

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Rural Transit (rT)

Thurston Regional Planning Council

I. PURPOSE

Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) is seeking a qualified consultant (contractor) to provide transportation services for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, and rural communities in Thurston County, Washington. Contingent upon allocation, funds are available July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2027, with some funds expiring June 30, 2025, from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Funding may be either state or federal or a combination. The contractor will be required to adhere to all Contract requirements for this funding source.

This RFP is only open to those qualified firms or individuals who satisfy the requirements stated herein and who are licensed and available to do business in Washington state. TRPC has a budget of up to \$4,019,999 for this project comprised of the following:

- \$1,576,476 in the 2023-2025 biennium (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025);
- \$731,821 in the 2023-2025 biennium for expansion service; and
- \$1,711,702 in the 2025-2027 biennium (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027) for continuing service.

It is anticipated that an agreement will be executed by TRPC and a firm or individual for this project, with an approximate 4-year term. The agreement start date is anticipated to be July 1, 2023 (pending receipt of a contract from WSDOT) with a current end date of June 30, 2027. Note that the expansion funding/service is currently funded from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025. The project's needs are outlined in the following RFP.

II. BACKGROUND

Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) is a 23-member intergovernmental board made up of local governmental jurisdictions within Thurston County, plus the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation and the Nisqually Indian Tribe. The council was established in 1967 under RCW 36.70.060, which authorized creation of regional planning councils. TRPC's mission is to "Provide visionary, collaborative leadership on regional plans, policies, and issues for the benefit of all Thurston region residents."

As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Washington state designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for Thurston County, TRPC is responsible for coordinated transportation planning in the Thurston Region.

ruralTRANSIT's (rT) continuing service is a week-day accessible, general public, route-deviated/demand responsive service for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation and rural areas including Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rainier, Rochester, and Tenino. It maintains connections to Intercity Transit, Twin Transit, and Grays Harbor Transit, each of which connects to services in other counties.

Expansion service includes routes available on Saturday, a route to Yelm, mid-day routes to Tenino, and connections to Twin Transit at Mellen Street in Centralia, Lewis County.

This project will be funded through state or federal funds or a combination, and all applicable state and federal laws must be followed.

As of 2022, Thurston County has an estimated population of 300,500 and employment is estimated at 156,400 jobs. The population of the Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater urbanized area is estimated at 211,700.

III. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Thurston Region is one of the fastest growing areas of the state. The Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater urban area comprises the urban core of our county with a concentration of jobs, population, and activities. It is well-served by transit within the urban core but the areas of rural Thurston County, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Bucoda, Ground Mound, Rainier, Rochester, and Tenino also require transit service amongst these communities in addition to access to the urban core. rT provides links to Intercity Transit (Thurston County) and to Twin Transit (Lewis County), connecting to but not duplicating transit routes. rT also works to coordinate services with Mason, Grays Harbor, and Pierce counties. Through this coordination, rT provides connections along the I-5 corridor to the north via Sound Transit, Pierce Transit, and King County Metro, to Greyhound services in Olympia, AMTRAK in Olympia and Centralia, and other transit systems.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The role of the contractor is to provide route-deviated / demand responsive transit services for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, rural areas including Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rainier, Rochester, Yelm and Tenino Monday – Saturday, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Additionally, contractor will provide transit vehicles, drivers, and the necessary administrative, customer service and supervisory staff to run the transit service, vehicle maintenance, and technology.

A detailed Scope of Work is presented in Exhibit A. Proposals should detail how the Contractor would meet the 16 primary scope requirements.

V. QUALIFICATIONS

Contractors must have demonstrated experience in providing transit service in similar-sized communities.

Contractors must carry automobile liability insurance with a minimum combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage of \$5 million per accident. Commercial General Liability insurance shall be written with limits no less than \$5 million each occurrence, \$5 million general aggregate, and \$5 million products-completed operations aggregate limit.

VI. SELECTION PROCESS, SCORING CRITERIA AND CONTENT

A selection committee comprised of staff from TRPC and partners will review the RFPs. The committee will either recommend a firm based on RFPs or will develop a short list of firms to invite for an interview. TRPC will notify all applicants of the outcome of this process.

Phase 1 – RFP Evaluation. Evaluation will be based on the proposal’s merits in meeting the first three Required Proposal Elements outlined in Section VII.

Criteria for Selection for Interview	Weight Given
Qualifications	30%
Approach	60%
Budget and Schedule	10%
Total Criteria Weight	100%

Each RFP will be independently evaluated on the above factors.

Phase 2 – Interview (If necessary)

Phase 3 – References (Pass/Fail)

VII. REQUIRED PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

A. Qualifications

- i. Name, address and telephone number of the firm or individual and the primary contact.
- ii. Brief description of the organization and its background, size, and nature of services.
- iii. Names of principals and key personnel who would work on the project and their experience and qualifications.
- iv. Availability of personnel who would be dedicated to the project.
- v. Similar relevant projects and where to find out more about them.

