

# **LEWIS COUNTY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

## **Lobbying Services (Revised 6-13-2022)**

**Please Submit Three (3) Paper Copies  
and One (1) Electronic PDF by:  
June 24, 2022  
5:00 PM**

**Lewis County  
351 NW North St  
Chehalis, WA 98532**



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):  
LOBBYING SERVICES**

**Estimated RFP Schedule**

RFP Issued:	June 7, 2022
Final Date for Questions Related to RFP:	June 22, 2022
Proposal Deadline:	June 24, 2022
Applicant Interviews:	July 5-8, 2022*
Selection of Consultant by Board of COUNTY Commissioners and Contract Development:	July 12, 2022*

*\*Exact dates are subject to change at the COUNTY's discretion*

Any interested individual may request to be on an email list to receive updates on the RFP process, including addenda to the RFP if any are issued. Lewis County may alter the RFP at any time.

**Submittal Instructions**

Written proposals and an electronic PDF must be received by Lewis County no later than 5PM PST on June 24, 2022. Proposals received after this deadline will not be accepted or considered.

Send proposals to:  
Erik Martin  
County Manager  
Lewis County  
351 NW North St  
Chehalis, WA 98532

Direct questions regarding the RFP to:  
Lara McRea  
County Administration  
360.740.2660  
[lara.mcrea@lewiscountywa.gov](mailto:lara.mcrea@lewiscountywa.gov)

## **Background**

Lewis County is a beautiful rural county with a long history. As Washington's first county, Lewis County has deep economic and cultural roots in the timber and agriculture industries. Lewis County has nine incorporated cities/towns and over a dozen other established communities. The history and culture of Lewis County are important to the elected officials, employees and the people they serve.

Lewis County is a safe and proud community with good schools, a growing economy, vibrant cities, and a wealth of recreational opportunities. Hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, skiing and boating are all just a short trip in any direction here. Lewis County utilizes these natural resources in a way that creates an environment that attracts and retains those with an appreciation for its natural beauty and a sense of adventure.

Lewis County has a growing population approaching 80,000 and Chehalis is the County seat. Lewis County operates under the commission form of government with three Commissioners and a County Manager, elected officials include the Assessor, Auditor, Clerk, Coroner, Sheriff, Treasurer, and Judges for District and Superior Courts.

## **Request for Proposals**

Lewis County (COUNTY) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants/firms for State Lobbying Services beginning June 7, 2022. The County anticipates awarding one contract with options for annual renewal for up to three years based on performance. Services performed by the selected Consultant include: providing strategic advice and planning in the development of an annual comprehensive state affairs strategy, implementing the state legislative agenda, and keeping the County abreast of developments on a broad range of issues of concern and potentially negative impacts to Lewis County.

The COUNTY encourages any inquiries with respect to the expectations and/or scope of work sought through this proposal by email to the attention Lara McRea, [lara.mcrea@lewiscountywa.gov](mailto:lara.mcrea@lewiscountywa.gov). All inquiries will receive a response. A consultant will be selected for this project based on criteria stated in "Evaluation of Proposals". All proposals received by 5:00 p.m. PST on Monday, June 24, 2022 will receive full consideration.

## **RFP Process**

It is expected that one (1) consultant, team or firm will be selected as a result of the RFP, although the COUNTY is under no obligation to award a contract as a result of the selection process. Based on the proposals received, the selection committee (comprised of COUNTY officials, staff and the BOCC) will select individuals/firms to be interviewed. As a result of those interviews the top-rated consultant will be selected for contract negotiations. The COUNTY may also elect to forego interviews and select a consultant team based on the information provided in the submitted proposals.

### **Scope of Services**

Provide strategic advice and planning in the development of an annual comprehensive state affairs strategy for the Lewis County, including but not limited to:

- Contributing proactive and creative suggestions for funding opportunities to advance the County's economic objectives, legislative, business, and transportation priorities.
- Developing a legislative agenda with implementation plans for how to advance strategic priorities.
- Developing and lobbying for operating, transportation and capital budget funding requests available to the County or identified by the County.
- Identifying additional state grant opportunities that align with the County's priorities and legislative agenda.
- Proactively engaging with state lawmakers, legislative, agency and governor's staff in pursuit of the County's stated priorities.
- Attending all relevant legislative hearings.
- Lobbying the Legislature on all issues developed under the legislative program.
- Lobbying defensively on legislation that is introduced that would negatively impact the County's capital and transportation priorities.
- Identifying key legislative and state agency relationships for the County and assist in creating opportunities to build and strengthen those relationships.
- Coordinating, at the County's direction, with other entities having common legislative interests with the County.
- Providing the County with a weekly legislative report during the Washington State legislative session that includes weekly hearing schedules and a summary of bills, and their progress important to the County.
- Working with the County to arrange lobbying visits to Olympia for the Commissioners, other elected officials and the County Manager as well as other staff as appropriate.
- Drafting letters and talking points on legislation as necessary.
- Testifying on the behalf of the County at hearings before legislation and interim legislative committee.
- Providing regular updates, including but not limited to: Monitoring of potential and pending legislation.
- Identifying emerging issues of interest to the County in the areas of state policy.
- Reporting on activities conducted in support of the state legislative strategies.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

