

City of Council Bluffs Multimodal Connection and Expansion

Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

MAPA



**Proposals must be submitted by
4:30 p.m. CDT on July 13, 2023**

Table of Contents

1. Introduction & Project Outcome	2
Introduction	2
Project Outcome	5
2. Scope of Services	7
Task 1: Project Management & Administration	7
Task 2: Public Outreach & Presentations	8
2.1 Technical Advisory Committee	8
2.2 Strategic Advisory Committee	8
2.3 Community Stakeholder Committee	9
2.4 Public Meetings	9
Task 3: Existing Conditions Inventory & Analysis	9
Task 4: Develop the Study	10
4.1 Develop the Statutory Approach to Implementing PEL	10
4.2 Research and Define the Existing and Future Transportation Systems	11
4.3 Identify the Purpose and Need of the Study	11
4.4 Develop and Evaluate Alternatives	11
4.5: Conduct an Environmental Evaluation	12
4.6: Identify the Next Steps for Project Implementation	12
4.7: Develop the Report and Complete the FHWA PEL Questionnaire	13
Task 5: Deliverables	13
5.1 PEL Report	13
3. Project Schedule	14
4. Evaluation Criteria	15
5. Submission of Qualifications	16
Pre-Submission Conference	16
Submission Overview	16
6. Submittal Requirements	17
7. Interviews	19
8. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Policy	20
9. General Terms and Conditions	21
10. Award of Contract	22

1. Introduction & Project Outcome

Introduction

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) and the City of Council Bluffs (the City) are soliciting qualifications to prepare a City of Council Bluffs Multimodal Connection and Expansion Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. In accordance with Nebraska Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1712), the Brooks Act (40 USC 544), and 23 CFR 172.5, MAPA is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the City of Council Bluffs Multimodal Connection and Expansion (PEL) Study. Firms are invited to submit qualifications outlined below. The MAPA website referred to in this document is located at <http://mapacog.org/projects/rfpsrfqs/>.

Council Bluffs is located on the east bank of the Missouri River in western Iowa. The City is home to 62,799 residents (2020 Decennial Census), encompasses nearly 41 square miles, and is part of the broader Omaha-Councils Bluffs metropolitan area. Supporting a growing population, the City is prioritizing development and redevelopment which improves upon existing developed corridors and undeveloped land to add housing and commercial development supporting multimodal transportation. The City of Council Bluffs is located within the MAPA transportation management area (TMA). MAPA provides planning and technical support on issues such as transportation, infrastructure, housing, and natural resources.

Connections between Council Bluffs, Omaha, and other regional destinations support employee commuting, business, and recreation. These connections are currently made predominantly by automobile, with limited transit and pedestrian or bicycle options available. Past studies have identified opportunities for economic development, increased attraction of professional talent, and improving active and healthy lifestyles. Some of these studies include, but are not limited to, the West Broadway Subarea plan, the West Broadway Transit Study, the MAPA Long Range Transportation Plan, and the Urban Core Strategic Plan. These enhancements are made possible through improving existing multimodal infrastructure and strengthening connections to existing and future multimodal networks on both sides of the Missouri River. .

