

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for

TRANSPORTATION/LEGISLATIVE STRATEGIST

1. Introduction

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is a state-designated public agency serving as the regional transportation planning agency for Santa Cruz County responsible for securing and administrating local, state, and federal funds to implement projects and programs consistent with approved transportation policies. The RTC is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of all 5 County Supervisors, a representative from each of the 4 cities in the county, and 3 representatives from the Santa Cruz County Metropolitan Transit District. The RTC administrates an agency budget of approximately \$12 million annually with an additional \$7 million in state and federal pass-through funds distributed by RTC to local agencies.

RTC is an active member of statewide organizations (including the RTPA Group, the California State Association of Counties, the California Council of Governments, the Rural Counties Task Force, and the Self-Help Counties Coalition) to help identify and represent our interests on state and federal transportation matters. RTC staff also work directly with elected state officials and their staff to advocate for and against specific legislative issues.

Due to severe budget constraints a few years ago, the RTC decided to delete its Sacramento Legislative Assistant from the budget. However, monitoring transportation-related legislative and administrative activity in Sacramento and advocating for funding have become both increasingly important and time consuming.

2. Purpose

The RTC wishes to engage the services of a Transportation/Legislative Strategist to assist the agency in positioning itself to be competitive in the pursuit of discretionary funds and responding to new initiatives and programs proposed by the administration or the state legislature. Available funding to secure these services is constrained; therefore, staff will continue to participate with statewide organizations and expand the established working relationship with local elected officials to realize local and regional transportation goals.

To effectively leverage existing resources and relationships, the RTC seeks an individual or firm that can provide extended “eyes and ears” on issues of interest and concern to the

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Santa Cruz region. The RTC desires assistance in identifying trends and nuances in the transportation and political arenas, and to report in a timely manner on the specifics and potential implications for the RTC. Strategic assistance would also include advice and assistance in opportunities to build public-private partnerships to finance and implement regional projects and programs.

3. Statement of Services

The services to be provided will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Serve as an advisor to RTC management and policy members on strategic transportation planning and programming, and legislative matters that affect the funding and delivery of projects and programs in Santa Cruz County.
- Monitor legislative and administrative initiatives and developments, and advise the RTC on items identified as high priority.
- Provide assistance to RTC staff in drafting proposed testimony, and developing effective strategies in response to or to influence legislative and administrative activities in ways beneficial to the RTC.
- Meet periodically with key legislative staff and policymakers to discuss legislative or administrative actions of potential benefit or burden to the RTC and its interests.
- Represent the RTC, when requested, before the State Legislature, Departments, and Agencies on issues that impact the policies and programs of the RTC.
- Assist staff in the coordination of strategies with other interested parties, advocacy groups, public and private entities to advance high priority projects and programs.
- Provide input in the development of RTC's annual State Legislative Agenda and participate with RTC staff in meetings with key Legislators and/or staff in promoting funding and legislative programs and projects.
- Support staff in the identification of key planning, programming and funding issues critical to delivering high priority projects and programs, and provide research and analysis of transportation policy and budgetary issues affecting the RTC.
- Provide regular reports to the Executive Director and/or designated staff on pending legislative or administrative developments and make recommendations for RTC action or response.
- Undertake other assignments upon which the RTC and Consultant mutually agree.

4. Budget

The RTC has provided \$25,000 for this activity in the Fiscal Year 2006/2007 Budget.

5. Qualifications

To be considered for selection and contract award, the Consultant must have the following qualifications:

- Breadth of experience and understanding of transportation, government, the Capitol culture, and the organizations operating and competing in it.
- An understanding of the role and responsibilities of the RTC, an appreciation of the geographic and the institutional environment in which it operates.
- Record of satisfactorily representing the interests of local public agencies to members of the California State Legislature, the Governor's Office, the California Transportation Commission, and the State Department of Transportation (Caltrans).
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, and appreciation of the time demands on RTC Commissioners and the need to report to and advise them and the staff in a clear, concise and effective manner.
- No conflicts of interest, and a commitment to avoid potential conflicts that might arise from work performed for others, past associations or pending relationships.
- Possess the necessary resources to provide the specified services to the RTC.

