Southern Alleghenies HSIP Project Identification and Prioritization Process

Request for Proposals

Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission

3 Sheraton Drive • Altoona, Pennsylvania • 16601

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Version: 1.0
Date: 9/10/2020
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I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Introduction and Purpose
This effort will provide a reusable data driven process to identify critical safety improvement areas in the Southern Alleghenies RPO and develop prioritized lists of potential site specific and systematic alternatives that are eligible for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding. The projects on the lists should have planning horizons of four, eight, and twelve years, and will be evaluated for inclusion on the Southern Alleghenies RPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

The Southern Alleghenies LRTP was last adopted in November 2017 and is expected to be updated in July of 2022. Using a data driven process to identify high quality HSIP projects will allow the RPO to program projects in an efficient and effective manner while promoting the safety of the traveling public. Ideally, by developing a process for project selection, the RPO will be able to access additional HSIP dollars for this and future LRTP updates.

The Highway Safety Improvement Program was established as a core Federal-aid program under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and was reaffirmed with changes by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The FAST Act identified the overall purpose of HSIP, which is “to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, including non-State-owned public roads and roads on tribal land.” HSIP funds are obligated toward infrastructure-related safety improvements at specific locations and are systematically chosen as proven low-cost countermeasures.

There has been an increased emphasis at the federal level for utilizing a data driven process for selecting and prioritizing projects. Funding decisions are required to contribute to the achievement of established state and regional performance targets, which were developed to support federal performance measures and Pennsylvania’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Five performance measures for HSIP were established:

1. Number of fatalities
2. Rate of fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)
3. Number of serious injuries
4. Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT
5. Number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries

In Pennsylvania, MPOs and RPOs are allocated a portion of HSIP funding on their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). MPOs and RPOs are responsible for approving projects to utilize this funding. However, MPOs, RPOs, and Districts must submit potential projects for review and evaluation to determine HSIP funding eligibility. The shift to a more data centric application process has increased the workload required to identify and prioritize
safety projects and has drastically increased the time required to complete an application for HSIP funding.

The Southern Alleghenies RPO LRTP outlines a vision for the region’s transportation system over a 20-25-year horizon. The Plan identifies the region’s transportation assets, highlights current and future transportation needs, outlines a series of goals and objectives to fulfill those needs, and identifies a fiscally constrained list of planned projects. The LRTP is used to guide decisions during the development of the Twelve Year Plan (TYP) and the TIP. The Southern Alleghenies RPO is in the process of developing the 2022-2042 LRTP. The prioritized project lists will aid the RPO in selecting safety projects to include in the LRTP update, as well as future updates. The 2022-2042 LRTP will be adopted in November 2022.

The selected contractor will craft a data driven tool to identify and prioritize site specific locations in the Southern Alleghenies RPO that are eligible for HSIP funding, as well as interim and final reports, and an executive summary to inform the RPO about the identification and prioritization process. The tool and supplementary information in the report will allow the RPO to recreate the process to identify HSIP eligible projects in the future, making the project selection strategy for the LRTP and the TIP more streamlined and uniform.

**Who May Respond**

Any consultant or other organization with appropriate expertise may respond. Ideally, the consultant will have expertise in HSIP project identification, experience with LRTP/TIP development, and familiarity with the Highway Safety Manual (HSM). Parties submitting proposals in response to this RFP are referred to herein individually as “Respondent” or collectively as “Respondents”.

**Statement of Work**

Results of the assessment will be used to inform the Southern Alleghenies RPO and PennDOT District 9-0 on HSIP eligible projects to be included on the LRTP and/or the TIP. The identified projects will be assessed and chosen by the RPO and the District. That being the case, the respondents should develop a process or tool that will identify and prioritize site specific locations that are eligible for HSIP funding, and the process should be able to be repeated by the RPO and the District for future considerations.

