

COUNTY OF LAKE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

State Legislative and Regulatory Advocacy (Lobbying) Services



COUNTY OF LAKE

RFP No. 24-33

Issued: August 26, 2024

Submission Deadline:

September 23, 2024 at 5:00 P.M.

By:

Matthew Rothstein

Chief Deputy County Administrative Officer

State Legislative and Regulatory Advocacy (Lobbying) Services

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1. INTRODUCTION. The County of Lake invites qualified and experienced firms to submit proposals to provide professional State-level Legislative and Regulatory Advocacy Services. The most qualified firm will demonstrate the capacity to work with the County to ensure Legislative Priorities and Platform are effectively developed and drafted for Board of Supervisors approval and presented before the Legislature and regulatory bodies. Proposers interested in working collaboratively with the County, Board of Supervisors and leadership staff are encouraged to submit proposals in accordance with the requirements described herein.

2. BACKGROUND. A vibrant and diverse collection of rural Northern California communities and breathtaking natural features, Lake County encompasses 1,258 square miles of land mass, and has a total population of approximately 68,163 (2020 Census). Lake County is surrounded by mountainous terrain and divided into northern and southern "shores" by Clear Lake, the largest natural lake fully within the borders of the State of California, and one of the oldest lakes in North America. Mount Konocti is a defining feature on Lake County's landscape, and teems with cultural, geological, and historical significance. Natural beauty is around every corner, attracting visitors who love the great outdoors. Hiking, boating, kayaking, swimming, and biking opportunities are available in abundance. Two growing incorporated cities, Clearlake and Lakeport, are located on the south and north shores of Clear Lake, and bustling towns such as Middletown and Kelseyville bring their own unique flair; wine country elegance, destination street fairs, and high craft arts experiences can all be found within the County's borders. Lake County also has a rich agricultural heritage, including winegrapes, pears, and walnuts; residents and visitors alike enjoy Lake County's Farmer's Markets and farmstands.

3. SCHEDULE (*all dates approximate*).

Request for Proposals Issuance	August 26, 2024
Deadline for Questions	September 13, 2024
Deadline to Submit Proposals	September 23, 2024
Short-Listing Notification for Oral Interviews (<i>optional, at discretion of County</i>)	September 30, 2024
Oral Interviews (optional, at discretion of County)	October 1-11, 2024
Notice of Intent to Award	October 15, 2024
Period for Protesting Notice of Intent to Award	Within seven (7) business days of the County's issuance of a Notice of Intent to Award

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Offerors would perform the following tasks on an ongoing basis, with guidance from County of Lake staff.

- I. Assistance with developing a Legislative Platform, annual review and possible updating of Legislative Priorities – see Exhibit A for Lake County's 2024 high-level priorities statement.
- II. Advocate on issues that directly or indirectly affect the County of Lake's ability to conduct its business efficiently and cost effectively.

