



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Request for Qualifications

Professional Services for N-71 Wildlife Crossing Feasibility Study

November 6, 2024

Statements of Qualifications are due Wednesday, November 27, 2024, 1:00 P.M.

GENERAL

In accordance with Nebraska Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act ([Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1702](#)), the Brooks Act ([40 USC 1101](#)), and [23 CFR 172.5](#), the State of Nebraska, Department of Transportation (NDOT), is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Wildlife Crossing feasibility study along N-71. Qualified consultants are invited to submit a statement of qualifications as outlined below. NDOT's website referred to in this document is located at: <http://www.dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/consultant/>

All consultants interested in providing professional services for NDOT are strongly encouraged to review NDOT's template [Standard Professional Services Agreement](#), [Sample Fees and Payments Exhibit](#), and [Insurance Requirements for Professional Service Providers](#) prior to responding to this RFQ. By submitting a statement of qualifications in response to this RFQ, Consultant, and all subconsultants, agree to meet the substantive requirements of these documents. These documents can be found on NDOT's website. An agreement will not be executed unless consultant provides a current overhead (indirect cost rate) schedule and proof of meeting the insurance requirements in the form of an [Insurance ACORD](#). Further information regarding insurance, including a [checklist](#) to assist in submitting an acceptable certificate, can be found at <https://dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/consultant/insurance/>.

This RFQ does not commit NDOT to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to procure or contract for services. NDOT reserves the right to award contracts to more than one qualified consultant, to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any qualified consultant or to modify or cancel in part or in its entirety the RFQ, if it is in the best interest of NDOT to do so.

In accordance with Nebraska Revised Statute [84-712](#) et.seq., Nebraska Public Records Act, documents provided to NDOT are public records subject to disclosure unless consultant requests in writing that documents must be kept confidential and can demonstrate that such records are confidential under federal or state law.

Required Title VI Non-discrimination General Assurance

The Nebraska Department of Transportation, 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 bidders/offerors that it will affirmatively insure {ensure} that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

STANDARD WORK CATEGORIES

Standard Work Categories anticipated on this project are listed below. Consultant/team must be certified in the following Standard Work Categories. Information regarding the [Standard Work Categories](#) can be found on NDOT's website.

- 102 Transportation Planning
- 115 NEPA Studies (Unclassified)
- 120 Roadway Design
- 130 Bridge Design
- 140 Traffic Operation Studies & Design
- 210 Engineering Survey
- 250 Public Involvement

SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. OVERVIEW OF THE WORK:

The Consultant will assist the NDOT in the development of a detailed Feasibility Study to assess and identify potential mitigation strategies to significantly reduce the threat of vehicle collisions with big game species, in particular the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep that frequently cross Nebraska highway 71 (N-71). The Study will focus on the Wildcat Hills region of N-71, located approximately 7 miles south of Gering, NE. This location sees regular wildlife crossings and the risk of collisions will only increase as the Heartland Expressway expands and traffic grows. The Study will engage the Consultant in several tasks:

1. To establish baseline information for the study area, the Consultant will collect data and perform analyses on a variety of study area elements. This includes but is not limited to, historic and future traffic data along the N-71 corridor, wildlife movements (specifically bighorn sheep - based on collar data) and population trends, review of historical wildlife vehicle collision (WVC) data and stakeholder consultation among other things.
2. The Consultant will conduct research and evaluation of potential strategies to mitigate WVCs. Consideration for strategies will be given to 1) long-term biological impacts and movement patterns post-construction for bighorn sheep and other game and non-game species, especially to threatened and endangered species present on the alignment, 2) constructability, including environmental impacts, such as water resources and archaeological /section 106 impacts, 3) cost-effectiveness, including construction and maintenance, 4) impact on future programming and operations for the N-71 corridor, and 5) geotechnical analysis. This work will also include the development of evaluation criteria involving the above considerations and the criteria formatted in a comparison matrix to evaluate benefits and costs of each potential mitigation strategy.
3. The Consultant will prepare a final report, to include a provision of recommended strategies featuring the benefit-cost analysis outlined above. This work will also involve the development of an implementation plan for up to three (3) strategies, to include high-level cost estimates and funding strategies.

B. QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE:

- a. The consultant firm shall have experienced transportation professionals including planners, public involvement specialists, roadway and bridge designers, traffic engineers, safety specialists, statistical analysts as well as environmental scientists and/or biologists.
- b. The consultant team shall have experience in conducting feasibility studies related to WVCs or similar transportation and environmental projects.
- c. The consultant team shall have the technical competence to analyze and interpret data, develop effective mitigation strategies, and prepare detailed reports.
- d. The consultant team shall have experience working with NGPC and/or other state wildlife agencies in utilizing radio collar data and/or data of similar purpose, or other relevant experience.
- e. The consultant team shall have experience with the following types of work:
 1. Wildlife Ecology, specifically (but not limited to) with bighorn sheep and their interactions with transportation systems
 2. Endangered Species Act, specifically Section 7
 3. Nebraska Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act (NESCA)
 4. Transportation engineering
 5. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
 6. Federal Laws, Regulations, Guidance and Emphasis areas
 7. Federal Programs and Program Requirements (e.g., Formula & Grant Programs, Performance Management, Permitting, etc.)
 8. NDOT Plans (e.g., LRTP, SHSP, etc.)
 9. Benefit-Cost Analysis
 10. Safety Analysis
 11. The NDOT STIP/Program Book
 12. Collaborative stakeholder activities such as public meetings, focus groups, surveying, etc.
 13. ArcGIS analysis
- f. Upon receipt of environmental approval, approval of the project sponsor and cooperating agencies, and availability of funds, preliminary and final roadway and bridge design will begin.

C. SOFTWARE AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS:

- a. Microsoft Office and Adobe Products

D. EXPECTATIONS FOR THE DELIVERABLES:

- a. All documents produced with Microsoft Office and Adobe Products
- b. Work is to be completed and submitted to NDOT electronically in an agreed format at the time of assignment.

- c. All work completed will be available for use by NDOT in related documents and for public review.

E. SCHEDULE:

- a. The Consultant will be expected to complete the work within 1 year from notice to proceed. Additional time may be granted if deemed necessary by the NDOT. Future phases of work will commence upon environmental approval, approval from the project sponsor and cooperating agencies, and availability of funds.

DETAILS

It is anticipated that three (3) consultants will be short-listed for interviews, with one (1) consultant awarded the contract for the work. The evaluation criteria to be used for the short-listing and final selection is outlined below. The payment method for the contract may be Lump Sum, Cost Plus Fixed Fee, or Specific Rates of Compensation.

NDOT reserves the right to abandon or terminate any contract at any time and either re-advertise services or utilize its own forces. NDOT also reserves the right to accomplish services for future phases on this project with the selected consultant, select another consultant, or utilize its own forces.

NDOT will not hold a briefing. All information is contained within this RFQ and on NDOT's website. If additional information is deemed necessary, it will be posted on the same web page as this RFQ and will be labeled as an update. Consultants interested in this RFQ are responsible for checking for updated information.

Interested consultants must be certified by NDOT or have a completed certification form on file with NDOT prior to the deadline identified in the Schedule of Activities. Instructions for completing the NDOT Annual Consultant Certification form is available at: <https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/g1qb344b/cert-instruc-annual-certification.pdf>

Please submit your Drug-Free Workplace Policy (DF Policy) separate from the response to this RFQ ([DF Policy Example](#)). The DF Policy is a one-time submittal to NDOT. Please do not re-submit unless your DF Policy has changed, or you never have previously submitted a DF Policy. While the DF Policy is not a submittal requirement, all consultants must have an acceptable DF Policy on file prior to the deadline identified in the Schedule of Activities. If necessary, the consultant's DF Policy may be submitted via email to: NDOT.PDAnnualCertification@nebraska.gov

Please do not call or write NDOT staff for information regarding the services in this RFQ. Email all inquiries/questions to NDOT Procurement Engineer, at: ndot.pdRFQinfo@nebraska.gov or call (402) 479-4778.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Short List (70 pts)

A. QUALIFICATIONS (30 PTS)

- a. Qualifications of the project manager and key team members to perform the work.

