

June 16, 2025

Attention: Qualified and Interested Consultants

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
Evansville Regional Transit Feasibility Study

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), cooperatively with the City of Evansville, City of Henderson, Vanderburgh County, and Warrick County is announcing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from consultants for a Regional Transit Feasibility Study.

This RFP describes the proposal format, submittal requirements, preliminary scope of services and project schedule, the minimum information that must be included in the proposal, and the selection process. Failure to submit the Proposal in accordance with the procedures outlined may be cause for disqualification.

Requirements for this RFP are enclosed. In order to be considered in the selection process, interested parties shall submit eight (8) copies and one (1) electronic copy of their Proposal no later than **2:00 PM (Central Time), July 18, 2025** to:

Seyed Shokouhzadeh, Executive Director
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
1 NW Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Civic Center Complex – Room 316
(812) 436-7833
Email: seyed@evansvillempo.com

Late proposals will not be accepted.

Introduction

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), cooperatively with the City of Evansville, City of Henderson, Vanderburgh County, and Warrick County is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified consultants to prepare a Regional Transit Feasibility Study.

Your company, among others, is invited to submit a proposal on a competitive basis in the format described in this Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP establishes requirements and defines the responsibilities of the proposing firm to perform all phases of work.

Agency Information

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (EMPO) has been designated a Transportation Management Area (TMA) for the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Area that includes the City of Evansville, all of Vanderburgh County, and all of Warrick County in Indiana. In Kentucky, the Metropolitan Planning Area includes the City of Henderson and Henderson County.

A Policy Board and a Technical Committee guide and assist the Evansville MPO in its regional planning activities for the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The Policy Board is the chief advisory body and is responsible for policy formulation, project guidance, and administrative coordination. This includes delegation of and review of work activities for the Evansville MPO Staff. Official actions taken by the Evansville MPO require approval by the Policy Board. Board membership includes elected or appointed officials from local government within the MPA, as well as representatives from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC). The Policy Board members are appointed for a one-year term.

The Technical Committee is composed of planners, engineers, community representatives and professional staff from various departments of the MPA's local public agencies. This committee is the chief working committee, providing relevant expertise and data to the MPO. Each technical task undertaken by the MPO's staff involves the participation of the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee is directly responsible to the Policy Board.

Regional Transit Overview

There are three public transportation systems in the Evansville MPA:

- Metropolitan Evansville Transit System (METS)
- Henderson Area Rapid Transit (HART)
- Warrick Area Transit System (WATS)

The Metropolitan Evansville Transit System (METS) is the public transportation system for the City of Evansville, Indiana. METS was established in 1971 as a publicly owned transit system, operated by the City of Evansville. It offers 22 fixed routes, demand response (paratransit) service and microtransit service. METS has an annual ridership of approximately 1,000,000. METS is an FTA Section 5307: Urbanized Area Formula Grants recipient.

Henderson Area Rapid Transit (HART) is the public transportation system for the City of Henderson, Kentucky. HART was established in 1957 as a publicly owned transit system, operated by the City of Henderson. It offers five fixed routes and demand response (paratransit) service. HART has an annual ridership of approximately 70,000. HART is an FTA Section 5311: Formula Grants for Rural Areas recipient.

Warrick Area Transit System (WATS) is a fixed route transit system operated by Ride Solution. Ride Solution is a 10-county, non-profit rural on-demand transportation provider. Ride Solution provides door-to-door service in Warrick County. WATS offers three fixed routes and route deviations within southwest Warrick County. Ride Solution has an annual ridership of approximately 120,000 across 10 counties. WATS/Ride Solution is an FTA Section 5311: Formula Grants for Rural Areas recipient.

Scope of Work Requested

This RFP describes the scope of work to be performed that is intended to be representative of desired activities, products, and outcomes. Proposers are encouraged to suggest modifications to the tasks and products or to expand specific tasks that would enable a more effective regional transit system. Potential proposers should carefully review all requirements contained in this document for submittal and prepare a written proposal that is responsive to the minimum task requirements.

