

# Notice of Request for Proposals

The Benton County Auditor will be accepting proposals for a new tabulation software system in the Elections Department. Applications are available online at [www.bentonauditor.com](http://www.bentonauditor.com) or from Taylor Raschko, Chief Deputy Auditor, at the following location:

Benton County Auditor, 620 Market St, Prosser, WA 99350  
Or submit your request via email to [auditor@co.benton.wa.us](mailto:auditor@co.benton.wa.us)  
Phone: 509-786-5632

Benton County is soliciting proposals from election tabulation vendors to replace the current election ballot scanning and tabulation system. The system must be one that is scalable as our voter registration base grows and easily modified to work with new versions of operating systems so not to restrict our ability to stay current with technology. Successful vendors will be excellent communicators and write clearly and concisely. They will have some experience in the public sector, and have worked with counties that are both larger and smaller than Benton. The procedures for awarding this project will follow the guidelines outlined in RCW 39.04.270 Competitive Negotiations.

The evaluation criteria is outlined below as well as information about goals, requirements, and vendor scoring. The proposal should include and address all areas defined in the attachment. It is important to understand that we are asking for a proposal and do not require any contracts or obligations that are binding in any way at this point. This document and the associated materials constitute an invitation to submit proposals only, and do not represent an offer to contract. Benton County reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals at any time without penalty. Further, Benton County reserves the right to not make an award, if it is deemed that no single proposal fully meets the Project Goals and Requirements.

Once submitted, your proposal will be part of a competitive appointment process. It is important to answer all subject areas completely and thoroughly and give specific details. A demonstration may be requested of a vendor.

Please submit the proposal to the Benton County Auditor either by mail or physical delivery:

**Mailing Address:**

Attn: Taylor Raschko  
P.O. Box 470  
Prosser, WA 99350

**Physical Address:**

620 Market St.  
First Floor County Courthouse  
Prosser, WA 99350

**Note: All written proposals must be received by no later than 4:00pm on December 4, 2017.**

Proposals will not be accepted after that date and time. Postmarks will not be considered in determining the timeliness of submitted proposals. All expenses for preparation of the proposal package are the responsibility of the respondent. All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of Benton County and are subject to public disclosure under the provisions of Chapter 5.14 Benton County Code and applicable state and federal laws.

For specific details about submitting your proposal, see attached documents.

## **Benton County Elections**

Benton County has 106,648 active registered voters (as of the date of this RFP) and an active voter outreach program. As with all counties in the State of Washington, Benton County conducts all elections by mail and typically holds four (4) elections per year. The current election ballot tabulation system was installed in 2005, at least partially utilizing HAVA Grant funds.

## **Current Infrastructure**

Benton County has adopted Microsoft products as its standard. Workstation operating systems include Windows 7 and Windows 10. Server operating systems include 2008 R2, 2012 R2, and 2016. Dell is the preferred business class hardware vendor for both servers and workstations.

## **Project Goals**

Benton County is looking for a qualified vendor to assist in the replacement of the County's non-networked, standalone election ballot scanning and tabulation system.

- The system proposed (including all hardware and software associated with ballot design, scan, adjudication, tabulation, and results reporting) must be a United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and Washington State Certified Tabulation System.
- System should be scalable and readily be modified to work with new versions of operating systems so not to restrict ability to update hardware and operating systems.
- Replace existing scanners with cost effective common scanners that can be supported by a wide range of competitive vendors.
- Improve speed of ballot tabulation and efficiency of ballot adjudication process to provide timely election results for the public.
- Increase scan reliability through modern technologies that can read dirty and damaged ballots.
- Reduce the number of ballots that need to be hand duplicated before being scanned by utilizing scanners that can scan a wider variety of paper types and sizes.
- Provide for one or more offsite ballot on demand printing solutions.
- Improve processes by allowing scanning and adjudication functions simultaneously without suffering system lag or downtime.
- Maintain high quality standards for ballot design and productions.
- Enhance audit capabilities, transparency, and openness to public scrutiny through canned and ad-hoc reporting capabilities.
- Improve system administration capabilities by providing easy to use menus, profile settings, and audit reports.
- Expand voter outreach opportunities through modern accessible voting unit technologies that are easily portable, wireless, secure, and can remotely connect to and interface with the Election Management and Tabulation Systems.