The suggested responsibilities below may be used as a guide, but ultimately the respondent should develop a proposal that will best meet the inherent intent and purpose of the study:

1. **Problem Identification:**
   a. Define and develop consensus on the methodologies and parameters for identifying safety issues and critical safety improvement areas. Both location specific and systematic improvements will be considered.
      i. Improvements will be consistent with Pennsylvania’s SHSP emphasis areas including:
         1. Reducing impaired driving
2. Increasing Seat Belt Usage
3. Infrastructure Improvements
4. Lane Departures
5. Intersection Safety
6. Reducing Speeding & Aggressive Driving
7. Reducing Distracted Driving
8. Mature Driver Safety
9. Motorcycle Safety
10. Young & Inexperienced Driver Safety
11. Enhancing Safety on Local Roads
12. Improving Pedestrian Safety
13. Improving Traffic Records Data
14. Commercial Vehicle Safety
15. Improving Emergency/Incident Influence Time
16. Improving Bicycle Safety
17. Enhancing Safety in Work Zones
18. Reducing Vehicle-Train Crashes

ii. Established methods must be consistent with the methods identified in the Highway Safety Manual.

b. Improvements will be identified through a data driven process and will support the five safety performance measure targets for the Southern Alleghenies RPO.

c. Identification of locations with severe accident potentials, critical safety improvement areas, and locations for possible systematic improvements. At a minimum, the following information will be gathered and analyzed:

i. Crash data
ii. Traffic Volumes
iii. RMS data
iv. Available lists and studies
   1. County Network Screening Lists
   2. CDART Year End Crash Cluster Reports
   3. Systemic safety crash lists including cross median crash and wrong-way crash priority lists
   4. Other lists or studies developed by the District and planning partners

2. Countermeasure Identification:

a. Data analysis and network screening - Data will be analyzed to reveal contributing factors and possible patterns. The exact analysis methods will be determined in Task 1.a. above. However, the analysis must be consistent with methods identified in the Highway Safety Manual.

b. Site condition assessment – A field view of potential improvement areas will be conducted to help inform and confirm the analysis results as well as aid in identifying potential countermeasures. It will likely not be feasible to conduct site visits of all identified problem areas, so a strategic approach for field viewing sites will be identified.
c. Develop possible alternatives and identify potential countermeasures that may reduce the potential for future crashes and the potential results of a crash for the identified critical safety areas and systematic improvement areas.

3. Project Prioritization:
   a. Assess countermeasure effectiveness
      i. Identify Crash Modification Factors (CMFs) for identified alternatives and countermeasures, where applicable.
      ii. Calculate Benefit/Cost ratios for identified alternatives and countermeasures.
      iii. Determine systemic safety improvement value, where applicable.
   b. Develop weighting factors/prioritization method in coordination with the RPO and the District and must have consensus among all parties.
   c. Score and prioritize projects. Provide final prioritized lists for each SHSP targeted area; with emphasis weighing to the five (5) HSIP Performance Measures. The project lists should have a planning horizon up to twelve (12) years. The final prioritized lists will be reviewed by the RPO.

4. Development of Final Strategy:
   a. The following will be developed for each identified improvement:
      i. Purpose
      ii. Need
      iii. Potential alternatives or countermeasures

5. Completion of an interim report at minimum summarizing process development progress, noting any potential data needs, or shortcomings, and potential workarounds.

6. Final Report:
   a. This information must be organized and presented to convey findings to the RPO, District, and local stakeholders.
      i. Prepare an executive summary to comprehensively summarize findings.
         1. Summarize the process developed to identify and prioritize critical safety improvement projects.
         2. Summarize the results of running the tool, challenges in developing the tool, and opportunities and offer recommendations for best-practice strategies.
      ii. Develop a spreadsheet containing identified project information that can be easily converted to a GIS format. Spreadsheet data should be compatible with PennDOT’s GIS and PA OneMap attribute data.
         iii. The respondent will provide examples of how this information and the study results can most successfully be presented and communicated.
         iv. The final report may include a story map of the process findings.

