King County

Finance & Business Operations Division
Procurement & Payables
Department of Executive Services

Request For Information Executive Summary

Date: **8/12/2025**

To: Steve Tolzman, Jack Launit

To: Melissa Jordan, Jenny Sebero, Corinne Easter

From: Megan Jacobs

Project Title: KC001483 / RFI – MDCSO Chelan Wet Weather Storage

Subject: RFI Submittals

1. Purpose

The purpose of issuing an RFI is to provide high-level information to the industry about the project and the Owner goals. Additionally, it serves as a public process for receiving industry feedback on a variety of questions and topics associated with the MDCSO Chelan Storage Tank project and inform the Project Review Committee (PRC) application process by confirming the chosen delivery methods and supplemental contracting approval requests.

Project goals are to proactively manage and mitigate risks while minimizing project delivery time; create opportunity for procurement and construction of early work packages or mini-MACCs; acquire early contractor input regarding construction activities; consider lifecycle cost and sustainability in decision-making processes; clearly define, meet, or exceed project and quality requirements within baselined budget and schedule; create a facility that minimizes net energy requirements; and meet Consent Decree requirements while improving water quality in the Duwamish River and Elliott Bay.

The RFI was issued through the County's Solicitation Site. The County received seven submittals, all from firms indicating they would consider proposing as prime. [Note: An eighth submittal was received and was determined to duplicate the content of one of the other seven.] All responses included answers to the questions. Participant input and feedback have been aggregated.

2. Questions and Responses

Question 1: Is it recommended to use Heavy Civil authority for the stated scope of this package? Why or why not? Please describe how the approval for Heavy Civil authority may benefit the project.

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback indicates that most respondents support the use of Heavy Civil (HC) authority due to the project's inherent complexity, citing benefits such as early contractor involvement, risk mitigation, and improved schedule and cost control, which benefit the rate payers and community. The following are key elements highlighting details of the feedback received.

- All respondents supported the recommendation to use HC authority for the project.
- The ability to self-perform critical, specialty scopes of work was cited by all respondents as a benefit of using HC authority. Self-performance supports better cost control and schedule reliability.

- Most respondents also noted collaboration and early contractor involvement can reduce cost and schedule risk due to constructability input as the design process moves forward.
- Several contractors noted that the uncertainty of underground work can benefit from the flexibility of multiple, phased scopes available using HC authority. One respondent noted HC authority can reduce procurement delays for complex trenchless work and can increase appeal to qualified firms with appropriate equipment and workforce.
- Multiple respondents characterized the scope elements that could be self-performed using Heavy Civil delivery include top-down construction method, slurry walls installation, microtunneling, dewatering, and contaminated soils removal.

3. Questions and Responses

Question 2: The County intends to request CPARB PRC approval to use Alternative Subcontractor Selection procurement. Will this approval benefit the project? Please describe why or why not.

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback indicates that there is general agreement that Alternative Subcontractor Selection would benefit the project by enabling early engagement of specialized subcontractors, improving design integration, optimizing constructability and enhanced risk management. The following summarizes key considerations supporting the use of Alternative Subcontractor Selection:

- Qualifications-based selection and early involvement of specialty contractors were the most cited reasons that using Alternative Subcontractor Selection would benefit the County. One respondent noted that early collaboration is crucial for constructability, risk mitigation, and overall project success.
- All respondents confirmed that alternative subcontractor selection is appropriate for the categories proposed in the RFI. One respondent suggested that alternative subcontractor selection could result in reduced competition, limit the prime's ability to self-perform specialty work, and potentially cause delays to the schedule due to procurement and could cause delays to the schedule due to procurement.
- Potential alternative subcontractor selection categories include trenchless excavation, ground improvements, instrumentation and controls, electrical, and environmental remediation/hazardous materials.
- A few contractors noted that qualifications-based selection can benefit safety and environmental factors. Two contractors specifically mentioned risk mitigation by planning for fabricated and long-lead items as an advantage of using alternative selection.
- Some respondents emphasized maintaining flexibility and not restricting the GC/CM's ability to self-perform select scopes.
- A single contractor suggested that adding steps to the procurement process could cause delays.

4. **Questions and Responses**

Question 3: Are there additional subcontractor selections the County should consider? Please describe what they are and how the County may benefit from the delivery of the scope of this package.

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback indicates that respondents suggest considering additional subcontractor scopes such as dewatering, ground improvement, and environmental remediation, while emphasizing flexibility based on contractor capabilities. The following are key considerations for the types of Alternative Subcontractor Selection:

- In general, all respondents agreed that the proposed Alternative Subcontractor packages are appropriate.
- Alternative selection is most appropriate for highly specialized scopes (e.g., mechanical, electrical, SCADA, trenchless, earthwork, dewatering) due to the ability to validate constructability and system compatibility, precision coordination in complex situations, and early procurement planning.
- Additional packages suggested by various contractors include environmental remediation/hazardous materials, ground improvement/specialty geotechnical, and ground anchoring.
- Several firms emphasized that the final list of alternative packages should align with GC/CM capabilities and design progression due to early GC/CM involvement.

