

Lake County Utilities Department Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Lake County Solid Waste Facility (LCSWF) Landfill Gas Utilization Project

Introduction:

The Lake County, Ohio Utilities Department is soliciting responses to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the purpose of identifying a qualified, experienced firm to act as the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) entity for the Lake County Solid Waste Landfill Gas Utilization Project.

The goal of this project is to recover and upgrade landfill gas (LFG) to renewable natural gas (RNG) for energy production, contributing to sustainability goals, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and potentially creating revenue streams for the County.

Scope of Work:

Lake County is seeking a qualified firm to support the design, permitting, installation, and operational optimization of the landfill gas recovery and upgrading system. The selected firm will play a key role in the planning, engineering, and implementation of the project, while considering the specific conditions of the Lake County Landfill. This will include working with both the current landfill operator, Rumpke, and the well field management operator, SCS, to ensure integration in planning and operations.

Project Objectives:

1. **Collaborative Approach:** Both parties will engage in a collaborative effort to recognize the overall project potential, identify risk-reward partnerships, and optimize outcomes based on Lake County's unique conditions. The County expects realistic expectations for the long-term commitment to project returns, recognizing there is inherent uncertainty in the value of RNG over time.
2. **Operational Integration:** Given the separation between landfill operations and well field management, it is essential to integrate these two components into the planning process. Potential changes to current landfill operational practices will need to be incorporated into the plant design, with possible impacts on gas quantity and quality. The selected firm will need to evaluate these operational changes and their effects on system design and operations.
3. **Variable Site Conditions:** The firm selected will be expected to focus on the variable site conditions of Lake County's landfill. The project will involve trade-offs in selecting the appropriate RNG equipment and systems integration. These decisions must be reviewed in collaboration with the County team before finalizing the design, site selection, and gas injection points for the recovery and upgrading plant.
4. **Modular Equipment and Expansibility:** Due to the projected volumes of recovered gas, much of the upgrading equipment can be modular and potentially expandable. The firm will need to ensure that equipment is selected with flexibility in mind. The system design should allow for remote construction of the modular components, with efficient installation and system integration once on-site.
5. **Project Schedule:** The EPC team will be responsible for establishing a realistic and comprehensive project schedule, ensuring it accounts for planning, permitting, equipment ordering, and installation timelines. The team must be prepared to dedicate appropriate resources to ensure timely completion of these tasks. The EPC entity will also work with the County team to track and review progress, adjusting the schedule as needed to accommodate unforeseen developments.

6. **Long-term Relationship and Risk Mitigation:** The County understands the long-term nature of this project, which may involve a relationship with the developer for twenty years or more. The selected EPC entity will be expected to establish a relationship of trust with the County, ensuring that risk management strategies are in place, and both parties share a commitment to the project's success.
7. **Technology Assessment and Advancements:** The selected EPC entity must stay informed of the latest technological advancements in landfill RNG systems, including CO₂ and nitrogen removal technologies. The firm will be expected to propose the best available technologies, assess their suitability for the Lake County project, and explore potential additional revenue streams from new processes.
8. **Well Field Management:** The well field management component will play a critical role in the project's viability. The selected firm will need to collaborate with the well field management team to identify potential treatment options and integrate them into the overall system design.

Qualifications and Proposal Requirements:

The County invites responses from qualified firms or teams that can provide the following information. Note that each of the four areas of concern is weighted by importance, as a percentage of 100%.

1) Project Team (20%)

- a. Office location(s)
- b. Total number of personnel
- c. Management structure
- d. Qualifications (education and experience) of key executives and project leaders
- e. Technical expertise in the selection, design, and integration of RNG systems.
- f. Experience in landfill gas recovery and RNG upgrading projects.
- g. Safety Record, environmental compliance history and certifications

2) Project Approach Specific to Lake County (30%)

- a. Outline of the implementation and management of the project from construction to operations phase
- b. A strong commitment to innovative solutions, including exploring new technologies and approaches for CO₂ and nitrogen removal.
- c. The ability to collaborate with multiple stakeholders, including the County, Rumpke, SCS, and other entities.
- d. Overview of Energy recovery process
- e. Detailed profile of energy recover technology
- f. Energy recovery efficiency
- g. Operational efficiency: uptime rate vs. downtime rate
- h. Benefits for the environment

3) Provide Individual Profiles for up to Four Past or Current Projects (30%)

- a. Locations, including any that are within one to two-day drive time from Lake County, Ohio
- b. A proven track record of delivering similar projects on time and within budget.
- c. Permit acquisition process
- d. Overall project design
- e. Project footprint
- f. Project site maintenance
- g. Proximity to populated areas

- h. Nuisance prevention and abatement (e.g. traffic, odors, noise, dust)
- i. Challenges and resolutions
- j. References

4) Corporate Financial Profile (20%)

- a. Ownership structure
- b. Length of time in RNG business
- c. Portfolio summary: List of completed/operating RNG projects, especially at landfills
- d. Key financial highlights: Summary metrics for the last 3-5 years:
 - i. Annual revenue and growth
 - ii. Operating income
 - iii. Total assets, liquidity ratios and debt levels
- e. Pending or past legal criminal, civil or environmental suits

Conclusion:

This RFQ represents an exciting opportunity for qualified firms to engage in a collaborative effort with Lake County to maximize the potential of the landfill gas utilization project. The County seeks a partner who can bring innovative solutions, technical expertise, and a commitment to the long-term success of the project. Responses will be reviewed based on the firm's experience, qualifications, and approach to managing the project's complexity and scope.

Submission Instructions:

Please note that this RFQ represents phase one of a two-phase evaluation process. RFQ submittals will be reviewed by the Lake County Department of Utilities (LCDU). This review will determine which firm(s) will be invited to engage in phase two. Phase two will be comprised of a request for proposals process, and involve more detailed discussions around approach parameters, cost considerations, additional questions from LCDU and financing alternatives.

Firms interested in responding to this RFQ should submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) that outlines the qualifications of the firm, the proposed approach (including preliminary thoughts on technology and landfill integration), relevant experience (with specific examples of landfill or similar RNG projects), and key personnel.

The submission deadline is **April 3, 2026**. Please submit through email to Timothy Gourley (Tim.Gourley@lakecountyohio.gov).