



Charlotte County Purchasing Division
18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 344
Port Charlotte, Florida 33948-1094

Phone 941.743.1378

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA

The County of Charlotte will be receiving sealed proposals at the Purchasing Division, Suite 344, Charlotte County Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948-1094, for:

RFP NO. 20250392
FLORIDA STATE LOBBYIST

Charlotte County is seeking proposals from interested firms and individuals for full-service government relations to assist with the development and implementation of a state legislative program.

There will not be a Pre-Submittal Conference for this project. Please send all questions to the email address below.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: 3:00 p.m. (EST), JUNE 26, 2025
PURCHASING DIVISION CONFERENCE ROOM

Proposal Documents may be obtained by accessing the Charlotte County Purchasing Division's website at <https://purchasingbids.charlottecountyfl.gov> under "Purchasing Bids Online", document number 253922. Any questions can be answered by contacting Rhiannon Mills, Senior Contract Specialist at 941.743.1374, or email: rhiannon.mills@charlottecountyfl.gov

ELECTRONIC BID SUBMISSIONS: All submittals for this project shall be submitted electronically. Please visit <http://bit.ly/3TYAyKa> and follow given instructions.

Notice of Availability
Posted: June 2, 2025



Charlotte County Purchasing Division
18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 344
Port Charlotte, Florida 33948-1094

Phone 941.743.1378
Fax 941.743.1384

STATEMENT OF NO SUBMITTAL

If you **do not** intend to submit on this commodity/service, please return this form to the above address immediately. If this statement is not completed and returned, your company may be deleted from the Charlotte County Vendors' list for this commodity/service.

We, the undersigned, have declined to submit on requested commodity/service **RFP #20250392, FLORIDA STATE LOBBYIST**, for the following reason(s):

- _____ Specifications too "tight", i.e. geared toward one brand or manufacturer only (explain below).
- _____ Insufficient time to respond to the Request for Proposal.
- _____ We do not offer this product or service.
- _____ Our schedule would not permit us to perform.
- _____ Unable to meet bond/insurance requirements.
- _____ Unable to meet specifications.
- _____ Specifications are unclear (explain below).
- _____ Remove us from your vendors' list for this commodity/service.
- _____ Other (specify below).

Remarks: _____

Company Name: _____

Contact Person (typed or printed): _____

Contact Person Signature: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Note: Statement of No Submittal may be emailed to rhannon.mills@charlottecountyfl.gov

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RFP NO. 20250392**

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FLORIDA STATE LOBBYIST
RFP 20250392**

PART I - INSTRUCTIONS

RP-01 INTENT:

A. It is the intent of the County to select a firm who clearly demonstrates the highest level of ability and proven reliability to perform the professional services specified in the Scope of Services. Brief summaries applicable to the required work should be included with the proposal.

B. **Time and Date Due** - Charlotte County will accept proposals from individuals, corporations, partnerships, and other legal entities authorized to conduct business in the State of Florida until **3:00 p.m., JUNE 26, 2025.**

RP-02 CONTRACT AWARDS/TERM OF CONTRACT: The County anticipates entering into a contract with one (1) firm who submit the proposal judged to be most advantageous to the County. **The term of the contract will be effective from date of award, through and including September 30, 2026, with option to renew for one-year term(s) at the same prices, terms and conditions, by mutual consent.** The selected firm shall be required to sign a formal agreement in the standard form currently used by Charlotte County for professional services.

The proposer understands that this RFP does not constitute an agreement or a contract with the proposer. A proposal is not binding until proposals are reviewed and accepted by the Board of County Commissioners and a contract is executed by both parties.

RP-03 DEVELOPMENT COSTS: The County shall not be liable for any expense incurred in connection with preparation of a response to this Request for Proposal (RFP). Proposers should prepare a straightforward and concise description of the proposers' ability to meet the requirements of the RFP.

RP-04 INQUIRIES: The County will not respond to oral inquiries. Proposers may submit written or emailed inquiries regarding this RFP to Purchasing, 18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 344, Port Charlotte, Florida 33948 or rhannon.mills@charlottecountyfl.gov. The County will respond to written or emailed inquiries received at least five (5) calendar days prior to the RFP due date.

The County will record its responses to inquiries and any supplemental instructions in the form of written addenda. It shall be the responsibility of the proposer, prior to submitting their proposals, to view the website <https://purchasingbids.charlottecountyfl.gov> to determine if addenda were issued, acknowledging and incorporating them into their proposal.

