

Problems Only Government Can Solve

Foundations are important, but they have their limits.



Federal Government office workers searching files in Washington D.C. 1939. (Shutterstock)

By Mark Funkhouser

“For almost forty years our economy has bred stagnant wages, long-term unemployment, huge disparities of wealth, and fewer escalators of social mobility.”

These are the opening words of social scientist Daniel Yankelovich's book *Wicked Problems, Workable Solutions: Lessons from a Public Life*. They describe a set of facts that, in ways often unrecognized or unacknowledged, dominates almost every issue.

This list also is a reminder, in an age of disruption and social entrepreneurship, of the importance of government. Technological advances and innovation are rightly prized, and yet the problems Yankelovich lists remain largely undiminished. And they are massive in scale. As Alan Greenblatt wrote in *Governing* back in 2011, “Public education is a \$600 billion enterprise in the United States. All the private money that goes to support it, from bake sales to the Gates Foundation, represents less than 1 percent of that amount.”

It would seem to follow, then, as Hilary Pennington of the Ford Foundation put it at a recent symposium, that “the path to scale is through the government.” I was surprised to hear this from an executive in the philanthropic community and followed up with her. She thinks that the degree of attention paid by foundations and the public to individual social entrepreneurs is problematic because they tend to position government as the problem. She wishes that foundations would devote as much attention to social entrepreneurs within government. Yes, government needs to change, but I agree with her that the path to scale, especially on issues of social justice, is indeed through government because there are limits to what the market will do.

Pennington went on to say that it would be wonderful if young people who are so in love with social entrepreneurship and public service saw government as a credible sphere in which to pursue these ideals. Instead, as she noted, they are skeptical of government as an agent for progress. As Paul C. Light reported in his book *A Government Ill Executed*, only 28 percent of college seniors who were surveyed saw working for government as the preferred form of public service.

So if it must fall to government to tackle the “wicked problems,” then what should be the role of foundations? For Pennington, the answer depends on the relationship between government and the governed, since it is the public that should determine public priorities. Foundations can help governments be more effective and accountable. They can fund experimentation and then help government make wiser decisions about what programs it should fund. And foundations can rally attention to neglected problems or unifying goals.

Near the end of his book, Yankelovich writes that the central challenge we face is this: “How do we reinforce the human bonds that hold society together?” It seems to me that the only answer is effective and accountable government.

Source: <http://www.governing.com>

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California Sub-Bid Request Ads

ATKINSON CONTRACTORS, LP

Sub-bids from All Qualified & Certified DBE Subcontractors/Suppliers for:

BART Contract 15PB-120

**BART Earthquake Safety Program
A Line Lake Merritt to Coliseum
in Oakland, Alameda County**

Bids Tuesday, July 28, 2015

Description of Work (but not limited to):

Administrative Services, Asphalt Paving, Cast-in-Place Concrete. Cast-in-Place Concrete (Foundation), Chain Link Fences and Gates, 4" Column Drain Outfall, Concrete Curbs, Gutters, and Walks, Concrete Paving, Concrete Reinforcing, Concrete Reinforcing (Foundation), Decorative Brick Pavement, Demolition, Drill and Bond Dowels, Drill and Bond Dowels (Chemical Adhesive), Elastomeric Bearing Pads, Electrical and Fiber Optic Cable Modifications, Excavation Support and Protection (UPRR), Grounding and Bonding for Traction Power, Janitorial Services, Planting Irrigation, Planting, Precast Concrete Splash Blocks, Prestressed Concrete, QA/QC, Selective Structure Demolition, Shoring and Underpinning for Safeguarding Structures, Signage and Pavement Markings, Slope Protection, Hydroseeding and Turf Installation, Storm Drainage Utilities 12-in.-diameter, Structural Backfill, Structural Excavation, Support and Protection of Service Utilities, Temporary Traffic Signal Systems, Traffic Maintenance and Control, Traffic Signal System Modifications - City of Oakland.

Atkinson Contractors, LP

18201 Von Karman Ave, Suite 800. Irvine, CA 92612
norcal.estimate@atkn.com
Phone: 949-382-7145 • Fax: 949-855-9923 / 949-553-0252
Contact: Andrew Nelson

Atkinson is a union contractor and an Equal Opportunity Employer. 100% Performance & Payment Bonds from an approved surety company will be required for subcontractors greater than \$500,000. Atkinson will pay the cost of bonds up to 1.5%. Atkinson will assist in obtaining necessary equipment, supplies, materials or related services. We will split items of work (refer to project specs for full list of bid items) and provide assistance for bonding, LOC and insurance where needed. Subcontractors will be expected to sign Atkinson's standard subcontract and to comply with our company's standard insurance requirements which include a waiver of subrogation. This is a BART OCIP project. Subcontractors must provide contractor's license number and Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) registration number with their quote.

