

PUBLIC NOTICE

Request for Proposals: TRI-CITIES METRO LOOP TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TRI - CITIES METRO

LOOP

TRANSPORTATION
STUDY



Funding for this contract will be provided through the Surface Transportation Grant (STBG), and all applicable state and federal laws must be followed.

Process Schedule (subject to change)

- **Issue Request for Proposals:** June 19, 2026
 - **Written Questions Deadline:** June 29, 2026
 - **Answers Posted on BFCOG Website:** July 3, 2026
 - **Submittal Deadline:** July 20, 2026
 - **Interview Finalists (as needed):** No later than August 21, 2026
 - **Notify Finalists of Decision:** No later than August 26, 2026
 - **Contract Executed:** No later than September 30, 2026
 - **Draft Study due to BFCOG:** Spring 2028
 - **Public Comment Period (subject to change):** Spring/Summer 2028
 - **Final Study due to BFCOG:** Fall 2028
 - **End of Contract Date:** December 31, 2028
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BENTON-FRANKLIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Regional Planning Agency for Benton & Franklin Counties

Benton-Franklin Metropolitan Planning Organization • Regional Transportation Planning Organization
Benton-Franklin Economic Development District

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BFCOG is initiating a request for proposals (RFP) from qualified firms for the Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study. This RFP is open only to qualified firms or individuals who meet the requirements stated herein and are licensed and available to do business in Washington state. The successful firm will assist BFCOG in completing the Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study. BFCOG has a budget of up to \$1.3 million available for this project.

Funding for this contract will be provided through the Surface Transportation Grant (STBG), and all applicable state and federal laws must be followed.

Electronic proposals may be submitted from June 19, 2026, through July 20, 2026, to ebraich@bfcog.us. For the Request for Proposals (RFP) package and instructions for proposers, please go to: <https://www.bfcog.us/225/RFPRFQ>.

Work Description

The work will focus on the following seven (7) major tasks:

1. Project Management and Regional Coordination
2. Public and Stakeholder Engagement
3. Existing Conditions and System Assessment + Travel Demand Modeling and Data Analysis
4. Alternatives Development and Metro Loop Concept Evaluation
5. Benefit-Cost Analysis and Prioritization
6. Implementation Strategy and Phasing Plan
7. Final Report and Deliverables

Reservation of Rights

The right is reserved to reject any or all proposals or a portion of a proposal, to waive any informalities or irregularities in the proposal submission process, to supplement, amend, or otherwise modify the RFP and cancel this request with or without the substitution of another RFP, to extend the date for submission of responses, to request additional information and data from any or all Proposers, to reissue the RFP, to negotiate further with those Proposers within the competitive range, to increase or decrease the scope of work, negotiate changes in the scope of services prior to contract award and to award a contract in the best overall interests of BFCOG.



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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On February 19, 2025, BFCOG hosted a workshop, *The Road Ahead: Regional Transportation Reimagined*, for staff leaders and Public Works Directors from jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region to envision what the transportation system of the Tri-Cities would look like in 2075. The discussion yielded a consensus on seven (7) large-scale projects to complete the regional transportation system and form a 'Metro Loop'. Additionally, six (6) other projects were identified during the discussion, but were not included as part of the 'Metro Loop' idea.

'Metro Loop' Projects:

- 4th River Crossing (North Richland Bridge)
- Bypass (Grade Separated)
- Expand Blue Bridge
- Expand US 395
- Franklin County Bypass
- I-82 Interchange (Red Mountain)
- West Richland Bypass

Other Projects:

- 2nd Benton City Bridge
- Kingsgate Connection
- Regional Light Rail Feasibility
- SR 397 Truck Route Improvements
- Water Taxi
- Franklin County US 395 Safety Improvements

The Road Ahead: Regional Transportation Reimagined participants agreed that none of these projects is the most important; however, a study is needed to determine their prioritization given their regional impact and the massive financial undertaking required to fund any one of them.