5. **Questions and Responses**

Question 4: What are the risks you foresee that the County should consider for this Project?

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback indicates that key risks identified include geotechnical challenges, groundwater management, environmental contamination, schedule delays, and coordination with adjacent infrastructure and stakeholders. The following summarizes the key risks and uncertainties identified by respondents:

- Complex geotechnical conditions and dewatering challenges were the most frequently cited risks. These include deep excavation, groundwater control, uplift mitigation, and soil stabilization.
- Contaminated soils/groundwater may require complicated and extensive remediation, disposal permitting, and coordination with environmental agencies.
- Long permitting lead times, coordination with adjacent projects, and procurement delays were recurring themes.
- Limited site access in urban areas and risk of unknown underground utilities pose logistical and cost threats.
- Tie-ins with active wastewater systems require precise coordination to avoid service disruption.

6. **Questions and Responses**

Question 5: Based on your past experiences, what recommendations do you have for the County's consideration that will benefit the delivery of this contract package?

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback indicates that recommendations include early contractor involvement, phased design and procurement, use of mini-MACCs to advance enabling work, and robust planning for long-lead items and operational continuity. The following summarizes key recommendations provided by respondents:

- Generally, respondents recommended continued communication and outreach by the County using in-person industry days, issuing RFIs, and having one-on-one meetings with contractors. Sharing as much project detail as possible is beneficial.
- Several firms recommended releasing early construction packages (mini-MACCs), such as trenchless, dewatering, or ground improvement scopes.
- A number of firms focused on the value of collaboration and clear communication, specifically for contingency management, owner reviews during preconstruction, and transparent and structured constructability reviews. One mentioned prioritizing robust risk register development and cost model with participation from GC/CM and design team.
- Some firms recommended investing in detailed geotechnical and environmental baseline reports.
- Two respondents specifically suggested the County distribute draft contract documents and allow firms to provide feedback.

7. Questions and Responses

Question 6: Are there any specific measures that you recommend we include in our selection and contracting that could maximize certified MBE, WBE, DBE, and SBE participation (certified as registered on https://omwbe.wa.gov/certification)? If so, please describe them and why you recommend we consider them.

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback indicates suggested measures include breaking subcontract scopes into smaller packages, hosting outreach events, mentorship programs, and incorporating diversity and inclusion criteria in evaluations. The following summarizes specific recommendations that seek to maximize participation by MBE, WBE, DBE, and SBE firms:

- Respondents emphasized clearly defining realistic goals and requirements early.
- Most firms believe that the County should provide clear scope elements sized appropriately for certified subcontractors.
- Several respondents suggested the County sponsor pre-bid outreach and networking events and encouraging/incentivizing prime contractors to host events for MBE, WBE, DBE, and SBE firms improving subcontractor retention and building relationships between firms.
- Additional suggestions included streamlining the prequalification and administrative processes, and providing bonding assistance and training programs.
- Some firms recommended using alternative subcontractor selection to engage specialty certified firms during preconstruction.

- A few firms suggested scoring proposer inclusion plans based on innovation instead of past performance and considering tiered participation structures or flexible goal setting.
- One firm noted that larger or consolidated packages could reduce accessibility for small and/or disadvantaged firms. They suggested “right-sizing” the work packages where feasible and beneficial.

8. Questions and Responses

Question 7: Are there other innovations (e.g., value engineering, constructability reviews, means and methods, sequencing, risk mitigation) that your company has implemented that the County should consider? If so, please describe the outcomes resulting from these innovations.

Summary of Responses:

Aggregated feedback of innovations mentioned include constructability reviews, digital modeling, risk registers, early procurement planning, virtual design and construction using laser scanning/drones and collaborative problem-solving through working groups and partnering sessions. The following are key considerations identified by respondents:

- Value engineering was suggested by several respondents, both as a general practice, as part of progressive VE workshops, and in conjunction with constructability reviews.
- One firm suggested collaborative small working groups of subject matter experts to address critical project issues.
- Other suggested innovations were related to risk management and mitigation (e.g., Monte Carlo simulations, scenario planning, and use of live risk registers).
- Several firms advocated for a formal third-party facilitated partnering program to foster collaboration and trust between the owner, designer, and contractor.
- One firm recommended holding “Public Constructability Input Meetings” or an “Open House” to allow the local contracting community to review plans and offer input.
- There were several technology-related suggestions such as using 3D modeling of trenchless crossings and shafts to identify conflicts, scenario planning, use of digital construction platforms, and real-time KPI tracking dashboards.
- Consolidation of work, either through modular construction or pre-fabrication, was suggested by some respondents to reduce interface risks and improve efficiency.
- One respondent recommended a dedicated commissioning team to support operational continuity.