RP-05 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL: The County will receive proposals electronically. Please visit <http://bit.ly/3TYAyKa> and follow given instructions.

Proposals received after the established deadline will not be opened. Proposers may withdraw their proposal by notifying the County in writing at any time prior to the due date. Proposals not so withdrawn shall, upon opening, constitute an irrevocable offer for a period of 120 days to provide Charlotte County the services set forth in these specifications until one of the proposals has been accepted by the Board of County Commissioners. Upon opening, proposals become "public records" and shall be subject to public disclosure in accordance with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

RP-06 PROPOSAL RESTRICTIONS:

A. In order to control the cost of preparation, submittals should be limited to a maximum of 50 pages, excluding cover letter, index, dividers, resumes, and the required forms.

B. In accordance with Ordinance #96-002, the manufacture, use, display or other employment of any facsimile or reproduction of the Charlotte County Seal, without the express, prior, written approval of the Board of County Commissioners of Charlotte County, Florida, is hereby declared to be unlawful and punishable as a Second Degree Misdemeanor as provided in Section 165.043, Florida Statutes.

RP-07 DRUG FREE WORKPLACE: Charlotte County is a Drug Free Workplace. It is strongly suggested that the attached Drug Free Workplace Form be signed and returned to this office with the proposal.

RP-08 PUBLIC ENTITY CRIMES STATEMENT: In accordance with Florida Statutes Sec. 287.133(2)(a), "A person or affiliate who has been placed on the convicted vendor list following a conviction for a public entity crime may not submit a bid on a contract to provide any goods/services to a public entity, may not submit a bid on a contract with a public entity for construction or repair of a public building or public work, may not submit bids on leases of real property to a public entity, may not be awarded or perform work as a Contractor, supplier, subcontractor, or consultant under a contract with any public entity, and may not transact business with any public entity in excess of the threshold amount provided in Section 287.017, for Category Two, for a period of 36 months from the date of being placed on the convicted vendor list".

RP-09 CANCELLATION/TERMINATION: The County shall have the right to unilaterally cancel, terminate or suspend this Contract, in whole or in part, by providing the successful proposer thirty (30) days written notice by certified mail.

It is expressly understood by the County and the Contractor that funding for any successive fiscal years is contingent upon appropriation of monies by the Board of County Commissioners. In the event funds are not available or not appropriated, the County reserves the right to terminate the Contract and/or individual leases. The County will be responsible for any outstanding invoices prior to the termination.

RP-10 RESERVED RIGHTS: The County reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all proposals, to waive irregularities and technicalities, and to request resubmission. Any sole response received the first submission date may or may not be rejected by the County, depending on available competition and timely needs of the County. The County shall be the sole judge of the proposal and the resulting agreement that is in its best interest, and its decision shall be final.

The County reserves the right to accept or reject any or any part of the submissions, if it is deemed in the best interest of the County. The County, in its sole discretion, may expand the scope of work to include additional requirements. The County reserves the right to investigate as it deems necessary to determine the ability of any firm to perform the work or services requested. The firms, upon request shall provide information the County deems necessary in order to make a determination.

RP-11 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY CLAUSE: Charlotte County, Florida, in accordance with the provisions of Title VII of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252) and the Regulations of the Department of Commerce (15 CFR, Part 8) issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies all firms it will affirmatively ensure in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women-owned and minority business enterprises (collectively MBEs) will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to this advertisement and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, race, color or national origin in consideration for an award. The County will consider the firm's status as an MBE or a certified MBE, and also the status of any sub-contractors or sub-consultants proposed to be utilized by the firm, within the evaluation process. Interested MBEs and certified MBEs are encouraged to respond.

All firms are hereby notified that the successful firms must and shall comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Florida Civil Rights Act, all as amended. Specifically, firms agree that:

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program, activity or service funded through this Contract.

- Contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or marital status. Contractor agrees to post in a conspicuous place, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this non-discrimination clause.
- Contractor will, in all solicitations or advertisements regarding program activities, services provided or applications for employment, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for services or employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or marital status.
- County may require Contractor to submit reports as may be necessary to indicate non-discrimination. County officials will be permitted access to Contractor's books, records, accounts and other sources of information and its facilities as may be pertinent to ascertain compliance with non-discrimination laws.

