



**Request for Proposals  
for  
Shared Service Study  
for Fire Services**

Date Released: December 5, 2023

**Proposals Due:  
January 9, 2024  
by 4:30 PM**

## **Request**

The City of St. Francis is accepting proposals from qualified and experienced fire service consulting firms to provide a Shared Service study and facility needs analysis. The purpose of the study is to map current fire realities for the City of St. Francis and the City of Bethel to, compare to current standards, and provide a planning tool provide the road map for a merger.

## **Community Overview**

Both Cities are located in Northern Anoka County of Minnesota. The city of St. Francis has a population of 8,342 and covers approximately 24 square miles. The City of Bethel has a population of 476 and covers approximately 1 square mile. The communities were established in the late 1800's and the two cities incorporated in 1962 and 1974 respectively.

Currently the region reports moderate expansion of population, business and construction. It is clear that community funding remains a concern. All references to community shall include the City of St. Francis and the City of Bethel. It should be noted that the long-term goal is to restructure the fire departments in to a Joint Powers Fire District.

Funds for this effort have been provided by the Department of Public Safety. All invoicing will be provided to the City of St. Francis for payment.

## **Community Structure**

St. Francis is a Charter city and Bethel is a statutory city, each with elected City Council Members and Mayor. The City of St. Francis Fire Department reports to the City Administrator and the City of Bethel Fire Department reports to the Mayor and City Council.

## **Current Contractual Partners**

Currently the City of St. Francis is contracted to provide Fire Management Services to the City of Nowthen. The current contract is set to expire on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Both Fire Departments currently have a robust automatic aid agreement with each and with partner cities within both Anoka County and Isanti County. Both departments also belong to the Anoka County Fire Protection Council which provides our Public Safety Data Systems (all departments converting to First Due 2023), Anoka County Fire Academy, and networking for ideas and advice.

The current structure between St. Francis and Bethel is one of Mutual and Auto Aid, situation dictates which agreement is used.

## **Scope of Services**

The Cities are seeking a qualified and experienced fire service consulting firms to provide a Shared Service study. The report will demonstrate full disclosure and transparency of risk/benefit for elected officials allowing them to determine appropriate response model, staffing, facilities to remain operational, funding, funding formula for a Joint Powers Agreement, and structure of a Joint Powers Agreement.

The scope of services includes the following:

- 1) Determine current fire service response condition for the community (3 years) Generate GIS mapping and report as appropriate.
  - a. All emergency response calls beginning January 1, 2020 to current day.
  - b. Location of any and all firefighters whose homes are in the community.
  - c. Population density.
  - d. Land use
  - e. Response time
  - f. Capital Equipment
  - g. Budget Planning
  - h. Fire Prevention programs
  - i. Any additional mapping required to adequately support any recommendations.
- 2) Work with city staff and within the Communities Comprehensive Plan to update mapping that includes expectations of future growth or decline for 20 years into the future.
- 3) Identify staffing and program strategies;
  - a. Command structure
  - b. Alternative staffing models
  - c. Fire Prevention program
- 4) Make recommendations after a review of both stations on:
  - a. What is needed for stations as it relates to service area
  - b. What level of growth or capacity determines the need for additional stations
  - c. Level of equipment needs in each station, matching or individual
- 5) Determine, compare and contrast current and future budget models with recommendations.
- 6) Conduct feedback forums on existing model and future model
  - a. Expressing the need for change as highlighted by elected and fire chief officials
  - b. elected official input
  - c. public input
  - d. firefighter
- 7) Compensation study
  - a. Basis for current and ongoing structure of pay
  - b. Data points in which compensation is adjusted or reactive to a change in structure

## **Assumptions**

Each fire service consulting firm shall develop their proposal with the following assumptions included:

- 1) Base GIS mapping will be provided by the community. Consultant to verify conditions.
- 2) Emergency response call data will be made available by each Fire Department currently serving the community. Successful consultant will be responsible for contacting each Fire Department and gathering the data required.
- 3) Existing service contracts will remain in place following the study. This study is intended to develop strategies to develop a new Joint Powers Organization.
- 4) Fire Departments will meet with the successful consultant to provide the necessary data at the cost of the City of St. Francis

- 5) All GIS mapping data will be delivered to the City of St. Francis at the completion of the study for their use in future planning efforts.

