



December 22, 2020

**Request for Proposals
Professional Government Relations
(Lobbying) Services**

Contract No. 20-14

General Information

The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority (RITBA) manages the Newport Pell, Jamestown Verrazzano, Mount Hope and Sakonnet River Bridges, along with ten (10) small bridges and a section of Route 138 which runs from North Kingstown and continues through Jamestown. RITBA is a quasi-public corporation having a distinct legal existence from the state of Rhode Island. The powers of RITBA are vested in a five (5) member Board of Directors, which is authorized, pursuant to its enabling act and bylaws, to undertake the planning, development, management and operation of the assets for which it is responsible.

Summary of Scope of Services

RITBA is seeking Request for Proposals (RFP) from qualified firms to provide professional Government Relations (Lobbying) services for one three (3) year term, commencing when RITBA has a need for specific services. Either party may terminate the agreement with or without cause upon thirty (30) days' notice.

The selected Consultant:

- A. Is required to have a strong identity and presence in the State of Rhode Island, with a strong familiarity with the Rhode Island federal delegation and federal governmental affairs;
- B. Will monitor and provide regular reports on current legislation, the state and federal budget processes, and events at the state and federal levels that may directly or indirectly impact RITBA;
- C. Will work with RITBA in coordination of a legislative/regulatory program, which includes the development of legislative/regulatory positions and platforms, as well as drafting proposed legislation when appropriate;
- D. Will obtain and monitor all bills that may have an impact on RITBA;
- E. Will provide strategic counsel for the resolution of issues, and identify impacts that proposed resolutions may have on the operation and funding of RITBA;
- F. Will remain in frequent contact with members of the Rhode Island General Assembly, Congress and staff, as well as state and federal committee and agency staff, on matters concerning RITBA and future appropriations or grants impacting RITBA;
- G. Will keep policy makers aware of the potential effect of legislation and regulations relative to RITBA's interests at all state and federal levels of government;
- H. Will closely monitor the activities and proposals of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and take appropriate action as directed by RITBA;
- M. Will perform other tasks related to advocacy or lobbying at the state and federal level on behalf of RITBA as requested;
- N. Will assist RITBA to develop, implement, and encourage economic and job development;
- O. Provide direct, preferably written, communication with the Board of Directors and/or Executive Director on legislative or regulatory issues related to or of interest to RITBA; written summary of legislative communications shall be reported to the Executive Director on a regular basis, preferably monthly; all oral and written correspondence will be maintained as strictly confidential

unless otherwise advised by RITBA.

Services required of the consultant shall be personally provided by the principals of the consultant as identified in the response that shall be specified between the Consultant or Consultant's Firm and RITBA. Any reports, information, data, statistics, procedures, studies, or other form of communication or information provided by the consultant shall be the exclusive property of RITBA. Consultant or Consultant's Firm shall provide all equipment, personnel and expert sub-consultants needed to fulfill the requirements for representing RITBA. RITBA reserves the right to not award a contract for any work herein; issuance of this RFP solicitation does not guarantee any subsequent award. Furthermore, RITBA reserves the right to hire any additional subject matter experts as needed for specialty items.

Selected Government Relations firms are expected to execute RITBA's form Letter of Engagement attached hereto as **Exhibit A**. RITBA reserves the right to add terms specific to the engagement.

Request for Proposals Requirements

RITBA requires that the Firms keep the proposal to no more than fifteen (15) double sided 8 ½ x 11 pages, no less than size 12 font, excluding:

- Cover Letter (one page, single sided)
- Table-of-Contents
- Dividers
- Executive Summary (one page, double sided)
- Resume(s) (one page, double sided)
- Professional References

RITBA will not accept videos, simulations, or other electronic presentations for this submittal. However, such electronic information may be presented during an interview process for the shortlisted Firms.

Firms shall submit one (1) electronic (thumb/flash drive only accepted) and four (4) printed copies of the proposal to:

Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority
Office of the Executive Director
P.O. Box 437
1 East Shore Road
Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835-0437

Vendors are advised that if they are hand delivering proposals to the RITBA offices, access requires the wearing of a cloth mask which covers the nose and mouth in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order(s) and Rhode Island Department of Health Emergency regulations.

