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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# Request for Qualifications

## Professional Services for Broadband Strategy Development and Implementation

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April 19, 2023

Statements of Qualifications are due **Wednesday, May 3, 2023, 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 Broadband Strategy Development and Implementation. 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. The selected Consultant will be required to provide their most 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/>.

NDOT is seeking a statement of qualifications from consultants who wish to be considered to provide these services.

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.

### STANDARD WORK CATEGORIES

Standard Work Categories anticipated on this project are listed below. Consultant/team must

be certified in the following Standard Work Categories prior to final selection. Information regarding the [Standard Work Categories](#) can be found on NDOT's website.

## 102 Transportation Planning

### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

#### **A. OVERVIEW OF THE WORK**

The Nebraska Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Nebraska Broadband Office (NBO) is issuing this Request for Qualifications to hire a consultant to assist in developing a five-year action plan to improve broadband service in the State of Nebraska. The plan will establish the State's broadband goals and priorities and will serve as a comprehensive needs assessment which will inform the State's initial proposal. The specific details of the Five-Year Action Plan are detailed in [the BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) Section IV.B.3.b.

#### **B. QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE**

In order to be considered for eligibility, applicants must provide qualifications as well as experience information on key personnel related to broadband, grants management, and administration. Applicants should list any similar projects which have been completed in the last five years. Proposals will be considered only from applicants who have experienced personnel and necessary equipment to provide the required services. NDOT and the NBO may request information substantiating the requirements.

#### **C. SOFTWARE AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must have access to GIS mapping programs, Microsoft product, publishing software.

#### **D. EXPECTATIONS FOR THE DELIVERABLES**

1. Develop a five-year action plan congruent with the requirements of the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program.
  - a. The Plan should achieve the following:
    - 1) Identify strategies that will maximize BEAD funding and include a discussion on how to best target high cost areas.
    - 2) Identify service gaps that the Broadband Office could fill in regard to infrastructure deployment, delivery of public services, and enhancing business and residential services.
    - 3) Identify the resource requirements necessary to achieve publicly supported projects.
    - 4) Provide detailed cost estimates and timelines for such projects.
    - 5) Identify and document strategies and partnerships that could enhance the delivery and affordability of private sector broadband services.
  - b. The Five-Year plan will be developed and submitted to the Broadband Office by August 1, 2023
2. Establish a business plan and address short term and long-term operational plans to staff, operate and measure the performance of the Nebraska Broadband Office.

- a. Provide a five-year budget plan that outlines necessary funding for all operations.
  - b. Identify additional revenue sources, including outside funding and grant opportunities and partnerships which would provide more buildout opportunities and administrative support for the Broadband Office and the Department of Transportation.
3. Development of an organizational performance plan to provide measures of success.
4. All plans must be available both in a hard copy and digital format.
5. Develop and maintain the Nebraska Broadband Map and all responsibilities related to its function.
  - a. This includes a challenge process by which the map's data can be updated on regular intervals.
  - b. The map itself will include the following:
    - 1) Location specific data
    - 2) Several Zoom layers aggregating data.
    - 3) Additional layers dividing up the state.
    - 4) Funding overlays
  - c. And any other GIS/Mapping functionalities deemed necessary by the Broadband office and the Department of Transportation.
6. All materials required must be presented in a report format that is in accordance with the expectations laid out by the legislature in LB683.
7. All plans, including attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc. shall become the property of NDOT and NBO and will not be returned to the applicant. Applicants may be required to present ideas, research, and reports to various governmental bodies, staff, and vendors.

## **DETAILS**

It is anticipated that one (1) consultant will be awarded the contract for this work. The payment method for the contract may be Cost Plus Fixed Fee, or Specific Rates of Compensation.

It is anticipated that three (3) consultants will be short-listed for interviews. The evaluation criteria to be used for the short-listing and final selection is outlined below.

***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 all projects 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.

Consultants must be certified by NDOT and have a Drug-Free Workplace Policy ([DF Policy Example](#)) submitted before final selections are made for this RFQ. Instructions for completing the NDOT Annual Consultant Certification form is available at:

<https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/6075/cert-instruc-annual-certification.pdf>

The Drug-Free Workplace Policy may be submitted via email to:

[NDOT.PDAnnualCertification@nebraska.gov](mailto: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](mailto:ndot.pdRFQinfo@nebraska.gov) or call (402) 479-4778.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

### **Short List (70 pts)**

#### **A. QUALIFICATIONS (20 PTS)**

1. Qualifications of the project manager and key team members to perform the work.
2. Qualifications and capability of key subconsultants
3. Expertise of consultant's team with preparing high level planning documents and programs with this or similar purposes.

#### **B. PERFORMANCE DATA (25 PTS)**

1. The capacity to accomplish the work in the required time
2. Adherence to industry standards
3. Completeness and schedule adherence of previous submittals to other clients.
4. Documented performance by clients for work of a similar nature. If no documented performance evaluations are provided, firm shall list a minimum of two (2) references for work completed of a similar nature for other clients.

#### **C. UNDERSTANDING OF THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED (25 PTS)**

1. Consultant demonstrated they understand nature and scope of the work.
2. The consultant has recognized and identified special circumstances to be considered for the work.
3. Consultant provided a logical approach to complete tasks, resolve issues, and inform stakeholders of results and conclusions.

### **Final Selection (30 pts, 100 pts total)**

#### **D. DISCUSSION OF FOCUS AREA TOPICS (20 PTS)**

1. Consultant's interview presentation was clear and concise.
2. Consultant showed knowledge and understanding of topics.

**E. COMMITTEE Q&A SESSION (10 PTS)**

1. Consultant answered committee questions logically and thoroughly.

<b>SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Date (2023)</b>	<b>Time (CST)</b>
RFQ posted	Apr 19, 26	
Last day questions will be accepted	Apr 24	4:00 PM
Last day Q&A or updates to RFQ may be posted	Apr 28	4:00 PM
NDOT Form 497 & Drug-Free Workplace Policy on file at NDOT	May 3	1:00 PM
<b>Statement of Qualifications Due</b>	<b>May 3</b>	<b>1:00 PM</b>
Post Short-List Consultants & Interview Schedule	May 8	4:00 PM
Interviews/Discussions with short-listed firms	May 12	2-4:00 PM
Post Final Selections	May 16	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 not to exceed one (1) page.
3. Organizational Chart not to exceed one (1) page.
4. A narrative responding to the established evaluation factors not to exceed six (6) pages.
5. A maximum of five (5) pages of additional supportive material such as charts, tables, resumes, or photos.

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.
3. Fold-out or oversized pages are not allowed.

**INTERVIEWS**

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. Interview discussions/presentations will be capped at 20 minutes, followed by up to 10 minutes of Q&A.

NDOT selection committee will conduct interviews with the short-listed consultants via WebEx. Consultant may contact the Procurement Engineer to make any special arrangements.

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*