**Summary of Questions and Responses**

**Discussed at the August 9, 2012 Pre-proposal Conference**

**For an RFP/RFQ issued July 30, 2012 for**

**An Operational, Management and Efficiency Analysis**

**Of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)**

1. **Would you prefer that we provide additional information on the focus areas in the proposal or did you want us to save it for the interview phase?**

**Response:** We need sufficient information to assess the Consultant’s expertise and proposed approach in addressing the focus areas, but the Consultant also should be prepared to clarify any information in the submittal regarding the focus areas during the interviews, if needed.

1. **Are all Divisions subject to review?**

**Response:** Yes, with the exception of the Human Resources Division, which need only be reviewed to the extent that its policies, procedures and practices affect other areas, particularly the Focus Areas listed on page 7 of the RFP. The management of SDOT’s fleet and equipment assets is also not within the scope of work for this review.

Again, the greatest focus should be placed in the Focus Areas identified in the RFP. Evaluating the City’s handling of its Major Projects is not a focus because these projects generally undergo significant analysis and oversight.

Having said this, we hope to rely on the Consultant’s expertise and analysis to help us identify, in Phase I of the work, the areas that should be of greatest concern and emphasis for further evaluation in Phase II.

1. **What are SDOT’s revenue and/or funding sources?**

**Response:** Federal and State Grants

City of SeattleGeneral Fund
      Bridging the Gap Levy
      Commercial Parking Tax
      Vehicle Licensing Fees

      License Renewal Tax

1. **Is Bridging the Gap a property tax levy?**

**Response:** Yes, that is the focus of Bridging the Gap.

1. **What is the primary focus for this RFP?**

**Response:**

1. Are we doing the best we can with the limited amount of resources that we have? (“How are we doing?”)
2. What is SDOT doing well and what areas can they, or do they need to, improve upon? (“What could we do better?”)
3. How do we get a handle on the major back-log of projects with the limited funding that is available?  Can we justify asking voters for additional funding?
4. How should we measure and communicate SDOT’s performance going forward?
5. **Do you anticipate having a formal exit conference?**

**Response:** Yes. We believe an exit conference would be valuable.  It provides an opportunity for senior department leadership to ask questions.  However, the presentation need not follow the format of an exit conference from a formal audit (see #11 below).

1. **Is the Phase I schedule due date, January 15, 2013, locked in stone?**

**Response:** This is not a hard deadline.

1. **Do you have on-going surveys on how the public views SDOT’s transportation project issues?**

**Response:** Yes.

1. **Who will be the decision makers for the Consultant Selection process?**

**Response:** The six members of the interdepartmental team overseeing the RFP. This team includes a Seattle City Council legislative aide, two Seattle City Council Central Staff members, a representative from the City’s Budget Office, and two staff members from the Office of City Auditor.

1. **Are there any particular qualifications that you’re looking for *that would make one firm stand out from the others*?**

**Response:** The firm should have a real-world understanding of how a public transportation department operates.  Experience with performance audits with municipal, public utilities, state DOT, etc. is relevant.  We are looking for someone with the expertise to make valid comparisons with other jurisdictions using the most promising or best practice performance measures in the transportation industry. Since this is not a formal U.S. Government Accountability Office Yellow Book audit, we do not expect the Consultant to meet Yellow Book standards, although we do expect the Consultant to be able to document and substantiate their findings.

We are looking for a Consultant who is willing to point out both areas of weakness and areas where SDOT is managing its operations effectively. In other words, the final evaluation could validate the work that SDOT has done in some areas and identify other areas for improvement. A range of experience is expected.

1. **What do you think the biggest challenges will be?**

**Response:**

1. Appreciating the uniqueness of the Seattle DOT; grasping the vast programs that they have for transit and transportation needs. For example, Seattle has far more bridges and overpasses than most municipalities.
2. Identifying critical maintenance work and providing information that will help policymakers make hard choices about where to focus resources.
3. Working within the constraints of the public sector. For example, understanding the City’s values related to geographic equity, fair wages, etc.
4. **How does SDOT define a maintenance project?**

**Response:** In two categories: routine maintenance and major construction.