



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NERC TRANSMISSION OPERATOR (TOP) SERVICES

The City of Alexandria, LA (herein referred to as COA) is pleased to invite you to submit your proposal for NERC Transmission Operator (TOP) Services specified herein.

GDS Associates, Inc. will be assisting COA in the evaluation of the TOP Service bids and will be the primary contact for any questions regarding the RFP.

COA is committed to selecting the best NERC TOP for the City's needs and to provide the most reliable service to the City's customers.

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01 NOTICE

From the issuance date of this RFP until a Contractor is selected and the selection is announced, Transmission Operator Service Provider, (hereinafter referred to as “TOP”) are to communicate with the designated GDS Associates, Inc. consultants for the City of Alexandria, LA (hereinafter referred to as “COA”) as stipulated in this document.

Timeline:

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	September 4, 2026
Intent To Bid Due	September 18, 2026, 11:59 PM EST
Proposal Due	October 18, 2026, 11:59 PM EST

Contact Information:

Chris White

Director, NERC Compliance & Cybersecurity
GDS Associates, Inc.
chris.white@gdsassociates.com
(980) 699-8038

Bill Bateman

Principal, NERC Compliance & Cybersecurity
GDS Associates, Inc.
bill.bateman@gdsassociates.com
(678) 232-4305

02 OVERVIEW OF CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, LA UTILITES

The City of Alexandria, LA (herein referred to as COA) is pleased to invite you to submit your intention to bid for NERC Transmission Operator (TOP) Services specified herein.

COA is a tax-exempt, municipal utility serving more than 24,000 retail consumers located within the city.

COA's system is in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) Regional Transmission Organization footprint, MISO South subregion, and in the SERC Reliability Corporation Regional Entity area. This RFP is for Transmission Operator Services for facilities (hereafter collectively referred to as "COA Transmission Facilities") owned by COA. COA had a 2023 summer peak load of 142 MW and owns six (6) 138 kV substations and one (1) 230 kV/138 kV substation. The COA Transmission Facilities includes 1.3 miles of 230 kV and 16.8 miles of 138 kV transmission lines. COA owns the DG Hunter generation facility with 65 MW connected to at 230 kV.

03 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NOTE:

Proposals submitted in response to the specifications contained herein shall comply with the following instructions and procedures:

COA requests that any TOP with intent to propose submit their intent to bid by **September 18th, 2026, 11:59 PM EST**

3.1 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL STANDARD INFORMATION

This Request for Proposal is issued in accordance with internal COA policies. The RFP process is a procurement option allowing the award to be based on stated evaluation criteria. The RFP states the relative importance of all evaluation criteria. No other evaluation criteria, other than as outlined in the Request for Proposal, will be used.

3.1.1 Receipt of Proposals

Upon receipt of proposals, all marked trade secrets and company financial information will be kept confidential by COA and provided only to the evaluation committee members or persons participating in the contracting process (see Section 1.1.7 "Claims to Keep Information Confidential" statement below).

3.1.2 Initial Classification

All proposals will be initially classified as being "responsive" or "nonresponsive," based on the date received and how the proposal responds to the content of the RFP. If a proposal is found to be nonresponsive, it will not be given further consideration.

3.1.3 Evaluation

All responsive proposals will be evaluated based on stated evaluation criteria. Submitted proposals must be complete at the time of submission and may not include references to information located elsewhere, such as Internet websites or libraries, unless specifically requested in COA's document.

3.1.4 Discussion/Negotiation

Although proposals may be accepted and a contract awarded without discussion, COA may initiate discussions with one or more TOP's should clarification or negotiation be necessary. TOP's should be prepared to send qualified personnel to Alexandria, LA, to discuss technical and contractual aspects of the proposal.

3.1.5 Best and Final Offer

The "Best and Final Offer" is an option available to COA under the RFP process, which permits COA to request a "best and final offer" from one or more TOP's. TOP's may be contacted asking that they submit their Best and Final Offer, which must include the discussed and/or negotiated changes. Information pertaining to other TOSP proposals and the content or ranking shall not be discussed at any time during the RFP Process.

3.1.6 Award

Contract Award will be made to the proposal offered by a responsive and responsible TOP which is determined to best meet the evaluation criteria and is therefore the one most advantageous to COA.

