Request for Proposal ("RFP")

Election Ballot Sorter

Washington County Clerk-Auditor
C/O Genna Goodwin
111 East Tabernacle St
St. George, UT 84770

Release of RFP	January 23, 2026
Deadline for Questions	February 4, 2026
Deadline for Proposals	February 13, 2026
Opening of Proposals	February 17, 2026

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INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The Washington County Clerk-Auditor (hereinafter referred to as "County") has statutory responsibility to administer all County, State and Federal Elections, and provides administrative services to Municipalities and Special Service Districts as contracted. This Request for Proposal (hereinafter referred to as "RFP") announces the intent of County to enter a contract with a qualified firm (hereinafter referred to as "firm") to provide equipment, software, service and support to fully automate the receipt and processing of vote by mail ballots.

This automation must include the ability to export and import vote history, import and export signature images, capture and compare signature images, capture and compare hand written numbers as well as overall ballot return envelope image capture. The system must sort ballots into workable batches based upon criteria such as precincts, cities, legislative districts, whether the ballot can be counted, needs review, needs ID, or is rejected.

System must be able to exchange files and data with our current voter registration database (VISTA) and anticipate a voter registration database shift in the next three (3) years. Responses to this RFP must be able to fully automate our process outlined in SECTION 10 including, if feasible, automatic removal of a privacy tab or other method to expose the voter information for processing. Responses must specifically state whether or not the proposed equipment is capable of automatic removal of the privacy tab or exposure of the voter information for processing, and, specifically state in a separate line item the cost of this feature for County consideration.

Project must fully be implemented and tested by June 1, 2026 in time for the Primary Election; ballot processing begins June 8, 2026.

This RFP is designed to provide interested offerors with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting the minimum requirements and is not intended to limit a proposal's content or exclude any relevant or essential data. Offerors are at liberty and are encouraged to expand upon the specifications to evidence service capability under any agreement.

BACKGROUND

Washington County is situated in the southwestern region of Utah. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the county had a population of 180,279, with 2024 estimates indicating growth to approximately 207,943 residents. As of 2025, there are about 113,000 active registered voters in the county.

The county conducts a minimum of two (2) elections per year. Even numbered years have elections in March, June, and November. Odd numbered years have elections in August and November. Occasionally, a special election or recount may be held within a year. These elections are conducted primarily by mail.

PERIOD OF CONTRACT

The initial contract period may be for three (3) years starting on the date of contract execution in 2026 and ending December 31, 2028. At the end of this period, the contract may be renewable for one additional two-year calendar period upon agreement of both parties (January 1, 2029 – December 31, 2030). Either party may terminate the contractual agreement without liability or penalty upon 90 days written notice delivered to the other party.

Washington County reserves the right to review contracts on a regular basis regarding performance and cost analysis and may negotiate price and service elements during the term of the contract.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE

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After the evaluation and final scoring of the proposals are complete, the Washington County Commission and designees shall award the contract as soon as practicable to the eligible responsive and responsible offeror with the highest score. If selected, the parties will enter into a mutually acceptable agreement for fulfillment of the project, and then the successful offeror will be given a notice to proceed. The agreement will be based on the contents of the RFP and offeror's proposal, using County's standard independent contractor agreement form. If the offeror and the County cannot agree on a satisfactory agreement, County reserves the right to terminate the negotiations. The County may then negotiate an agreement with the company which ranked second, or the County may submit another request for proposals.

SCOPE OF WORK

Firms must be able to provide equipment, software, service, and support necessary for automation of processing approximately 113,000 vote by mail ballots per election with capacity for growth. This automation must include the following for envelope with various dimensions:

- Receive and sort envelopes into manageable batch sizes (piece count, sort, and batch).
- Create an exportable file indicating vote history applicability for approved by mail ballots eligible for vote history.
- Capture digital images of all processed envelopes.
- Automate signature verification of envelopes with those on file in a voter database at configurable thresholds or confidence levels.
- Automate unique identifier verification (last 4 of state identification or social security number) written on envelopes with those on file in a voter database at configurable thresholds or confidence levels (OCR handwritten text and compare to dataset in voter database).
- Import and export vote history, signatures, and unique identifiers (last 4 of state identification or social security number) securely to and from a voter database.
- Sort envelopes that require manual processing due to database flags such as "needs ID," or "missing signature," or "wrong election", or physical flags such as dimensional errors with envelope size, weight, or thickness.
- Sort envelopes based upon criteria such as precincts, cities, or legislative districts.