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- III. Engage in pre-Legislative session discussions with the County on any additions or deletions of the County's Legislative Platform, and formulate specific objectives, including but not limited to introduction of proposed Legislation or Amendments to existing and multi-year bills, and advise on cost-related impacts.
- IV. Raise, discuss, and recommend any affirmative legislative action that may benefit the County, and identify any potential or actual legislative or agency action that may affect the County and region.
- V. Provide strategic advice to best position County with policymakers in the legislature, the executive branch, and regulatory agencies.
- VI. Schedule and/or facilitate meetings with the County of Lake and key contacts around the state, as needed, to ensure the County of Lake is a leader and influencer with regards to emerging statewide policy and funding proposals. Key contacts may include leadership from both the Assembly and the Senate and key policy and fiscal Committees; participate and advise regarding effective and consistent engagement with our legislative delegation, Senate and Assembly leadership, and other key coalition partners, as needed.
- VII. Draft letters and talking points on legislative, regulatory, and budgetary issues, as necessary.
- VIII. Advise, as needed, on language for County grant applications, where contemporary legislative, agency and/or regulatory body parlance is of material concern.
- IX. Act as representative for the County of Lake at legislative hearings, when appropriate, through oral or written testimony, and provide guidance regarding opportunities where local elected leaders and/or officials can contribute to advancing Lake County's legislative priorities.
- X. Review, identify, and highlight budget proposals that may impact County of Lake, and engage in the budget process, as consistent with the County's Legislative Platform and Priorities and/or targeted direction.
- XI. Present regular updates to the Board of Supervisors in-person and/or via Zoom; the ideal candidate will assist County staff in ensuring these presentations are appropriately timed to maximize the efficacy of the County's State-level advocacy.
- XII. Provide summaries of Governor's January and May budget proposals, highlighting areas that affect the County of Lake (*particularly where related to the County's Legislative Platform*).
- XIII. Ensure adherence to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and mandates including those concerning lobbyist registration and activities, within the scope of the contract as the County's Legislative Representative.
- XIV. Advise regarding any additional elements that will enhance the quality and effectiveness of the County's State level advocacy, and provide cost information for any associated activities.

5. COMPENSATION.

To be defined by Agreement.

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6. PROPOSAL CONTENT.

6.1 Proposal Compliance: In order to enable direct comparison of competing responses, you must submit your Proposal in conformity to the requirements stated herein. Failure to adhere to all requirements may result in your Proposal being disqualified as non-responsive.

6.2 Proposal. Please assemble your Proposal in the following order.

A. **Cover Letter.** A standard business letter must be included which represents your agreement to supply the requested goods and/or services detailed in the RFP.

B. **Company Profile.** Provide a brief history of your company, a general description of your services and qualifications, and an executive summary of your response. Content should be no more than two pages.

C. **Work Plan.** Provide your specific proposal to address the Scope of Work outlined in Section 4 above. At the very least, this should describe in detail how the service shall be provided and include a description of major tasks, subtasks, and a proposed timeline for completion.

D. **Example Legislative Platform and Advocacy Materials.** Please provide a Legislative Platform and relevant advocacy materials (*written comments/Letters, etc.*) to which your firm contributed, and describe your firm's involvement. The ideal candidate will select materials relevant to areas of County of Lake priority.

E. **Cost Proposal.** All prices submitted are non-binding at this stage of the procurement process and are subject to negotiation.

7. **PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL.** Proposals submitted must meet the following criteria to be acceptable for consideration regarding this project:

7.1 In order to be considered, responses may be submitted either on paper or electronically through the County Purchasing Agent. Hard copy responses submitted must include one (1) original and five (5) unbound copies of the proposal. Electronic submissions must be in either Microsoft word or PDF format and sent to LakeCountyPurchasingAgent@lakecountyca.gov. Proposals whether submitted electronically or via hard copy must be received no later than Monday, September 23, 2024, **by 5:00 p.m.**, and addressed to:

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CONFIDENTIAL

Administrative Office

Attn: Matthew Rothstein

255 N. Forbes Street

Lakeport, CA 95453

Normal business hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Staff can be reached at (707) 263-2580.

Proposals may be mailed through the United States Postal Service or any other courier service and they may be delivered in person to the above office. Faxed or emailed proposals will NOT be accepted.

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7.2 In order to receive addenda and information regarding this RFP, proposer must register online at: <https://www.lakecountycalifornia.gov/Bids.aspx>. Proposers are cautioned to read the scope of services and proposal contents herein and be sure to respond to all items listed in these sections.

7.3 Proposals received incomplete or late, for any reason, shall not be accepted.

7.4 All Questions regarding this Request for Proposals may be submitted in writing at any time prior to Friday, September 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., to Chief Deputy County Administrative Officer Matthew Rothstein at: Matthew.Rothstein@lakecountycalifornia.gov. Only written questions will be accepted. Questions will be answered by Wednesday, September 18, 2024, 5:00 p.m. and uploaded as an addendum to the website listed in the above paragraph.

