REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

City of Elkhart, Iowa

2026-2027 Sanitary Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Study

Issue Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2026

Submittal Deadline: Friday, December 18, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)

Prepared by:
City of Elkhart
260 NW Main Street
Elkhart, Iowa 50073

1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Elkhart is requesting Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) from qualified engineering firms to identify infiltration and inflow (I&I) sources in the sanitary sewer collection system and develop a prioritized, cost-effective reduction program. Initial review will emphasize the west side and mid-town, with the investigation area refined using available evidence. The selected consultant will review available sewer televising, manhole inspection, flow, mapping, construction, and maintenance information. The selected consultant will identify deficiencies, evaluate rehabilitation and replacement alternatives, and develop recommendations that support a sustainable sanitary sewer system. In addition, the City may choose to contract the selected consultant to complete engineering services related to developing an application, or application materials, for grants to fund the implementation of recommended improvements to the sewer system. One purpose for issuing this RFQ is to meet federal guidelines and requirements for procurement of engineering professional services (2 CFR Part 200 section 320, especially subsection b.2 "Proposals") so that the City could use the selected consultant to provide services needed for a project funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or other federal agency.

2. CONTACT AND SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

Katie Wilson
City Administrator
City of Elkhart
260 NW Main Street
Elkhart, IA 50073
(515) 367-4735 ext. 2
kwilson@cityofelkhart.com

SOQs must be received by Friday, December 18, 2026, prior to 12:00 p.m. (noon). Submit proposals electronically by email to Katie Wilson at kwilson@cityofelkhart.com.

The City may request additional written information during its review. Submittals must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposing firm. Submitted materials become the property of the City of Elkhart.

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Review available sewer televising, smoke testing, and manhole inspection records to identify likely I&I sources and needed repairs.
- Review available flow data to evaluate the extent and likely sources of I & I and recommend next steps.
- Develop a targeted investigation strategy to locate public and private sources of I&I, including additional monitoring or testing where records are insufficient.
- Review current maintenance practices and recommend improvements that support I&I prevention and reduction.

- Develop a prioritized I&I reduction program with planning-level costs and recommended phases.
- Explain rehabilitation and replacement alternatives and the factors used to determine the appropriate treatment for identified deficiencies.
- If and when a grant opportunity arises, develop an application and documentation necessary to apply for federal and/or state grants to fund detailed designs and/or actual installation of components identified in the prioritized I&I reduction program.

4. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS CONTENT

To make proposals easier to compare, SOQs should be organized using the sections below. Submittals should not exceed 20 single-sided pages, excluding covers and dividers, and should use a minimum 11-point font.

Firm Information. Provide the firm name, address, office responsible for the work, principal-in-charge, and a statement identifying any potential conflicts of interest.

Project Understanding and Technical Approach. Describe the City's I&I concerns, proposed investigation methods, tasks, deliverables, and use of subconsultants. Explain how findings will guide corrective work.

Relevant Experience. Provide three to five comparable municipal I&I investigations or sanitary sewer evaluation studies, including methods, recommendations, location, and client references. Describe results achieved where available. Also provide up to three examples of working with clients to develop applications for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants, which could include developing benefit-cost analyses, completing engineering studies and reports to support benefit-cost analysis, or generating other documentation to be included in an HMA (e.g. BRIC or HMGP) application.

Project Team. Identify the project manager, key personnel, and subconsultants. Include concise resumes highlighting relevant experience, education, professional registrations, office location, and anticipated role.

Availability and Schedule. Describe current workload, staff availability, and the firm's ability to complete the project in a timely manner.

Work Elements and Level of Effort. Provide proposed tasks, personnel classifications, anticipated hours, and an estimated professional services fee range, including subconsultants.

Additional Information. Provide any other information that demonstrates the firm's ability to successfully complete the project.

5. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following scope is intended to describe the City's general expectations. The City anticipates refining the final scope with the selected consultant based on the consultant's expertise and the information available for the system.

