

Building the Border Wall

By: Mary Love, APAC Procurement Counselor

President Trump has said that the “Wall” is currently being designed, and so it is. I would like to call your attention to two solicitations that are currently published on Fedbizopps, <https://www.fbo.gov>.

Presolicitation 2017-JC-RT-0001, Design-Build Structure, was posted on February 24, 2017 by the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, Indianapolis, IN. It is requesting that vendors submit a concept paper of their prototypes by March 10, 2017 and contemplates multiple awards by mid-April. You may find the presolicitation at: <https://www.fbo.gov/spg/DHS/USCS/FPSB/2017-JC-RT-0001/listing.html>

On March 2, 2017 the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, Washington DC posted 2017-DHS-OCPO-RFI-0001, Request for Information – DHS Border Wall Long-Term Strategy. The stated purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit ideas from industry and other partners for the more comprehensive long-term strategy related to the border wall. The RFI states: “For this action DHS seeks white papers from companies, not for profits, educational institutions, consortia, and other entities with innovative ideas to design, finance, and complete construction of physical infrastructure, known as the “Wall” on the Southwest land Border of the United States....” You may find the detailed RFI at: <https://www.fbo.gov/notices/8d3da7a86af51e252d019f2e13b08378>

Federal contracting agencies will often initiate a “conversation” with industry using an RFI when input is advantageous to best describe or define an acquisition strategy. These exchanges can take months, sometimes longer. This particular RFI is a perfect example of how the government interacts with the American public to understand the parameters of what often begins as a loosely described objective. Public input will be vital to establishing a formal government estimate to provide to Congress for the deliberation and allocation of funds in the current and/or future federal budget(s). For example, should the “Wall” become a multiple award task order contract with a base and four option years, the monetary limit anticipated for the entire project will need to be identified in the solicitation.

The RFI will be interesting to watch to see how (or if?) the ideas for the “Wall” progress to an actual structure. You have an opportunity to add your two cents to this historic American project. So I challenge you to disregard any political views, opinions, and/or concerns about the viability, and think instead about what business capability you might be able to contribute to this HUGE undertaking. Could your company be a prime? What might your business contribute as a sub?