Proposers may contact only the individual identified above and are specifically directed not to contact other County personnel for meetings, conferences, or other technical discussions related to this RFP. No questions will be answered by other County staff.

7.5 All proposals submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the County and will not be returned. The County reserves the right to make use of any information or ideas contained in the proposals. The proposal itself shall not constitute a contract, but will, if accepted, be incorporated into the contract between the County and the selected proposer.

Please note: The successful Proposer shall be expected to fully meet all representations made in its proposal, including demonstration of project understanding, work plan, project schedule, project team, and cost proposal.

8. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND AWARD. The County is using the competitive proposal process, wherein the experience and responsiveness of each submitted proposal is evaluated as it relates to the Scope of Services. Administrative staff will evaluate the proposals as described below.

8.1 Proposals shall be opened and checked to ensure that each complies with the requirements of the RFP. The absence of required information may render the proposal non-responsive and may be cause for rejection.

8.2 All proposals will be evaluated to determine whether they meet all the requirements of the RFP.

8.3 A Consultant Selection Board maybe convened to review, discuss and rank the proposals, using the following criteria:

A. Criteria

- a. Ability to meet the requirements of the Scope of Services, as demonstrated by previous success in providing similar services.
- b. Responsiveness to the RFP.
- c. Demonstrated understanding of the County of Lake's objectives and capacity to provide assurance of a quality work product, as evidenced by your Proposal and follow-up interview(s), if applicable.
- d. Quality of Example Legislative Platform and any accompanying Advocacy Materials.

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- e. Cost: Relationship and reasonableness of anticipated costs to proposed services.

8.4 Prior to final selection, a short list of qualified and responsive Consultants may be requested to participate in an interview. The purpose of the interview will be to provide an opportunity for each Consultant to present their qualifications and proposals in person and/or to answer any questions that County staff may have regarding the Consultant's submittals. If interviews are to be held, the time and place of the interview will be arranged after the short list is completed. Typically a minimum of three (3) proposals will be selected for the Short List; however, the County may, at its option, choose to interview more or less than three (3) qualified Consultants or select consultants based solely on evaluating written proposals.

8.5 If an agreement cannot be reached with the top ranked Consultant(s), the County will then contact the next highest ranked firm and attempt to negotiate a contract scope of work and fee. This process will be continued until a contract scope of work and fee is successfully negotiated, or until the County determines to cease negotiations with any firm.

8.6 County reserves the right to select multiple contractors.

8.7 The County of Lake is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and the successful Consultant(s) will be required to comply with the provisions of Federal Executive Order 11246 and applicable state and federal laws. Consultants should be familiar with the Employers' Practical Guide to Reasonable Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act as published by the Job Accommodation Network, a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy.

9. PROTEST PROCEDURE. The County of Lake will follow the Appeal Procedure in their Consultant Selection Policy as follows:

9.1 Appeal Procedure:

Any party with a direct financial interest who is aggrieved by any alleged material irregularity in connection with the intended RFP award, may file a protest with the Purchasing Agent or Assistant Purchasing Agent, where such protest is based on alleged violations of Federal, State, or local law or ordinance, or alleged material irregularity in either the County's RFP invitation or in the proposal to which an award is intended. Generally, non-material irregularities in a RFP response are those that substantially conform to the RFP requirements and do not affect the RFP price, time or conditions in such a way as to affect the amount of the RFP or provide a competitive advantage or benefit not allowed to other bidders. Material irregularities in a RFP invitation provide a competitive advantage or benefit to one (1) bidder that is not enjoyed by other bidders. The Purchasing Agent or Assistant Purchasing Agent may determine whether an alleged irregularity exists and whether it is material or non-material and shall have the authority to waive non-material irregularities. A RFP protest must:

- (a) Be written,
- (b) State the specific alleged violation of law or alleged material irregularity,
- (c) Request a determination of the appeal,

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(d) Provide a telephone number and email address at which the appellant can be contacted,

(e) Be filed no later than seven (7) days after the date of the Notice of Intent to Award Letter and/or formal Bid Opening (holidays excepted). Any protest filed after this time will not be considered.

