

Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Request for Qualifications for Freight Alternatives Study



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Reponses are due by or before October 11, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. (PST)

Please note that late applications will not be accepted.

Submit an electronic PDF of your RFQ response by email to rebecca@palousertpo.org.

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Palouse RTPO) is a transportation planning agency covering Asotin, Columbia, Garfield and Whitman Counties in eastern Washington. It represents cities, counties, WSDOT regions, transit agencies, ports, and large employers in the region, and each agency appoints representatives to serve on the Palouse RTPO Transportation Policy Board, the governing authority of the Palouse RTPO. The board engages and participates in regional transportation discussions and decision processes to achieve unified regional transportation planning for the four counties, as established and directed by RCW 47.80.

The purpose of this RFQ is to hire a consultant to conduct a Freight Alternatives Study within and around the City of Pullman in Whitman County, Washington. The Palouse RTPO will be serving as the lead agency for the completion of the Freight Alternatives Study. The City of Pullman is the central hub for many businesses, commerce, industrial areas, higher education facilities, and interstate commerce in Whitman County and the region. The primary north-south highway is SR195, which bypasses Pullman to the west, and is served by a business route following SR27 through downtown Pullman. North-south commerce in nearby Idaho uses US95 that passes through Moscow, Idaho, only 8 miles to the east. The two major routes are connected by SR270 which also passes through the heart of downtown Pullman (see Figure 1, Palouse RTPO Map). Since downtown Pullman is geographically constrained by steep hills, and follows the main river channel through downtown, the highways route through the heart of downtown. This results in a significant number of heavy trucks, farm implements, tankers, and other heavy equipment having only one primary route through the downtown core.

