

**French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**REQUEST for LETTERS of INTEREST (RFLOI)**

**2050 Socio-Economic Projections**

TITLE: **2050 Socio-Economic Projections**  
ISSUE DATE: **4/6/23**  
SUBMITTAL DEADLINE: **5/1/23**  
ISSUING AGENCY: **French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**SYNOPSIS**

**SUBCONSULTANTS ARE PERMITTED UNDER THIS CONTRACT.**

This contract shall be partially reimbursed with Federal-aid funding through the Land of Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) with oversight from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT.) The solicitation, selection, and negotiation of a contract shall be conducted in accordance with all Department requirements and guidelines.

The primary and/or subconsultant firm(s) shall be pre-qualified by the Department to perform any of the Discipline Codes listed below for the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization. Discipline Codes required are:

- 140 – Travel Demand Model Development
- 261 - Long-Range Transportation Planning
- 363 – Travel Demand Model Application

**WORK CODES** for each primary and/or subconsultant firm(s) **SHALL** be listed on the respective RS-2 FORMS (see section ‘SUBMISSION ORGANIZATION AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS’).

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

## **French Broad River MPO 2050 Socio-Economic Projections**

Electronic LOIs should be submitted in .pdf format

**LOIs SHALL be received Electronically no later than 5:00 PM, Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.**

**The address for electronic deliveries is: [mpo@landofsky.org](mailto:mpo@landofsky.org)**

**LOIs received after this deadline will not be considered.**

### **Requirements for Engineering Firms**

Except as provided below (i.e. Requirements for Non-Engineering Firms) any engineering 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. Any Engineers performing engineering 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.

### **Requirements for Non-Engineering Firms**

Firms which are not providing engineering services need not be registered with the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors. The following services being solicited do not require a Professional Engineering license. Therefore, firms with experience in urban planning, transportation planning, demography, and other disciplines aligning with the NCDOT Discipline Codes listed below may respond to this RFLOI.

- 140 – Travel Demand Model Development
- 261 - Long-Range Transportation Planning
- 363 – Travel Demand Model Application

### **Requirements for All Firms**

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. It is the responsibility of each firm to adhere to all 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 **French Broad River MPO** is soliciting proposals for the services of a firm/team for the following contract scope of work:

### **Study Area**

The study area covers the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) and Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) planning areas, including the counties of Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania.

### **French Broad River MPO Travel Demand Model**

The French Broad River MPO Travel Demand Model (as most recently updated in 2015) includes the full five counties (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania.) The French Broad River MPO has an agreement with NCDOT under which NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch houses, runs and maintains the French Broad River MPO Travel Demand Model. The FBRMPO is responsible for providing socio-economic data inputs as part of model updates. The FBRMPO Travel Demand Model is a traditional “trip-based” four-step model, built in TransCAD.

### **Project Background**

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Asheville Metropolitan Area, FBRMPO is required to produce a population forecast for the region to accompany its Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP, also known as Long-Range Transportation Plan), with a horizon year that is at least twenty years out from the plan’s adoption date. The current RFLOI is for a data forecast to accompany the Regional Travel Demand update to 2050 and MTP 2050 plan update.

The 2050 MTP will serve as the guiding document for future investments in transportation related activities and services – roads, transit services, aviation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities – to match anticipated growth in the Land of Sky region of Western North Carolina. It plans for the next 25 years of transportation projects, from 2025 to 2050. The land use and socio-economic data forecast developed under the current proposal will be utilized to update the FBRMPO Travel Demand Model and to serve as support in MTP 2050, future Comprehensive Transportation Plan updates, and other planning processes at the regional and local level.

### **General Information**

As a result of responses to this RFLOI, FBRMPO plans to review submissions and conduct interviews with selected consultants it determines can best meet the requirements outlined below. Subject to “Reservation of Rights” below, it is anticipated that a contract will be awarded for the work described. The contract awarded will be for a period of one year, with an optional extension.

## Project Description

The French Broad River MPO is seeking a consultant with experience in the modeling of land use decisions in medium-size urban areas (200,000-1,000,000 population) to develop disaggregated Socio-economic data including population, household and employment numbers and some special populations by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) across the five-county region for multiple growth scenarios for 2050. It is expected that a land use model will be utilized to disaggregate the population and household projections across the region. Employment projections out to 2050 by industry category will be developed and disaggregated under this project as well. The socio-economic data provided under this project will be used as inputs into the FBRMPO traditional trip-based four-step travel demand model.

