

Tuscaloosa County Parking & Transit Authority  
601 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

**Part I - PUBLIC NOTICE and REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)**

Tuscaloosa County Parking & Transit Authority (TCPTA) is requesting qualifications for a Transit Study to provide analysis and recommendations for public transit improvements over the next five (5) years. Qualifications must be received in the TCPTA office at 601 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Tuscaloosa, AL 35401, in sealed envelopes marked "TRANSIT STUDY / RFQ 2019" no later than 5:00 PM Central Time, Wednesday, November 27, 2019. The schedule will allow for thirty (30) calendar days for qualifications submission.

The RFQ document package may be obtained from TCPTA at 601 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Tuscaloosa, AL 35401, on or after October 28, 2019, by contacting Executive Director Russell Lawrence. Interested individuals or firms may download the RFQ documents package from the TCPTA website at [www.tuscaloosatransit.com](http://www.tuscaloosatransit.com), or call (205) 343-2305 to arrange for pick up or mailing.

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)**

The Tuscaloosa County Parking & Transit Authority (TCPTA) reserves the right to accept any qualifications or any part or parts thereof.

The TCPTA reserves the right to reject any or all qualifications and to waive irregularities therein, and all respondents must agree that such rejection shall be without liability on the part of the TCPTA for any penalty brought by a respondent because of such rejections, nor shall the respondent seek any recourse of any kind against the TCPTA because of such rejections, and the filing of any qualifications in response to this solicitation shall constitute an agreement of the respondent to these conditions.

**KEY DATES AND DEADLINES**

- RFQ Release: October 28<sup>th</sup> 2019
- Qualifications Due Date: November 27<sup>th</sup> 2019
- Finalist Interviews: December 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2019
- Cost Negotiations: December 16<sup>th</sup> 2019 to January 14<sup>th</sup> 2020
- Selection and Notice to Proceed: January 15<sup>th</sup> 2020
- Final Report and Presentation: October 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) TRANSIT STUDY**  
**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

1.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The Tuscaloosa County Parking & Transit Authority (TCPTA) is requesting qualifications from qualified firms, consulting teams or individuals to evaluate 7 transit objective areas and make recommendations that can be reasonably implemented within a 1-5 year window and within the current local, state, federal financial environment. TCPTA is open to consideration of an increasing local share to support transit. This study should provide the TCPTA with a clear 5-Year implementation plan for providing additional public transit service that better meets the needs of citizens in Tuscaloosa and the region while increasing ridership.

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

TCPTA strives to efficiently use available funding to provide the highest quality of service possible in order to meet the transit needs of the community, maximize ridership and provide ongoing system evaluation.

3.0 TRANSIT STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. Evaluate and recommend services and operating hours that meet the needs of the citizens of Tuscaloosa to include senior citizens, disabled, workers, students, and the general public. Recommendations need to show routes, service levels, times, headways, forecasted revenues, expenses, FTA Share of Expenses, and the TCPTA Share of Expenses.
2. Evaluate and recommend strategies to increase usage (ridership) through “straightening” or “modifying” fixed routes to achieve faster trip times and improved service frequency. Consideration should be given to eliminating inefficient miles and hours as a budget offset for improved service trip times and frequency.
3. Evaluate and recommend actions to be taken to reduce the cost of complementary paratransit service. This evaluation should include (but is not limited to) the evaluation of the TCPTA paratransit eligibility requirements, ways to encourage paratransit-eligible riders to utilize ridesharing (Uber / Lyft), taxicabs or other low cost service options for ambulatory paratransit trips.
4. Evaluate the use of a subsidized taxi, ride-sharing (Uber / Lyft) versus traditional fixed route service during off-peak evening hours and weekends. This evaluation should show forecasted ridership, revenue, and expenses versus traditional fixed route bus service for the same days and hours.
5. Evaluate and recommend the best strategy or most efficient, cost-effective service or method to provide public transit service from low income residential areas of the TCPTA service area to manufacturing jobs on the west side of Tuscaloosa, the region, and along the west Tuscaloosa corridor. Non-traditional options such as subsidized carpools, vanpools, and smart phone applications should be explored.
6. Evaluate and recommend the appropriate transit fare media types and pricing levels; with the corresponding impact on passenger ridership and revenues. Recommend the appropriate improvements to be made over the next 5 years; with corresponding fares models.

7. The Study Final Report should also include a “Recommended 5-Year Capital Plan” and “Fixed Route Expansion” that corresponds to the recommendations in the six (6) objectives above and associated recommendations. This recommended 5-Year Capital Plan should be based on current and future anticipated 5307 appropriation levels to achieve the greatest positive impact on Customer Ridership, Safety, Convenience and Overall Experience. Buses, Video Camera Systems, Fare Media / Farebox Technologies, Other software, etc.