Attn: RFP 20-14 – Professional Government Relations (Lobbying) Services

The proposal must be submitted no later than **1:00PM EDT, January 5, 2021**. Late submissions will **not** be accepted. In order to control the dissemination of information regarding this Request for Proposals (RFP), Firms interested in submitting proposals shall not make personal contact with any member of RITBA staff or Board of Directors regarding this RFP. Questions concerning

this RFP should be directed, via email, to rsciola@ritba.org no later than **4:00PM EDT, December 29, 2020**. RITBA will respond to all relevant questions no later than end of day than **4:00PM EDT, December 31, 2020** via addendum. This addendum will be posted to RITBA's website (www.ritba.org).

RITBA accepts no financial responsibility for any costs incurred by a Firm in either responding to this RFP, or in participating in oral presentations or in any meetings with RITBA prior to being hired. The proposals in response to this RFP become the property of RITBA and may be used by RITBA in any way it deems appropriate. All information submitted in response to this RFP is deemed public and subject to disclosure unless a separate redacted public copy is submitted, regardless of whether the information is marked confidential/proprietary. Firm's may redact in the public copy any trade secrets or commercial or financial information which is of a privileged or confidential nature pursuant to the Access to Public Records Act (R.I. Gen. Laws § 38-2 et. seq.). If a Firm does not submit a redacted public copy, RITBA assumes that Firm is not seeking confidential treatment for any of its information and thus, all information is subject to public disclosure. By submitting a proposal, the Firm certifies that it has fully read and understands the RFP, has full knowledge of the Scope of Services to be provided, and accepts the terms and conditions under which the services are to be performed.

RITBA reserves the right to interview some, all or none of the Firms responding to this RFP based solely on its judgment as to the Firm's proposals and capabilities. RITBA reserves the right to reject any and all submittals, to request and consider additional information from Firms, and to reject any and all submittals on any basis without disclosing the reason. No Firm may withdraw their submittal for at least one hundred twenty (120) days after the time and date set for submission. RITBA reserves the right to waive any irregularities and technical defects. RITBA reserves the right to modify, amend or waive any provisions of this RFP, prior to the issuance of a contract. By this RFP, RITBA has not committed itself to employ Firms for any or all of the above-described services, nor does the suggested Scope of Services or term of agreement require that Firms should be employed for any of those purposes. RITBA reserves the right to make those decisions after receipt of responses. RITBA's decision on these matters is final. RITBA reserves the right to terminate any relationships with Firms if it determines that such action is in its best interests. RITBA may award one or more contracts for any combination of services including specific tasks within a subcategory.

SUBMITTAL AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

A Selection Committee comprised of RITBA staff will review proposals. This committee will review all proposals meeting the minimum requirements of this RFP and select finalists to make a presentation to the committee, if warranted. The standard by which the selection committee will make its evaluation is the proposal which best serves the overall interests of RITBA based on the following criteria:

- A. General Information:** Provide a brief description of your Firm, including but not limited to the following:
1. Location(s) of offices.
 2. Number of partners and associates or employees.
 3. Name, address, phone number, fax number and email address of the Firm's contact person.
 4. Indicate the type and amount of professional liability insurance your Firm carries. The Firm's professional liability coverage must have minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per claim.

5. Identify any material litigation, administrative proceedings or investigations which i) currently names your Firm as a party, ii) have been threatened against your Firm; or iii) have been settled within the past two (2) years and involved your Firm as a party.

B. Experience and Resources

1. Indicate which partners and associates or employees would be involved in providing services to RITBA. Provide appropriate background information and identify what their responsibilities would be in serving RITBA.
2. Describe your Firm's relevant experience.
3. Discuss any specialized experience that may be relevant to RITBA.
4. Provide three (3) references from your Firm's corporate or governmental agency clients including names, addresses and telephone numbers.
5. Describe your Firm's current relationship with governmental agencies and/or quasi-public corporations. Please include information in the following format:
 - Name of Governmental Agency
 - Relationship (type of counsel services provided)
 - Length of time serving in this capacity
 - Expiration date of current contract

