

Request for Proposals

Date: January 23, 2024

CONTACT: Stewart Carroll, Director of IT Infrastructure

734.484.4600 ext. 184

2777 State Road

Ypsilanti, MI 48198-9112

E-mail: scarroll@ycua.org

Web Site: <http://www.ycua.org>

Request for Proposal
IT Managed Service Provider

Responses due: 2:00 p.m., local time, February 13, 2024

- 1. Invitation:** The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) is currently accepting proposals for a Managed Services Provider (MSP) of Information Technology (IT) Services. The prospective MSP would partner with current in-house staff to provide multiple services including networking support, operating system management, security services, backup systems, and hardware support and provision. Firms with relevant experience and qualifications are sincerely encouraged to apply. Responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) will require a full explanation of the organization, specific roles of the project team participants, and proposed pricing.
- 2. Project Description:** YCUA was formed in 1974 when the Charter Township of Ypsilanti and the City of Ypsilanti combined their respective water departments. In addition to the Charter Township of Ypsilanti and the City of Ypsilanti, YCUA provides water and/or wastewater services to other portions of eastern Washtenaw County as well as western Wayne County. There are two primary sites located in the Charter Township of Ypsilanti with approximately 120 employees, including two (2) in-house IT staff. The sites are located at 2777 State Rd. and 2780 E. Clark Rd.

YCUA currently has two ESX hosts running VMWare that host 17 servers – 13 of which would be managed by the MSP. There is a Sonicwall security appliance, as well as a Datto backup system that provides both local and remote real-time backups. YCUA also has approximately 90 workstations and laptops for end users supported by internal IT staff.

- 3. Scope of Services:** The scope of services being requested includes but is not necessarily limited to the following:
 - a. Provide security services for the network and infrastructure including, but not limited to, intrusion prevention and detection, anti-virus, and spam filtering.
 - b. IT infrastructure hardware support, including servers, firewall, backup appliances, and networking equipment.

- c. Server monitoring for failures, operating system upgrades, and patches.
 - d. Desktop support on a limited basis, including system patches and anti-virus. (Internal IT staff provides end-user support for applications).
 - e. Firewall configuration, support, and monitoring.
 - f. Provide a system for real-time backup for servers (and a few select workstations) including both on-site and cloud-based solutions.
 - g. Provide disaster recovery services, testing, and procedures.
 - h. Assist and provide tools for internal IT staff for user support when necessary.
 - i. Provide emergency 24/7 support for IT staff.
 - j. Provide local technicians for periodic onsite system maintenance and emergency onsite support services.
 - k. Preferably will provide license management and procurement for server/desktop operating systems and databases as well as Office 365 licensing.
 - l. Maintain SSL security certificates for in-house hosted websites, including renewals and installation.
 - m. Provide onsite IT staff tools for supporting desktop users remotely (i.e., ScreenConnect).
4. **Vendor Requirements:** Prospective vendor shall at minimum meet the following requirements:
- a. Vendor must have been in the business of being an MSP for at least five (5) years.
 - b. Vendor will be required to provide a minimum of five (5) references of which at least two (2) shall be local governments, municipalities, and/or utilities.
5. **Proposal Specifications:** Responses to the request will be evaluated based on the following technical considerations. A cost estimate will be one element of the response evaluations. All proposals shall adhere to the following format:
- a. **Firm Background:** Respondents shall provide firm background information including but not limited to date of incorporation, ownership, office location(s), staff size, number of years being an MSP provider, and documentation of any network-related certifications.
 - b. **Ability to Perform Services:** Respondents shall provide a summary of work experience in providing networking support, operating system management, security services, backup systems, and hardware support and provision. Respondent shall document how long they have been in the business of providing MSP services. The summary should include a brief description of not more than 5 specific projects/clients for which services have been provided in the last 4 to 6 years, which exhibit the firm's expertise. The summaries should include the project budget, client name, client contact person, and telephone number for reference calls. At a minimum, two (2) of the projects shall be local governments, municipalities, and/or utilities. Include any additional information that may assist the YCUA in the evaluation of the firm's past performance.

