

CENTRAL PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE

I. REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS (PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANTS)

I. PURPOSE OF REQUEST.

Central Pierce Fire & Rescue, “District”, is requesting Statements of Qualifications “SOQ” from qualified Consultants to assist with the Scope of Work identified in Section VI of this RFQ.

It is the District’s intent to select the Consultant based on qualifications, abilities, past performance and the ability to perform the necessary work and to complete projects within timeframes specified. Once the District has reviewed the qualifications, one or more Consultants may be requested to provide additional information and/or participate in an interview process.

II. TIME SCHEDULE.

Issue RFQ	<u>June 1, 2026</u>
Deadline for Submittal of Qualifications	<u>June 11, 2026</u>
Notify Consultant Chosen	<u>June 17, 2026</u>

III. INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS.

- A. The SOQ must be received via email 4:30 p.m. on June 11, 2026. It is the responsibility of the Consultant to ensure the SOQ arrives on time and to the correct location. Any SOQ received after the scheduled closing time shall be returned to the Consultant unopened.
- B. All SOQ’s shall be clearly marked as “CPFR Professional Communications Consultant RFQ” and shall be emailed to:

Central Pierce Fire & Rescue
Communications Manager
Brianna Stenstrom
bstenstrom@centralpiercefirerescue.org
- C. Any additional information or addendums to this RFQ will be issued by the District prior to the submittal deadline. The District will e-mail such information directly to known interested parties.
- D. SOQ’s should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of provider capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the request.
- E. All qualifications must include the following information:
 - 1. A cover letter/statement of interest indicating the Consultant’s interest in working for the District and highlighting its qualifications to perform communication services related to fire protection districts.

2. A brief overview of the company, including how long in business, privately or publicly owned, etc.
3. Related experience with communication services related to fire protection districts and specific qualifications and resumes of key team members.
4. At least three (3) references related to prior communication services related to fire protection districts performed by Consultant, including entity name, contact person and telephone number.
5. If Consultant intends to use subcontractors to provide any of the services identified in Exhibit A, Consultant shall specifically identify such subcontractors and provide the information required in this section for each subcontractor.

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA.

The following may be used to evaluate the applicants:

- A. Demonstrated experience and expertise in communication services related to fire protection districts.
- B. Previous overall experience of Consultant based on staffing plan.
- C. References.
- D. General impressions and presentation of qualifications.
- E. Demonstrated ability to meet requirements listed in Exhibit A.

V. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

- A. The District reserves the right to reject any and all SOQs.
- B. The District reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any Consultant.
- C. The District reserves the right to retain the services of the next most qualified Consultant, if the successful Consultant for any reason is unable to or refuses to provide services when specifically requested by the District or if Consultant and District are unable to agree on terms of engagement.
- D. The District shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by the Consultant in preparing, submitting or presenting its response to the RFQ.
- E. All Consultant submittals are subject to the Washington State Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW. Any information in any submittals that the Consultant desires to claim as proprietary and thus exempt from disclosure under the provisions of existing state law, shall be clearly designated. Each page claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the word "Confidential" printed on it. If the District

receives a public record request for any information that the Consultant has designated as proprietary, the District's sole obligation will be to notify the Consultant that a request has been received and that the District will release such information within ten business days of notifying the Consultant unless Consultant obtains a court order enjoining disclosure under RCW 42.56.540.

F. The successful Consultant will be expected to enter into a contract substantially in the form set forth as **Exhibit B**.

VI. SCOPE OF WORK.

See Exhibit A

This RFQ is for a specific project but the District reserves the right to use different Consultants for various portions of the project and also may use the Consultant for general services outside the scope of this Section on an as needed basis. Central Pierce Fire & Rescue will determine the priority and timelines for each project.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION.

Equal Opportunity Employment: The successful Consultant must comply with Washington State equal opportunity requirements. The District is committed to a program of equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, sex, age, nationality or disability.

Insurance Requirements: The selected Consultant shall maintain insurance that is sufficient to protect the Consultant's business against all applicable risks in a manner acceptable to the District. Consultant shall be required to provide the District with proof of insurance coverage and limits prior to execution of Agreement and may, but is not required, to include this information in its SOQ.

Non-Endorsement: As a result of the selection of a Consultant to supply services to the District, the Consultant agrees to make no reference to the District in any literature, promotional material, brochures, sales presentation or the like without the express written consent of the District.