Firms must also be able to meet all statutory requirements per Utah State Code and Administrative Rules. Note that Utah State Code and Administrative Rules are subject to change without notice and timely compliance is essential to contract performance.

Value added elements are:

- The ability to expose voter information on envelopes covered by a privacy tab without manually touching the envelopes.

RFP SUBMISSION

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Responses to the RFP shall include:

- Cover letter and/or executive summary including an organizational chart showing the team member(s) involved and a breakdown of responsibilities as well as a narrative specifically addressing the firm's experience and capability to successfully perform the required items listed in the Scope of Work.
- Resumes of key members who will be involved in the project.
- Firm Representative name, phone number and email address.
- Two (2) references from other agencies, demonstrating experience and ability in related activities. References to include a contact name, email, and phone number as well as dates of service.
- Proposal: This section should cover things such as the approach to the RFP's Scope of Work, project strategy, methodology used to control costs, PII protections, data breach response, or other advantages to County for selecting firm.
- Fee schedule providing costs estimated for, equipment, software, service and support as well as onboarding costs for shipping, installation, and training.

All proposals must be submitted as a single PDF file.

Responses should clearly outline the firm's experience working with by mail ballots and implementing the equipment outlined in this RFP with similar sized counties with similar processes. Firms should demonstrate the necessary ability and resources to provide the equipment, software, service, and support necessary for automation of processing of vote by mail ballots for elections.

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, offeror is acknowledging that the requirements, scope of work, and the evaluation process outlined in the RFP are fair, equitable, not unduly restrictive, and are understood and agreed to. Any exceptions to the content of the RFP must be protested to by the requestor prior to the closing date and time for submission of the proposal.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Submittals must be received by 4:00 PM (MST) on or before February 13, 2026. All proposals shall be the property of County and will become public record. If a bid proposal is received after this deadline, it will not be considered and will be rejected without any further action by County.

DESIGNATED COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE

Genna Goodwin, Chief Deputy Clerk
111 East Tabernacle St.
St. George, UT 84770
435.301.7240
genna.goodwin@washco.utah.gov

CORRESPONDENCE

All bid proposals shall be submitted electronically. Please email your proposal with the subject line "RFP Proposal – Ballot Sorter" to the Chief Deputy Clerk, Genna Goodwin at genna.goodwin@washco.utah.gov.

Once this RFP has been issued, firms are specifically directed not to contact County for meetings, conferences, or technical discussions related to this RFP. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disqualification of the firm.

Questions related to the RFP must be submitted via email to the designated County Representative, Genna Goodwin. The deadline for submitting questions is February 4, 2026. Any response to a question posed by a potential firm will be posted as an addendum to the original RFP.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

This is a multiple stage solicitation.
In the first stage, submittals will be reviewed as outlined below.

Selection Criteria	**Maximum Points 100**
1. Qualifications & Experience	20
2. Technical Expertise & Automation	20
3. Performance – ability to meet the Scope of Work	20
4. References	20
5. Overall Proposed Cost	20

After review, the top submissions will be invited to a virtual interview. The original proposal cannot be changed in any aspect during the interview process. Interviews are conducted to allow each firm to bring to the attention of the Washington County Election office any aspects of their offer that may contribute to the selection of their response and for introducing key personnel. Interviews will be scored based on the same criteria as the initial submissions.

All proposals in response to this RFP will be evaluated in a manner consistent with Washington County and Utah Procurement Codes, rules, policies and the evaluation criteria established in the RFP.

PROPOSAL CONDITIONS

FIRM PRICING

All prices, quotes, or proposals shall remain firm for the duration of the RFP process regarding this RFP and until a contract regarding this RFP is executed by County and firm; or if County

decides not to entire into a contract with any firm to provide the services sought through this RFP.

All pricing must be guaranteed for two (2) years. Following the guarantee period, any request for price adjustments must be for an equal guarantee period, and must be made by September prior to the effective date, for County budget purposes. Requests for price adjustments must include sufficient documentation supporting the request. Any adjustment or amendment to the contract will not be effective unless approved by the Washington County Commission. County will be given the immediate benefit of any decrease in the market, or allowable discount.

