

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS PROJECT 2318

FEDERAL ADVOCACY SERVICES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) RELEASE DATE: July 25, 2023

QUESTION/CLARIFICATION DEADLINE:

 Date:
 August 8, 2023

 Time:
 5:00 p.m. (PT)

PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND TIME:

Date: August 15, 2023 Time: 10:00 a.m. (PT)

CONTACT PERSON:

Noelle Gordon Procurement Coordinator (360) 705-5857 ngordon@intercitytransit.com

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FEDERAL ADVOCACY SERVICES

INTERCITY TRANSIT PROJECT 2318

Intercity Transit, the public transportation provider in Thurston County, Washington, is seeking Proposals for Federal Advocacy Services.

Solicitation documents for this opportunity are available online through Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) located at <u>https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/</u>. Proposers are responsible to register in WEBS and download the RFP 2318 solicitation documents in order to receive automatic e-mail notification of any future Addenda.

Proposals are due no later than August 15, 2023 10:00 a.m. (PT).

Please contact Noelle Gordon, Procurement Coordinator, by phone at (360) 705-5857 or email at ngordon@intercitytransit.com with any questions regarding this solicitation.

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

Intercity Transit (Transit), the public transportation provider in Thurston County, Washington, is conducting this Request for Proposals (RFP) in order to establish a Contract for Federal Advocacy Services. Transit is seeking responses from qualified and experienced individuals or firms who are ideally positioned to serve as a federal legislative liaison on behalf of Intercity Transit on a year-round basis.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Transit is the leader, major advocate, and primary source of public transportation in Thurston County. As such, Transit is charged to balance several important functions: providing primary transportation for people without an alternative, including those with a physical or mental disability; offering high-quality alternative transportation for people with options; providing a stimulant to economic growth; serving as a partner in building livable communities; and, being a ready resource able to respond to community emergencies. In order to better serve the community and fulfill its mission, Transit has determined a continuing need for a highly qualified and experienced federal legislative advocate to proactively advance its interests and agenda.

1.3 STATEMENT OF WORK

The primary responsibility of the federal legislative advocate hired as a result of this solicitation will be to assist Transit in pursuing federal funding opportunities and to represent Transit's interests in public policy and legislative matters. The successful consultant will represent Transit on transportation issues before key members and staff of the United States Congress, including but not limited to, the Washington delegation, the Senate Committees on Appropriations and Commerce, Science and Transportation, and the House Committees on Appropriations and Transportation, and Infrastructure.

The Awarded Consultant will provide Federal Advocacy Services that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. Proactively advise Transit on how to establish a long-term legislative strategy that would maximize discretionary funding for Transit capital projects;
- 2. Identify and document planning, programming, and funding issues, and key legislative champions;
- 3. Monitor grant opportunities and alert and assist Transit in applying for federal grants and programs;
- 4. Secure appropriations requests including Zero-Emission fleet replacements and related Infrastructure and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) development and implementation ;
- 5. Ensure that Transit funding opportunities from categories authorized under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and any subsequent transportation authorization legislation are maximized;
- 6. Establish and maintain constant, effective communication with Washington's Congressional delegation;

- 7. Provide status and advisory reports for Transit executive staff and Board members;
- 8. Plan and staff at least one (1) visit per year in Washington, D.C. for Transit officials to meet with the Washington State delegation.
- 9. Comply with all federal lobbying disclosure requirements and maintaining the highest ethical standards, both publicly and privately, including the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

1.4 AWARD

Transit intends to award a Contract to the responsive responsible Proposer whose Proposal meets all RFP requirements and is determined the most advantageous to Transit.

This Solicitation does not obligate Transit to contract for the services specified herein. Transit reserves the right to add, remove, or otherwise modify requirements to meet the operational and strategic objectives of the agency.

1.5 CONTRACT TERM

The initial term of the Contract resulting from this solicitation will be for one (1) year, beginning October 22, 2023, and ending October 21, 2024. Transit reserves the option to extend this Contract up to four (4) additional years, in one (1) year increments, for a total Contract period not to exceed five (5) years. However, if necessary and upon a showing of good cause, additional mutually agreed periods beyond five total years may be authorized. Extension for each additional term may be offered at the sole discretion of Transit and will be subject to written mutual agreement.

SECTION 2 - GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 CONTACT INFORMATION

All questions and communication concerning Solicitation must be directed to the Procurement Coordinator listed below. All oral communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding. Proposers are to rely only on written statements issued by the Procurement Coordinator.

