

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

January 2024

**MASTER PLANNING SERVICES LIST
FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SERVICES**

**In support of the
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Of the

**Gulf Regional Planning Commission
1635-G Popps Ferry Road
Biloxi, MS 39532**

PART I GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this *Request for Qualifications* is to solicit submissions from consultants interested in providing transportation planning services required by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission (hereinafter “GRPC”) in furtherance of tasks included in the annual *Unified Planning Work Program for Transportation Planning* for the Mississippi Gulf Coast Area. GRPC expects to develop a Master Planning Services List of qualified consultants under which contracts may be authorized and negotiated with selected contractors as needed.

This document is also intended to provide interested consultants with information regarding the types of transportation planning services for which assistance is being sought and the conditions under which GRPC proposes to enter into contractual agreements for such services. Details pertaining to the content and submittal of the requested *Statement of Qualifications* are provided herein. In addition, this *Request for Qualifications* outlines the procedures to be adopted by GRPC for the evaluation of consultant submissions, the selection of a consultant (or consultants), and the negotiation of agreements for required transportation planning services.

2. Issuing Agency

This *Request for Qualifications* is being issued by GRPC as the designated metropolitan planning organization for the Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula metropolitan area (Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties). GRPC is responsible for planning and promoting the development of an intermodal transportation system that will facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Area. Proposed planning activities and sources of funding are described in the annual *Unified Planning Work Program for Transportation Planning* adopted by GRPC. All planning activities undertaken by GRPC must conform to the joint planning regulations promulgated by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

The Gulf Regional Planning Commission is located at 1635 Popps Ferry Road, Suite G, Biloxi, MS 39532 (telephone (228) 864-1167; fax (228) 864-1149). The Executive Director of GRPC will serve as contract administrator but may delegate responsibility for the administration of specific tasks to project administrators. The project administrator will be identified in the Assignment Instrument appended to the contract for each individual planning assignment.

3. Planning Services

GRPC will be seeking assistance on a contractual basis from qualified consultants interested in performing various work tasks related to the UPWP. The types of transportation planning services for which assistance is being sought fall into the following categories:

- Travel Demand and Forecast Scenarios
- Freight Mobility Study
- Intersection Study
- Transit & Multimodal Systems
- Roadway Lighting Plan
- Speed Management Program
- Pedestrian Crossing Analysis

More detailed information regarding the planning activities proposed within each category is provided in the Scope of Work (Part III).

4. Consultant Selection

Consultants should submit their qualifications for those tasks they have the capability to perform. The statement of qualifications should clearly identify the task(s) for which the consultant feels it is strongly suited.

Copies of all responses to the *Request for Qualifications* will be distributed to members of the Consultant Selection Committee. As the need for specific planning services comes up, all statements of qualifications will be rated and ranked by category in accordance with the selection criteria specified below (Part II).

5. Rejection and Issuance of RFP's

GRPC reserves the right to reject any and all submissions received in response to this *Request for Qualifications*.

There may be projects or studies undertaken by GRPC, not in the current work program, which require work from a consultant(s). If so, GRPC reserves the right to use submissions received during this *Request for Qualifications* for consulting firm consideration.

6. Negotiations

GRPC's Executive Director will negotiate the terms of contracts with the top-ranked-consultant(s). In the event of a joint submittal, the Executive Director will negotiate with representatives of the firm identified as the prime consultant. In the event that negotiations fail to produce a contract acceptable in all its particulars to both parties, the next highest ranked consulting firm will be considered.

7. Master Planning Services List

GRPC proposes to develop a Master Planning Services List of consultants selected to pre-qualify for work on one or more tasks, as described more fully in Part III for a period **of 36 months**.

8. Ineligible Costs

GRPC shall not be liable for any costs incurred by any consultant prior to the execution of a contract by all parties.

9. Addenda

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this *Request for Qualifications*, addenda will be provided to all consultants on record with GRPC as having received the original request.

10. Response

Firms qualified to conduct business in the State of Mississippi are asked to submit 1 (one) unbound original and a digital copy of the proposals to the GRPC office by 5:00 PM CST, Wednesday, February 21, 2024. All proposals must be mailed or delivered in a single, sealed package to the GRPC office. Statements not received by the deadline shall be deemed non-responsive by GRPC.