9.2 The party filing the appeal ("appellant") must concurrently transmit a copy of all appeal documents and any attachments to all other parties with a direct financial interest which may be adversely affected by the determination of the appeal.

9.3 Within seventy-two (72) hours of receipt of appeal, the Purchasing Agent or Assistant Purchasing Agent shall provide written notification to the appellant of the determination. A determination under this procedure shall be final except that the Purchasing Agent's decision may be appealed to the County Administrative Officer in writing within forty-eight (48) hours from the Purchasing Agent's or Assistant Purchasing Agent's notification to appellant.

10. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS. By your submission of a proposal, you agree to be bound by the following conditions:

10.1 To the fullest extent allowed by law, RFP's will not be public record until discussion and negotiations with Respondent have been completed, as such premature disclosure would jeopardized the County's and the Respondents negotiating interests. If any proposal contains trade secrets or other information that is confidential or proprietary by law, Respondent shall label all such pages with a stamped annotation such as: "**CONFIDENTIAL-PROPRIETARY TRADE SECRETS, DO NOT DISCLOSE**", and further, provide written notification to the County of its request to keep said information confidential. A Respondent's request for confidentiality must be made in writing and enclosed in the envelope containing the proposal. The proprietary or confidential data must be readily separable from the proposal in order to facilitate eventual public inspection of the non-confidential portion of the proposal.

10.2 The County reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time, even after opening of proposals.

10.3 County is not liable for any costs incurred by Proposer in the preparation, presentation or in any other aspect of the Proposal.

10.4 Disposition of Proposal(s) and Contract Award:

A. All proposals shall become the property of Lake County.

B. Failure to furnish all information requested in this RFP or to follow the proposal format may disqualify a proposal.

C. County reserves the right to accept or reject all or any part of any proposal, waive immaterial defects, informalities, irregularities, negotiate with all qualified Respondents, and award the contract to the firm or individuals, who, in the sole judgment of the County, best serves the interests of the County. The County may terminate negotiations if, in its opinion, they are unsuccessful and begin negotiations with other respondents.

D. A response to this RFP is an offer to contract with the County based upon the terms, conditions, scope of work and/or specifications contained herein. County shall have no

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contractual or other obligation to a Respondent under any successfully negotiated contract until the contract has been approved and signed by both parties. The contents of the proposal submitted by the successful Respondent and this RFP will become part of any contract awarded.

E. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the County to procure or contract for the articles of goods or services solicited.

F. Proposers may be required before the award of any contract to show, to the complete satisfaction of the County, the necessary facilities, ability, and financial resources to provide the services specified in a satisfactory manner.

10.5 Respondent shall indemnify and defend County and its officers, employees, and agents against and hold them harmless from any and all claims, losses, damages, and liability for damages, including attorney's fees and other costs of defense incurred by County, whether for damage to or loss of property, or injury to or death of person, including properties of County and injury to or death of County officials, employees or agents, arising out of, or connected with the use of any copyrighted or uncopyrighted composition, secret process, patented or unpatented invention, articles or appliances furnished or used under this Request and any subsequent Contract, unless such damages, loss, injury or death is caused solely by the negligence of County.

10.6 Default by Respondent: In case of default by the successful Respondent, Lake County may procure the articles or services from other sources and may deduct from any monies due, or that may thereafter become due to the Respondent, the difference between the price named in the Purchase Order, Contract, or Agreement with said Respondent and the County's subsequent cost to obtains substitute articles or services. Prices paid by the County must be considered the prevailing market price at the time such purchase is made.

