

Advertised: **January 27, 2025**

Amended: January 30, 2025

Foothills Regional Commission

REQUEST for QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

FOOTHILLS REGIONAL COMMISSION SAFETY ACTION PLAN

TITLE: Foothills Regional Commission Safety Action Plan

ISSUE DATE: January 27, 2025

SUBMITTAL DEADLINE: February 28, 2025

ISSUING AGENCY: Foothills Regional Commission

RFQ Contact: Magnolia Long

E-mail: mlong@frcnc.gov

Phone: 828-351-2331

General

SUBCONSULTANTS ARE PERMITTED UNDER THIS CONTRACT.

The Foothills Regional Commission (FRC) seeks proposals from qualified firms to deliver planning documents for a Regional Safety Action Plan. FRC was recently awarded a federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) planning grant from the Federal Highway Administration in the amount of \$256,000. The 20% local match requirement has been provided by Dogwood Health Trust in the sum of \$64,000. \$268,800 is available for this project. This project will be administered according to all applicable federal and state laws and guidelines.

Background

The FRC applied for, and was awarded, a Federal SS4A planning grant in 2023, the purpose of which is to develop a Regional Safety Action Plan. The application covered 3 of FRC's 4 counties McDowell, Polk, and Rutherford which make up the Foothills Regional Commission Rural Planning Organization. According to the latest census data, the study area has a population of approximately 120,000 residents. The study area is extremely diverse, both socioeconomically, and geographically, and will range from micropolitan development to extremely rural, hilly roadways, with each setting presenting its own unique challenges.

Submission Format and Timing

Electronic RFQ responses should be submitted in .pdf format.

RFQ responses SHALL be received **ELECTRONICALLY no later than 6:00 PM, February 28, 2025.**

The address for electronic deliveries is: *mlong@frcnc.gov*

RFQ responses received after this deadline will not be considered.

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 if intending to provide engineering services in the proposal. Any firm proposing to use corporate subsidiaries or subcontractors for engineering services must include a statement that these companies are properly registered with the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors. The firms performing the work and in responsible charge of the work must be registered 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 an RFQ response. 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 Safety Action Plan document will include assembling and analyzing data regarding existing conditions within the established planning area and utilizing that data to develop recommended policies, actions, and an implementation plan to guide future development and decision making. Per guidance from USDOT for SS4A, the Safety Action Plan must include the following components:

1. Leadership Commitment and Goal Setting

A. Include an official public commitment (e.g., resolution, policy, ordinance) by a high ranking official and/or governing body (e.g., Mayor, City Council, Tribal Council, rural planning organization [RPO], Policy Board) to an eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The commitment must include a goal and timeline for eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries achieved through one, or both, of the following:

- i. The target date for achieving zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries, OR;
- ii. An ambitious percentage reduction of roadway fatalities and serious injuries by a specific date with an eventual goal of eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

2. Planning Structure

A. Describe and report on the past and planned activities of the committee, task force, or similar body that is tasked with overseeing Action Plan development, implementation, and monitoring.

3. Safety Analysis

A. Research existing conditions and historical trends and provide a baseline level of crashes involving fatalities and serious injuries across a jurisdiction, locality, Tribe, or region.

B. Conduct an analysis of locations where there are crashes and the severity of the crashes, as well as contributing factors and crash types by relevant road users (motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, etc.).

C. Conduct an analysis of systemic and specific safety needs (e.g., high-risk road features, specific safety needs of relevant road users, public health approaches, analysis of the built environment, demographics, and structural issues).

D. Develop and map of a High-Injury Network (or equivalent) based on the analysis of higher-risk locations.

E. To the extent practical, include all roadways within the jurisdiction, without regard for ownership.

4. Engagement and Collaboration

A. Ensure representation from stakeholders, community groups, and the public and coordinate with other governmental planning processes.

