

REQUEST for LETTERS of INTEREST (RFLOI)

TITLE: **Shallotte Collector Street Plan**

ISSUE DATE: **6/03/2024**

SUBMITTAL DEADLINE: **7/15/2024**

ISSUING AGENCY: **Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) MPO**

CONTRACT TIME: **Six (6) months from the date of contract execution**

CONTRACT PAYMENT TYPE: **Lump-Sum.**

SYNOPSIS

This contract shall be partially reimbursed with Federal-aid funding through the North Carolina Department of Transportation (hereinafter referred to as the Department). The solicitation, selection, and negotiation of a contract shall be conducted in accordance with all Department requirements and guidelines.

Subconsultants are permitted under this contract. The primary and subconsultant firms shall be pre-qualified by the Department to perform any of the Discipline Codes listed below for Brunswick County.

00045, Corridor Planning- Must show expertise and experience in corridor planning, coordinating existing and future land use and the multimodal transportation system to provide guidance as development occurs. Must have a current TransCAD license. Must show ability to use TransCAD and Micro Simulation.

00141- Multimodal Transportation Planning- Must show expertise in development of a Transportation Plan which considers various modes of transportation and connections between them.

This RFLOI is to solicit responses (LETTERS of INTEREST, or LOIs) from qualified firms to provide professional consulting services to:

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (hereinafter “GSATS”) is requesting letters of interest (LOI) for professional services from a qualified consultant to develop the Shallotte Collector Street Plan (hereinafter “Plan” or “Project”). This study proposal submitted by the Town of Shallotte was selected for funding through GSATS’ Local Direct Attributable (DA) Funds Program. The study area consists of the entire municipal limits of the Town of Shallotte along with its adjacent extraterritorial jurisdiction.

The lack of roadway connectivity outside of major arterial corridors in the Town of Shallotte has contributed to increased congestion on US 17 and especially Main Street. As with many other built-up areas of the Grand Strand, dominant development practices here have created insular residential communities, often with only one access point. This development has served to keep vehicle traffic to a minimum within these developments but has also cumulatively brought unneeded congestion to the major roads with motorists typically having only one way to reach destinations outside the development. Motorists must take major roads for short trips where a more direct, less congested option could or should be available. The Town seeks to decrease dependence on major arterials for short trips and increase access to the Town’s various amenities and businesses for residents and visitors. The town also seeks safer transportation routes for pedestrians and cyclists, which will feature safety amenities such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and/or multi-use paths where appropriate.

This study will consider leveraging collector streets to improve the safety and efficiency of the local roadway network. Collectors are a type of roadway occupying a middle ground between local streets and arterial roads, often connecting the two – providing some direct land access and serving medium length trips. Local street layouts tend to be determined on an ad hoc basis by developers and subdivision plats, while arterials, serving long trips between developments, jurisdictions or regions, are the province of government planning. Collector street planning is more often ceded to private development but is seen as an increasingly important area for public planning.

This study will help guide policy and strategy to plan for a safe and effective street network. Drawing on environmental suitability data, land use, population and development projections, and public input, this study will identify needed corridors for new connections and changes to existing corridors, and address any regulatory strategies needed to bring collector streets to these corridors when private development reaches them. Regulatory strategy recommendations may pertain to easement acquisition, changes in zoning and/or the town’s unified development ordinance, and other mechanisms. This study will also inform design standards for these roadways to serve various modes where appropriate.

Except as provided below, any firm wishing to be considered must be properly registered with the Office of the Secretary of State and with the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors. Any firm proposing to use corporate subsidiaries or subcontractors must include a statement that these companies are properly registered with the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors and/or the NC Board for Licensing of Geologists. The Engineers performing the work and in responsible charge of the work must be registered Professional Engineers in the State of North Carolina and must have a good ethical and professional standing. It will be the responsibility of the selected private firm to verify the registration of any corporate subsidiary or subcontractor prior to submitting a Letter of Interest. Firms which are not providing engineering services need not be registered with the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors. Some of the services being solicited may not require a license. It is the responsibility of each firm to adhere to all the laws of the State of North Carolina.

The firm must have the financial ability to undertake the work and assume the liability. The selected firm(s) will be required to furnish proof of Professional Liability insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.00. The firm(s) must have an adequate accounting system to identify costs chargeable to the project.

SCOPE OF WORK

The respondent’s LOI package must meet or exceed the project tasks specified below in this work statement. The respondent will use their technical expertise, professional experience, and creativity when developing a LOI package designed to meet the specifications of this work statement. As such, respondents may propose a method or collection that differs from those processes or tasks listed in the work statement to produce a sounder study. Two public meetings will be required for this project.