It is expressly understood that County shall have the right to terminate this Contract upon receipt of evidence of discrimination.

RP-12 PAYMENT: Request for payment must be submitted to Charlotte County Purchasing on a form approved by the County in accordance with contract documents. Price shall be net and all invoices payable according to the Local Government Prompt Payment Act (F.S.218.74).

RP-13 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: At the end of the Contract, the receiving department will evaluate the successful proposers' performance. This evaluation will become public record.

RP-14 UNAUTHORIZED ALIEN WORKERS: Charlotte County will not intentionally award publicly-funded contracts to any contractor who knowingly employs unauthorized alien workers, constituting a violation of the employment provisions contained in 8 U.S.C. Section 1324a [Section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act ("INA")]. The County shall consider employment by any Contractor of unauthorized aliens a violation of Section 274A of the INA. Such violation by the Contractor of the employment provisions contained in Section 274A of the INA shall be grounds for termination of this Agreement by the County. In addition, pursuant to Section 448.095 of the Florida Statutes, all persons or firms entering into contracts with Charlotte County are required to register with, and use, the E-Verify system of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to electronically verify the employment eligibility of all newly hired employees. The County may terminate this Agreement for failure on the part of the Contractor to use E-Verify. Contract termination for failure to use E-Verify is not considered a breach of contract pursuant to s. 448.095(2)(c)3, *Fla. Stat.*

RP-15 EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECK: If an owner, except a stockholder in a publicly traded corporation, or an employee of the Contractor has been convicted of any offenses requiring registration as a sexual offender or sexual predator, regardless of the location of conviction, the Contractor shall ensure that the offender's or predator's work on the project is consistent with the terms of his probation and registry requirements.

RP-16 PUBLIC RECORDS CLAUSE TO CONTRACTORS "ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE COUNTY": Pursuant to Section 119.0701 of the Florida Statutes, Contractors acting on behalf of the County must comply with the public records laws, specifically: a) keep and maintain public records required by the County to perform the contracted services; b) upon request from the County's custodian of public records, provide the County with a copy of the requested records or allow the records to be inspected or copied within a reasonable time at a cost that does not exceed the cost provided in Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes or as otherwise provided by law; c) ensure that public records that are exempt or confidential from public records disclosure requirements are not disclosed except as authorized by law for the duration of the contract term and following completion of the contract; and d) upon completion of the contract, keep and maintain all public records required by the County to perform the service, and meet all applicable requirements for retaining public records.

IF THE CONTRACTOR HAS QUESTIONS REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF CHAPTER 119, FLORIDA STATUTES, TO THE CONTRACTOR'S DUTY TO RETAIN AND PROVIDE PUBLIC RECORDS RELATING TO THIS CONTRACT, CONTACT THE COUNTY'S CUSTODIAN OF PUBLIC RECORDS AT (941) 743-1441, E-MAIL TO RECORDS@CHARLOTTECOUNTYFL.GOV, 18500 MURDOCK CIRCLE, BLDG. B, Suite 109, PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA 33948.

RP-17 SOCIAL, POLITICAL, OR IDEOLOGICAL INTERESTS: Charlotte County will not request documentation of, or consider a vendor's social, political, or ideological interests when determining if the vendor is a responsible vendor. Charlotte County does not give preference to vendors based on social, political, or ideological interests.

END OF PART I

PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES

RP-18 PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Charlotte County is seeking proposals from interested firms and individuals for full-service government relations to assist with the development and implementation of a state legislative program. Services required by the County include legislative and administrative representation with members of the legislature, pertinent state offices and agencies, and relevant interest groups, coalitions, and associations.

The purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify interested firms/individuals and assess their qualifications in performing similar services.

RP-19 BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Charlotte County is located along Florida's Southwest Gulf Coast between Sarasota and Fort Myers, approximately 100 miles south of Tampa. The area covers a diverse landscape of communities from Port Charlotte, historic City of Punta Gorda, and Englewood; to the barrier island communities of Boca Grande; Palm Island, Don Pedro Island and Little Gasparilla Island; and to the waterfront towns of El Jobean, Manasota Key, Cape Haze, and Placida. Our population estimate in 2023, was 206,134; a 10% increase over the 2020 census data with signs of continuing growth.

Charlotte County is seeking a state lobbyist qualified to identify and seek funding sources at the state level along with initiating and monitoring policy as well as administrative priorities. The individual or firm would work at the direction of the Board of County Commissioners with the assistance of the County Administrator.

