

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS/PROPOSALS**

**for the**

**US 1/US 78 CORRIDOR STUDY**

February 4, 2010

**AIKEN COUNTY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

(Serving as the Augusta Regional Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization for the South Carolina side – SC ARTS MPO)

The Aiken County Planning & Development Department (AIKEN COUNTY) in cooperation with City of Aiken, City of North Augusta, and Town of Burnetown (collectively, the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES) is hereby issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) in order to procure consulting services (CONSULTANT) for the US 1/US 78 Corridor Study. Each CONSULTANT must have the capability to perform the scope of work described later.

The Project Officer overseeing this study is Stephen Strohminger, AICP, Aiken County Planning & Development Director. Each CONSULTANT must submit a package containing an original and nine (9) copies of its proposal no later than **3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 23, 2010** to:

Attn: Debbie Pearson, Purchasing Manager  
Aiken County Government  
828 Richland Avenue, West, Room 216  
Aiken, South Carolina 29801  
Email: [dpearson@aikencountysc.gov](mailto:dpearson@aikencountysc.gov)

Hard copies of the proposals may be submitted in person or via postal mail, courier or parcel service. All proposal packages will be logged and date & time stamped. Any package that is received after the specified date and time will be logged and date & time stamped as “Late” and returned unopened to the CONSULTANT.

Each Proposal must meet the following specifications:

1. Be no more than the equivalent of 30 single sided 8 ½ by 11-inch pages in length (not counting front and back covers of the proposal, section dividers, and SF 330 forms). The font size should be no smaller than 12 point.
2. Include names of the prime and SUBCONSULTANTS who will comprise the team, and identify the Executive Officer of each company. If a joint venture, clearly state it.
3. Identify the proposed Project Manager for the team who will be the primary point of contact to AIKEN COUNTY for day-to-day operations.
4. List the key personnel who will participate in performing the scope of work. Provide a resume for each listed team member. (Include key personnel of SUBCONSULTANTS who will be performing a portion of the scope of work).
5. Provide an organizational chart depicting the relationships between the team members and agencies.
6. List three (3) recently performed, relevant projects within the past five (5) years that indicate the past performances and abilities of the proposed team. Include a key client

- contact person for each project with their current daytime phone number.
7. Provide a proposed list of required tasks and milestones to address the provided scope of work.
  8. Provide a proposed project schedule that includes the key task activities, duration, milestones and deliverables that will complete the scope of work in the shortest time frame that is responsive to the required review.
  9. Provide a flow chart depicting key task activities and sequence.
  10. Provide Standard Federal Form 330 for the prime CONSULTANT and all SUBCONSULTANTS. If the CONSULTANT needs to change any of their personnel after initially submitting their proposal, a new SF 330 needs to be re-submitted. The new personnel must be identified by name, assignment and resume on a new SF 330.

*Special Note: Per South Carolina Department of Transportation Guidelines, the maximum compensation for raw labor is \$43.00 per hour. An authorized officer of the prime CONSULTANT firm shall sign all proposal submissions.*

### **CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCESS**

All proposals received shall be subject to an evaluation by a Selection Committee, assisted by other technical personnel as deemed appropriate for the purpose of selecting the CONSULTANT with whom a contract will be executed. AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES reserve the right to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part if, in the judgment of the CONSULTANT Selection Committee, the best interest of all parties will be served. In all cases AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES will be the judge as to whether a CONSULTANT'S proposal has or has not satisfactorily met the requirements of this RFP.

There will be no pre-proposal conference conducted by AIKEN COUNTY or the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES. Any questions, clarifications or Requests for Information (RFIs) regarding the contents of this RFP and the expectation of AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES shall be submitted via email to Gerald K. Jefferson ([gjefferson@aikencountysc.gov](mailto:gjefferson@aikencountysc.gov)) no later than **5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 12, 2010. No telephone inquiries will be accepted.** AIKEN COUNTY will reply via email to the originating CONSULTANT and the other CONSULTANTS before closing of the next business day with the answer(s) and originating question(s).

