

LOWER COLUMBIA INITIATIVES CORP.

Request for Proposals – WEST KOOTENAY BORDER CROSSING IMPACT ASSESSMENT



July 12, 2023

**THE LOWER COLUMBIA INITIATIVES
CORPORATION (LCIC)
IS SEEKING
PROPOSALS
FOR AN
IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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Request for Proposals – WEST KOOTENAY BORDER CROSSING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Contact Person:

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Closing Date: 4:00 PM Pacific Time, July 28, 2023

i. BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation:

The Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation (LCIC) is the result of a partnership between the City of Rossland, City of Trail, Village of Warfield, Village of Montrose, Village of Fruitvale and electoral areas A & B of the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary. The LCIC works collaboratively with the communities in the Lower Columbia region, local agencies, organizations and businesses to develop and implement strategies that will assist in strengthening our local economy while identifying and pursuing new economic opportunities. As the regional economic development agent that supports and drives growth and prosperity, the LCIC is committed to a cohesive, comprehensive, region-wide approach to the challenges and opportunities of economic development in the Lower Columbia Region.

Background:

The West Kootenay region has three border crossings with Washington State; the Paterson border crossing near Rossland, BC, the Nelway border near Salmo, BC, and the Waneta border crossing located in Electoral Area A of the Regional District of the Kootenay Boundary (RDKB). The Nelway port is not of interest to this study. The current 24 hour cross-border commercial truck route into the West Kootenay is Hwy 22 (via the Paterson Border Crossing) which passes through 3 residential zones, one school zone and over an 8% incline. The Waneta border crossing is open 9am – 5pm and is currently limited in the vehicle traffic it can accept due to the Waneta Bridge which spans the Pend Oreille River immediately before the border.

The Waneta Bridge is a 500 foot single lane structure, originally constructed in 1893 for the railway. It was later modified by the BC Ministry of Transportation for vehicular traffic. The bridge (Hwy 22A) is a piece of key infrastructure to create a low level route and border crossing to the U.S. providing Canadian companies with access to US markets. The bridge has weight and speed restrictions in place and only

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allows passenger vehicles. In 2008, the BC Ministry of Transportation spent \$1.8 m to refurbish the bridge deck and deck substructure in order to extend its life. No improvements were made to the truss structure of the vehicle span.

The current state of the Waneta Bridge and the resulting commercial use of the Paterson border crossing have long been of concern to local governments, residents and businesses. Three key areas of concerns have been identified:

❖ Economic

- The current necessity of using the Paterson border crossing for commercial traffic creates a bottleneck on economic growth because it is unattractive to potential business investors and, critically, it prevents established local companies from expanding their operations due to high logistics costs. The potential for economic growth in the West Kootenay by improving access to the US is improved cannot be realized until the Waneta Bridge and border are upgraded.
- As transportation routes and options for the West Kootenay region are limited to begin with, it is particularly important to maintain the function and availability of all existing routes. This is of concern particularly for the tourism industry.
- Hazardous materials that are shipped by truck must go through border crossings outside the West Kootenay region which increases transportation costs for local companies significantly.

❖ Environmental

- Fuel consumption and carbon emissions from commercial trucks going up the Rossland Hill are higher than a crossing without the elevation gain. Moving the 24 hour commercial crossing to Waneta would greatly reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions.
- The amount of waste associated with regular repairs required by commercial trucks (caused by wear/tear of the Rossland Hill on brakes, etc) will be substantially reduced by moving the crossing to Waneta.

❖ Safety

- Commercial trucks currently pass through 3 residential zones and 1 school zone.
- Winter conditions on the Rossland Hill create significant hazards for commercial trucks and, by extension, regular traffic.
- Disaster planning is increasingly necessary and improvements to the Waneta Bridge and border crossing will play an important part of disaster preparation. Currently, if the Paterson border was compromised, the Waneta Bridge and border would seriously hamper commercial and residential traffic, potentially causing problems for evacuation.

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1.0 PURPOSE

The goal of this project is to clearly document the impacts of the current border crossing arrangements (Waneta & Paterson) on the businesses and communities of the West Kootenay. We require a full understanding of how these border crossings are serving business and community interests and any problems that may arise from how they currently function. The assessment will also inform on how infrastructure and operating changes to the border crossings such that Waneta becomes the primary commercial crossing would impact businesses and communities.

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project can be split into two phases. In the first phase, this project requires an impact assessment based on the current infrastructure and operating conditions of the existing Paterson and Waneta border crossings. The impact assessments should cover the economic, environmental, and social conditions of the West Kootenay in both scenarios. We are particularly interested in how the business community interacts with the border crossings and how they are impacted by the current arrangements. The first phases should give a thorough examination of reported problems that arise from the current set up.

In the second phase, the project should consider what changes would be required for Waneta to become the primary commercial port instead of Paterson. Based on these hypothesized changes, an assessment of what the impacts would be on communities and businesses, and whether this would address the problems uncovered in the first phase is required. It should also include an estimate of the potential economic impacts from successfully switching the commercial traffic to the Waneta port. The assessment should go as far as considering whether the magnitude of the problems warrant the proposed changes, but a full cost/benefit analysis is not expected.