Task 1: Project Schedule

The consultant will provide detailed project schedule outlining the proposed completion of the following major phases in the 6-month study process:

Phase	Task
Data Collection	1-7
Initial Finding and Public Input	8
Draft Plan and Public Input	9
Final Review and Revisions	10
Presentation of Final Plan	11

Task 2: Data Collection

The consultant will collect all data necessary to complete a comprehensive evaluation for the study area. Relevant data includes (but not limited to):

- Parcel and tax data;
- Developments (existing and planned) located within and around the study area;
- Available infrastructure and existing utility easements (Water, sewer, electricity, etc.);
- Potential construction limitations (zoning, flood zones, protected species, wetlands, historic sites, etc.);
- Existing roadway data (public and private) including surface type, current and projected future traffic volumes- daily and peak volumes) and turning movement counts at selected intersection locations. Consultant will use the GSATS Model for data and coordinate with NCDOT;
- Analysis of existing right-of-way constraints;
- Design characteristics of intersections and other access points to existing roadways;
- Planned roadway improvements;
- Existing land uses;
- Applicable zoning regulations;
- Applicable subdivision regulations; and
- Most recent crash data

Data may be available from the Town of Shallotte, GSATS, and NCDOT. Where appropriate, GSATS staff will assist the consultant in locating appropriate data; however, the consultant will be responsible for verifying key attributes of these datasets. Fieldwork may be necessary to verify the data assembled for the project. The consultant should review adopted plans and policies relevant to the study area.

Task 3: Mapping of Environmentally Crucial and/or Unsuitable Areas

The consultant will identify wildlife habitats and corridors to minimize impacts to and fragmentation of these areas. The consultant will address any previous environmental analysis and planning for land use in the study area and solicit comments from appropriate regulatory agencies. The consultant will also identify environmentally feasible areas for corridors from an engineering and fiscal standpoint, utilizing appropriate engineering expertise. The consultant will provide maps displaying sustainable and feasible areas for potential collector street corridors, based on environmental and engineering information.

Task 4: Existing Conditions Assessment, Projection of Growth Areas

The consultant will inventory current land uses, zoning, and current traffic burden by roadway segments to determine current population mobility and access needs and their level of attainment. The analyzed data will be synthesized with building permit data, the unified development ordinance, other plans pending or in place, environmental analysis, and any other applicable information or expertise to develop a comprehensive projection of future growth.

Task 5: Identification of Potential of both New and Expanded Collector Street Corridors

The consultant will identify connections between growth areas currently or potentially needed by 2045 based on growth area projections, current demand, and travel demand modelling analysis based on these data. The consultant will identify environmental and engineering constraints for these connections. Consultant should produce maps of these corridors showing data layers used to determine them.

Task 6: Design Standards and Corridor Type Differentiation

The consultant will identify both existing and proposed collector streets with a high potential and need to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian users. This process will involve land use data, NCDOT standards, and public input. The consultant will recommend best roadway cross sections based on the North Carolina DOT Typical Highway cross section document. These illustrations should include recommended conceptual designs and context-sensitive cross-sections for collector streets in the study area.

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/Roadway/RoadwayDesignAdministrativeDocuments/Highway%20Typical%20Sections%20for%20SPOT%20Online.pdf>

Task 7: Recommendations for Planning and Regulatory Strategy

The consultant will list recommendations and strategies for attaining the desired collector street network through public and private development and/or public ROW acquisition. Recommendations and strategies should be based on local ordinances, state laws, NCDOT requirements, and best practices within these constraints where available or applicable.

Task 8: Public Involvement and Input

The proposal should include a detailed description of how the Consultant proposes to engage the public in the planning process and ensure the recommendations are considered for the final plan. Public participation and engagement are required to help formulate a plan that is consistent with the vision of the community.

The Consultant will hold the first public meeting to present findings and initial recommendations to the public and solicit public input.

Task 9: Draft Collector Street Plan

The Consultant will prepare a draft report that identifies the recommendations of the study. Essential materials to be included in the draft report include a compendium of data collected for the project, maps of existing conditions in the study area, environmental and engineering constraints, growth areas, and corridor determinations with supporting text, illustrations of design standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, a table considering various methods for attaining this desirable collector street layout, and assignment of lead and supporting entities needed to complete the project. The draft should include a summary of the procedures used by the consultant to develop the recommendations and strategies outlined in the plan.

The Consultant will hold the second public meeting to present the draft plan.

Task 10: Steering Committee Review

The Steering Committee will undertake a final review of the draft report and recommend revisions deemed necessary. Following review of the draft report (and any revisions), the Steering Committee will endorse a Final Report once it is deemed complete.