The proposed consultant must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- At least three to five years' experience representing client interests before the Washington State Legislature or a state agency, or serving in a senior staff capacity in the Washington State Legislature or a combination thereof.
- Public sector experience.
- Knowledge of local government operations, the state legislative processes, and how that process affects local government operations.

- Familiarity with the Lewis County political landscape.
- Demonstrated ability to develop positive working relationships with stakeholders in all areas of government including the four legislative caucuses and state agencies
- Ability to communicate clearly and persuasively to a broad range of audiences.

## **DELIVERABLES**

The selected consultant will:

- Regularly (at least one a week during the Washington State legislative session and monthly during interim) communicate in person or by phone with the Board of County Commissioners and County Manager, describing the work and activities completed as part of each of the tasks included in the Scope of Services.
- Prepare a semi-annual summary that describes the work and activities completed during either the legislative session or the interim as part of each of the tasks included in the Scope of Services.
- Participate in functions associated with County professional organizations, including the Washington Association (WSAC) of Counties and the National Association of Counties (NACO).
- Liaise as appropriate with the County Manager or his designee concerning ongoing work.

### **Proposal Submission Requirements**

1. Cover letter of interest and transmittal not to exceed one page in length.
2. Legal name of the consultant firm, address, phone, fax, and email address, year the firm was established, and type of business.
3. Fee schedule and proposed fee to accomplish the work (separate, sealed envelope marked Fee Schedule).
4. A minimum of three (3) examples of relevant written work related to lobbying services, with no less than one example prepared on behalf of a local government organization or comparable entity.
5. Include brief resumes for all individuals identifying their proposed roles and applicable qualifications and experience. The name of the person intended to be the project coordinator for the lobbying service and a list of recently completed projects relevant to the scope of this RFP.
6. Written answers to the inquiries below. Answers are encouraged to be brief, with a target of no more than 300 words for any numbered item—an ability to communicate effectively

in as few words as possible is one of the selection criteria.

7. A budget as set forth below.
8. Proposals must be complete in order to be considered by the evaluation committee.

### **Qualifications, Experience and Project Approach**

1. Describe the nature and scope of the firm's experience in providing state legislative lobbying services for local government agencies.
2. Describe the firm's knowledge and experience in analyzing and reviewing proposed legislation; participating in administrative rule development and interim work groups; analyzing the proposed state budget; educating clients about the impact of legislation; advising clients on potential courses of action; and preparing legislative strategies and plans in advance of the legislative session.
3. Outline a process for establishing and maintaining strong working relationships with state legislators and staff representing all political affiliations, public officials and state agencies, special interest and industry groups, local governments, and other organizations involved in the legislative process.
4. Describe any legislative information and bill-tracking processes or software used by the firm to identify and monitor introduced legislation of interest to the County and to generate weekly status reports.
5. Articulate the firm's approach to be used in this project including a proposed schedule and description of the proposed methods of public involvement.
6. Describe, from a project management and logistical perspective, how the firm would carry out the scope of work specified in this RFP.
7. Explain the firm's philosophy and strategy used to achieve the best possible outcomes for clients as a result of the legislative session.
8. Document examples of success in providing lobbying services to clients in the following area: achieving passage of legislation; b) defeating legislation; c) amending legislation.
9. Provide assurance that the firm is capable of providing the described services to Lewis County in addition to other responsibilities or commitments of the firm.
10. Describe the firm's overall knowledge and understanding of issues that are likely to be of

specific concern to Lewis County.

11. Describe the firm's process for identifying, avoiding, and resolving and/or managing conflicts or potential conflicts that may arise from representing various clients who hold opposing views on legislative issues.
12. Outline internal procedures and/or policies related to work quality and cost control.

## **BUDGET**

- Provide a detailed budget for the full contractual period itemized in accordance with each of the responsibilities, tasks, and activities outlined in the scope of work as well as any additional elements proposed. The budget should be organized in such a way that each item is priced individually, allowing Lewis County to select all or a portion of the services and negotiate a total contract price accordingly.

