

AUGUST 18, 2023



MIDLAND AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR THE MICHIGAN INFRASTRUCTURE OFFICE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

ISSUED BY
MIDLAND AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
220 W. Ellsworth St., Ste 326 Midland MI 48640

Midland Area Transportation Study

Request for Proposals

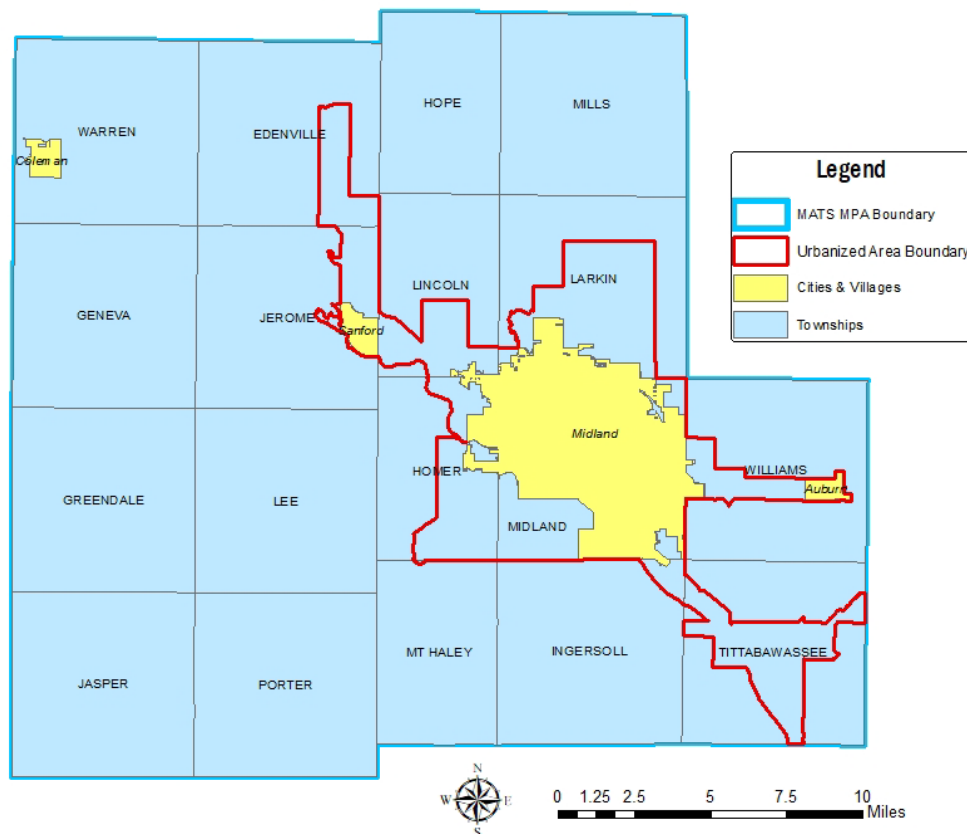
Federal infrastructure discretionary grant identification, grant writing, Benefit Cost Analysis, project outreach, implementation, reporting

Program of Proposed Projects and Scope of Services:

- 1. Develop a federal discretionary grant application to fund the planning and implementation of a network of (approximately 6-12) charging stations located within the Midland Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Area.**

These stations would be located in areas selected for the broadest benefit to the MATS area, aiding both urban and rural portions of the area. In addition, these locations would be located to satisfy the federal government's Justice40 initiative and locational criteria, as well as any other criteria found in the program documentation.

Midland Area Transportation Study (MATS) Jurisdiction



The resulting grant application must be compelling and competitive, being fully reflective of the program NOFO, while clearly laying out an appropriate approach to the 5 focus areas of Safety, Climate Change Resilience and Sustainability, Equity Community Engagement and Justice⁴⁰, Workforce Development and Job Quality, and Wealth Creation.

Potential discretionary program:

- a. Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Community Charging Program (BIL-11401)

2. Develop a federal discretionary grant application to fund the work for the Saginaw Road Bridge over the Tittabawassee River, Str. No. FHWA 7022.

