

DIVISION OF LOCAL ASSISTANCE



CALTRANS OVERSIGHT INFORMATION NOTICE



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Welcome to the COIN!

This is a Caltrans Oversight Information Notice, or “COIN” for short. These short, single-topic bulletins are intended to provide outreach information and guidance to local agencies on issues pertaining to Federal-aid projects. They cover a wide variety of subjects, including discussions of findings resulting from process reviews by Caltrans and/or FHWA, changes in procedures or regulations, reminders of existing procedures or best practices, and other timely information. The goal is to ensure proper and timely delivery of Federal-aid projects.

Topic: THE USE OF NON-TRADITIONAL (ELECTRONIC) ADVERTISING FOR CONTRACT BIDS OR PROPOSALS

I. BACKGROUND

This COIN pertains to advertising for contract bids/proposals for construction contracts as well as formal Architectural and Engineering (A&E) consultant qualifications/proposals.

Referred to as the traditional method of advertising for contract bids or proposals, and as stated in Section 15.4, “Project Advertisement” of the Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM),

“The advertising period begins with publication of a “Notice to Contractors” in a newspaper receiving wide local circulation.”

The purpose of this COIN is to inform local agencies of the allowable use of non-traditional (electronic) advertising methods, the broad parameters covering such non-traditional methods, and the need to clearly document those advertising methods utilized.

II. POLICY

The solicitation for contract bids/proposals for construction contracts and formal A&E consultant contracts/proposals shall be by public advertisement, or by any other public forum or method that ensures adequate publicity, and that qualified in-State and out-of-State bidders/proposers are given a fair opportunity to be considered for award of the contract.

Advertisement in a newspaper receiving wide local circulation, technical publications of widespread circulation, contractor/professional associations and societies, recognized DBE organizations, web hosting or clearinghouses known for posting government contract solicitations such as BidSync, and/or posting on the local agency’s or other widely used websites are all acceptable methods of solicitation.

III. PROCEDURE

As always, the minimum advertising period shall commence a minimum of three weeks (two weeks for A&E consultant contract) prior to the scheduled receipt of bids/proposals (unless a Public Interest Finding is approved by the District Local Assistance Engineer).

It is critical that for audit purposes, local agencies thoroughly document their methods of advertising, with applicable prints of screen shots or other means which show specific dates and durations of website or other postings as necessary.

IV. APPLICABILITY/IMPACTS

This COIN pertains only to advertising for contract bids/proposals for construction contracts as well as formal A&E consultant qualifications/proposals.