C. Fees

1. RITBA strongly prefers a retainer arrangement for Government Relations (Lobbying) service. Describe your Firm's proposed fee structure for the three (3) applicable years identified under this RFP. Include the hourly rate for the partners, associates, or employees to be assigned to RITBA activities (if applicable) and the costs of various reimbursable and expenses. Please be as specific as possible. **Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws 37-2-70(b), Legal Firms must certify that the rate of compensation does not exceed the rate of compensation charged by the Firm to its preferred public or private clients.**

D. Miscellaneous

1. Identify any actual or potential conflicts of interest with regard to representation of RITBA and/or the State of Rhode Island. Include a listing of any matters in which your Firm has represented other parties in litigation, transactional matters or government relations/lobbying efforts directly or indirectly involving RITBA.
2. Identify any conflicts that may arise as a result of business activities, associates and/or ventures by members and associates of your Firm, or as a result of any individual's status as a member of the board of directors of any organization likely to interact with RITBA. Describe how your Firm will handle actual and/or potential conflicts of interest.
3. Identify any publications and other information and resources of your Firm that will be available to RITBA.
4. Discuss any topics not covered in this Request for Proposals, which you would like to bring to the attention of RITBA.

E. Additional Requirements

Campaign Finance Compliance

Every person or business entity providing goods or services at a cost of \$5,000 cumulated value

is required to file an affidavit regarding political campaign contributions with the RI State Board of Elections even if no reportable contributions have been made (RI General Law 17-27). Forms may be obtained at Board of Elections, Campaign Finance Division, 50 Branch Avenue, Providence, RI 02904, (401-222-2056).

Major State Decision-Maker

Does any Rhode Island “Major State Decision-Maker”, as defined below, or the spouse or dependent child of such person, hold (i) a ten percent or greater equity interest, or (ii) a \$5,000 or greater cash interest in this business?

For purposes of this question, “Major State Decision-Maker” means:

- (i) All general officers; and all executive or administrative head or heads of any state executive agency enumerated in R.I.G.L § 42-6-1 as well as the executive or administrative head or heads of state quasi-public corporations, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase "executive or administrative head or heads" shall include anyone serving in the positions of president, senior vice president, general counsel, director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff;
- (ii) All members of the General Assembly and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state legislative agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase "executive or administrative head or heads" shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel or chief of staff; and
- (iii) All members of the state judiciary and all state magistrates and the executive or administrative head or heads of a state judicial agency, whether appointed or serving as an employee. The phrase "executive or administrative head or heads" shall include anyone serving in the positions of director, executive director, deputy director, assistant director, executive counsel, chief of staff or state court administrator.

If your answer is “Yes”, please identify the Major State Decision-Maker, specify the nature of their ownership interest, and provide a copy of the annual financial disclosure required to be filed with the Rhode Island Ethics Commission pursuant to R.I.G.L. §36-14-16, 17 and 18.

Title VI Solicitation Notice:

RITBA, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders or offerors that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit proposals 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.

EXHIBIT A

DATE

FIRM NAME
FIRM ADDRESS
FIRM ADDRESS

Re: **Letter of Engagement**

Dear FIRM:

This letter serves as the Letter of Engagement for FIRM to serve as consultant to the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority ("RITBA") with respect to Government Relations (Lobbying) Services.

The term of the engagement shall not exceed one year unless duly renewed and shall also include the following:

1. The performance of Government Relations (Lobbying) services with respect this engagement commencing _____.
2. A retainer agreement shall be set to include the following terms:

_____.
3. This Agreement and any changes or modifications hereto shall be in writing executed by both parties.
4. All notices required under the contract shall be given in writing to the parties at the following addresses:

R.I. Turnpike & Bridge Authority: RI Turnpike & Bridge Authority
Executive Director's Office
PO Box 437
Jamestown, RI 02835

FIRM: FIRM NAME
FIRM ADDRESS
FIRM ADDRESS

If the foregoing correctly states the terms of the contract between you and RITBA, kindly confirm this by executing and returning a copy of this letter.

Very truly yours,

Lori Caron Silveira
Executive Director
R.I. Turnpike & Bridge Authority

AGREED:

FIRM

By: _____

_____ Date