

Process followed to develop the RFP for the Biosolids Removal Contract

The development of the request for proposals (RFP) for the removal of biosolids from the Hornsby Bend site took approximately a year and a half. Staff started researching options for a new contract in February 2015. Other cities were contacted and it was found that 90% handled their sludge by treating it to Class B standards and then land applying it on agricultural fields or taking it to a land fill. During the checking staff found that San Antonio Water System "SAWS" has a composting contract with New Earth who also has the food waste contract and uses both biosolids and food waste to compost.

Hearing about that joint operation, AW and ARR staff met several times between February 2015 and October 2015 discussing options for a joint contract. It was soon apparent the AW timeline was moving at a faster rate than ARR's and it was agreed AW would move forward with a "bridge" contract to get through the five years ARR was using to get their food waste program going. There was the added problem that the food waste couldn't come to Hornsby due to the proximity to ABIA and the FAA regulations. The food waste would attract scavenger birds which get in the way of the airplanes.

The Purchasing Department was also brought into the new contract discussion in February 2015 and through those discussions it was decided the type of solicitation used would be an RFP not a bid, and that in the development of a final scope of work AW could meet with prospective contractors for feedback.

A scope of work was drafted and companies known to handle biosolids were asked to review it and give comments and suggestions. AW staff met with New Earth 8/12/15, Synagro 8/17/2015, and TDS 8/26/2015. Denali was also contacted and they gave their comments over the telephone. The majority of the companies said composting was the least expensive way to handle the biosolids, and ideally the contractor would have access to the whole pad for composting.

Staff made the decision to be fiscally conservative and weight the RFP with 40% cost, 10% local business, 20% experience, 20% proposed solution, and 10% timeline. The RFP was sent to ARR and the vendors one last time to ensure as many responses as possible. The RFP was issued in April of 2016.