



The City of Wheeler is soliciting qualifications and proposals from consulting firms to assist in developing

## **Request for Proposals** **for Safer Electric Utility Alternatives**

a comprehensive plan to explore improved, reliable, and safe electric service alternatives, including evaluating, structuring, and facilitating the potential acquisition, financing, and operation of utility infrastructure or entities, including electric service. The intent of this RFP is to identify solutions that enhance public safety and mitigate the risk of damage caused by fires, many of which have historically been attributed to electrical facilities. The selected firm will act on behalf of the City throughout the process. Proposals must be submitted in sealed form and will be subject to the Texas Public Information Act and Texas Open Meetings Act. The City reserves the right to amend, withdraw, or extend the RFP and will not be responsible for any costs incurred in the proposal process.

City of Wheeler  
RFP for Safe Electric Utility Alternatives  
Attn: Stephanie Alvarado, City Secretary  
501 Alan L. Bean Boulevard  
Wheeler, Texas 79096  
[Stephanie@WheelerTexas.org](mailto:Stephanie@WheelerTexas.org)  
Phone: (806) 826-3222

**Issued: Thursday, August 7, 2025**  
**Bids Due: 3:00pm on Monday, September 15, 2025**

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# General Information

## Introduction and Scope of Service

The City of Wheeler is requesting qualifications and proposals from qualified consulting firms to explore and propose alternatives, including regulatory strategies, to improve and ensure the safe and reliable delivery of electric service. This may include evaluating and recommending potential acquisitions of utility infrastructure and/or entities, arranging financing as appropriate based on selected alternatives, and facilitating professional utility operations.

Firms should be capable of assessing regulatory methods, operational models, and ownership structures that support the City's objectives. The City of Wheeler will accept sealed proposals from firms interested and qualified to perform such duties. It is the City's intent to select one firm to act on its behalf in carrying out this work.

Any action taken by the City regarding acceptance of proposals will be subject to the TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT, Chapter 551, TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE. The City reserves the right to negotiate any element of proposals and to cancel, amend, or withdraw the RFP, either before or after submission, or to extend the submission deadline by written notice to interested firms. This project is not federally funded; therefore, federal procurement guidelines do not apply.

The consulting firm selected will be expected to submit a comprehensive plan for the City of Wheeler, and possible regional cooperating cities, to explore improved, safer, and more reliable methods for delivering electric services, including the evaluation of regulatory options, professional operation models, and the possible acquisition and financing of utility assets.

## Inquiries and Information

For information concerning RFP procedures and technical information contained in this RFP, contact Stephanie Alvarado, City Secretary at (806) 826-3222. Such contact is to be for clarification purposes only. Material changes, if any, to the special conditions, technical specifications, or RFP procedures will only be handled through written addendum.

All questions regarding this RFP must be directed to Stephanie Alvarado at (806) 826-3222 by **5:00 p.m. Monday, September 8, 2025.**

## Costs to Respond

All costs directly or indirectly related to the preparation of a response to this RFP, any oral presentations, clarifications, and/or reasonable demonstrations which may be required by the City, shall be the sole responsibility of and shall be borne completely by the Proposer.

## Calendar of Events

Advertise Notice in Newspaper – 1st	Thursday, August 21, 2025
Advertise Notice in Newspaper – 2nd	Thursday, August 28, 2025
Receive and open proposals	3:00pm, September 15, 2025

## Respondent Requirements

To be considered for selection, all respondents must meet the following general requirements:

- The respondent must be legally authorized to conduct business in the State of Texas and must provide appropriate documentation (e.g., Certificate of Formation, registration with the Texas Secretary of State, or Certificate of Authority if out-of-state).
- Respondents must certify that there are no known conflicts of interest that would prevent them from performing the duties required by this RFP objectively and in the best interest of the City. Any potential or existing conflicts must be fully disclosed and addressed in the proposal.
- The respondent must be in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including but not limited to equal opportunity employment, nondiscrimination, and accessibility standards. The firm must acknowledge that, while it is not independently subject to the Texas Public Information Act or the Texas Open Meetings Act, any work performed for or communications with the City may be subject to disclosure or public access in accordance with those laws.
- All proposals submitted must remain valid for a minimum period of ninety (90) days from the proposal due date to allow time for review and potential contract negotiation.

## Response Instructions

**Proposals should be received on or before 3:00 p.m., Monday, September 15, 2025.** It is the Proposer's responsibility to confirm the receipt of any and all addenda related to the proposal. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Proposer to ensure that their proposal is received by the City of Wheeler within the time limit indicated. Late proposals will not be considered and will be returned unopened.

The proposal should be returned in a sealed envelope bearing the name and address of the Proposer. **"Sealed Proposal and RFP for Safer Electric Utility Alternatives"** should also be clearly visible on the outside of the envelope. Your proposal may be mailed or

hand delivered to the attention of Stephanie Alvarado, City Secretary as follows:

RFP for Safe Electric Utility Alternatives  
Attn: Stephanie Alvarado, City Secretary  
501 S. Alan L. Bean Boulevard (P.O. Box 98)  
Wheeler, Texas 79096

Faxed and/or e-mailed proposals **will not** be accepted.