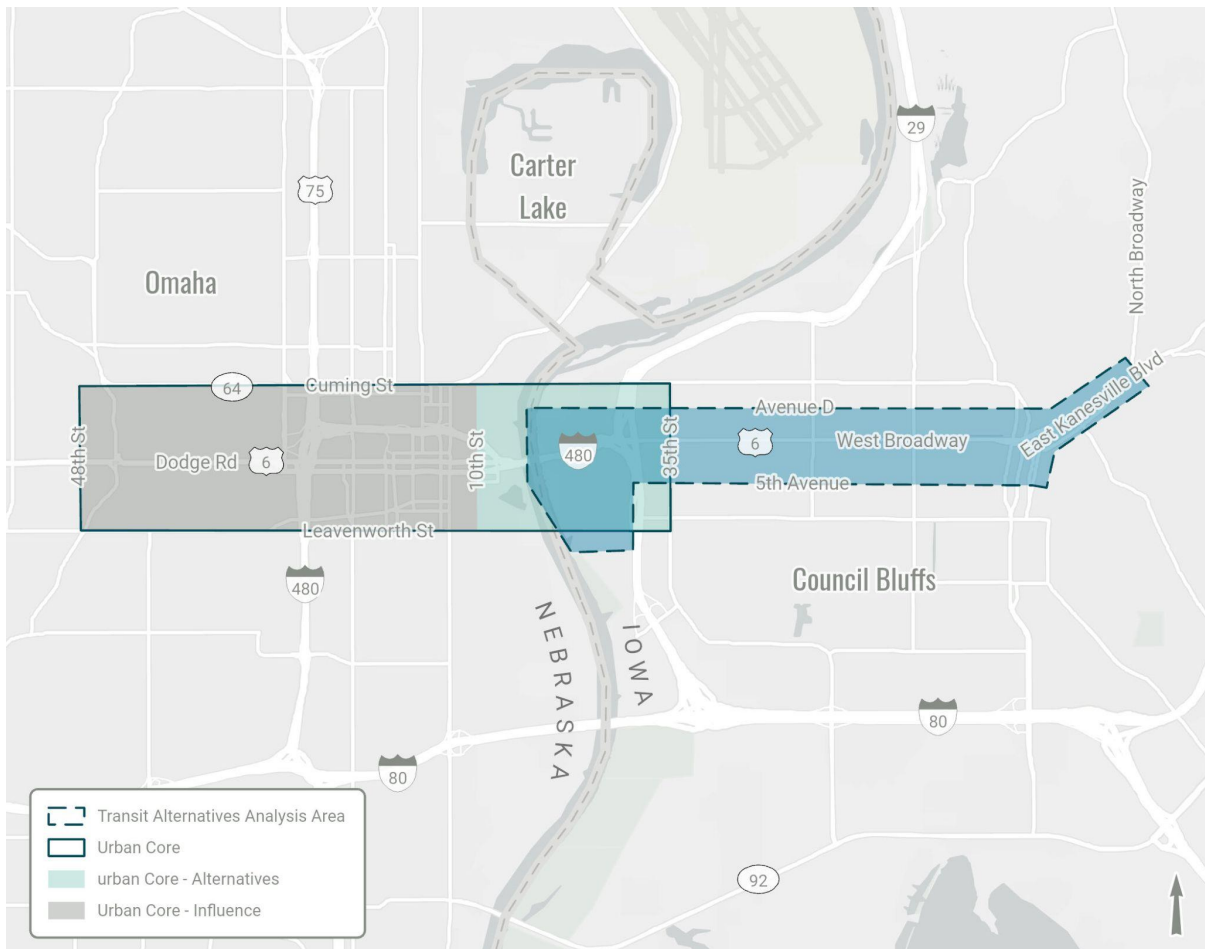
This request invites Consultants to submit qualifications for accomplishments of the items of work described below. Responses shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the requirements described in this RFQ. Once the firm is selected, a contract will be negotiated based on a mutually agreed upon Scope of Services. The purpose of this project is to conduct a PEL study identifying purpose and need, the range of possible alternatives (with subsequent screening of unreasonable alternatives), and proposed evaluation criteria for connections to existing and future multimodal networks within the proposed alternatives study area (Figure 1). Specifically, the alternatives study must include at a minimum the [Transit Alternatives Analysis](#) study area in Council Bluffs and the [Urban Core Strategic Study](#) area within the City of Omaha Urban Core. The study will meet documentation requirements such that all work produced within the study can be carried forward into future National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) activities. The environmental analysis will consider the broader proposed environmental study area as shown in Figure 2.

This study will involve close coordination with the City of Council Bluffs and MAPA, and will utilize and enhance stakeholder coordination with the City of Omaha, Metro Transit, Iowa and Nebraska Departments of Transportation, the Omaha Streetcar Authority, and others identified during the study. The project will build upon past study outreach through robust, equitable public input opportunities at key points during the PEL study.

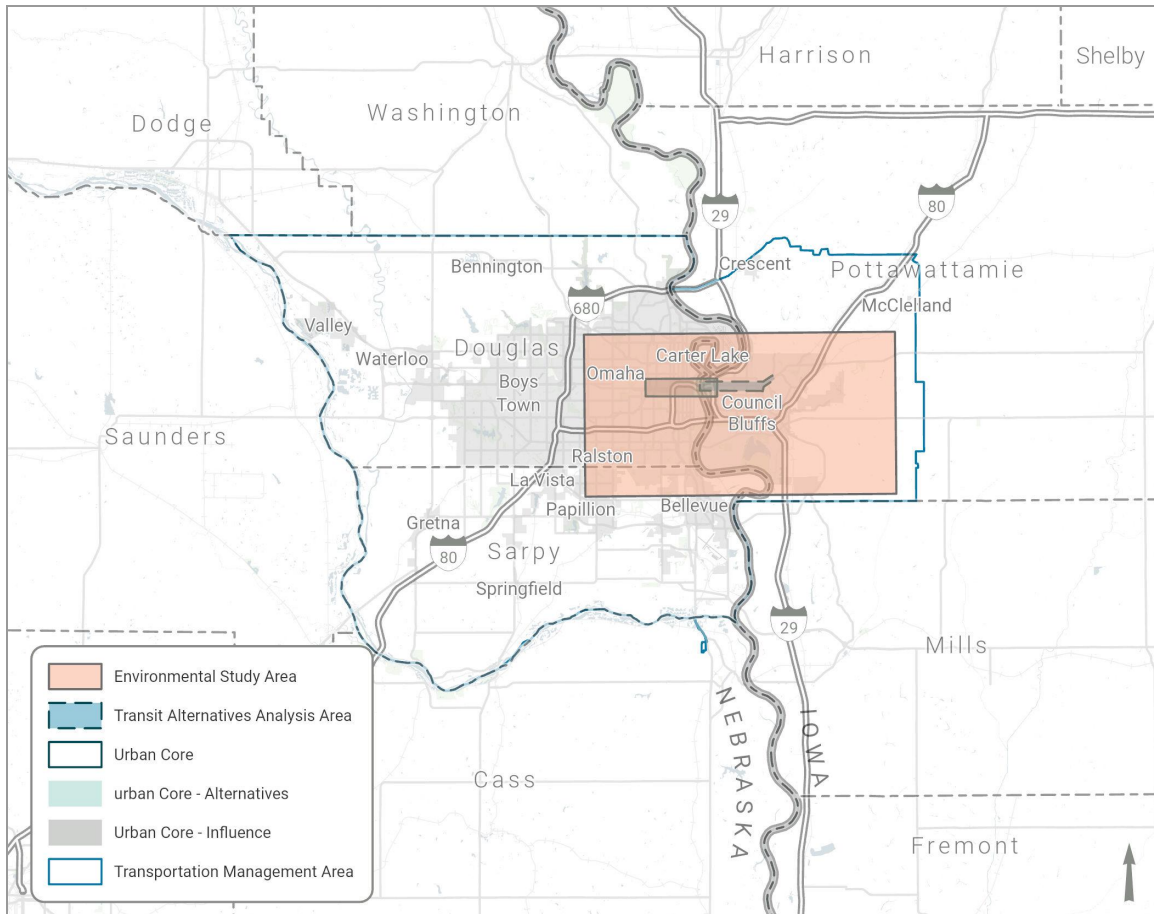
The City of Council Bluffs and MAPA have a strong interest in working with a firm that has documented knowledge and expertise in Metropolitan Transportation Planning and PEL.