Procurement Coordinator:	Noelle Gordon	
Email Address:	ngordon@intercitytransit.com	
Address:	Intercity Transit	
	526 Pattison Street SE	
	Olympia, WA 98501	

2.2 ANTICIPATED PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

The activities and dates listed below represent the anticipated procurement schedule. Transit reserves the right to change the schedule. Transit will post any changes to the Proposal Due Date and Time on Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) at <u>https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/</u>.

Procurement Activity	Date and Time (Pacific Time)
RFP Release	July 25, 2023
Questions and Requests for Clarifications Due	August 8, 2023 -5:00 p.m.
Proposal Due Date and Time	August 15, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.
Proposal Evaluation	August 16-28, 2023
Anticipated Interviews (optional)	Sept 19-20, 2023
Anticipated Contract Award Date	October 6, 2023
Anticipated Contract Start Date	October 22, 2023

2.3 SOLICITATION DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

Solicitation documents are available on-line through <u>WEBS</u>. Proposers are responsible to register in WEBS and download the Solicitation Documents. Contact WEBS customer service at (360) 902-7400 or <u>WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov</u> if you require assistance with the WEBS registration process or need help accessing the Solicitation Documents.

Transit will post Addenda or schedule changes on WEBS. Proposers are responsible to check for updates and obtain any Addenda related to this Solicitation. Failure to do so may result in the submission of a Proposal that is inconsistent with the most current information and may result in disqualification.

2.4 EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTS

Proposer must thoroughly examine all Solicitation Documents, including but not limited to, the RFP, Solicitation Standards, Sample Contract, Proposal Submittal Document, any other material referenced or incorporated herein, and any Addenda. Submission of a Proposal constitutes acknowledgment that the Proposer has thoroughly examined all Solicitation Documents.

Proposer's failure or neglect to receive or examine any of the Solicitation Documents, statutes, ordinances, regulations and permits will in no way relieve the Proposer from any obligations with respect to the Proposal or any resulting Contract.

Transit will reject claims for additional compensation based upon a lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of any of the Solicitation Documents, statutes, ordinances, regulations, permit requirements, or other materials referenced or incorporated in this RFP.

2.5 QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATION REQUESTS

Proposer questions and/or requests for clarification regarding this RFP will be allowed consistent with the respective dates specified in the Anticipated Procurement Schedule. All Proposer questions and/or requests for clarification must be submitted in writing via email to the Procurement Coordinator. It is at Transit's sole discretion to accept or reject any request for changes.

Transit will provide an official written response to Proposer questions received by the respective deadlines. Proposers must not rely on any oral statements or conversations, with Transit representatives for questions or clarifications regarding this RFP. Verbal responses to questions and/or clarifications will be considered unofficial and non-

binding. Only written responses posted to WEBS in the form of an Addendum will be considered official and binding. All such Addenda will become part of the Solicitation and any awarded Contract.

If no requests for clarification are received, Transit will construe silence as acceptance and that the Proposer intends to comply with the Solicitation Documents as written in their entirety.

2.6 SOLICITATION STANDARDS

The Solicitation Standards document is included in <u>Appendix B</u>.

This document contains important information for Proposers applicable to this Solicitation. The terms and conditions provided in the Solicitation Standards document apply directly to, and are incorporated by reference, into this Solicitation and the Contract resulting from this Solicitation. As such, Proposers do not need to submit this document with their Proposal. It is the Proposer's responsibility to read and fully understand the details of all items contained herein prior to Proposal submittal.

2.7 CONTRACT TERMS & NONNEGOTIABLE

A Sample Contract is included in <u>Appendix C.</u>

THE TERMS CONTAINED IN THE SAMPLE CONTRACT ARE NONNEGOTIABLE.

Transit expects the final Contract signed by the successful Proposer to be substantially the same as the Contract located in Appendix C. Proposer should examine the Contract terms to understand Transit's expectations. Proposer's submission of a Response to this Solicitation constitutes complete acceptance of these Contract requirements.

The awarded Contract will be between Transit and the selected firm.

2.8 INCORPORATION OF DOCUMENTS INTO CONTRACT

A Proposal submitted in response to this Solicitation is an offer to contract with Transit. This Solicitation document, all incorporated documents, any subsequent Addenda, and the successful Proposer's Response will be incorporated into the resulting Contract.

SECTION 3 - PROPOSAL SUBMITTALS

Respond to the following requirements in this section.

3.1 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposer must complete and provide the following information (1-6) using in the Proposal Submittal Document of <u>Appendix A</u>. Incomplete or vague responses may be considered non-responsive and may be rejected. Failure to complete and submit all items listed in this section may disqualify the Proposer from further participation in this RFP.

