

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

## Utility Bill Printing & Mailing Services



**DUE DATE: July 14, 2014  
@ 2:00 P.M. C.S.T.**

**CITY OF GOODLETTSVILLE, TN  
Purchasing Department  
105 South Main St.  
Goodlettsville, TN 37072  
615-851-2200  
[www.cityofgoodlettsville.org](http://www.cityofgoodlettsville.org)**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Request for Proposals Utility Bill Printing and Mailing Services

The City of Goodlettsville is seeking Proposal(s) from qualified firms for monthly utility billing printing and mailing services associated with approximately 6,000 City customer accounts. These monthly bills will include City sewer, sanitation, and stormwater utility fees.

The City manages its utility accounts using Incode Financial software. Incode is a product of Tyler Technologies. The City will divide its 6,000 customers into subgroups which will be processed individually each month. The City will generate a file within the utility billing module of Incode and will provide that file to the vendor to prepare, print, and mail/distribute statements. This schedule is subject to change and the vendor must be capable of adapting to such changes. It is the intent of the City of Goodlettsville to select a single firm to accomplish services outlined in this Request for Proposal.

Sealed proposals will be accepted until **2:00 p.m. CST on July 14, 2014**, and should be addressed to:

**One electronic copy of the proposal must be submitted in .pdf format. Sealed response packages will be accepted until 2:00 p.m. CST on July 14, 2014 and should be addressed to:**

City of Goodlettsville  
Attn: Charlie Ballard, Purchasing Coordinator  
105 South Main St.  
Goodlettsville, TN 37072  
615-851-2200

*In order to ensure a fair and objective RFP process and evaluation, all questions related to this Request for Proposal shall be addressed in writing, via e-mail to Julie High ([jhigh@cityofgoodlettsville.org](mailto:jhigh@cityofgoodlettsville.org)). **The deadline for written questions and inquiries is July 7, 2014 @ 3:00 p.m. CST.** Contact with any other City of Goodlettsville employee or official is prohibited without prior written consent from the Purchasing Coordinator or his designee. Offerors contacting any other employee(s) or official(s) without prior written consent risk elimination of their proposal from further consideration.*

Any firm attempting to influence the selection process by contacting an elected official or employee of the City of Goodlettsville shall be disqualified from this process. The City reserves the right to reject any and all submittals. The City may reject any or all of the submittals on any basis and without disclosure of a reason. The failure to make such a disclosure shall not result in accrual of any right, claim, or cause of action by any unsuccessful bidder against the City Goodlettsville.

The City shall not accept a proposal from a contractor or firm who is in default on the payment of taxes, licenses, or other outstanding monies due the City. Therefore, this bid

request is void as to any person or business in default on said payments. The individual or firm awarded this project, if the City so chooses to award this project, must obtain and retain throughout the life of the project current licenses within the City, State, and other jurisdictions as required.

The City of Goodlettsville does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, color, national origin, religion or disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services or activities, nor does it discriminate in its hiring, employment or purchasing practices. Contact the city manager at (615) 851-2200 with questions, concerns, complaints and with requests for ADA accommodations.

**Schedule of Important Dates**

The tentative schedule for this Request for Proposal is as follows:

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Release and Distribute RFP to Firms          | 06/23/2014        |
| Deadline for Questions and Inquiries         | 07/07/2014        |
| Proposal Submission Deadline                 | 07/14/2014        |
| Contract Evaluations/Negotiations            | 07/15-07/25/2014  |
| Earliest Award Notification by City          | 07/28/2014        |
| <b>Expected Implementation no later than</b> | <b>01/01/2015</b> |

## **DEFINITIONS, TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **Definitions**

In order to simplify the language throughout this request for qualification, the following definitions shall apply:

**CITY OF GOODLETTSVILLE** – Same as City.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS** – The elected officials of the City of Goodlettsville, Tennessee, given the authority to exercise such powers and jurisdiction of all City business.