GOVERNING LAW AND EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION AND VENUE

Any contract between County and firm regarding this RFP will be interpreted, construed, and given effect according to the laws of the state of Utah and the ordinances of Washington County, and the courts within Washington County, Utah shall have the sole and exclusive jurisdiction and venue regarding any such contract. No contract will be assigned, in whole or in part, without the written consent of Washington County.

LICENSING

The selected firm shall obtain all applicable federal, state, and local licenses before any contract between County and firm regarding this RFP is executed. The selected firm must maintain such licenses for the duration of the contract between County and firm regarding this RFP.

MODIFYING OR WITHDRAWING PROPOSALS

Firms may modify or withdraw their proposals at any time prior to the deadline set for firms to timely submit a proposal in response to this RFP.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

Any firm who enters into a contract with County regarding this RFP shall be an independent contractor and have no authority, express or implied, to bind Washington County to any agreements, settlements, liability, or understanding whatsoever with any third party and shall have no interest in any benefits provided by Washington County to its employees.

SUBCONTRACTORS

The firm agrees not to enter into any subcontracting contracts for work contemplated under Contract without obtaining written approval from the county. Any subcontracting shall be subject to the same terms and conditions as the firm. The firm shall be fully responsible for the performance and payment or any subcontractor's contract.

Without the prior written consent of the county, the contract is not assignable by the firm either in whole or in part.

FREE AND COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Any agreement or collusion among firms to fix a price or limit competition shall render the proposal void and automatically rejected. Such conduct is unlawful and subject to criminal sanction.

INSURANCE

The selected firm shall secure and maintain insurance, at its sole cost and expense, both prior to the commencement of the term of the contract between County and firm and for at least the duration of the contract between County and firm regarding this RFP.

(1) General Liability Insurance as follows (for all applicable):
(a) Each Occurrence - $1,000,000.00
(b) General Aggregate - $2,000,000.00

(2) Automobile Liability Insurance: With minimums to satisfy the state of Utah's requirements; and
(3) Workers Compensation and Employers' Liability: With minimums to satisfy the state of Utah's requirements or a valid waiver issued by the appropriate department of the state of Utah.

CONFLICTING TERMS OF PROVISIONS

If any portion of this RFP conflicts in whole or in part with a written agreement entered into between the selected party and Washington County subsequent to the issuance of this RFP, the subsequent written agreement between the selected party and Washington County shall control.

DISCLOSURE

All proposals accepted by County shall become a matter of public record and shall be regarded as public, except those elements of each proposal that are identified by the firm as business or trade secrets and clearly marked as "trade secret," "confidential," or "proprietary." Each element of a proposal that the Candidate desires not to be considered a public record must be clearly marked. Any blanket statement (i.e. regarding entire pages, documents, or other non-specific designations) shall not be sufficient and shall not bind the County in any way whatsoever. If disclosure is required under the Utah Government Records Access Management Act ("GRAMA") or otherwise by law (despite the firm's request for confidentiality), the firm shall promptly comply with such disclosure requirements.

CONTINGENCIES

This RFP does not commit County to award a contract. County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals if County determines it is in the best interest of County to do so.

MODIFICATIONS

County reserves the right to issue addendums to this RFP. Any addendum will be posted online with the original RFP.

INCURRED COSTS

This RFP does not commit County to pay any costs incurred by firms in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request, and firms agree that all costs incurred by firms in developing this proposal are the firm's responsibility.

NEGOTIATIONS

County shall require the selected firm to participate in negotiations and to submit price, technical, or any other revisions of their proposals as may result from negotiations.

WRITTEN CONTRACT REQUIRED

The selected firm must be willing to enter into a written contract with Washington County. A binding agreement between County and firm is dependent upon the negotiation, preparation, and execution of a formal contract. At any time prior to the execution of a binding agreement executed by both parties, County may, in its sole discretion, stop the selection process and decline to enter into an agreement for the subject matter herein.

FIRM POINT OF CONTACT

The firm will designate an individual to serve as the primary point of contact for the contract. The firm or designee must respond to County inquiries within two (2) business days. The firm shall not change the primary contact without written, notification to the county.

NOTIFICATIONS TO COUNTY

In the event of a problem or potential problem that could impact the quality or quantity of work, and/or services, or the level of performance, the firm shall notify County in writing within one (1) business day.

In the event of a data breach, the firm shall notify County in writing within one (1) business day.