7. Information sharing, presentation of findings, and technical assistance:
   a. Once the report is finalized, share with appropriate stakeholders and be available to present findings.
   b. Provide technical assistance to incorporate key findings into potential HSIP funding applications.
Description of the Region

The Southern Alleghenies RPO is comprised of four counties (Bedford, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset) in south-central Pennsylvania. The majority of the region is rural and forested with a land area of 3,400 square miles and a population of 175,983 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 Population Estimates). The one geographic factor linking all counties in the region is the Allegheny Mountain Range of the Appalachian Mountains, with some mountain ridges in each of the four counties. The geography of the region includes a mix of low, rugged, mountain ranges, rolling countryside, and river valleys. There is over 2,700 miles of state roadway in the RPO, with several more thousand miles of locally owned roads. There is a total of 1,941 bridges in the RPO, 1,472 are state owned and 469 are locally owned. Between 2014 and 2018 there was a total of 103 vehicular crashes that involved a bicycle or pedestrian. In general, the Southern Alleghenies Region is a relatively rural region, close to the large Pittsburgh area on the west and not far from the State Capital in Harrisburg on the east. The outer areas of the Washington metro area are only a one-hour drive from parts of the southern end of the Southern Alleghenies Region.

Description of Entities

SAP&DC, a nonprofit corporation that serves six counties in South-Central Pennsylvania, has been determined to be exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is governed by a 19-member volunteer Board of Directors. Administrative offices and all records are located at 3 Sheraton Drive, Altoona, PA 16601.

- **SAP&DC**: The Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAP&DC) is a non-profit regional economic and community development organization, serving the Pennsylvania counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset. SAP&DC is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of County Commissioners from each member county and representatives from the private sector. SAP&DC’s mission is “to address human resource development, encourage the creation and retention of jobs, and to improve the quality of life for residents of the Alleghenies.” As a regional planning commission, SAP&DC currently coordinates regional, multi-county transportation, economic development, greenways, and recreation planning through the following plans: Alleghenies Ahead Regional Comprehensive Plan, RPO Long Range Transportation Plan, the Southern Alleghenies Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and the Southern Alleghenies Greenways and Open Space Network Plan.

SAP&DC is the grantee for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) funds being used for this study. These funds will be awarded to the potential respondent selected by SAP&DC Board of Directors pursuant to this RFP.
Response Information & Estimated Project Timeline

1. **Closing Submission Date:** Responses must be submitted no later than **4:00 PM on October 2, 2020.** It is the responsibility of all Respondents to ensure that SAP&DC receives the proposal by the date and time specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

2. **Submission Instructions:** Proposals should not exceed ten (10) pages in length and should be typed on 8.5 X 11-inch pages with margins no smaller than one (1) inch. Font size should be no smaller than ten (10) point. Supporting materials can be provided in addition to the scope of work. Proposals should be submitted in pdf format via email to Brandon Peters at bpeters@sapdc.org.

3. **Submissions Assistance:** Questions regarding the RFP will be addressed on the SAP&DC website at [http://www.sapdc.org/about/RFPs](http://www.sapdc.org/about/RFPs). Questions regarding submission instructions may be addressed to:
   Brandon Peters  
   Transportation Program Manager  
   SAP&DC  
   (814)-949-6543  
   E-mail: bpeters@sapdc.org

4. **Selection Date:** The responses will be referred to the Southern Alleghenies LRTP Steering Committee, a subset of the RPO’s Rural Transportation Technical Committee (RTTC). The Committee’s decision will serve as a recommendation of a firm to the SAP&DC Board of Directors, who will select a firm or team of firms via memo vote by **October 14, 2020.**

5. **Anticipated Project Start Date:** SAP&DC anticipates entering a fully executed contract with the selected firm or team of firms by **October 19, 2020.**

6. **Completion of work:** SAP&DC expects the work to be completed and all deliverables received by **March 31, 2021.**

**Conditions of Response**
All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Respondent submitting the proposal and shall not be reimbursed by SAP&DC.

**Right to Reject**
SAP&DC reserves the right to reject any and all responses received in response to this RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP.
Small and/or Minority-Owned Businesses
Efforts will be made by SAP&DC to utilize small businesses and minority-owned businesses. A Respondent qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the definition of “small business” as established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201), by having average annual receipts for the last three fiscal years of less than six million dollars.

Notice of Decision
It is expected that a decision selecting the successful Respondent will be made no later than October 9, 2020. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful Respondent, all other Respondents submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful Respondent.

Period of Performance
The anticipated period of performance for the project is October 19, 2020, through March 31, 2021.

