

TO: Townsend Town Council

FROM: Julie Goodyear, Town Manager

DATE: July 14, 2025

RE: Summary and Recommendation – RFP Responses for Engineering Services and Code Review & Inspection Services

Overview

The Town of Townsend issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for two service categories:

1. **Engineering Services**
2. **Code Review & Inspection Services**

Six (6) firms submitted proposals:

- **Remington & Vernick Engineers (RVE)**
- **Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc. (DBF)**
- **VanDemark & Lynch, Inc. (V&L)**
- **First State Inspection Agency (FSIA)**
- **Verdantas**
- **Pennonni**

Each proposal was reviewed across key criteria including firm background, services offered, team qualifications, relevant municipal experience, fee structure, and unique strengths. A summary comparison table is also included for quick reference.

Proposal Summaries

Remington & Vernick Engineers (RVE)

- **Experience:** Serving as the Town's Engineer since 2001.
- **Team:** 480+ staff; multidisciplinary team with deep municipal experience.
- **Key Personnel:** Erik Gruenes, PE (Town Engineer); Christopher Fazio, PE (Principal in Charge).
- **Notable Projects for Townsend:**
 - 2024 Road Program
 - Municipal Park Irrigation
 - Wastewater Feasibility Study
 - New Town Hall
- **Strengths:**
 - Deep institutional knowledge of Townsend.
 - Strong project portfolio with successful grant acquisition (DNREC, ORPT).
 - Advanced asset management via vialytics AI.
- **Rates:** Competitive; not the lowest but justified by experience and continuity.

Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc. (DBF)

- **Experience:** 40+ years in municipal engineering across Delaware and Maryland.
- **Team:** 100+ professionals; strong in-house capabilities across engineering, planning, surveying, and architecture.
- **Key Personnel:** Sharon Cruz, PE, AICP (Project Manager); Ring Lardner, PE (QA/QC).
- **Notable Clients:** Towns of Delmar, Selbyville, Georgetown, Bridgeville, Sussex County.
- **Strengths:**
 - Broad technical expertise and regional presence.
 - Strong grant writing and funding support.
 - Competitive hourly rates.
- **Rates:** Principal - \$230/hr; Engineer - \$155/hr; Inspector - \$110/hr.

VanDemark & Lynch, Inc. (V&L)

- **Experience:** 80+ years in Delaware; currently serve Elsmere and East Marlborough Township.
- **Team:** 32 staff; structural division (SCE) has 25+ years of code review experience.
- **Key Personnel:** Lisa Donlon, PE (Municipal Lead); Darryl Jones, PE (Code Review Lead).
- **Strengths:**

- Strong structural and code review expertise.
 - Long-standing municipal relationships.
 - Detailed scope of services and clear understanding of Town needs.
- **Rates:** Municipal Engineer - \$215/hr; Inspector - \$113/hr.

First State Inspection Agency (FSIA)

Focus: Code Review & Inspection Services

- **Experience:** 40 years in Delaware; 45,000 inspections in 2024.
- **Services:** Building, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, rental, zoning, fire sprinkler inspections, and plan reviews.
- **Team:** 23 inspectors (many with master-level trade licenses), 8 support staff.
- **Strengths:** Same-day inspection response, deep bench of qualified inspectors, no subcontractors used.
- **Rates:** Flat fees per permit type (e.g., \$345 for new single-family dwelling), with detailed schedules for building, plumbing, mechanical, and plan review services.

References: Extensive list of municipalities in DE and MD.

Verdantas

Focus: Full-Service Municipal Engineering

- **Experience:** 1,950+ employees; active in DE since 2015; current contracts with Middletown, Smyrna, Clayton, Millsboro, Georgetown.
- **Services:** Plan review, municipal planning, roadway & drainage design, stormwater, construction oversight, GIS, surveying, geotechnical, environmental, and more.
- **Team:** Multidisciplinary with PE-certified engineers, AICP planners, and support staff.
- **Strengths:** Strong local presence, rapid response, in-house capabilities, and extensive municipal experience.
- **Fee Structure:** Hourly rates (e.g., \$182–\$236/hr for project managers, \$125–\$175/hr for surveyors).

References: Middletown, Smyrna, Clayton, Millsboro, Newark, and others.

Pennoni

- **Focus:** Comprehensive Municipal Engineering Services
Experience: 50+ years in municipal engineering; 1,400 staff; long-term clients like Valley Township (since 1977).
- **Services:** Water/wastewater, stormwater, traffic, parks, GIS, surveying, inspections, MEP, structural, environmental, grant writing, and more.

- **Team:** Led by Brian Miller, PE; supported by senior engineers and specialists in various disciplines.
- **Strengths:** Deep bench, local offices, strong project management, visualization tools (Photo360, PFX), and grant support.
- **Fee Structure:** Hourly rates (e.g., \$180/hr for senior professionals, \$210 for 2-person survey crew).
- **References:** Milton, Frederica, Newark, Wilmington, and others.