3.1.7 Claims to Keep Information Confidential

All information received in response to this RFP will not be available for external inspection except as required by Local, State and Federal law or under a court ordered demand. Records may be maintained at COA for up to five (5) years.

3.1.8 Late Proposals

Regardless of cause, late proposals may be considered. It will be at the sole discretion of COA to consider late proposals. Timeliness of the proposals will be considered as a scoring factor for awarding the TOP contract.

3.1.9 Preparing a Response

This RFP contains the instructions governing the proposals to be submitted and a description of the mandatory requirements. To be eligible for consideration, a TOP must meet the intent of all mandatory requirements. The evaluation committee members in the contracting process will determine compliance with the intent of all requirements. Responses that do not meet the full intent of all requirements listed in this RFP may be deemed non-responsive.

Clarification

TOP's shall promptly notify COA via GDS of any ambiguity, inconsistency or error, which they may discover upon examination of this RFP. COA via GDS will provide necessary clarifications to all RFP Participants.

Pre-Proposal Conference

Bidder to Provide Information or indicate Not Required.

Requests for Clarifications

TOP's requiring clarification or interpretation of any section or sections contained in this RFP shall make a written request to the COA Contact Official by the deadline described in the Schedule of Events. All written correspondence must be addressed to:

Name: Chris White
Title: Director, NERC Compliance & Cybersecurity
GDS Associates, Inc.
Address: 1850 Parkway Place, Suite 800
Marietta, GA 30076

Telephone: (980) 699-8038

E-mail Address: chris.white@gdsassociates.com

Requests may be sent via email.

Request Content

Each TOP submitting written questions must clearly address each question by reference to a specific section and item of this RFP. An official written answer will be provided to all questions received as soon as possible (usually the same or next day). Written questions received after the deadline may not be answered.

Response Delivery

Responses to written questions will be sent to all RFP participants by email.

RFP Changes

Any correction or change to this RFP will be made by written addendum by COA. Interpretations, corrections or changes to this RFP made in any other manner will not be binding and TOP's should not rely upon such interpretations, corrections, or changes.

3.1.10 Proposal Instructions

A point-by-point response to all numbered sections, subsections, and appendices must be submitted by each TOP in order to be considered for selection.

TOP must organize proposals into sections following the format of this RFP, with tabs separating each section.

If no exception, explanation, or clarification is required in the TOP's response to a specific subsection, the TOP shall indicate so in the point-by-point response with the following:

“(TOP Name)”, understands and will comply.

Except as listed above, the TOP will provide as much detail about their services and how it would apply to each requirement in point-by-point detail.

A TOP responding to a question with a response like, “Refer to our literature...” or “Please see www.TOP.com” may be deemed non-responsive. All materials related to a response must be submitted to the COA in the RFP response and not just referenced. Any references in an answer to another location in the RFP materials shall have specific page numbers and sections referenced.

TOP's may, at their option, submit multiple proposals, in which case each proposal shall be evaluated as a separate document.

3.1.11 Submitting a Proposal

TOPs must submit proposal via the Electronic Bid Submission: Central Bidding: www.centraauctionhouse.com.

Pursuant to Louisiana R.S. 38:22 12 B.(6)(a) through E. (1-7) and R.S. 38:2212.I B.(4)(a), vendors/contractors have the option to submit their bids and bid bonds electronically. Bids and bonds to be filed electronically shall be posted with Central Bidding at www.centraauctionhouse.com (phone 1-225-81 0-4814). Registration will need to be completed prior to posting of bid.

Complete bid specifications are available for viewing and downloading at the City of Alexandria's website www.citvofalexandrialala.com ; on the left-hand side of the opening page, go to the heading "Business" then drop down to "RFP/RFQ/Bids "; the current bids will be listed for your convenience.

Proposal must be submitted by **October 18, 2026**. Proposals received after this date may not be accepted for consideration.