- c. **Staff Experience:** Respondents shall describe the credentials and roles of the key individuals capable of working on the project team. Include project experiences and a prospective organization chart exhibiting roles and responsibilities. Indicate whether each individual is employed by the Respondent or by a subcontractor.
- d. **Estimate of Costs and Rates Schedule:** Respondents shall provide an estimate of costs based on the preliminary work plan and the corporate schedule of billing rates to be used under a contract with the Authority. Include a current schedule of billing rates and/or a budgetary estimate of annual costs. Respondents shall include pricing options for annual and multi-year contracts.
- e. **Submittal:** Any firm desiring to be considered for this project shall submit 2 copies of their response no later than 2:00 p.m., local time, February 13, 2024, to be considered by the selection committee. Submit sealed proposals to:

Attention: Stewart Carroll, Director of IT Infrastructure
Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority
2777 State Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198-9112

Questions regarding the RFP will be received in writing via electronic mail through **February 6, 2024**, without exceptions. Inquiries should be directed to Stewart Carroll, Director of IT Infrastructure.

The Authority reserves and has the right, in the Authority's sole discretion: to reject or accept any bid/proposal, including without limitation, a non-conforming, non-responsive, unbalanced, incomplete or conditional bid/proposal; to waive any failure to comply with or fully satisfy the requirements of bid specifications or the specifications of a request for proposal; to extend the time for filing a bid or proposal; to reject the bid/proposal of any bidder/proposer if the Authority believes it would not be in the best interest of the project or the Authority to make an award to that bidder/proposer; to reject the bid or proposal of any bidder/proposer whom the Authority finds, after reasonable inquiry, to be non-responsive; to waive all informalities not including price, time or changes in the work; or, to negotiate contract terms with the apparent successful bidder/proposer.

6. Schedule For RFP: The RFP process schedule is currently anticipated as follows:

January 23, 2024	Request for Proposals issued
January 30, 2024	Optional site visit for potential respondents (1 hour) Site visit will start at 11:00 a.m., local time, in the Board Room of the YCUA Administration Building, 2777 State Road, Ypsilanti, MI, 48198.
February 1, 2024	Optional site visit for potential respondents (1 hour) Site visit will start at 11:00 a.m., local time, in the Board Room of the YCUA Administration Building, 2777 State Road, Ypsilanti, MI, 48198.
February 6, 2024	Close of Period for Questions regarding RFP

Request for Proposal - IT Managed Service Provider

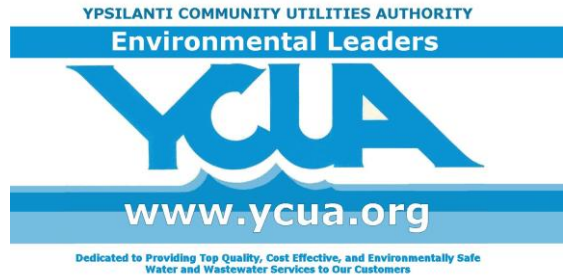
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February 13, 2024	Response to RFP due 2:00 p.m., local time
February 28, 2024	Selection of firm or team by YCUA Board of Commissioners
March 13, 2024	Authorization to Proceed

7. **Project Participants:** Authority staff will actively collaborate with the selected firm or team during of the project. It is anticipated that a project organizational meeting will be conducted following selection of a firm or team by the Authority.

8. **Respondent Contact Information:** Provide the following information on the person who is designated to be the Respondent's key contact with the Authority:
 - a. Firm.
 - b. Name.
 - c. Title.
 - d. Address.
 - e. Office telephone number.
 - f. Electronic mail address.