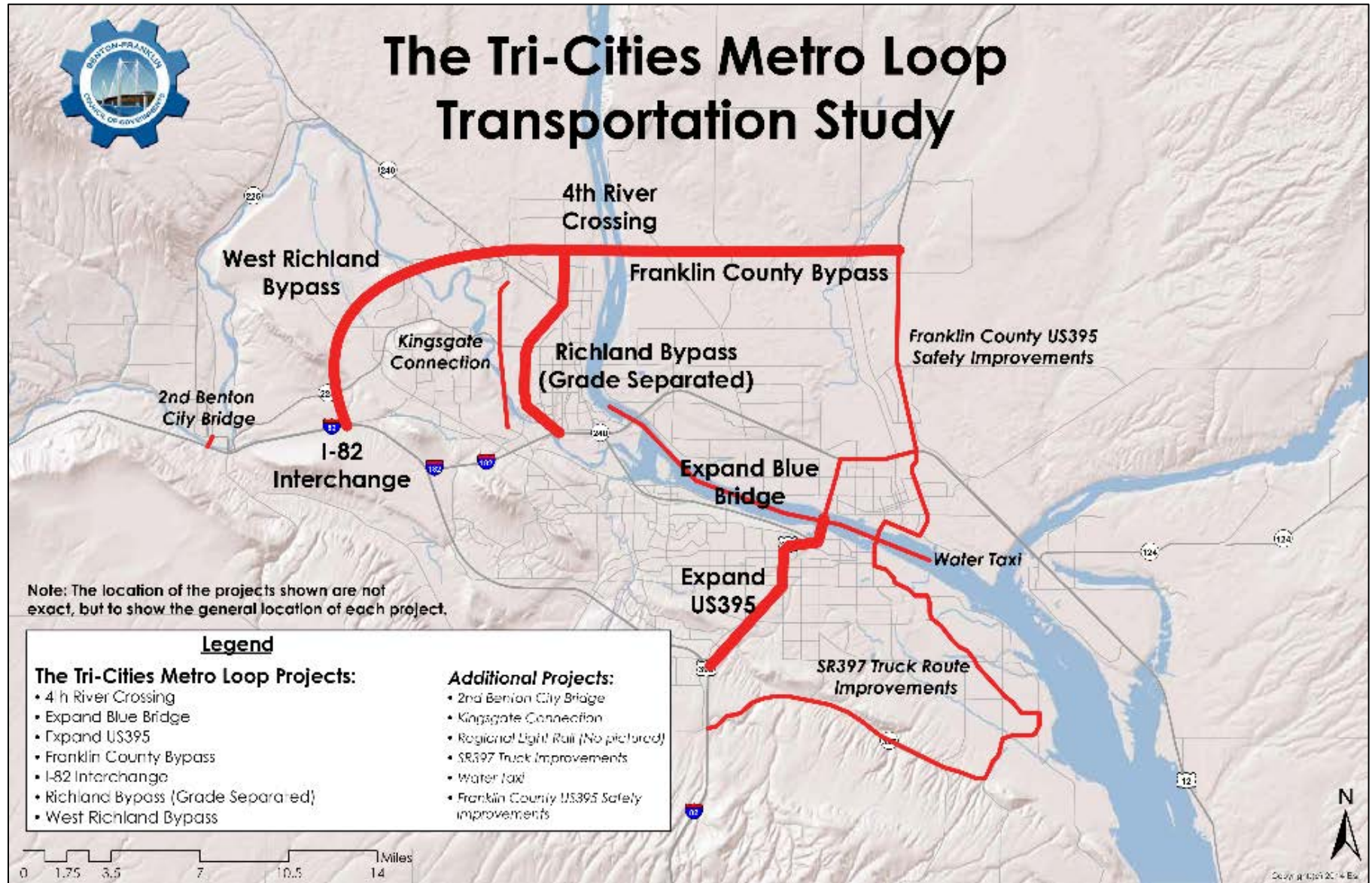
The 'Metro Loop' projects have been studied individually at different points in the region's development; however, they have not been assessed as one idea (in relation to one another or together on the full system). The feasibility of the 'Metro Loop' needs to be comprehensively studied to proactively plan for the region's future, and the projects will be phased based on the study's results.



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SCOPE OF WORK

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG), in coordination with regional jurisdictions, seeks to conduct a comprehensive Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study to evaluate and prioritize a coordinated system of transportation investments. The study will provide a data-driven framework for prioritizing and improving regional mobility, safety, freight movement, and long-term economic development. This scope reflects a phased, analytical, and engagement-driven approach, consistent with best practices for large-scale regional planning efforts.

The chosen planning consultant or consulting team will be responsible for working with BFCOG to develop a report that encompasses the following key components and deliverables. The BFCOG reserves the right to modify the scope of work as needed to improve project quality and to accommodate any changes proposed by state, local, and federal agencies.

Task 1: Project Management and Regional Coordination

This task establishes the overall framework for delivering a coordinated, multi-jurisdictional transportation study.