Plans and specs are available for viewing in our San Francisco office located at 450 Mission Street, Suite 402, San Francisco, CA 94105. Please call 949-204-7594 to schedule a visit. In Southern California please call 949-382-7145 to schedule an appointment to view plans and specs in our Irvine (Orange County) office.

REQUESTING SUB-QUOTES FROM QUALIFIED SBE SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS/TRUCKERS FOR:

Montague Expressway and South Milpitas Boulevard Improvements

Contract No.: C640 (15014)

Owner: Santa Clara VTA

Engineers' Estimate: \$25,000,000.

BID DATE: July 22, 2015 @ 2:00 PM

Items of work include but are not limited to: Survey, SWPPP, QC / QA, Trucking, Sweeping, Water Truck, Fence, Clear & Grub, Demo, Landscape, Minor Concrete, Sign Structure, Construction Area Signs, Stripe, Electrical, Adjust Utilities, Slurry Seal, Bridge, Joint Seal, Rebar, Piling and Under-ground.

Granite Rock Company 'Graniterock' is signatory to Operating Engineers, Laborers, Teamsters, Carpenters and Cement Masons unions. 100% performance and payment bonds will be required from a qualified surety company for the full amount of the subcontract price. Bonding assistance is available. Graniterock will pay bond premium up to 1.5%. In addition to bonding assistance, subcontractors are encouraged to contact Graniterock Estimating with questions regarding obtaining lines of credit, insurance, equipment, materials and/or supplies, or with any questions you may have. Subcontractors must possess a current contractor's license, insurance and worker's compensation coverage. Subcontractors will be required to enter into our standard contract. Graniterock intends to work cooperatively with all qualified firms seeking work on this project.

Granite Rock Company

120 Granite Rock Way, San Jose, CA 95136
Phone (408) 574-1400 Fax (408) 365-9548
Contact: Paul Brizzolara
Email: estimating@graniterock.com
We Are An Equal Opportunity Employer

Sub Bids Requested From Qualified
DBE Subcontractors & Suppliers for

City of West Sacramento

Village Parkway Extension Project

Location: West Sacramento, CA

Bid Date: August 4, 2015 @ 2:00 PM

McGuire and Hester is seeking qualified subcontractors in the following trades: striping/signage; construction area signs; erosion control; landscaping; slurry seal; stamped AC; minor concrete; electrical; demolition; and trucking.

We will pay up to and including one and one-half percent (1-1/2%) of your bonding cost. Certification assistance is available, as well as viewing plans and specs.

McGuire and Hester

9009 Railroad Avenue • Oakland, CA 94603
Phone: (510) 632-7676 • Fax: (510) 562-5209
Contact: Sean Moss

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Sub Bids Requested From Qualified
DBE Subcontractors & Suppliers for

San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

BART Earthquake Safety Program

Aerial Structures

A Line Lake Merritt to Coliseum

Location: Oakland, CA

Project No. 15PB-120

Bid Date: July 28, 2015 @ 2:00 PM

McGuire and Hester is seeking qualified subcontractors in the following trades: construction area signs; demolition; contaminated soil testing; prestressing concrete; reinforcing steel; electrical & fiber optic; temporary traffic signal systems; hydroseeding; striping; fencing; and trucking.

We will pay up to and including one and one-half percent (1-1/2%) of your bonding cost. Certification assistance is available, as well as viewing plans and specs.

McGuire and Hester

9009 Railroad Avenue • Oakland, CA 94603
Phone: (510) 632-7676 • Fax: (510) 562-5209
Contact: Keith Ones

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Sub-Bids Requested From Qualified
MBE, WBE, DBE, DVBE

Subcontractors and Suppliers

Jefferson Middle School Modernization

Project No. 02-07-23-15

Location: Torrance, CA 90501

Bid Date: 7/23/2015 @ 2:00PM

Respond By: 7/16/2015

Proposals Requested For The Following Trades:
Gates & Handrail Railing, Temporary Fence.

Raffi's Metal Design

534 E Fig Ave Monrovia CA 91016
Phone: 818-612-0769 • Fax: 626-932-1850

Name: Raffi Hanneyan
Email: raffismet@aol.com

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California Sub-Bid Request Ads

ATKINSON CONTRACTORS, LP

Requests

Sub-bids from All Qualified & Certified DBE Subcontractors/Suppliers for:

Caltrans Contract No. 08-3555V4

Construction on Rte 15 in San Bernardino County in Victorville

from 0.5 Mile North of Mojave Drive to 1.5 Mile North of Stoddard Wells Road Overcrossing

Bids Wednesday, August 5, 2015

Description of Work and Material Supply (but not limited to):