## **Study Timeframe**

The City of St. Francis and the City of Bethel expects that the successful consultant will complete the study 12 months from the execution of the contract with substantial progress no later than September 1, 2024.

## **Required Meetings**

The consultant shall propose a meeting schedule based on the aforementioned scope of services. The City of St. Francis and Bethel, at a minimum, expects the following meetings:

- 1) Initiation meeting with Community staff.
- 2) Onsite community visit and evaluation of existing facilities and equipment with each Fire Department.
- 3) One on one meetings with elected officials, Community Administrator, Fire Chief.
- 4) Group meetings with firefighters, and survey form
- 5) Community input forum and survey
- 6) Meeting with each community staff to review the preliminary (draft) results of the study.
- 7) Work session (evening) meeting with the City Council and City Staff to review the preliminary (draft) results of the study. This meeting needs to include adequate time for thorough review and questions.
- 8) Formal presentation of the final results of the study at a Joint Council meeting (evening). This meeting needs to include adequate time for thorough review and questions.

## **Deliverables**

Each fire service consulting firm shall deliver the final results of the study and GIS data electronically in a format useable by the Cities of St. Francis and Bethel. All data becomes property of the St. Francis and community partners, citing the fire service consulting firm as the source.

## **Proposal**

Each fire service consulting firm submitting a proposal must include:

- 1) A letter outlining the firm's background.
- 2) A list of five similar studies completed in the past three years. This should include contact information for the respective persons.
- 3) A project outline detailing the strategy your firm will use for completing the study.
- 4) A statement identifying in detail the items your study will include, referencing the aforementioned scope of services.
- 5) The name and professional biography for the manager assigned to this study.
- 6) The names and professional biographies for the staff whom will be assigned to this study.
- 7) A meeting schedule in accordance with the aforementioned required meetings.
- 8) A cost for each additional meeting.
- 9) A timeline for completion of the study.

- 10) A “not-to-exceed” cost.
- 11) A list of additional and/or recommended study options not included within the aforementioned scope of services and with individual costs per additional study option.

## **Costs of Proposal**

All costs incurred for the preparation of a proposal in response to this request for proposals shall be borne by the proposing fire service consulting firm.

## **Evaluation Criteria / Process**

1. The Cities retain the right to accept or reject all or any proposals.
2. City Staff will review RFP’s and interview selected firms as deemed necessary.
3. City Staff will recommend a selected firm to the City Council. City Council has the right to accept or reject the recommended and conduct their own interviews as deemed necessary.

City of St. Francis will award a contract to the fire service consulting firm whose qualifications are deemed to best provide the services desired, considering the requirements, terms and conditions contained within this request for proposals. The City will consider conformity with the scope of services, the performance period, the delivery terms, and the proposed price as factors in making its award decision.

## **Release of Claims, Liability, and Preparation Expenses**

It is agreed by and between the parties of this RFP that in no event shall the City itself nor any official, officer, employee, or agent of the City in any way be personally liable or responsible for any covenant or agreement whether expressed or implied, nor for any statement, representation or warranty made herein or in any connection hereto.

Under no circumstances shall the City be responsible for any proposal preparation expenses, submission costs, or any other expenses, costs, or damages of whatever nature incurred as the result of a fire service consulting firm’s participation in this RFP process. The fire service consulting firm understands and agrees that it submits its proposal at its own risk and expense, and releases the City from any claim for damages or other liability arising out of the RFP and award process.

## **Errors in Proposals**

The City shall not be liable for any errors in the fire service consulting firm’s proposal. No modifications to the proposal shall be accepted from the fire service consulting firm after the submittal date and time. The fire service consulting firm is responsible for careful review of its entire proposal to ensure that all information is correct and complete. The fire service consulting firm are responsible for all errors or omissions contained in their proposals.

## Withdrawing Proposals

A fire service consulting firm may withdraw their proposal at any time prior to the submittal deadline by submitting a written request to the contacts for RFP inquiries indicated on the submittal guidelines page. The written request must be signed by an authorized representative of the fire service consulting firm. The fire service consulting firm may submit another proposal at any time prior to the submittal deadline. No proposal may be withdrawn after the submittal date and time without approval by the City. Such approval shall be based on the fire service consulting firm's submittal, in writing, of a reason acceptable to the City in its sole discretion.

## General Conditions

- A. Invitation for Proposals. The issuance of this RFP constitutes only an invitation to submit proposals to the City of St. Francis as a means by which the City can acquire information related to retaining fire service consulting firm services. It does not constitute a final contract to provide the services, materials, and equipment contemplated as part of this RFP.
- B. Submission of Proposals. The City is not obligated to respond to any proposal submitted nor is the City legally bound in any manner whatsoever by the submission of a proposal.
- C. Compliance with Minimum Standards. The City reserves the right to determine, in its sole and absolute discretion, whether any aspect of any proposal satisfactorily meets the criteria established in this RFP.
- D. Public Record/Confidentiality. Proposals submitted become a matter of public record. Information supplied by the fire service consulting firm to the City is subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13. Such information is public unless it falls within one of the exceptions in the Act, such as security information, trade secret information, or labor relations information pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 13.37. If the fire service consulting firm believes any non-public information will be supplied in response to the RFP, the fire service consulting firm shall take reasonable steps to identify and provide reasonable justification to the City regarding which data, if any, falls within the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act exceptions. The fire service consulting firm agrees as a condition of submitting a proposal that the City will not be held liable or accountable for any loss or damage which may result from a breach of confidentiality as may be related to the responses submitted.
- E. Indemnification. To the fullest extent permitted by law, fire service consulting firm agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City, and its employees, officials, and agents from and against all claims, actions, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, arising out of fire service consulting firm's negligence or the fire service consulting firm's performance or failure to perform its obligations under this Proposal and any subsequent Agreement. The fire service consulting firm's indemnification obligation shall apply to the fire service consulting firm's subcontractor(s), or anyone directly or indirectly employed or hired by the fire service consulting firm, or anyone for whose acts the fire service consulting firm may be

liable. The fire service consulting firm agree this indemnity obligation shall survive the completion or termination of work requested in this RFP and any subsequent Agreement.

- F. Independent Contractor. It is expressly understood that the fire service consulting firm is an “independent contractor” and not an employee of the City. The fire service consulting firm shall have control over the manner in which the Services are performed under their Proposal and any subsequent Agreement. The fire service consulting firm shall supply, at its own expense, all materials, supplies, equipment and tools required to accomplish the Services contemplated by this RFP. The fire service consulting firm shall not be entitled to any benefits from the City, including, without limitation, insurance benefits, sick and vacation leave, workers’ compensation benefits, unemployment compensation, disability, severance pay, or retirement benefits. Nothing in this RFP or any subsequent Agreement shall be deemed to constitute a partnership, joint venture or agency relationship between the Parties.

## Questions

Any and all questions relating to this request for proposals should be directed via email to [Kthunstrom@stfrancismn.org](mailto:Kthunstrom@stfrancismn.org) , Email contact information is indicated below. Questions and answers will be posted with the RFP on the City website.

## Proposal Submission

The City requests four hard copies of the proposal and one electronic copy. Both versions of the proposals shall be submitted to:

City of St. Francis  
Attn: City Administrator- Kate Thunstrom  
Address 23340 Cree St. NW, St. Francis MN 55070  
Email: [Kthunstrom@stfrancismn.com](mailto:Kthunstrom@stfrancismn.com)

**PROPOSALS DUE JANUARY 9, 2024 - by 4:30 PM**