#### 4.0 RESOURCES

TCPTA (with assistance from City of Tuscaloosa staff) will provide all relevant information and resources as available to assist the consultant team to ensure a successful completion of the study.

#### 5.0 KEY DATES AND DELIVERABLES

Respondent shall include a proposed schedule of study activities and completion date for project. It is the desire of the TCPTA to have the final presentation and report not later than October 15<sup>th</sup> 2020.

##### Deliverables:

- Six (6) hard copies of Final Draft Report
- Six (6) hard copies of the Final Report
- One (1) electronic copy of the Final Draft Report
- One (1) electronic copy of the Final Report (including appendices) in PDF format
- Presentation of Final Report to the TCPTA officials and City of Tuscaloosa

#### 5.1 Presentations

The Consultant shall be available for presentations to the TCPTA officials and City of Tuscaloosa following completion of the Final Draft Report and the Final Report.

#### 6.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH AND MEETINGS

This project will be conducted by the Consultant, with assistance from the TCPTA staff. The Consultant will be responsible for completing the tasks listed in the Project Objectives and in the final negotiated Scope of Work.

#### 6.1 Reports

The Consultant shall develop progress reports on a weekly basis during the study and as specific tasks are completed, and submit these reports to TCPTA for review and comment. The Consultant shall prepare a Final Draft Report which summarizes all the completed tasks reports (incorporating Public Transit comments), and which will include: executive summary; narrative description of work performed; project objectives met; methodologies used; data analysis using charts, tables, graphs, and maps; evaluation of current system; and, specific recommendations based on the results of the analysis. This report will be submitted to the Executive Director of TCPTA, his staff, and the City of Tuscaloosa for review and comment.

#### 6.2 Meetings

The Consultant shall hold internal meetings with TCPTA representatives at the beginning of the project, and at significant milestones throughout the project; the Consultant will keep TCPTA informed as to progress, and TCPTA will provide the Consultant with the opportunity for data gathering and with feedback on draft reports. These meetings are to be completed through teleconference, via Skype, or at TCPTA offices as needed.

#### 6.3 Contact and Mailing List

With the assistance of TCPTA, the Consultant shall develop a project contact and mailing list, said list to be comprised of interested parties in the study area.

**7.0 IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTANCE**

The Consultant shall assist TCPTA staff with implementing recommendations approved by the TCPTA. This assistance shall include creating new schedules and work assignments and an outline of the sequence and timing for implementing schedules for revised routes and for new service(s).

**PART II - INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS**

This RFQ represents, in writing to all respondents, the most comprehensive and definitive statement that TCPTA is able to make at this time as to requirements, terms, and conditions for this qualification process and performance of a Comprehensive Transit Improvement Study. The qualification package is the Consultant's opportunity to demonstrate how it will best meet the needs of TCPTA in the service provided. A well organized, complete, and compliant qualification package will improve the Consultant's chances of selection.

Any information or understandings, verbal or written, which are not contained either in the RFQ or in subsequent written addenda to the RFQ, will not be considered in evaluating the qualifications.

**1.0 DISCLOSURE OF QUALIFICATIONS**

Qualifications and other materials submitted by respondents which may become part of a contract with the TCPTA may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The TCPTA may deny public access to such records or applicable portions thereof that "are trade secrets or are maintained for the regulation of commercial enterprise which, if disclosed, would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the subject enterprise", are "specifically exempted from disclosure by state or federal statute," or are otherwise exempted from disclosure under the Act. Respondents shall make confidential only those portions of their qualifications that they believe are not required to be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act. The TCPTA, however, is obligated to disclose information consistent with the requirements of said Act, notwithstanding any such markings made by respondents.

Qualifications and other materials submitted by respondents which may become part of a contract with the TCPTA may be subject to the Alabama Open Records Act. The TCPTA may deny public access to "specifications for competitive bidding, sealed bids and related documents until the specifications are officially approved or until a bid is accepted or all bids reject." The TCPTA is obligated to disclose information consistent with the requirements of said Act.

**2.0 SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS**

One (1) original and five (5) copies of the qualifications, as well as one (1) electronic version are to be submitted in a sealed envelope with the name and address of the respondent clearly visible. Qualifications shall not be submitted by facsimile or other electronic transmission.

Due to the nature of this solicitation, a complete written response with supporting information and documentation is the only acceptable form of qualification submittal. The qualifications shall be comprehensive, accurate and effective without unnecessary bindings or other decorative or extraneous materials. The submission envelope shall be labeled "COMPREHENSIVE TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT STUDY /RFQ 2019-1."

**3.0 QUALIFICATIONS DELIVERY, DUE DATE, CONTACT PERSON, RFQ NUMBER**

All qualifications must be received by the TCPTA office no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on Wednesday, November 27, 2019. It is the responsibility of each respondent to ascertain that its qualifications are received by the TCPTA by the specified deadline. Qualifications received after that date and time will not be considered. All submission envelopes must include the following information when delivered and shall be delivered by the appropriate date and time to:

Tuscaloosa County Parking and Transit Authority  
601 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
ATTN: Executive Director  
RFQ # 2019-1

#### 4.0 CONTACT PERSON / RFQ QUESTIONS

TCPTA Executive Director Russell Lawrence is the contact person for this procurement. Written questions should be directed to TCPTA at the address shown above no later than November 20, 2019. The RFQ number shall appear on the envelope. Any new information to be issued by the TCPTA, replies to questions, and/or addenda/amendments to the RFQ will be provided in writing to all solicitation holders. Questions received via facsimile or e-mail will be answered only in writing and both the question and answer will be shared with all solicitation holders.

#### 5.0 QUALIFICATIONS PREPARATION COSTS

No payment will be provided by the TCPTA for any of the information provided in response to this solicitation. Respondents are responsible for the entire cost of responding to this RFQ, including but not limited to: preparation of qualifications, mailing of qualifications, expenses pertaining to preaward conferences, interviews and contract negotiations, and any and all legal costs incurred by the respondent.

#### 6.0 QUALIFICATIONS POSTPONEMENT AND AMENDMENT

The TCPTA reserves the right to revise or amend any portion of this RFQ prior to the date and time for the qualifications delivery. Such revisions and amendments, if any, shall be issued through addenda to this RFQ. Copies of such addenda and/or amendments shall be furnished a notice to respondent's last known address.

#### 7.0 REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS CONTENT AND FORMAT

Submitted qualifications must include the required contents and follow the format outlined below. There is a 10-page limit (8.5"x11" size) on the information submitted. Information submitted by the respondent is expected to be concise and relevant to the RFQ and project. Qualifications that do not follow the listed format, or fail to include the required material, may be removed from consideration. Each copy of the Qualifications must be complete.

##### 7.1 Cover Letter

The Cover Letter shall be brief, signed by a person who is authorized to commit the Consultant to perform the scope of services included in the qualifications, and should identify all materials and enclosures being forwarded in response to the RFQ. It shall be written on firm letterhead and contain the firm name, address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, firm URL and name of contact person.

##### 7.2 Understanding of the Project

The qualifications must demonstrate the Consultant's understanding of the scope of services, summarizing the key tasks to be undertaken and explaining how the objectives of the study will be addressed and fulfilled. The Consultant may wish to make alternate proposals for approaching various tasks/sub-tasks, to suggest additional sub-task(s) which would prove valuable to the study, or make suggestions as to which sub-tasks could be deleted without jeopardizing the accuracy of usefulness of the overall study.

##### 7.3 Approach to the Project

Include a detailed work plan, which addresses all elements of the scope of service, and describes and justifies the Consultant's qualifications and/or recommended approach to each task.

##### 7.4 Experience and Qualifications of the Firm

Provide a description of the consulting firm, including any sub-Consultant, and a statement of the firms' qualifications to perform studies of this type. Include a list of similar studies undertaken by the Consultant, including any sub-Consultant, with corresponding project descriptions, start and end dates, and contact persons and telephone numbers for reference.

Contact information for all references shall be up to date. If a reference cannot be obtained due to lack of accurate contact information, or the contact was not directly involved in the project, the points given shall be adjusted accordingly for this category. Provide a list of project personnel (Consultant and sub-Consultant) including an organizational chart and resumes. Specify the percent of time each staff member is expected to spend on the project. Provide references for the project leader and the staff member(s) programmed to do the majority of the work on this study. The references shall be for similar studies and shall include contact persons, addresses, and telephone numbers.

#### 7.5 Project Schedule

The schedule should outline the time from the Notice to Proceed to the submittal of the Final Report. The schedule should indicate the estimated starting and completion dates of each task, major reports, meeting dates, and other significant terms.

### 8.0 OTHER COMMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

#### 8.1 Right of Selection/Rejection The

TCPTA reserves the right to:

- 8.1.1 Reject any and all qualifications. Respondents who submit qualifications that do not follow the instructions, or do not provide the information requested within this RFQ, may be subject to immediate rejection;
- 8.1.2 Reject any or all qualifications not in compliance with all public and/or TCPTA procedures and requirements;
- 8.1.3 Select qualifications which appear to be in the best interest of the TCPTA;
- 8.1.4 Waive any or all irregularities in qualifications submitted;
- 8.1.5 Award any or all parts of any qualifications; and
- 8.1.6 Not award or postpone awards of contracts to any selected firms during the contract term.

