

QUESTIONS & RESPONSES #02

CONTRACT NUMBER: 032026-1024

RFP/RFQ TITLE: NWSA Rebrand Initiative

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QUESTIONS DUE DATE: 4/28/2026 @ 2:00 PM (PDT)

Q&A ISSUE DATE: 04/21/2026

14	1. Why does NWSA feel a new name is needed at this time? Staff experience, customer feedback?	3787
		Both staff experience and customer feedback. As our commercial team engages with international shipping lines and cargo owners our name does not state where our gateway is located which has led to a lot of confusion and need to spend time communicating our location versus our value proposition to the marketplace. We feel a name change could reduce the effort spent on informing the market of 'where we are' and we could focus on marketing what services we provide to the marketplace.
15	Has any market research been conducted to support this initiative?	3787
		No formal market research has been conducted. We have received informal feedback and comments from customers and other stakeholders in the cargo industry. Part of this contract requires market research to identify opportunities and perceptions in key trade markets and analysis of peer ports.
16	Is there any existing competitor analysis (SWOT) that has been done and can be shared?	3787
		Not at this time, but we are asking colleagues.
17	Does the Port have any restrictions to compensating participants to a focus group or survey for market research?	3787
		Funds need to be expended to carry out a fundamental purpose of the government so that no gift of public funds are made. Reasonably compensating participants for market research related to this work is likely not restricted. However, we would want to evaluate and have a say in any proposed plan to conduct any survey or market research where a financial stipend or incentive are involved. If compensating community engagement participation is an element, all costs should be included in the proposal.
18	What is driving the timeline for the end of 2026? Is there any flexibility?	3787
		There is flexibility - however we would like this process to be efficient and our commercial team is eager to utilize the new brand in marketing efforts.
19	Please outline what constitutes "Substantial project completion by the end of 2026"	3787
		Substantial completion would include an approved name and branding visuals with plan for launch - but not necessarily launched.
20	Is there a preference to in-person focus groups vs. online surveys?	3787
		Not necessarily - but likely prefer some focus groups (virtual would be fine) to capture conversation around rebrand with key stakeholders.
21	Will this initiative have any branding implications on Port of Tacoma or Port of Seattle?	3787
		None are expected.
22	What are the primary business outcomes this rebrand is intended to drive—and how will success be measured across internal and external audiences?	3788
		The ultimate goal is that a rebrand would drive increased cargo volumes through our gateway. This outcome is difficult to measure as a direct outcome of a rebrand as there are many contributing factors to cargo volumes. Smaller outcomes that could be measured would include increased BCO's utilizing gateway and increased media engagements.

23	How do you envision the new brand repositioning NWSA within the competitive landscape of North American and global port alliances?	Currently the NWSA markets itself as a fast, flexible and first-class gateway leaning into our location with the fastest transit times and superior service for shippers. We hope the new brand will improve location recall of our gateway by the industry. Today, shippers know they move cargo through Seattle or Tacoma, but they have no connection to the name "The Northwest Seaport Alliance."	3788
24	What are the most critical perception gaps today between how NWSA is currently understood and how you aspire to be seen?	Regarding our name, the industry doesn't immediately recognize that we are a port authority or where we are located. We believe our marketing efforts would be easier if we were easily identified as a port authority.	3788
25	What role should the new name play strategically (e.g., geographic clarity, differentiation, global recognition), and are there any constraints we should be aware of?	We don't have specific constraints but are hoping the new name will provide geographical clarity in a global landscape.	3788
26	How will decision-making and approvals be structured across the Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, and other key stakeholders?	The NWSA is a separate organization from the Port of Seattle and Port of Tacoma, however the five port commissioners from each 'homeport' oversee the NWSA and are referred to as Managing Members (Board). Approvals will only be within the NWSA - first approvals from NWSA Executives with approval required from Managing Members. Requests for authorization and approval from the Managing Members occurs during monthly public meetings.	3788
27	Which audiences are most critical to influence through this rebrand (e.g., global shipping partners, regional businesses, policymakers), and how should they be prioritized?	We care about the impact of this change on all stakeholders, however we hope this will specifically influence global shipping partners and industry stakeholders to drive increased cargo through our gateway. While regional stakeholders are important, the global market is our focus.	3788
28	In the Discovery and Research Phase Deliverables – it mentions that we should develop a workplan that seeks to complete the project before the end of 2026. Is that just for the Discovery and Research to be completed by the end of 2026 or the entirety of the RFP?	Ideally, completion of all deliverables by the of 2026 is desired, but we may have some flexibility depending on scope and depth of proposed approaches.	3788
29	The incidence level of commercial customers for the Northwest Seaport Alliance is relatively small (compared to say, a consumer brand) and may be challenging to engage meaningful decision makers. Can we assume in our research estimates that the Northwest Seaport Alliance would help facilitate conversations with current and potential commercial clients?	The NWSA will help facilitate access to key stakeholders for the purposes of this project (e.g. beneficial cargo owners and shipping lines/ocean carriers).	3788
30	What are the most important rollout considerations, highest priority touchpoints (digital presence, terminal signage, partner communications, etc.) and/or milestone moments that should inform timing, phasing, and implementation strategy?	Communications with existing partners, tenants, and elected officials are the highest priority touchpoints. We would expect that we also have a roll out that sent to press including via social channels and engage with near port communities as well.	3788
31	Should the Silver option include full implementation support and launch, or is the expectation that Silver focuses primarily on strategy, naming, and brand identity development?	We are open to either - if you feel that the strategy, naming, and brand identity development will need to absorb the silver budget to be effective, then please suggest that. We want to trust the expertise of our partner on what areas need the most investment to be effective.	3794

