

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Administrative Entity

Josephine County is seeking assistance from an experienced consulting partner to determine the feasibility of forming a fire district in the rural areas of Josephine County that are currently not covered by other fire districts, and potential funding mechanisms for delivery of fire and emergency services.

Purpose

The purpose is to determine if the formation of a fire district is a realistic alternative to the existing system involving optional contracts with private fire services.

The County will negotiate an agreement with the applicant whose proposal is most responsive to this Request for Proposals (RFP) and is in the best interest of providing a quality and comprehensive study on the viability of forming a fire district. To be considered responsive to this RFP, the instructions must be followed precisely. The County reserves the right to decline any or all responses.

Overview

Fire Protection in a large portion of Josephine County is not adequately provided for by any form of local government. Service is delivered by two private companies, Rural Metro Fire Department Inc. and County Fire & Security Inc., with varying delivery methods under almost no measurable standards. Furthermore, fire protection is more than extinguishing fires – in most areas in the country and in the world, the fire service responds to medical emergencies, technical rescues, and provides public education and prevention services.

It should be noted that the existing Fire Districts in Josephine County report that between 50% and 90% of their calls for service include a medical element. It should also be noted that a large percentage of wild land fires start on private property and therefore a timely and effective response to structure fires is critical. The importance of public education and fire prevention cannot be understated. The unprotected area to be covered by the District accounts for more than half of the calls for service in Josephine County annually.

One of the fundamental conditions that allow these services to be delivered is a stable funding base. This is difficult at best with multiple private companies funded by selling subscriptions to individual property owners.

It is estimated that approximately 75% of the property owners subscribe to one of the two companies. There is inefficient duplication when multiple companies attempt to provide service in the same area. This overlap of services also leads to Command & Control and Communication issues as it relates to Incident Command during emergencies, at times an extremely unsafe environment for firefighters and the public they serve. This does not mean that private companies cannot provide adequate service when it comes to fire protection. It simply means that with a lack of accountability in regulating the cost for services, clarity as to what those

services are, and meeting safety and equipment standards, it would be difficult at best for this to work properly.

In May of 2019, voters passed advisory ballot measure 17-89 by a 65% to 35% margin that asked:

“In your opinion, should Josephine County begin the process to form a Rural Fire Protection District in the currently unprotected areas?”

It was included in the Explanatory Statement”

“The process of forming a rural fire protection district would begin with a feasibility study that would provide information to the Commissioners about a proposed district boundary. The study would also include a recommendation about the amount of tax that would be necessary to fund the operations of the district.”

In July 2019 the Board of Commissioners established the Fire Protection Committee via Order 2019-048. The stated purpose was to “assess and study fire protection boundaries, service areas, rates, and standards in the unprotected areas of Josephine County”. In November 2019, the Committee met for the first time consisting of 13 citizens, most of whom are knowledgeable in fire protection operations and all hazard operations, a liaison to the Board of Commissioners and 5 ex-officio members representing the private fire protection companies, the Fire Defense Board, Oregon State Fire Marshal, and Oregon Department of Forestry.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

A. Project Initiation

The vendor will confer with the Fire Protection committee, which includes a member of the Board of Commissioners, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the backgrounds, goals and expectations for the project. The vendor’s project manager will develop and refine a proposed work plan that will guide the project. The work plan will be developed identifying:

- Primary task to be preformed
- Timetable for each objective to be completed
- Method of evaluating the results
- Resources to be utilized
- Possible obstacles or problem areas associated with the accomplishment of each task

B. ACQUISITION & REVIEW OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The vendor will acquire the pertinent information and data from the Fire Protection Committee and other outside sources. These data will be used extensively in analysis and development of the feasibility document, and include ongoing work products of the Fire Protection Committee such as:

- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the current environment
- Proposed standards for the delivery of all risk fire services
- Historical documents related to failed ballot initiatives dating back to 2008
- Data provided by the Private Fire Services including human resource information, response area, training, and fire/medical/public safety services provided
- Possible service delivery options

Additional information to be acquired from County Departments include but not be limited to:

- Taxation base and laws
- Potential budgeting, operating requirements and best practices

The vendor will conduct at least 3 community meetings in conjunction with Fire Protection Committee to gather input from impacted citizens:

- Explain current services in comparison to other districts, thereby validating the SWOT analysis
- Act as focus groups to determine the amount of tax the community is willing to pay for services via a district as opposed to a contract with a private company
- Further develop community desire of a permanent fire protection service and its abilities.

C. Stakeholder Input

The vendor's project team will conduct meetings with stakeholder groups for the purpose of gathering information. Stakeholders will include:

- Fire Protection Committee
- County Fire & Security
- Rural Metro
- Adjoining Fire Districts: Illinois Valley, Applegate Valley, City of Grants Pass
- County Departments, such as Sheriff, Building and Planning, to identify for services additional to that currently provided by the private companies
- Rogue Valley Fire Chiefs Association
- County Board of Commissioners

From these meetings the vendor will obtain additional perspectives on economic and Fire service delivery issues facing the rural non-covered areas of the County.

D. FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

The vendor will explore all options for service up to and including a district in providing the current levels of service provided by the Private Companies.

The vendor shall:

- Detail the Service Area
- Identify the total annual cost of providing the current level of fire rescue services if organized into a newly formed fire district. These include:
 - Fire Suppression: All fires within the jurisdiction area. This may include residential, commercial, wildland. Also, flue, vehicle, open burns
 - Emergency Medical Response: All calls requiring Emergency Medical assistance. This can be broken down to either a Basic Life Support (EMT level) or Advanced Life Support (Paramedic Level). Includes vehicle accidents, traffic collision,
 - Hazardous Materials Response: This can be as basic as a single engine response with awareness level personnel to a full developed Hazardous Materials team. Minimum response requires awareness level training.
 - Rescue Response: This varies based on the degree of training. Basic Training to include low angle rescue, high angle rescue, water rescue, trench rescue, confined space. This can be difficult to establish based on available resources. Minimum standards apply to each system.
 - Fire Prevention/Education: This includes: Fire investigation/cause determination, Business inspections, property walkthrough for fuel mitigation projects, home safety assessments, code enforcement, burn restriction enforcement. Education includes school program, Jr Fire setter programs, etc.
 - Public Service: This includes Lift Assists, Fire alarm, Smoke and other types of investigation, Domestic animal rescue
 - Mutual aid: wildland fires, assist in other districts
 - Other services currently performed by other County agencies as appropriate
- Detail operational impacts: Standards, Service Levels, Insurance Rating (ISO), Policies, Agreements
- Detail Capital Resource Impacts: Fire Stations, Fire Apparatus, Insurance, Capital Improvement Planning
- Propose an effective tax rate and potential future costs
- Recommend a Phase in approach from current operations including capital assets

E. FINAL REPORT

The vendor will provide the Feasibility Study focusing on the viability of cost and service delivery. Include:

- Findings and support reason(s) for recommending an approach that addresses the following:
 - Rate must reflect a rate that the public will support
 - Service levels or benefits are not reduced
 - *An elected Rural Fire Board will have its own autonomy*

- Resulting ISO rating will not be diminished
- Must lead to long-term solution for the County
- Has the ability to improve level and delivery of services
- Is financially sustainable
- A proposed community education plan to support the resulting solution, whether a district requiring a ballot proposition or other alternative.

The vendor will complete any necessary revisions of the draft and produce 20 printed copies of the bound, final version of the written study report, along with an electronic version.

A formal presentation of the study will be made by the vendor to Josephine County Commissioners.

3. ELIGIBLE PROPOSERS

Proposals will be accepted from individuals, organizations (profit or non-profit), or other collaborative arrangement that:

- a. Are qualified to conduct business in the State of Oregon and Josephine County.
- b. If a corporation or limited liability company, it is in good standing with the Secretary of State.
- c. Previous experience in conducting feasibility analysis for rural fire and public safety services.

4. SOURCE OF FUNDS, BUDGET AND CONTRACT TERM

The source of funds for this project is from the County's General Fund. The overall budget figure has not yet been established, but sufficient funds will be provided as required by this RFP. It is expected that Josephine County will make the final contract approval decision after hearing a recommendation from the Fire Protection Committee.

The term of the contract with the successful proposer shall be 60 days with a final study completion date on or before May 13, 2020.

5. PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

EVENT	DATE
Release of Request for Proposals	February 3, 2020
Pre-Proposal Conference	February 17, 2020
Proposals Due	March 2, 2020
Committee and Board of Commissioners Review	By March 10, 2020
Award Date	March 17, 2020
Contract Start Date	March 23, 2020
Receipt of Feasibility Study	May 5, 2020
Project Presentation to Board	May 13, 2020

6. PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

Where????

February 17, 2020

RSVP to Annette Sorenson

At this conference, the Fire Protection Committee will review the RFP document and respond to questions regarding requirements of the RFP. Josephine County does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access.

7. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The original proposal, together with two (2) complete hard copies, plus two (2) electronic copies on thumb drives must be received by 5:00pm., on Monday, March 2, 2020. Proposals must be sent or delivered to:

Annette Sorenson
Josephine County Board of Commissioners
<address>

Timely submission of proposals is the sole responsibility of the proposer. The County reserves the right to determine the timeliness of all submissions. Late proposals will not be reviewed. All proposals received after the deadline will be returned unopened.

8. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposal Requirements, Evaluation Factors, and Selection Process

The following outlines the proposal requirements, evaluation factors, and the selection process. Submission of a proposal pursuant to this RFP shall constitute acknowledgement and acceptance of the terms and conditions set forth herein. Portions of the RFP and the contents of the proposal submitted by the successful proposer may become contractual obligations if an agreement is awarded. Failure of the successful proposer to accept these obligations may result in cancellation of the award. The County reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time without prior notice. All proposals submitted in response to the RFP become the property of the County and will be a public record after the selection process is completed.

A. Proposal Requirements

1. Respondent Information Cover Letter: A cover letter must be submitted with the proposal. The cover letter should be signed by the person authorized to bind the proposer to all commitments made in the proposal.

- Name of firm
- Location of office or offices
- Phone and email
- Person(s) authorized to represent the firm in negotiations
- Length of time in business

2. Letter of Interest and Approach: Each proposer shall furnish a narrative of how the individual/firm will provide services to meet the projects goals as outlined in the scope of work.

- Letter should demonstrate respondent's approach to providing subject matter experience, financial analysis as well as an understanding of the project scope of work and purpose
- Describe initial approach/philosophy to scope of work
- Describe areas for creativity
- Identify number of hours per week on account
- Describe the benefits the City could expect should the respondent be awarded the agreement
- Describe goals and measures of performance to be used

3. Experience: Each proposer shall furnish a narrative supported by relevant data regarding past experience with similar projects for the firm, and for the individuals who will be assigned to work on this account. Each proposer shall also furnish a list of up to five references/clients including names, addresses, phone numbers, and principal contacts in which the proposer has provided similar services.

- Describe fire service management experience specific to municipal and special district funding formulas, budgeting and operations
- Describe public financial analysis experience
- Developing a transitional plan

4. Personnel/Resources

- Background/qualifications/hours of personnel assigned to this account
- Resources available to conduct work; ability to leverage outside resources

5. Similar Work/References

- List of current/previous clients and type and examples of work performed
- Describe proven performance
- Minimum of 5 references

6. Cost: Each proposer shall provide a detailed estimated matrix of costs to provide the services. Include a breakdown of costs including amount for administration of contract

B. Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process General

The County will conduct a preliminary evaluation of all proposals by the deadline to determine compliance with proposal requirements and mandatory document submissions. The City reserves the right to request additional information to clarify the content of a proposal.

All proposals shall be reviewed to determine that the minimum eligibility requirements have been met. Ineligible proposers will be informed in writing.

All proposals will be evaluated by the Fire Protection Committee and the Board of Commissioners. The successful respondent must demonstrate an understanding of the project scope and purpose. This refers to the proposer’s understanding of the needs that generated the RFP, of the objectives in asking for the services and to the nature and scope of the work involved.

The evaluation of the proposals shall be accomplished using the criteria described in this section. Information and data included in the proposal shall be considered in the evaluation process.

Completeness of Proposal

Following receipt of proposals, the Fire Protection Committee shall review all proposals with respect to completeness and conformance with the instructions and requirements specifically indicated in this RFP. Responses, which are deemed incomplete or nonconforming with instruction and requirements of this RFP, may not be given further evaluation. Josephine County reserves the right to reject any and all responses and to waive any irregularity, variance, or informality, whether technical or substantial in nature, in keeping with the best interest of the County.

Selection Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated with respect to the completeness of the data provided support for all claims made and the overall approach taken. A total of 100 points will be awarded as part of the evaluation. The following criteria will be used in the evaluation and ranking process:

Proposer qualifications, experience, and demonstrated ability	40 points
Approach to Scope of Work: Quality and responsiveness of proposal to the Scope of Work	40 points
Cost reasonableness, appropriateness, and necessity as compared to all other proposals to provide the services proposed	20 points

C. Contract Award Process

The proposer selected to perform the services outlined in this RFP will enter into an agreement, approved as to form by the County Attorney, directly with the Josephine County.

The County reserves the right to verify the information received in the proposal. If the proposer knowingly and willfully submits false information or data, the City reserves the right to reject

that proposal. If it is determined that an agreement was awarded as a result of false statements, or other data submitted in response to this RFP, the County reserves the right to terminate the agreement.

The contract start date will be March 23, 2020

9. GENERAL RFP AND COUNTY CONTRACT INFORMATION

The following terms and conditions will apply to the agreement entered into between the successful proposer and Josephine County:

Term

The term of this contract shall be 60 days. Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP may be terminated by the County for its inconvenience effective as of any date, upon thirty days prior written notification by the County to the successful proposer.

Budget

Total expenditures under this contract cannot exceed the budgeted or final contracted amount. No guarantee can be given that this total will be reached.

Laws and Policies

In the performance of the services agreement, the selected entity must abide by and conform to any and all applicable laws of the United States, State of Oregon, and Josephine County.

Costs Incurred by Proposers

All costs of proposal preparation shall be the responsibility of the proposer. The County shall not, in any event, be liable for any precontractual expenses incurred by proposers in the preparation and/or submission of the proposals. Proposals shall not include any such expenses as part of the proposed budget.

General County Reservations

The County reserves the right to extend the submission deadline should this be in the best interest of the County. Proposers have the right to revise their proposals in the event that the deadline is extended.

The County reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time without prior notice. The County makes no representation that any contract will be awarded to any proposer responding to the RFP. The County reserves the right to reject any or all submissions.

If an inadequate number of proposals are received or some of the proposals received are deemed non-responsive, not qualified, or not cost effective, the County may, at its sole discretion, reissue the RFP, or execute a contract with a vendor of their choice.

The County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and the right to waive any informality when to do so would be advantageous to the County.

Termination

Any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP may be terminated by the County for its convenience effective as of any date, upon 30 days prior written notification by the County to the successful proposer.

10. PROPOSER’S CONTACT FOR INFORMATION

All questions received after the pre-proposal conference must be addressed to Ms. Sorenson in writing. Deadline for written questions is Monday, February 17, 2020.