## **Deliverables**

The vendor shall provide the County with the following deliverables. The deliverables will be written in layman's terms and be written in such a way that a person unfamiliar with such products or processes could understand and follow along.

- A. Project Work Breakdown Structure, which includes at a minimum:
- Tasks and durations
  - Start and finish dates
  - Resource assignments
  - Dependencies (internal and external to the project)
- B. Project Management Plan, which includes at a minimum:
- Status Reporting Process (County prefer weekly)
  - Issue Tracking and Escalation Process
  - Risk Mitigation Plan
  - Communication Plan
  - Conflict Resolution Plan
- C. Architecture and Technical Specifications, which includes at a minimum:
- System architecture diagrams
  - Recommended server configurations
  - Recommended database configurations
  - Recommended scanner configurations
  - Recommended network configurations
  - Recommended tabulation room configurations
  - Recommended scan/adjudication room configurations
  - Recommended tablet configurations
  - Recommended printer configurations
- D. Test Plan, which includes at a minimum:
- Test cases. These shall be tracked back to requirements and shall be comprehensive to include all test cases proposed by the County and adequate tests for all requirements. They shall also include pass/fail criteria.
  - Changes, modifications, and corrective action tracking system.
  - Number of rounds of testing/bug fixes for each type of testing.
  - Test methodology, including roles and responsibilities for both the vendor and the County to execute tests and evaluate results.
- E. Training Plan, which includes at a minimum:
- County staff that require training (i.e., role type).
  - Number of classes for each type of training, including technical training, system administrator training, and end-user training (i.e., beginning, advanced, etc.).
  - Length of classes.
  - Resource needs for training classes (i.e., projector, computers, etc.)
- F. Promote from Test to Production Plan, which at a minimum includes:
- Explanation of how the configuration changes, once approved in the test environment, get promoted from the test environment to the production environment.
  - Documentation of the steps required to promote approved changes in the test environment to the production environment.
  - Documentation of how the source of an issue will be identified.

## Functional Requirements

The proposed solution must have the following capabilities at no additional cost to the County:

- Enable the County to achieve the goals defined in “Project Goals”.
- Process voted ballots up to six (6) weeks before each Election Day, and suppress election results until 8 pm, Pacific Standard Time (PST) on election night.
- Process typical ballot volumes experienced by the County in a reasonable timeframe and should enable the County to improve its current throughput.
- Import election definition data from the State of Washington’s Voter Registration Data Base (VRDB) and Washington Election Information (WEI) systems.
- Import election definition data from DFM Associates Election Information Management System (EIMS) at no additional cost.
- Export ballots for printing by 3rd party service providers.
- Provide for one or more offsite printing solutions, allowing ballots to be produced on demand at remote voting centers.
- Extract election results and format them for publishing to the County Auditor’s website.
- Support centralized tallying of paper ballots.
- Extract data for publishing to the State of Washington’s reporting system.
- Designed to guarantee the security and integrity of election data.
- Enable the County to create and design ballots in-house.
- Import past election definitions and results data to the new system (up to eight (8) years).

## Technical Requirements

The system must, by design, operate in a standalone state utilizing an isolated network infrastructure. Publishing results and accessing State of Washington resources will utilize County’s private networks for transport. The vendor is responsible for providing security infrastructure to isolate and protect the tabulation systems from County’s wide area networks or other connected private networks. The vendor shall be responsible for supporting both the hardware and software components of the system on an ongoing basis. As such, we do not have specific technical requirements other than any technical requirements required for certification by the State of Washington and those found in attachments to this RFP. The County prefers a system that is architected, from both a software and hardware standpoint, to be flexible enough to:

1. Monitor, develop, and deploy software updates and patches to guarantee continued software compliance with applicable state and federal laws.
2. Accommodate future changes in functional requirements.
3. Leverage new hardware technologies as upgrades become available.
4. Accommodate future operating system upgrades.
5. Enable the vendor to deliver software patches and upgrades in a timely manner.
6. Provide upgrades required or necessitated by changes in state law.