**CONTRACT** – An agreement between the City and a Supplier to furnish supplies and/or services over a designated period of time during which repeated purchases are made of the commodity and/or service specified.

**CITY** – The government of the City of Goodlettsville, Tennessee.

**FIRM** – The successful Offeror of this request.

**RFP** – Request for Proposal

### **Proposals**

The submitted proposal(s) must be received by the Purchasing Department prior to the time and date specified herein. The mere fact that the proposal was dispatched will not be considered; the firm must ensure that the proposal is actually delivered and received on time.

Proposals received after the date and time specified shall be returned unopened and will be considered void and unacceptable. The City of Goodlettsville is not responsible for lateness of mail carrier, etc., and time/date stamp in the Purchasing Department shall be the official time of receipt.

Proposals cannot be altered or amended after the closing date. Alterations made before closing must be initialed by Offeror guaranteeing authenticity.

The proposals received will be publicly opened but not read aloud. Proposals shall remain valid for a period of one (1) year from the date and time identified herein.

By submitting a proposal, the vendor certifies that he has fully read and understands this “Request for Proposal” and has full knowledge of the scope, quantity, and quality of the services to be furnished and intends to adhere to the provisions described herein. Failure to do so will be at the Offerors own risk.

Any proposal which does not contain all of the information requested in this RFP will be considered incomplete and may be rejected by the City of Goodlettsville.

The City of Goodlettsville is exempt from State Sales Tax and Federal Excise Tax, and the proposal price shall not include taxes.

The Offeror shall furnish any additional information as the City of Goodlettsville may require. The City of Goodlettsville reserves the right to make investigation of the qualifications of the Offeror(s) as they deem appropriate.

This Request for Proposal does not commit the City of Goodlettsville to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services.

### **Reservations**

The City of Goodlettsville reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel, in part or in its entirety, this Request for Proposal if found in the best interest of the City of Goodlettsville. All proposals become the property of the City of Goodlettsville.

The City of Goodlettsville reserves the right to waive any informalities and technicalities and to accept the offer considered most advantageous in order to obtain the best value for the City. Causes for rejection of a proposal may include but shall not be limited to the Offeror's current violation of any City ordinance, the Offeror's current inability to satisfactorily perform the work or service, or the Offeror's previous failure to properly and timely perform its obligations under a contract with the City. Offeror's may be disqualified and rejection of proposals may be recommended for any (but not limited to) of the following causes: 1) Failure to use the proposal forms furnished by the City; 2) Lack of signature by an authorized representative on the Certification form; 3) Failure to properly complete the proposal; 4) Evidence of collusion among proposers; 5) Omission of uncertified personal or company check as a proposal guarantee (if Bid Bond required); or 6) Any alteration of the language contained within the RFP forms. Owner reserves the right to waive any minor informality or irregularity.

The City reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any idea in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the terms and conditions contained in this request for proposals, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the City of Goodlettsville and the firm selected.

The City of Goodlettsville may conduct reference checks as needed to evaluate proposals. The City may contact those listed, and inclusion of this listing in your proposal is agreement that the City may contact the named reference. The City reserves the right to contact other companies or individuals that can provide information to the City that will assist the City in evaluating the capability of the Service Provider.

### **Reimbursements**

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the City of Goodlettsville to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this Request for Proposal, and the City of Goodlettsville will not reimburse responding firms for these expenses, nor will they pay any subsequent costs associated with the provision of any additional information or presentation, or to procure a contract for these services.

### **Communication**

The City of Goodlettsville shall not be responsible for any verbal communication between any employee of the City or City Official and any potential firm. Only electronic and properly submitted proposals will be considered.

### **Negotiations**

During the evaluation process, City of Goodlettsville reserves the right, where it may serve the City of Goodlettsville's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from proposers. At the discretion of the City, all firm(s) reasonably susceptible of being selected based on criteria set forth in this RFP, may be requested to make oral presentations. Each proposal must designate the person(s) who will be responsible for answering technical and contractual questions. Preliminary negotiations may be conducted

with responsible Offeror(s) who submit proposals that are reasonably susceptible of being selected. At the discretion of the City, all Offeror(s) reasonably susceptible of being selected based on criteria set forth in this RFP may be given an opportunity to make a presentation and/or interview with the Selection Committee. Vendors will be ranked in order of preference.