The consultant will:

- Conduct project kickoff meeting with BFCOG and partner jurisdictions
- Develop a detailed work plan, schedule, and communication protocols
- Facilitate ongoing coordination meetings (biweekly/monthly)
- Coordinate with local, state, and regional agencies (cities, counties, WSDOT, transit, ports)
- Maintain quality assurance/quality control procedures

Consultant Deliverables

- Project Management Plan and Schedule
 - Monthly Progress Reports and Invoices
 - Meeting Agendas, Summaries, and Coordination Materials
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Task 2: Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging the appropriate stakeholders in planning efforts is critical for ensuring the study reflects the community's priorities, regional needs, and stakeholder expertise. Local jurisdictions, key stakeholders, and members of the public should have reasonable opportunities to be actively involved in the decision-making process at key decision points throughout the study.

The consultant will:

- Develop and implement an extensive Public and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Develop a logo for the Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study that will be used throughout the duration of the study
- Establish a Regional Advisory Committee (jurisdictions, freight, business, community groups)
- Conduct stakeholder interviews and focus groups
- Develop and administer public surveys
- Facilitate public meetings/workshops (initial visioning and results review phases)
- Provide targeted outreach to underserved and disproportionately impacted communities

Consultant Deliverables

- Public and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study Logo
- Public Survey and Summary Report
- Meeting Materials and Summaries
- Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Task 3: Existing Conditions and System Assessment + Travel Demand Modeling and Data Analysis

Establishing a baseline understanding of the current transportation system by performing quantitative analysis of current and future transportation conditions. Additional data collection and analysis will be completed to improve the regional travel demand model.

The consultant will:

- Review existing plans, studies, and prior analyses
- Analyze current transportation conditions:
 - Traffic volumes and congestion



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- Safety (crash data, high-risk corridors)
- Freight movement and bottlenecks
- Transit service and multimodal access
- Evaluate land use patterns and growth trends
- Identify system deficiencies and constraints
- Utilize and refine the BFCOG travel demand model
- Establish baseline travel conditions (VMT, mode split, congestion levels)
- Develop future growth scenarios (population, employment, land use)
- Evaluate transportation system performance under future conditions
- Conduct corridor-level and systemwide modeling

Consultant Deliverables

- Existing Conditions Technical Memorandum
- Transportation System Performance Maps and Data
- Key Issues and Needs Summary
- Baseline and Future Conditions Modeling Report
- Travel Demand Model Outputs and Documentation
- Scenario Analysis Results

Task 4: Alternatives Development and Metro Loop Concept Evaluation

This task evaluates potential transportation investments within a coordinated system.

The consultant will:

- Define and refine the Metro Loop concept and study network
- Analyze the seven (7) key projects as the main part of the Metro Loop individually, and all completed on the regional network:
 - 4th River Crossing (North Richland)
 - Blue Bridge expansion
 - US 395 Expansion
 - Franklin County Bypass
 - West Richland Bypass
 - I-82 Interchange (Red Mountain)
 - SR 240 Bypass (grade-separated)
- Analyze the six (6) additional projects individually, and all completed on the regional network:
 - 2nd Benton City Bridge
 - Kingsgate Connection



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- Regional Light Rail
- SR 397 Truck Route Improvements
- Water Taxi
- Franklin County US 395 Safety Improvements
- Analyze systemwide impacts between projects
- Evaluate opportunities for multimodal integration (freight, transit, active transportation)
- Identify the location of each project to aid in future land acquisition (if needed)

Project Evaluation Criteria (Subject to Change)

- Mobility and travel time improvements
- Safety benefits
- Freight efficiency
- Environmental considerations
- Land availability feasibility and costs
- Economic impacts
- Constructability and cost

Consultant Deliverables

- Alternatives Development Report
- Comparative Evaluation Matrix
- Conceptual Maps and Graphics

Task 5: Benefit-Cost Analysis and Prioritization

This task identifies the most effective and feasible investments.

The consultant will:

- Develop planning-level cost estimates
- Conduct benefit-cost analysis for major projects
- Evaluate funding feasibility and constraints
- Prioritize projects based on performance metrics and regional goals

Consultant Deliverables

- Benefit-Cost Analysis Report
- Project Prioritization Framework
- Ranked Project List



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Task 6: Implementation Strategy and Phasing Plan

This task translates analysis into actionable recommendations.

The consultant will:

- Develop phased implementation scenarios (short, mid, long-term)
- Identify funding strategies (local, state, federal, partnerships)
- Analyze the feasibility of a regional taxing authority to complete the funding of these projects
- Define governance and coordination structure for implementation and possible regional taxing authority
- Identify next steps (environmental review, design, funding applications)

Consultant Deliverables

- Implementation and Phasing Plan
- Funding Strategy Memorandum
- Regional Taxing Authority Framework
- Action Plan / Identification of Next Steps

Task 7: Final Report and Deliverables

A draft and final Tri-Cities Metro Transportation Study will be prepared by June 2028. The following anticipated deliverable dates are provided to correspond with the scheduled meetings of BFCOG's Transportation Policy Board, anticipated meetings of the Regional Advisory Committee, and the Tri-Cities Metro Transportation Study public comment period.