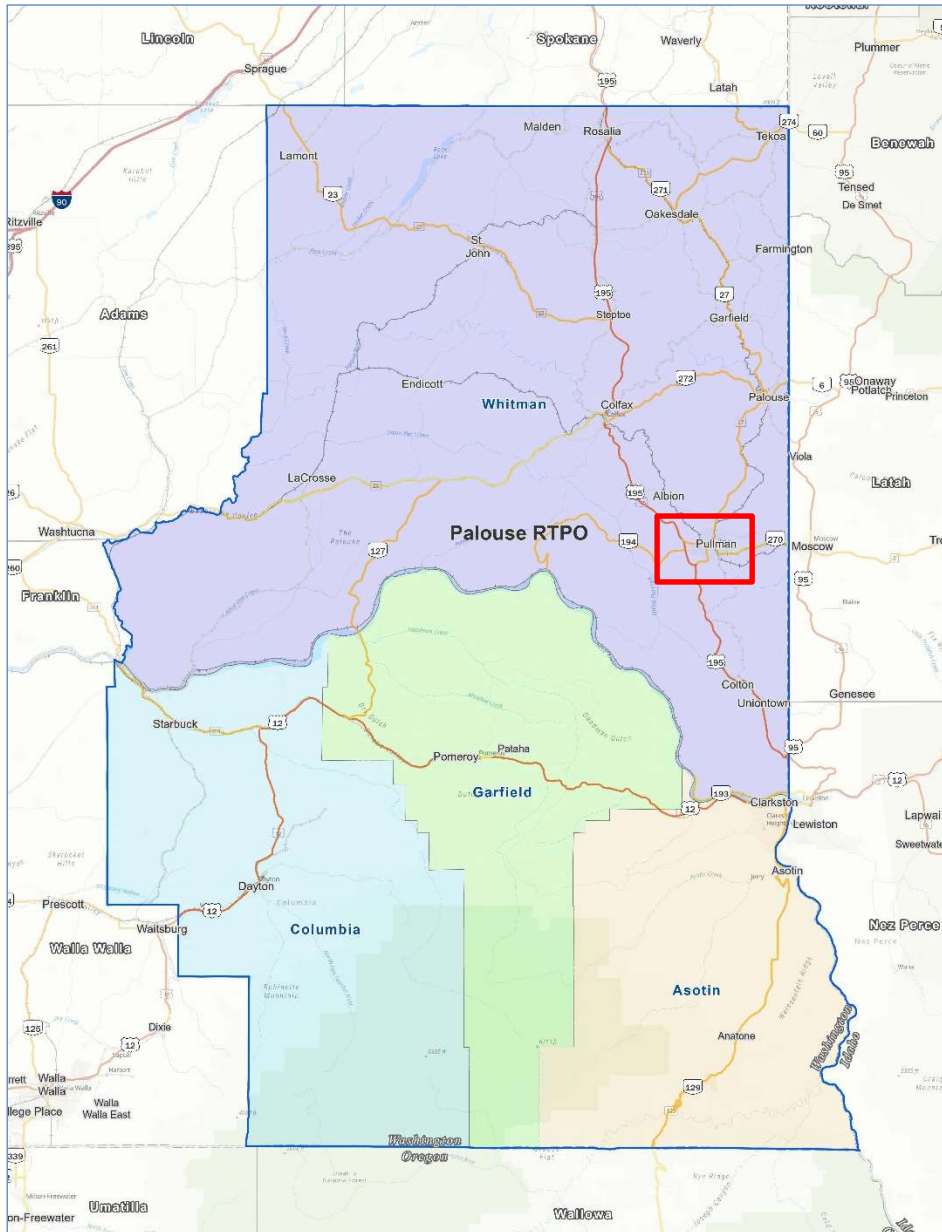


Figure 1. Palouse RTPO region map highlighting counties, cities, and highways. The approximate study area for this Freight Alternatives Study is identified by a red box.

DOCUMENT PURPOSE:

This Request for Qualifications outlines a description of the professional services sought, as well as the required documents to be submitted by interested Consultants. All responses shall be submitted by 4:30 p.m. (PST) on October 11, 2024. *Any responses received after this deadline will not be considered.*

The responses received by the due date will be used to determine which Consultant, in Palouse RTPO’s sole opinion, best meets the requirements to complete the Freight Alternatives Study. An evaluation team will review responses, interview Consultant(s), recommend a final rank order of qualified Consultant(s), and select the Consultant. The final decision regarding contract award will be made by the Palouse RTPO Transportation Policy

Board in an open public meeting.

For its own best interests, Palouse RTPO reserves the right to accept any response or to reject any or all responses.

The successful Consultant will be required to comply with Equal Employment Opportunity laws, as well as other applicable federal, state, and local laws and requirements.

FUNDING:

Funding for this project may be provided through local, state, and federal funds. Consultants must comply with applicable administrative and funding regulations.

Palouse RTPO recognizes that the selected Consultant may not have an office within the Palouse RTPO region. For that reason, Consultant expenses for travel or data collection and community engagement efforts may be substantial. The Consultant is encouraged to address this issue in their response to this RFQ.

CONTRACT INFORMATION AND COST:

This RFQ is for a fixed-fee type contract. The [WSDOT Local Agency A&E Professional Services Cost Plus Fixed Fee Consultant Agreement](#) will be utilized as the contract between the selected Consultant and the Palouse RTPO.

The Consultant will be paid on a monthly basis for authorized and satisfactorily completed work and services as rendered under the contract. The Consultant will provide a detailed Summary of Progress of Work and Invoice for monthly payment.

Consultant selection will not be based on cost or price. The Palouse RTPO Director shall negotiate compensation with the offeror determined to be most qualified per the evaluation criteria and selection process described in this RFQ. If fair and reasonable compensation cannot be negotiated with that offeror, the Director shall initiate negotiations with the next most qualified offeror (see Chapter 39.80 RCW).

CONTACT INFORMATION

All questions concerning this project or Request for Qualifications shall be directed to Rebecca Couch, Director, Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization, via e-mail at rebecca@palousertpo.org.

SCOPE OF WORK AND SCHEDULE

STUDY OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this Freight Alternatives Study is to examine various innovative and practical solutions to reduce heavy truck traffic and regional freight movement within the Pullman downtown area, while providing safe, reliable and practical alternative route(s) for freight movements.