**Disclosure**

At the public opening, there will be no disclosure of contents to competing firms and all proposals will be kept confidential during the negotiation process. Except for trade secrets and confidential information which the Vendor identifies as proprietary, all proposals will be open for public inspection after the contract award.

**If Proposal Results in a Contract, the Following Terms and Conditions Will Apply:**

Proposers should be aware that the RFP and the contents of the successful proposal will become a part of any subsequent contractual document that may arise from this RFP. In case of discrepancy between the RFP and the Offeror's proposal, the RFP will rule.

No oral statement of any person shall modify or otherwise change, or affect the terms, conditions, or specifications stated in the resulting contract. All Change Orders to the contract will be made in writing by the Purchasing Coordinator for the City of Goodlettsville.

Should there be a change in ownership or management, the Contract shall be cancelled unless a mutual agreement is reached with the new owner or manager to continue the contract with its present provisions and prices. This Contract is nontransferable by either party.

**Addenda**

In the event of a needed change in the published RFP documents, it is understood that all the foregoing terms and conditions and all performance requirements will apply to any published addendum. All published addenda shall be signed and included with your response package as acknowledgement of the addendum. Firms are responsible for obtaining all published addenda from the City of Goodlettsville Purchasing office or by downloading these documents from the City of Goodlettsville's website at [www.cityofgoodlettsville.org](http://www.cityofgoodlettsville.org). The City assumes no responsibility for the Firms failure to obtain and/or properly submit any addendum. Failure to acknowledge and submit any addendum may be cause for the proposal to be rejected. The City's decision to accept or reject any particular proposal due to a failure to acknowledge and submit addenda shall be final.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Background**

The City of Goodlettsville is a suburb north of Nashville, Tennessee. The City lies partially in Davidson and Sumner Counties. The City's population is approximately 16,000 and consists of 15 square miles.

The City of Goodlettsville operates under the City Manager-Commission form of government. The City provides a full range of municipal services. These services include police, fire and emergency medical services, parks and recreational facilities, street maintenance and construction, public improvements, general administrative services and sewer collection services.

The City of Goodlettsville provides Sewer services, sanitation service and has a stormwater maintenance utility. All of these services are provided to residences and businesses within the City of Goodlettsville and are assessed a monthly user fee.

*A third party currently provides billing services for the City's multiple utilities. It is expected that no later than 01/01/2015, the City will take over the billing function by utilizing a third party to provide printing and mailing services. Respondents must provide proposals based on this estimated date of service. The vendor selected may be required to work with the City's software vendor, Incode, as the City implements its utility billing module*

City Charter, Council minutes, Budget information, maps and a wealth of miscellaneous information about the City of Goodlettsville can be found online at [www.cityofgoodlettsville.org](http://www.cityofgoodlettsville.org).



## SCOPE OF WORK

### **I. INFORMATION TO VENDOR**

#### **1. Confidential Material**

Any material that is to be considered as confidential in nature must be clearly marked as such and will be treated as confidential by the City to the extent allowable in the Open Records Act.

#### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to solicit Proposals to provide printing and mailing services for the City of Goodlettsville Utility billing.

The Vendor submitting a successful Proposal must clearly demonstrate its ability to provide these services and support.

The solution must include and clearly demonstrate its ability to accept a file generated by the City's Utility Billing software module and produce and mail monthly statements.

#### **3. Background**

The City of Goodlettsville provides Sewer services, sanitation service and has a stormwater maintenance utility. All of these services are provided to residences and businesses within the City of Goodlettsville and are assessed a monthly user fee.