In order to be considered for selection, a consultant must submit a digital copy and a hard copy of a completed *Statement of Qualifications*. The format should be 8.5 X 11 with 12-point font. The statement should not exceed twenty (20) pages, including a letter of transmittal, table of contents, summary and introduction, but excluding appendices. Up to five oversized (11x17-inch) sheets are allowed, but each shall count as pages against the 20-page maximum. In the event of a joint submission, all requested information must be provided for all consultants. Statements should be emailed or delivered to the following address:

Jeff Loftus
Gulf Regional Planning Commission
1635 Popps Ferry Road, Suite G
Biloxi, MS 39532
jol@grpc.com

11. Responsibility

The prime contractor shall be considered responsible for ensuring the satisfactory performance of all services assigned in accordance with the terms of an executed contract whether such services are performed by the prime consultant or by a subcontractor. GRPC will deal exclusively with the prime contractor regarding all contractual matters and retains the right to approve or disapprove all subcontractors. Consultants responding to this *Request for Qualifications* must identify all proposed partners and subcontractors and provide complete information regarding the qualifications of such firms. All items required of the prime consultant (e.g., a completed Standard Form 330), company organization chart, and resumes of principals, managers, and professional staff must be provided for non-prime consultants as well.

12. Disclosure

All materials submitted in response to the *Request for Qualifications* shall become the property of GRPC and may be returned only at the option of GRPC. However, GRPC shall treat all information contained in a consultant's *Statement of Qualifications* as the property of the consultant and shall respect the confidentiality of the information. Pending the selection of a consultant (or consultants), no statement shall be released to anyone other than auditors or authorized State or Federal government personnel or as required by law.

13. Small Business and DBE Nondiscrimination

GRPC encourages small businesses, minority-owned and disadvantaged enterprises to participate in the RFQ process, either as part of a submission or as an independent submission, on one task or more for which the firm is qualified.

A pre-qualified consultant shall agree to adhere to all applicable portions of Federal guidelines (49 CFR 21 and 23 CFR 200) which prohibit unlawful discrimination in employment practices, or in the provision of services, based on race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the event the consultant performs work for GRPC that involves the selection of a site or the location of a facility, the consultant shall utilize criteria or methods of selection which take into consideration the probable impacts and benefits of the facility on individuals without discrimination because of their race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, sexual orientation, or disability. Such criteria and methods shall be designed to include measures which ensure the opportunity for potentially affected individuals to participate in the selection process without regard to race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, sexual orientation, or disability.

14. Publication

The consultant shall not copyright any part of the work performed under the terms of a contract without written approval of GRPC. If copyright permission is granted, the consultant shall agree to grant to GRPC, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the U. S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) an irrevocable, non-exclusive, non-transferable, and royalty-free license to publish, distribute, and use according to law, any article or material that may be developed as a part of the assigned work.

GRPC, MDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) shall have equal responsibility to review and approve material for publications. After acceptance of any final report prepared in accordance with an *Assignment Instrument*, the consultant, GRPC, MDOT and FHWA/FTA shall be free to use the data and results incorporated in the report without restriction. All publications shall contain the following statement on the credit sheet:

The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Gulf Regional Planning Commission, the Mississippi Department of Transportation or the United States Department of Transportation.

Publication is understood to include both written and oral releases but not discussions of the study effort with small technical groups or lectures delivered to employees or students. Lectures to other groups which describe the study effort are permissible so long as they do not disclose data or results without express authorization from GRPC. **The consultant shall publish no final reports without formal approval from GRPC, MDOT and FHWA/FTA.**

15. Notification

Consultants selected for negotiation of a contract will be notified of their selection by the Executive Director on behalf of GRPC.

16. Administration

The contract will be administered by the Executive Director of the Gulf Regional Planning Commission and staff. All payments for services rendered will be made by GRPC to the prime contractor. The prime contractor will be responsible, in turn, for making payments to partners or subcontractors.

17. Duration

The termination date for the *Master Planning Services List* shall be **36 months** from the date of execution, after which no additional assignments shall be made. A completion date will be specified in each contract.

18. Management

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected consultant(s) will be required to name an overall project manager who is qualified by training and experience to supervise the performance of transportation planning services to be provided in accordance with the terms of the contract.

The consultant may change the overall project manager at any time during the contractual period provided GRPC is notified and approves the change in advance. The consultant shall also name a project manager for the contract. The assignment project manager must also meet the qualifications outlined above or be under the direct supervision and daily control of the overall project manager. The name and qualifications of the assignment project manager must either be provided to GRPC or already on file at the time the assignment is made to the consultant (i.e., before the Notice to Proceed is issued by the Executive Director). If, at any time prior to the completion of an assignment, the consultant finds it necessary to change assignment project managers, GRPC must be notified immediately and approve of the new manager's qualifications.

17. Non-Discrimination Assurance

As provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259) and related statutes, executive orders and regulations, the Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC) assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity from GRPC.

Part II

SELECTION CRITERIA

3.1 Ranking

Once GRPC identifies a planning task to initiate, the Selection Committee will review and evaluate all statements of qualifications received from consultants. After members of the Selection Committee have reviewed and evaluated all submissions, statements will be rated and ranked.