## Other Technical Requirements

- Test and Production Environments – The vendor shall provide both a test and production environment for the solution.

- Technical Documentation – During the planning phase of the project, vendor shall provide the County with the technical documentation and activities identified below.
- Promote from Test to Production Plan – detailing steps necessary to promote tested and approved configuration changes from the Test environment to the Production environment.
  - Test Plan and Testing –
    - The vendor shall work with the County to develop an overall Test Plan for installed application, and coordinate and conduct each test in a manner acceptable to the County. The Test Plan must be submitted to the County for review and acceptance 10 Days prior to when testing is scheduled.
    - Testing should include, at a minimum, system/unit testing, functional testing, quality assurance testing, performance/load testing, backup-restore testing, interface testing, results reporting testing (web/online and state) and user Acceptance Testing. The vendor will be responsible for execution of the test plan, which shall include the test cases and County-performed testing activities proposed by the County.
    - The County will conduct a security/penetration test and may require participation by the vendor when needed, at no additional cost to the County.
    - After all of the components of the system have been completed to the satisfaction of the County, the County will conduct User Acceptance Testing. The County will report any defects to the vendor immediately for correction.
    - If any defects are found, the vendor will provide a written plan to achieve acceptance or to make corrections or replacements that are acceptable to the County.
- Training & Documentation – The vendor shall deliver training and training materials to system administrators and end-users. The vendor shall develop a Training Plan that will be acceptable to the County to fully prepare the system administrators to support the system and the end-users to use the system. The training will be held at a location to be determined by the County and will be ‘just in time’ training (meaning, training will occur immediately prior to implementation of the system at the specified location). The Training Plan and materials must be submitted in soft copy (electronically) to the County for review and acceptance prior to training. To provide County agencies an in-depth understanding of how the system works, the Training Plan must include, at a minimum:
  - Set-up and configuration
  - Security and role-based access settings
  - Workflow development
  - Interfaces and data exchanges
  - Documented best practices in the configuration and use of the system
  - Instructions on how to configure the system’s individual and role-based security profiles, event business rules, and batch workflows
  - Troubleshooting guide
  - Query and reports creation and configuration
  - General system administration
  - End-user training. At a minimum to include:
    - Import/export of data
    - Ballot design
    - Offsite on demand ballot printing
    - AVU set up and use
    - Ballot scan
    - Adjudication

- Merging/tabulation of results
- Reporting
- Election Certification
- Technical Support and Documentation – The vendor shall provide technical assistance and written documentation to the County’s Information Technology (IT) staff on the system’s configuration and customization, testing, and troubleshooting. The vendor will also provide documentation on the system’s database, services, and other items to the County for the implementation and future support.

## **Implementation Guidelines**

1. The County expects the solution to be fully implemented by the April 2018 Special Election, if applicable, but no later than the August 2018 Primary Election.
2. The County expects a turn-key solution. Vendor will be responsible for procuring and installing all hardware components of the solution and for installing and configuring all software components of the solution.
3. The vendor shall assign skilled and experienced staff to complete the deliverables described in this Statement of Work, including at a minimum: system design, hardware delivery, implementation, configuration and customization, testing, training, and go-live support. The County shall reserve the right to reject any of the vendor’s employees whose qualifications do not meet the standards established by the County as necessary for the performance of services or whom the County identifies as being unacceptable.
4. Go-Live Support – Upon the County’s request, the vendor shall provide, at no additional cost to the County, at least two (2) support staff for the first election cycle using the new tabulation system, offsite ballot on demand printing solutions, and accessible voting units. These resources will be available to provide onsite election support. The County may require (upon request) Vendor resource(s) to be onsite to support subsequent elections.
5. Deliverables, Solutions, and Service Acceptance
  - a. Installed solutions and services shall meet the standard performance as proposed and mutually agreed to by the County and the vendor. Solutions and services are accepted after running in production for one (1) Primary and one (1) General Election without material defect in accordance with the contract in the County’s fully implemented production environments and when the County’s staff have been trained in accordance with the requirements set forth in this RFP and any mutually agreed upon adjustments.

