

Submitting an Unsolicited Proposal to the South Florida Water Management District

Introduction

This document is a guide to assist private entities in navigating the South Florida Water Management District's Unsolicited Proposal Process governed by section 255.065, Florida Statutes (2024). An Unsolicited Proposal is a project proposal submitted to the District without a District procurement solicitation process.

Process

Step 1 – Create a project proposal that demonstrates how your project meets the definition of a Qualifying Project under section 255.065(1)(i), Florida Statutes. Please note that this is your initial proposal, which will be posted to the District's procurement website and considered a public record. Please do not include information in your initial proposal that would be detrimental to competition (e.g., design details, cost, etc.) should the District decide to seek additional proposals through a solicitation. You will have the opportunity to update your proposal with all necessary information later in the process (see Step 3).

Step 2 – Submit an Unsolicited Proposal (1 original and 1 electronic copy (USB)) and a \$1000.00 Initial Application Fee to District's Procurement Bureau at:

South Florida Water Management District
Procurement Bureau
B-1 Building, 2nd Floor West
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Hand delivery may be dropped off at the B-1 Building on the First Floor.

Payment must be made by cashier's check or other noncancelable instrument. Personal checks will not be accepted.

Should you wish to withdraw your Unsolicited Proposal prior to the District initiating the Evaluation process, you may either request your Initial Application Fee be returned or that the District hold the fee for up to 1 year to allow for the submittal of a new Unsolicited Proposal.

Step 3 – The District will determine whether the project meets the definition of a Qualifying Project and whether it will move forward with evaluating the Unsolicited Proposal. The District may or may not ask its Governing Board to determine whether to evaluate the proposal at a monthly Governing Board Business Meeting. If your proposal will be brought before the Governing Board, you will be notified and should be prepared to discuss your proposal at the Board meeting.

You will receive a letter from the District stating whether your project will be further evaluated and whether the District will accept additional proposals for a similar project.

If the District chooses not to continue with the evaluation process, your Initial Application Fee will be returned to you.

If the District intends to Evaluate¹ your project, it will request an estimated Evaluation Fee to cover the cost of evaluating the project. The fee may increase if actual costs are higher. The District will also provide the Evaluation Criteria that it will utilize to evaluate your project, and a deadline to submit any additional materials the District deems necessary to meet the Evaluation Criteria. Regardless of the deadline for submitting additional material, the Evaluation Fee must be submitted within 30 days of receipt of the District's request. The District will not evaluate the proposal until it receives the Evaluation Fee and any necessary additional materials.

Step 4 – If the District will accept additional proposals, an Evaluation and Selection Committee will evaluate and score the proposals using the Evaluation Criteria. The District will hold a duly noticed public meeting for the Evaluation and Selection Committee to discuss and rank all proposals. If the top ranked proposals are tied in score, or have a one-point difference, the Evaluation and Selection Committee will request Oral Presentations from those proposers.

If the District will not accept additional proposals, then it must hold two duly noticed public meetings. Be prepared to discuss your project at the first public meeting. If your proposal already went before the District's Governing Board, then the first public meeting has been accomplished. The Evaluation and Section committee will discuss your proposal at the second duly noticed public meeting. As a result of the second meeting, the Committee will make a written recommendation containing the evaluation results and a Public Interest Determination Report. The Public Interest Determination Report will be published in the Florida Administrative Register for at least 7 days.

Step 5 – If your project is selected, and if the cost and type exceed the District's delegation threshold, District staff will seek Governing Board approval at a monthly Governing Board Business Meeting to negotiate and enter into a project agreement.

Step 6 – Negotiate a project agreement with the District. The District may terminate negotiations at any time at its sole discretion. If additional proposals were accepted, the District may negotiate with private entities in ranked order until negotiations successfully result in an executed project agreement.

Step 7 – Enter into a comprehensive project agreement with the District upon successful negotiations.

¹ The District may end the Evaluation process at any time for any reason at its sole discretion.