3.2 Criteria

The following criteria will be employed by the Selection Committee in evaluating the qualifications of consulting firms making submissions:

- *Qualifications* – The methodological approach, technical skills and planning expertise described by the consultant in the *Statement of Qualifications* will be evaluated by the Committee and will figure prominently in their decision. The consultant should include an overall project level organizational chart to identify personnel and team participants and the type of work attributed to each of the participants. Professional Transportation Planner (PTP) certification is desired.
- *Experience* – This criterion is primarily concerned with the consultant’s experience in providing similar, or closely related, transportation planning services involving work done, not only by the firm, but by the individuals who would actually perform the planning tasks.
- *Capacity for Performance* – The Selection Committee will also focus on the ability of the consultant to provide the requested services in a required time-frame. A principal consideration in this regard will be the size and depth of experience of the firm’s professional and technical staff relative to the magnitude of the project.

PART III

SCOPE OF WORK

Transportation Planning Services

The consultant shall provide transportation planning services required by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission in connection with tasks listed in the *FY 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program for Transportation Planning, Mississippi Gulf Coast Area* and in the subsequent editions of the annual work program, or in connection with other transportation activities undertaken by GRPC. The objective of transportation planning services is to assist GRPC to identify, evaluate, and prioritize transportation improvement projects to improve mobility, safety, and resilience on the Gulf Coast. The types of transportation planning services which may be required by GRPC are generally described below.

Travel Demand and Forecast Scenarios

GRPC is currently using the TransCad model and scenario-building tools and will need customization and data augmentation to support this application for short-range planning. Tasks may include:

- The application of the model to support the analysis of improvement alternatives identified in planning studies undertaken by GRPC, Coast Transit Authority, the Mississippi Department of Transportation or local governmental agencies.
- Development of highway, truck and transit networks needed in order to generate travel assignments for testing proposed new roadways or other capacity enhancements, additional interchanges, service roads, modified bus routes, transit schedule changes and fixed-guideway service.
- Customized programming to assess the impacts of planned or proposed new developments on traffic conditions and air quality.

Freight Mobility Study

Consultant will perform a study to ensure efficient mobility for freight users and industries in the Region. This effort will be used to identify freight clusters. Tier I and Tier II freight networks, Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC), and other freight routes will be evaluated to identify impediments to the network such as traffic delay, roadway geometric challenges, bridge condition, bridge clearance, crash rates, rail crossing safety, road weight class, and pavement conditions.

Intersection Study

The consultant will assist GRPC in developing and implementing a program for identifying improvements to intersections where traffic congestion is occurring. The objectives are to mitigate traffic delay. The program will provide for the systematic collection of information relating to concerns at the intersections. Turning-movement and vehicle classification counts at selected locations may be required for intersection analyses. Travel speed-and-delay studies, traffic sign and signal inventories and other data collection and analysis activities may be required. The consultant will recommend criteria for

evaluating traffic flow conditions and for identifying points of congestion. The consultant will evaluate and make recommendations to intersections system-wide by considering innovative design changes, improved delineation, advanced warning, roundabouts, improve traffic flow by adding turn lanes, extending turn lanes, and improving operations.

Transit & Multimodal Systems

GRPC is responsible for transit planning and will seek assistance in further development of the coordinated transportation plan, Title VI Plan, and other required transit planning documents. Additionally, the consultant shall assist GRPC in meeting the transportation planning needs of Coast Transit Authority in developing and scheduling recommended operational improvements by providing a review of service that provides for a general evaluation of all transit services considering changes in the local environment (funding, population, development). The review identifies new transit services or significant changes to existing services for the following year. The review identifies changes that are designed to achieve specific service goals and opportunities for service expansion and improvement.

Roadway Lighting Plan

The goal of the plan is to provide a consistent approach for street and pedestrian lighting that creates safe nighttime conditions. The lighting plan will provide an evaluation of existing street lighting conditions on major mobility corridors in the Region. This plan would identify methods to improve visibility and aesthetics while reducing energy and maintenance. The plan may identify street lighting standards for retrofit and new construction. Existing conditions will be inventoried and measured as excellent, acceptable, moderate, and poor based on standards such as pole spacing and luminaire. Improvement implementation strategies will be identified. Particular attention to high activity pedestrian areas and areas experiencing nighttime crashes.

Speed Management Program

Identify speed concerns and speed management strategies on High Injury Corridors such as traffic calming, road design changes, conducting education and outreach, and strategically using speed safety cameras to address speed along key corridors, setting appropriate speed limits, review speed limit sign spacing, update signage for improved visibility, and better speed limit signage along high-crash urban and rural corridors.

Pedestrian Crossing Analysis

Identifying and correcting common risks across a High Injury Corridor, such as improving pedestrian crosswalks by adding high-visibility pavement markings, pedestrian refuge, audible pedestrian signals, and lighting. Evaluation criteria will include pedestrian crossings standards, crossing distance, ADA considerations, and technology upgrades.