1. Review available sewer televising records, smoke testing records, manhole inspections, GIS, and maintenance history. Identify likely I&I sources and data gaps.
2. Review available manhole inspection information and identify needed repairs or improvements. Include field verification where appropriate.
3. Review sanitary sewer flow data if available and perform flow metering. Review other relevant information to assess I&I and recommend additional investigation or corrective actions.
4. Conduct field investigation to review connections within the manholes.
5. Review available GIS or mapping information for sanitary sewer infrastructure and recommend useful data fields or improvements for future system management.
6. Prepare an inventory, to the extent information is available, of sewer mains including size, material, installation date, slope, and other relevant attributes.
7. Evaluate maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement alternatives and explain the factors and life-cycle considerations used to select the recommended improvements.
8. Develop a prioritized maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement schedule in five-year increments, with planning-level cost estimates and annualized funding outlook where feasible.
9. Review current sanitary sewer maintenance practices and recommend practical improvements.
10. Prepare draft and final reports. At the very least, one or more reports should summarize records reviewed, methods, data gaps, mapped findings, supporting analyses, prioritized actions, costs, and follow-up monitoring. Incorporate City comments and present findings to Council if requested. If requested, prepare an extra report that explains how I&I is a critical hazard mitigation and disaster resilience issue. In such report, explain how I&I directly causes or exacerbates external disaster-level hazards. Explain the degree to which severe wet-weather events cause stormwater infiltration that overwhelms the collection system and creates systemic hydrologic overloads, causing hazardous sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) into local waterways and pushing raw sewage backups into basements. Explain how recommended projects could structurally seal the system to eliminate public health crises and flood-related property damage. Document the risk of human exposure to waterborne pathogens from basement backups and street-level overflows. Determine if I&I volumes coincident to extreme rainfall events could risk flooding or completely shutting down the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP); if so, provide documentation of that in the extra report. Prioritize and document the recommendations that would provide a greater benefit than their cost ("benefit" being defined as "avoided losses" – see next task for more detail).

11. Assist the city in seeking and securing potential funding sources and grant opportunities for completing any recommended improvements. If requested, assist the city in completing applications for such grant opportunities. As FEMA's hazard mitigation assistance grant programs could be possible grant opportunities, the vendor should be prepared to complete many of the

elements listed in *Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide 2025 (Guide)* Part 6 C.1 through C.2 and Part 12 E2.

12. If requested, complete necessary benefit-cost analysis (BCA) often required as part of the application for such grants. If such BCA is requested, quantify disaster-related damages that would be avoided with the installation of recommended improvements (such "avoided losses" are the "benefits" of particular improvements). This could include calculating the historical or projected costs of cleaning and repairing residential basements flooded by sewage backups, determining the cost of relocating residents (hotel stays, meals) if their homes become temporarily uninhabitable due to sewer backups, or quantifying municipal expenses incurred during heavy rains (e.g. expenses for deploying bypass pumps or paying overtime for utility crews to manage overflows. Developing such a BCA could also include using FEMA's standard economic values to calculate the economic toll on a community if businesses and residents lose wastewater services for days at a time. Familiarity with FEMA's BCA Toolkit 6.0 would be advantageous in estimating values and completing the BCA.

13. If requested, assist the City in completing or facilitating the completion of Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) documentation required as part of a grant application process: Provide information to support the FEMA EHP compliance review. Ensure the project scope of work considers all potential EHP compliance issues and costs. Provide information and documentation about potential impacts on the pertinent environmental and cultural resources in the project area. Identify applicable information related to:

a) Biological resources: Any identified federally listed threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitats potentially affected by the proposed project.

b) Water and biological resources: Vegetation, including amount (area), type and extent to be removed or affected.

c) Water resources: Identification of all surface waters in the project area regardless of drainage area, size or perceived hazard level. Information about surface waters should include dimensions, the proximity of the project activity to the water and the expected and possible impacts of the proposed project on surface waters, if any.

d) Pollution control and debris management: Identification of any hazardous or toxic materials that will affect the project, including studies, investigations or enforcement actions related to the proposed project's location.

e) Socioeconomic and/or environmental justice requirements: A description of any socioeconomic effects, including disproportionately high and adverse effects on low-income or minority populations (i.e., communities with environmental justice concerns) in the proposed project area.

f) Historic or cultural resources

14. If requested, develop construction plans and specifications for a project or projects that implement some of the recommendations from the I&I study. Included as part of this work is any related work to ensure adequate engineering and design, which may include, but are not limited to, soil borings, Archeological Phase 1 services, permit acquisition as needed, and other testing, monitoring, modeling, or subconsultant type work. As part of this work the selected consultant would work with Iowa DNR to ensure that the design of the project and related parts are in compliance with state and federal regulations. Additionally, the chosen vendor would work with Iowa HSEM and FEMA officials to ensure compliance with all FEMA regulations. This task could also include services up to the bid letting process, and so may include preparing bid packets for bid

letting. The work of this task may also extend to include assisting the City in review of bids and selection of one or more contractors to do construction or other necessary work to complete the project(s).