1. <u>Proposer Acknowledgements</u>

The Proposer Acknowledgements must be signed by the Proposer's Authorized Representative. Proposer must complete the acknowledgement of Addenda receipt box(es) by filling the "addenda numbers" fields for each Solicitation Addenda issued, and complete the signature box information on the Proposer Acknowledgements page.

2. <u>Proposer Information</u>

Proposer must complete the Proposer Profile, Proposer Authorized Representative, Proprietary or Confidential Information, Certified DBE and SBE Status, and Statement of Prior Contract Termination sections. Proposer may attach additional sheets if necessary.

3. <u>Sub-Consultant Information</u>

Proposer is instructed to complete the Sub-Consultant Information section if the Proposer intends on utilizing Sub-consultants. If Proposer does not intend to use Subconsultants, the Proposer is not required to complete this section of the Proposal Submittal Document. If no information is entered, Transit will assume that Subconsultants will not be used.

Transit will accept Proposals that include third party involvement only if the Proposer submitting the Proposal agrees to take complete responsibility for all actions of such Sub-consultants. Proposer must disclose the use of any Sub-consultant(s) in their Proposal.

If applicable, Proposer will identify all Sub-consultants who will perform services in fulfillment of Contract requirements, including their name, the nature of services to be performed, address, telephone, email, federal tax identification number (TIN), Washington State Unified Business Identifier (UBI), and DBE or SBE certification status. Transit reserves the right to approve or reject any and all Sub-consultants that Proposer proposes. Any Sub-consultants not listed in the Proposer's Response, who are engaged after Contract award, must be pre-approved, in writing, by Transit before providing services under the Contract.

4. <u>References</u>

Proposer must submit a minimum of three (3) references for which the Proposer has provided services similar to those described herein.

Through this submission, Proposer grants permission to Transit to independently contact the references. Transit reserves the right to obtain and consider information from other sources concerning a Proposer, such as Proposer's capability and performance under other contracts, Proposer's financial stability, past or pending litigation, and other publicly available information.

5. <u>Non-Cost Proposal</u>

Proposer must complete and submit the Non-Cost Proposal Section. Proposer may attach additional sheets if necessary.

6. <u>Cost Proposal</u>

Proposer must complete and submit the Cost Proposal Section. Proposer may attach additional sheets if necessary.

Prices will be in U.S. dollars. Proposers will extend unit pricing as required. In the event of an error in the extension of prices, the unit price will prevail. All Proposal prices will remain firm for a minimum of sixty (60) Calendar Days from the Proposal due date.

Proposal prices will include everything necessary for the procurement of the Contract, execution and completion of the work, and fulfillment of the Contract. This includes but is not limited to, furnishing of all materials, delivery costs, equipment, tools, labor and services, Proposal preparation costs, Contract management costs and administrative costs, except as may be provided otherwise in the Solicitation documents.

All applicable taxes which the Awarded Consultant is required to pay will be included in the proposed price. No adjustments will be made in the amount paid by Transit under the Awarded Contract due to misunderstanding or lack of knowledge of the Proposer as to liability for, or the amount of, any taxes for which the Proposer is liable or responsible by law or under the Awarded Contract or due to increases in tax rates imposed by any federal, state, or local government.

No payments in advance or in anticipation of services to be provided under any resulting Contract will be made. Consultant will only be compensated for performance delivered and accepted by Transit.

3.2 SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Transit receives Proposer bid responses via email/email attachment to <u>BidBox@IntercityTransit.com</u>; other forms of delivery will not be accepted.

Proposer must complete and submit all sections of the Proposal Submittal Document, located in <u>Appendix A</u>, as their Proposal. One (1) electronic copy of the Proposer's complete Proposal must be received by Intercity Transit on or before the Proposal Due Date and Time set forth in Section 2.2, Anticipated Procurement Schedule.

Send Responses to BidBox@IntercityTransit.com

1. File Size

Max File Size 25 MegaBytes. An Automatic response will be sent to you as soon as the bidbox received the email, this is a courtesy automatic acknowledgement. The automatic response is a courtesy and not a guarantee the files were received and/or intact. File sizes above **25MB**, may be corrupted on our end and there is always the possibility of some technological failures.

Bidders are required to submit the bid response electronically by email/email attachment(s) to the address provided in this section. Any other delivery method is nonresponsive.

2. Subject Line

Example of subject line: 2318 Bid Federal Advocacy [company name]

The subject line should include the bid's identification number, "Bid" and Company name. This number is used by the Procurement team for the system's search and filter features. The failure in using the competition's bid identification number may result in your bid response not being seen and possibly not included in the evaluation; essentially disqualified.