1.2 PROJECT SCOPE & SCHEDULE

The geographic scope for this project is primarily the West Kootenay region with an emphasis on the communities of Trail, Rossland, Warfield, Montrose and Fruitvale as they are the most impacted by the two border crossings.

What is NOT included in the scope:

- Nelway border crossing
- American interests
- Waneta bridge replacement

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The scope of this project can be divided into the three categories of economic, environmental and social. Rough estimates are considered acceptable for this project, highly detailed estimates are not required. The items listed below are for guidance and not exhaustive.

For Phase I:

- Economic
 - Impact of current border crossing arrangements on West Kootenay businesses (all sectors)
 - Does it impede their ability to grow their business?
 - Does it create problems for serving their current customers?
 - What costs does it impose?
 - Are there any cost advantages to the current set up?
 - Rail transportation use
- Environment
 - Are there environmental impacts from the current border crossing arrangements? Ex. GHG emissions
 - Environmental risks from road conditions and routes
- Social
 - Impact of the current border crossing arrangements on communities in the West Kootenay
 - Are there safety issues?
 - Are there traffic problems?
 - Other social considerations

For Phase II:

- Any infrastructure and operational changes that would be required for the Waneta port to become the functional commercial crossing serving the West Kootenay region.
- Assuming the changes have been made,
 - Economic
 - Any cost reductions for the business community.
 - The potential growth in economic activity from improved access to the US.
 - Any potential negative consequences for West Kootenay businesses.
 - Environmental
 - GHG emission reductions
 - Reduced road maintenance needs
 - Social
 - Are there traffic and safety
 - Improvements
 - New problems created
 - Other social impacts

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1.3 PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The expected project deliverables are as follows:

- Kick-off meeting
- Final Report detailing:
 - Background information used to inform the assessment
 - Methodology used in execution of the assessment
 - Main findings for each phase in each category (economic, environmental and social)
 - Discussion of the findings as required including
 - An analysis of the problems associated with the current border crossings
 - Potential benefits of the hypothetical changes to make Waneta port the main commercial crossing
 - An assessment of whether the problems associated with the current setup warrant the proposed changes
- Presentation of draft final report to the Board of Directors
- All raw data collected during the assessment process
- Details on how findings were reached based on data and methods used to conduct the assessment

2.0 BUDGET

The LCIC has allocated a maximum of \$23,000.00 **inclusive of GST** for this project.

The LCIC expects to receive proposals that meet the established scope and goals of the project and as such will select the proposal that best fits the project goals with an appropriate budget.

Proposals pricing must be firm for at least 60 days after the final date. Prices will be firm for the entire contract period.

Prices quoted are to be:

- In Canadian dollars;
- Inclusive of duty, where applicable;
- FOB destination, delivery charges and all disbursements to be included where applicable;
- and
- Inclusive of all taxes

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The successful proponent will be paid according to this schedule:

1. 15% on signing contract
2. 25% on completion of research and data collection
3. 25% on completion of data analysis
4. 35% on completion and receipt of final report

3.0 SUBMISSION DETAILS

3.1 MANDATORY PROPOSAL CONTENT:

- Covering letter highlighting key features of the proposal, to be signed by an authorized signatory of the firm.
- 250 – 500 word description of an example of the firm’s undertaking of similar project(s) or other relevant experience.
- Details on the approach and methods used to deliver on the full scope of the project. In particular, the estimation methods should be explained.
- Details on the project management methods and tools used to ensure success of the project.
- Details on experience and qualifications of the personnel planned to be assigned to the project.
- Three (3) references
- Detailed project schedule, not to exceed past December 31st, 2023.
- Fee Structure (see 3.2 for details)

3.2 FEE STRUCTURE:

- Proponents will fully describe the proposed fee structure and must clearly quote any additional charges that may be applicable and which have not already been addressed in the Proposal. The fee should include GST as a separate line item. A list of chargeable disbursements, including unit costs and an estimate of the total cost is also to be included.
- Proponents will clearly note any/all costs that are not included or allowed for and will also allow for the mandatory meetings and notifications required for the project.

3.3 SUBMISSION PROCESS:

Responses should be no longer than fifteen (15) pages including all appendices and supporting documents.

Responses should be emailed to rrichards@lci.ca in PDF format by 4pm on Friday July 28th, 2023

DEADLINE: JULY 28, 2023 AT 4PM PDT

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4.0 SELECTION PROCESS

4.1 SELECTION CRITERIA

The LCIC will take into consideration such matters as it considers appropriate in selecting the Proponent. Those matters will include, but are not limited to:

- Proposed methodology;
- Proponent's understanding of the context, issues and ultimate objectives of the project;
- Experience and qualifications of those involved in the project;
- Fees and disbursements;
- Schedule; and
- Reference checks.

Decision making will be based on an assessment of the criteria mentioned in the selection process.

4.2 SELECTION PROCESS & SCHEDULE

Closing date for submissions: July 28, 2023 @ 4pm PDT

Review of submissions: July 31 – Aug 4, 2023

Award of contract: By Aug 9, 2023

Project start: Aug 14, 2023