If in the judgment of AIKEN COUNTY or the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES, modifications to the contents of the RFP are required, an addendum will be issued by AIKEN COUNTY and transmitted via facsimile and/or email to each firm. AIKEN COUNTY will allow each CONSULTANT a maximum of three (3) additional business days to incorporate the necessary changes before submitting their proposals.

Due to potential conflict of interest or undue influence, no CONSULTANT or a person representing a CONSULTANT may meet with any members of the Selection Committee to discuss 1) anything related to this RFP or 2) anything about the other CONSULTANTS during the period of time between the release of this RFP and whenever AIKEN COUNTY announces the selection of the successful CONSULTANT.

The CONSULTANT will be evaluated based on a two-step selection process. The first step will involve an evaluation of the CONSULTANT's technical proposal using the selection criteria described later. The second step will involve up to three (3) CONSULTANTS with the highest scoring technical proposals being short listed, then invited for oral presentations / interviews.

The selection of the successful CONSULTANT will be determined by the highest total score of 1) the technical proposal and 2) the oral presentation / interview from these two steps. In the event of a tied, highest total score, only AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES, using their best judgment, will have the responsibility of selecting the successful CONSULTANT. AIKEN COUNTY will be primarily responsible for making any contract & fee negotiations with the successful CONSULTANT. However, AIKEN COUNTY, at their discretion, may request any or all of the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES to join in any negotiations. The successful CONSULTANT will ultimately be confirmed by vote of the AIKEN COUNTY COUNCIL as recommended by the Selection Committee.

Furthermore, after all the short listed CONSULTANTS have been informed of the successful CONSULTANT, no CONSULTANT on this short list or a person representing a CONSULTANT on this short list may meet with any members of the AIKEN COUNTY COUNCIL to discuss 1) anything related to this RFP or 2) anything about the other short listed CONSULTANTS during the period of time from whenever AIKEN COUNTY announces the selection of the successful CONSULTANT to whenever the AIKEN COUNTY COUNCIL ultimately confirms the CONSULTANT whom the Selection Committee recommended.

AIKEN COUNTY reserves the right to 1) contact a firm to obtain any necessary clarifications, follow-up information or material regarding their submitted proposal and 2) perform reference checks of each CONSULANT.

When selecting the CONSULTANT, the entire Selection Committee shall rank each proposal against the stated criteria and the percentage of their importance as follows:

## **STEP ONE**

### *CRITERIA*

#### ***Method of Approach: 20%***

This refers to the technical soundness of the CONSULTANT'S stated approach to the project, the comprehensiveness of the proposed approach, and the techniques to be used.

#### ***Understanding the Purpose: 15%***

A determination will be made of the CONSULTANT'S understanding of the project purpose and tasks as presented in the RFP. Evaluation will be based on the data presented in the CONSULTANT'S proposal and the approach and allocation of time on specific tasks.

CONSULTANTS should feel free to suggest other requirements and problems that may have been overlooked.

**Capability and qualifications: 15%**

The ability of a prospective CONSULTANT will be evaluated under the terms of the RFP, relative to having a staff with the qualifications needed to successfully complete the project. Qualifications of professional personnel assigned to the project, as specified in the proposal including SUBCONSULTANTS, will be measured by both education and experience, and with particular reference to experience on similar projects. The CONSULTANT'S professional and project staff that work on the project must be the same staff that is identified in the proposal.

**Originality or innovativeness: 15%**

While this RFP generally outlines the tasks, products, and outcomes expected of the CONSULTANT, a key factor in the selection of a CONSULTANT is any innovative approach to the study that goes beyond the suggested Scope of Work either in data gathering, data analysis, public participation, etc.

**Cooperative work experience: 10%**

This covers the CONSULTANT'S experience working as a cooperative team with other CONSULTANTS and public agencies. Qualifications of professionals assigned will be measured by past experience on past projects within a cooperative team environment. The CONSULTANT will provide specific examples of cooperative work experiences with contact references for the Selection Committee.

**Schedule: 5%**

The CONSULTANT will be evaluated on their ability to follow a schedule that will successfully complete the project within the required time frame.