Non-Collusion: Submittal and signature of a statement of qualifications swears that the document is genuine and not a sham or collusive, and not made in the interest of any person not named, and that the Consultant has not induced or solicited others to submit a sham offer, or to refrain from proposing.

Compliance With Laws and Regulations: The Consultant that is retained to provide services to the District under this RFQ shall comply with federal, state and local laws, statutes and ordinances relative to the execution of the all work performed. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, protection of public and employee safety and health; environmental protection; waste reduction and recycling; the protection of natural resources; permits; fees; taxes; and similar subjects.

For additional information or explanation of the contents or intent of these specifications, please contact: Brianna Stenstrom at bstenstrom@centralpiercefirer.org.

EXHIBIT A

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT SERVICES:

SCOPE OF WORK

1. PURPOSE:

The Communications Consultant will serve as a strategic advisor to executive leadership and the Communications Manager in support of organizational initiatives involving regionalization, identity evaluation, public engagement, and long-term communications strategy.

The consultant's role is intended to provide high-level strategic counsel, external perspective, and executive advisory support. The consultant is not expected to perform routine tactical communications execution, content production, or day-to-day communications management functions, which will remain the responsibility of the internal Communications Team.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES:

2.1. Strategic Advisory Support: Provide high-level communications strategy guidance related to organizational initiatives, change management efforts, and long-term public trust considerations.

Services may include:

- Advising leadership on strategic communications approaches and organizational messaging
- Providing guidance on stakeholder engagement and public communication considerations
- Offering independent perspective and recommendations related to organizational initiatives and emerging issues
- Supporting leadership discussions involving public perception, employee engagement, and community trust.

2.2. Identity Evaluation and Regionalization Guidance: Provide strategic counsel related to identity evaluation efforts and future regionalization discussions or initiatives.

Services may include:

- Advising on communications considerations related to organizational identity, branding, and regional representation
- Providing guidance on change management communications and stakeholder engagement strategies

- Assisting leadership in evaluating communications risks, opportunities, and public sentiment considerations
- Supporting identity implementation such as a renaming or rebranding efforts, if directed by the Board of Commissioners
- Serving as an external strategic resource for Executive leadership and the Board of Commissioners when requested

2.3. Strategic Communications Planning: Provide advisory support for future district initiatives that may require long-range communications planning and stakeholder engagement.

Potential initiatives may include:

- Organizational rebranding efforts
- Levy or ballot measure communications planning
- Community engagement initiatives
- Crisis communications
- Governance or structural changes
- Reputation and trust-building initiatives
- Services may include:
 - Reviewing and advising on strategic communications plans and engagement approaches
 - Providing recommendations on messaging alignment and communications sequencing
 - Advising on communications best practices for public agencies and community-centered organizations

2.4. Professional Mentorship and Capacity Building: Provide mentorship and strategic coaching to the Communications Manager to strengthen internal communications leadership capacity and long-term organizational sustainability.

Services may include:

- Executive-level communications coaching and strategic guidance
- Mentorship related to change management, leadership communications, and stakeholder engagement
- Professional development support focused on strategic planning and organizational communications leadership
- Sharing industry best practices and providing external perspective on complex communications challenges

3. DELIVERABLES: Deliverables will primarily consist of strategic consultation, recommendations, advisory discussions, leadership guidance, and periodic review of communications strategies, initiatives, or messaging as requested by the district.

4. **COORDINATION:** The consultant will coordinate primarily with the Communications Manager and may provide strategic input directly to Executive leadership and the Board of Commissioners when requested.
5. **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:** The consultant is expected to function as a strategic advisor and thought partner rather than a tactical communications resource. The District's Communications Team will retain responsibility for implementation, content creation, media relations, digital communications, and day-to-day communications operations.
6. **DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

The consultant should possess:

- Significant experience in strategic communications and organizational change management
- Experience advising executive leadership and governing bodies
- Expertise in public sector or regional government communications
- Experience supporting regionalization, organizational identity, or governance-related initiatives
- Strong understanding of stakeholder engagement, public trust, and reputation management
- Ability to provide executive-level strategic counsel and mentorship leadership support

EXHIBIT B
CENTRAL PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE
PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered into between CENTRAL PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE, of Pierce County, Washington (“District”) and _____, providing professional engineering services with offices at _____ (“Consultant”).