Submittals may be mailed or delivered to:

Erik Martin, County Manager  
Lewis County  
351 NW North St.  
Chehalis, WA 98532.

Applicants must submit three (3) hard copies to the COUNTY by the deadline. The submittals shall be clearly marked on the exterior to denote both the names of the submitting firm and the particular professional services contract for which the proposals are offered, "Lobbying Services". Responses to the 12 inquiries under Qualifications, Experience and Project Approach must be limited to ten (10) pages, front and back, in length.

All proposals should also be submitted as computer files in PDF format. Electronic files may be transferred via email to Erik Martin at [erik.martin@lewiscountywa.gov](mailto:erik.martin@lewiscountywa.gov) or provided on a portable electronic storage device. The COUNTY is not responsible for returning portable storage devices. Large files should be uploaded with a link to download files provided via email.

Lewis County is not responsible for communication errors. Applicants are advised to call the COUNTY Administration Department at 360-740-2660 to confirm that a submittal has been received.

### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Lewis County's project team will review and evaluate all properly submitted proposals received on or before the deadline. The project team will first review each proposal for compliance with the minimum qualifications and mandatory requirements of the RFP. Failure to comply with any mandatory requirements may disqualify a proposal, although the COUNTY reserves the right to waive technical deficiencies that do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any applicant. The project team shall participate in the analysis of RFPs, the interview process and the final recommendation of the selected consultant for the project. Upon successful negotiations with the selected consultant, the contract will be recommended for approval by the project team to the Board of COUNTY Commissioners for final approval.

### **Selection Criteria**

The COUNTY will rank proposals based on the criteria stated below:

1. Responsiveness of the Proposal to the project objectives.
2. Responding firm's experience in completing work of a similar size and scope. Considerable weight will be given to projects in similar sized, rural communities. Considerable weight will be given to projects in mid-sized rural communities similar to Lewis County prepared within the last five (5) years.
3. Specific qualifications of the primary staff who will manage, supervise, and provide services, including past experience on projects of similar size and scope.
4. Public sector experience and qualifications of the firm. This includes past project experience and/or research projects conducted for recognized industry associations.
5. Proposer's project management methodology and experience.
6. Responses of the client references.
7. Cost of services and payment policies.
8. Ability to communicate effectively in brief.
9. Such other information that may be required or secured.

### **Lewis County Rights**

Lewis County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, make counter proposals and/or engage in negotiations with any or all firms or individuals, waive any requirements or otherwise amend this RFP, or cancel the RFP in order to achieve the COUNTY's goals and objectives for this project. Any changes in the status of the RFP will be brought to the attention of all parties that



provide contact information for updates. The information contained in this RFP represent the COUNTY's best information at the time of the release of the RFP and the COUNTY reserves the right to modify any term or condition contained herein.

**Responsibility for Proposal Preparation**

Except as otherwise specifically agreed to in writing by the COUNTY, each consulting individual or team submitting proposals shall provide and pay for all materials, labor, transportation, charges, levies, taxes, fees or expenses incurred, including all costs to prepare a response to this RFP, travel and presentation costs, and all other services and facilities of every nature whatsoever necessary for the preparation of the RFP.

It is neither the COUNTY's responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any proposal as a result of the RFP process. It is the proposer's responsibility to assure that a proposal is delivered and received in a timely manner.

*No Conflict of Interest*

No member of the Board of COUNTY Commissioners, member of the evaluation committee for this RFP, and any other officer, employee or agent of the Lewis County who exercises any functions or responsibilities in the selection of a proposal, shall have any personal interest, direct or indirect, in the project.

*Open Records/Proprietary Information*

COUNTY recognizes that in responding to this RFP, the proposer may desire to provide proprietary information in order to clarify and enhance their response. To the extent permitted by law, COUNTY will keep confidential such information provided that:

1. The information submitted is arguably proprietary, and
2. The proprietary information is submitted in a separate file or section that is clearly identified as containing proprietary information, according to the submittal instructions of this RFP. Only information that is credibly propriety may be included. Inclusion of non-propriety significant information in the sealed portions may render a submittal ineligible.

Responders should note that Lewis County is a county in Washington State, and as such its files are available for public review pursuant all applicable public disclosure laws, and its governing body's deliberations and decisions are public under the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act. "Keep confidential," as used here, means that COUNTY will not voluntarily disseminate such information in the absence of a public records request. It may discuss such information at a meeting required to be public, however. If a public records request is made encompassing materials identified as proprietary using the procedure above, COUNTY will notify the responder of the request and give the responder a reasonable time to seek to prevent disclosure of the material. It will be the responder's responsibility to seek to prevent disclosure, not COUNTY's.