*PROPOSED TIMEFRAME*

The proposed timeframe for this study is as follows:

<b>Deadline to Receive Questions:</b>	<b>March 12, 2010</b>
<b>Request for Proposals Due:</b>	<b>March 23, 2010</b>
<b>Interviews:</b>	<b>March or April 2010</b>
<b>Award of Contract:</b>	<b>March or April 2010</b>
<b>Notice to Proceed:</b>	<b>Shortly after award.</b>
<b>Completion of Contract:</b>	<b>Within 18 months after notice to proceed.</b>

**STEP TWO**

*ORAL PRESENTATIONS / INTERVIEWS*

CONSULTANTS who submit a proposal will be requested to make an oral presentation of their proposal. Up to three (3) short-listed CONSULTANTS with the highest scoring technical proposals will be invited by AIKEN COUNTY for oral presentations / interviews. This presentation/interview will provide an opportunity for the CONSULTANT to clarify their proposal.

**Interview: 20%**

The prospective CONSULTANT will be evaluated on their ability to clarify their proposal to accomplish the key outcomes of this study.

<b>Step One:</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Step Two:</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

**DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE**

It is the policy of AIKEN COUNTY to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of federally-assisted contracts and to use Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) in all types of contracting and procurement activities according to State and Federal laws. To that end the AIKEN COUNTY has established a DBE program in accordance with regulations of the United States Department of Transportation found in 49 CFR Part 26. Each CONSULTANT is encouraged to use certified DBEs to meet the tasks and milestones of this request.

To ensure compliance with the AIKEN COUNTY DBE Program, please note that AIKEN COUNTY will request a minimum participation goal of 10% for South Carolina Unified Certification Program (UCP) certified DBEs for this project. Please note that the following statement should be included in the proposal to denote the level of proposed DBE participation.

“We, the CONSULTANT, ensure to the fullest extent possible that at least \_\_\_\_\_% of all procurement made with funds provided under this project/study/request will be made from organizations owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantage individuals, women, and historically black colleges and universities.”

**NOTICE OF AWARD**

The short listed CONSULTANTS will be notified via telephone and email as to whom was selected as the successful CONSULTANT. Shortly after the award announcement, negotiations to finalize the scope of work, personnel, hours, hourly rates, use of SUBCONSULTANTS, and other direct costs that will be required to complete the agreement between AIKEN COUNTY and the selected firm (CONSULTANT) will begin. If an agreement cannot be reached with the top ranked firm, AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES will identify the next most responsive and qualified firm, and the negotiation phase will be repeated. This process will be continued until an agreement is reached with a qualified firm that can provide the required services.

## **APPEAL POLICY**

Short listed CONSULTANTS dissatisfied with the decisions regarding contract award can appeal to AIKEN COUNTY. The protest must be filed in writing by the authorized signatory official for the CONSULTANT addressed to Stephen Strohmingner within ten (10) business days of the announcement of the contract awards. The ten (10) business days to file appeals will begin on the date the announcement is made of the successful CONSULTANT. AIKEN COUNTY will not consider appeals from individuals or organizations that do not have standing to appeal nor from SUBCONSULTANTS of parties with which contracts have been placed. The signature of a party on an appeal document constitutes a certification by the signer that the signer has read the document and to the best of their knowledge, information, and belief and, after reasonable inquiry, it is well grounded in fact. It must be warranted by existing law or by a good faith argument, and that it is not submitted for any improper purpose such as to harass, limit competition, or cause unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of the procurement or the appeal. The cost of the appeal will be borne solely by the appealing organization or individual. AIKEN COUNTY will issue a written decision in accordance with its contract appeals procedures. Frivolous appeals will not be addressed by AIKEN COUNTY. The decision of AIKEN COUNTY is final. There will be no formal debriefing on AIKEN COUNTY decisions on the appeal.

## **INSURANCE**

The CONSULTANT shall effect and maintain insurance at its own cost and expense to protect itself and AIKEN COUNTY from claims under Workers' Compensation Acts; from claims for damages because of bodily injury including sickness, disease, or death of any of its employees or other parties; from claims for damages because of injury to or destruction of tangible property; and from claims arising out of the performance of professional services caused by errors, omissions, or negligent acts for which it is legally liable, each in the amount of \$1,000,000 or statutory amount as applicable.