1. Scope of Services. The District retains Consultant to perform the Services designated in **EXHIBIT A** “the Services” together with such other services as requested by the District. All services provided shall be performed at the direction of the District Board of Commissioners and the District Chief. Consultant agrees to use competent and experienced personnel to provide the services necessary to complete the Services in accordance with the agreed project schedule and in a competent and professional manner and to furnish or procure the use of incidental services, equipment, and facilities as necessary for the completion of the Services. The District reserves the right to approve the primary personnel designated by Consultant to perform services under this Agreement. This Agreement is not intended to create a relationship in which the District contracts exclusively with Consultant for similar or related services or in which the Consultant serves the District as its sole client. The District reserves the right to use the services of other Consultants for both general and specific projects at District’s sole discretion.
2. Term. This Agreement shall be for a 12-month term, commencing from _____ and shall terminate on _____; provided, however, either party may terminate this Agreement at any time upon twenty (20) days written notice to the other party by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the other party’s business office.
3. Payment. Payment for the Services referenced on **EXHIBIT A** shall be made as follows:
 - 3.1. Cost of Services. The total cost for all services, personnel, materials, supplies, and equipment used in performing the Services shall be as set forth on **EXHIBIT B** but shall not exceed \$ _____. Should the Consultant either perform or propose to perform services or incur expenses to which it believes it should be entitled to compensation in excess of the stated limit either for the total or for one or more itemized tasks, the District shall not be obligated to pay for such services or expenses unless the excess compensation has been negotiated between the parties prior to the performance of the services or incurring of the expenses.
 - 3.2. Billing Procedures. The Consultant shall submit invoices for services rendered to the District for approval and payment on a monthly basis. Payment shall be made within 30 days of receipt of the invoice following verification and approval of the invoice by the District. Consultant shall submit complete documentation for the invoices in a form acceptable to the District.

- 3.3. Full Payment. Payment provided in this section shall be full compensation for work performed, services rendered and for all materials, supplies, equipment and incidentals necessary to complete the work.
- 3.4. Partial Payment. If any Services covered by this Agreement are suspended or abandoned by District, the Consultant shall be paid for services performed prior to the date that written notification of abandonment is provided to Consultant; provided, however, such payment shall only be owing if Consultant performed such services in a professional and non-negligent manner consistent with the terms of this Agreement.
4. Ownership of Documents. Ownership of Documents created pursuant to this Agreement shall be determined as follows:
 - 4.1. Work Product. As a result of providing the Services to the District, the Consultant will create certain instruments of professional services as a work for hire which will take the form of traditional project documents such as hard copy drawings, designs, mylars, specifications, renderings of surveys, survey data, and like items; these may also take the form of computer-ready data sets such as CADD, word processing, electronic spread sheets and/or databases; in addition, the Consultant's instruments of professional service may be represented in the form of computer programs, software and materials (except for pre-existing intellectual property, all of the foregoing instruments of professional service collectively referred to as "Work Product"). District acknowledges this Work Product as instruments of professional service. However, such Work Product created solely under this Agreement shall become the property of the District on payment in full of all monies due to the Consultant for such Work Product. The District shall own all copyrights to such Work Product, and Consultant agrees to assign all ownership rights to such Work Product to the District. The Consultant cannot guarantee the authenticity, integrity or completeness of Work Product supplied in electronic format ("Electronic Files"). The District shall release, indemnify and hold the Consultant, its officers, employees, consultants and agents harmless from any claims, or damages arising from the use of Electronic Files. Electronic Files will not contain stamps or seals and are not to be used for any purpose other than that for which they were transmitted.
 - 4.2. Work Product Modifications. Upon its sole risk, the District may make modification to the Work Product without the prior written authorization of the Consultant. The District agrees to waive any claim against the Consultant arising from the District's reuse or modification of any such Work Product.
 - 4.3. Possession of Work Product. The Consultant shall hold on the District's behalf, original reproducible copies of all designs and as-built drawings for a period of three (3) years for the date of substantial completion. Computer-ready data shall be provided to the District, if requested, on a data disk compatible with the District's computer equipment and programs. Consultant may not use Work Product specifically developed for and paid for by the District, for non-District projects, without the prior written authorization of the District upon such terms and conditions imposed by the District.