The following work is desired at the Saginaw Road bridge:

- Complete bridge replacement **or**
- Full superstructure replacement **and**
- Substructure modifications and repairs **and**
- Bridge approach reconstruction

Depending on which would increase the likelihood of application success.

The resulting grant application must be compelling and competitive, being fully reflective of the chosen program NOFO and include a benefit-cost analysis. It must also emphasize the primary object of the program, being resilience over the design life of the structure. Clear and effective information must be presented regarding safe and effective evacuation infrastructure; mitigate environmental impacts, and ensure access to critical destinations. These may be especially important in light of the 2020 Midland County flood event.

Potential discretionary program(s):

- a. Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Formula Program (BIL-11405)
- b. Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (BIL-11132)
- c. Other discretionary programs may be evaluated for applicability

SECTION I: PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) provides, through its Technical Assistance program, funding for eligible recipients to contract with qualified consultants on projects supported by federal infrastructure discretionary grants. The Contractor will aid and support in communicating and understanding grant opportunities, recommending grant strategies, interacting with state and federal agencies, forming partnerships, and drafting and submitting complete grant applications. The type of professional services requested requires in-depth familiarity, knowledge and expertise in transportation, environment, including water resources and natural resources, and community and economic development issues with demonstrated success in procuring grant funding.

Eligible recipients of the grants to be applied for are local governments, road commissions, MPOs and transit agencies.

This is a prequalification program allowing eligible recipients and MiDEAL members to contract for consulting services through their Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Planning Agencies, or Economic Development Districts on a fast-track, as-needed basis and then receive reimbursement from MIO for those approved services.

OVERALL SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

The selected Contractor will perform consulting services which include, but are not limited to, the following:

Task 1. Establish Project Team and Duties:

Define roles and responsibilities of project participants.

Meet with the project manager throughout the project to ensure deliverables and deadlines are being submitted and met.

Create a project timeline and deadlines for deliverables. Meetings with the project team as required.

Task 2. Grant Identification / Project Management

The Contractor will finalize selection of federal infrastructure grant opportunities consistent with applicants' project programs.

Task 3. Grant Writing / Administration

The general grant writing and related tasks for any single application should include:

1. Provide staff to work on the applications who have in-depth knowledge and subject matter expertise;
2. Review grant application guidelines with staff to develop and oversee an application strategy and schedule to ensure timely submittal;
3. Develop a grant-writing schedule that includes draft reviews by staff;

4. Writing and editing grant narratives, outlining clear explanation of project funding, linking to local, regional and state plans, developing work plans and schedules and securing letters of support from recommended partner agencies and elected officials;
5. Creating the Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA): Detailed breakdown of the various costs of the project as laid out in the narrative;
6. Locate, identify, research, collect and analyze data as needed for the grant application;
7. Interact with staff and bring in additional partners to increase funding opportunities and leverage resources;
8. Develop language about data for grant application narratives and, if necessary, charts, tables and diagrams to illustrate data;
9. Prepare supplemental documents required for grant application completion including budget forms and budget justifications;
10. Prepare drafts of the grant application proposals and coordinate reviews of the draft proposal documents with staff. Incorporate comments and edits as necessary;
11. Follow all federal and state agency requirements outlined in the grant availability notice (NOFO);
12. If awarded, provide early logistical support to the local agency, if needed, to ensure the local agency is prepared to accept the grant funding, and;
13. Track the status of grant applications and provide additional supporting information, as required.

Expected Deliverables: Final electronic copies of all grant applications.

Excluded:

Task 4 – Grant administration: ~~Work with stakeholders as needed to ensure grant funds are used in accordance with state and federal requirements.~~

Pricing

The contractor will be compensated based on the established hourly rate for services performed up to a maximum of \$80,000 per grant application project applied for. More than one grant application/funding source may be considered for each project, subject to the approval of MATS.

REQUIRED MDOT GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Work shall conform to current MDOT, FHWA, and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) practices, guidelines, policies, and standards.

