or like categorical exclusions.

**RF** **Rachel Funke** 16:29

This isn't one that comes up too frequently in the work that we do, but I might push it to Nate. If you have any experience on on that.

 **Nate Zwonitzer** 16:40

I think it could be both.

You know, we might we might get into an an EA if there's a specific project that is happening that would require it. I I think most likely though it it's probably more of an investigative process of you know.

Yeah, we're, we're we're doing soil borings to try to get some information on a site as part of a feasibility study. And there might be some environmental screening that goes along with that.

And if there's something found, then you know, having a remediation plan of some kind put in place so.

I.

I don't wanna get too detailed on that one. I'd like to keep that one fairly broad because I mean it, it's Saint Paul.

We we never know what we're gonna find when we put a shovel on the ground, so. That investigation work is pretty important.

**AB** **Alicia Bock** 17:37

Thank you.

**RF** **Rachel Funke** 17:42

Right. I'm not seeing any other questions come up right now, but feel free to ask those at the end as well.

**AB** **Alicia Bock** 17:50

Have one more quick question.

**RF** **Rachel Funke** 17:52

Go ahead.

**AB** **Alicia Bock** 17:52

I know there's a page limit for each of those service areas, but it also mentioned you know if there's another service area that wasn't mentioned. We could include that if it's, you know, like a #12 per say, can that be an extra page or does that inform? Need to be integrated with those other pages.

RF

**Rachel Funke** 18:12

I would integrate that in with the other pages and focus more on these 11, but if there's another service area that you feel is worth mentioning, you know weaving that in somehow is totally fine. But as far as a more detailed.

Explanation of of your service that you provide. You can focus on just these 11.

AB

**Alicia Bock** 18:39

Perfect. Thank you.

RF

**Rachel Funke** 18:40

Mm hmm.

I wanted to cover a couple contracting bullets as well.

So each of our projects, if you work with us, we have a standard crwd professional services agreement and there are.

Some and I will send that agreement template out with this Q&A to I'll post that on our on our project Web page. So you can take a look at what that template looks like.

Changes to that agreement template are really rare.

So that is most likely what you would be signing when you work with us.

There are some insurance requirements that are listed here, so general liability.

Minimum 1.5 million per occurrence and aggregate auto liability is a 1.5 million combined single limit for each occurrence coverage for bodily injury and property damage.

Workers compensation is required by statute and a professional liability coverage minimum 1.5 million per claim and aggregate, and those are listed out in the agreement language as well.

There's also some language about them, notification there and then a note that payment is based on actual time and materials and.

We usually work with monthly invoices submitted at the end of each month.

So we thought it would be helpful to share some information about anticipated 2025 and 2026 projects. Some of these are a little more general. Some of these are a little more specific.

But we anticipate doing.

You know at least one feasibility study for flood mitigation opportunities and some of our.

Higher priority flood areas we've done.

H Nation water quality modeling for a good portion of our watershed district.

And identified areas that are prone to flooding and and done some prioritization for those areas as well.

So the next step would be to.

Look at what we might what we might be able to do, or what our partners might be able to do to help mitigate some of the flood risk in those areas.

We also also anticipate a lake management plan update for Lope Lake in Saint Paul.

We're on the in the North End neighborhood of St.

Paul, it's a smaller.

Smaller lake kind of surrounded by Parkland.

Our management plan for that is due for an update in the next few years.  
I mentioned we've completed.  
H&H and water quality modelling for a good portion of our watershed district, but not all of it.  
Sometimes we'll partner with.  
Our our partner cities on that work, but we might.  
Take a leader partner role in future modeling efforts for the parts of our watershed district that they either need an update or haven't been modelled yet.  
CMP, retrofit design and support is a little more of a general bullet point.  
So we have projects that.  
Might need some adjustments in order to function.  
To their fullest potential.  
Might need some more.  
Overhaul type maintenance. Those kinds of things.  
We also anticipate some.  
You know, potential wetland restoration planning work.  
As well as GIS work that might include things like updating our district boundary, for example.  
Now that some of that more detailed modeling has been completed, making adjustments to those boundaries might be needed.  
And the last bullet I'll mention is another.  
More general one, but we are currently developing.  
A quorum management plan and a climate resiliency framework work sort of on unparallel timelines, but two separate plans.  
And those are still in progress, but we anticipate.  
Some actions recommended actions resulting from both of those plans.  
That we might want to implement in the next couple years too.  
And I have just a note on kind of working with crwd in general.  
I'd say we tend to be a little more involved than maybe some other clients that you worked with.  
We like to collaborate a lot.  
We're not afraid to look at innovative or out-of-the-box.  
Options solutions for things.  
We usually have some sort of partner or stakeholder engagement in no 95% of the projects that we do.  
It's because we are highly collaborative and we wanna make sure that our partners and our residents are on the same page as us.  
We appreciate a frequent check in an update on how things are going.  
And you can anticipate usually a few rounds of internal review on on any no reports or studies or that sort of thing.  
Few rounds of that are typical.  
OK.  
So this is our last slide.  
I have a few important dates.  
As reminders on here, they're also in the request for qualifications.  
Another thing that is different from those who have submitted slqs before is we.  
We're doing things through our website this year, so you submit your statement of qualification on our website. There's a form to fill out and you upload your PDF right



there.

See responses to the Q&A will get posted on that Web page.

And any and will have the recording of this meeting on there and sort of any other relevant documents will just be right on that Web page.

So you you won't get another e-mail from us necessarily. As a reminder, you just can check the web page on those dates and statements of qualification are due at 4:00 on Monday the 24th.

If you do have technical difficulties or any of that, you can send me an e-mail and we can help you.

Through all of that.

But I will open up the floor for any other questions again chat.

Unmute yourself or send me an e-mail later this week.



**Nate Zwonitzer** 26:56

Yeah, feel free to to speak up if you have questions. If you need to leave.

I just want to say thank you for attending and we look forward to seeing your statements, qualifications.



**Rachel Funke** 27:09

In the chat, do we want to see resumes in an appendix?

Yes, if you have.

I think that's what we've done in the past. If you have a.

Oh, I guess we don't have that listed.

Nate, do you remember what we've done for?

For resumes, do we need those or do we just have a more? I guess a shorter description or summary.



**Nate Zwonitzer** 27:32

I'd say it's not required, but yes, if you want to include resumes, you can attach them as an appendix.



**Rachel Funke** 27:40

And those don't need to count toward the page limit. That's how we've done in the past.



**Nate Zwonitzer** 27:43

Right, Section 1, Section 1 does ask for a listing of key personnel on their qualifications, so keep that in mind too.

We'd still like to see that in Section 1.



**Rachel Funke** 27:56

And.

David had the question.

Will this be posted on the response site?

Yep, we'll post this recording in a pdf of the slides on the web page.

Well, great, Nate and I'll stay on a little bit longer if questions come up last minute. But if you have all of your questions answered, we will let you go and look forward to seeing an soq come in in the next couple weeks here.

Thanks everybody.

□ Rachel Funke stopped transcription