## **FUNDING**

This project will be funded with federal Planning Level funds allocated for transportation planning through the ARTS MPO. The required match will be shared by AIKEN COUNTY and the CITIES of AIKEN and NORTH AUGUSTA. Costs incurred prior to notice-to-proceed shall be the responsibility of the CONSULTANT and will not be reimbursed. The CONSULTANT shall bear any travel expenses prior to notice-to-proceed. This project will be negotiated as a lump sum contract.

## US 1/US 78 CORRIDOR STUDY

### SCOPE OF WORK

#### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

This RFP provides sufficient information to enable the CONSULTANT to prepare and submit a proposal for consideration by AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES. This will be a cooperative process, affording early and continued involvement of the public, to include affected public agencies and other stakeholders in the study area. The public participation and active involvement of transportation and land use stakeholders will be a critical component of this plan.

#### II. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the US 1/ US 78 Corridor Study is to evaluate and address current transportation conditions along the corridor and propose future improvements with particular emphasis on flow, capacity, adjacent & nearby land uses, and multimodal planning. The study must also address the wide range of challenges and opportunities affecting the corridor and involve public participation as a critical component towards future planning.

#### III. BACKGROUND/EXISTING PROBLEMS

US 1/ US 78, known officially as Jefferson Davis Highway and colloquially as the Aiken-Augusta Highway, is in Aiken County and provides a vital link between the Cities of Aiken, North Augusta, and Augusta and the Town of Burnetown.

The termini in the study area are the Savannah River on the west end and Highway SC-118 (Robert M. Bell Parkway/Hitchcock Parkway) on the east end, which stretch approximately 12.25 miles. The corridor exists in an area zoned primarily RUD (rural urban development). (See *Study Area Map* on page 18.)

US 1/US 78 is a four-lane *principal arterial* meaning the roadway serves high-volume traffic over a long distance. The median has infrequent openings and varies between grassed ditch, formal landscaping, and asphalt center lanes. Direct access to parcels is limited to 300 feet curb cut separations. Some of the vegetated median has been paved over and the number of turning movements has increased as individual parcels develop. Adjacent land uses are served by other network roadways and inter-parcel connections, and secondary feeder roads are carrying increased amounts of traffic.

Corridor improvements are needed due to steady commercial and residential growth along and in the vicinity of this major thoroughfare in recent years. Over the last ten years traffic volumes have noticeably increased while vehicle travel time has decreased and road safety has diminished.

Most of this highway segment traverses unincorporated developed and vacant land. Existing land uses include a college campus, commercial strip development, pockets of residential development, religious institutions, a major cemetery, ponds, streams, watersheds, other environmental elements, etc. Therefore, consideration must also be given to the transportation and traffic influences of the surrounding areas.

The recent opening of Palmetto Parkway (I-520) is likely to speed up the rate of economic development in this area since it establishes a north/south connection to I-20. In addition, accessibility of both the Atomic Road (SC-125) interchange and the Martintown Road (SC-230)/Edgefield Road (US-25) interchange is inadequate. Transportation problems will likely worsen along the corridor unless recommendations are made to redesign these interchanges and make other improvements as well.

#### IV. REFERENCE MATERIALS

When proposing corridor improvements, the successful CONSULTANT must refer to the documents stated below:

- The respective *Comprehensive Plan* of AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES. Consider any conceptual road networks, proposed land development patterns, and related policies found in the *Comprehensive Plans*. The *Comprehensive Plan* of each municipality can be obtained online or by requesting a hard copy. The websites are as follows: [www.aikencountysc.gov](http://www.aikencountysc.gov), then click the appropriate link in the *Online Now* box; [www.northauqusta.net](http://www.northauqusta.net); and [www.cityofaikensc.gov](http://www.cityofaikensc.gov). The *Comprehensive Plan* for Burnettown is available by visiting the Town Hall located at 3144 Augusta Road, in Warrentonville, South Carolina, or calling 803-593-2676 or emailing [burnettown@bellsouth.net](mailto:burnettown@bellsouth.net).
- Aiken County's 1) 2009 *Land Management Regulations* (LMR) which covers land use and zoning policies and 2) the *Major Thoroughfare Map*, both located at [www.aikencountysc.gov](http://www.aikencountysc.gov).
- *ARTS Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* (a map) and the *Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* located at <http://www.augustaga.gov/index.aspx?NID=896>.
- Travel Demand Model that South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) is developing for AIKEN COUNTY. The model is TransCad® driven, and completion is expected Spring 2010.
- 2009 National Household Travel Surveys, once the data is available for distribution from SCDOT.

