



Request for Proposals  
**Electronic Payment Processing Services**  
for  
**Forsyth County, NC**  
**Tax Department**

**Proposals Will Be Received per Document Instructions Until**

**12:00 Noon, Tuesday, November 10, 2020**

**By The City of W-S/Forsyth Co. Purchasing Department**  
**In Room 324 City Hall Building**  
**101 North Main Street**  
**Winston-Salem, North Carolina**

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

Sealed proposals endorsed **Electronic Payment Processing Services for Forsyth County** to be furnished to Forsyth County will be received per proposal document instructions by the City/County Purchasing Department **until 12:00 Noon, Tuesday, November 10, 2020**. To obtain the complete proposal document or receive instructions for submitting proposals contact Jerry Bates via email [jerryjb@cityofws.org](mailto:jerryjb@cityofws.org) or phone 336-747-6939. The County reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals, bids, to waive informalities in the bids, and to choose the bid that is in the best interests of the County.

Jerry Bates

This document **IS NOT** the complete proposal. To obtain the completed proposal specifications contact Jerry Bates via email [jerryjb@cityofws.org](mailto:jerryjb@cityofws.org) or phone 336-747-6939.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

### INTRODUCTION:

This entire set of documents constitutes the RFP. The proposer must return the RFP with all information necessary to properly analyze the proposer's response in full.

### Proposer Questions and Inquiries

Proposer Questions and Inquiries relative to this RFP must be submitted **in writing only by 12:00 Noon, Friday, October 30, 2020**, to Jerry Bates, City/County Purchasing Director, 101 North Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101 or e-mail: [jerryjb@cityofws.org](mailto:jerryjb@cityofws.org) (**Email is preferred**), Fax: (336) 727-2443. The County will provide written responses to all inquiries received by this date, and responses will be made available to all recipients of this RFP. Any oral responses made by any representative of the County may not be relied upon. Any supplements or amendments to this RFP will be in writing and furnished to potential bidders.

### RFP Response Submission

**Bidders must submit a proposal electronically.** Electronic bids should be submitted by attaching a single file of the required bid forms to an email entitled, "**BID – Electronic Payment Processing Services – RFP21118**" and emailed to: [jerryjb@cityofws.org](mailto:jerryjb@cityofws.org) and received no later than **12:00 Noon, Tuesday, November 10, 2020**. Such submission will not be opened until the time for receiving bids has come. Please do not wait until the last minute to send your Proposal to avoid any possible delay that may occur during the transmittal of files. A screen print of the email receipt will be used as verification of the time received. **Late proposals will not be considered.**

The County will not be obligated for the expenses of any provider arising out of preparation and/or submittal of responses to this RFP. Any and all proposals to this RFP are to be prepared at the cost and expense of the respondents, with the express understanding that there may be no claims whatsoever for the reimbursement of any costs, damages, or expenses relating to this procurement from the County or any other party for any reason (including the cancellation of this RFP).

Proposals must be made in the official name of the individual, firm, or corporation under which the business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the business entity submitting the proposal.

All proposals should be complete and carefully worded and must convey all of the information requested by the County. If errors or exceptions are found in the proposal, or if the proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP, the County will be the sole judge as to whether that variance is significant enough to reject the proposal.

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically. All data, materials, and documentation shall be available in a clear, concise form. The County reserves the right to reproduce proposals for internal use in the evaluation process.

Proposers are expressly forbidden from contacting any other County employee or Forsyth County elected official regarding this Request for Proposals. Any such outside contact may result in disqualification from the request for proposal process.

► All proposals should include a signed acknowledgement of any addendums issued.

## **PURPOSE OF SPECIFICATIONS:**

**The Forsyth County Tax Administration is seeking a sole provider for electronic payment processing services. The County has a goal to consolidate other departmental electronic payment services to one provider over time.**

### GENERAL CONDITIONS

- A. In order for a bid to be considered complete, vendors must be able to supply all items in the bid package. In addition, all requested information in the bid package must be completed and returned in its entirety to constitute a complete bid.
- B. Contract Period: The services of the Provider shall begin on or about Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, continue for a period of 3 years from the date of original contract, provided that either party shall have the right to terminate the Agreement for services upon (30) days notice in writing to the other party. A detailed project implementation schedule is on page 13.
- C. Default and Termination: Contractor may be found in default of contract if services are not performed to the degree of quality and frequency so stated herein. If so, the County can provide 7 days written notice to terminate the Agreement.
- D. Basis of Award: Bid will be awarded to the vendor based upon the ability to meet or exceed all specifications and with consideration to cost for the services. The County reserves the right to reject any and all bids.
- E. Invoicing Instructions: Invoices payable within 15 days following billing date, with breakdown of services by work submitted. Send invoices to: Forsyth County Tax Administration PO Box 757, Winston Salem, NC 27102.
- F. Taxes
  - a. Federal: Forsyth County is exempt from Federal Excise Taxes. The County will issue Federal Excise Exemption Certificates or Bureau of Internal Revenue Tax Exception Number only upon request of the contractor. Issuance of the certificate does not mean that the contractor is entitled to a tax refund. All requests for refunds are to be handled by the contractor. The County will not guarantee any Federal Tax refunds to the contractor.
  - b. State: Applicable North Carolina Sales and Use Taxes are NOT to be shown on bids, but are to be added to invoices as a separate item.
- G. All bids must be firm and not subject to increase.
- H. Forsyth County reserves the right to hold bids open for a period of sixty (60) days after bid opening before making awards.
- I. No special inducements will be considered that are not a part of the original bidding document.
- J. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. Chapter 55 Article 15 entitled Foreign Corporations, the successful bidder must have on file with the Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina a Certificate of Authority to transact business in this state.

### DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS:

#### **Vendor Requirements:**

- 1. Vendor will keep website updated daily to show all bills with unpaid balances and all paid bills that are contained in our daily file. The County expects to be able to see bills paid up to a 12 month period visible on the website. Bills with a zero balance will not be selectable for payment.
- 2. Vendor has to meet the current NCPTS file format structure for payments received by vendor (E-Pay Payment File Format Included in this RFP)
- 3. Vendor must provide a daily report to indicate expected payment files for same day funds deposited and sent to County Finance. Report should indicate what was paid by Web, IVR, and ePay.

4. Vendor must provide certification of compliance information regarding Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards. (Please provide level of PCI compliance)
5. Vendor application must be compliant with all applicable state, federal and industry regulations, including NACHA, PCI-DSS (payment card industry), Red Flag rules, Federal E-Signature Act and any other applicable paperless billing and payment laws throughout the contract term.
6. Vendor will update website daily when county sends new file. (Additionally, please indicate vendor's ability to update website up to 4 times daily).
7. Vendor must provide the file format necessary for the daily and monthly files that are to be provided by the County.
8. Vendor must accommodate payments by Phone, e-Check, Debit/Credit Cards (Mastercard, Visa, Discover, American Express).
9. Phone recorded message must be approved by the County and must not use the terms "Past Due" or "Delinquent".
10. Vendor must inform the County of all planned changes to phone recorded messages or to the website in advance of implementation.
11. Phone messages should only provide amount due for specific year of bill entered.
12. Phone payment needs to have option to add other bills to the payment transaction.
13. Vendor must have an online bill search that accommodates Parcel Number, Bill Number, Owner #1 Name, Owner #2 Name, Sanitation Lien # (any alpha search should not be case sensitive, and bill number search should only require base bill number and provide all years unpaid balances).
14. Vendor must supply four POS Terminal/Printer every other year that are compatible with the County hardware and software, with four POS Terminal/Printer supplied at the beginning of the contract.
15. Vendor must have website and phone systems available for use 24/7/365 with minimal downtime for maintenance.
16. Vendor must include plan and amount of downtime anticipated for maintenance.
17. Vendor must include disaster recovery/service interruption plan.
18. Vendor must provide procedure for unexpected issues with data integrity, service interruptions, and/or software functionality and include response/resolution timeline.
19. Vendor must have a method for the County to view and void payments that are not in processed status.
20. Vendor must have a method for payments to be made through our e-Notice vendor website.
21. Vendor must meet all County minimum insurance requirements.
22. Vendor must have a method for the County to search transactions, individually or by date range, and to export results in either csv or xlsx format.
23. Vendor must provide process for handling disputes and chargebacks to include information regarding weekends and holidays in timeline.
24. Upon mutual agreement, Vendor must be able to add in other County Department(s) electronic payment services during the contract period.
25. Vendor must complete Information section on Page 8, Reference section on Page 9, and the grids on Pages 10-13 labeled Grid A, Grid B, and Grid C.

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### **Responsibility of the County:**

1. County will provide a daily file (M-F) to include current balance due on all unpaid bills.
2. County will provide a monthly file to include new interest on all delinquent bills.
3. County will meet file format structure for providing bill data to payment vendor.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **1. GENERAL**

- a. Contracts awarded will be governed by the laws of the State of North Carolina.
- b. Contracts awarded are not assignable, by either party, by operation of law or otherwise.
- c. Should any provision, portion or application thereof of Contracts awarded be determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, unenforceable or in conflict with any applicable law or constitutional provision, the Parties shall negotiate an equitable adjustment in the affected provisions of any Contracts awarded with a view toward effecting the purpose of Contracts awarded, and the validity and enforceability of the remaining provisions, portions or applications thereof, shall not be impaired.
- d. The subject headings of the paragraphs are included for purposes of convenience only and shall not affect the construction or interpretation of any of its provisions. Contracts awarded shall be deemed to have been drafted by both parties, and no purposes of interpretation shall be made to the contrary.
- e. Contracts awarded including any attachments, will constitute the entire understanding between County and the Contractor and will supersede all prior understandings and agreements relating to the subject matter hereof. Any modification, revision or amendment to this Agreement must be in writing and executed by both parties. Contracts awarded may not be orally modified.

#### **2. SELECTION PROCESS:**

- a. Evaluation – As part of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Panel may engage in discussions with one or more proposer(s). Discussions might be held with an individual proposer to determine in greater detail the proposer’s qualifications, to explore with the proposer the scope and nature of the required contractual Services, to learn the proposer’s proposed method of performance and the relative utility of alternative methods, and to facilitate arriving at a Contract that will be satisfactory to the County. An Evaluation Panel will evaluate proposals for quality, completeness, and price value to the County. Selection shall be made from all offers deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals based on the evaluation of factors included in the RFP, including price. Price shall be considered, but need not be the sole determining factor. The Evaluation Panel may cancel this RFP or reject proposals at any time prior to an award and is not required to furnish a statement of the reason why a particular proposal was not deemed the most advantageous. The County reserves the right, as part of the selection process, to request on-site (or virtual) demonstrations and/or presentations.
- b. Evaluation Criteria – Below is a description of the evaluation criteria that will be used to evaluate the proposals. To be deemed responsive, it is important for the firm’s proposal to contain appropriate detail to demonstrate satisfaction of each criterion and compliance with the performance provisions outlined in this RFP. The proposal will be the primary source of information used in the evaluation process. The proposal must contain information specifically related to the proposed services requested in this RFP. Failure of any firm to submit information requested may result in the elimination of the proposal from evaluation. Major criteria to be considered in evaluation may include, but shall not necessarily be limited to:
  - i. **Requirements:** Ability to meet RFP Vendor requirements.

- ii. **Costs/Fee:** Costs shall be considered, but need not be the sole determining factor.
- iii. **Qualifications and Experience:** Proposers will be evaluated based on their qualifications and experience for performing the requested Electronic Payment Processing Services.

REQUEST FOR ELECTRONIC PAYMENT PROCESSING SUPPLIER QUALIFICATIONS

**Information about the provider:**

1.	Company Name	
2.	Years in Business	
3.	Number of years providing services <i>similar</i> to this proposal	
4.	Contact Person	
5.	Full Mailing Address	
6.	Telephone Number	
7.	Email Address of contact person	
8.	Number of full time employees	
9.	Name and phone number of Bonding Company	
10.	Names, titles, roles, experience, and qualifications certifications of personnel who would work on this project (attach brief experience listing for each, focusing on similar projects).	
11.	Name and resume of proposed point of contact for this project:	
12.	Volume of Payments Processed Annually	

Suppliers shall provide (3) three references (NC County Tax Department references preferred).

REFERENCE		
1.	Organization Name	
2.	Address	
3.	Type of Business	
4.	Contact Person	
5.	Telephone and Fax Numbers	
6.	Secondary Contact Person	
7.	Telephone and Fax Numbers	
8.	Length and Dates of Consulting Services	
9.	Description of Services	

The timetable for the RFP process is summarized below. Note that these are target dates and are subject to change by the County.

Activity	Target Date
Submission of Questions by Suppliers Closes	12:00 pm, Friday, October 30, 2020
Answers to Vendors	Tuesday, November 3, 2020
RFP Due Date and Time	12:00 pm, Tuesday, November 10, 2020
RFP Evaluation	November 20, 2020
Supplier Award Notification	December 1, 2020
Contract Finalized	January 2, 2021
Go-Live Date	February 1, 2021

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