Each TOP who submits a proposal represents that:

- The proposal is based upon an understanding of the specifications and requirements described in this RFP.
- Costs for developing and delivering responses to this RFP and any subsequent presentations of the proposal as requested by the COA are entirely the responsibility of the TOP. COA is not liable for any expense incurred by the TOP's in the preparation and presentation of their proposals.
- All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the COA and may be appended to any formal documentation, which would further define or expand any contractual relationship between the COA and TOP resulting from this RFP process.
- The proposals must be signed by an individual authorized to legally bind the business submitting the proposal.
- A proposal may not be modified, withdrawn or canceled by the TOP for a thirty (30) day period following the deadline for proposal submission, or receipt of Best and Final Offer, if required, as defined in the Schedule of Events, and TOSP so agrees in submitting the proposal.

3.2 RIGHTS RESERVED

While COA has every intention to award a contract as a result of this RFP, issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by GSEC to award a contract. Upon a determination such actions would be in its best interests, COA in its sole discretion reserves the right to:

- (a) Waive any formality.
- (b) Cancel or terminate this RFP.
- (c) Reject any or all proposals received in response to this document.
- (d) Waive any undesirable, inconsequential, or inconsistent provisions of this document,
- (e) which would not have significant impact on any proposal.
- (f) Not award, or if awarded, terminate any contract if the COA determines adequate
- (g) COA funds are not available.

3.3 TOP SITE VISIT / PRESENTATION

COA may request a site visit and tour of the TOP's control center and facilities that will be used for the NERC Transmission Operator functions.

3.4 SUBCONTRACTING

The successful TOP will be the prime contractor and shall be responsible, in total, for all work of any subcontractors. All known subcontractors must be listed in the proposal.

COA reserves the right to approve all subcontractors.

The Contractor shall be responsible to the COA for the acts and omissions of all subcontractors or agents and of persons directly or indirectly employed by such subcontractors, and for the acts and omissions of persons employed directly by the Contractor. Further, nothing contained within this document or any contract documents created as a result of any contract awards derived from this RFP shall create any contractual relationships between any subcontractor and COA.

3.5 GENERAL INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements: Successful contractor shall maintain for the duration of the contract, at its cost and expense, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property, including contractual liability, which may arise from or in connection with the performance of the work by the Contractor, agents, employees, representatives, assigns, or subcontractors. This insurance shall cover such claims as may be caused by any negligent act or omission.

Primary Insurance: The Contractor's insurance coverage shall be primary insurance as respect to COA, its officers, officials and employees and shall apply separately to each project or location. Any insurance or self-insurance maintained by COA, its officers, officials, employees or volunteers shall be excess of the Contractor's insurance and shall not contribute to it.

TOP Insurance

As a Project Operating Cost hereunder (including any applicable deductibles, any net premiums after dividends and/or retrospective premiums and any losses in excess of insurance coverage) the TOP shall obtain and maintain the TOP's insurance, which shall include the following:

- (a) Workers Compensation Insurance in compliance with all applicable laws and Employer's Liability Insurance with limits not less than \$1,000,000 for each accident and \$2,000,000 aggregate. If permissible in the state of operation, the policy shall contain a waiver of subrogation in favor of the owners.
- (b) Commercial General Liability Insurance, covering liability for bodily injury, personal injury and property damage to third parties (other than the Owners property under, the care custody and control of the TOP) Such policy or combination of policies shall provide limits of \$2,000,000 for each occurrence and annual aggregate and shall include contractual liability coverage;
- (c) Automobile Liability Insurance with limits of \$1,000,000 for each accident, Including but not limited to coverage for owned, non-owned and hired automobiles.
- (d) Cybersecurity Insurance with limits of \$5,000,000 aggregate.
- (e) In addition to the foregoing and at COA's request, Operator shall obtain all insurance that Lenders may reasonably require for Project as a condition precedent to providing construction of long-term financing for the Project.

Contractor's Insurance

TOP must ensure its contractors and their subcontractors shall procure and maintain as minimum Contractor's Insurance as defined in the finalized TOP Services agreement if awarded.

3.6 COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

The TOP must, in performance of work if awarded a contract, fully comply with all applicable federal, state, or local laws, rules and regulations, including the Human Rights Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Contractor agrees that the hiring of persons to perform the contract will be made on the basis of merit and qualifications and there will be no discrimination based upon race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, or national origin by the persons performing the contract.

3.6.1 NERC Reliability Standards and MISO Market Rules Compliance

The TOP must, in performance of work if award a contract, fully comply with all applicable North American Electric Reliability Corporation ("NERC") and SERC Reliability Corporation ("SERC") Standards and Requirements that have been approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC").

The TOP must also comply with all Midcontinent Independent System Operator ("MISO") market rules and Business Practice Manuals, as applicable. TOP must also comply with the FERC Standards of Conduct.

3.7 TOP COMPETITION

COA encourages free and open competition between TOPs. Whenever possible, specifications, proposal requests, and conditions are designed to accomplish this objective, consistent with the necessity to satisfy the COA's need to procure technically sound, cost-effective services.

The TOP's signature on a proposal in response to this RFP guarantees that the pricing quoted has been established without collusion and without effort to preclude COA from obtaining the best possible supply or service.

3.8 CONTRACT PROVISIONS AND TERM

This RFP and any addenda, the TOPs response including any amendments, any best and final offers, any clarification question responses, and any negotiations may be included in any resulting contract.

TOPs shall notify the COA of any standard terms and conditions which are used by the TOP to conduct business. This notification must be made by the deadline for receipt of proposals.

The contract term is for a minimum of three (3) years or as negotiated beginning at date of signing. Renewals of the contract, by mutual agreement of both parties.

04 SCOPE OF WORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The TOP Proposal shall be consistent with providing COA with Professional High-Quality NERC Certified Transmission Operator (TOP) Services, at a competitive pricing structure. An outline of minimum work scope items is listed below.

4.2 WORK SCOPE

The TOP shall be responsible for the operation of the COA Transmission Facilities as follows:

1. Provide supervision and NERC-certified personnel in connection with the twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, three hundred and sixty-five days per year operation. The NERC certified personnel should be certified at the Transmission Operator level at a minimum.
2. Provide a transmission Control Center with:
 - 2.1. Redundant and diversely routed data exchange infrastructure.
 - 2.2. Redundant Inter-Control Center Protocol (ICCP) data circuits between COA Master Station and transmission control center and between transmission control center and MISO operations center.
 - 2.3. Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) for all POD with a scan rate not to exceed four (4) seconds.
 - 2.4. Real-time alarms that are both visual and audible.
 - 2.5. Primary and back-up voice communications (land line, cell phone, VOIP, satellite phone, etc.)
 - 2.6. Real-Time alarming/flagging for data quality.
 - 2.7. Back-up power supply using on-site generation.
3. Provide transmission control center back-up functionality to include all items in 2.2.2 above.
4. TOP will operate in a manner that ensures safe and reliable operation in compliance with all mandatory and enforceable NERC Reliability Standards, MISO Business Practices Manuals, and all other applicable regulations.
5. TOP must comply with all existing COA contractual agreements, including but not limited to, Power Sales and Transmission.
6. TOP must be able to interface with COA power marketing contractors and exchange data necessary for COA to function in the MISO Market subject to the FERC Standards of Conduct.

05 TOP QUALIFICATIONS

1. COA may make such inquiries as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the TOP to supply and perform the services specified.
2. COA reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or inquiry of, the TOP fails to satisfy COA that TOP is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract.
3. In determining the capabilities of a TOP to perform the services specified herein, the following informational requirements must be met by the TOP and will be weighed by COA. These references should be based upon operation of similar facilities.
4. TOP shall provide a minimum of two (2) references that are using services of the type proposed in this RFP. The references should fall within the categories identified below. At a minimum, the TOP shall provide the company name, the location where the services were provided, contact person(s), customer's telephone number and complete description of the service type, and dates the services were provided. COA reserves the right to use any information or additional references deemed necessary to establish the ability of the TOP to perform the conditions of the contract.
5. TOP shall demonstrate their financial stability to supply, install and support the services specified.
6. TOP shall demonstrate compliance with all applicable NERC Reliability Standards and SERC Regional Reliability Standards.
7. TOP shall demonstrate compliance with all applicable MISO market rules and MISO Business Practice Manuals.

06 COST PROPOSAL

Provide a breakdown of costs for the facility for major tasks identified in the Scope of Work to include:

1. Operations budget with major line-item breakdown.
2. Annual fixed/variable budget breakdown to include labor breakout.
3. Proposed staffing with classifications.
4. Proposed Terms and Conditions
5. Assumptions

07 EVALUATION CRITERIA

7.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The evaluation committee will separate proposals into “responsive” and “non-responsive” proposals. Non-responsive proposals will be eliminated from further consideration.

The evaluation committee will evaluate the remaining proposals and determine whether to award the contract to the best proposal or to seek discussion/negotiation or a best and final offer before awarding a contract. Selection and award will be based on the TOSP’s proposal and other items outlined in this RFP. Responses must be complete and address all the criteria listed. Information or materials presented by TOSP’s outside the formal response or subsequent discussion/negotiation or “best and final offer,” if requested, will not be considered and will have no bearing on any award.

7.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation committee will review and evaluate the offers according to the following criteria:

1. How well the Proposal addresses the Scope of Work – TOP’s should at a minimum, respond to all Scope of Work items as part of their proposal. TOP’s are encouraged to provide detailed information, which will allow the Evaluation committee to understand each TOP’s proficiency in each area.
2. Pricing – Provided for in Section 6
3. Qualifications – Based on the information provided in the proposal, each TOP will be evaluated on its Qualifications and ability to successfully perform if awarded a contract. See section 5 of this RFP.

7.3 EVALUATION SCORING

Each proposal will be scored using a 100-point objective system based on the following criteria:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Responsiveness to RFP | 5 points |
| • Qualifications and Experiences as a NERC Certified TOP | 15 points |
| • NERC/SERC Standards Compliance | 15 points |
| • Experience with Municipal Utility Systems | 5 points |
| • Compatibility with COA Systems | 10 points |
| • Pricing | 10 points |
| • On-Site Demo/Interview | <u>40 points</u> |
| | 100 points |

08 AFEAT PROGRAM

Under the City's AFEAT (Alexandria Fairness, Equality, Accessibility, and Teamwork Program), participation by minority and/or disadvantaged business enterprise firms is encouraged. The AFEAT Program should be inquired about through the office of the Chief Diversity Officer. The goals for qualifying disadvantaged, minority and female owned business in the use of professional service agreements with prime contractors will help effectuate the goals of increasing: the competitive viability of small business, minority, and women business enterprise by providing contract, technical, educational, and management assistance; business ownership by small business persons, minority persons, and women (including professional service opportunities); and the procurement by the City of professional services, articles, equipment, supplies, and materials from business concerns owned by small business concerns, minority persons, and women.

Prime contractors offering subcontracting should take specific action to ensure that a bona fide effort is made to achieve maximum results towards meeting the established goals. Primes shall document efforts and shall implement steps at least as extensive as the following in a good faith effort to reach or exceed the established goals:

- A. Establish and maintain a current list of minority and female owned businesses in Alexandria, in Rapides Parish, and in the State of Louisiana.
- B. Document and maintain a record of all solicitations of offers for subcontracts from minority or female construction contractor and suppliers in Alexandria, in Rapides Parish, and in the State of Louisiana.
- C. Secure listing of minority and women owned businesses from the City of Alexandria Purchasing Department, the Central Louisiana Business Incubator, and the State of Louisiana Department of Minority Affairs.
- D. Participate in associations which assist in promoting minority and women owned businesses such as the Central Louisiana Business League, the Central Louisiana Business Incubator, and the Entrepreneurial League System.
- E. Designate a responsible official to monitor all activity made in the effort to achieve or exceed the established goals; record contacts made, subcontracts entered into with dollar amounts, and other relevant information.

For more information on AFEAT and the City of Alexandria's Diversity in Action Initiative, and to explore a local and statewide directory of minority businesses, please visit www.diversityinaction.org. Good faith compliance with the City's AFEAT Program will be a consideration during the evaluation of responses.

APPENDIX A: TRANSMISSION OPERATOR SERVICES RFP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby submit and acknowledge agreement with the conditions set forth in COA RFP # XXXXX.

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Must be signed by an individual authorized to legally bind the business submitting the proposal.

Please sign acknowledgement and e-mail copy to chris.white@gdsassociates.com.

APPENDIX B: LIST OF COA TRANSMISSION FACILITIES

The List of COA Transmission Facilities, One-Line diagrams, and other information will be provided to bidders using a Secure SharePoint site.