Task 11: Final Report

The consultant will be responsible presenting the final document the Town of Shallotte Board of Alderman, Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), and Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

The consultant will provide copies of the Final Report in the following formats:

- One (1) Digital copy to the Town of Shallotte
- One (1) Digital copy to GSATS
- Three (3) Hard copies to the Town of Shallotte
- Three (3) Hard copies to GSATS

SELECTION PROCESS

Following is a general description of the selection process:

- The Steering Committee will review all qualifying LOI submittals.
- For Project-Specific Contracts (non On-Call type contracts), the Steering Committee will shortlist firms to be interviewed. The dates of shortlisting and dates for interviews are shown in the section SUBMISSION SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES at the end of this RFLOI.
- To be considered for selection, consultants must submit a complete response to this RFLOI prior to the specified deadlines. Failure to submit all information in a timely manner will result in disqualification.
- The GSATS MPO will negotiate a final contract with the most qualified firm.

TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION NOTIFICATION

The Department, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all RESPONDENTS that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit LETTERS of INTEREST (LOIs) in response to this ADVERTISEMENT and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

SMALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FIRM (SPSF) PARTICIPATION

The Department encourages the use of Small Professional Services Firms (SPSF). Small businesses determined to be eligible for participation in the SPSF program are those meeting size standards defined by Small Business Administration (SBA) regulations, 13 CFR Part 121 in Sector 54 under the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). The SPSF program is a race, ethnicity, and gender-neutral program designed to increase the availability of contracting opportunities for small businesses on federal, state or locally funded contracts. SPSF participation is not contingent upon the funding source.

The Firm, at the time the Letter of Interest is submitted, shall submit a listing of all known SPSF firms that will participate in the performance of the identified work. The participation shall be submitted on the Department's Subconsultant Form RS-2. RS-2 forms may be accessed on the Department's website at [NCDOT Connect Guidelines & Forms](#). The SPSF must be qualified with the Department to perform the work for which they are listed.

PREQUALIFICATION

The Department maintains on file the qualifications and key personnel for each approved discipline, as well as any required samples of work. Each year on the anniversary date of the company, the firm shall renew their prequalified disciplines. If your firm has not renewed its application as required by your anniversary date or if your firm is not currently prequalified, please submit an application to the Department **prior to submittal of your LOI**. An application may be accessed on the Department's website at [Prequalifying Private Consulting Firms](#). *Learn how to become Prequalified as a Private Consulting Firm with NCDOT. Having this data on file with the Department eliminates the need to resubmit this data with each letter of interest.*

Professional Services Contracts are race and gender neutral and do not contain goals. However, the Respondent is encouraged to give every opportunity to allow Disadvantaged, Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (DBE/MBE/WBE) subconsultant utilization on all LOIs, contracts and supplemental agreements. The Firm, subconsultant and sub firm shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability or sex in the performance of this contract.

DIRECTORY OF FIRMS AND DEPARTMENT ENDORSEMENT

Real-time information about firms doing business with the Department, and information regarding their prequalification and certifications, is available in the Directory of Transportation Firms. The Directory can be accessed on the Department's website at [Directory of Firms](#). The listing of an individual firm in the Department's directory shall not be construed as an endorsement of the firm.

SELECTION CRITERIA

All prequalified firms who submit responsive letters of interest will be considered. In selecting a firm/team, the steering committee will take into consideration the following qualification:

35% = Specialized experience and technical competence of the respondent's assigned staff relative to the task requirements outlined in the Scope of Work:

- A. Experience of the prime contractor and subcontractor(s);
- B. Project Manager; and
- C. Other assigned individuals.

30% = Understanding of the nature of the project and the firm's approach:

- A. Understanding of the proposed Scope of Work
- B. Respondent's proposed methodology and approach; and
- C. Organization and clarity of the proposal.

35% = References reflecting the previous work experience and product quality of the project team on comparable projects:

- A. Quality of final products
- B. Ability to meet work schedules; and
- C. Responsiveness to client input.

SUBMISSION ORGANIZATION AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

The LOI should be addressed to Elizabeth Tucker-Senior Transportation & Transit Planner, and must include the name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the prime consultant's contact person for this RFLOI.

The LOI must also include the information outlined below:

INTRODUCTION

The Introduction should demonstrate the consultant's overall qualifications to fulfill the requirements of the scope of work and should contain the following elements of information:

- Expression of firm's interest in the work;
- Statement of whether firm is on register;
- Statement regarding possible conflict of interest for the work; and
- Summation of information contained in the letter of interest.