SECTION II: GENERAL INFORMATION

INSTRUCTION TO PROPOSER

A. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to select a firm to assist local units of government in the Metropolitan Planning Area for the Midland Area Transportation Study (MATS) in applying for specific federal discretionary grants associated with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as IIJA, to fund selected projects. This process will utilize Technical Assistance funds from the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) to fund the selected consultant's work efforts on behalf of MATS.

The final work products will be fully documented application packages for each of the projects.

B. QUESTIONS

The RFP is issued by the Midland Area Transportation Study. All questions regarding this proposal content or process must be addressed to Maja Bolanowska, MATS Director, via email, with the subject line "Federal Discretionary Grant Technical Assistance" at majab@midlandmpo.org. Questions and answers will be sent to all firms who were sent an RFP or who have submitted questions and will be posted at midlandmpo.org.

Question deadline shall be **September 15, 2023 at 2pm.**

C. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

To be considered, each firm must submit a response to this RFP using the format provided in Section IV. No other distribution of proposals is to be made by the submitter.

The proposal must be signed by an official authorized to bind the submitter to its provisions. Each proposal must remain valid for at least ninety days from the due date of this RFP.

Each total submittal should not be more than 25 sheets (50 sides), with material on two sides, not including required attachments. The electronic copy of the proposal should be submitted in pdf format via email, including the subject line "**Proposal – MATS MIO Technical Assistance Program**" to majab@midlandmpo.org

D. CHANGES IN THE RFP

Should any prospective proposer be in doubt as to the true meaning of any portion of this Request for Proposal, or should the proposer find any ambiguity, inconsistency, or omission therein, the Proposer shall make a written request for an official interpretation or correction. Such requests must be received by Maja Bolanowska, MATS Director, via email, not less than seven days prior to the final date of submittal of the proposals.

E. ADDENDUM

Any interpretation or correction, as well as any additional RFP provisions that MATS may decide to include, will be made only as an official addendum that will be posted to www.midlandmpo.org. It shall be the proposer's responsibility to ensure they have received all addendums before submitting a proposal. Any addendum issued by MATS shall become part of the RFP and will be incorporated in the proposal.

MATS will not be bound by oral responses to inquiries or written responses other than written addenda.

F. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All Proposals are due and must be delivered to MATS on or before **September 29, 2023 at 2pm** (local time). Proposals submitted late or via oral, telephonic, telegraphic, or facsimile **will not** be considered or accepted.

Each Proposer must submit one (1) original signed Proposal, in pdf format via email and optionally via certified mail to the physical address below. Proposals submitted must be clearly marked:

Proposal – MATS MIO Technical Assistance Program and then list **Proposer’s name and address**.

Proposals must be addressed and/or emailed to:

majab@midlandmpo.org
Midland Area Transportation Study
220 W. Ellsworth St., Ste. 326
Midland MI 48640

All Proposals received on or before the Due Date will be publicly opened at the Office of the Midland Area Transportation Study and the company name recorded immediately following the deadline. No immediate decisions are rendered.

MATS will not be liable to any Proposer’s for any unforeseen circumstances, delivery or postal delays. Postmarking on the Due Date will not substitute for receipt of the Proposal. Each Respondent is responsible for submission of their Proposal.

Additional time will not be granted to a single Proposer; however, additional time may be granted to all Proposers if MATS determines that circumstances warrant it.

Any proposer may withdraw their proposal response by written request at any time prior to the scheduled proposer opening.

G. DISCLOSURES

Under the Freedom of Information Act (Public Act 442), MATS is obligated to permit review of its files, if requested by others. All information in a submitter’s proposal is thus subject to disclosure under this provision. This act also provides for a complete disclosure of contracts and attachments thereto.

H. TYPE OF CONTRACT

This contract will be an extension of the standard MiDEAL contract for reimbursement. The contract that may be entered into will be that which is most advantageous to MATS, price and other factors considered.