B. Integrate into the Action Plan the information received through engagements and collaboration.

C. Seek inter- and intra- governmental collaboration as appropriate.

5. Equity Considerations

A. Develop the Action Plan using inclusive and representative processes.

B. Collaborate with appropriate partners for the analysis of underserved communities.

C. Consider the impact of proposed projects and strategies.

D. Include population characteristics and equity impact assessments.

6. Policy and Process Changes

A. Analyze existing policies, standards, manuals, plans, and guidelines.

B. Identify opportunities for improvements to prioritize transportation safety.

C. Incorporate the implementation of revised or new policies into the Action Plan.

7. Strategy and Project Selections

A. Address safety problems identified using proven countermeasures focused on a Safe System Approach.

B. Prioritize deployment of mitigation strategies and countermeasures.

i. List specific projects or strategies with timeframes.

ii. Explain criteria used for prioritization.

iii. Projects and strategies should focus on infrastructure, behavioral and/or operational safety and be shaped by data, the best available evidence and noteworthy practices, and stakeholder input and equity considerations—that will address the safety problems described in the Action Plan.

8. Progress and Transparency

A. Identify the method to measure progress over time after an Action Plan is developed or updated, including outcome data.

B. Establish a means to ensure ongoing transparency with residents and other relevant stakeholders.

C. Include, at a minimum, annual public and accessible reporting on progress toward reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries and public posting of the Action Plan online.

Expectations of Consultant Firm(s)

The consultant will be expected to conduct the following tasks. FRC strongly encourages proposers to expand on these tasks, emphasize tasks and to suggest additional tasks not identified in this RFQ that may be necessary or beneficial. Subconsultants are permitted under this contract.

1. Project coordination meetings, weekly updates, and client review of materials

The consultant is expected to meet regularly with FRC for project coordination that includes, but is not limited to, discussion of ongoing tasks; presenting or discussion on draft project deliverables; and addressing unforeseen development challenges and/or adjusting development processes. When appropriate, these meetings may be via telephone or video conference. Additional project coordination expectations include:

A. Initial meeting with FRC staff to review a project timeline, schedule meetings and begin the process of data acquisition.

B. Draft materials for review and comment by FRC staff in accordance with a schedule developed at the beginning of the planning process.

C. Provide, at a minimum, weekly updates, via e-mail or telephone, outlining work completed by the consultant and/or subconsultants. Periodic written status reports and status update presentations may also be required to the Foothills RPO.

D. Preparation of written quarterly progress and performance reports and final reports addressing SS4A post award reporting requirements and performance measures

2. Meetings with the Safety Action Plan Steering Committee, Staff, RPO Technical Coordinating Committees (TCC) and RPO Boards

A Safety Action Plan steering committee will be charged with oversight of the Action Plan development, implementation, and monitoring. The consultant will meet with the Steering Committee to collect input and provide updates. In addition, the consultant will solicit input and feedback from the TCC and RPO Boards and provide interim reports, presentations, and updates to each as required and appropriate, and attend the Plan's formal adoption by the RPO Boards.

3. Public Engagement and Communications

Public participation is essential to this planning effort, and we expect robust engagement with the public and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and community groups, that allows for both community representation and feedback. Information received from engagement and collaboration should be analyzed and incorporated into the Action Plan. The FRC member jurisdictions and planning partners should be included in the process. Plans and processes should be coordinated and aligned with other governmental plans and planning processes to the extent practical. Other expectations include:

- A. Address meetings with FRC staff, citizen groups, applicable advisory committees, school districts, local units of government, etc.
- B. Plan and implement a stakeholder and public outreach process using a range of methods to inform and involve stakeholders, citizen organizations and the public.
- C. Conduct meetings with key elected and appointed officials and steering committee. The selected consultant will lead stakeholder outreach and participation efforts with FRC and local government staff aiding where needed.
- D. Prepare a draft plan document for public review and comment. The plan should be prepared and presented in a format and language that is user-friendly and easily understood by the public.

Respondents should explain their approach and public participation plan in detail in their responses.

4. Safety Action Plan Development

The consultant will serve as the primary drafter of the plan and shall perform research and develop materials for the Plan, including but not limited to:

- A. Review all existing plans, maps, documents, data and other materials relevant to the project. FRC will provide all available existing documentation to the consultant. The consultant will study and consolidate applicable materials into the Safety Action Plan.
- B. Review crash history to include locations and severity of incidents as part of an analysis of systemic and specific safety needs and development of a regional High Injury Network.
- C. Develop Safety Action Plan vision, goals, objectives.