- b. Qualifications and capability of key subconsultants.
- c. Applicability and relevance of comparable projects provided by the Consultant.
- d. Knowledge of and experience with wildlife crossing feasibility studies and guidance documents listed above in the SCOPE OF SERVICES section, item “B”.

B. PERFORMANCE DATA (20 PTS)

- a. Performance evaluations by NDOT, or other DOT’s, regarding the work of the Consultant, if available.
- b. Project schedule adherence on previous projects with NDOT.
- c. Cooperation with NDOT staff on previous projects.
- d. If firm has no experience with NDOT, review information obtained from Consultant’s references for Consultant’s performance with other states, local governments, or appropriate clients. The team should list a minimum of two (2) references in their proposal.

C. UNDERSTANDING OF THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED (20 PTS)

- a. Consultant demonstrated they understand nature and scope of the project.
- b. The consultant has recognized and identified special circumstances to be considered for the project.
- c. Consultant provided a logical approach to complete tasks and resolve issues of the project.

Final Selection (30 pts, 100 pts total)

D. DISCUSSION OF FOCUS AREA TOPICS (20 PTS)

- a. Consultant’s interview presentation was clear and concise.
- b. Consultant showed knowledge and understanding of topics.

E. COMMITTEE Q&A SESSION (10 PTS)

- a. Consultant answered committee questions logically and thoroughly.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	Date (2024)	Time (CST)
RFQ posted	November 6, 13, 20	
Last day questions will be accepted	November 13	4:00 PM
Last day Q&A or updates to RFQ may be posted	November 20	4:00 PM
NDOT Form 497 & Drug-Free Workplace Policy on file at NDOT	November 27	4:00 PM
Statement of Qualifications Due	November 27	1:00 PM
Post Short-List Consultants & Interview Schedule	December 11	4:00 PM
Interview	December 18	9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Post Final Selections	December 20	4:00 PM

NOTE – Shortlisted Firms may be asked to provide verification that they and all subconsultants have submitted their indirect cost rates and certifications for their latest fiscal year. Latest fiscal year means the last fiscal year with an end date no more than 6 months in the past.

SUBMITTAL OF QUALIFICATIONS

All information must be received by the deadline identified in the Schedule of Activities. No exceptions to this deadline will be given.

One (1) electronic copy (PDF format) of your firm's statement of qualification (SOQ) must be submitted using the Online "[SOQ Submittal Form](#)" link found on the Consultant Services Business Opportunities page. Please "reduce file size" of PDF before submitting.

Submittals are to include the following in the order given below:

1. Front cover to include the consultant, subconsultants (if applicable), and number and title of the RFQ.
2. A letter of interest and Organizational Chart not to exceed one (1) page, each.
3. A narrative responding to the established evaluation factors not to exceed five (5) pages.
4. A maximum of five (5) pages of additional supportive material such as charts, tables, resumes, or photos.
5. [NDOT Form 498, "Architect, Engineer, & Related Services Supplement to Statement of Qualifications" \(MS Word version\)](#) not to exceed six (6) pages for the consultant and six (6) pages for each subconsultant. A separate NDOT Form 498 must be submitted for each subconsultant to be used.

Additional submittal requirements are:

1. All material in the submittal must be formatted for 8½ x 11 paper, single or double spaced.
2. Submittal covers and dividers between the sections are allowed and not included in the page limit.

INTERVIEWS

NDOT's selection committee will conduct interviews with the short-listed consultants via WebEx on the date and time specified in the Schedule of Activities. Interviews will be capped at 15 minutes, followed by up to 10 minutes of Q&A. Consultant may contact the Procurement Engineer to make any special arrangements.

NDOT will make every effort to post the short-listed consultants and interview schedule on NDOT's website prior to the deadline identified in the Schedule of Activities.

Upon completion of scoring and approval of the Deputy Director, NDOT will post the final selections on NDOT's website prior to the deadline identified in the Schedule of Activities, or as soon as possible.

Vicki Kramer, Director
Nebraska Department of Transportation

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER