

Strategic Funding & Grant Consulting Services

Request for Information

Issuance Date: August 3, 2026

Response Deadline: Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. CT

Submission Email: rfp@madsewer.org

Primary Contact: Amanda Wegner, Communications & Public Affairs Manager

Purpose & Disclaimer

Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (District) is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to gather market intelligence, capabilities, and non-binding budgetary estimates from qualified firms specializing in state and federal funding procurement (grants, earmarks, and loan-forgiveness programs).

The District is currently evaluating its long-term strategy to maximize funding opportunities available through programs such as, but not limited to, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Information gathered through this RFI will assist the District in planning future budgets and structuring a formal Request for Proposal (RFP).

Please Note: This is an RFI, not a formal solicitation. No contract will be awarded from this process. Information from these responses will be used to inform the procurement strategy and approach used by the District in preparation for a forthcoming Request for Proposal (RFP), or for planning and budgetary purposes. Participation in this RFI is voluntary and will not advantage or disadvantage any firm in subsequent procurement processes.

Proposals will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. CT on Tuesday, September 8, 2026 via email to rfp@madsewer.org. The subject line must clearly state "Strategic Funding & Grant Consulting RFI." Any questions should be directed to Amanda Wegner at rfp@madsewer.org.

Any questions may be directed to:

Amanda Wegner
Communications & Public Affairs Manager
Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District
rfp@madsewer.org

About the District

Established in 1930 to protect the lakes and streams of the upper Yahara watershed, the District is a wastewater collection and treatment utility serving about 440,000 people in 24 Madison-area owner communities covering about 190 square miles. Organized as a municipal corporation, the District is governed by a nine-member Commission appointed by the communities we serve.

The District owns and operates 150 miles of pipe and 18 regional pumping stations that convey approximately 38 million gallons of wastewater to the Nine Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant daily. Through the treatment process, we recover valuable resources from the wastewater we receive before returning clean water to the environment. Our mission is to protect public health and the environment.

Learn more at www.madsewer.org.

Context & Problem Statement

The District maintains an aggressive six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) focused on aging infrastructure upgrades, increased conveyance capacity for our fast-growing region, and projects to address regulatory requirements and improve energy efficiency. Additionally, the District is in the very early stages of preparing for its largest project ever, and the organization is committed to seeking funding support to reduce the burden on ratepayers. While significant state and federal funding opportunities exist, our internal staff lacks the experience, dedicated hours, and specialized, niche expertise required to continuously monitor, track, and draft highly technical grant applications and funding requests.

The District seeks to understand how external funding consultants partner with regional public utilities to bridge this capacity gap, interface with internal engineers, and navigate complex agency portals (e.g., EPA, FEMA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) efficiently, and identify additional opportunities, as relevant, within the State of Wisconsin. Note that the District already applies for and receives funding for select projects through the State of Wisconsin Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

The District's 2026-2031 CIP and capital finance information is contained within its 2026 budget, which can be found at www.madsewer.org/2026-budget.

RFI Timeline

The District will follow the schedule below for this market research initiative:

Target Date	Step	Notes
Monday, August 3, 2026	RFI Issued	Publicly posted to District website and online procurement portals
Friday, August 14, 2026 @ 4:00 p m CT	Deadline for Respondent Questions	Must be submitted via email at rfp@madsewer.org
Monday, August 24, 2026 at 4 p.m. CT	Respondent Questions Answered	Responses posted on District website.
Tuesday, September 8, 2026 @4:00 p m CT	Respondent Responses Due	Final deadline for submission. Late submissions will not be accepted. The District intends

		to review responses as they are received.
Weeks of September 14 and 21, 2026	30-minute Response Follow-up Calls	30-minute Microsoft Teams call with selected respondents at the District's discretion

Response Follow-up Meetings

To better understand the information provided, the District may request a 30-minute Team calls with selected respondents. These calls will be held during the weeks of September 14 and 21, 2026.

The District reserves the right to modify this RFI timeline.

Information Requested

To assist the District, respondents are requested to provide concise, detailed responses to the following categories. Please structure your response using the headings provided below.

Category 1: Firm Profile & Core Capabilities

- A. Primary Expertise:** Provide a brief overview of your firm's history, size, and primary focus areas. What percentage of your business is dedicated specifically to public sector infrastructure, water utilities, or environmental sectors?
- B. Agency Experience:** Detail your firm's specific experience and track record navigating funding programs with the following entities:
 - a. U.S. Department of Energy (DOE): Experience with renewable energy deployment programs, clean energy demonstration grants, and industrial decarbonization initiatives.
 - b. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Experience with rural development energy programs, REAP, or related bioenergy initiatives applicable to municipal utilities.
 - c. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), green infrastructure set-asides, and specialized water infrastructure grants.
 - d. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): Experience navigating environmental infrastructure authorities, specifically including the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) environmental assistance programs.
 - e. State-level environmental and natural resource agencies (e.g., Wisconsin DNR).
 - f. Congressional earmarks / Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS).
- C. Staffing Model:** Describe the typical team structure assigned to a public utility client. Do you employ dedicated, full-time grant writers, technical specialists, contract lobbyists, or former federal/state program officers?

Category 2: Service Delivery & Strategic Approach

- A. Identification & Pipeline Tracking:** Describe your methodology for proactively identifying opportunities for funding aligned with a client's CIP or project portfolio. How frequently do you update clients on emerging or shifting grant cycles?

- B. Technical Writing & Assembly:** Walk through your process for developing a complex federal application package. How does your team handle data-heavy requirements such as benefit-cost analyses (BCAs), project narratives, etc.?
- C. Post-Award Services:** Does your firm provide compliance, reporting, and audit-readiness services once a grant is awarded? If so, please briefly outline these capabilities.

Category 3: Collaboration & Client Resource Expectations

- A. Level of Effort Matrix:** To help the District plan its internal capacity, please complete the following table indicating which entity typically owns, leads, or supports each task during a major federal application cycle.

Project Stage/Deliverable	Consultant Role (Lead/Support/None)	Client (District) Staff Role (Lead/Support/None)
Grant Pipeline & CIP Matching		
Technical Data Extraction (Engineering, flow data, etc.)		
Narrative Draft & Storytelling		
Budget Development & Cost Estimates		
Letters of Support & Stakeholder Coordination		
Grants.gov Submission & Portal Management		

- B. Ideal Lead Times:** What is the ideal lead time your firm requires from the moment a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) drops to successfully execute a highly competitive application?
- C. Engineering Interface:** How do your writers interface with a client's internal engineering staff or third-party design consultants to extract technical details without causing operational disruption?

Category 4: Pricing & Business Models (Non-Binding)

- A. Pricing Structures:** Describe the pricing models your firm typically utilizes for public agencies (e.g., flat monthly retainer for tracking + writing; fixed per-application fees; hourly rates with a cap).
- B. Budgetary Estimates:** Provide a non-binding, estimated annual budget range for a comprehensive grant-seeking partnership for a mid-sized regional utility. If applicable, break down the costs into:
- Onboarding/Strategy alignment/CIP audit
 - Ongoing monitoring and reporting
 - Per-application production (differentiating between minor state grants vs. major multi-million dollar federal applications)
 - Out-of-Pocket Expenses: Detail any additional costs that are typically billed separately (e.g., travel, specialized database subscriptions, graphic design, third-party software)

Category 5: Supplemental Services

- A.** Describe supplemental services or capabilities your firm offers that could further support the District's goal in competing for and obtaining state and federal funding. If applicable, outline the costs or pricing structure related to these services/capabilities.

Submission Guidelines

How to Respond

Responses must be submitted via email to rfp@madsewer.org no later than Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. CT. The subject line must clearly state "Strategic Funding Services RFI Response." Any clarifying questions regarding this RFI should be directed to Amanda Wegner at the same email address.

Additional Provisions

Procurement Notification

The District has provided notification of this procurement on the State of Wisconsin's VendorNet system. Actual procurement documents are provided on the District's Contracting Center, which can be found at www.madsewer.org/contracting-center. If this RFI results in a Request for Proposals, the District will similarly advertise and post using VendorNet and the District Contracting Center.

Reasonable Accommodations

The Department will provide reasonable accommodations, including providing informational materials in an alternative format upon request, to qualified individuals with disabilities. If a Vendor needs accommodations at the outset of this solicitation process, please get in touch with the Project Manager.

Confidentiality of RFI and Open Record Requests

The District and all records it retains are subject to Wisconsin Public Records law, sec. 19.31 et seq, Wis. Stats.

To maintain fairness to any forthcoming solicitation as a result of this RFI, all RFI responses shall remain confidential and closed to an open records request, until a Request for Proposal, Notice of Intent to Award or a Request for Bid, Notice of Award, has been issued.

Proprietary Information

Vendors who include proprietary and/or confidential information in their Response may use the District's Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information form to identify which information shall be kept confidential under Wisconsin law. Note that it is the responsibility of the vendor to understand what information may be held confidential under Wisconsin law.