The consultant will:

- Prepare draft and final study report
- Develop executive summary and presentation materials
- Present findings to stakeholders and decision-makers

Consultant Deliverables

- A draft Tri-Cities Metro Transportation Study by Spring 2028
- Several open houses with presentations during the public comment period (Spring/Summer 2028)
- The final Tri-Cities Metro Transportation Study by Fall 2028
- Present the final Tri-Cities Metro Transportation Study to the BFCOG Transportation Policy Board in Fall 2028



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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Successful proposers must have demonstrated experience in performing transportation planning services, especially with public transportation and considering special needs in the planning process.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The BFCOG MPO Director shall act as the Principal In charge (PI) and will be assisted by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Regional Advisory Committee, consisting of regional member entity representatives. The BFCOG PI will provide all project direction, assistance with scheduling, and access to existing data as available. The Regional Advisory Committee will work closely with the PI and provide guidance for project-related decisions.

The Consultant shall be responsible for all technical work, public participation, identification of recommendations and strategies, report preparation, and presentation of findings, as agreed to in the final scope of work. All work to be performed must comply with federal and state laws, regulations, and guidance, and the selected consultant shall be responsible for having knowledge of and ensuring compliance with all applicable requirements.

Process Timeline

- Issue Request for Proposals: June 19, 2026
- Written Questions Deadline: June 29, 2026
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Any questions and answers communicated may be made available on BFCOG's Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study webpage on BFCOG's website here: <https://www.bfcog.us/273/Tri-Cities-Metro-Loop-Transportation-Stu>



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Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is available to potential applicants if requested within the outline's proposed timeline before the proposal deadline. Assistance available includes answers about funding regulations and application requirements, as well as discussing the proposed project's compliance with program regulations and eligibility for funding. If you would like to send questions, please email them to Erin Braich (ebraich@bfcog.us).

ESTIMATED BUDGET

The BFCOG estimated a \$1.3 million budget to complete the Tri-Cities Metro Loop Transportation Study. Respondents should be aware that the completion of this study is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and that the awarded consultant will have to fully comply with all requirements and certifications that are imposed by federal funding sponsorship.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

Proposals must include the following information:

Qualifications (30 points)

- Provide name, address, and telephone number of the firm or individual;
- List similar relevant projects and where to view them;
- Names of project team members, professional certifications/registrations, and relevant experience of each; and
- References, including names and phone numbers of contact people.

Approach (60 points)

- Provide a detailed scope of work and describe how it will be accomplished.

Schedule (10 points)

- Provide a project schedule that includes all the scope of work tasks, milestones, and deliverables.



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Proposal Details:

- Proposals must total no more than 20 pages.
- Dividers will not count as pages if they do not contain content (text, pictures, graphics, etc.) other than what is necessary to identify the section of the proposal.
- Front and back covers of the proposal will not count toward the 20 pages.
- Resumes will not count toward the 20 pages.
- The font used in the proposals must be Arial, size 11 font.
- The margins of the proposal must be 1 inch on all sides.

If necessary, proposers may be contacted and asked for further information and may be expected to appear for oral interviews. The BFCOG will select the preferred provider and negotiate a contractual agreement, which will be considered for approval by the Board prior to its execution. If negotiations are unsuccessful due to unresolved issues, negotiations with the consultant will be formally terminated. Negotiations will then commence with the second-highest ranking firm.

Submittals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. (PST), July 20, 2026

Late submissions will not be considered.

Submit an electronic PDF of your proposal by email to ebraich@bfcog.us



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TITLE VI AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) NOTICES

Title VI Assurance Notice

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) hereby gives public notice that it is the organization's policy to ensure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any Federal Aid Highway program or other activity for which the BFCOG receives federal financial assistance.

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with the BFCOG. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with the BFCOG Title VI Coordinator within one hundred and eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. Title VI Discrimination Complaint Forms may be obtained from the BFCOG Office, on the website at <https://bfcog.us/title-vi-information/> at no cost to the complainant, by calling Erin Braich at (509) 492-5199, or by emailing at transportation@bfcog.us.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Notice

BFCOG is committed to providing equal access in its programs, services, and activities for persons with disabilities. Civil rights legislation requires that no qualified individuals with disabilities shall, solely based on their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of the BFCOG's programs, services, or activities, in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended; and Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

It is the policy of the BFCOG that, when viewed in their entirety, services, programs, facilities, and communications provided directly by the agency, or by a contracted service provider, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. This is achieved through maintaining an ADA-compliant Website; holding events in accessible spaces; and providing program materials in alternative formats on request.