3. Signature

For purposes of this competition, Transit is accepting a typed signature of an individual's name as the symbol of signature as authorized by RCW 1.80.

While a signature (typed signature) within the submittal(s) attached to the email is preferred and requested, an individual's printed name (first and last) in the body of the email will serve the same purpose. Using :"Thank you, The Sales Team" WILL NOT WORK as it doesn't identify an individual. An example: Using something like "Attached please find ACME INC. bid response to your competition, and thank you for the opportunity, John Smith, Manager", WILL WORK because it includes an individual's name.

For clarity: Find the SUBMITTAL forms/instructions that were provided on WEBS. If the document or self-authored submittal has or requires a signature and/or other information, complete it. Where it asks/requires a signature, simply type in your name (first and last) and any other required information. Then save and return the document as part of you/your firm's bid response as an attachment to an email and send the email to <u>BidBox@IntercityTransit.com</u>.

4. Time of Receipt

Time of receipt will be determined by the date and time the Proposal is received by <u>bidbox@intercitytransit.com</u>. Proposer accepts all risks of late delivery regardless of fault or chosen method of delivery.

Proposals are to be submitted in the format described in this Solicitation. No oral, faxed, mailed or telephone Proposals or modifications will be accepted or considered. All Proposals and any accompanying documentation become the property of Transit and will not be returned.

CAUTION: It is up to the Proposer to decide when to submit the bid response to Intercity Transit. Some things to consider:

- Submitting early may result in a later-in-time solicitation amendment issued by Transit being missed by the Proposer. <u>While not guaranteed</u>, Transit will likely extend the competition's due date if an amendment that meaningfully changes the competition is issued within five (5) business days prior to the day of the competition's due date.
- Submitting late/close to the deadline leaves little time to deal with any noticed technological slow-down, delays, or malfunctions.

While Transit does its best to make the submittal of a bid response easy, technological failures can occur, and while unfortunate, bids sent by a Proposer but not received or can't be found by the Procurement Coordinator, corrupted files, and/or bids received after the due date and time noted in Section 2.2, as indicated by the timestamp on the email when printed out, or any other failure, for **any reason**, **no matter the cause**, *regardless of responsibility or fault*, *will be rejected*.

3.3 LATE PROPOSALS

Any Proposal received after the exact time specified for Proposal due date and time will not be accepted or considered. The exact time is designated as the date and time received by the <u>BidBox@intercitytransit.com</u>.

3.4 **PROPOSER RESPONSIVENESS**

Proposer must respond to each question/requirement contained in this RFP. Failure to demonstrate to Transit that your firm meets RFP requirements and/or comply with any applicable item may result in the Response being deemed non-responsive and disqualified from further consideration.

Transit, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to consider the actual level of Proposer's compliance with Solicitation requirements, accept or reject any and all Proposals received, waive any irregularities or minor informalities, to accept any items or combination of items, and to request additional information required to fully evaluate a Proposal.

SECTION 4 - EVALUATION AND AWARD

4.1 OVERVIEW

The responsive responsible Proposer whose Proposal is determined to best meet all RFP requirements and is the most advantageous to Transit, based on the evaluation factors described herein, will be declared the successful Proposer. All Proposals are subject to Transit's final approval as to whether they meet all RFP requirements.

4.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The scores for each Proposal will be assigned a relative importance for each scored section as follows:

PHASE 1 EVALUATION

Phase 1 Requirements	Max Points
Non-Cost Proposal:	70 points
Cost Proposal:	30 points
Total Possible Phase 1 Points:	100 points

PHASE 2 EVALUATION (OPTIONAL)

Phase 2 Requirements	Max Points
Interview:	100 points
Total Possible Phase 2 Points	100 points

4.3 EVALUATION PROCESS

1. Initial Determination of Responsiveness (pass/fail)

Responses will be reviewed initially by the Procurement Coordinator to determine on a pass/fail basis compliance with administrative requirements as specified in this RFP. Only responses that meet this requirement will move to the next evaluation step.

Transit reserves the right to determine at its sole discretion whether Proposer's Response meets the Responsiveness criteria as set forth within this document. If all responding Proposers are determined to be deemed Non-Responsive, Transit will cancel the Solicitation and reject all Proposals.

Only Responses that pass the Initial Determination of Responsiveness review will be further evaluated based on the requirements in this Solicitation.

2. Phase 1 Evaluation - Non-Cost and Cost Elements (scored)

a. Non-Cost Proposal Evaluation:

Evaluators will score each element of the Non-Cost Proposal. The Procurement Coordinator will tabulate the evaluation team's scoring. Transit will calculate a single score for each Non-Cost Proposal. There are a maximum of **70 points** available for the Non-Cost Proposal.