B. Approach

- i. Provide a detailed scope of work and describe how it will be accomplished. The approach should detail how the Contractor would meet the 16 scope elements outlined in the Scope of Work (Exhibit A).

C. Budget and Schedule

- i. Provide a budget that includes 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday – Saturday service to: Tumwater, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Bucoda, Rainier, Grand Mound, Yelm, Centralia, Rochester and Tenino.

D. DBE Participation

- i. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with Washington State's Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) DBE Participation Requirements. WSDOT did not set a mandatory DBE goal for this project.

E. References, including names and phone numbers of contact persons

- i. Provide three references.

VIII. COMPENSATION

- A. Upon selection of the most qualified contractor based on demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional services required, and development of a detailed scope of work, TRPC will negotiate a price which it determines is fair and reasonable. If TRPC is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the contractor selected, negotiations with that contractor will terminate and TRPC may select another contractor.
- B. Payment by TRPC for the services will only be made after the services have been performed. An itemized billing statement is required to be submitted in the form specified by TRPC and approved by the appropriate TRPC representative, which shall specifically set forth (1) the services performed, (2) the name of the person performing such services, the (3) hourly labor charge rate for such person, and any other reporting requirements set by TRPC, including – but not limited to - service hours, trips, and miles. Payment shall be made monthly, within thirty (30) days of receipt of such billing statement.

IX. PROJECT TIMELINE

Recruitment will occur with an anticipated project start date of July 1, 2023.

The anticipated dates for key actions are listed below:

Issue RFP: March 27, 2023
Last date for questions April 14, 2023
Proposals Due: April 21, 2023 – 4:00 p.m. PDT
Interview Notification: May 3, 2023
Interviews Conducted: Mid-May 2023
Contract Negotiations Begin: Late May 2023
Consultant (Contractor) Services Begin: July 1, 2023

X. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Instructions to Proposers

- Submittals must be limited to ten (10) double-sided pages (20 total pages), plus a cover page.
- Please send an electronic copy of the proposal in PDF format to Tyson Justis, Human Resources and Finance Manager, justist@trpc.org. Paper copies will not be required or accepted due to limited office access.
- All responses must be received by **April 21, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. PDT**.
- Responses should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight-forward, concise description of provider capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the request. Colored displays, promotional materials, etc. are not allowed.
- Any questions concerning the RFP's specifications or process shall be directed in writing to Tyson Justis, at justist@trpc.org before **April 14, 2023**. Responses to questions and/or any changes to this RFP during the period of advertisement will be posted on the TRPC website (www.trpc.org).

B. Any changes to this RFP during the advertisement period will be posted online at www.trpc.org.

XI. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. TRPC reserves the right to reject any and all RFPs, and to waive minor irregularities in any RFP.

B. TRPC reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any contractor.

C. TRPC reserves the right to award any contract to the next most qualified contractor if the successful contractor does not execute a contract within thirty (30) days after selection.

D. Any RFP may be withdrawn up until the date and time set forth in the Project Timeline for opening of RFP. Any RFP not so timely withdrawn shall constitute an irrevocable offer, for a period of ninety (90) days to provide TRPC the services described in the attached specifications, or until one or more of the RFP have been approved by TRPC, whichever occurs first.

E. TRPC reserves the right to reject any proposed agreement or contract that does not conform to the specifications contained in this RFP, and which is not approved by TRPC.

F. The Recipient, 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 notifies 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 23 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.

XII. POST-CLOSING DISCUSSION

After any of the responses are open, conversations may only take place between TRPC and respondents for the purposes of clarification regarding the selection process. Respondents shall be bound by the information submitted in their RFP and subsequent negotiations.

Those submitting an RFP may be required to make a presentation to TRPC and partners as part of the selection process. The presentation team should include the Project Manager and any other key personnel necessary to address administrative and technical issues.

XIII. PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE / REJECTION

TRPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all RFPs received from this RFP, or to negotiate separately with any respondent, and to waive any informalities, defects, or irregularities in any RFP, or to accept that RFP which, in the judgment of the proper officials, is in the best interest of TRPC.

Execution of any agreement as a result of this RFP is contingent upon receipt of funding for the above referenced projects.

XIV. AWARD

TRPC reserves the right to award the contract to a contractor that they deem to offer the best overall RFP. TRPC has the discretion and reserves the right to cancel this RFP, to reject any and all RFP, to waive any and all irregularities, or to re-advertise with either the identical or revised specifications if it is deemed to be in the best interest of TRPC.

XV. ASSIGNMENT

The awarded contractor shall not assign, transfer, convey, sublet, or otherwise dispose of any award or of any of its rights, title, or interests therein, without the prior written consent of TRPC.