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ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

1. BFCOG's Executive Director shall negotiate compensation with the offeror determined to be most qualified. If a fair and reasonable compensation cannot be negotiated with that offeror, the Executive Director shall initiate negotiations with the next most qualified offeror (see Chapter 39.80 RCW).
2. A monthly progress report is required to be submitted within ten (10) working days after the end of each month in which work took place; until the final report is submitted. Each report shall include a comprehensive narrative of the activities performed during the month, an estimated percent complete for each project task, monthly and cumulative costs by task, activities of any subcontractors, payments to any sub-contractors, a discussion of any notable issues or problems being addressed, a discussion of anticipated activities for the next month, and an invoicing for the work completed.
3. An audit examination of the consultant's record may be required.
4. BFCOG, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, nondiscrimination in federally assisted programs of the Department of Transportation issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notify all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises as defined at 49 CFR Part 26 will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex in consideration for an award.
5. BFCOG is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) organization, which does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, sex, age, marital status, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability in consideration of a contract award. The successful Proposer will be required to comply with all EEO federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
6. BFCOG complies with the provisions of Section 1352 of Title 31, U.S. Code (Public Law 101.121) as codified in Title 48, Federal Acquisition Regulations Subpart 3.8, and Subpart 52.203-11 and 23 CFR 630.112(c)(5). That legislation prohibits Federal funds from being expended by a recipient or



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any lower tier sub-recipients of a Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence a Federal agency or Congress in connection with the award of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant or loan, or entering into any cooperative agreement, including the extension, continuation, renewal, amendments, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement.

7. The contractor will be required to provide proof of insurance. This may include Workmen's Compensation, Architects and Engineers Professional Liability, Commercial General Liability, Business Automobile Liability and Valuable Papers insurance.
8. The service will be funded through a combination of federal and local BFCOG funds. Because federal funds will be used on this project, the consultant will be required to comply with all applicable federal contracting rules and regulations.
9. Any survey, data, reports, equipment, or presentation materials prepared or purchased with funds from this project will become the exclusive property of the Project Manager (BFCOG). All report originals, presentation materials, and/or equipment must be provided to the Project Manager prior to final payment.
10. No employee, officer, or agent of BFCOG shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract or authorization of a purchase if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. No person or entity who seeks or may seek a contract with a state agency may give, loan, transfer, or deliver to any person something of economic value for which receipt of such item would cause a state officer or employee to be in a violation of RCW 42.52.040, 42.52.110, 42.52.420, 42.52.140, or 42.52.150. All purchases must be based on the best interests of BFCOG. BFCOG personnel are expected and required to take the initiative to report promptly, with sufficient detail, all activities or situations that may involve, or appear to involve, a conflict of interest.
11. By submittal of a response pursuant to this RFP, the Proposer certifies the following:
 - a. The submission of the offer did not involve collusion or other anti-competitive practices.



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- b. The Proposer shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment in violation of the Federal Executive Order 11246.
 - c. The Proposer has not given or offered to give and does not intend to give at any time hereafter any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip favor, or service to a public servant in connection with the submitted offer.
 - d. Failure to sign the offer, or the falsity of a statement in a signed offer, shall void the submitted offer or any resulting contracts, and the Proposer may be debarred.
 - e. That to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals, including sub-consultants, are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded or disqualified from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency.
 - f. The Proposer has not paid or agreed to pay any fee or commission, or any other thing of value contingent on the award of this contract, to any employee, official or current consultant of the Project Manager.
 - g. The Proposer has examined, read and understands the RFP document, and any amendments, if applicable. Further, the Proposer certifies that its submittal is based upon the materials and requirements outlined in the scope of work in the RFP document on conditions affecting the work as determined by the Proposer's own examinations, at a proposed sum sufficient to cover the total cost of the work.
12. All material submitted in response to this solicitation becomes the property of the Project Manager and will not be returned. After contract award, the submittals shall be deemed public records as defined in Ch. 42.56 RCW "Public Records Act". Any information in the submittal that the Proposer desires to claim as proprietary and exempt from disclosure under the provisions of state law shall be clearly designated. Each page claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the word "Confidential" printed on it. Marking the entire submittal exempt from disclosure will not be honored.
- a. The Project Manager will review any portions of the submittal that the Proposer considers to be confidential and will then decide on what should be released. The Project Manager will notify the Proposer in writing of the determination and provide the Proposer an opportunity to respond to the decision prior to releasing the submittal.