Ideally, the evaluation team will reach a consensus score, but if a consensus score can't be reached, the scores will be summed and divided by the number of evaluators to reach an average score which will serve the same purpose.

b. <u>Cost Proposal Evaluation:</u>

The Procurement Coordinator will calculate the Cost score using Proposer's Cost Proposal submittal. The total available points for the Cost Proposal section are **30 points**. The Proposer's Cost Proposal will be scored in relation of the other Cost Proposals received, with the lowest Cost Proposal receiving the maximum available points. Other higher cost bids will receive a pro rata share of points. Example: Bid #1 is the low bid at \$100 and earns 30 points. Bid #2 is the second low bid at \$200 and earns 15 points. \$100 / \$200 = .5. 30 points x .5 = 15 points.

c. <u>Proposer Total Phase 1 Score:</u>

Proposers' Total Phase 1 Scores will be calculated by summing Non-Cost and Cost Proposal points (maximum of **100 points**) to determine the Proposer's total Phase 1 Score.

3. Phase 2 Evaluation - Interview (scored) (Optional)

Transit reserves the right to schedule Interviews if determined to be in the best interest of Transit. In the event Interviews are required, Transit will contact the top-scoring Proposer(s) from Phase 1 to schedule an Interview date, time, and location. If Phase 2 is required, Phase 1 scoring will only be used to determine which Proposer(s) move to Phase 2. Phase 2 scoring will then be used during the remainder of the RFP evaluation process to determine the Apparent Successful Proposer. There are a maximum of **100 points** available for the Interview. Commitments made by the Proposer during the Interview, if any, will be considered binding.

4. References (pass/fail)

Transit reserves the right to check references after Proposal submittal, to assist in determining the overall responsibility of the Proposer. References may be checked during Proposal evaluation to determine the responsibility of Proposers. Transit reserves the right to reject any Proposal submittal if the Proposer receives unfavorable references and may use results as a factor in award. Transit reserves the right to seek and substitute other references to determine the sufficiency of the Proposer's level of responsibility.

5. Evidence of Qualification (pass/fail)

After Proposal submittal, Transit reserves the right to make reasonable inquiry and/or requests for additional information, to assist in determining the overall responsibility of any Proposer. Requests may include, but are not limited to, educational degrees, business licenses, financial statements, credit ratings, references, record of past performance, experience, criminal background check, clarification of Proposer's offer, and on-site inspection of Proposer's or Proposer's Sub-consultant's facilities. Failure to respond to said request(s) within two (2) business days may result in the Proposer being deemed non-responsive and thus disqualified. Transit reserves the right to reject any Proposal where, upon investigation of the available evidence or information, Transit is not satisfied that the Proposer's character, wherewithal to carry out the contract, reputation, and past performance, if any.

4.4 OVERVIEW OF THE AWARD PROCESS

The successful Proposer, if any, will be the responsive, responsible, qualified Proposer whose Proposal, in the sole opinion of Transit, best meets the requirements set forth in this RFP and is in the best interest of Transit. Transit may offer a Contract to the successful Proposer.

All responsive Proposers responding to this solicitation will be notified when Transit has determined the successful Proposer.

If Transit and the successful Proposer are unable to execute a Contract within a reasonable amount of time, Transit will terminate the engagement and will proceed with the next highest ranked Proposer.

Transit may be required to seek and receive Intercity Transit Authority (Authority) approval to enter into a contract with the successful Proposer. If the Authority concurs, a Contract will be awarded to the successful Proposer.

4.5 EXECUTION OF CONTRACT

The successful Proposer will execute the final Contract using DocuSign and provide to Transit evidences of insurance, within ten (10) Business Days of execution.

4.6 **POST AWARD MEETING**

The Awarded Consultant may be required to attend a post award meeting scheduled by the Procurement Coordinator to discuss Contract performance requirements. The time and place of this meeting will be scheduled following Contract award.

Proposal Submittal Document: Proposers must complete and submit the below Proposal Submittal Document as their Proposal.



Solicitation Standards: This document contains the Standard Definitions, Instructions to Proposers, and Terms and Conditions. This document <u>does not</u> need to be submitted; however Proposers are instructed to be familiar with it as it governs this Solicitation and will be incorporated into the resulting Contract.



Sample Contract Document: Transit expects the final Contract signed by the successful Proposer to be substantially the same as this Contract. This document <u>does not</u> need to be submitted; however Proposers are instructed to be familiar with it.