Date: January 30, 2024, 11:00 AM

**IT DEPARTMENT
2777 STATE ROAD
YPSILANTI, MI 48198-9112
Telephone No.: 734.484.4600**

Pre-Bid Meeting Synopsis

2024 IT Managed Service Provider Request for Proposal

Board Room
Eldon Ahles Administration Building
2777 State Road, Ypsilanti, MI
January 30, 2024, 11:00 a.m. and
February 1, 2024, 11:00 a.m.

The January 30, 2024, meeting was delayed approximately 5 minutes due to poor weather and road conditions.

IT Manager Stew Carroll introduced himself, Steven Vass ((IT Service Tech), Luke Blackburn (YCUA Executive Director), and Karen Groulx (Executive Administrative Assistant)

It was requested that all potential Bidders sign the attendance sheet.

Mr. Carroll provided a brief description of the project. The Bid time and place, as well as all information required to be submitted, was outlined. The anticipated schedule was discussed. It was noted that an addenda would be issued.

The floor was then opened for questions.

1. **What if my company has not done business with a municipality or other government organization?** If your company does not have prior business with a municipality, please use your most relevant customers as references as required in Vendor Requirements (4.b.)
2. **What does your current Microsoft Licensing contain, especially for 365 products?** YCUA currently has 42 Exchange Online (Plan 1) licenses, 95 Microsoft 365 Standard Licenses, and one E1 license. YCUA is open to owning its own licenses to be managed by the MSP. At this time, YCUA does not back up Microsoft 365 beyond their standard back up.

3. **How is service connected between the main building site (State Road) and the Service Center (Clark Road)?** Service is connected from our main site (State Road) to the Service Center via point to point LAN. This is a point-to-point circuit managed by ISP between the two sites (no site-to-site VPN tunnels).
4. **Are the current infrastructure devices including hosts and virtual machines under current support contracts?** Yes. Devices include approximately 15 switches (mostly HP Aruba), 1 SonicWall NSA 3600 Firewall/Appliance, 12 Cisco Meraki Access Points (managed through web based Meraki dashboard), and 1 HP SAN (VMFS) with approximately 11 TB of total storage.
5. **Can you define 24/7 emergency services as requested in the RFP?** 24/7 support is required only in rare cases with a critical impact to YCUA. MSP will be contacted solely by in-house IT Staff.
6. **Should the proposal include onsite support?** Onsite support capability is required, however, it is not necessary to include it in the contract other than a stipulation for time and materials for onsite support.
7. **What is the expected "time on site"?** Usually, the next business day. Emergency situations may require off-hours and/or weekends.
8. **Should this proposal include provisions for a day-to-day help desk?** No, YCUA IT staff provides this type of support directly to the end user.
9. **What software is YCUA currently using?** YCUA uses SonicWall NSA 3600 for firewall, Bit Defender for Anti-Virus, Proofpoint Essentials for Spam Filtering. Most users are using Windows 10 as YCUA is transitioning to Windows 11 with new equipment purchases. All versions of Microsoft Windows Server are either 2016 or 2019. Most software is on the YCUA premises.
10. **What are the other 4 servers, as the RFP states managing 13 of 17 servers?** The other 4 servers are for the phone system which includes VMS hosting non-Microsoft OS and will not be supported by MSP (other than backup).
11. **What are the server brands?** There are currently 2 HP ProLiant DL360 ESX Hosts.
12. **Is there a Datto Appliance contract?** YCUA owns the Datto Device, model number S4-E24. It currently protects approximately 4 TB of data. Most individual work stations are not backed up.
13. **Is the SCADA system logically separate and is there any security for the SCADA system?** YCUA's SCADA system is a separate network from YCUA's main business and phone networks and is supported by a separate vendor.
14. **What are the standard business hours of YCUA?** YCUA's normal business hours are Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
15. **Is there any compliance or security policy that YCUA must follow, in relation to credit card payment, HIPPA, or homeland security?** YCUA does not process credit card information. Credit card processing is done through a 3rd party vendor. YCUA maintains records that require HIPPA compliance, however, the MSP would not be expected to be directly involved in this.
16. **Reference the Scope of Services (3.a.), will the MSP need to monitor real time security events or just monitor if the firewall is functioning?** Real-time monitoring is preferred. Proposals can provide different option levels of monitoring and protection.
17. **Does YCUA have a disaster recovery plan?** YCUA currently has a disaster recovery plan, however it is outdated and has not been tested in some time. YCUA would like to work with the MSP to update disaster recovery procedures and develop plans for testing.