15. If requested, perform construction observation and monitoring services following the bidding process including, but not limited to, conducting a pre-construction conference, regular progress meetings, construction site observation (sufficient to ensure a successful project), review and approval of pay applications, monitoring of BABAA requirements (if applicable), and other normal construction observation services.

6. PROJECT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CITY

The City will make available existing sanitary sewer information in its possession, which may include GIS or mapping data, sewer televising and inspection records, flow information, construction plans, and maintenance history. The consultant should identify any additional data needed and any assumptions or limitations associated with available records.

7. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The selected consultant will work with City staff to establish a project schedule following contract approval. The SOQ should identify the firm's anticipated timeline for kickoff, data review, progress meetings, draft deliverables, final report, and any Council presentation. The City values a practical schedule that keeps staff informed throughout the study.

8. QUESTIONS AND ADDENDA

Questions, objections, or requests for clarification must be submitted in writing to Katie Wilson, City Administrator, no later than ten calendar days before the submittal deadline.

After issuance of this RFQ, proposers should direct project-related communications to the designated contact person and should not contact other City officials or employees in an effort to influence the selection process.

9. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A City selection committee will evaluate SOQs and may invite one or more firms to interview. The City reserves the right to interview any, all, or none of the firms. The City intends to select the firm it determines is best qualified and then negotiate a professional services agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached, the City may begin negotiations with the next-ranked firm.

Item	**Description**	**Rating Ranges**
1. Experience, Qualifications and Expertise	Firm's experience with similar projects, qualifications and expertise of key personnel and subconsultants.	(0 - 20)
2. Capabilities and Resources	Projects currently under contract involving equipment and key personnel that would also handle this project along with estimated time of completion. Availability and responsiveness of staff in local area.	(0 - 20)
3. Project Overview	Convey your understanding of the project objectives. Identify major problems that you perceive at this time. Describe the overall approach you will use to overcome these problems and efficiently complete this project.	(0 - 20)
4. References	Information on other organizations for which your firm has provided comparable consulting services.	(0 - 5)
5. Quality and Thoroughness of Proposal		(0 - 10)
6. Geographic Location of your Firm		(0 - 5)
7. Additional Factors	a. City Experience b. Other related information	(0 - 5)
8. Work Elements	Appropriateness of estimated staff hours in relation to objectives and methodology for project.	(0 - 15)

10. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- The City will not reimburse firms for costs incurred in preparing an SOQ, responding to questions, or participating in interviews.
- The City reserves the right to reject any or all SOQs, waive informalities or irregularities, and

request additional information when determined to be in the City's best interest.

- The selected consultant will be required to enter into a professional services agreement acceptable to the City. The consultant should provide its proposed standard agreement form with the SOQ or upon request.
- Any professional services agreement may not be assigned without written approval of the City Council.
- The City may discontinue the consultant's services and select another consultant if work is not performed in accordance with the executed agreement.

INSURANCE AND INDEMNIFICATION

The selected consultant will be required to maintain insurance and indemnification provisions acceptable to the City of Elkhart. Specific insurance limits and contract requirements will be established in the final professional services agreement. The consultant should identify any anticipated exceptions to standard municipal insurance or indemnification requirements in its SOQ.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Scope of Services listed in Section 5 is incorporated into this RFQ as the City's preliminary scope. The final scope, deliverables, schedule, and fee will be negotiated with the selected consultant.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The Selection Committee established by the City for this project will evaluate each firm in accordance with the criteria mentioned above to identify the firm or firms best qualified to meet the City's needs on this project. The firms deemed best qualified by the Selection Committee may be invited for additional presentations and/or interviews. However, the City reserves the right to request interviews of any, all, or none of the consultants.