FBRMPO expects the project to be completed within nine (9) months. The SE data will be needed in time to be utilized for a Travel Demand Model update as part of the FBRMPO MTP 2050 Plan update in 2024-2025.

## Scope of Services

Proposals must address all requirements outlined below. FBRMPO is seeking to work with a consultant to provide detailed socio-economic data for the Agency's four-step travel model. It is expected that some form of land use model would be utilized to provide SE data at a sufficient level of spatial granularity to allow for land use and population change analysis that could be broken down to a community/town center/village center scale analysis of land use changes suitable for communicating to staff, partner agencies, and stakeholders within the region. At a minimum, granularity at a TAZ level is required.

## Maximum Budget for the Project

The maximum budget for this project is \$100,000.

## Data Requirements

All proposals must include an overview of the conceptual underpinnings of the land use model, including the roles of transportation accessibility and real estate markets in the influence of land use choices. In addition, respondents must address the following topics in their proposals:

- Employment forecast for 2050, 2020 base year and interim years (2030, 2040) is required as part of the scope of work. U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data from 2019 will be made available by the FBRMPO for base year employment calculations by TAZ and industry type. Employment industry types for the purpose of the FBRMPO Travel Demand Model are as follows:
  - Retail (RET)
  - Highway Retail (HWYRET)
  - Industrial (IND)
  - Office (OFF)
  - Service (SVC)
  - Total Workers (TOTEMP)

- Population data will be broken out into the following categories for input into the FBRMPO Travel Demand Model, in addition to being disaggregated by TAZ:
  - HH (Households as defined by Census - Occupied Dwelling Units)
  - HHPOP ("Population in Households" as defined by Census)
  - GQPOP ("Group Quarters Population" as defined by the Model)
  - SeasonalDU (Seasonal Dwelling Units (includes both occupied and unoccupied households))
  - MedInc (Median Income)
  - Hotel (Number of hotel rooms)
  - RV\_Camp (Number of RV Hookups)
  - BnB (Number of bed and breakfast facilities)
  - Motel (Number of motel rooms)
  - Cabins (Number of vacation cabins)
  - Resort (Number of resort rooms)
- FBRMPO will provide the HHPOP projections by County out to 2050 and for the interim years (2030, 2040); the consultant should develop an alternative growth amount in coordination with the MPO members and the Prioritization Subcommittee.
- The consultant will be expected to develop the following the following population data parameters for base year, 2050 and interim years (2030, 2040):
  - K-12Enroll (K-12 Enrollment @ School location)
  - UnicEnroll (University Enrollment @ school location)
  - PctOffCampus (Percentage of enrolled students living off campus)
  - UnicStudRes (University Student Residences - AB Tech Only)
  - YearlyVis (Yearly Visitors)
- Describe how the firm's approach to land use modeling and SE data forecasting and disaggregation would allow for multiple scenarios to be analyzed based on the assumption of adoption of specific planning strategies or combinations of multiple strategies. A minimum of four (4) different scenarios (numbered below) are desired to be developed for 2050 and interim years:
  1. Business as usual scenario, based on existing land use controls and policies across the five-county region and recent growth trends
  2. Business as usual with an increased population and employment growth
  3. Strong and vibrant communities scenario, which would include an expectation for increased density in existing dense, walkable nodes including historic downtown centers as well as development/redevelopment of additional new walkable nodes with a more dense pattern of development along major travel corridors and transit corridors
  4. Strong and vibrant communities scenario with increased population and employment growth
    - Other scenarios as requested by the MPO Steering Committee
    - The consultant should provide an analysis of impacts to VMT based on different growth scenarios as well as any other information pertinent to assist in choosing a Preferred Growth Scenario
- There are some developed areas in the FBRMPO region where infill or redevelopment can play a role in the revitalization or growth of a community. The model must account for the redevelopment or "upzoning" of uses, and not be strictly based on consumption of available land. Describe how infill development can be specifically addressed within the land use model.

- A GIS file of model Transportation Analysis Zones is available for review. Provide a discussion of the proposed scale of model output and the model's ability to adapt to alternative geographies.
- Model interface must be able to provide results for horizon and interim years in the following forms, for both "Business as Usual" and "Strong and Vibrant Communities" scenarios:
  - mapped display on selected indicators/variables (including files in ESRI ArcGIS format)
  - comma-delimited tables of selected variables to serve as inputs to FBRMPO travel models.

Please indicate whether the model output can be provided in these formats.

## Deliverables

The final product should include:

- Maps of the Land Use Forecast results for 2050 and interim years, both in pdf format for presentations and in GIS format for MPO staff future use
- Employment forecast data for 2050 and interim years, disaggregated by employment type and by county and TAZ, in table (CSV) format
- Population and other categories forecast SE Data for 2050 and interim years, disaggregated by county and TAZ, in table (CSV) format
- A digital copy of the final report
- Any presentation/MPO Steering Committee materials

The consultant team selected will be expected to provide a presentation to the FBRMPO Prioritization Subcommittee, the FBRMPO TCC and the FBRMPO Board upon completion of the project. In addition, the consultant team selected will share any applicable presentation materials with the FBRMPO staff to provide ongoing updates for the FBRMPO TCC and Board on a quarterly basis.

**PROPOSED CONTRACT TIME: 6-9 Months**

**PROPOSED CONTRACT PAYMENT TYPE: LUMP SUM**

## **SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

All LOIs are limited to 30 pages (RS-2 forms are not included in the page count) inclusive of the cover sheet, and shall be typed on 8-1/2" x 11" sheets, single-spaced, one-sided.

*Fold out pages are not allowed. In order to reduce costs and to facilitate recycling; binders, dividers, tabs, etc. are prohibited. One staple in the upper left-hand corner is preferred.*

LOIs containing more than 30 pages will not be considered.

**Firms submitting LOIs are encouraged to carefully check them for conformance to the requirements stated above. If LOIs do not meet ALL of these requirements they will be disqualified. No exception will be granted.**

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Following is a general description of the selection process:

- The MPO's Selection Committee will review all qualifying LOI submittals.
- If necessary, the MPO and the Selection Committee may request interviews with the final firms prior to selection
- In order 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.

## **TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION NOTIFICATION**

The LGA in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 US.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 subfirm 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 prequalifications and certifications, is available in the Directory of Transportation Firms. The Directory can be accessed on the Department's website at [Directory of Firms](#) -- Complete listing of certified and prequalified 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 selection committee will take into consideration qualification information including such factors as:

1. **40%** = Experience in Similar Projects
2. **20%** = Responsiveness to the RFLOI
3. **20%** = Quality and Relevance of Example Work
4. **20%** = Timeline

After reviewing qualifications, if firms are equal on the evaluation review, then those qualified firms with proposed SPSF participation will be given priority consideration.

## **SUBMISSION ORGANIZATION AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

The LOI should be addressed to Scott Adams, MPO Transportation 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:

### Chapter 1 - 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;
- Date of most recent private engineering firm qualification;
- Statement regarding firm's(') possible conflict of interest for the work; and
- Summation of information contained in the letter of interest.

### Chapter 2 - 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:

1. 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.
2. If subconsultants are involved, provide corresponding information describing their qualifications as requested in bullet number 1 above.

### Chapter 3 - 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. Specifically, the Department 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, NCDOT should be notified immediately.

### Chapter 4 - 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:

- **Prime Consultant firm**
  - Prime Consultant Form RS-2 Rev 1/14/08; and
- **ANY/ALL Subconsultant firms** (*If Subconsultants are allowed under this RFLOI*) to be, or anticipated to be, utilized by your firm.
  - 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.

**Complete and sign each Form RS-2 (instructions are listed on the form).**

The required forms are available on the Department's website at:  
<https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/consultants/Pages/Guidelines-Forms.aspx>

[Prime Consultant Form RS-2](#)

[Subconsultant Form RS-2](#)

All submissions, correspondence, and questions concerning this RFLOI should be directed to [scott@landofsky.org](mailto:scott@landofsky.org).

IF APPLICABLE, questions may be submitted electronically only, to the contact above. 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 the person listed above to be placed on a public correspondence list to ensure future updates regarding the RFLOI or other project information can be conveyed. Questions must be submitted to the person listed above no later than April 21, 2023. The last addendum will be issued no later than April 28, 2023

## **SUBMISSION SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES**

RFLOI Release – **April 6, 2023**

Deadline for Questions – **April 21, 2023**

Issue Final Addendum – **April 28, 2023**

Deadline for LOI Submission – **May 1, 2023**

Firm Selection and Notification\* - **May 15, 2023**

Anticipated\*\* Notice to Proceed – **June 16, 2023**

\*Subject to interview schedules, if applicable, between MPO and firms, etc.

\*\*Subject to NCDOT review schedule