D. Develop policies and projects for the implementation of recommended strategies based on technical data and public input.

E. Analyze consistency of regional ordinances and policies in relationship to the Safety Action Plan goals and objectives.

F. Prepare a draft document and present it at all associated meetings and public hearings for review and comment.

G. Confirm the final Safety Action Plan conforms to existing North Carolina General Statutes.

H. Complete a final draft of the Safety Action Plan and present it to the RPO Technical Coordinating Committees and RPO Boards.

I. Provide digital, editable, working and printable copies of all final documents including reports, maps, and final plan.

Project Deliverables

Maps and associated digital data and shapefiles shall be in ArcGIS format and shall be provided to the FRC as work is being conducted. All such data, graphics, charts, images, etc. as contained in the final adopted version of the Safety Action Plan as adopted by the RPO Boards shall also be furnished to FRC upon adoption. An editable version of the final document shall also be provided.

Upon adoption, the consultant shall provide 30 printed copies of the final document for distribution to the RPO Boards and FRC member jurisdictions.

The consultant shall also provide flash drives, or access to cloud-based drives, of all digital products in the following forms as appropriate: 7

1. Text (Document text as well as notes from public engagement sessions or other board workshops): Microsoft Word, InDesign, and PDF
2. Spreadsheets: Microsoft Excel in addition to the tables formatted for Word, InDesign, and PDFs
3. Mapping Products and Data: PDF and ArcGIS (All spatial data to be delivered as shapefiles using the NAD 1983 State Plan North Carolina FIPS 3200 (US Feet)
4. Graphics/Icons: PNG, JPEG, and vector files

At all times and project stages, the selected consultant shall act in the best interests of FRC and use their best efforts to deliver the Project in an expeditious and cost-effective manner consistent with FRC's project requirements, time constraints, and budget. The selected consultant shall develop a contractually obligated overall project schedule and will be responsible for coordination of all work, in addition to miscellaneous contracts, if needed, for completion of the project within its predetermined budget limits and schedule.

FRC expects all parties to this project to work closely together and deal appropriately with project conditions to finish the job successfully. A spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and a commitment among professional service providers to work in the best interests of the project is of utmost importance.

PROPOSED CONTRACT TIME: 12-18 Months

PROPOSED CONTRACT PAYMENT TYPE: Quarterly payments

Submittal Requirements

All RFQ responses are limited to **fifteen (15)** pages inclusive of the cover sheet and shall be formatted on 8-1/2" x 11" sheets, single-spaced.

Responses containing more than **fifteen (15)** pages may not be considered.

RFQ responses must be submitted exclusively in .pdf format.

Firms submitting responses are encouraged to carefully check them for conformance to the requirements stated above. If responses do not meet ALL these requirements they may be disqualified.

Selection Process

Following is a general description of the selection process:

- FRC's Selection Committee will review all qualifying RFQ responses.
- For Project-Specific Contracts (non-On-Call type contracts), the LGA's Selection Committee MAY, at the LGA's discretion, shortlist firms to be interviewed. If applicable, dates of shortlisting and dates for interviews are shown in the section submission schedule and key dates at the end of this RFQ.
- To be considered for selection, consultants must submit a complete response to this RFQ prior to the specified deadlines. Failure to submit all information in a timely manner will result in disqualification.

Title VI

FRC 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 Qualification Statements 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 Services Firm Participation

Small Professional Services Firms (SPSF) are encouraged to apply. 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 SPSF must be qualified with the Department to perform the work for which they are listed.

Participation with Disadvantaged, Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (DBE/MBE/WBE)

Recipients of SS4A grant funding are required to demonstrate efforts to improve equity and reduce barriers to opportunity. It is the intention of USDOT that these efforts include supporting wealth creation by including inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship in federally funded projects. This includes the utilization of Disadvantaged, Minority-owned, and Women-owned Business Enterprises. FRC will utilize Minority Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (DBE/MBE/WBE) subconsultant utilization as an evaluative criterion for all received RFQs to ensure efforts to improve equity and reduce barriers to opportunity are being met. 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.

