



CAMAS WASHOUGAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

616 NE 4th Avenue, Camas, WA 98607, 360.834.2262

TO: Qualified Consulting Firms
FROM: Camas Washougal Fire Department
DATE: February 17, 2021
RE: Camas Washougal Partnership Analysis

Overview

The Cities of Camas and Washougal, WA are requesting proposals from qualified consultants to assist with and facilitate the Cities analysis of their partnership for joint Fire and EMS services. The Cities are seeking professional services to facilitate the work of a subcommittee of the JPAC and staff to compare alternative organizational and governance models, evaluate service delivery methods, analyze the financial history of the partnership and evaluate the financial implications of various organizational and governance models. The subcommittee will evaluate the provisions and effectiveness of the current interlocal agreement for shared services, forecast future implications, and provide recommendations for the Cities to consider as they contemplate the future of Fire and EMS services. The consultant will facilitate this effort and the consideration of the recommendations of the subcommittee by the full JPAC and both City Councils. Initially this effort will focus on the partnership between the Cities of Camas and Washougal. A possible additional scope will include incorporation of the East County Fire and Rescue District (ECFR) fully into the facilitated review process.

Background

The Camas Washougal Fire Department was consolidated in 2014 by a formal agreement between the cities of Camas and Washougal pursuant to RCW 39.34, the Interlocal Cooperation Act. The agreement was updated in 2019 and 2020 and expires December 31, 2023. This agreement was preceded by an April 2012 agreement for a trial consolidation. Prior to that, each City provided its own fire services. The City of Camas provided ALS and ambulance transport services to the City of Washougal for several decades. The City of Camas has also provided ALS and ambulance transport services to the East County Fire and Rescue District for several decades. Several prior financial and organizational studies have been completed, both before and after the consolidation, evaluating various options for the partnership. Most recently, a Master Plan was completed in 2019.

The current ILA provides for the Joint Policy Advisory Committee (JPAC), which consists of three members of each City Council. The JPAC serves as the initial review body regarding the program partnership, providing recommendations to each Council. Detailed provisions regarding the JPAC are found in the current ILA.

Several issues related to the current ILA need to be reviewed and addressed. Two of the issues

that are the most significant involve perceptions of equity in the cost sharing model and how to deal with growth in the program. The current cost sharing model was recommended by a prior consultant in 2013 as part of the work leading up to the consolidation. Twelve similar partnerships were evaluated by the consultant in determining the recommended cost sharing model. The current model splits the costs based upon a formula using three factors: 50% structure assessed value (fire protection component), 25% population (fire and EMS protection component) and 25% calls for service (fire and EMS utilization or demand component). At the time of the initial consolidation, adoption this cost sharing model came within \$10K of the actual cost born by each city prior to the consolidation. Leaders from each community have expressed varying concerns regarding the equity of this cost sharing formula, often with each city perceiving that it is paying too much under the current approach. Growth and other pressures to expand the program by adding additional personnel has become a prominent partnership issue. Camas has been growing at a faster rate than Washougal. New revenue from this growth provides Camas a stronger ability to pay for additional personnel without needing to identify other new sources of revenue, such as tax increases. Washougal needs to identify new sources of revenue, most likely in the form of new voter approved property taxes. This disparity has led to issues regarding the equitable approach to program growth. Camas has moved forward with hiring or planning to hire additional personnel. Washougal has only been able to agree to fund its share of the new costs temporarily and cannot commit to the on-going funding of the additional positions. The partners are looking to this analysis to evaluate these and other program dynamics, options and alternatives and recommend an equitable and sustainable approach moving forward.

The ECFR District, which receives ALS and ambulance transport services from Camas through a separate agreement, has expressed its desire to be considered as a partner in any regionalization alternative. The study should evaluate the current Camas-Washougal partnership, as well as considering the possibilities and implications of including ECFR as a partner in a regional solution.

The department proudly serves over 22 square miles, 41,000 residents within the cities of Camas and Washougal, 10,000 within the boundaries of ECFR, and hundreds of businesses. The department responds to over 4,800 calls for service annually. The fire department is currently staffed by one full-time Fire Chief, one full-time Division Chief of EMS, one full-time Division Chief – Fire Marshal, two full-time Deputy Fire Marshals, 4 full-time Battalion Chiefs, 9 full-time Captains, 39 full-time firefighters, 2 administrative assistants and 15 volunteers. The fire department serves the communities out of three fire stations. Station 41 is located at 616 NE 4th Avenue in Camas, Station 42 is located at 4321 NW Parker Street in Camas, and Station 43 is located at 1400 A Street in Washougal. All three stations are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Scope of Work

The facilitated analysis is to be the anchor point for any future iterations of the current agreement, movement to a new organizational and governance model or the full or partial dissolution of the partnership. It should closely examine input, activities, outputs, outcomes, funding, costs, finances, partnership equity, alternatives and future implications for the purposes of clearly articulating why and how, if indeed the Cities should, continue to partner to provide Fire and EMS services, and, what role ECFR should have, if any.

Desired Services:

The consultant will facilitate and collaboratively guide the work of the subcommittee to:

- A. Analyze the history and status of the partnership using three lenses, as one community served by the combined department and for each city, respectively.
- B. Identify and provide a multi-faceted evaluation of the opportunities and challenges to the ongoing successful operation of the partnership, through the same three lenses.
- C. Review the agreement between ECFR and the City of Camas for EMS to formulate the pros/cons and implications of including ECFR as a potential party to an expanded partnership. Depending upon the outcome of this review, ECFR may be included fully in the work of the subcommittee at this stage.
- D. Identify and provide a multi-faceted evaluation of all possible alternatives to the current partnership, through the same three lenses, including organizational and governance alternatives, financing and cost sharing, partnership equity and program sustainability.
- E. Formulate a recommendation for the preferred future of Fire and EMS services, including organization and governance, financing and cost sharing, and process and timing.
- F. Provide recommendations focusing on program cost, efficiency and effectiveness that will be applicable regardless of the preferred future partnership parameters.
- G. Provide a facilitated review and evaluation process involving the JPAC and the two City Councils (and ECFR as appropriate) with the goal of assisting the two Councils (and ECFR as appropriate) in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement regarding the future of the program.
- H. Total project estimated cost not to exceed \$100,000.

Submission Requirements

Qualified consultants should submit one (1) electronic copy of their proposal on or before 12:00p.m., March 17, 2021 to NSwinhart@cityofcamas.us. ***All proposals must follow the format outlined below. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.***

- 1. Description and history of your company.
- 2. Introduction and qualifications of staff assigned to this project.
- 3. Qualifications and experience with public safety services, specifically fire and emergency medical services, and for the design, development and execution of similar facilitated program evaluation projects of a similar scope. Experience and familiarity with the Washington State context is helpful.
- 4. Description of your overall approach to this project, along with your methodology for assessing each issue.
- 5. Cost proposal, including identification of specific tasks and proposed costs per task.
- 6. Project plan with timelines and schedules for performance of each task and proposed acceptance criteria for each task.
- 7. At least 3 references from projects completed within the last three years.
- 8. A sample of your work product from a similar project (this can be marked confidential and will be treated as confidential if necessary).

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate all proposals:

- Recommended approach, perceived ability to deliver services, and input from references.
- Level of experience with program evaluation and facilitation of complex multi-agency partnership decision making.
- Demonstrated understanding of public safety services, particularly Fire and EMS in the Washington State context.
- Cost
- Overall best interest of the two cities.

The cities reserve the right to reject any or all proposals or accept what is, in their judgment, the proposal which is in the cities' best interest. The cities further reserve the right to waive any technical defects or irregularities in all proposals submitted.

Discussion may be conducted with qualified consultants who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for purpose of classification and to assure full understanding of the proposal, and responsiveness of the proposal to the solicitation requirements.

Questions and Answers

All questions related to this request for proposal must be submitted in writing and submitted to NSwinhart@cityofcamas.us. The question period shall expire on March 2, 2021. The answers to all questions will be compiled and distributed to all interested consultants. Consultants must notify the cities of their intent to participate in the RFP process by emailing NSwinhart@cityofcamas.us or take the responsibility to check for possible addendums or clarifications to this RFP. Failure to do so may result in the consultant not receiving all addendums or clarifications necessary to present a responsive Proposal. The cities reserve the right to modify the timeline if necessary.