### **II. METHOD OF AWARD**

The City of Goodlettsville will review all proposals to determine compliance with the requirements as specified in the RFP. Only proposals which, in the opinion of the Selection Committee, meet the requirements of the RFP will be further evaluated.

Recommendation of award will be based on the following:

- Vendor's experience, capacity and capability to provide the required printing and mailing services in a professional, timely, reliable and secure manner.
- Vendor's understanding of the City's technical requirements and demonstrated ability to meet or exceed the same.
- The cost of providing the required printing and mailing services.
- Ability to meet the anticipated project schedule and interact productively with City staff and Incode, its software vendor representatives, as required.
- Information obtained through reference checks.

### III. Vendor Requirements

#### Basic Requirements

*A third party currently provides billing services for the City's multiple utilities. It is expected that no later than 01/01/2015, the City will take over the billing function by utilizing a third party to provide printing and mailing services. Respondents must provide proposals based on this estimated date of service. The vendor selected may be required to work with the City's software vendor, Incode, as the City implements its utility billing module.*

- Ability to process and mail approximately 6,000 bills monthly while maintaining one day processing for any bill cycle.
- Ability to provide bill forms, mailing envelopes, and return payment envelopes.
- **\*\*Ability to mail bills same day as received. Please provide time deadline to receive print file to accomplish this requirement.**
- Ability to provide PDF copies of bills prior to printing and mailing for approval.
- Development of bill format that meets the City's requirements.
- Ability to accept export files from City's billing software.
- Capability of folding, inserting, and mailing bills in Zip+4 order and manifest same.
- Selective insertion of return envelope with bills, not to include bank draft accounts or credit card accounts.
- Ability to selectively send inserts or return envelopes in a bill.
- Provide service to compare and approve data base of mailing addresses against National Change of Address (NCOA) files if requested.
- Provide automated service to sort to the lowest possible rates in accordance with Postal regulations. All mailing shall be submitted to the USPS as stand-alone mailings. No co-mingling with other mail.
- Provide daily electronic confirmation (email) of the files received and processed indicating the cycle and the number of items. Also, electronic confirmation (email) of number of items mailed and the postage breakdown. Provider shall include a copy of the manifest presented to the USPS for each mailing in an electronic format. A report of all addresses failing CASS/PAVE (USPS certifications) shall be provided so we can correct address issues on a cycle by cycle basis.
- Provide simplified monthly invoices that allow confirmation by date of number of bills processed and mailed.
- Printing shall be laser quality with a resolution of at least 600 x 600 DPI. The paper should be of a brightness factor to allow for a contrast ratio of paper to print to ensure reliable OCR scanning.
- Bills will be printed on 8 1/2" x 11", 24# bond, with perforation. The Service Provider must have the capability to print an information box displaying the customer's usage over a 12-month period.
- **The Service Provider must have the ability to print variable messages and data on the bills when requested.**
- Envelopes should be a window (#10) that will allow for the outgoing address on the bottom, with the return address and the City logo in the top window(s). Payment stubs with perforations will be designed with City's payment address revealed when inserted into vendor provided return window envelopes. The appropriate size return window envelopes must be security tinted on the inside.
- Service Provider must include in the proposal one set price per piece (bill) that is all-inclusive for the production of the billing statement. This would include but not be limited to the processing, laser printing on form, folding, inserting, along with remittance envelope, sorting, and delivery of bills to the USPS. These costs should include any and all costs for printing the documents, ordering forms, envelopes and processing for mailing.