YCUA has used the Datto Appliance for testing protocols in the past, but is open to other solutions.

18. **What type of devices do the YCUA field teams use?** YCUA field employees use tablets and mobile phones. All devices used are android. There are approximately 30 tablets to be supported.
19. **Does YCUA take advantage of any of the MI State Technology Grant Programs?** Not at this time.
20. **Does YCUA have remote users, if yes, how is security provided?** YCUA does not have fully remote employees, but a few employees do have the opportunity to work remotely on occasion. Users connect to YCUA's network through SonicWall NetExtender VPN with MFA.
21. **Does YCUA have an internal developer for our ERSI/GIS map updates?** Yes. YCUA's Engineering Department handles all necessary ESRI/GIS updates when required.
22. **Does YCUA have any legacy systems/programs, including any programs that might affect the updating of the OS?** No.
23. **Is YCUA's internet service stable?** Yes.
24. **Does YCUA have a generator? A UPS?** YCUA has multiple generators, however, currently there is not a generator connected to the server room. There are three UPSs in the server room.
25. **Does YCUA use multifactor authentication? Privileged access management?** YCUA utilizes MFA for remote connectivity, Microsoft Office 365 authentication, and some of its applications.
26. **Is there security training for end users? Are end users permitted to install their own software?** YCUA utilizes Security Mentor, Inc. for all end users. End users have the capability to install software, but they do not. YCUA has an end user policy for IT use.
27. **How often does YCUA IT staff contact the MSP?** IT staff will contact the MSP with new equipment needs, or large, complicated issues. On average YCUA submits a ticket about 2-4 times per month.
28. **Regarding YCUA websites, are they hosted in-house? How many are there? What protects the sites?** Sites are hosted in-house and are accessible externally. There are 5 or 6 IIS sites protected by a SonicWall.
29. **Where does YCUA procure hardware?** YCUA uses direct pricing with MiDeal. Most hardware is purchased from Dell. Servers and various networking equipment are usually purchased through the MSP.
30. **Is YCUA looking for a vendor to be a partner in management of IT needs or a partner to guide strategic development of the YCUA IT needs?** YCUA is open to a vendor who is capable of providing strategic development.
31. **Does YCUA pool resources with the City or Township?** No
32. **What tools is YCUA wanting the MSP to provide for the IT staff?** Currently, YCUA IT Staff is using an outdated version of Screen Connect to provide remote support for end users. YCUA would prefer that a vendor provide either an updated version of this software or one like it for these services. IT Staff is open to a ticketing system, but it is not required. IT Staff would like access to the RMM dashboard.
33. **How does YCUA manage the IT assets?** YCUA assets are managed in a Microsoft Access database. YCUA currently does not maintain our IT assets in the YCUA asset management system.
34. **Is there a fire suppressant system in the server room?** No.

35. **Does YCUA have security cameras?** Yes, YCUA is currently installing a new security camera system which will be on a separate VLAN provided by the vendor for the security camera vendor.
36. **What is driving the change from the current MSP?** The contract with YCUA's current MSP has expired and our procurement policy requires a formal RFP process to be performed at this time.
37. **What is the expected duration of the contract?** A one year contract is anticipated. YCUA is open to financial incentives with a longer contract, up to three years per the procurement policy.
38. **Is mailing the only way to submit a proposal?** Two copies of the proposal can be mailed directly to YCUA or dropped off in person, or an electronic copy can be emailed to scarroll@ycua.org.
39. **What will the evaluation criteria for the submitted proposals be?** The criteria will be based on the proposal specifications outlined in the RFP.