- SCDOT *Public Participation Plan* located at [http://www.scdot.org/inside/public\\_participation\\_plan.shtml](http://www.scdot.org/inside/public_participation_plan.shtml) (An underscore is before and after the word *participation*.)

Special Note: A fee may be charged for hard copies of any documents listed above.

## V. SCOPE OF WORK

### Task 1 - Identify & Evaluate Transportation Systems and Facilities

The CONSULTANT will identify & evaluate the existing and proposed transportation systems and facilities; roadways (minor collectors, major collectors, arterials, highways and freeways) major intersections (unsignalized and signalized) and interchanges; sidewalk and bikeway/path systems; public transit routes (local and outside area); and proposed major land use changes. It is recommended that the CONSULTANT review, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Pattern and demand of existing development
- Road audit (traffic counts, etc.)
- Traffic flow
- Aesthetics
- Multimodal
- Through vs. origin/destination trips
- Trip distribution, characteristic, and traffic assignment
- Traffic volumes, daily (school year)
- Capacity analysis (LOS)
- Travel time increase (delay)
- Travel cost increase (vehicle operating cost, time cost, and accident cost)
- Excess delay index and delay ratio
- Deficiencies of the existing transportation system
- Evaluate existing posted speed limits and alleged speed traps
- Crash data
- Truck traffic

### Task 2 - Development Trends and Future Demand

The study process will identify and include existing and projected development trends within and outside the study area including, but not limited to, land use and demographics, which impact transportation systems within the study area. When analyzing development trends outside the study area, the CONSULTANT shall consider, at a minimum, the impacts of/to 1) State Highway SC-421 (Augusta Road) and 2) the Town of Graniteville with particular consideration given to the train derailment pre- & post- 2005.

### Task 3 – Land Use Planning and Environmental Impacts

In addition to focusing on transportation, significant consideration should also be given to existing and projected land use patterns and environmental resources as they affect transportation planning.

3.1 The CONSULTANT will 1) identify and recommend general land use management, policy solutions, and strategies as they relate to transportation systems in the region as well, 2) consider the impacts of proposed multimodal transportation strategies and solutions and how best to avoid or mitigate effects that may conflict with current policies and/or the community's values and guiding principles through scenario planning, and 3) identify any conflicts with existing or proposed projects inside the Study Area.

3.2 The CONSULTANT will also be sensitive to the design implications of land use areas identified in each Comprehensive Plan and the LMR so that all users will be able to access and safely use the roadways. It is recommended that the CONSULTANT review, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Multimodal/inter-modal planning (trails, etc.)
- Complete Streets program
- Context Sensitive Design
- Signalization
- Aesthetics
- Improve access management
- Streetscape features
- Preserving and landscaping medians
- Improve connectivity
- Improve safety
- Examine the current spacing of intersections and the ultimate profile of the road by segment
- Achieve a more consistent speed limit along the corridor
- Determine how the corridor needs to be designed for a capacity that will maintain an adequate level-of-service per segment, preferably LOS C
- Maintain commercial activity at a specific growth rate
- Regulations for adjacent private land including: tree protection, signs, landscaping
- Creative solutions are encouraged such as limited frontage roads, view shed of adjacent ponds or bogs, etc.

3.3 The CONSULTANT should also identify all known environmental resources and describe ways to minimize environmental Impacts. The CONSULTANT shall review, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Ponds, streams, watersheds
- Habitat
- Cultural/historical
- Air quality

- Preserve open/green space
- Reduce the carbon footprint/greenhouse gases

#### **Task 4 - Congestion Management**

All the elements to be addressed, including congestion management, are a function of the future land uses and projected volumes. Appropriate traffic demand and operational management strategies should be implemented to increase the efficiency of the corridor and extend the life of any improvements. Therefore, the CONSULTANT must identify and evaluate all reasonable alternatives to alleviate potential congestion and enhance mobility. It is recommended that the CONSULTANT review, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Improve vehicle travel time
- Improve safety

#### **Task 5 - Establish Highway Scenarios**

It is recommended that the CONSULTANT review, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Determine the effects of a potential overlay district.
- Determine whether creating a parkway design is a viable solution.
- Identify possible routes for future roadways and protect the rights-of-way for these roads.
- Identify & describe significant needed improvements to the existing corridor and provide general cost estimates.
- Justify any proposed new roads and/or widenings.
- Classify the design of any proposed new roads and/or widenings and provide general cost estimates.
- Merge recommendations for the existing corridor and any proposed new roads and then prioritize the improvements and/or changes to the corridor. Provide the rationale for prioritization.
- Describe the difference in approach between a more specific level of study within the growth areas (Contiguous, Nodal, Highway Commerce, Enhancement and Gateway) and the broader level of study for the areas designated Rural.
- Identify the pros and cons of each scenario.

#### **Task 6 - Transit Element**

The CONSULTANT, in cooperation with the transit provider Best Friend Express; and, if required, the SCDOT-Division of Mass Transit will evaluate transit issues in the study area. It is recommended that the CONSULTANT review, at a minimum, the following issues:

- Population served
- Route(s), existing and future
- Stop location, spacing, etc.
- Frequency of service

- Travel time (origin-to-destination)
- Ridership levels, existing and future

These issues will be considered in determining the need for transit services in general and dedicated transit lane(s) for the year 2035.

### **Task 7 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Element**

The CONSULTANT will assess the quality of the walking environment in the study area and make recommendations for improvements and opportunities for interconnections within the study area.

### **Task 8 - Public Participation**

Develop and implement a comprehensive public participation process with corresponding activities. The primary outcome sought from this process is the significant enhancement of community understanding of the relationships, impacts and interconnectivity between transportation and land use decisions. Public awareness, education, participation, and input will assist with the development of recommendations and solutions appearing in the final plan. Public involvement strategies and activities should engage the public and the full range of affected stakeholder groups to: identify community values and guiding principles, identify and evaluate current land use as it relates to transportation; identify and evaluate existing multimodal transportation challenges; develop multimodal transportation scenarios and strategies to improve land use as it relates to transportation and future transportation decision-making.

### **Task 9 - Recommendations / End of Study**

9.1 The CONSULTANT must devise a comprehensive Purpose-and-Need Statement, in accordance with FHWA and SCDOT's guidelines that focuses on, at a minimum, improving safety and decreasing congestion.

9.2 The study must identify multimodal transportation system solutions that meet the study area's transportation challenges and be supportive of the preferred land use vision within the study area. These solutions will be outlined in incremental time blocks using a 2035 transportation-planning horizon. In addition, the CONSULTANT shall provide an overview of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities associated with the transportation system to assure actions or strategies implemented by each municipality within the study area today, tomorrow or even 20 years in the future will not preclude long-term transportation and land use opportunities down the road. The study must include recommendations that can be implemented. The transportation and related land use solutions recommended in the plan should include but not be limited to:

- Reflect community values and guiding principles
- Be guided, understood, and supported by the public through the public participation

process

- Be supported by stakeholder groups and decision-makers
- Be economically feasible
- Outline opportunities and incentives for community investment
- Conform to applicable laws and regulations
- Include multimodal transportation solutions

## **VI. DISQUALIFICATION**

Respondents are strongly encouraged to identify concerns, issues or questions that should be considered by the issuing agency (AIKEN COUNTY). Verbal inquiries, RFIs, etc., shall not be made to other staff or representatives of participating agencies. Any attempt on the part of any CONSULTANT or any of its employees, agents or representatives to contact anyone other than the party listed above regarding this RFP, will lead to disqualification.

## **VII. SCHEDULE**

The CONSULTANT must agree to begin work upon issuance of a notice-to-proceed by AIKEN COUNTY and complete this work within 18 months. The work shall be guided by a detailed flow diagram, prepared by the CONSULTANT and furnished to AIKEN COUNTY within one week of receipt of notice to proceed, and approved by AIKEN COUNTY. The Project shall be considered complete only after action has been taken by AIKEN COUNTY. Periodic payments for the work shall be made in accordance with a schedule proposed by the CONSULTANT and approved by AIKEN COUNTY.

## **VIII. MEETINGS**

Public participation meetings shall be conducted by the CONSULTANT, during the course of this project. The CONSULTANT shall be responsible for the logistics of these meetings and will implement the public participation plan of the ARTS MPO. The number of meetings shall be negotiated between the CONSULTANT and the Project Officer of AIKEN COUNTY.

## **IX. BRIEFINGS**

A series of formal briefings shall be held by the CONSULTANT for AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES. These meetings shall be held at least once every three (3) months at an agreed upon location, during the course of the project. The purpose of the briefings will be to apprise AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES of the activities of the CONSULTANT, to schedule future activities and to ensure that the project is on schedule. Any minutes for these meetings shall be the responsibility of the CONSULTANT.

## **X. COMPUTING / ELECTRONIC DATA REQUIREMENTS**

1. AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES will not be responsible for providing any

proprietary computer software packages to the CONSULTANT.

2. Should the CONSULTANT desire to use any computer software of AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES permission must be received in accordance with this agreement.
3. Computations or graphics based on computer software other than AIKEN COUNTY'S and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES must conform to all the format requirements of AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES.
4. All electronic data submitted must be compatible with the Microsoft® Windows XP Professional Operating System and all word documents, spreadsheets, graphs, tables, charts, etc., must be compatible with 1) Microsoft® Office 2003 software and 2) Adobe® Portable Document Format (PDF).

#### **XI. REPORT REQUIREMENTS**

The CONSULTANT shall provide copies of 1) the Draft Report and 2) the Final Report including an Executive Summary in a size no smaller than 8½ X 11-inch and no larger than 11 x 17-inch. Ideally, AIKEN COUNTY would like the CONSULTANT to submit a draft of the final report to AIKEN COUNTY and the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES for review no later than two thirds into CONSULTANT'S proposed duration. Only the Final Report is required to be spine-bound. The number of copies of the Draft and Final Reports shall be determined between the CONSULTANT and the AIKEN COUNTY Project Officer. These documents shall also be provided in an electronic format such as CD-Rom or DVD.

#### **XII. FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

Following the completion of the Study, the CONSULTANT shall make a technical presentation via Microsoft® Powerpoint or similar format to AIKEN COUNTY, the OTHER MUNICIPALITIES, and any other interested parties prior to making the same type technical presentation to the COUNTY COUNCIL.

#### **XIII. PROPRIETARY/CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by a CONSULTANT in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act; however, the CONSULTANT must invoke the protections of this section prior to or upon submission of the data or other materials, and must identify the data or other materials to be protected and state reasons why protection is necessary. Disposition of material after award is made should be stated by the CONSULTANT. No information, materials or other documents relating to this procurement will be presented or made otherwise available to any other person, agency, or organization until after award.

All CONSULTANTS must visibly mark, as "Confidential", each part of their proposal that they consider to contain proprietary information. All unmarked pages will be subject to release in accordance with the guidelines set forth under Chapter 4 of Title 30 (The Freedom of

Information Act) South Carolina Code of Laws and Section 11-35-410 of the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code. Privileged and confidential information is defined as "information in specific detail not customarily released to the general public, the release of which might cause harm to the competitive position of the part supplying the information." The examples of such information provided in the statute includes: customer lists, design recommendations and identification of prospective problem areas under an RFP, design concepts to include methods and procedures, and biographical data on key employees of the CONSULTANT.

Evaluative documents pre-decisional in nature such as inter or intra-agency memoranda containing technical evaluations and recommendations are exempted so long as the contract award does not expressly adopt or incorporate the inter- or intra-agency memoranda reflecting the pre-decisional deliberations.

Marking the entire proposal confidential/proprietary is not in conformance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

## STUDY AREA MAP