The RTC reserves the right to investigate the qualifications of all firms and persons under consideration, to include reference checks to confirm any part of the information furnished by a Consultant.

6. Proposal Format

The RTC staff will screen all proposals submitted in response to this request. The screening will determine which Consultants will be invited to an interview. In order to simplify the review process and to facilitate comparative analysis, the proposal shall be organized in the following manner and shall not exceed 15 pages.

a. Transmittal Letter – The Transmittal Letter should be signed by an official authorized to solicit business and enter into contracts for the firm. The letter will include all contact information including phone number and email address of the contact person.

b. Understanding of the Scope of Services – This section should include a brief narrative introducing the Consultant’s understanding of the services required. The contents of this section are to be determined by the particular respondent, consistent with the skill set offered by the Consultant in response to the requested services.

c. Consultant’s Experience and Qualifications – This section should provide a summary of the Consultant’s overall qualifications to provide the specified services and previous experience on similar or related engagements. This section should include the names and resumes of the individuals who will be performing all specified services.

d. References – The Consultant shall provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers for at least three references for whom the Consultant has performed services similar in nature and complexity to that proposed in this Request for Proposals.

e. Fees for Service – Provide cost breakdown and preferred payment requirements.

7. Proposal Submittal

An original Proposal and six copies must be received **no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, August 11, 2006**, at the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA, 95060. Proposals must be clearly marked:

**“Proposal for Services of a Transportation/Legislative Strategist”
(Proposal Date: Friday, August 11, 2006)**

8. Request for Proposal Schedule

a. Release of RFP	Friday, July 7, 2006
b. Pre-Proposal Conference	Friday, July 28, 2006
c. Proposals Due to the RTC	Friday August 11, 2006
d. Interviews	Week of August 28, 2006
e. RTC Approval of Contract	September 21, 2006
f. Contract Begins	October 2006

9. Pre-Proposal Conference

The RTC will host a pre-proposal conference on Friday, July 28, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. in the RTC Office, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz California. A conference call line will be set up for those wishing to participate remotely. Conference call information can be received from the contact person noted below.

In the interest of fairness, the RTC will not answer individual questions about this proposal after the conference. Answers to all questions asked prior to and during the conference will be made available to all potential proposers who request them from the contact person noted below, and will be posted on the RTC website.

10. Contact Person

Kim Shultz, Sr. Transportation Planner
Phone: (831) 460-3208
email: kshultz@scrtc.org

11. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria, listed in order of priority, which shall be the sole criteria for determining qualifications for contract award:

- A. Qualification of Firm/Proposed Staff: (40 points)
 - 1. Technical knowledge of transportation planning and programming activities as practiced in California.
 - 2. Experience working with State Legislators and Executive/Senior Management in State Departments and Agencies.
 - 3. Prior history of satisfactory service to other clients or employers.
 - 4. Good character and standing among professional associates and peer.

- B. Understanding of the Scope of Services: (30 points)
 - 1. Clear, concise, and creative representation of the proposed scope of services.
 - 2. "Best Fit" assessment of the skill set offered by the Consultant and the needs desired by the RTC.
 - 3. Prior history of serving clients or employers in the manner described in the proposed scope of services.

- C. Fees for Service – Monthly and Annual: (20 points)

- D. Compliance with Proposal Requirements and Contract Terms and Conditions: (10 points)

12. Rejection of Proposals

Failure to meet the requirements for the Request for Proposals will be cause for rejection of the proposals. The RTC may reject any proposal if it is conditional, incomplete or contains irregularities. The RTC may waive an immaterial deviation in the proposal. Waiver of an immaterial deviation shall in no way modify the Request for Proposal's documents or excuse the Consultant from full compliance with the contract documents if

the Consultant is awarded the contract. The RTC reserves the right to not award the contract, should it determine that the proposals are not in its best interest.

13. Proposed Contract

The RTC anticipates entering into a one-year contract renewable at the end of the fiscal year, subject to the availability of funds. The consultant's proposal should specify the cost breakdown and payment requirements. Actual terms and conditions will be set forth in the final "Agreement for the Services of a Transportation/Legislative Strategist" (a draft of which is attached as Exhibit A to this RFP), which will include the addition of any changes negotiated between the selected Consultant and the RTC.

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