The Palouse RTPO is seeking qualified and experienced consultants to conduct a data driven approach to identify practical solutions using tools such as Transportation Systems Management Operations (TSMO) Strategies to optimize the performance of existing infrastructure to preserve capacity and improve safety and reliability of the transportation system. Further objectives of this study include:

- Obtaining annual regional traffic data (including freight patterns) and including origin and destination data to analyze various potential solutions. Data will need to come from one or more sources and needs to differentiate between freight vehicles, agricultural vehicles, and regular passenger vehicles, and account for the seasonal peak(s) of traffic patterns in the region. Manipulation and/or extrapolation of this data will be required to estimate traffic patterns.
- Developing and conducting a community and stakeholder engagement plan to collect information and inform potential solutions.
- Identify key issues from past related studies (previous studies completed will be provided by the Palouse RTPO).
- Developing baseline assessment of existing conditions to be used in the development of an analysis of phased practical strategies.
- Developing ranking of effectiveness (benefit) of the potential practical solutions identified.
- Agree on specific Task by Task work deliverables.
- Develop a meeting schedule(s) with the Technical Advisory Group. Meetings shall be scheduled to coincide with other activities such as the Palouse RTPO TAC meeting, when possible, to conserve costs.

See Attachment A for the detailed draft scope of work. The scope will be negotiated and refined after consultant selection.

SCHEDULE OF KEY DATES

Request for Qualification issued	September 20, 2024
Deadline for questions on the RFQ	October 2, 2024
Final responses due	October 11, 2024
Palouse RTPO evaluation of proposals	October 14, 2024 – October 17, 2024
Consultant interviews	October 21, 2024 – October 25, 2024
Scope of Work and Contract Agreement negotiation	October 28, 2024 – November 8, 2024
Final Scope of Work delivered to Palouse RTPO TAC	November 19, 2024
Final Scope of Work approved by Palouse RTPO TAC	November 26, 2024
Final Scope of Work and Contract Agreement Approved by the Palouse RTPO Policy Board	December 10, 2024
Project Start	December 11, 2024
Technical Advisory Group Meeting	December 17, 2024 (tent.)
Data Collection / Stakeholder Outreach / Public Engagement	December 2024 – February 2025
Technical Advisory Group Meeting	February 11, 2025 (tent.)
Palouse RTPO TAC Meeting – progress report/review data/receive feedback	February 25, 2025
Palouse RTPO Policy Board Meeting – progress report/review data/receive feedback	March 11, 2025
Plan Development / Stakeholder & Public Engagement	March 12, 2025 – April 11, 2025
Technical Advisory Group Meeting	April 22, 2025
Final Study delivered to Palouse RTPO TAC	May 20, 2025
Final Study presented to Palouse RTPO TAC for review	May 27, 2025
Final Study Approval by the Palouse RTPO Policy Board (project completion)	June 10, 2025

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Submittals must conform to the following instructions. Any non-conforming submittal may be rejected at the sole discretion of the Palouse RTPO.

The statement of qualifications in response to this RFQ must be submitted electronically as a .pdf file sent to the e-mail address below. NO PAPER SUBMITTALS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

The maximum length of the submittal shall be ten (10) pages excluding the cover page. No appendices. Consultant may include embedded links to provide supplemental documents, websites, and other explanatory material. **Use of embedded links is encouraged to reduce the file size of the electronic submittal.**

Submittals are due by 4:30 p.m. (PST) on October 11, 2024. Late submittals will not be considered and will not be accepted.

Responses to this RFQ shall be sent to:

E-MAIL DELIVERY: Rebecca Couch, Director Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization rebecca@palousertpo.org
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SUBMITTAL CONTENT

It is essential that the Consultant provides adequate staff of experienced personnel and/or Sub-Consultants capable of and devoted to the successful accomplishment of the work to be performed under this Request for Qualifications. The Project Manager is an assigned key position and shall not be removed or replaced without the prior written approval of Palouse RTPO. Replacement personnel submitted for approval must have at least equal qualifications, experience and expertise as those listed in the proposal. The following criteria apply to both the Consultant and each Sub-Consultant. The proposal response shall include the following items arranged in the order listed below:

- **Introduction:** Introduce the Company, giving location, brief history, and describe how the company is organized to develop this type of project.
- **Project Team:** Identify the Project Manager who will be responsible for all aspects of project execution, cost, quality, work schedule performance, and provision of adequate personnel and other resources for the successful completion of this project. Provide a summary of education, experience, and qualifications as they relate to the management and conduct of this project. Characterize the proposed Project Manager's decision-making authority regarding all aspects of this project. Identify other proposed key personnel and briefly describe each person's role(s), duties relative to this project, and summary of experiences and qualifications, including estimated percentage of time each personnel will spend on the project.
- **Project Experience:** Provide a written narrative demonstrating knowledge of methodology, policies, and procedures for accomplishing this type of project. Identify potential issues that may be encountered and proposed resolutions. Provide links to these completed Plan documents.