Aggregate Base, Architectural Treatment, Asphalt Paving, Biologist, Clear & Grub, Concrete Barrier, Concrete Paving, Construction Area Signs, Demolition, Drainage, Earthwork, Drilled Piling, Driven Piling, Electrical, Environmental Services, Erosion Control, Fencing & Railing, Flatwork, Guardrail, Imported Borrow, Irrigation, Joint Seal, Landscaping, Pavement Marking, Maintenance of Traffic, Minor Concrete, Misc Iron & Steel, Overhead Sign Structures, Painting, Pipe Supply, Precast Prestressed Concrete Girders, Rebar, Retaining Wall, Road Barrier, Roadway Joint Seal, Roadway Sign, Rock Slope Protection, Sewer, Shotcrete, Signal and Lighting, Soil Nail Wall, Soundwall (Masonry Block), Street Sweeping, Structural Concrete, Structural Steel, Survey, SWPPP, Traffic Control System, Traffic Monitoring Stations, Trucking, Wireless Vehicle Detection System (Refer to project specs for complete bid item list). This project has a 12% DBE Goal.

Atkinson Contractors, LP

18201 Von Karman Ave, Suite 800. Irvine, CA 92612

socal.esteeming@atkn.com

Phone: 949-855-9755 / 949-382-7145 • Fax: 949-855-9923 / 949-553-0252

Contact: Andrew Nelson

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TO DOWNLOAD PLANS, SPECS AND SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Please go to http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/esc/oe/project_ads_addenda/08/08-3555V4/

RGW Construction Inc. is seeking all qualified DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprises) for the following project:

State Highway in Alameda County at Various Locations

Caltrans Contract No. 04-3G7104

Federal Aid Project No. ACNHPI-X001(592)E

Engineer Estimate: \$930,000 - 50 Working Days

Goal: DBE 25%

Bids: July 21st, 2015 @ 2:00 PM

Requesting Sub-quotes for (including but not limited to): Fabric & Oils, Construction Area Signs, Traffic Control, Raise Iron-Utilities, Clear and Grub, Roadway Excavation, Landscaping, Erosion Control, Aggregate Base, Asphalt Paving, Signs Roadside, SWPPP, Water Truck, Sweeper, Trucker, Storm Drain (Underground).

Scope of Work: Construct Roadside Paving and Maintenance Vehicle Pullout.

RGW is willing to breakout any portion of work to encourage DBE participation. Contact us for a specific item list.

Plans and Specs are available to view and copy at our office or the Caltrans website www.dot.ca.gov/hq/esc/oe/. Contact our Estimator, Andy Eldridge 925-606-2400 andrew.eldridge@rgwconstruction.com for any questions, including bonding, lines of credit, or insurance or equipment or material suppliers. Subcontractors should be prepared to submit payment and performance bonds equal to 100% of their quotation. For bonding and other assistance, please call.

RGW Construction, Inc.

Contractors License A/B 591940

550 Greenville Road • Livermore, CA 94550 • Phone: 925-606-2400 • Fax: 925-961-1925

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Sub-Bids Requested From Qualified MBE, DBE, WBE, SF LBE Subcontractors and Suppliers

Agreement No. CS-249 Planning and Design Services Mountain Tunnel Improvements

Location: Moccasin, CA

Bid Date: 8/4/15

AE003 – Civil Engineering; AE015 – Surveying (Land & Aerial); AE020 – Water Resources Engineering; PS045 – Hazardous Waste and Remediation Services; PS047 – Laboratory Services (Materials Testing)

Jacobs Engineering Group Inc.

160 Spear Street, 12th Floor • San Francisco, CA 94105

Contact: Kris Benson • 510-761-6581

Email: sfpub.mttunnel@jacobs.com

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Project Name: Transbay Block 8

Project Location: San Francisco, CA

Bid Due Date: July 22, 2015

For Concrete Structures and Testing & Inspection

Related California and Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation are currently requesting bid proposals from qualified subcontractors and material suppliers based in San Francisco. This project is administered by the Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure (OCII) for the construction of the Transbay Block 8 Project. The OCII has established a subcontractor goal for this project at 50% SBE participation, with first consideration will be given to SF-based SBEs/LBEs/WBEs and MBES; Non-SF-based SBEs shall be used to satisfy the goal only if SF-based SBEs are not available, qualified, or if their bids or fees are significantly higher. To count towards the SBE goal, a business must be certified as a LBE with the City and County of San Francisco. There is also a 50% SBE goal for suppliers. For more information on the LBE certification process, please visit the following site: <http://sfgsa.org/index.aspx?page=5364>

The Project is comprised of approximately 546 residential units and 18,000 square feet of neighborhood retail over a 3-level subterranean parking structure. The design features a 55-story tower, 65' and 85' podium buildings, townhomes and a publicly accessible mid-block paseo. The Project's residential program includes 116 for-sale condominiums, 280 market rate rental units and 150 below market rate rental units.

