CITY OF FORSYTH

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Professional Advisory & Consulting Services: Data Center Development Negotiation & Impact Assessment

Proposal Submission Deadline
November 18, 2026, at 11:00 AM EST

Delivery Location
City of Forsyth – City Hall
Attn: Alex Smith
23 E. Main Street
Forsyth, GA 31029

1. Project Background & Purpose
The City of Forsyth, Georgia (hereinafter referred to as the "City"), is currently evaluating a potential large-scale technological facility development ("Data Center Project") within its jurisdiction. Data centers present unique infrastructure, economic, land use, and community planning considerations, including substantial power and water demands, complex tax abatement/incentive requests, rapid personal property hardware depreciation, and low long-term operational headcounts relative to site footprint.

The purpose of this solicitation is to retain a highly qualified advisory firm ("Consultant") to serve as the City's primary expert advisor during negotiations with the prospective developer. The Consultant will ensure the proposed development protects the local tax base, safeguards public utilities and ratepayers, minimizes community disruption, maintains compliance with state sunshine laws, and maximizes long-term public benefit.

2. Project Contact
The designated contact for this project is:
Dean Nelson, Community Development Director
(478) 508-4014 cell
dnelson@cityofforsyth.com

The alternate contact is:
Alex Smith, Project Manager
(478) 993-6276 cell
asmith@cityofforsyth.com

3. Core Tasks & Scope of Work
The selected Consultant shall provide technical, financial, environmental, zoning, and contractual advisory services across six (6) comprehensive task areas:

Task 1: Financial, Fiscal Impact & Tax Policy Modeling

- **1.1 Net Fiscal Impact Analysis:** Conduct a comprehensive 10-, 15-, and 20-year net fiscal impact model comparing projected municipal revenues (ad valorem property tax, sales tax, utility franchise fees, permit fees) against anticipated municipal expenses (public safety, road impacts, emergency services).
- **1.2 Equipment & Personal Property Depreciation Evaluation:** Model the specific revenue impact of personal property hardware refresh cycles (servers, power infrastructure, and cooling equipment) under Georgia state tax policies and local depreciation schedules.
- **1.3 Incentive & PILOT Structuring:** Evaluate developer requests for local tax abatements or Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements. Recommend minimum baseline PILOT revenue floors to ensure guaranteed local government receipts regardless of future shifts in tax code or property valuations.
- **1.4 State Sales Tax Exemption Dynamics:** Evaluate state-level sales tax exemptions on high-tech data center equipment and determine their direct impact on local options sales tax (LOST/HOST/SPLOST) collections under current and pending Georgia General Assembly legislation.
- **1.5 Developer Fee Recovery Agreement:** Assist the City in establishing a Developer Fee Recovery Agreement requiring the developer to deposit funds into an escrow account to fund 100% of third-party consulting, engineering, legal, and advisory expenses incurred by the City during project evaluation and negotiation.

Task 2: Utility, Power & Infrastructure Impact Assessment

- **2.1 Power Grid Coordination & Tariff Review:** Collaborate with local electric utility providers (investor-owned utilities and electric membership cooperatives) to review grid capacity, substation location requirements, minimum billing commitments, and take-or-pay contract terms under Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) large-load rules. Ensure transmission line extensions and substation buildouts do not shift stranded asset costs or financial risk onto existing ratepayers.
- **2.2 On-Site Generation, Microgrids & Energy Storage Systems (BESS):** Evaluate developer proposals for prime or backup generation (e.g., natural gas turbines, fuel cells, diesel generator farms) and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Assess fire, life safety, hazardous materials, and noise impacts from continuous or test operations.
- **2.3 Water & Wastewater Demand Analysis:** Evaluate proposed cooling technologies (e.g., evaporative cooling vs. closed-loop air-cooled systems) and calculate total peak and average daily water draw and discharge requirements.
- **2.4 Water Conservation & Capacity Standards:** Assist in drafting enforceable Water Usage Effectiveness (WUE) metrics, mandatory greywater/recycled water use thresholds, or developer-funded municipal water/wastewater capacity expansions.
- **2.5 Substation Easements & Right-of-Way (ROW):** Establish routing and site design criteria for high-voltage transmission corridors and substation land dedications to protect prime commercial and residential growth corridors.
- **2.6 Off-Site Transportation Improvements:** Define precise Developer Responsibility Limits requiring 100% developer funding for off-site transportation improvements, signalization, and utility connection corridors.

Task 3: Land Use, Environmental Protection & Ordinance Drafting

- **3.1 Noise & Acoustic Mitigation Standards:** Establish measurable decibel limits (both dBA and low-frequency dBC) at property boundaries. Draft mandatory testing protocols for continuous chiller/HVAC operation, generator load testing, and transformer hum.
- **3.2 Site Design & Ordinance Text Amendments:** Draft enforceable zoning code text amendments, overlay districts, or Conditional Use Permit (CUP) standards governing setbacks, maximum building heights, continuous vegetative buffers, sound walls, and architectural screening.
- **3.3 Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Support:** Assist City staff in preparing documentation and presenting regional impact filings for state and regional planning council review (Middle Georgia Regional Commission / Georgia Department of Community Affairs).
- **3.4 Environmental Safety & Containment:** Evaluate bulk fuel storage containment, spill prevention protocols, air permitting thresholds, and emergency management plans for backup fuel and generation infrastructure.

Task 4: Digital Infrastructure, Telecom & ROW Management

- **4.1 Fiber Route & Micro-Trenching Standards:** Review developer requirements for redundant, multi-carrier dark fiber feeds. Assist the City in establishing micro-trenching standards, fiber franchise fees, and public right-of-way (ROW) restoration bonds.
- **4.2 Middle-Mile Fiber Rights:** Negotiate city access rights or middle-mile fiber concessions for municipal, public safety, and public broadband communication networks.

Task 5: Development Agreement, Legal Protections & Open Government

- **5.1 Direct Negotiation Support:** Participate directly alongside the City Attorney, Development Authority counsel, and elected officials in strategic negotiation meetings with developer representatives.
- **5.2 Performance Milestones & Clawbacks:** Establish clear, phase-based performance benchmarks (capital expenditure thresholds, completion dates) tied directly to development approvals and tax incentives, enforced by mandatory statutory and contractual clawback mechanics.
- **5.3 Open Records Act & NDA Compliance:** Establish protocols for balancing developer trade secret protections against the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70) and Georgia Open Meetings Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1), ensuring elected officials maintain full legal compliance during executive negotiations.
- **5.4 Decommissioning & Remediation Security:** Draft contractual mechanics requiring performance bonds, letters of credit, or decommissioning escrow funds to guarantee site remediation or structural removal should the facility become obsolete or abandoned.

Task 6: Public Engagement & Stakeholder Communications

- **6.1 Strategic Communication Plan:** Prepare fact sheets, FAQ documents, visual impact renderings, and executive summary slides explaining project impacts, utility protections, and fiscal benefits to the community.
- **6.2 Public Hearing Support:** Provide expert witness testimony and presentation support during public hearings, town halls, and City Council meetings.

4. Required Deliverables

The selected Consultant shall provide the following key deliverables across the lifecycle of the engagement:

- **Inception & Strategy Briefing:** Summary analysis of developer proposals, identified technical/financial risks, and recommended municipal negotiation positioning.
- **Fiscal & Utility Impact Report:** Formal presentation containing the 20-year net fiscal model, personal property depreciation impact, sales tax loss evaluation, and utility capacity analysis.
- **Data Center Ordinance & Zoning Amendments:** Draft text amendments establishing noise limits (dBA/dBC), WUE metrics, visual buffers, BESS safety rules, and setback parameters.
- **Telecommunications & ROW Framework:** Recommended fiber franchise fee schedule, micro-trenching standards, and ROW restoration requirements.
- **Negotiation Term Sheet & CBA Outline:** Proposed framework for PILOT terms, minimum revenue floors, fee recovery escrow terms, and community value contributions.
- **Public Engagement Package:** Fact sheets, project FAQs, and presentation decks for public hearings and community meetings.
- **Final Development Agreement Redline:** Comprehensive legal review and redline of final contracts, clawbacks, NDA protocols, and decommissioning bond language prior to elected body action.

5. Minimum Consultant Qualifications

Proposers must demonstrate the following minimum qualifications:

1. **Demonstrated Local Government Representation:** At least five (5) years of experience advising municipal governments, county commissions, or economic development authorities in high-density utility or industrial project negotiations.
2. **Strict Independence & Conflict Standards:** Firm must demonstrate no active conflicts of interest representing data center developers, hyperscalers, or electric power providers within the target region/state within the past 36 months.
3. **Relevant Project Experience:** Documented successful negotiation of large-scale data center developments or high-load industrial developments on behalf of public sector clients within the past five (5) years.
4. **Multidisciplinary Team:** Identified key personnel must include demonstrated expertise in municipal finance/fiscal modeling, municipal law/incentives, environmental/utility engineering, and urban planning.

6. Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposers shall submit their proposals organized into the following sections:

1. **Executive Summary & Understanding of Scope:** Overview of firm capabilities, project approach, and demonstrated understanding of Georgia municipal development dynamics.
2. **Key Personnel Resumes & Subconsultants:** Identification of Lead Project Manager and key team members. Proposers must disclose all subconsultants used to fulfill specific task areas (e.g., acoustic or utility engineering).

3. **Project Experience & References:** Minimum of three (3) case studies of similar public-sector engagements completed within the past 5 years, including client contact information.
4. **Comprehensive Conflict of Interest Disclosure:** Formal signed declaration disclosing any current or historical representation (within __ months) of major data center developers, hyperscalers, or electric utility providers.
5. **Fee Proposal & Developer Escrow Memorandum:** Itemized cost schedule provided as a Fixed Fee per Task, Hourly Rate with a Guaranteed Maximum Cap or flat fee**.**

7. RFP Schedule & Procurement Timeline

Milestone	**Date / Time (EST)**
RFP Issuance Date	10/21/2026
Pre-Proposal Vendor Teleconference (Optional)	Not Applicable
Deadline for Written Questions	10/28/2026 at 5:00 PM
City Answers & Addenda Released	11/04/2026 at 5:00 PM
Proposal Submission Deadline	11/18/2026 at 11:00 AM
Shortlist Interviews (If Requested)	12/16/2026 at 10:00 AM
Contract Award & Onboarding	01/04/2026