- Project Execution Approach and Schedule:** Define and provide a description of the activities required for successful project completion. Describe the Consultant’s work plan including procedures for scope and schedule changes, cost adjustment, and quality control. This should include a description of the Consultant’s control measures regarding management of key personnel and Sub-Consultant(s). Provide a project schedule in accordance with the Schedule of Key Dates with a Final Study completion date on or before May 20, 2025. Schedule shall be logically linked in accordance with best industry practice. Activities of the Palouse RTPO and other organizations participating in the execution of the project shall be included within the schedule logic. Contractor shall identify risks and opportunities to project delivery success, and note any exceptions, exclusions, and other assumptions. Identify capability to meet project time and budget requirements. Approach should include a narrative on the firm’s experience with freight studies and similar projects where practical solutions were ranked and identified as final recommendations. A Plan for stakeholder and public engagement shall be discussed and included in the approved scope of work.
- References:** Provide three references for other U.S. Clients that the Consultant has contracted with in the past five (5) years to complete a similar Scope of Work. Provide Client company name, a specific currently employed contact person familiar with the Scope of Work and Consultant performance, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.

EVALUATION PROCESS

An Evaluation Committee will evaluate and determine the individual and comparative merits of each of the proposals received in accordance with the following evaluation criteria. It is the responsibility of the Consultant to ensure that it complies with this Request for Qualifications and provides the information requested. If the Consultant fails to provide any information requested in this RFQ, such failure may result in either a lowered evaluation score or disqualification.

Evaluation Criteria	Points Possible
A. Project execution approach	35
B. Stakeholder and public outreach approach	25
C. Related experience on similar projects	20
D. Qualifications of professional personnel to be assigned to the project	10
E. Ability to meet project timeline and have final study completed on or before May 20, 2025	10
Final Score	100

GENERAL PROVISIONS

This Request for Qualifications does not commit Palouse RTPO to enter into an agreement or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal or in subsequent negotiations.

The selected Consultant, by submission of a response to this RFQ, agrees to disclosure of any claims, lawsuits or formal disputes over work or services previously or currently being performed.

DBE PARTICIPATION

The Consultant will not be required to meet a specific Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) utilization goal for this project. However, the Consultant is encouraged to utilize services provided by DBE firms to accomplish tasks required to complete this project.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND NON-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

The consultant or consulting team shall agree to ensure that they have no interest, direct or indirect, that would conflict in any way with the performance of the requested services; furthermore, the consultant or consulting team shall not employ any person, or subcontract with any entity, having such known interest.

Consultants, by submission of a proposal, agree to not discriminate against any current or prospective employee, subcontractor, or a member of the public because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a parent, or age, or otherwise commit an unfair employment practice and further agrees to comply with all Federal, State, and Local equal employment opportunity requirements.

The Palouse RTPO, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252,42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS BY PALOUSE RTPO

The issuance of this RFQ does not constitute an assurance by Palouse RTPO that any contract will actually be entered into by Palouse RTPO. The Palouse RTPO reserves the right to:

- Waive any immaterial defect or informality in any response or response procedure
- Reject any and all proposals
- Reissue the Request for Qualifications
- Invite additional respondents to the proposal
- Request additional information and data from any or all respondents
- Extend the date for submission of responses
- Supplement, amend, or otherwise modify the RFQ and cancel this request with or without the substitution of another RFQ

- Disqualify any respondent who fails to provide information or data requested herein or who provides inaccurate or misleading information or data
- Disqualify any respondent on the basis of any real or apparent conflict of interest

By responding to this proposal, each respondent agrees that any finding by the Palouse RTPO of any fact in dispute as to this proposal or the responses thereto shall be final and conclusive except as provided herein.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

The selected Consultant and their Sub-Consultants will be required to submit certified hourly rates and their last years' financial information and overhead schedule in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations.

PROPRIETARY MATERIAL

The Palouse RTPO assumes no liability for disclosure of proprietary material submitted by respondents. Proposal submittals shall be considered public documents under applicable state law except to the extent portions of the submittals are otherwise protected under applicable law.

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