The contract executed for this project will require that full copyrights to the data are assigned to the Evansville MPO, meaning that the Evansville MPO is free to redistribute the data to its member jurisdictions and agencies, stakeholders, and the general public. This includes the display and distributions of the data through its website.

This RFP does not commit the Evansville MPO to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of a response to this request. The Evansville MPO reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received resulting from this request, to negotiate with qualified proposers, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, if such action is in the best interest of the Evansville MPO.

The tasks identified in this scope of services are suggested as a comprehensive approach to help the Evansville MPO meet its regional transit feasibility study objectives and secure project funding. Consultants are encouraged to modify or expand on these tasks in their proposals as appropriate. All work performed must comply with Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and local requirements associated with project funding and administration. The project will be guided by a Project Team comprised of consultant staff, Evansville MPO staff, and the Evansville MPO Regional Transit Committee. The Evansville MPO Executive Director will serve as the main point of contact. The feasibility study will be subject to approval and adoption by the Evansville MPO Policy Board. The selected consultant will provide a proposal that details how their study will meet/exceed the scope of work, and that expands on their ability to complete all project tasks.

Task 1 — Project Initiation

Upon the Notice to Proceed, a project kickoff meeting(s) will be held with the Project Team to confirm Scope of Work, project schedule, and deliverables. A data-sharing system will be established for the purpose of storing and sharing project files and documents with the Project Team. The consultant will develop a process for disseminating information to stakeholders and the public at regular intervals.

Task 2 — Transit Needs Assessment and Transit Plans Review

A comprehensive transit needs assessment will be conducted to identify current and potential market demand for transit service within the three-county Evansville MPA (Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Henderson counties), based on relevant variables including, but not limited to, current and projected demographic data, transit-dependent and choice-rider markets, and commercial and residential developments completed or planned.

A review of past and current regional and local transit plans will be conducted to consider key and viable recommendations from previous plans, studies, and projects to incorporate into this plan.

Task 3 — Operational Analysis

The operational analysis will identify potential barriers and gaps at the local and regional level. This will include, but it is not limited to, a review of existing bus routes, stops, terminals/transfer points, paratransit and microtransit services, ridership, and governance.

The operational analysis should assess multiple operational strategies, such as (1) restructuring existing transit operations, (2) consolidating transit services, and/or (3) adding new and innovative mobility strategies.

The assessment will include a metric to allow stakeholders to assess annually whether the transit system(s) is meeting or are making significant progress toward meeting performance goals. The metric will also be used as a screening tool to evaluate and prioritize future regional transit improvements.

Task 4 — Fiscal Analysis

A full range of funding and likely funding measures (allowable under current state, county, and local legislation) will be evaluated to determine the existing and potential future available funds to support regional transit system(s) within the existing framework and to support future systemwide expansion. Future funding sources should include, but are not limited to, the feasibility of a dedicated source(s) of public funding beyond the current FTA and INDOT sources of funding.

Task 5 — Stakeholder and Public Engagement

The Consultant will develop and conduct a stakeholder and public meeting schedule concurrent with project milestone phases. The meetings will provide an effective and interactive means to involve the public in the decision-making process. The Consultant will be responsible for meeting setup and breakdown, presentations, visuals, handout materials, facilitating the meetings and meeting minutes when applicable. The Consultant will coordinate with Evansville MPO staff when scheduling and publicizing meetings. Evansville MPO staff will offer staff support for these meetings and identify and reserve meeting locations (if needed).

- *Project Team Meetings* – The project team, consisting of the consulting team, Evansville MPO staff, and Evansville MPO Regional Transit Committee members, will meet periodically as required. The consultant will schedule meetings and prepare agendas; present action/milestone items accomplished during reporting periods; discuss challenges encountered/anticipated and offer potential solutions; present the action plan for the next reporting period and provide meeting summaries.

