



CITY OF DURHAM | NORTH CAROLINA

Date: August 7, 2017

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
From: Terry Bellamy, Transportation Director
Subject: Supplemental Agreement #2 between the City and VHB Engineering NC, P.C. for the NC 54 Corridor Study

Executive Summary

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) staff requests authorization for the City Manager to execute Supplemental Agreement #2 with the consulting firm VHB to conduct a corridor study of NC 54 from Carrboro to the I-85 interchange in Graham. The City is authorizing the agreement and contract on behalf of DCHC MPO because the City of Durham is the Lead Planning Agency for the MPO.

On November 28, 2016, DCHC MPO issued a request for interest to the City/DCHC MPO pre-qualified on-call consulting transportation and engineering firms to submit proposals for the NC 54 West Corridor Study. Eight firms submitted proposals. Staff reviewed the proposals and recommends selecting VHB Engineering NC, P.C. DCHC MPO negotiated a scope of services for the study project consistent with the project's federal funding grant amount.

Recommendation

The Department of Transportation recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute Supplemental Agreement No. 2 to the Master Agreement for Transportation and Engineering On-Call Services with VHB Engineering NC, P.,C. in the amount of \$160,450.

Background

Highway NC 54 between the City of Graham and the Town of Carrboro is primarily a rural two-lane road. While it has served its purpose for decades, Graham and southern Alamance County are experiencing an increase in residential development, and projections through 2040 call for continued population increase. Furthermore, it is anticipated that a substantial portion of that growth will serve residents who will work at the University of North Carolina and/or its hospital as housing costs in Chapel Hill continue to rise and price out many of the workers at the university. NC 54 would be a major transportation corridor for these commuters, particularly as an alternative to I-40 and NC-86.

While the standard remedy to future congestion would be to widen the existing two-lane road, that solution in and of itself could lead to other problems. A widened NC-54 could bring more traffic into Carrboro that the town's street network could not handle. In addition, NC-54 is a major gateway into rural Orange County for many cyclists, and there is desire on the part of Carrboro to investigate alternatives to congestion relief than widening.

Therefore, DCHC MPO, in partnership with the City of Graham, wishes to engage the consulting firm VHB for services to investigate possible solutions to future road congestion that do not necessarily involve road widening, how alternative transportation options such as bike facilities and transit options could operate in the corridor, the cost and likely state and federal funding possibilities for these options, and what the potential for development is in the corridor over the next couple of decades given current land use plans.

Issues/Analysis

Through the development of the DCHC MPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the MPO Board set aside funds for a study of the NC 54 corridor. On November 28, 2016, the Transportation Department issued a request for interest to consulting transportation and engineering firms to submit proposals for developing a corridor study for NC 54 from Carrboro to Graham. Eight firms submitted proposals: AECOM, Davenport, Ramey Kemp, Renaissance Planning Group, SEPI, Timmons, VHB, and WSP-Parsons Brinckerhoff (WSP). A selection committee from DCHC MPO, the Town of Carrboro, and NCDOT reviewed the eight proposals and evaluated them based on the following criteria:

1. The qualifications and experience of the professional personnel to be assigned to the project;
2. The consultant's understanding of the project study area, goals, and objectives;
3. The consultant's proposed approach to the project;
4. The quality of the proposal,

The selection committee then selected two finalists: VHB and WSP. The two firms were interviewed on February 9, 2017. From the interviews, the selection committee recommends selecting VHB, teamed with Rose and Associates, to undertake the project study. DCHC MPO negotiated a scope of services for the study project consistent with the project's federal funding grant amount as allocated by the DCHC Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) as part of the approved Unified Planning Work Program.

Alternatives

The City Council can choose not to authorize DCHC MPO to conduct the NC 54 Corridor Study.

- Authorize the City manager to execute the agreement with VHB in an amount not to exceed \$160,450.00.
- Do not authorize the execution of the Agreement. The proposed NC 54 West Corridor Study will not be undertaken.

Financial Impact

The contract cost for professional consultant services is \$160,450.00. The cost of the study is funded through the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO has allocated federal funds for 80% of the cost with Town of Carrboro, Orange County and Town of Graham, providing the required 20% (\$32,090) non-federal local match.

UBE Information

Due to the nature of this agreement, this item was not reviewed for compliance with the Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracts.

Attachment

Supplemental Agreement No. 2 to the Master Agreement for Transportation and Engineering
On-Call Services Between the City and VHB Engineering NC, P.C. Dated August 7, 2017