XVI. ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

TRPC reserves the right to introduce additional terms and conditions at the time the final contract is negotiated. Any additional terms or conditions would be limited to ones having the effect of clarifying the RFP language and/or correcting defects, such as omissions or misstatements, which are discovered after the RFP is issued, or that reflect State or Federal Law changes, or as required by funding entities.

Thurston Regional Planning Council ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination against any person based on race, color, national origin, or sex in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For questions regarding TRPC's Title VI Program, you may contact the Title VI Coordinator at 360.956.7575 or email info@trpc.org.

EXHIBIT A SCOPE OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

The Scope of Work for any Contract awarded pursuant to this RFP shall be based on Proposer's ability to perform the following Scope of Work.

The Contractor will provide ADA-compliant route-deviated / on-demand transit services for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, rural areas including Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rainier, Rochester, Yelm and Tenino Monday – Saturday, 6:00am – 6:00pm. Additionally, contractor will provide ADA-compliant transit vehicles, drivers, the necessary administrative, customer service and supervisory staff to run the transit service, vehicle maintenance and technology.

The service is currently operating and TRPC plans to begin a new contracting period with the successful proposer. The Rider Guide with current route and schedule information is available at www.thurstonRT.org. The current Rider Guide does not include expanded service that is part of this Scope of Work but the expansion will continue all current service while adding a route from Rainier to Yelm, Saturday service as a continuation of weekday service, adding a mid-day route to Tenino, and adding a stop at the Mellen Street Station, which is a transfer point for Twin Transit and Grays Harbor Transit.

For estimating purposes only, this service currently provides 1275 trips per month, traveling approximately 18,100 miles per month, with up to 700 hours of service per month.

1. Coordination and Sustainability

- Provide general purpose, route-deviated / demand responsive transportation service for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, the communities of Rochester, Grand Mound, Yelm, Tenino, Bucoda, Rainier and surrounding areas of rural Thurston County, with connections to neighboring transit services. CONTRACTOR agrees to work toward a sustainable, coordinated transportation system throughout Thurston County.
- Coordinate services with human service providers and transportation vendors serving residents of the service area. Such providers include but are not limited to: The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Intercity Transit, private transportation services, and Senior Services for South Sound. CONTRACTOR is encouraged to take advantage of excess capacity in coordinating trips. Additionally, the Contractor will participate in monthly coordination meeting with TRPC staff, and quarterly Transit Partner meetings as they are scheduled.
- Support TRPC'S efforts to identify and obtain continuing funding for this service. This may include, but is not limited to providing customer comments, data, letters of support, and guidance for grant submittals or identifying potential sources of funding.
- CONTRACTOR shall coordinate customer service with other transit service providers.

2. Targeted Population

The service must be available to the public with an emphasis on serving people with special needs, who because of age, income, or ability have limited transportation choices.

- CONTRACTOR will work with TRPC to develop and implement a marketing plan to ensure that the public is aware of the availability of the service.

3. Services

- The service is general purpose, route-deviated / demand responsive transportation service with modification available within three-quarters (3/4) of a mile of the service route by reservation.
- *This is a non-emergency transportation service.*

4. Service Area

- The CONTRACTOR agrees to provide service under this Agreement to riders who live within three-quarter (3/4) of a mile of the service route (map below) serving the communities of the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, the communities of Rochester, Grand Mound, Yelm, Tenino, Bucoda, Rainier and surrounding areas of rural Thurston County, with a connection Centralia in Lewis County.
- While the goal when connecting and coordinating with other transit entities is to not duplicate service within Public Transportation Benefit Areas (PTBA), CONTRACTOR and TRPC may establish transfer points within rather than at the edge of the PTBA to better serve clients. Such determination may include, but is not limited to, the consideration of safety issues, improved transit schedule connections or amenities.

5. Service Hours and Days

- The CONTRACTOR shall provide services on a schedule to be determined by TRPC and CONTRACTOR. In general, the service operates Monday through Saturday from approximately 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. RT is closed for holidays on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

6. Communication

- The CONTRACTOR shall provide for eligible clients (people within ¾ mile of the scheduled route) the ability to make reservations for transportation via a toll-free telephone information and reservation system, which shall also provide access to persons with hearing and/or speech impairments and make provision for trip scheduling for non-English speaking clients.

- The CONTRACTOR shall provide a system utilizing time and date stamped messaging or answering service for clients to request scheduling of a trip when live service is not available. CONTRACTOR shall contact the client requesting trip service within twenty-four (24) hours of the next business day via the phone reservation system during working hours. The CONTRACTOR shall provide sufficient trained and proficient staff and phone lines to handle all ride reservations without clients encountering excessive hold times or busy signals.
- Dispatch service (communication between driver(s) and operations) must meet state and federal government requirements and regulations and be in operation while vehicles are in service under this Contract.
- The CONTRACTOR shall provide a process for customer comments and complaints that is compliant with WSDOT guidelines. TRPC has created an online comment / complaint / ADA complaint portal on the Rural Transit website, for rider.