Figure 1. Alternatives Analysis Study Area



Initial Alternatives Study Area Boundary - The initial alternatives study area is bounded by 10th Street (in Omaha) on the west, Avenue D on the north, 5th Avenue to south west of I-29, and to Harrahs Blvd to the west of I-29. The eastern portion extends to the intersection of East Kanesville Blvd with North Broadway. The Project Team will coordinate with MAPA and the City to establish the final boundary extent. This boundary may change throughout the study as necessary to ensure the alternative analysis meets the project outcome described in the following section.

Figure 2. Environmental Analysis Study Area



Initial Environmental Study Area Boundary - The initial environmental study area is generally bounded by the region illustrated in Figure 2. The Project Team will coordinate with MAPA and the City to establish the final boundary extent. This area shall be of an area sufficient in size to address the environmental considerations reasonably expected to occur as a result of any of the proposed alternatives. This boundary may change throughout the study as necessary to ensure the analysis meets the project outcome described below.

Project Outcome

The overall project outcome will be a PEL report and associated documentation whose planning decisions and analyses can be **adopted** or **incorporated** within NEPA as required under 23 USC 168 (outlined in Task 4). The study shall:

1. Identify and bring together key stakeholders and integrate past studies and ongoing work within the Urban Core to develop the project purpose and need.
2. Evaluate existing and future land use, and modify as necessary through a land use review process.
3. Identify the range of alternatives which:
 - a. Provide connections to existing and planned multimodal networks within the Urban Core;
 - b. Expand multimodal access and capacity within the Transit Alternative Analysis Area.
 - c. Incorporate MAPA Travel Demand Model (TDM) data with a horizon year of 2050;
 - d. Consider both existing and future transit stops and spacing for fixed route bus and streetcar;
 - e. Are evaluated using the Simplified Trips-on-Project Software (STOPS).
4. Develop organizational and operations plans that include:
 - a. Standards of service;
 - b. Facility and stop locations;
 - c. Days and hours of operation;
 - d. Types and number of vehicle;
 - e. Travel times;
 - f. Fare structure;
 - g. Peak load capacity, and;
 - h. Vehicle/passenger miles and hours traveled.
 - i. In particular, the study shall develop an operational plan that addresses the potential for interlining with the Farnam/Harney streetcar project and identifies the need for layover, maintenance or parking facilities.
5. Develop Operating Financial Plan: The Consultant will develop an operating financial plan which:
 - a. Includes factors that impact financial projections.
 - b. Includes both Capital and Operations and Maintenance costs.
 - c. Address questions regarding governance and authority related to transit operations.
6. Conduct robust outreach with the public and key stakeholders at key points to:
 - a. Confirm the project purpose and need;
 - b. Develop and use evaluation criteria to screen alternatives for reasonableness which consider both the performance and acceptability of each alternative;
 - c. Identify, and as much as possible, resolve issues identified within the study. And, if unresolved issues remain, ensure appropriate documentation to facilitate any additional study and decision making within NEPA.