- *Stakeholder meetings* – Stakeholder meetings will be scheduled to disseminate project updates to internal and external stakeholders to gauge interest in plan objectives and funding goals and to obtain project buy-in. Engagement will be designed to determine opinions, assess service preferences, community priorities, and level of commitment to regional transit system goals. During subsequent meetings, the consultant will present potential restructuring alternatives and obtain comments and feedback on draft service and funding recommendations.
- *Public Forums* - Public meetings will be held after completion of project milestones to solicit input for recommendations and after the development of the draft plan.
- *Continuous Public Engagement* – Public engagement strategies will be utilized throughout plan development to raise awareness of project activities and increase public participation in the planning process. The Consultant will develop and implement a cost-effective public engagement process to include, but not limited to, dissemination of electronic surveys, public and stakeholder meetings, presentations, executive summaries, data visuals/infographics, website and/or Facebook page, and public notices and press releases. The Consultant will develop a Regional Transit Feasibility Study project logo/branding for use on all public project related materials.

Task 6 — Recommendations and Final Draft

Project goals, operation analysis results and stakeholder feedback will provide the basis for development of the draft plan and project recommendations. Implementation strategies will include cost estimates, funding sources, governance, private/public partnership opportunities and options to fund the creation and operation of a regional transit authority. These strategies should be outlined in a comprehensive roadmap with a range of dates, ensuring timely yet realistic implementation, with clearly defined responsibilities assigned to relevant agencies or stakeholders.

All recommendations should consider and support other relevant plans, including but not limited to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan, Public Transit Agency Safety Plans, Transit Asset Management Plans, and individual system capital improvement plans. All recommended route service adjustments or changes should be mapped and delivered in GIS format shapefiles compatible with existing transit agencies network systems. The Consultant will present the final plan to the Evansville MPO Policy Board for approval and adoption consideration.

Consultant Selection Schedule

Consultant selection will follow the estimated schedule:

June 16, 2025 – RFP distributed and posted on Evansville MPO website

July 18, 2025 – Written proposals due at the Evansville MPO by 2:00 PM (Central Time).

August 13, 2025 – Finalist interviews.

August 29, 2025 – Select consultant and initiate contract negotiations.

September 29, 2025 – Approval of contract, Notice to Proceed.

Period of Performance

The date for initiation of the contract as well as the overall contract performance period will be negotiated with the selected consultant. Proposals should include any recommendations on a preferred time line by the responder.

Final payment will not be made to the consultant until the Final Report is accepted by the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization.

General Instructions

Inquiries

Questions about the proposal may arise as proposers are preparing their responses. Inquiries are to be made in writing (email) prior to **July 11, 2025**. Answers will be posted to the MPO website. Origin of the questions will not be identified. Please direct questions to:

Seyed Shokouhzadeh, Executive Director
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
1 NW Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Civic Center Complex – Room 316
(812) 436-7833
Email: seyed@evansvillempo.com

Signature Requirements

Proposals must be signed by a duly authorized official of the proposer. Consortia, joint ventures, or teams submitting proposals, although permitted and encouraged, will not be considered responsive unless it is established that all contractual responsibility rests solely with one contractor or one legal entity which shall not be a subsidiary or affiliate with limited resources.

Each proposal should indicate the entity responsible for execution on behalf of the proposal team.

Minimum Services of the Consultant

The following shall be the basic services and products provided by the consultant.

- A. The consultant shall be responsible for all public hearing notices, graphics, slides, and handouts, including executive summaries for distribution to the general public.
- B. To ensure the project remains on track, the following project management activities will be expected:

Progress reports: The consultant shall provide progress reports to the EMPO's project manager at proposed regular intervals which shall include the following information:

- Status of work completed to date.
- Work anticipated to be completed in the next reporting period.
- Problems/Obstacles identified during the reporting period.
- Outstanding issues (items would remain on this list until resolved).

- C. The consultant agrees to attend and make presentations at the following meetings:

Presentation of the draft Regional Transit Feasibility Study to the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Committee and Policy Board at dates and times to be determined.

Presentation of the final Regional Transit Feasibility Study to the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Committee and Policy Board at dates and times to be determined.

- D. The consultant agrees to prepare a brief synopsis of public comments as part of the final document. Official minutes of public meetings and committee meetings are the responsibility of the consultant and shall be included as part of the final document.
- E. The consultant agrees to prepare draft documents, make revisions as required, and prepare final document(s) which will include graphics, charts, tables, and an executive summary. The consultant will respond in a timely manner to any comments that result from the State/Federal/Public review and will provide copies of all responses. The final Regional Transit Feasibility Study will be prepared and submitted for staff and officials within the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization and Regional Transit Committee. Originals will also be supplied in digital format.