#### 9.0 RFQ MISTAKES OR WITHDRAWAL

A respondent who seeks to rescind his/her qualifications or correct an error in his/her qualifications may do so no later than two business days prior to qualifications being opened. After the qualifications are opened, they may not be withdrawn for ninety (90) calendar days. Prior to the date and time set for the qualifications opening, however, qualifications may be modified or withdrawn by the Respondent's authorized representative in writing (does not include facsimile, telegram, e-mail, or any other form of electronic communication). The written notification is to be an original document, on Firm letterhead, and signed by an authorized representative of the Firm.

#### 10.0 ADDENDA AND REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Requests for interpretations or clarifications shall be made in writing by November 20, 2019. Only requests made in writing will be considered. All responses will be provided to all document holders by November 22, 2019.

#### 11.0 RESPONSIVE QUALIFICATIONS

In order to qualify as a responsible firm, in addition to the other requirements herein provided, a respondent must be prepared to prove to the satisfaction of the TCPTA that it has the integrity, skill, and experience to faithfully perform the conditions of the Agreement and that it has the necessary facilities and financial resources to perform the services in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified. The respondent is expected to refrain from knowingly undertaking collaboration or representation that will create a conflict with the TCPTA and to inform the Executive Director promptly of any conflict that develops or they become aware of during the course of their work with

the TCPTA. The respondent agrees to provide the TCPTA additional information, or to clarify or supplement information already furnished, including, but not limited to information relating to its past performance, its plan for performing the requirements of the Agreement, investigations, indictments, convictions, the respondent's safety practices and record, and financial conditions. The respondent agrees to permit the TCPTA to conduct site visits. To be considered skilled and experienced, the respondent must show, among other requirements of the TCPTA that it has satisfactorily supplied services of the same general type and scope as that which is called for in the RFQ. The respondent shall also be required to secure any necessary insurance policies or necessary licenses, permits, or certificates by any legislative or regulatory body with jurisdiction of the subject matter and may be required to furnish evidence of same.

## 12.0 TERM OF AGREEMENT

The term of the agreement will be negotiated. The successful firm will be expected to commence the provision of services immediately upon full execution of an agreement.

## **PART III - QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

### 1.0 EVALUATION AND SELECTION/AWARD PROCESS

Evaluations will be conducted by a selection committee formed by the TCPTA. Respondents shall provide complete and concise contact information, including the name of the interested firm, the name of the authorized company representative, the appropriate mailing address, telephone number(s), fax number(s), e-mail address, and any other pertinent contact information.

The TCPTA will make the award to the respondent who has demonstrated that it can most effectively represent the interests of the TCPTA. The successful respondent shall possess the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed agreement. The RFQ represents, in writing to all respondents, the most comprehensive and definitive statement that the TCPTA is able to make at this time as to the requirements, terms, and conditions for this qualifications process and performance of contract services. Any information or understandings, verbal or written, which are not contained either in the RFQ, or in subsequent written addenda to the RFQ, will not be considered in evaluating qualifications. In order to be eligible for an award of a contract and notwithstanding its relative qualifications for purposes of the evaluation criteria and in other respects, the respondents must demonstrate to the TCPTA's satisfaction that it is in all respects a responsible party, i.e., that it has the integrity, skill, and experience to faithfully perform the Agreement and the necessary facilities and financial resources to perform the services in accordance with the Agreement documents, and be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations. The TCPTA is seeking the highest quality, most professional services available.

At any time during any phase, the TCPTA, on advice from the selection committee, may elect to reject all qualifications, rewrite the scope of services, and seek new RFQs from all firms. Qualifications and interviews will be evaluated by the selection committee based upon the following criteria:

- a) Demonstrated understanding of the 7 Project Objectives (up to 25 points)
- b) Description of the approach, methods, and process for completing the study for all objectives (up to 25 points)
- c) Experience and qualifications of the consultant team members (up to 25 points), and
- d) Project schedule (up to 25 points)

### 2.0 PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Members of the selection committee will individually review and score each response. A total score will be determined from this review.

### 3.0 INTERVIEWS

The committee may choose to invite the higher scoring firms to make an oral presentation to further demonstrate the firm's qualifications to perform the services and its understanding of the project. The selection committee will individually score the interviews (up to 25 points). The selection committee will complete its final scoring based upon additional information gathered during the interview process. Interviews may be completed via teleconference or Skype.

### 4.0 SELECTION

Cost negotiations will begin with the proposer receiving the highest overall score from the preliminary review and the interview. If the committee chooses not to conduct interviews, the recommendation will be based upon the highest scoring respondent based on the criteria in Part III, Section 1.0 above. If an agreement acceptable to TCPTA cannot be reached with this respondent, negotiations with this respondent will be terminated and the committee will begin negotiations with the next highest scoring respondent, and the negotiation process will be repeated.

### 5.0 CLARIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

The TCPTA reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a firm's qualifications or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular response. Failure of a firm to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification may result in rejection of the firm's qualifications.