7. Involve to the maximum extent possible Federal, tribal, state and local environmental, regulatory and resource agencies. Specifically, the project will:
 - a. Identify required review points and the method for requesting, facilitating, and documenting successful completion of the review;
 - b. Develop proposed selection criteria and processes to be used in NEPA as required in 23 USC 168;
 - c. Identify the likely NEPA class of action for future projects;
 - d. Identify the potential for future funding utilizing the [FTA Capital Investment Grant](#) program, and develop checkpoints within the Scope of Services where this decision may alter timelines and deliverables;
 - e. Ensure that documentation is consistent with, and meets the requirements of local agencies as well as the lead, cooperating, and participating agencies as identified in the statutory approach to PEL.
8. Fully document the work conducted throughout the project using the Federal Highway Administration Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire (April 5, 2011) and required [FTA Standard Operating Procedures](#) (SOP.1 Environmental Project File, and SOP.3 Early Scoping, at a minimum).

2. Scope of Services

This project will include the following tasks:

1. Project Management & Administration
2. Public Outreach and Presentations
3. Existing Conditions Inventory & Analysis
4. Study Development
5. Deliverables

The plan is anticipated to be completed in approximately two years. The contract mechanism shall be Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CFFF).

Task 1: Project Management & Administration

The Consultant shall provide project management and administration necessary to successfully deliver the project. These are anticipated to include, at a minimum:

- Preparation and management of the project schedule that aligns with City and MAPA milestones, including meetings, public workshops and other milestones;
- Budget and cost control reporting, change management, preparation and submission of a monthly progress report and invoice;
- Administration of a Quality Management Plan and participation in periodic progress meetings to adequately update the City and MAPA on the progression of the project as requested by the Project Manager;
- Prepare meeting agendas and materials.

In coordination with MAPA and the City of Council Bluffs, the Consultant Team will develop a detailed Scope of Services to guide the overall PEL study process. This will include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- Review project tasks and objectives;
- Review and refine Scope of Services and data collection methods;
- Identify available data, prior plans and studies related to multimodal connectivity, and other published materials;
- Establish a detailed schedule identifying key milestones and deliverables;
- Establish communication channels with city departments and appropriate agencies and organizations;
- Review and list all applicable design and planning standards.

If necessary, changes to the Scope of Services may be made at the conclusion of this task, and an amended Scope and Schedule will be provided.

Responsibilities of the Consulting Team Project Manager will include but not be limited to producing the items identified in this RFQ and subsequent scope of work document, General Project Management, Bi-Weekly Progress Meetings, Critical Path Method (CPM) Schedule Updates, Accounting, Monthly Progress Reports, Management of Project Documents and quality assurance, and coordination with the related projects, such as the Omaha Streetcar and MetroNEXT.

Task 2: Public Outreach & Presentations

Public outreach for the Study will be conducted by the Consultant in partnership with the City of Council Bluffs and MAPA. The Consulting Team will develop a Public Involvement Action Plan that will clearly lay out the details of the major public involvement tasks that will take place throughout the course of the project. A strategic focus of the plan should be to attract a broad and diverse audience, reaching beyond current multimodal users, to engage people of all ages, abilities, and genders, with emphasis on including minority, low and moderate-income earners, and youth participation. The Consultant will ensure the Committees below will be structured and utilized to ensure agreement can be reached on the key points of: 1) governance, 2) operations plan completeness, 3) study-level environmental impact assessment of alternatives, and 4) robust public input. The Consultant for the study will be expected to facilitate the following:

2.1 Technical Advisory Committee

The City of Council Bluffs and MAPA will convene a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisting of representatives from City of Council Bluffs departments, including the Mayor's Office, and representation from MAPA and Metro Transit and others identified in scoping. The Consultant shall attend meetings and provide information on research and best practices that have been successful in other communities. The Consultant will prepare and distribute meeting notes within one week of the meeting date. The number of TAC meetings will be determined during scope negotiations.

2.2 Strategic Advisory Committee

The City of Council Bluffs and MAPA will convene a Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) consisting of representatives from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region 7, Iowa and Nebraska Departments of Transportation and their respective Federal Highway Administration Division Office representatives and the TAC. The Consultant shall attend and lead meetings and document recommendations and decisions made by this committee related to key milestones or deliverables as identified during the scoping process. The Consultant will prepare and distribute meeting notes within one week of the meeting date. The number of SAC meetings will be determined during scope negotiations and will be held at a periodicity which allows for progress updates to, and guidance from the SAC members. The SAC shall meet less frequently than the TAC, and will meet during the regularly scheduled TAC meeting time.

2.3 Community Stakeholder Committee

The City of Council Bluffs and MAPA will convene a Community Stakeholder Committee consisting of representation from relevant Mayor's advisory committees, partner jurisdictions (to include the City of Omaha), local businesses, and neighborhood associations to help guide an inclusive and engaging planning process and to formulate an impactful plan. The Consultant shall attend meetings and provide information on research and best practices that have been successful in other communities. The Consultant will prepare and distribute meeting notes within one week of the meeting date. The number of Stakeholder meetings will be determined during scope negotiations.

2.4 Public Meetings

The Consultant will develop materials for public informational meetings with area businesses, property owners, residents, and neighborhood groups to gather input. These meetings will be facilitated by the Consultant and will be focused on identifying the project purpose and need and identification and evaluation of alternatives. The number of public meetings will be determined during scope negotiations, but a minimum of 2 are anticipated.

The Consultant Team will be responsible for all the aspects of the meetings: scheduling; logistics; room rental; sign-in; nametags; refreshments; facilitate these meetings; comment cards; and meeting notes/minutes.

The Consultant Team will coordinate with City staff to draft and submit press releases or articles about the Plan, including meeting notices, progress updates – such as mapping, and final presentations to Planning Board and City Council. These announcements will be placed in local media outlets at strategic points in the planning process.

The Consultant, in coordination with the City, will create and administer a project website or webpage to disseminate project information and materials formatted for online distribution and engagement.

Task 3: Existing Conditions Inventory & Analysis

The Consulting Team will produce an assessment of the existing transportation network to support work with Task 4. The report will describe the current conditions of the network, including facilities and support facilities as well as gaps or missing elements, and existing programs and policies. The system will be reviewed for general user convenience, accessibility, comfort level, topography, support facilities, and wayfinding, as well as coherence of the system for the average user. At minimum, the following information will be provided to the Consulting Team:

- Map (GIS layers) of existing bus routes and stops and schedule information

- Map (GIS layers) of existing on-street bicycle facilities and signed routes and their characteristics
- Map(s) of existing trails and their characteristics (GIS layer)
- Map of existing motor vehicle traffic volumes
- Transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and scooter safety overview; pedestrian, bicycle, and scooter counts (where available); and collision and other traffic data.
- Adopted plans and guiding documents relevant to the active transportation system, including the Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the FIRST AVE Project and associated plans: Transit Alternatives Analysis; West Broadway Subarea Plan; West Broadway Corridor Plan; MetroNEXT, and the Regional Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan..
- Ongoing regional efforts such as the Urban Core Strategic Study, ConnectGO, Back to the River, The Riverfront, the City of Omaha Active Mobility Plan, the City of Omaha Vision Zero Action Plan, and other related ongoing projects and studies.
- Map of all previously proposed bicycle and trail facilities in adopted plans, relevant studies, and guiding documents (GIS layer)
- List of forthcoming/planned trail and street projects.
- A map of signalized intersections and grade-separated crossings across major streets and physical barriers such as highways, railroads, and streams (GIS layers)
- A map of gaps in the sidewalk network (GIS layer)
- A map of public bicycle parking installed through the City’s Bicycle Parking Program (GIS layer)
- A map of existing and planned bike share station locations (GIS layer)
- City’s Complete Streets Policy
- City’s Traffic Calming Manual (1999), Parking & Mobility Strategic Plan (2020), Bicycle Wayfinding Manual (2017), Bicycle Parking Guidelines, and Municipal Code provisions relevant to pedestrian and bicycle mobility and accessibility.
- Previous application for Bike Friendly Community designation and feedback from the League of American Bicyclists
- Strava Metro data
- Data available from the Spins “Mobility Data for Safer Streets” partnership (potentially includes Numina and Ford Safety Insights Connect data at select locations)
- Community overview and data, land use and density, census data, zoning information, locations of key destinations (e.g. schools, parks, employment centers), and future plans and projects
- Overview of funding/anticipated funding to support projects.

Task 4: Develop the Study

4.1 Develop the Statutory Approach to Implementing PEL

It is the intention of the City of Council Bluffs and MAPA that all appropriate planning decisions resulting from this study meet statutory requirements such that they may be

adopted or **incorporated** by reference within NEPA as defined within 23 USC 168. The Consultant shall identify and document the intended approach which will be coordinated with lead, participating, and cooperating agencies prior to subsequent steps in this task. The Consultant shall reference Section 3.1.1.1 of the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) Planning and Environment Linkages Guidance Document (November 2022) and other relevant guidance documents as provided by Iowa DOT and FTA Region 7.

4.2 Research and Define the Existing and Future Transportation Systems

The project will document the existing roadway, transit, railroad, and pedestrian and bicycle networks within the alternatives study area. It will also document existing and future travel demand utilizing the MAPA TDM (2050), the FTA STOPS tool, and incorporate details from planned projects within or otherwise influencing the Alternatives Analysis Area. The Consultant will identify the analysis area to be evaluated if changes are proposed to the TDM based on updates to land use or the incorporation of projects not currently considered in MAPA's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan.

4.3 Identify the Purpose and Need of the Study

The Consultant will establish a process which, early in the study, involves all project stakeholders and the public in shaping the project purpose and need. This process will incorporate the guidance provided within Appendix A to Part 450, Title 23, and NDOT PEL Guidance. Generally, this task will establish a vision for the future transportation system of the region (in this case specifically within the Alternatives Study Area), identify needs to address, and define any related goals and objectives.

During this evaluation, consideration will also be given to the potential for this study to lead to a subsequent application for project funding through the **FTA Capital Investment Grant** program. This grant program comes with statutory timelines that may overlap with the completion of this study, and may provide the opportunity to narrow the alternatives considered in detail in NEPA to the No-Build (No Action) alternative and the Locally Preferred Alternative (23 CFR Appendix A to Part 450 11.(b)). The Consultant will develop the Scope of Services such that the PEL study can be conducted without requiring modifications to the Scope of Services in either case.

4.4 Develop and Evaluate Alternatives

The Consultant shall establish a process for identifying alternatives, establishing screening criteria, and use these criteria to screen alternatives into categories as described below. The screening criteria shall be informed by the purpose and need of the study, and will also consider the feasibility of each alternative and its environmental impact. If it is determined that the study will not be followed immediately with an FTA Capital Investment Grant, the alternatives will be screened into one of the final categories:

- Reasonable alternative

- Reasonable but not recommended alternative
- Unreasonable alternative
- Recommended alternative

For alternatives involving transit, alternatives will be sufficiently developed that an operations plan is produced with subsequent operations cost-benefit analysis, project governance, and linkages to state and local governments. In particular, evaluation criteria will include:

- Requirements and project risk related to future project funding sources;
- Required interlocal arrangements to operate and maintain the project;
- Required Iowa or Nebraska legislative or local ordinance changes required to construct, operate, and maintain the project;
- Impact the alternative has on interlinked routes, as well as potential second-order impacts to existing transit services;
- An evaluation of any rail-based services in relation to the floodplain.

For alternatives which would span the Missouri River, alternatives will be analyzed to the extent agreed during scoping with the US Army Corps of Engineers, to include at a minimum:

- Impact of proposed bridge structure on hydraulics;
- Impact to navigation.

4.5: Conduct an Environmental Evaluation

In consultation with stakeholders, the Consultant shall establish the study environmental analysis area and proposed analysis and planning products as described in (23 CFR Appendix A to Part 450 11.(b)). Specifically, this analysis shall support a stand-alone PEL report or a potential FTA Capital Investment Grant application. The Consultant shall ensure information derived from this task can be used in the analysis of indirect and cumulative impacts as it meets (23 CFR Appendix A to Part 450 14):

- (a) Be sufficiently detailed that differences in consequences of alternatives can be readily identified;
- (b) Be based on current data (e.g., data from the most recent Census) or be updated by additional information;
- (c) Be based on reasonable assumptions that are clearly stated; and/or
- (d) Rely on analytical methods and modeling techniques that are reliable, defensible, and reasonably current.

4.6: Identify the Next Steps for Project Implementation

The Consultant shall document the next steps, including the required coordination and timelines based upon the results of tasks 4.1 - 4.5. In particular, this section will include

recommended actions by the City of Council Bluffs and MAPA, and identify impacts to other planning documents, such as the MAPA Transportation Improvement Program, the MAPA Long Range Transportation Plan, and the Nebraska and Iowa State Transportation Improvement Programs.

4.7: Develop the Report and Complete the FHWA PEL Questionnaire

The Consultant will maintain a working document throughout the project such that following completion of Task 4 the project seamlessly transitions into finalizing the PEL Report and FHWA Questionnaire.

Task 5: Deliverables

5.1 PEL Report

The Consulting Team will work with City staff to develop a final plan document. The Consultant shall provide the plan document to the City in Adobe InDesign, including all associated assets and PDF formats, and shall provide all GIS layers for all maps in a geodatabase.

The report document will be posted on the MAPA website, and will be written such that it is easy to read and understand by a wide audience. The report will clearly describe the requirements and regulations which were followed to produce the planning decisions and analysis, and provide documentation detailing the work taken to meet these requirements. The specific format of the document will be determined after Consultant selection, but at a minimum shall include:

- Purpose and Need statement
- Documentation of the PEL analysis of alternatives, including the rationale for determining the reasonableness of alternative(s)
 - Operations Plans
 - Financial Plans
 - Any other criteria used to determine reasonableness
- Benefit to Cost ratios of PEL alternatives analyzed
- Documentation of environmental research
- Documentation of Agency coordination
- Documentation of Public Outreach activities
- Documentation of existing policies or organizational processes which impact decisions made within the study
- Documentation of recommended next steps
- The completed FHWA PEL Questionnaire and any other agency required reporting

3. Project Schedule

The anticipated project schedule is listed below. It is recommended that key personnel hold the interview date on their calendars for a potential interview.

Activity	Date
RFQ released	Friday, June 2, 2023
Pre-Submission Conference	Tuesday, June 13, 2023
Deadline for written questions to be submitted	Friday, June 16, 2023
Responses to written questions posted	Tuesday, June 20, 2023
Deadline for submittals (CDT)	Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 4:30 PM
Shortlist Notifications	Thursday, July 27, 2023
Consultant interviews	Thursday, August 10, 2023
Consultant selection notification	Thursday, August 24, 2023
Scope & fee negotiation deadline	Tuesday, September 26, 2023
Agreement Finalized	Friday, October 6, 2023
Finance Committee Approval	Wednesday, October 18, 2023
MAPA Board Approval	Thursday, October 26, 2023
Target Project Start Date	Thursday, November 2, 2023
Contract End Date	Saturday, January 31, 2026

4. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation of respondent firms will be based on their qualifications. A Consultant evaluation team made up of representatives from the City of Council Bluffs, MAPA and/or other project partners will screen the responses to ensure they meet the minimum requirements of the submittal format, review and score the responses. Factors that will be considered by the selection team include the following:

Criteria	Points
Project understanding and approach.	30
Qualifications and experience of professional personnel and staff.	25
Past performance on similar projects.	25
Adequate staff to perform the work based on present workload and willingness to meet time requirements.	10
Experience of Firm and Key Personnel on Projects in the region and/or study area.	10
Total Points	100

5. Submission of Qualifications

Pre-Submission Conference

A pre-submission conference will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at 2:00 PM in the Council Bluffs Police Department Community Room located at 1 Ezra Jackson Way, Council Bluffs, IA 51503. A virtual option will be provided for those unable to attend in person, and a recording will be made available. Attendance at the pre-submission conference is optional for Consultants.

Submission Overview

One (1) electronic version (PDF preferred) of the response must be submitted using the City's IonWave system by the deadline for submittals (see Section 3 Project Schedule). Applicants must follow the "Supplier Registration" process at the following URL: <https://cbiabids.ionwave.net/Login.aspx>. Responses received after the deadline will not be considered. Responses may not exceed 20 pages in length based on the submittal requirements in Section 6. A table of contents will not be counted toward the page limit when included in responses. Responses must include proof of insurance and compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (which also do not count towards the total page limit).

The Issuing Officer, identified below, is the sole point of contact regarding the RFQ from the date of issuance until selection of the successful vendor.

James Boerner
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
2222 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68102
jboerner@mapacog.org

From the issue date of this RFQ until announcement of the successful vendor, vendors may contact only the Issuing Officer regarding this RFQ. Vendors may be disqualified if they contact any employee or representative of MAPA other than the Issuing Officer regarding this RFQ. All questions must be submitted using the City's IonWave System by the deadline for written questions. Answers to all questions will be posted on IonWave as well as on the MAPA website by the responses to written questions date (see Section 3 Project Schedule). Firms whose responses are not accepted will be notified as soon as the selected firm has been approved.

6. Submittal Requirements

Responses shall include the following items and be organized in the manner specified below.

A. Front Cover (Not Included in Page Limit)

The response shall include a front cover that identifies the Prime Consultant, Sub-Consultants (if applicable) and the title of the project or service.

B. Letter of Interest

The response shall include a letter of interest outlining briefly the firm's understanding of the work, as well as a general statement introducing the firm and individuals to be involved. The letter of interest shall not exceed two (2) pages.

C. Organizational Chart

The response shall include an organizational chart not to exceed one (1) page.

D. Firm Profile & Qualifications

The response shall include general information about the firm, the firm's area of expertise, and the firm's official name and address. Additionally, the response shall furnish the following qualifications to be considered for award of the contract:

1. Name of the anticipated Project Manager and his or her relevant qualifications and experience on similar projects, along with those of key personnel who will be involved with the project.
2. If the project includes multiple team members, an organizational chart including team members shall be included.
3. Experience of the firm in performing similar work and examples of this work.
4. Explanation of ability to integrate the scope of work into the present and anticipated workload of each key team member for the proposed duration of the project.

E. Project Approach and Scope of Work

The response shall include the firm's approach to successfully accomplish the tasks listed in the RFQ. This should include focus on technical approach and ability to present and communicate the findings in a compelling manner. (NOTE: The detailed Scope of Services will be negotiated with the selected Consultant at the time of contract development.) The discussion of the scope of work shall not exceed ten (10) pages.

F. Proposed Project Schedule

The response shall include a project schedule outlining the time frame and estimated completion date of each major task identified in the proposed scope of work. The Consultant Team shall also explain its approach to the project schedule in narrative form. The project schedule shall not exceed three (3) pages. The Consultant shall provide what he or she believes is a realistic timeline to fully complete the tasks in an expeditious, effective manner.

G. Conflict of Interest Disclosure (Not Included in Page Limit)

The response shall include a completed Consultant Conflict of Interest Disclosure form for the prime Consultant and any Sub-Consultants. Example form is available from NDOT at the link below:

<https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/7322/coi-disclosure-doc-consultant.doc>

H. Systems of Award Management (SAM) Registration (Not Included in Page Limit)

Documentation that the applicant firm has a current Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) or that registration has been initiated. Registration information can be found at

<https://www.sam.gov/>.

I. Proof of insurance (Not Included in Page Limit)

The response shall include proof of insurance for the prime contractor and any subconsultants. Specific insurance requirements and an example ACORD are available here: <https://dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/consultant/insurance/>

7. Interviews

After reviewing all submitted responses, MAPA and its selection committee will invite respondent firms of their choosing to interview for the project. MAPA anticipates interviewing three (3) firms selected from among qualified respondents. Interviews will be held on the date indicated in Section 3. Firms chosen to interview will be known as short-listed firms.

The short-listed firms will be notified by telephone and/or email of the interview time and duration. Interviews will be capped at 40 minutes maximum; please allot at least 10 minutes for questions and answers. MAPA will make every effort to inform short-listed firms of the interview schedule via email or phone by 4:00 p.m. on the date listed for Shortlist Notifications in Section 3.

The project selection committee will conduct interviews with the short-listed firms on the date listed for Consultant Interviews in Section 3. Interviews will be conducted in-person, but requests for a virtual option can be accommodated. The location will be determined when shortlisted firms are notified. The number of Consultant Team members participating in the interview (both in person and virtual) shall be capped at six.

8. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Policy

The Omaha–Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program in accordance with regulations of the U.S Department of Transportation (DOT), 49 CFR Part 26. MAPA has received Federal Financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, and as a condition of receiving this assistance, MAPA has signed an assurance that it will comply with 49 CFR Part 26.

It is the policy of MAPA to ensure that DBEs, as defined in part 26, have an equal opportunity to receive and participate in DOT-assisted contracts. It is also our policy:

1. To ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT assisted contracts;
2. To create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT assisted contracts;
3. To ensure that the DBE Program is tailored narrowly in accordance with applicable law;
4. To ensure that only firms that meet 49 CFR Part 26 eligibility standards fully are permitted to participate as DBEs;
5. To help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT assisted contracts;
6. To assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the market place outside the DBE Program.

The following assurance is to be included on all DOT-assisted contracts:

“The contractor, subrecipient or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR part 26 in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract, which may result in the termination of this contract, or such other remedy as the recipient deems appropriate.”

9. General Terms and Conditions

1. **Access to Records and Reports** — The proposer acknowledges the selected Consultant firm will give MAPA, NDOT, Iowa DOT, FTA, FHWA, and the Comptroller General of the United States access to any books, documents, papers and records of the Consultant firm which pertain directly to the contract for the purposes of making audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcriptions. Related contractual documents will be maintained for no less than three years after the date of termination or expiration of the contract. During this time, the records shall be available to Iowa DOT and FHWA staff upon request.
2. **Amendments to the RFQ** — MAPA reserves the right to amend or cancel any or all parts of this RFQ. Revisions to the RFQ shall be posted on the MAPA website at least three (3) full business days prior to the deadline for submission of responses.
3. **Civil Rights** — MAPA is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, section 303 of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990, and Federal transit law. Thus, clauses relating to nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity (race, color, creed, national origin, sex, and disabilities) will be included in the contract with the selected Consultant firm.
4. **Confidentiality** — Before award of the contract, all responses to this RFQ will be designated confidential to the extent permitted by the Nebraska Public Records Law (84-712). After award of the contract (or if not awarded, after rejection of all responses), all responses will be regarded as public records and will be subject to review by the public. Any language purporting to render all or portions of the responses confidential will be regarded as non-effective and will be disregarded. MAPA will treat all information submitted by a consultant as open records following the conclusion of the selection process. Open records are public records that are open for public examination and copying. MAPA's release of records is governed by Iowa Code Chapter 22 and 761 IAC Chapter 4. Consultants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these laws before submitting a proposal.
5. **Conflicts of Interest** — The proposer shall disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest with MAPA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The proposer must declare that the proposer is not currently, and will not during the performance of any services for MAPA, participate in any other work involving a third party with interests in conflict currently or likely to be in conflict with MAPA's interests without MAPA's approval. All Sub-Consultants must submit a conflict of interest form as well.

6. **SAM Registration** – All prospective Consultant firms must be listed in the U.S. Federal Contractor Registration database known as SAM (System for Award Management) to be considered for this project.
7. **Scope of Work** – The statement of services to be provided, as written in the contract between the local agency and the consultant. This includes the specific work activities, deliverables, and timeframes to perform the work for the specified price.
8. **Simplified Acquisition Threshold** – A dollar amount set by the Federal government in 48 CFR 2.101 under which consultant services may be procured using an abbreviated process
9. **Statement of Non-Discrimination** – The selection and contract are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 11246 (Affirmative Action to Insure Equal Employment Opportunity). Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa DOT's affirmative action officer at 515-239-1422. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa DOT's services, contact the agency's civil rights/ADA coordinator at: 515-239-1514.
10. **Termination** – MAPA will retain the right to terminate the contract for convenience or default. These clauses will be incorporated into the contract with the selected Consultant firm.

10. Award of Contract

MAPA reserves the right to negotiate with the selected firm on matters related to project cost, or technical or other considerations that arise following announcement of the award of the contract. A decision to contract with the selected firm will be made by the MAPA Board of Directors following a recommendation by MAPA staff. Subject to selection and successful negotiation, MAPA intends to sign a contract on the date of MAPA Board Approval as shown in Section 3 with the objective of the selected firm beginning work on the Target Project Start Date and concluding on the Contract End Date as shown in Section 3.