



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

STATE ADVOCACY SERVICES



I. SUMMARY

The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC), the regional transportation planning agency for Ventura County, is soliciting proposals in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP) for State Advocacy Services. The initial agreement will be a three-year base agreement commencing Jan. 1, 2027. VCTC will review the program annually and reserves the right to terminate the program at any time. At the end of the three-year base agreement period, VCTC reserves the right to extend the agreement one time for two additional years. Information about VCTC programs, projects and legislative priorities can be found at goventura.org. Proposals shall be evaluated pursuant to the Evaluation Criteria contained herein and staff intends to recommend an award to VCTC's governing body after completion of such evaluation. Any award is solely within the discretion of VCTC's governing body and no award will be valid until approved by the Commission. The successful proposer shall execute VCTC's standard Consultant Services Agreement, a draft of which is included in this RFP.

The RFP is comprised of the following parts:

- Proposal Information, Organization and Content
- Scope of Work
- Evaluation Criteria
- Rate Structure
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- Draft VCTC Consultant Services Agreement

II.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE (Subject to Change)	DATE	TIME (Pacific Standard)
RFP Released	September 11, 2026	4 p.m.
Deadline to Submit Questions	September 28, 2026	8 a.m.
Answers to Questions Posted	October 1, 2026	4 p.m.
Proposal Due Date	October 12, 2026	4 p.m.
Consultant Interviews (at VCTC discretion)	October 28, 2026	
Anticipated Contract approval by VCTC	December 4, 2026	
Contract Start	January 1, 2027	

III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposers shall submit four (4) hard copies of the technical proposal and a thumb drive containing both the technical proposal and the cost proposal. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. Proposals are due no later than 4 p.m. October 12, 2026, to:

Ventura County Transportation Commission
Attn: Darrin Peschka, Government and Community Relations program
manager
751 E. Daily Drive, Suite 420
Camarillo, CA 93010

The cost proposal should not be included in the hard copies of the technical proposal. Proposals received later than 4 p.m. October 12, 2026, may be deemed non-responsive and returned to the proposer.

Any questions concerning this Request for Proposals should be directed to Darrin Peschka, VCTC Government and Community Relations program manager, at dpeschka@goventura.org no later than 8 a.m. September 28, 2026. All consultants requesting information shall be responded to directly and all questions and responses will be posted on the website as an addendum to the RFP.

Responding firms are responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in the preparation and/or delivery of a proposal. There is no expressed or implied obligation for VCTC to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in the preparation or delivery of proposals in response to this request. VCTC reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and use any idea in a proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected. All submissions are considered a matter of public record. All proposals must include the items listed below. Any proposal that does not include the following may be deemed non-responsive and rejected.

No Proposer, or anyone representing a Proposer, is to discuss this RFP with any official or employee of VCTC, other than the Procurement Officer named in this RFP. Neither Proposers, nor anyone representing a Proposer, is to discuss this RFP with any consultant engaged by the Commission for assistance in preparing the RFP documents or any cost estimate associated with this procurement. Violation of this prohibition may result in disqualification of the Proposer even if the contract has already been awarded.

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of VCTC and will be subject to disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. Proposers must identify, in writing, all copyrighted material, trade secrets or other proprietary information that it claims are exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act (California Government Code Section 6250 et seq.).

Any proposer claiming such an exemption must identify the specific provision of the California Public Records Act that provides an exemption from disclosure for each item that the proposer claims is not subject to disclosure under said Act. Any proposer claiming such an exemption must also state in its proposal that the proposer agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless VCTC and its officers and employees, from any action brought against the VCTC for its refusal to disclose such material, trade secrets and other proprietary information to any party making a request, therefore. Any proposer who fails to include such a statement and/or fails to identify the specific provision of the California Public Records Act supporting the claimed exemption shall be deemed to have waived any right to an exemption from disclosure as provided by said Act and shall release and hold harmless VCTC from any harm resulting from VCTC's release of said materials.