10.7 Lake County reserves the rights to amend, alter, or change the rules and conditions contained in this RFP prior to the deadline for submission and to request additional data after the deadline. If it becomes necessary to do so, an addenda or supplements to the RFP will be issued and shall become a part of the RFP. The County is not responsible for any other explanation or interpretation. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that he/she has received all addendums and/or supplements prior to submitting a proposal.

10.8 It is the County's intent that this Request for Proposal (RFP) permits competition. It shall be the Respondent's responsibility to advise the County in writing if any language, requirement, specification, etc., or any combination thereof, inadvertently restricts or limits the requirements stated in this RFP to a single source. Such notification must be received by the County not later than ten (10) days prior to the date set for acceptance of proposals.

10.9 Errors and Omissions: If prior to the date fixed for submission of proposals, a respondent discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission or other error in the RFP or any of its exhibits, it shall immediately notify the designated County contact of such error in writing and request modification or clarification. Modifications and clarifications will be made by written addenda and distributed to all parties who have been furnished or who have requested the RFP.

10.10 Security and Confidentiality: To preserve the integrity of the security and confidentiality measures integrated into County operations, any Respondent required to come in contact with confidential County information in order to respond to this RFP and/or to perform the services

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solicited, may be required to sign and submit a Confidentiality Statement. Successful Respondent's personnel and/or subcontractors, who may require periodic access to secured areas within the County, may be required to wear security identification badges. Badges will be issued to individuals only after satisfactory completion of a background check. Any such confidentiality and/or security measures will be part of the contract.

10.11 Insurance: Successful Respondent agrees to comply with the County's standard insurance provisions.

10.12 Governing Laws: The laws of the State of California will govern any purchase order entered into between the County and the selected Respondent.

10.13 Each Respondent shall inform himself of, and the successful Respondent awarded a contract shall comply with, State and local laws, statutes, regulations, ordinances and generally accepted industry standards relative to the execution of the material supplied or work performed. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, applicable regulations concerning employment of labor, protection of public and employee safety and health, environmental protection, the protection of natural resources, fire protection, burning and non-burning requirements, permits, fees, and similar subjects.

10.14 This RFP supersedes all proposals, oral and written, and all negotiations, conversations or discussions heretofore and between the parties related to the subject matter.

Exhibit A - 2024 County of Lake Legislative Priorities



COUNTY OF LAKE

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Courthouse - 255 North Forbes Street

Lakeport, California 95453

TELEPHONE (707) 263-2368

FAX (707) 263-2207

Moke Simon – District 1

Bruno Sabatier – District 2

Eddie Crandell – District 3

Michael S. Green – District 4

Jessica Pyska – District 5

2024 County of Lake Legislative Priorities

Last Updated: January 23, 2024

The County will prioritize the following issues in 2024:

- **Water Reliability.** Pursue efforts to ensure sufficient groundwater and surface water quality and availability for all beneficial uses, including agriculture, municipal, and environmental purposes, while safeguarding natural, cultural and economic resources.
- **Wildfire Resilience.** Increase wildfire preparedness, implementing 2023 Community Wildfire Protection and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- **Tree Mortality and Hazardous Vegetation Removal.** Mitigate risk to County roadways and evacuation routes, and coordinate with State (*and Federal*) agencies and public utilities to ensure hazardous vegetation is appropriately managed.
- **Fire Insurance.** Support efforts to ensure the availability of fire insurance for property owners.
- **Lake Pillsbury.** Advocate for a deliberative and inclusive process to decide the fate of Scott Dam and the Lake Pillsbury area, representing the interests of the County and its residents, including those whose lives and property will be directly affected.
- **Housing Supply.** Provide new housing at all income levels, establish a Housing Trust and access State and Federal Tax Credits.
- **Homelessness.** Shelter and connect unhoused residents with wraparound services.
- **Economic Development.** Support State policies that enhance the County's efforts to create a favorable environment for business, including increased Recreation and Hospitality, Broadband availability and Waste Woody Biomass Utilization.
- **Opioid Fatalities.** With partner agencies, support efforts to reduce the number of opioid fatalities.