Non Appropriations: MATS shall be bound, hereunder, only to the extent that funds shall have been appropriated and budgeted or are otherwise available for the purpose of this contract. In the event that no funds or insufficient funds are appropriated and budgeted, or are otherwise unavailable by any means whatsoever in any fiscal period of payments due under this contract, then MATS shall immediately notify the Contractor of such occurrence and this contract shall terminate the last day of the fiscal period for which appropriations were received without penalty or expense to MATS of any kind, whatsoever.

Laws: The laws of the State of Michigan shall govern the rights, obligations, and remedies of the Parties under this proposal and any agreement reached through this process. MATS is an Inter-Municipal Committee established under Act 200 of 1957 of the Public Acts of Michigan.

Disclosure: All of the information included in your proposal response is subject to the “Freedom of

Information Act” and may be disclosed in its entirety after the formal, public proposal opening has been completed. Proposal tabulations will be available at the MATS website, www.midlandmpo.org subsequent to proposal opening date.

Independent Price Determination: By submission of this proposal, the proposer certifies that the pricing structure offered has been arrived at independently without consultation, communication, or agreement of such prices for the purpose of restricting competition with any other proposer or competitor.

Non-Iran Linked Business: By signing RFP response form, I certify and agree on behalf of myself and the company submitting this proposal the following: (1) that I am duly authorized to legally bind the company submitting this proposal; and (2) that the company submitting this proposal is not an “Iran linked business,” as that term is defined in Section 2(e) of the Iran Economic Sanctions Act, being Michigan Public Act No. 517 of 2012; and (3) That I and the company submitting this proposal will immediately comply with any further certifications or information submissions requested by MATS in this regard.”

I. COST LIABILITY

The Midland Area Transportation Study assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by the consultant prior to the execution of a Professional Services Agreement. The liability of MATS is limited to the terms and conditions outlined in the Agreement.

J. SCHEDULE

The following is the solicitation schedule for this procurement:

Activity/Event	Date
Deadline for submitting questions on the RFP	September 15, 2023
Proposal Due Date	September 29, 2023
Technical Committee Review	September 29 – October 13, 2023
Technical Committee recommendation	October 18, 2023
Policy Committee Award	November 7, 2023

Note: The above schedule is for information purposes only and is subject to change at MATS’ discretion.

Proposals submitted shall define an appropriate project schedule in accordance with the requirements of the proposed work plan. The final schedule will be negotiated based on the final scope of work and work plan agreed to by MATS and the selected firm.

K. RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

1. MATS reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Proposals, in whole or in part.
2. MATS reserves the right to waive or not waive informalities or irregularities in proposals or proposal procedures, and to accept or further negotiate cost, terms, or conditions of any proposal determined by MATS to be in the best interests of MATS even though not the lowest proposal.

3. MATS reserves the right to request additional information from any or all Proposals.
 4. MATS reserves the right not to consider any Proposal which it determines to be unresponsive and deficient in any of the information requested within the RFP.
 5. MATS reserves the right to determine whether the scope of the project will be entirely as described in this RFP, a portion of the scope, or that a revised scope be implemented.
 6. MATS reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in this Request for Proposals, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted.
 7. MATS reserves the right to disqualify Proposals that fail to respond to any requirements outlined in the RFP, or for failure to enclose copies of the required documents outlined within the RFP.
- L. FUNDING SOURCES:** This project is funded by the Michigan Infrastructure Office Technical Assistance Program, and contracted through the MiDEAL Program of the Michigan Department of Technology Management and Budget. A signed copy of the clauses from the pre-qualified MiDEAL contract document must be included with the submitted proposal.

SECTION III: SELECTION CRITERIA

The proposals will be evaluated using the selection criteria below which are listed in order of

importance. Price is less important than the other technical factors as a whole.

All proposals will be evaluated by the MATS Technical Committee membership. The Committee may be assisted by other personnel as deemed appropriate for the purpose of selecting the proposer with whom a contract will be executed. Representatives from the firm(s) in a competitive range may be invited to interview by phone, teleconference or in person with the Committee before final selection is made.

Midland Area Transportation Study reserves the right to cancel the solicitation or reject any and all proposals in whole or part for sound, documentable, business reasons. Midland Area Transportation Study also reserves the right to award to other than the lowest priced proposal. Midland Area Transportation Study reserves the right to waive any minor informalities or irregularities and to use whatever reasonable and prudent evaluation techniques it deems appropriate.

MINIMUM PROPOSAL INFORMATION AND PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Respondents should organize Proposals into the following Sections:

1. Proposed Work Plan
2. Past Involvement with Federal grant applications
3. Professional Qualifications
4. Fee Proposal
5. Authorized Negotiator
6. Attachments

The following describes the elements that should be included in each of the proposal sections and the weighted point system that will be used for evaluation of the proposals. The evaluation will be completed by the MATS Technical Committee, which will provide a recommendation to the MATS Policy Committee for contract award.

Evidence of past project experience should demonstrate that the proposed Consulting Team includes individuals competent in 1) Federally discretionary grant programs; 2) Electric Vehicle Infrastructure; and 3) Highway Bridge Engineering.

A. Proposed Work Plan – 50 points

- A list of all tasks required to meet the project's objectives, with assigned resources (person-hours) and responsible staff members.
- A timeline schedule showing the sequence and duration of tasks, including milestones for

completion. It is expected that grant applications will take approximately 6 months to prepare.

- Identification of information needed from MATS or local agency staff and estimated time and resource commitments from them.
- Inclusion of any additional project elements suggested by the proposer, labeled as "Proposer suggested elements."
- Also include in the work plan all proposed steps, if any, to expedite completion of the project. This will be given due consideration during evaluation of proposals. Any other pertinent information the proposer deems necessary should also be included.
- In the scoring for this section, consultants shall be evaluated on the clarity, thoroughness, and content of their responses to the above items as well as to the projects objectives.

B. Past Involvement with Federal grant applications– 25 points

- The written proposal must include a list of specific experience in the grant development area and indicate proven ability in developing similar federal grant applications. A related benefit would be experience with the subject matter of either or both project types, i.e. electric vehicle charging infrastructure and bridge reconstruction. A complete list of similar endeavors and their post-submission outcomes should be provided.

C. Professional Qualifications – 15 points

- State the full name and address of your organization and, if applicable, the branch office or other subordinate element that will perform, or assist in performing, the work hereunder. Indicate whether it operates as an individual, partnership, or corporation. If as a corporation, include whether it is licensed to operate in the State of Michigan.
- Include the name of executive and professional personnel by skill and qualification that will be employed in the work. Indicate which of these individuals you consider key to the successful completion of the project. Qualifications are required for all proposed project personnel, including all sub consultants.
- State history of the firm, in terms of length of existence, types of services provided, etc. Identify the technical details which make the firm uniquely qualified for this work.

D. Fee Proposal - 10 points

- Fee quotations are to include the names, title, hourly rates, overhead factors, and any other details, including hours of effort for each team member by task, and sub-task, by which the overall and project element costs have been derived. The fee quotation is to relate in detail to each item of the proposed work plan. Consultants shall be capable of justifying the details of the fee proposal relative to personnel costs, overhead, how the overhead rate is derived, material and time. The cost proposal should be realistic in showing the hours necessary to provide a quality product.

E. Authorized Negotiator

- Include the name, phone number, and e-mail address of persons(s) in your organization authorized to negotiate the Scope of Work with MATS.

G. Proposal Evaluation

The Technical Committee will evaluate each proposal by the above described criteria and point system

(A through D, based on 100 points). A proposal with all the requested information does not guarantee the proposing firm to be a candidate for an interview, if interviews are conducted.

H. Interview

The Committee reserves the right to schedule interviews with selected firms if necessary. The selected firms will be given the opportunity to discuss in more detail their qualifications, past experience, proposed work plan and fee proposal.

I. Final Scoring

If interviewed, firms will then be re-evaluated by the above criteria (A through D), and adjustments to scoring will be made as appropriate. After evaluation of the proposals, further negotiation with the selected firm may be pursued leading to the award of a contract by the Midland Area Transportation Study.

MATS reserves the right to not consider any proposal which is determined to be unresponsive and deficient in any of the information requested for evaluation. MATS also reserves the right to waive the interview process and evaluate the consultants based on their proposals and fee schedules alone.

SECTION IV: WRITTEN PROTEST PROCEDURES

GENERAL - DEFINITIONS

1. The procedures established hereunder shall be available to contractors for the purpose of handling and resolving disputes relating to procurements hereunder. A protestor must exhaust all administrative remedies hereunder before pursuing a protest in any court of law. The term “contractor” means any person, firm, or corporation, which has contracted or seeks to contract with MATS.
2. The term “hearing officer” shall mean a person, appointed by the Policy Committee, to hear and decide allegations made by any contractor relating to procurements hereunder.
3. A “post-award protest” is a protest received after award of a contract.

FILING OF PROTESTS

Any Contractor may file a written post-award protest of the procurement procedures involved herein, with MATS director, at least five (5) working days after the date of MATS’s decision regarding a selection of a Contractor. Each protest must clearly state: a) The name, address, and telephone number of the protester; and b) A statement of all of the grounds upon which the protest is made.

Protests are to be filed by certified mail, return receipt requested or by personal delivery by 4:30pm on or before the due date at:

Midland Area Transportation Study
220 W. Ellsworth St. Ste. 326
Midland, MI 48640

If protests are filed by personal delivery, the Protester may obtain a time-stamped copy of the protest from the MATS office as proof of the date and time of the filing of the protest.

HEARING PROCEDURE

A hearing shall be conducted in accordance with these Written Protest Procedures.

The Hearing Officer shall be the responsible official who has the authority to make the final determination of the protest.

The Hearing Officer, shall respond in detail, to each substantive issue raised in the protest.

The Hearing Officer shall issue a written decision within ten (10) days of the last date of such hearing and state in the decision the reasons for the action taken.

The Hearing Officer’s determination shall be final and binding upon all parties upon issuance.

However, within (5) working days from its receipt of the decision of the Hearing Officer, a Protester may request reconsideration of the decision. The request for reconsideration shall be addressed to the Hearing Officer, in care of Midland Area Transportation Study, 220 W. Ellsworth St. Ste. 326, Midland, MI 48640. The request for reconsideration shall set forth all of the grounds upon which the request is made.

The Hearing Officer shall issue a written decision on the request for recommendation within ten (10) days of receipt thereof and state in the decision the reasons for the granting or denial of the request.

SECTION V: RFP SUBMISSION

Direct Questions To: Maja Bolanowska, Director
Midland Area Transportation Study
majab@midlandmpo.org
Submit questions by September 22, 2023
“Federal Discretionary Grant Technical Assistance” must be in the subject line of the e-mail

Date Issued: August 18, 2023

Proposals Due: September 29, 2023 at 2:00 pm

Proposer Name: _____

Proposal Price: _____

*Attach items as described in Section III of the RFP documents, including but not limited to, work plan, names, title, hourly rates, overhead factors, and any other details, including hours of effort for each member by task, and sub-task.

Submit To: Midland Area Transportation Study
220 W Ellsworth St. Ste. 326
Midland MI 48640
Email with subject line “**Proposal – MATS MIO Technical Assistance Program**”
To majab@midlandmpo.org

PROPOSER READ AND COMPLETE

The undersigned certifies that he/she offers to furnish services in strict accordance with all requirements set forth in this proposal.

I hereby state that all of the information I have provided is true, accurate, and complete. I hereby state that I have the authority to submit this proposal, which will become a binding contract, if accepted by the Midland Area Transportation Study. I hereby agree to abide by all relevant ordinances, rules and regulations, including the suspension process for poor performance arising out of this contract, if awarded.

Signature

Date

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) or Federal ID#: _____
(Precede with “S” if Social Security #)