5. Indemnification. The Consultant shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the District its officers, and employees from and against any and all claims, losses or liability, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising from injury or death to persons or damage to property to the proportionate extent caused by any negligent act, omission or failure of the Consultant, its officers, agents employees, volunteers and subcontractors in performing the Services required by the Agreement. With respect to the performance of this Agreement and as to claims against the District, its officers, agents employees and volunteers, the Consultant expressly waives its immunity under Title 51 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the Industrial Insurance Act, for injuries to its employees and agrees that the obligation to indemnify, defend and hold harmless provided for in this paragraph extends to any claim brought by or on behalf of any employee of the Consultant. This waiver is mutually negotiated by the parties. This paragraph shall not apply to any damage resulting from the sole negligence of the District, its officers, agents employees and volunteers. To the extent any of the damages reference by this paragraph were caused by or resulted from the concurrent negligence of the District, its officers, agents employees or volunteers, this obligation to indemnify, defend and hold harmless is valid and enforceable only to the extent of the negligence of the Consultant, its officers, agents employees and volunteers. The provisions of this section shall survive the expiration or termination of this Agreement or the retention of the Consultant pursuant to this Agreement.
6. Insurance. The Consultant shall maintain and Consultant shall ensure that each subcontractor maintains in force the following types and amounts of insurance covering the Services rendered under this Agreement.
 - 6.1. Workers Compensation. Current workers' compensation insurance in compliance with State and Federal statutes.
 - 6.2. General Liability. Commercial General Liability Insurance, written on an insurance industry standard occurrence form, with limits of no less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) combined single limit per occurrence and Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) aggregate.
 - 6.3. Automobile Liability. Comprehensive Automobile liability insurance covering bodily injury and property damage with combined single limits of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000).
 - 6.4. Professional Liability. Professional liability insurance (errors and omissions insurance) with limits no less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per claim.
 - 6.5. Policy Requirements. The insurance policies shall: (1) state that coverage shall apply separately to each insured and additional insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought, except with respect to the limits of the insurer's liability; (2) except for Workers Compensation and Professional Liability policies, be primary to any insurance maintained by the District, except as respects losses attributable to the sole negligence of the District; and (3) shall state that the District will be given thirty (30) days prior written notice of any cancellation, suspension, or material change in coverage.

- 6.6. Named Additional Insured. Except for Workers Compensation and Professional Liability policies, the District shall be named as an additional insured on the Liability Insurance policies with regard to the Services performed by or on behalf of the Consultant, and a copy of the endorsement naming the District as an additional insured shall be attached to the Certificate of Insurance.
- 6.7. Certificate of Insurance. Before commencing work under this Agreement, the Consultant shall deliver to the District a Certificate(s) of Insurance and endorsements for each policy of insurance meeting the requirements set forth herein when the Consultant delivers the signed Contract for the work. The certificate and endorsements must conform to the following requirements:
 - 6.8. An ACORD certificate or a form determined by the Owner to be equivalent.
 - 6.8.1. Copies of all endorsements naming District and all other entities listed in Paragraph 6.6 as Additional Insured(s), showing the policy number. The Contractor may submit a copy of any blanket additional insured clause from its policies instead of a separate endorsement. A statement of additional insured status on an ACORD Certificate of Insurance shall not satisfy this requirement.
 - 6.8.2. Any other amendatory endorsements to show the coverage required herein.
- 6.9. No Liability Limitation. Nothing in this Section, including without limitation the specification of minimum insurance limits, shall constitute or be construed or interpreted to constitute a limit on the Consultant's liability to the District. Any payment of deductible or self-insured retention shall be the sole responsibility of the Consultant.
7. Conflicts of Interest. Consultant agrees not to perform similar services for private parties on projects within the District if the performance of such services conflict in any way with the Consultant's performance of the Services for the District.
8. Warranty. Consultant agrees and warrants that the Services shall be performed with the care and skill ordinarily exercised by members of the profession practicing under similar conditions at the same time and same or similar locality. When the findings and recommendations of Consultant are based upon information supplied by District and others, Consultant is entitled to rely on such information.
9. Independent Contractor. The Consultant and the District agree the Consultant is an independent contractor with respect to the Services. Nothing in this Agreement shall be considered to create the relationship of employer or employee between the parties hereto. Neither the Consultant nor any employee of the Consultant shall be entitled to any benefits accorded to District employees by virtue of the Services provided under this Agreement. The District shall not be responsible for withholding or otherwise deducting federal income tax or social security, or for contributing to the State Industrial Insurance program, or for otherwise assuming the duties of an employer with respect to the Consultant or any employee of the Consultant.
10. Special Services. Special services may be required in conjunction with the Services that are outside the professional expertise of Consultant. When, in the opinion of the Consultant, such

expertise is required to complete the Services, the Consultant shall so advise the District. The District may directly obtain such special professional expertise and pay the cost thereof or, the District, at its sole discretion, may direct Consultant to retain such special expertise and pay the cost thereof, subject to reimbursement by District plus ten percent (10%) for administration, taxes and insurance.

