

**AMHERST COUNTY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
NUMBER 28017**

**FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF AN
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) STRATEGIC PLAN**

**PREPARED BY:
AMHERST COUNTY PURCHASING OFFICE**

PROPOSAL OPENING DATE: NOVEMBER 22, 2024

PROPOSAL CLOSING DATE: 2:00 P.M., DECEMBER 20, 2024

INDEX

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1.0 PURPOSE.....	3
2.0 BACKGROUND	3
3.0 PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING	4
4.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUESTED.....	4
5.0 CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PAYMENTS.....	6
6.0 PROPOSAL DATES	6
7.0 CONTACT PERSONS	6
8.0 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS.....	7
9.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION.....	7
10.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS.....	7
11.0 COOPERATIVE PROCUREMENT	11
12.0 PROPOSAL CONTENT.....	11
13.0 PROPOSAL SELECTION PROCESS.....	12
14.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATIONS	13

Amherst County will accept proposals until, but no later than 2:00 PM December 20, 2024 for Development of an IT Strategic Plan.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to solicit proposals to create an IT strategic plan for Amherst County that will set the framework for planning and implementation for the County for the next 3 years. This plan will give staff structure for future updates.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Amherst County is organized into county departments. The IT department provides technology support for County departments, select constitutional officers and additional groups (listed below). These services include: network access and support, email, telephones, all hardware and peripherals, including desktops, laptops, printers, scanners, planning and implementation of old/new connections, remote login support, internet connectivity, credit card machines, where applicable, anti-virus, network security, software support; consulting and planning for future departmental projects.

DEPARMENTS:

Building Maintenance

Building Official

Commissioner of the Revenue

Community Development

County Administration

Finance

Human Resources

Information Technology

Parks and Recreation

Public Safety/ 911 Center

Public Works

Purchasing

Registrar

Treasurer

BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS:

Board of Supervisors, includes 5 Board members

3.0 PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING

There is a mandatory pre-proposal conference scheduled for 10:00 a.m., December 9, 2024 at the Amherst County Administration Building. Prospective proposers should meet at the Purchasing Office. The Administration Building is located at 153 Washington Street, Amherst, VA 24521. If further directions are needed, please contact the Purchasing Office at 434-946-9308.

Proposals will only be accepted from firms represented at the pre-proposal meeting.

4.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUESTED

4.1 PROCESS:

- A. The selected proposer will conduct an assessment and provide preliminary recommendations to address needs of the County. The selected proposer will facilitate a process to review the recommendations and determine the future direction of IT for the County.
- B. The selected proposer will conduct an assessment including but not limited to the following topics:
 - 1. IT Infrastructure
 - a) Existing technical infrastructure and technology systems used within the County
 - b) Cyber security risks
 - c) Risk of System Failure
 - 2. IT Staffing and potential staffing needs to support IT needs and proposed strategy
 - 3. Needs and Opportunities
 - 4. Disaster Recovery Strategy/Continuity of Operations
 - 5. Direction and Vision of IT
- C. The selected proposer will include the following:
 - 1. Meet with IT Director and staff on IT mission, vision, and goals.
 - 2. Interview designated department heads (14) to determine needs and opportunities

- a) In-person interviews will be required for the departments listed in section 2.1.
 - 3. Interview Board of Supervisors to determine mission, vision, and goals.
 - a) Virtual interviews will be conducted for the Boards, Committees, and Commissions listed in section 2.1. These will be performed individually, not as a group.
 - 4. Review technical infrastructure
 - 5. Conduct Meetings with IT Director on project every two weeks and/or when there are status project updates
- D. Deliverables:
 - 1. Inventory and analysis of IT infrastructure and technology systems used within the County
 - 2. Analysis of IT structure and staffing
 - 3. A list of prioritized recommendations for the needs of the County. The list shall provide estimated implementation timeframes along with estimated costs.

4.2 **3-YEAR IT STRATEGIC PLAN:**

- A. The purpose of the 3-year IT Strategic Plan is to lay out the path to actualizing the IT strategy and vision across the agency and particularly in IT, given the resources identified in the assessment phase of the project. The Supplier is expected to collaborate with County staff in the development of the plan.
- B. Tasks undertaken by the Supplier may include but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Incorporate decisions made about vision, strategy, and other foundational elements into the plan
 - 2. Incorporate learning and information gathered during the assessment
 - 3. Present drafts of the strategic plan to IT Director
 - 4. Revise strategic plan upon gathering feedback
- C. County Expectations of the IT Strategic Plan:
 - 1. IT governance- processes and standards that the County uses to manage their IT and ensure that it aligns with their overall business goals
 - 2. Organization-wide technology project prioritization evaluation and prioritization process
 - 3. Metrics for IT performance
 - 4. IT structure and staffing appropriate for carrying out the strategy in relation to the size of the organization
 - 5. Internal and external resources required for implementation
 - 6. Present findings and recommendations to the County's leadership team
 - 7. Revise findings and recommendations upon gathering feedback
 - 8. Present findings and recommendations to The Board of Supervisors for approval of the IT strategic plan

- D. The IT Strategic Plan shall describe major phases of work, tasks, milestones, and associated timelines. The plan shall address the prioritization and sequencing of projects and activities. The plan shall provide cost and schedule estimates for projects and activities. The plan shall identify the staff anticipated to perform under this plan and their anticipated tasks/roles.