7. Technical Capability

- CONTRACTOR shall have sufficient computer equipment of size and capacity to maintain, access, and store all client information necessary to verify client eligibility, schedule trips, develop and print schedules, and perform other duties necessary in the provision of this service.

8. Monitoring and Supervision

- The CONTRACTOR shall be responsible for monitoring and supervising service performance.
- CONTRACTOR shall be responsible for dispatching and arranging for back-up vehicles, road service, towing, and other driver supervisory services as needed. Documentation of these occurrences must be maintained on a dispatcher log and be made available to TRPC upon request.

9. Complaints

- CONTRACTOR and TRPC shall establish and follow a Customer Complaint and Comment Process compliant with WSDOT Guidelines.
- CONTRACTOR shall resolve complaints promptly as they arise.

10. On-Time Performance

- On-time performance must be adhered to by arriving at the designated time stop within five (5) minutes before or after the scheduled pick-up time.
- Minimum on time performance standard is ninety-five percent (95%) or greater.

11. Trip Cancellations/No Shows

- CONTRACTOR shall provide a system to track trip cancellations and no shows. TRPC and CONTRACTOR shall develop and disseminate to riders the terms of a Cancellation/No Show policy.

12. Vehicle Cleaning and Maintenance

- Vehicle exteriors shall be washed as necessary to maintain a clean appearance (outside washed three (3) times per week and interiors cleaned daily). The passenger compartments must be clean and free of damage. Seatbelts shall be clean and in proper working order.
- Body fluids, which could pose a health hazard to passengers, shall be cleaned up immediately before picking up additional passengers following industry standard procedures. Clean up kits must be available on each vehicle in service. Vehicles will be cleaned and/or disinfected according to CDC and State of Washington guidelines and appropriate COVID-19 protocols.
- A pre/post trip inspection form shall be kept ensuring all vehicles are cleaned according to prescribed schedule. The CONTRACTOR shall submit the log to the COUNCIL within twenty-four (24) working hours of a request by COUNCIL.
- Each vehicle shall be expected to comply with the Minimum Periodic Inspection Standards that have been established and that are in compliance with the Original Equipment Manufacture Requirement (OEM), and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSA), Pocketbook edition.

13. Vehicle Safety Equipment

- At a minimum, service vehicles shall be equipped with the following safety equipment: communications system; fire extinguisher, U.L. approved and appropriate for size and type of vehicle; cleaning kit, first aid kit, approved for capacity of vehicle; sterile gloves and mouth to mouth barriers; triangle reflectors or other similar warning device; and flashlight. All vehicle safety equipment shall be properly maintained and kept in fully functional condition. Masks will be made available free of charge for riders.
- Seatbelts and other passenger restraint systems must be industry standard and used in accordance with applicable State Law.

14. Driver Requirements

CONTRACTOR shall establish and TRPC shall approve a Driver Behavior Policy, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

All drivers must:

- a. Wear proper uniform and identification when in service.
- b. Properly identify and announce stops.
- c. Confirm, before the vehicle is moved, that all passengers are properly secured with seatbelts.
- d. Provide support and direction to passengers as needed in the movement of mobility limited persons.
- e. Provide assistance with the stowage of mobility aids, wheelchairs, packages, or other materials.
- g. Use tact, respect, courtesy, and restraint in dealing with clients to ensure passenger safety and to promote dignity and pride.

Drivers must not:

- a. Make sexually explicit comments, solicit sexual favors, or engage in sexual activity with clients.
- b. Solicit or accept controlled substances, alcohol, or medications from clients.
- c. Solicit or accept money from clients.
- d. Use alcohol, narcotics, or controlled substances, or be under their influence while on duty, except as allowed under CONTRACTOR's Drug and Alcohol policy.
- e. Consume any food or beverage while operating the vehicle or while involved in client assistance.
- f. Smoke in the vehicle or when assisting clients.
- g. Wear headphones on duty, except for handsfree communication devices (Bluetooth) necessary for communicating with dispatch.
- h. Be responsible for client's personal belongings or items, with items found in the vehicle submitted to lost and found.

15. Rider Behavior Problems

TRPC shall approve a rider behavior policy that will be enforced by the CONTRACTOR. CONTRACTOR in cooperation with TRPC will work to resolve issues as they arise with riders.

16. Distribution of Materials

CONTRACTOR agrees to display and distribute Rider Guides and other service information and marketing materials as directed by COUNCIL. To support coordination, CONTRACTOR may also display and distribute service materials for other transportation providers. CONTRACTOR is precluded from distributing any other materials, except as approved by TRPC. Additionally, CONTRACTOR will have masks available to passengers free of charge.