IV. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The consultant team shall possess at least five years of experience advocating on behalf of public agencies and shall possess a combination of demonstrated experience and qualifications in the following areas: procedures of the state Legislature and state agencies relevant to VCTC; transportation funding, including formula and competitive grant funding; transportation planning; highways; active transportation; bus transit; and passenger rail.

V. VCTC RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

In connection with this RFP, VCTC reserves the right to do any of the following:

1. Accept or reject any and all proposals, or any item or part thereof, or to waive any informalities, requirements, or irregularities in a proposal or any item or part thereof.
2. Withdraw or cancel this RFP at any time without prior notice and VCTC makes no representation that any Contract will be awarded to any contractor responding to this RFP.
3. Reject all Proposals and to re-issue (or not re-issue) a new RFP for the same or similar work.
4. Postpone proposal openings, review and/or evaluation for its own convenience. Proposers may withdraw their proposals before the proposal submittal date by

submitting a written request signed by an authorized representative of the proposer, and delivered to VCTC at the address identified herein.

5. Award multiple contracts as a result of this RFP and reserves the right to award contracts for similar services outside of this RFP process.
6. Alter the Selection Process Dates.
7. Remedy technical errors in the RFP process.
8. Request additional information from Proposers and investigate the qualifications of all firms under consideration.
9. Confirm any part of the information furnished by a Proposer.
10. Obtain additional evidence of managerial, financial or other capabilities.
11. Negotiate with any, all, or none of the Proposers;
12. Solicit best and final offers from all or some of the Proposers;
13. Accept other than the lowest-priced Proposal;

Proposal Information, Organization, and Content

All proposals shall contain the following information, at a minimum:

1. Title Page

- Title of the Project
- Name and Address of Firm
- Phone number of Firm – **Do not include personal phone numbers or addresses. This information may become public under the California Public Records Act.**
- Prime Contact Person
- Email Address of the Prime Contact Person
- Signature of the Individual Authorized/Obligated to Commit the Firm to this Project

2. Table of Contents

- A clear identification of the materials by section and page numbers.

3. Technical Approach

- A statement and discussion of the project objectives, concerns and key issues.
- The technical approach for performing the tasks must include a detailed Scope of Work along with the process for executing the requirements and objectives of the project.
- A discussion of the difficulties expected or anticipated in performing the tasks, along with a discussion of how the consultant proposes to overcome or mitigate against those difficulties.
- A statement of the extent to which the consultant's proposed approach and Scope of Work will meet or exceed the stated objectives discussed in the RFP.

4. Cost Proposal

- Proposals must include a Cost Proposal in the format and details shown in the Cost Proposal section of the RFP.

5. Profile of Firm

- A statement indicating if the firm is local or national and a summary of representative experience to the work described in the Scope of Work for this RFP.
- The location and telephone number of the office from which the work is to be performed.

- Identification of the individuals who will perform the work, including officers, project manager and key staff. State the time commitment and include resumes for key individuals. **Do not include personal information, such as non-business phone numbers and addresses. This information may become public under the California Public Records Act.**
- Explanation as to how the proposed team meets the Minimum Qualifications

6. References

- Provide a list of at least three references, including the names of contacts at each firm. References should not include any VCTC staff or VCTC Commission members.

7. Required Forms

- The Debarment and Suspension Certification must be fully completed by all parties (prime consultant and all subconsultants) to the proposal (prime and all subconsultants).

Scope of Work

The Consultant shall perform the following tasks:

A. Legislative Program:

1. Support the development of VCTC's Legislative Program for review and adoption by the VCTC elected board. The Legislative Program is updated every two years to coincide with the start of new legislative and congressional sessions.

B. Legislation, Regulations, Funding and Policy

1. Submit a weekly Legislative Report when the California Legislature is in session. The report should analyze newly introduced bills, summarize activities in the Legislature, committees, the Administration, appropriate state agencies, and coalition stakeholders as the information relates to areas of interest to VCTC, and a forecast of activity likely to occur in the foreseeable future.
2. Review and analyze anticipated, newly introduced, or amended legislation. As needed, review and comment on staff reports, analyses and other memoranda that pertain to issues contained in VCTC's Legislative Program.
3. Work with VCTC to develop and recommend strategies to influence or amend legislation.
4. As directed, prepare and submit materials, testimony, letters and other support materials aimed at conveying VCTC's interests to the Legislature and Administration.
5. Continuously monitor the legislative environment to identify items that may affect VCTC's interests, analyze them and report to VCTC.
6. Work with VCTC to secure support from VCTC's legislative delegation for grant applications.
7. Assist with initiation of legislation sponsored or supported by VCTC.