Proposal Submission

The Evansville MPO must receive the proposal no later than **2:00 PM (Central Time), July 18, 2025**.

Proposals shall include the following and shall be organized using each of the elements listed below as section headings:

- A. *Firm Description*: Provide a brief description of the firm including firm size and area of specialization, location of corporate headquarters, and location of office proposed to handle this project.
- B. *Project Team, Experience, and Qualifications*: Provide names, resumes, and office locations of key staff who will be assigned to the project. Each team member's education and qualifications shall be listed. The project manager shall be clearly identified. If different consultants will be teaming together, indicate the lead consultant and sub-consultant(s). The project manager will act as the EMPO's primary contact, and will be entirely responsible for the consultant's work, including sub-consultant work if applicable.
- C. *Scope of Work*: Describe the consultant's approach and technical plan for accomplishing the work listed herein. The Consultant is encouraged to elaborate and improve on the tasks listed in the RFP; however, the consultant shall not delete any requested scope tasks. The proposer should identify the study process utilized on other significant projects of similar scope and magnitude as well as the process envisioned for this project.
- D. *Project Schedule*: The Consultant shall submit a schedule, itemized by task, for completing the scope of work.
- E. *Comparable Projects*: Description of related project experience and role of key staff in each project.

- F. *References*: Three (3) references, including current contact name and phone number for similar projects.

Eight (8) copies, and one (1) electronic copy of each proposal, with a maximum of 12 pages, must be submitted to the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization. Submissions will be directed to:

Seyed Shokouhzadeh, Executive Director
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
1 NW Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Civic Center Complex – Room 316
(812) 436-7833
Email: seyed@evansvillempo.com

Addenda and Supplements to the RFP

In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP or if additional information is necessary to enable the proposer to make adequate interpretation of the provisions of this Request for Proposal, a supplement to the RFP will be provided to each proposer.

Rejection Rights

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization retains the right to reject all proposals and to re-solicit if deemed to be in their best interests.

Selection is also dependent upon the negotiation of a mutually acceptable contract with the successful proposer.

Cost of Proposal Preparation

No reimbursement will be made by the Evansville MPO or any other party to this agreement for any costs incurred prior to a formal notice to proceed under a contract.

Conflict of Interest

No principal, representative, agent, employee, consultant or potential subconsultants or other(s) acting on behalf of or legally capable of acting on behalf of the consultant shall be a current employee of either Vanderburgh, Warrick, or Henderson counties or any municipality within, any county or municipal department or a member of any county or municipal Board or Council; nor shall any such person connected to the consultant be privy to any county or municipal information which may constitute a conflict of interest; or, if such a conflict or relationship does exist, the nature of the relationship or conflict will be disclosed.

Two Step Selection Process

This RFP has a two-step selection process. The first step of the process will be submittal and scoring of proposals, to identify a short-list of firms. The second step will include in-person interviews of the short-listed consultants. The anticipated Consultant Selection Schedule and requirements for submitting a proposal are listed previously in this RFP. The Evansville MPO reserves the right to modify that schedule in its discretion at any time with or without notice.

Step One

A three to seven member proposal evaluation committee, using the Proposal Evaluation Form, will score proposals independently. Individual score totals will then be tabulated, and the firms will be ranked by score. A short-list of top ranked firms satisfactorily meeting the requirements of this RFP will be considered for participation in interviews.

Step Two

The Project Manager of the lead firm from each of the selected teams will be asked to lead in presenting their project approach to a three to seven member interview evaluation committee. The interview evaluation committee scorers shall not include any of the members of the proposal evaluation committee in Step One. Each of the members of the interview evaluation committee will be supplied with copies of the proposals from the selected teams prior to the scheduled interviews. Interviews will include an allotted time for team presentations and a time for questions from the evaluation committee. The details of the time, place, durations, etc. will be given to the finalists following selection announcement. Selected consultants will be required to provide a one-page summary of credentials documenting why their team is the best to deliver this project. These summaries will be distributed immediately prior to the interviews. Some of the members of the original proposal evaluation committee may be present during interviews to communicate proposal approach observations to the interview evaluation committee scorers. Opportunities for discussion among the interview committee and proposal committee members present will be provided during an intermission in each interview between team presentations, questions, and answers and after the conclusion of each interview. Following the interviews, the interview evaluation committee scorers will independently score the interviewed teams using the Proposal Evaluation Form.

Proposal Evaluation Form

The Proposal Evaluation Form used for this RFP incorporates capacity to complete work, past performance, demonstrated qualifications, project management, and project approach. When the information available indicates "standard" performance a neutral rating of "0" will be assigned. The Proposal Evaluation Form is included at the end of this RFP for reference.

Miscellaneous

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization retains the right to amend the contract with the successful proposer to include other possible areas of concern with this project.

Equal Opportunity/Title VI

The Evansville MPO, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4 and Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Nondiscrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the Department of Transportation issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies respondents that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to this invitation and that minority businesses are afforded the opportunity to participate as sub-consultants. The Evansville MPO will not discriminate against any respondent on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion or sex in consideration for an award.

Contract Provision and Assurances

Federal funds received by the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization will be used as a component of the overall funding of this project. Accordingly, the selected consultant will be required to comply with all applicable Federal regulations and contracting provisions required by the Federal funding authority, including 49 CFR Part 31 - Allowable Costs, Civil Rights, Minority Business Enterprise, and other applicable assurance provisions. Additionally, the contract must be in compliance with state and local requirements applicable to such contracts.

Insurance

Any and all resulting agreements resulting from this request for proposals shall require the successful Consultant to provide and maintain professional liability insurance as well as worker's compensation, public liability and property damage insurance in compliance with all applicable State and Federal regulations and contracting provisions required by the Federal funding authority, including 49 CFR Part 31 or subsequent revisions of said federal regulations.

Proposal Evaluation Form

RFP Selection Rating for: Evansville MPO
(City, County, Town) or (Local Public Agency)

Services Description: _____

Consultant Name: _____

Evaluation Criteria to be Rated by Scorers					
Category	Scoring Criteria	Scale	Score	Weight	Weighted Score
Capacity of Team to do Work	Evaluation of the team's personnel and equipment to perform the project on time.		0	15	0
	Adequate capacity that results in added value.	1			
	Adequate capacity to meet the schedule.	0			
	Insufficient available capacity to meet the schedule.	-1			
Past Performance	Evaluation of the team's successful performance with similar projects in the past ten years.		0	15	0
	Outstanding work in similar projects.	2			
	High level of work in similar projects.	1			
	Appropriate level of work in similar projects.	0			
	Insufficient level of work in similar projects.	-1			
Team's Demonstrated Qualifications	Technical expertise of the team that yields a relevant added value or efficiency to the deliverable.		0	20	0
	Outstanding expertise identified for required services for value added benefit.	2			
	High level of expertise identified for required services for value added benefit.	1			
	Appropriate level of expertise identified for required services for value added benefit.	0			
	Isufficient level of expertise identified for required services for value added benefit.	-3			
Project Manager	Ability to manage the project, based on experience in projects of similar size, complexity, type, subs, and documentation.		0	20	0
	Outstanding experience in similar type and complexity.	2			
	High level of experience in similar type and complexity.	1			
	Appropriate level of experience in similar type and complexity.	0			
	Experience in different type or lower complexity.	-1			
	Insufficient experience.	-3			
Understanding of and Approach to Project	Project understanding and innovative approach that provides the best potential outcomes.		0	30	0
	High level of understanding and innovative ideas proposed.	2			
	High level of understanding of the project.	1			
	Basic understanding of the project.	0			
	Lack of project understanding.	-3			
Weighted Sub-Total:					0

It is the responsibility of scorers to make every effort to identify the firm most capable of producing the highest deliverables in a timely and cost effective manner without regard to personal preference.

I certify that I do not have any conflicts of interest associated with this consultant.

I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal for this consultant and certify that the above scores represent my best judgment of this firm's abilities.

Signature: _____

Title: _____