5.0 CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PAYMENTS

- 5.1 The contract form(s) will include a cover Agreement or Purchase Order describing agreed terms, conditions and pricing, as well as this original Request for Proposals with any subsequent Addenda, and the Proposer’s Response.
- 5.2 Specific details of consultant payments may be a subject of negotiation. However, monthly progress payments are generally acceptable.

6.0 PROPOSAL DATES

- 6.1 Proposal Issuing Date: November 22, 2024
- 6.2 Pre-Proposal Meeting: 10:00 a.m., December 9, 2024
- 6.3 Questions will be due at 5:00 p.m. on December 10, 2024
- 6.4 Proposal Closing Date: 2:00 p.m., December 20, 2024

7.0 CONTACT PERSONS

- 7.1 Questions related to the procurement process should be directed to:

Melissa Woodard
P O Box 390
Amherst, VA 24521
Telephone: 434-946-9308
E-mail: mdwoodard@countyofamherst.com

- 7.2 Questions regarding the Scope of Services Requested should be directed to:

Jackie Viar
P O Box 390
Amherst, VA 24521
Telephone: 434-946-9336
Email: jsviar@countyofamherst.com

8.0 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 Insurance: The Contractor shall secure and provide insurance in at least the following amounts:
- A. General Liability Insurance: \$1,000,000 occurrence limit, \$2,000,000 general aggregate.
 - B. Workers' Compensation Insurance at statutory limits as required under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act.
 - C. Cybersecurity insurance: \$1,000,000 combined limit.
 - D. Within 10 days after Notice of Award, the Contractor agrees to furnish a Certificate of Insurance naming Amherst County as additional insured.
 - E. All insurance shall be written by insurance companies licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The insurance company must have an A.M. Best Rating of A- or better. The policy obtained by Contractor shall require insurer to provide 30 days written notice to Amherst County before any cancellation or non-renewal of insurance coverage.

9.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

- 9.1 Five (5) hard/paper copies of each proposal and an electronic version on a thumb drive must be submitted to the Amherst County Purchasing Office, 153 Washington St., Amherst VA 24521 or P O Box 390, Amherst, VA 24521, in a sealed package and marked: **SEALED PROPOSAL NUMBER 28017, DO NOT OPEN**. Proposals must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m., December 20, 2024.
- 9.2 Amherst County will not be responsible for any cost incurred by the proposer or proposers who choose to submit proposals.
- 9.3 No proposals will be accepted after the proposal closing date. The date of postmark will not be considered.
- 9.4 Proposals may be withdrawn by written request from the proposer to the County Procurement and Contracts Division Manager prior to the proposal closing date.
- 9.5 All proposals must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposer company.
- 9.6 All proposals become the property of Amherst County and unless otherwise specified shall be binding for 90 calendar days following the proposal due date.

10.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the proposer to inquire about and clarify any requirements of this request for proposals that is not understood.

- 10.2 Any information relative to interpretation of these specifications shall be requested in writing to Amherst County Purchasing Office within five (5) working days of the date set for the opening of proposals.
- 10.3 No protest regarding the validity or appropriateness of the specifications will be considered, unless the protest is filed in writing with the County Procurement and Contracts Division Manager prior to the closing date for proposals.
- 10.4 Each proposal is received with the understanding that the acceptance in writing by Amherst County of the offeror to furnish any or all of the services described therein shall constitute a binding agreement which shall bind the proposer to furnish and/or deliver the services quoted at the price stated and in accordance with all conditions of said accepted proposal. Amherst County, on its part is to order from successful proposer, except for causes beyond reasonable control, and pay for at the agreed prices goods and services specified and delivered.
- 10.5 Amherst County reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals received.
- 10.6 Termination for Convenience
- This Agreement may be terminated by Amherst County upon not less than thirty days' written notice to the contractor for the County's Convenience and without cause. In the event of such termination, the Contractor shall be compensated for services performed prior to termination.
- 10.7 Prospective proposers acknowledge, by submission of a proposal, they have had the opportunity prior to submitting their proposal, to raise any questions which they might have had about the solicitation.
- 10.8 The successful proposer will be required to provide evidence of an applicable current business license.
- 10.9 The Contractor shall provide a drug-free workplace for Contractor's employees. Contractor shall post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in Contractor's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition. Contractor shall state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of Contractor that Contractor maintains a drug-free workplace. Contractor shall include these provisions in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000 so that these requirements are binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.
- (Virginia Code §2.2-4312)
- 10.10 During the performance of this Agreement, the Contractor agrees as follows:
- A. The Contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment,

except where there is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the contractor. The Contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

- B. The Contractor, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, will state that such contractor is an equal opportunity employer.
- C. Notices, advertisements and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting the requirements of this section.

The contractor will include the provisions of the foregoing paragraphs A, B, and C in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

(Virginia Code §2.2-4311)

- 10.11 The Contractor does not, and shall not during the performance of this Agreement, knowingly employ an unauthorized alien as defined in the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

(Virginia Code §2.2-4311.1)

- 10.12 If the Contractor is organized as a stock or nonstock corporation, limited liability company, business trust, or limited partnership or registered as a registered limited liability partnership, he shall be authorized to transact business in the Commonwealth as a domestic or foreign business entity if so required by Title 13.1 or Title 50 or as otherwise required by law. Contractor shall not allow its existence to lapse or its certificate of authority or registration to transact business in the Commonwealth to be revoked or cancelled at any time during the term of this Agreement.

10.13 PAYMENT CLAUSES

- A. The Contractor shall take one of the two following actions within seven days after receipt of amounts paid to him by the County for work performed by a subcontractor under the Agreement:
 - 1. Pay the subcontractor for the proportionate share of the total payment received from the County attributable to the work performed by the subcontractor under the Agreement; or
 - 2. Notify the County and subcontractor, in writing, of his intention to withhold all or a part of the subcontractor's payment and the reason for nonpayment.
- B. The Contractor shall pay interest to the subcontractor on all amounts owed by the Contractor that remain unpaid after seven days following receipt by the Contractor of payment from the County for work performed by the subcontractor under the Agreement, except for amounts withheld as allowed in subsection A.

- C. Unless otherwise provided under the terms of this Agreement, interest shall accrue at the rate of one percent per month.
- D. The Contractor shall include in each of its subcontracts a provision requiring each subcontractor to include or otherwise be subject to the same payment and interest requirements with respect to each lower-tier subcontractor.
- E. The Contractor's obligation to pay an interest charge to a subcontractor pursuant to the payment clause in this section shall not be construed to be an obligation of the state agency or agency of local government. No modification to this Agreement shall be made for the purpose of providing reimbursement for the interest charge. A cost reimbursement claim shall not include any amount for reimbursement for the interest charge.
- F. The Contractor shall provide to the County (i) his social security number if an individual, or (ii) the federal employer identification number if a proprietorship, partnership, or corporation.

(Virginia Code §2.2-4354)

- 10.14 The Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless County and its officers, agents, volunteers, and employees against any and all liability, losses, damages, claims, causes of action, suits of any nature, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, resulting from or arising out of Contractor's or its agent's or subcontractor's negligent activities or omissions on or near any of the County's property or easements, or arising out of or resulting from Contractor's negligence in providing any of the services under this Agreement, including, without limitation, fines and penalties, violations of federal, state, or local laws, or regulations promulgated thereunder, or any personal injury, wrongful death, or property damage claims of any type.
- 10.15 No payment, final or otherwise, nor partial or entire use or acceptance of Contractor's work by the County shall constitute acceptance of any professional services not in accordance with the Agreement, nor shall the same relieve the Contractor of any responsibility for any errors or omissions in connection with the Project or operate to release the Contractor from any obligation under the Agreement.
- 10.16 The Contractor shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes and regulations currently in force or subsequently adopted, including terms and provisions of Amherst County Code.
- 10.17 The claims procedure established pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-4363 shall apply to any contractual disputes arising under this Agreement.
- 10.18 In the event that any provision of this Agreement is adjudged or decreed to be invalid, such ruling shall not invalidate the entire Agreement but shall pertain only to the provision in question and the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid, binding, and in full force and effect.
- 10.19 The County does not discriminate against faith-based organizations, and enters contracts described in this sub-paragraph on the same basis as any other nongovernmental source

without impairing the religious character of such organization, and without diminishing the religious freedom of the beneficiaries of assistance provided under this section.

- A. “Faith-based Organization” means a religious organization that is or applies to be a Vendor to provide goods or services for programs funded by the block grant provided pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L. 104-193, as amended.
- B. If a Vendor is a faith-based organization, then the Vendor must give to each individual who applies for or receives goods, services, or disbursements provided pursuant to this Agreement the following notice in bold-faced type:

NOTICE:

Neither the County’s selection of a charitable or faith-based provider of services nor the expenditure of funds under this contract is an endorsement of the provider’s charitable or religious character, practices, or expression. No provider of services may discriminate against you on the basis of religion, a religious belief, or your refusal to actively participate in a religious practice. If you object to a particular provider because of its religious character, you may request assignment to a different provider. If you believe that your rights have been violated, please discuss the complaint with your provider or notify the appropriate person as indicated in this form.

- 10.20 Contractor shall, at the County’s request, provide documentation of their authority to transact business in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

11.0 COOPERATIVE PROCUREMENT

- 11.1 Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, §2.2-4304 “Cooperative Procurement”, and Amherst County's Request for Proposals Number 28016, this agreement is available for use by all “public bodies” as defined by §2.2-4301 and referenced by §2.2-4304 of the Code of Virginia.
- 11.2 Any public body desiring to utilize services described in this Request for Proposals must notify the Amherst County Purchasing Department of their intentions to do so. Amherst County shall have no responsibilities for cooperative procurement contract agreements for public bodies other than themselves.

12.0 PROPOSAL CONTENT

- 12.1 Proposal Content
 - A. Company Profile: This should include the offeror's headquarters; location of the office that will manage the County's contract; phone and fax number and email address; size of company, financial stability and organization structure; years in business, and number of full-time employees.
 - B. Proposed project team: Please include qualifications of the staff to be assigned to the County of Amherst Project.

- C. **Related Experience:** Please describe the offeror's prior related experience and expertise in providing the services as listed herein. The referenced projects should be for cities, counties, or towns similar in size and scope to the County of Amherst and preferably within the state of Virginia. These references should include names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, a description of the scope of work and the years in which services were provided to these localities. Please provide a detailed description of the services provided to the clients.
- D. **Project understanding:** Provide a narrative demonstrating the offeror's full understanding of all services and tasks required to successfully administer and complete this contract. The scope of work as outlined in the previous pages of this document are intended to outline the minimum expectation. Provide a complete step-by-step outline of the proposed plan.
- E. **Project approach and methodology:** Provide a narrative fully and completely describing the approach and methodology proposed to complete the tasks. Methodology should include detailed descriptions of how the consultant proposes to gather information, meetings to be held, project milestones and deliverables. The methodology should also describe the level of involvement to be expected from County staff and a detailed description of the data to be provided by the County during the process.
- F. **Project Timeline:** Provide a timeline that outlines how long each step of the proposed plan will take. Including how long from award of the contract to the start of the first step of the proposed plan.

12.2 Cost

- A. Please provide a fixed cost for your proposed services that meet the requirements described in Section 4.0 of this RFP.
- B. Please provide hourly rates that may be applicable for additional services that could be requested.
- C. **Budget:** The budget for this project is \$49,990.00.

13.0 PROPOSAL SELECTION PROCESS

13.1 This request for proposals is part of a competitive procurement process which helps to serve the best interest of Amherst County. It also provides firms with a fair opportunity for their services to be considered. The process of competitive negotiation being used in this case should not be confused with the different process of “competitive sealed bidding”. The latter process is usually used where goods and/or services being purchased can be precisely described and price is usually the sole determining factor. With competitive negotiation, price is not required to be the sole determining factor, although it may be, and Amherst County has the flexibility that it needs to negotiate with one or more firms to arrive at a mutually agreeable relationship. Offerors are to make written proposals which present the offeror’s qualifications and understanding of the work to be performed. Offerors are asked to address each evaluation criterion and to be specific in presenting their qualifications. Your proposal should provide all of the information which you consider pertinent to your qualifications for the project.

13.2 Selection shall be made of two (2) or more offerors deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals, on the basis of the factors involved in the request for proposals (the “shortlist”). Negotiations shall then be conducted with each of the offerors on the shortlist. Price shall be considered, but need not be the sole determining factor. After negotiations have been conducted with each offeror so selected, Amherst County shall select the offeror which, in its opinion has made the best value proposal and shall award the contract to that offeror. The best value proposal means the overall combination of quality, price, and various elements of required services that in total are optimal relative to the County’s needs.

13.3 The interview/negotiation process may be accomplished via a telephone or video conference process.

14.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATIONS

14.1 All proposals submitted will be reviewed and evaluated by a representative committee for Amherst County.

14.2 Following are the specific evaluation criteria to be used for judging proposals and the total possible point value to be assigned to each evaluation factor. The maximum possible score that a proposal could receive is 100 points.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FACTORS	EVALUATION POINTS
A. Strength of overall proposal.	25
B. Staff experience.	25
C. Proposed approach and methodology of plan.	30
D. Cost.	20
POSSIBLE TOTAL	100

14.3 Notice of Amherst County’s intent to make contract award will be posted on the County website.