Pre-Qualification

The primary and/or subconsultant firm may be pre-qualified with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to perform ANY COMBINATION of the Discipline Codes listed below for FRC.

Discipline Codes required are:

- 00026- Capacity Analysis; Basic (Level 1 Projects)
- 00027- Capacity Analysis; Intermediate (Level 2 Projects)
- 00036 – Community Impact Assessment
- 00045 – Corridor Planning
- 00132 – Landscape and Streetscape Design
- 00140 – Travel Model Development
- 00141 – Multimodal Transportation Planning
- 00171 – Public Involvement
- 00200 – Feasibility Studies
- 00251 – Project Level Traffic Forecasting
- 00252 – Traffic Impact Studies
- 00309 – Traffic Data Collection
- 00458 – Crash Analysis
- 00260 – Comprehensive Transportation Planning Development
- 00261 – Long Range Transportation Planning
- 00276 – Visualization

00315 – Municipal and Regional Planning Studies

00316 – Multi-use Trail Design, Survey, and Layout

00318 – Bicycle Map Preparation

00363 – Travel Demand Model Application

00410 – Multimodal Connectivity Planning

00459 – Traffic Engineering and Transportation Safety Investigation, Research, Recommendations and Studies

00549 – Prioritization

00563 – Traffic Safety Predictive Analysis

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. **Criteria #1 35%** = Past performance/ Demonstrated experience, proven record of success on similar projects. Firm's experience, knowledge, and familiarity with the desired services.
2. **Criteria #2 25%** = Team Experience and qualifications - The team's experience and staff qualifications to perform type of work required
3. **Criteria #3 25%** = Technical Approach - The firm's understanding of, and approach to accomplish objectives of the plan, including their envisioned scope for the work and any innovative ideas/approaches.
4. **Criteria #4 15%** = Innovation – The firm's innovative approach to add value to the project.
 - 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.

Submission Organization and Information Requirements

The RFQ responses should be addressed to **Alan Toney, Community & Economic Development Director** and must include the name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the prime consultant's contact person for this RFQ.

The RFQ responses 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:

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, FRC 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 RFQ (if any project-specific dates are outlined below).

Appendices - Completed RS-2 forms for the following shall be submitted with RFQ responses:

(Appendix pages do not count towards the fifteen [15] page limit.)

A. Prime Consultant

I. Utilize: Prime Contractor form RS-2 Rev 1/14/08

II. Access form at:

[https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/consultants/Roadway/Form%20RS2%20Prime%20Contractor%20\(Task%20Orders%20ONLY\).pdf](https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/consultants/Roadway/Form%20RS2%20Prime%20Contractor%20(Task%20Orders%20ONLY).pdf)

B. Subconsultant(s)

I. Utilize: Subconsultant form RS-2 Rev 1/15/08

II. Access form at:

[https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/consultants/Roadway/Form%20RS2%20Subcontract%20\(Task%20Orders%20ONLY\).pdf](https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/consultants/Roadway/Form%20RS2%20Subcontract%20(Task%20Orders%20ONLY).pdf)

III. 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.

IV. Complete and sign each Form RS-2 (instructions are listed on the form). The required forms and additional information are available on the NCDOT website at:

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/consultants/Pages/GuidelinesForms.aspx>

All submissions, correspondence, and questions concerning this RFQ should be directed to **Magnolia Long (mlong@frcnc.gov)** at the Foothills Regional Commission.

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 RFQ or other project information can be conveyed. Questions must be submitted to the person listed above no later than **February 10, 2025**. If changes are made, the last addendum will be issued no later than **February 17, 2025**.

SUBMISSION SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES

RFQ Release – **January 27, 2025**

Deadline for Questions – **February 10, 2025**

Issue Final Addendum – **February 17, 2025**

Deadline for LOI Submission – **February 28, 2025**

Interviews - the week of **March 3, 2025**

Firm Selection and Notification ** - **March 10, 2025**

** Notification will **ONLY** be sent to selected firms.