TEAM QUALIFICATIONS

This chapter should elaborate on the general information presented in the introduction, to establish the credentials and experience of the consultant to undertake this type of effort. The following must be included:

- Identify recent, similar projects the firm, acting as the prime contractor, has conducted which demonstrates its ability to conduct and manage the project. Provide a synopsis of each project and include the date completed and contact person. Please provide a minimum of three project references.
- If subconsultants are involved, provide corresponding information describing their qualifications as requested in bullet number 1 above.

TEAM EXPERIENCE

This chapter must provide the names, classifications, and location of the firm's North Carolina employees and resources to be assigned to the advertised work; and the professional credentials and experience of the persons assigned to the project, along with any unique qualifications of key personnel. Although standard personnel resumes may be included, identify pertinent team experience to be applied to this project.

GSATS is interested in the experience, expertise, and total quality of the consultant's proposed team. If principals of the firm will not be actively involved in the study/contract/project, do not list them. The submittal shall clearly indicate the Consultant's Project Manager, other key Team Members and his/her qualifications for the proposed work. Also, include the team's organization chart for the Project/Plan. A Capacity Chart/Graph (available work force) should also be included. Any other pertinent information should also be listed in this section.

Note: If a project team or subconsultant encounters personnel changes, or any other changes of significance dealing with the company, GSATS should be notified immediately.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

The consultant shall provide information on its understanding of, and approach to accomplish, this project, including their envisioned scope for the work and any innovative ideas/approaches, and a schedule to achieve the dates outlined in this RFLOI (if any project-specific dates are outlined below).

APPENDICES

- Consultant Certification Form RS-2 - Completed Form RS-2 forms SHALL be submitted with the firm's letter of interest. This section is limited to the number of pages required to provide the requested information. Submit Form RS-2 forms for the following:
 - a. **Prime Consultant** - Prime Consultant Form RS-2 Rev 1/14/08; and
 - b. **ANY/ALL Subconsultant utilized by the Prime Consultant** - Subconsultant Form RS-2 Rev 1/15/08. In the event the firm has no subconsultant, it is required that this be indicated on the Subconsultant Form RS-2 by entering the word "None" or the number "ZERO" and signing the form. The required forms are available on the Department's website at connect.ncdot.gov.

SUBMISSION SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES

All questions concerning this RFLOI should be directed to Elizabeth Tucker at etucker@wrcog.org.

Questions may only be submitted electronically. Responses will be issued in the form of an addendum available to all interested parties. Interested parties should also send a request by email only to be placed on a public correspondence list to ensure future updates regarding the RFLOI or where other project information can be conveyed. Questions must be received no later than Monday, June 17, 2024. The last addendum will be issued no later than Friday July 1, 2024.

RFLOI Release – **June 2, 2024**

Deadline for Questions – **June 17, 2024**

Issue Final Addendum – **July 1, 2024**

Deadline for LOI Submission – **July 17, 2024**

Shortlist Announced - **August 5, 2024**

Interviews - the week of **August 19, 2024**

Firm Selection and Notification – **August 19, 2024**

Anticipated Notice to Proceed – **September 2, 2024**

Please include Five (5) total copies of the LOI for all mailed or hand-delivered submittals and one electronic version. Electronic LOIs should be submitted in .pdf format using software such as Adobe, CutePDF, PDF Writer, Docudesk PDF, etc.

LOIs SHALL be received **no later than 5:00 PM on Monday July 15, 2024. LOIs received after this deadline will not be considered.**

The address for electronic deliveries
etucker@wrcog.org

The address for mailings or by hand-delivery
**GSATS MPO
ATTN: Elizabeth Tucker
1230 Highmarket Street
Georgetown, SC 29440**

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The GSATS MPO reserves the right to select the most competitive proposals. During the selection process, The GSATS MPO will ensure that all competitive respondents receive answers, or clarifications, to questions posed by any respondent.

The GSATS MPO reserves the right to negotiate a contract, including the scope of work and contract price, with any respondent or other qualified party. Intentions are to enter into a contract by September 1, 2024.

This RFLOI does not commit GSATS MPO to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in preparation of a response to this invitation, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

The GSATS MPO will accept or reject any or all responses received because of this request for qualifications, or to cancel this request in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the MPO.

The cost of preparing, submitting, and presenting a qualification package is the sole expense of the consultant. The GSATS MPO is not liable for any costs prior to issuance of a signed contract. All qualification packages submitted hereunder become the exclusive property of The Town of Shallotte and GSATS MPO.

There are no guarantees for any firm until such time there is an approved, negotiated contract.

Respondents shall not offer any gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value to any employee or agent of those entities that have influence in the selection of the contractor for the purpose of influencing favorable disposition toward either their qualification packages or any other packages.