RP-20 TASKS/DELIVERABLES: The following are the tasks and deliverables required for these services:

- Collaborate with the Board of County Commissioners and County legislative staff to create a legislative priorities packet addressing general government goals and interests.
- Conduct research and gather data to support the County's priorities, ensuring that the County's interests are recognized and adequately addressed by the state government.
- Track legislation and budgetary actions that impact local government, providing weekly written updates to the County's Legislative Manager on any impacts to the County.
- Develop and evaluate strategies for support, opposition, or amendment of legislation with County Legislative staff.
- Facilitate meetings with policymakers, legislators, and leaders of relevant state agencies to advocate for local government issues.
- Create briefing sheets, talking points, and other materials needed for meetings, and assist in the preparation of testimony before legislative committees.
- Advise when County representatives may be required in person in Tallahassee to address issues of particular interest to the County and prepare backup information and talking points for these sessions.
- Monitor and advocate for Charlotte County's interests before state agencies.
- Monitor state funding opportunities and coordinate with County's legislative staff.
- Aid in the development, preparation, and management of state appropriations requests.
- Deliver a comprehensive written summary of legislative activities and the impacts of approved legislation to present before the Commissioners.
- Ensure coordination with other lobbyists representing Charlotte County on policy or appropriations activities.
- Conduct research and gather data to support the County's positions on environmental and water quality issues, demonstrating the County's needs and advocating for legislative attention where appropriate.
- Coordinate and facilitate meetings with local governments to identify opportunities to partner on the County's water and environmental objectives.
- Perform any other pertinent duties and actions related to state relations as required by the County.

RP-21 POTENTIAL STATE SUBJECT AREAS OF INTEREST:

- Appropriations/project funding
- County Revenue/ Expenditure Issues
- Transportation Issues and Transit Grants
- Environmental Issues/Permitting
- Human Services Issues and Grants
- Building Code/Construction Permitting Issues
- Economic Development
- Green Initiatives

- Public Works – General Infrastructure
- Water & Wastewater Infrastructure
- Tourism
- Human Resources/Employee Benefits /FRS
- Home Rule Authority Protection
- Housing & Community Development
- Telecommunication/Services Taxes
- Unfunded Mandates
- Solid Waste/Recycling/Waste to Energy
- Growth Management/Disaster Mitigation/Resiliency
- Public Safety Issues
- Library Grants
- Parks & Recreation
- Energy Issues
- Local Bills

END OF PART II

**PART III
PROPOSAL FORMAT & EVALUATION METHOD**

RP-22 RULES FOR PROPOSALS:

A. The proposal must name all persons or entities interested in the proposals as principals. The proposal must declare that it is made without collusion with any other person or entity submitting a proposal pursuant to this RFP.

B. The following is an excerpt from Charlotte County Resolution #2011-221 and applies to this proposal: **"Any questions regarding a project or submittal shall be directed to the designated person in the Purchasing Division for a response. From the time the notice of request for proposals is published until the contract is awarded, there shall not be any contact between a proposer, agent or other representative and any member of the selection committee, user department, Administration, or any member of the Board of County Commissioners regarding the project or proposal submitted by any proposer. Should any member of the selection committee initiate contact or fail to report any contact, such committee member may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If any proposer, agent or other representative contacts any committee member, user department, Administration or member of the Board of County Commissioners regarding a request for proposals or submitted proposal, the proposer is subject to sanctions up to and including having the County disqualify the firm's submittal."**

C. For your information, the members of the Professional Services Committee for this project are as follows:

Eve Sweeting, Legislative Manager, Administration
Ben Bailey, Director, Community Development
Francine Lisby, Assistant Budget Director, Budget and Administrative Services

RP-23 EVALUATION METHOD AND CRITERIA:

A. General - The County shall be the sole judge as to the merits of the proposal, and the resulting agreement. The County's decision will be final. **Please note that proposals will be evaluated on content, *not bulk*.**

The County's evaluation criteria will include, but shall not be limited to, considerations listed in categories found below.

B. Selection - The Professional Services Committee shall evaluate the proposals submitted. Final approval will be by the Board of County Commissioners.