## **Proposal Content**

All proposals are to include the following:

- Contact information for the respondent.
- Location of respondent corporate offices.
- Number of year’s respondent has in information technology consulting.
- Credentials of specific personnel that will be involved in the project.
- Statement of approach to be taken to each of the areas listed under Requested Services.
- Proposed phases or steps in producing the deliverables listed above.
- Summary of expected costs, including estimates for travel and per diem.
- List of references with contact information.

## Evaluation of Proposals

Price will be a significant, but not the only, criteria in evaluating the proposals. Benton County requires a system demonstration and presentation by all responders that are in the competitive range as determined by the County. The demonstration must be held local to Benton County and be tailored to prove that the proposed solution will successfully address the stated requirements, while also providing flexibility for future expansion. The proposed solution should use a live install of the proposed software version.

Consideration will also be given to the following:

- Overall quality of presentation.
- Demonstrated understanding of Benton County's needs and scope of project.
- Soundness of project management and implementation approach.
- Timeline of proposed solution implementation.
- Functionality and ease of use of software solution.
- Experience and success performing similar services for local government entities.
- Extent to which the proposal addresses the areas listed under "Requested Services".
- Information collected from references provided.
- Responses to requests for additional information submitted to the respondents.

The award, if given, will be made to the qualified vendor whose proposal is most advantageous to the County with price and other factors considered.

## Scoring and Selection

Each vendor response to the RFP will be evaluated on the above criteria.

The evaluation team will consist of not less than 3 nor more than 5 County employees who have direct knowledge of the work to be performed and who will be directly impacted by the services provided under the agreement. The average of the scores from each member of the evaluation team will be used to determine the selected firm.

		<b>Total Points Possible</b>
<b>Phase 1: Proposal Evaluation</b>		
<b>Pricing</b>	<b>Attachment A: Price Proposal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ten-year total cost of ownership informed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One-time implementation costs</li> <li>Ongoing support and maintenance costs</li> </ul> </li> </ul> (Note: Proposers may also be requested to submit revised pricing.)	400
<b>Management Questions</b>	<b>Attachment B: Management Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposer Qualifications</li> <li>Professional Services (one-time and ongoing)</li> <li>Implementation Approach &amp; Methodology</li> <li>Solution Information</li> </ul>	200
<b>Technical Questions</b>	<b>Attachment C: Technical Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure Requirements</li> <li>Software Requirements</li> <li>Maintenance, Support and Upgrades</li> </ul>	200
<b>Solution Requirements</b>	<b>Attachment D: Solution Requirements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Definition</li> <li>Ballot Build</li> <li>Scanning</li> <li>Adjudication</li> <li>Tabulation</li> <li>Reporting</li> <li>Accessible Voting</li> <li>Security</li> <li>Audit</li> </ul>	520
<b>Terms and Conditions</b>	Compliance with Contract Terms and Conditions	210
<b>SCS</b>	Small Contractors and Suppliers (SCS)	170



<b>Total Written</b>		<b>1,700</b>
<b>Phase 2: Demonstrations and Interviews</b>		
<b>Demonstration and Interview</b>	Demonstration, if conducted	300
	Interview, if conducted	200
	Customer References, if reviewed	50

	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Total Points Possible</b>
	Financial Stability, if reviewed	50
<b>Total Evaluation</b>		<b>2,300</b>

## Software Source Code

To protect Benton County in the event the Vendor chooses not to perform or is no longer able to perform the required services, a copy of the Software Source Code will be supplied to Benton County. Vendor will keep the Software Source Code current with all customization and new releases of the product.

Escrow Account for Software: In lieu of providing a copy of the software, Benton County requests the Software Source Code will be held in escrow, with Benton County having full rights to all code in the event the Vendor ceases to perform required services. This includes all programs, libraries, and utilities required to build and maintain the software program. Supplier will keep the Software Source Code current with each new release of the product and notify Benton County when new codes are submitted to escrow. Any charges to Benton County for escrow, must be included in the contract price. If the cost of escrow is absent, vendor will be responsible for escrow payment for the life of this contract.

## Schedule

EVENT	ON OR BEFORE...
RFP Published	10/23/2017
Proposals submitted to County	12/04/2017
Vendor selection	By 01/31/2018

Approved as to form:

  
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Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

10/16/17  
Date