32	Are there any statutory, legal or intergovernmental requirements that must be reflected in the new name?	All NWSA governance documents have the NWSA name in them – these documents will need to be revised to update any new name. Those revisions will require a vote of our Managing Members, and that group meets as a board once per month. The NWSA name and associated marks are all protected under current USPTO filings, so any revision thereto will require re-filing and approximately 90 days' lead time. There may be additional state statutory requirements and we are evaluating applicability. For e.g. RCW 53.04.110 which provides requirements for "Port District" name changes. However, NWSA is "port development authority" under RCW 53.57 and is the only port development authority in the state of Washington. There is no precedence of a port development authority changing its name. We will need to work closely with the awarded vendor/contractor during the Discovery and Research phase of the anticipated contract.	3794
33	The RFP states "include our geographic location." (assuming must include "Northwest," "Seattle," "Tacoma," "Washington," etc.). Must it include all geographies or is it possible to select them based on the research phase. Are there any other exact naming parameters already identified?	This request in the RFP reflects our organization's experience with the industry not recognizing our location from our current name. Our team feels like Seattle and Tacoma should be included in the name, however we are looking for direction from the partner firm (and likely through the discovery phase) on what location element will be best for our brand moving forward.	3794
34	Is there a target timeline specifically for name selection and approval?	Not necessarily - but settling on a name earlier in the process would allow for completion of the other components (i.e. Brand & Visual Identity Development, Brand Guidelines and Standards, and Implementation Support) to occur sooner.	3794
35	Approximately how many internal staff will need to be engaged in this process?	15-20 people	3794
36	Can you provide a preliminary list of key stakeholder groups (for example, shipping lines, labor organizations, trucking/rail partners, international partners, community groups, etc)?	Shipping lines, beneficial cargo owners, terminal operators, Class 1 railroads, labor, trucking community, near-port communities.	3794
37	Are there key international markets or trade partners that should be included in research or stakeholder engagement?	There are key international markets and trade partners that should be included in research, however direct stakeholder engagement TBD.	3794
38	Is there a particular priority group to consider in the rebrand? (e.g., community perceptions vs industry perceptions?)	Industry perceptions take priority, however we want to consider community implications as well.	3794
39	Is there a desired launch date for the new brand?	Preferrably by the end of 2026.	3794
40	Are there any key milestones (Commission meetings, public announcements, etc.) that the project schedule must align with?	Not necessarily. We expect that we will want Managing Member approval at a public meeting, but those happen monthly and can be fit according to the timing of the rebrand.	3794
41	The L&I website outlines: "You are exempt from this training requirement if you've been in business with an active Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number for 3 or more years AND have performed work on 3 or more public works projects." Can we assume this to be the case with this project? If we are deemed without qualification, will there be an opportunity to take the training after we are notified and before you award the contract?	We do not believe this will apply to this personal service contract.	3794
42	Does NWSA have pre-determined deliverables for phase II or for an extended (\$250k+) LOE?	The \$250k Silver is likely the budget ceiling for the entirety of this project, but there might be flexibility depending on what is proposed.	3795
43	What is the anticipated budget range and is phased or optional pricing acceptable?	Phased and option pricing is acceptable.	3795
44	Should third-party costs such as stock photography, video, and fonts be included in our proposal or procured directly by NWSA?	Include front cost, but we would prefer to use our own photo and video assets that we could capture in-house.	3795
45	What level of licensing and usage rights are required for photography, video, and typography assets?	Minimum required is commercial use and we would ultimately like to own the asset. We have an in-house photographer or homeport resources that could capture any images/video that we would require.	3795

46	Are digital experience updates such as website redesign or content strategy expected as part of this effort?	Please call out specific digital updates that you'd recommend and content strategy, but do not include the cost of those updates in the RFP. We would make website changes and/or other content specific changes either in-house or with other funds.	3795
47	Will NWSA be fully responsible for brand internal adoption, and ongoing management after launch?	Yes	3795
48	Are there any aspects that NWSA will rely on the vendor to accomplish? Are there any major events that are targeted for rolling out the new brand (i.e., state of the port)?	We would like to roll out the new brand at our State of Trade breakfast in November 2026, however we understand that this may not be feasible and are not expecting that to happen. We would expect the vendor to accomplish the work set out in the RFP and are open to suggested approaches from the vendor.	3795
49	The RFP includes the following request: "Describe the team's experience responding to and overall management of on-call/ task order services and describe the firm's approach for responding to the Port's request(s) for services." Do you anticipate this contract including on-call services beyond the core scope? Can you confirm that our proposal should include a response to that request?	no on-call services anticipated	3796
50	Can you confirm that the due date of 4/22 listed on the procurement web page is the correct due date? The RFP shows a due date of 3/25.	To allow for all interested firms to respond and apply, the deadline has been extended to May 6, 2026.	3797