Deliverables:

Weekly legislative reports

Any initiated legislation that affects VCTC's core mission

C. Legislative Delegation

1. Provide logistical support for VCTC visits in Sacramento or district offices. This includes developing a proposed agenda and scheduling meetings with

members of the Legislature, legislative staff and members of the Administration to further the goals of VCTC's Legislative Program.

2. Assist with the development, attendance and programming of a Legislative Staff Tour/Luncheon for delegation member staff to be held annually in Ventura County.

Deliverable:

Logistical support for visits in Sacramento or district offices. Development and execution of a Legislative Staff Tour/Luncheon in Ventura County.

D. Liaison and Advocacy Activities

1. Assist VCTC in developing bipartisan relationships with members of the Legislature, specifically members of the Ventura County and Southern California delegations, and legislative leadership.
2. Assist VCTC in developing relationships with members of the administration of the Governor of California, including but not limited to representatives of and appointees to the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

Deliverable:

Office visits with members of legislative leadership and the Ventura County delegation, and other key figures in the state Senate and Assembly; office visits with representatives and appointees to CalSTA, Caltrans and the CTC.

E. Coordination with VCTC

1. The Consultant shall be required to attend at least one meeting of the VCTC elected board in person and make a presentation to board members at least once per calendar year of the contract. The presentation shall include a summary of recent legislative activities, discussion of the political landscape and a forecast of possible legislation and regulation.
2. Meet with VCTC staff twice per month to receive updates on projects and issues of importance to VCTC.
3. Meet with VCTC as needed.

Deliverable: In-person presentation at a meeting of VCTC's elected board at least once per calendar year.

F. Coalition Activities

1. Actively participate in appropriate state coalitions and working groups to further the goals of VCTC's Legislative Program.
2. Maintain communications with and be aware of issues of organizations in which VCTC has a membership or interest, such as, but not limited to, the California Councils of Governments (CalCOG), the California Transit Association (CTA), California Vanpool Authority (CalVans), Coast Rail Coordinating Council, Mobility 21, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink), and the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency (Pacific Surfliner).

Deliverable:

Written and/or verbal summaries of participation and activities with state coalitions and membership organizations.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
Work Plan/Methodology to achieve VCTC's goals	25
Experience: Professional capability, competence and relevant experience	20
Qualifications: Proposed consultant staff, staffing capacity, commitment to VCTC's goals, meets or exceeds minimum qualifications	20
Cost: Realistic for the services to be performed	25
References: Nature and quality of services provided to other clients	10
TOTAL	100

Failure to provide the Rate Structure-Cost Proposal for this procurement will result in your proposal being deemed non-responsive.

Rate Structure (Cost Proposal)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 (optional 12 months)	Year 5 (optional 12 months)
Flat monthly fee for all services outlined in Scope of Work	\$	\$		\$	\$
Yearly subtotal	\$	\$		\$	\$

**Certification of Primary Participant Regarding Debarment, Suspension,
and Other Responsibility Matters**

The Primary Participant, certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any state or Federal department or agency,
2. Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction,- violation of Federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
3. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (2) of this certification; and
4. Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.

(If the primary participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, the participant shall attach an explanation to this certification.)

THE PRIMARY PARTICIPANT,

**CERTIFIES OR AFFIRMS UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THE TRUTHFULNESS
AND ACCURACY OF THE CONTENTS OF THE STATEMENTS SUBMITTED ON
OR WITH THIS CERTIFICATION AND UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PROVISIONS
OF 31 U.S.C. SECTIONS 3801 ET. SEQ. ARE APPLICABLE THERETO.**

Signature of Contractor's Authorized Official

Date

Printed Name and Title of Contractor's Authorized Official