Award shall be made to the firm that, in the County's judgment, best meets the criteria specified below and which, in the County's opinion, best accommodates the County's needs and interests. The decision shall rest SOLELY with the County and the County reserves the right to modify or reject any proposal submitted to it for consideration. With 100 being a perfect score, submittals will be awarded based on the following formula:

<u>Evaluation Criteria</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
I. List of Clients	1-10 Points
II. References	1-15 Points
III. Qualifications of Firm, Team, or Lead Person	1-20 Points
IV. Experience of Firm with Clients similar to Charlotte County	1-15 Points
V. Ability to meet County's needs, methodology and approach	1-20 Points
VI. Cost	1-20 Points
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	100 Points

Proposals are to be typed on the firm's letterhead, specifically referring to the project and the scope of services, containing all required information. That information is to be submitted electronically. Please visit <http://bit.ly/3TYAyKa> and follow given instructions.

RP-24 ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE: The projected schedule of events for this proposal is as follows:

06/02/2025 County advertises for proposals
06/26/2025 Proposal due date
07/16/2025 Professional Services Committee short lists firms

END OF PART III

PART IV - SUBMITTAL FORMS
PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL SIGNATURE FORM

The undersigned attests to his/her authority to submit this proposal and to bind the firm herein named to perform as per contract, if the firm is awarded the Contract by the County. The undersigned further certifies that he/she has read the Request for Proposal, Terms and Conditions, Insurance Requirements and any other documentation relating to this request and this proposal is submitted with full knowledge and understanding of the requirements and time constraints noted herein.

By signing this form, the proposer hereby declares that this proposal is made without collusion with any other person or entity submitting a proposal pursuant to this RFP.

In accordance with section 287.135, Florida Statutes, the undersigned certifies that the company is not on the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in Sudan List, the Scrutinized Companies with Activities in the Iran Petroleum Energy Sector List, and does not have business operations in Cuba or Syria (if applicable) or the Scrutinized Companies that Boycott Israel List, or is not participating in a boycott of Israel.

As Addenda are considered binding as if contained in the original specifications, it is critical that the Consultant acknowledge receipt of same. The submittal may be considered void if receipt of an addendum is not acknowledged.

Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____
Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____	Addendum No. _____ Dated _____

Type of Organization (please check one):	INDIVIDUAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	PARTNERSHIP	<input type="checkbox"/>
	CORPORATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	JOINT VENTURE	<input type="checkbox"/>

Firm Name

Telephone

Fictitious or d/b/a Name

Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)

Home Office Address

City, State, Zip

Number of Years in Business

Address: Office Servicing Charlotte County, other than above

Name/Title of your Charlotte County Rep.

Telephone

Name/Title of Individual Binding Firm (Please Print)

Signature of Individual Binding Firm

Date

Email Address

(This form must be completed & returned)

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE FORM

The undersigned vendor in accordance with Florida Statute 287.087 hereby certifies that _____
does: (name of business)

1. Publish a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition.
2. Inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the business's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations.
3. Give each employee engaged in providing the commodities or contractual services that are under bid a copy of the statement specified in subsection (1).
4. In the statement specified in subsection (1), notify the employees that, as a condition of working on the commodities or contractual services that are under bid, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement and will notify the employer of any conviction of, or plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, any violation of Chapter 893 or of any controlled substance law of the United States or any state, for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction.
5. Impose a sanction on or require the satisfactory participation in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program if such is available in the employee's community, by any employee who is so convicted.
6. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of this section.

As the person authorized to sign the statement, I certify that this firm complies fully with the above requirements.

Proposer's Signature

Date

(This form must be completed & returned)

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING AFFIDAVIT
for Nongovernmental Entities Pursuant To FS. §787.06**

Charlotte County Contract #20250392

The undersigned on behalf of the entity listed below, (the "Nongovernmental Entity"), hereby attests under penalty of perjury as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18 and I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth except as otherwise set forth herein.
2. I am an officer or representative of the Nongovernmental Entity and authorized to provide this affidavit on the Company's behalf.
3. Nongovernmental Entity does not use coercion for labor or services as defined in Section 787.06, Florida Statutes.
4. This declaration is made pursuant to Section 92.525, Florida Statutes. I understand that making a false statement in this declaration may subject me to criminal penalties.

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing Human Trafficking Affidavit and that the facts stated in it are true.

Further Affiant sayeth naught.

Signature

Printed Name

Title

Nongovernmental Entity

Date

END OF PART IV

(This form must be completed & returned)