11. Compliance With Laws. The Consultant shall, in performing the Services, faithfully observe and comply with all federal, state and local laws, ordinances and regulations, applicable to the Services.
12. Assignment of Contract/Subcontractors. Consultant shall not assign this contract or assign or subcontract all or any portion of the work of any Services without prior District approval.
13. Dispute Resolution.
 - 13.1. If the parties are unable to resolve a dispute regarding this Agreement through negotiation, either party may demand mediation through a process to be mutually agreed to in good faith between the parties within 30 days. The parties shall share equally the costs of mediation and each party shall be responsible for their own costs in preparation and participation in the mediation, including expert witness fees and reasonable attorney's fees.
 - 13.2. If a mediation process cannot be agreed upon or if the mediation fails to resolve the dispute then, within 30 calendar days, either party may submit the dispute to arbitration according to the procedures of the Superior Court Rules for Mandatory Arbitration, including the Local Mandatory Arbitration Rules of the Pierce County Superior Court, Pierce County, Washington, as amended, unless the parties agree in writing to an alternative dispute resolution process. The arbitration shall be before a disinterested arbitrator selected pursuant to the Mandatory Arbitration Rules with both parties sharing equally in the cost of the arbitrator. The location of the arbitration shall be mutually agreed or established by the assigned Arbitrator, and the laws of Washington will govern its proceedings. The prevailing party in the arbitration, shall be entitled to its reasonable attorney fees and costs including expert witness fees.
 - 13.3. Following the arbitrator's issuance of a ruling/award, either party shall have 30 calendar days from the date of the ruling/award to file and serve a demand for a bench trial de novo in the Pierce County Superior Court. The court shall determine all questions of law and fact without empanelling a jury for any purpose. If the party demanding the trial de novo does not improve its position from the arbitrator's ruling/award following a final judgment, that party shall pay all costs, expenses and attorney fees to the other party, including all costs, attorney fees and expenses associated with any appeals.
 - 13.4. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, this dispute resolution process shall be the sole, exclusive and final remedy to or for either party for any dispute regarding this Agreement, and its interpretation, application or breach, regardless of whether the dispute is based in contract, tort, any violation of federal law, state statute or local

ordinance or for any breach of administrative rule or regulation and regardless of the amount or type of relief demanded.

14. Miscellaneous.

- 14.1. Entire Agreement. This Agreement, and its attachments, contains the entire understanding between District and Consultant relating to the Services. Any prior or contemporaneous agreements, promises, negotiations or representations not expressly set forth herein, are of no force or effect. Subsequent modifications or amendments to this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by the parties to this Agreement. Services to be performed by Consultant for District that are outside the scope of Services under this Agreement shall be performed pursuant to separately negotiated written agreements.
- 14.2. Non-Waiver. Waiver or forbearance by the District of any provision of the Agreement or any time limitation provided for in this Agreement shall be limited to the single instance of waiver or forbearance and shall not constitute an agreement by the District to waive or forbear in the future with respect to similar instances, nor shall any such waiver or forbearance constitute a waiver or forbearance with respect to any other provision of this Agreement.
- 14.3. Law/Venue. This Agreement shall be interpreted and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Washington. Any litigation arising out of or in connection with this Agreement shall be filed and conducted in Pierce County Superior Court.
- 14.4. Savings Clause. If any provision of this Agreement is declared invalid, illegal or incapable of being enforced by any court of competent jurisdiction, all of the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect, and no provisions shall be deemed to depend upon any other provision unless so expressed herein.
- 14.5. Document Use. Reuse of any such materials by District on any extension of this project or any other project without the written authorization of Consultant shall be at District's sole risk.
- 14.6. Responsibility for Others. Consultant shall be responsible to District for Consultant Services and the services of Consultant subcontractors. Consultant shall not be responsible for the acts or omissions of other parties engaged by District nor for their construction means, methods, techniques, sequences, or procedures, or their health and safety precautions and programs.
- 14.7. Consequential Damages. Neither Party shall be liable to the other for consequential damages, including, without limitation, loss of use or loss of profits, incurred by one another or their subsidiaries or successors, regardless of whether such damages are caused by breach of contract, willful misconduct, negligent act or omission, or other wrongful act of either of them.

Dated: _____

Dated: _____

CENTRAL PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE

CONSULTANT

By: _____

By: _____

By: _____