For more information please email TB8@related.com. A member of the team will be able to provide clarifications and answers to any questions. Please do not send your bids via email to this email address. Electronic bid submittals will not be reviewed.

Bid proposals shall be submitted no later than 3pm on July 22, 2015 via hardcopy delivery to:

Transbay 8 Urban Housing, LLC

44 Montgomery, Suite 1050

San Francisco, CA 94104

Phone: 415-677-4406 • Fax: 888-371-8739

Contact: Jeff Lucas

Email: TB8@related.com



States Take Larger Role in Passenger Rail

A federal law enacted in the late days of the Bush administration is starting to force states to take a closer look at local Amtrak routes that they subsidize.

By Daniel C. Vock

Illinois, which sits at the center of the country's railroad network, has long promoted passenger rail. It's rebuilt track so trains could travel faster between Chicago and St. Louis, added service along preexisting routes and even began planning for expansions to new cities. Ridership on Illinois routes grew by 85 percent in the last decade. But now the talk in Springfield is about cuts to Amtrak, not expansions.

That's no surprise considering Illinois' precarious finances. Nearly every service provided by the state is under scrutiny as Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner and Democratic leaders in the legislature try to come to an agreement on the budget.

But the uncertainty over Illinois' passenger rail isn't all the doing of lawmakers in Springfield. Illinois, like many other states, recently had to start paying higher subsidies in order to continue providing local Amtrak service to its residents. The increased state costs come as a result of a 2008 federal law, called the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act, that required many states to pick up a bigger part of the tab for 28 Amtrak routes that are shorter than 750 miles. Those routes cross 19 states and carry almost half of Amtrak's passengers.

The requirement for greater state subsidies took effect in October 2013. As a result, state payments to Amtrak increased from \$186 million in 2013 to \$238 million last year. State subsidies and fares on state-supported routes make up about 30 percent of Amtrak's revenue. Amtrak service levels, though, did not increase.

As more states pay higher subsidies to Amtrak, their scrutiny of the rail company has also increased. Lawmakers in Oregon have explored reducing its payments. Indiana officials are bringing in an outside contractor to try to improve Amtrak service there. And other state officials around the country are trying to clarify what they can expect from Amtrak going forward. "If you're making an investment in something, you have an obligation to make sure it's a certain quality," said Patricia Quinn, chair of the States for Passenger Rail Coalition. "This is a new relationship with all of the states and Amtrak."

In Illinois, Rauner is calling for a 40 percent reduction in the state's Amtrak subsidies, from \$42 million a year to \$26 million a year, which would return Illinois to what it was paying before the 2013 hikes. The administration provided few other details, such as which routes might be affected or how much service would be reduced. If enacted, Rauner's cuts would be the first significant drop in state support for local routes at a time when states are already taking a greater role in providing intercity passenger rail. "We are currently in negotiations with Amtrak about the impacts to service levels on all routes in order to make decisions about the frequency and level of service that the state can afford," said Guy Tridgell, a spokesman for the Illinois Department of Transportation, in a statement.

Imposing spending cuts, though, could be more complicated than it seems at first blush. Ray Lang, senior director of national state relations for Amtrak, told members of the Illinois House that reductions

along the Chicago-St. Louis line could force the state to have to pay back federal stimulus money used to improve the tracks to allow for faster trains. That means the spending cuts could fall disproportionately to other routes. Decreasing the frequency of trains would also make it more expensive to ride the routes that remain, because fixed overhead costs would be shared among fewer riders, said Richard Harnish, executive director of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association. He also predicted that ridership would drop at a steeper rate than the service cuts because "frequency and dependability are critical in making sure train service works."

Oregon lawmakers encountered similar concerns when they looked into their Amtrak subsidies this year. In a two-year budget proposal, former Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber recommended that Oregon spend \$10.4 million from general funds-on top of revenue generated from specialty license plates-to help the state meet the higher subsidy requirement for Amtrak's Cascade route.

If lawmakers fail to approve funds and completely eliminate the \$10.4 million two-year

subsidy, service would halt between Eugene and Portland. The state would have to repay the federal government for two train sets it bought with federal stimulus money or else give them away. If the state changed its mind after a decade, it would cost between \$80 million and \$200 million to get the service up and running again, the agency calculated. (Although Oregon's budget is not finalized, it now appears that legislators will likely include the full \$10.4 million in the next biennial budget.)

The same 2008 law that increased the cost of subsidies also gave states more flexibility to use vendors other than Amtrak to provide rail service. Indiana officials are using that to try to improve service on the Hoosier State line, which runs from Chicago to Indianapolis.

It is working on an arrangement where a separate contractor, Iowa Pacific Holdings, would take over key functions. It would provide the train equipment, marketing and on-board services, such as food sales and Wi-Fi. But Amtrak would remain the primary operator, providing the train crews and ticketing services.

Source: <http://www.governing.com>