Contract Information
1. Type of Contract: Best value

2. Period of Performance: The period of performance for this program will be from October 19, 2020 – March 31, 2021.

3. Payment: Payment will be made when SAP&DC has determined that milestones have been completed in the approved scope of work. These milestones and the payment schedule will be negotiated with the selected firm prior to the start of work on the project.

4. Options: At the discretion of SAP&DC, this contract can be terminated at any time or extended beyond the specified contract period.

5. Confidentiality: The Subcontractor agrees to keep the information related to all contracts in confidence.
II. RESPONSE GUIDELINES

Response Outline

1. Understanding of Work to be Performed: Each Respondent should demonstrate its understanding of why the project is needed and how it will meet SAP&DC’s needs. Respondents should not repeat the Statement of Work, but rather describe how the Respondent will accomplish the tasks defined in the work program within the specified time limits.

2. Service Delivery Process: Each proposal must describe how the Respondent proposes to complete all tasks identified in the Statement of Work of this RFP. The Respondent must also include a timeline that demonstrates the completion of each task within the limits of the specified period of performance. The timeline should include project milestones that details the completion date of each task outlined in the Statement of Work.

3. Organizational Experience/Past Performance: Each Respondent should describe its organization, size (in relation to the proposed services to be performed), and structure. Indicate if appropriate if the Respondent is a small, minority-owned, or disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE). DBEs are certified by the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program (PA UCP) in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26. The following information must be obtained from Respondents who maintain DBE status:
   a. Firm name;
   b. Firm address;
   c. Firm’s status as a DBE or non-DBE;
   d. Age of firm; and
   e. Annual gross receipts of the firm. Specifically indicate which gross receipts bracket your firm falls under:
      i. Less than $500,000
      ii. $500,000-$1 million
      iii. $1-$2 million
      iv. $2-$5 million
      v. Greater than $5 million

The Respondent should also describe its prior experience that qualifies the Respondent to fulfill the tasks described in this RFP based on past performance of the same or similar programs. Include all prior experience with similar programs and the operation of programs financed by the Federal/State Government.

4. Staff Qualifications: To achieve the objectives outlined in the proposed scope of work, SAP&DC is seeking a qualified and innovative firm or collaborative team of firms with a demonstrated ability to perform the necessary technical assistance. The selected Respondent must possess demonstrated experience in transportation planning and policy, as well as experience with traffic engineering, the Highway Safety...
Manual, and safety planning and analysis. Familiarity with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is required.

Each Respondent shall identify all personnel that will be assigned to the project, including contact information. Each Respondent shall also describe the relevant qualifications of staff to perform the proposed service, including technical, educational, and experiential background. This section of the proposal should include descriptions of staff team makeup, overall supervision to be exercised, and prior experience of the individual staff team members.

- Statements of qualifications and resumes for project team members with specific mention of related projects including their role, specific knowledge, and experience.
- A list of at least three references and contacts from past or current client relationships involving similar projects.
- Descriptions of example projects that have resulted from the participation of an implementable planning process.
- An organization chart of the project team including identification of project manager, principal in charge, and known sub-consultant/contractor relationships.

5. **Project Budget & Cost Proposal**: All Respondents must submit their total project cost, along with a task-by-task cost breakdown for each of the major tasks defined within the Statement of Work of this RFP. Submitted proposals must reflect a total project cost **not to exceed $50,000.**
III. RESPONSE EVALUATION

Proposal Contents
All responses must follow the specified format and include all required elements listed in Section II of this RFP.

Ineligible Responses
Proposals may be judged ineligible and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:
1. The response is not received timely in accordance with the terms of this RFP.
2. The response does not follow the specified format.
3. The response is not adequate for the reviewers to form a judgment that the proposed undertaking would comply with federal and state requirements.
4. The amount of the proposal exceeds the amount of funding available for the project.

Evaluation
Evaluation of each proposal will be based on the following criteria:

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrated knowledge of HSIP funding, Highway Safety Manual procedures, and principles, including identifying and assessing the effectiveness of safety counter measures and benefit-cost analysis.</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>• Demonstrated ability of the designated project director and key personnel to carry out the work as outlined.</td>
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<td>• Cost relative to the quality of the study proposed.</td>
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<td>• Demonstrated ability to complete the scope of work within the period of performance.</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Adequacy of the proposed scope of work.</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>/100</td>
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