## Description of the Entity & Services

### City of Wheeler

Wheeler is a picturesque town nestled among the rolling hills of the Texas Panhandle. The views today are much the same as it was for the early pioneers--including the vibrant sunsets and bright star-lit night skies. There is a welcoming, hometown feel in Wheeler with opportunities to explore the history of the pioneers and create one-of-a-kind experiences that you can treasure. Wheeler offers an authentic Texas experience where you can get away from the noise of the city into the heart of the country.

Easily accessible with Highway 83 (a main north and south artery for the Great Plains that connects Canada and Mexico) and Highway 152 (an east and west connection between Amarillo, Texas and Oklahoma City) intersecting at the town's only stoplight. Wheeler is the county seat of Wheeler County. The population in 2020 was 1,487.

### Required Services

To support the City of Wheeler's objective of enhancing the safe and reliable delivery of electric service, and to identify strategies that mitigate wildfire risks historically associated with electrical infrastructure, the selected consulting firm will be expected to provide comprehensive professional services in the following categories:

#### *Alternatives Analysis*

The City seeks a thorough evaluation of potential models for electric service delivery that prioritize safety, reliability, and long-term sustainability. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Continued service through existing providers with improved safety standards and oversight.
- Public ownership or municipal operation models designed to enhance safety and service responsiveness.
- Public-private partnerships or contractual alternatives with measurable safety and reliability outcomes.
- Regional or cooperative service models with proven safety records.

#### *Regulatory Strategy and Support*

The consultant will assist in identifying and navigating regulatory pathways to improve the safety and reliability of electric delivery, including:

- Analysis of applicable regulations under the Public Utility Commission of Texas,

- Southwest Power Pool, and related entities.
- Development of strategies to advocate for or implement enhanced safety standards, reporting requirements, and oversight mechanisms.
- Coordination with legal and technical experts to ensure full regulatory compliance in pursuit of improved safety and reliability.

### *Financial Structuring and Feasibility*

If acquisition or capital improvements are considered, the consultant will evaluate financing strategies that enable safety-driven infrastructure investment. Services may include:

- Evaluation of funding mechanisms to support modernization, system hardening, and resiliency upgrades.

### *Acquisition and Transition Planning*

Should the City pursue the acquisition of utility assets or operational control, the consultant will assist with:

- Comprehensive due diligence, including assessment of infrastructure safety, code compliance, and deferred maintenance risks.
- Structuring of acquisition agreements that include safety performance expectations.
- Development of transition plans to ensure immediate continuity and improvements in safety standards, operational procedures, and system integrity.
- Identification of liability exposure and safety risk mitigation measures.

### *Utility Operations and Management Alternatives*

The consultant will provide recommendations for professional operation models that strengthen the safety and reliability of electric service. Tasks may include:

- Evaluation of operational structures with proven safety records and regulatory compliance.
- Recommendations for staffing, training, and safety protocols aligned with industry best practices.
- Planning for system upgrades to reduce outages, fire risk, and public hazards.

### *Public Engagement and Communication Support*

Given the significance of this effort to the community, the consultant may support the City with:

- Public education efforts highlighting the importance of safe and reliable electric delivery.
- Development of clear, accessible communications explaining proposed changes, safety improvements, and service impacts.
- Facilitation of stakeholder meetings, public forums, or workshops as needed.

## **Other Stipulations**

This agreement is governed by the laws of the State of Texas. Venue shall be exclusively in Wheeler County, Texas.

## **Submittal Format**

To ensure consistency and facilitate a thorough evaluation, all proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP) must follow the format outlined below. One (1) electronic copy in PDF format and one (1) bound hard copy must be submitted. All responses must be organized in the order listed below, with clearly labeled sections. Proposals that fail to conform to this format may be considered non-responsive.

### Cover Letter

Each proposal must begin with a cover letter signed by an official authorized to bind the firm. The letter should introduce the firm, express interest in the project, and summarize the firm's qualifications. It should also acknowledge any addenda issued and confirm that the firm agrees to comply with all terms and conditions of the RFP.

### Executive Summary

The executive summary should provide a concise overview of the firm's understanding of the City's objectives, including the need to improve the safety and reliability of electric service. This section should briefly describe the firm's approach to meeting the scope of services and highlight key strategies or unique qualifications that distinguish the proposal.

### Firm Profile and Qualifications

This section must provide the legal name, address, and primary contact information for the firm. It should identify the firm's organizational structure, year of establishment, and relevant licenses or certifications. The narrative should describe the firm's experience with projects similar in scope—particularly those involving public utilities, regulatory strategy, infrastructure acquisition, and financial structuring. Experience with Texas municipalities and knowledge of state utility regulations should be emphasized.

### Project Approach and Methodology

The proposal must describe in detail how the firm intends to perform the requested services. This should include a clear explanation of the methods and processes that will be used to analyze alternatives, evaluate regulatory options, assess infrastructure safety, and develop financial strategies. The approach should reflect an understanding of the City's priorities related to safety, reliability, long-term viability, and community impact. A proposed timeline outlining key tasks, milestones, and deliverables should also be included.