## **INSERTION AND MAILING SERVICES**

### **Statement Mail Service**

- The Contractor shall provide mailing envelopes and return envelopes for all mailings.
- The bills and envelopes provided shall be designed to be consistent with billing system requirements and shall meet USPS regulations.
- The Contractor shall prepare all statements for insertion. A return envelope shall be inserted. Additional inserts or flyers are possible at any given time.
- All mail shall meet First Class automation rate requirements to obtain the **lowest** possible postage rates.
- The Contractor shall process mail through a presort routine which will attach and interface the CASS certified barcode for all qualified pieces and satisfy all documentation requirements of the USPS. All work will then be qualified for appropriate postal discounts and the Contractor shall produce the required postage reports.
- The City will drop-ship or deliver newsletters and inserts or electronic data to produce same to the Contractor on a monthly basis for insertion in customer bill envelopes.
- The Contractor shall pay postage for all mailings through the USPS.
- The Contractor shall provide a report detailing the number of envelopes mailed and the amount of postage by type of billing to the City daily.
- The Contractor shall guarantee that the completed work will reach the United States Postal Service (USPS) each billing day.
- Should mailings not be delivered to the USPS on the same business day, with all necessary insertions, the City may, at its option, terminate the contract and/or seek any all legal and equitable relief and damages available to it. The mailings should be delivered to the USPS at or before 2:00 PM to assure the mailings go out the same day.
- The City will also periodically require mailings such as annual business license applications from time to time. The City reserves the right to do any mailings they so choose to do in house.

### **Quality of Work**

- The quality of the Contractor's work shall be of the highest standard and quality and be consistent with USPS requirements and the City's remittance processing and imaging requirements, criteria and expectations. The Contractor's workmanship standards and responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the City's statement processing without disruption will be a key area addressed prior to work beginning under the contract.
- Material receipt problems, insert or other errors shall be reported to the City Utility Billing Supervisor immediately upon recognition of issues or errors.
- The Contractor shall establish and maintain quality control procedures to facilitate logging, tracking and checking all items from the time they enter the Contractor's system through the time they are transferred for mailing.
- The Contractor shall correct errors and omissions at the Contractor's expense including, but not limited to, labor, supervision, supplies, postage and all other expenses associated with correcting the error.
- Should mailings not be delivered to the USPS in a timely manner, with all necessary insertions, the City may, at its option, terminate the contract and/or seek any all legal and equitable relief and damages available to it.

### **Support and Services**

The Contractor shall provide the following:

- A single point of contact within the Contractor's firm
- Reference documentation for the billing services provided

## FORMAT REQUIREMENT

### **Requirements:**

The following instructions describe the form in which proposals must be submitted.

Responses to the following items will be used for proposal evaluation. Proposals which do not contain responses to each of the requirement items will be considered incomplete and may be rejected by the City of Goodlettsville.

Proposal documents should provide a straightforward, concise description of the Vendor's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness, clarity of content, and conveyance of the information requested by the City of Goodlettsville. The requirements stated do not preclude Offerors herein from furnishing additional reports, functions, and costs as deemed appropriate.

#### ***Item 1 – Transmittal/Cover Letter***

Include a dated transmittal/cover letter addressed to the Purchasing Coordinator that states the following, at a minimum:

- Name of Offeror's firm, address, telephone & fax numbers, and e-mail address
- Purchasing Department's RFP title
- Name of Offeror's contact person, title, and telephone number

#### ***Item 2 - References***

Proposals shall include a list of four (4) organizations, preferably Tennessee governmental entities, for which similar services/commodities have been provided. Please include organization name, contact person and title, and a telephone number. Also note types of services/commodities provided to each organization listed. This section should also include a brief summary of applicable past experience to show proven demonstrated ability to execute the requirements of this RFP.

#### ***Item 3 - Proposed Services***

This section shall include, but not be limited to the Offeror's proposal to meet the requirements identified above. If the proposal includes any comments above and beyond the information requested, it should be included as a **separate appendix** and placed at the end of the proposal document.

#### ***Item 4 – Pricing***

#### ***Item 5-Term***

Provide for an annual contract commencing on the date of the implementation (on or before 01/01/2015), and continuing through a one (1) year period. The City of Goodlettsville reserves the right to renew the contract two (2) additional one-year periods, provided both parties are in agreement.

Provide for an annual contract commencing on the date of the implementation (on or before 01/01/2015), and continuing through a one (1) year period. The City of Goodlettsville reserves the right to renew the contract two (2) additional one-year periods, provided both parties are in agreement.