### Cost Proposal

The cost proposal should provide a detailed fee structure, including hourly rates for all personnel, anticipated reimbursable expenses, and a proposed not-to-exceed amount or other pricing approach and shall specifically detail what costs the City will be responsible for. The proposal must clearly state whether rates are fixed or subject to adjustment. If desired, firms may include a proposed fee schedule broken down by task or phase.

## Selection Process

The successful Proposer will be selected on a rational basis; with both qualification and price considered in the selection process. Award of the contract with the firm shall be after proposals are received. Proposals should therefore be submitted on the most favorable terms.

## **Review of Proposals**

The City staff and City Council will review, discuss, and evaluate the proposals from the list of Proposers for consideration of award by the City Council of the City of Wheeler.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The City Council will review each response for solicitation compliance and technical scoring in each category using the following weighted criteria. A consensus score will be assigned to each response.

- 40% - Consultant's demonstrated ability to provide the services requested.
- 20% - Demonstrated understanding of the project.
- 25% - Consultants overall suitability to provide the required services within budget and financial constraints.
- 15% - Qualifications and experience of the assigned project team.

The evaluation process may reveal additional information for consideration. The City reserves the right to modify, without notice, the evaluation structure and weighted criteria to accommodate these additional considerations to serve the best interest of the City.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities and irregularities in any proposal reviewed. Further, the City may reject any proposal which does not conform to the instruction herein. Additionally, the City reserves the right to accept the proposal deemed most advantageous to the City.

## **Release of Information**

Submission of information by the Proposer(s) shall not be released by the City, during the proposal evaluation, nor prior to contract award.

## **Contract Incorporation**

Proposer(s) should be aware that the contents of the successful proposal may become part of any subsequent contractual document that may arise from this RFP. Failure of a Proposer to accept this obligation may result in the cancellation of any award.

## **Other Considerations**

Exceptions, conditions, or qualifications to the provisions of the City's specifications, or requirements must be clearly identified as such, with the reasons therefore, and alternate language proposed, if any, clearly stated and inserted in the appropriate place in the Proposal submission.



Each of these exceptions, conditions, or qualifications to the City's specifications may be included, as appropriate, in the contract documents. Items and matters not explicitly accepted in this manner shall be deemed to be in conformance with the City's specifications.

## **Rights and Remedies**

The rights and remedies of the City provided herein shall not be exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies provided by law or under any subsequent contract.

## **Publicity**

Any publicity, news releases, and/or advertising pertaining to this RFP and/or the awarding of any contract relating to the RFP may not be made without prior written approval by the City.

## **Confidentiality of Content**

All documents submitted in response to a solicitation shall be subject to the Texas Public Information Act. Following an award, responses are subject to release as public information unless the response or specific parts of the response can be shown to be exempt from the Texas Public Information Act. Pricing is not considered to be confidential under any circumstances.

Information in a submittal that is legally protected as a trade secret or otherwise confidential must be clearly indicated with stamped, bold red letters stating "CONFIDENTIAL" on that section of the document. The City will not be responsible for any public disclosure of confidential information if it's not clearly marked as such.

If a request is made under the Texas Public Information Act to inspect information designated as confidential, the Proposer shall, upon request from the City, furnish sufficient written reasons and information as to why the information should be protected from disclosure. The matter will then be presented to the Attorney General of Texas for final determination.

## **Conflict of Interest**

If a vendor who has a business relationship as defined by Section 176.001(1-a) with a local governmental entity and the vendor meets requirements under Section 176.006(a), then the vendor must complete and file a Conflict of Interest Questionnaire. By law this questionnaire must be filed with the records administrator of the local governmental entity not later than the 7th business day after the date the vendor becomes aware of facts that require the statement to be filed. A vendor commits an offense if the vendor knowingly violates Section 176.006, Local Government Code. An offense under this section is a misdemeanor. The questionnaire can be found at:

<https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/data/forms/conflict/CIQ.pdf>

## Waiver

By submitting a proposal, the proposer acknowledges that he or she understands all terms of the proposal documents and consents to the competitive selection process and the possibility of a negative assessment. By submitting a proposal, the proposer acknowledges and agrees that there was and is no disparity of bargaining power between the proposer and the City. The submitter agrees that this is the intentional relinquishment of the above listed presently existing known rights.

By submitting a proposal, each proposer agrees to waive and does hereby waive any claim the submitter has or may have against the City and/or its respective employees and representatives, for the award of attorney fees, arising out of or in connection with the administration, evaluation, or recommendation of any proposal, waiver of any requirements under this RFP, acceptance or rejection of any proposal, and award of the contract. By submitting a proposal, the proposer specifically waives any right to recover or be paid attorney's fees from the City or any of the City's employees and representatives.

## Sovereign Immunity

The City is not waiving its right of sovereign immunity. The City is retaining its immunity from suit and liability. The City does not consent to be sued by legislative resolution or action.