



Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2024

To: Recipients

Re: Staff Augmentation
Questions and Answers

In addition to the usual question and answer opportunity, SJTPO held a Live Q&A session via GoToWebinar on Wednesday, August 28, 2024. Attendees were required to pre-register to participate in the session. However, attendance was not necessary to remain eligible to submit a proposal for the Staff Augmentation effort.

The list of questions below represents those asked outside of and during the Live Q&A session to date. All questions and requests for interpretations related to this RFP must be submitted in writing and received on or before Tuesday, September 10, 2024.

Q1. If a consultant is selected for the roles, are they precluded from other future SJTPO work?

A1. If a consultant firm, or group of firms, is selected to augment SJTPO's existing staff through consultant services, they will not be precluded from future work. The firm(s) remain eligible for consideration for additional opportunities with SJTPO and its subregional partners as they arise.

Q2. Can a consultant pursue this if they have existing SJTPO work?

A2. If a consultant firm, or group of firms, has existing work with SJTPO, they are eligible to pursue the current Staff Augmentation effort.

Q3. Can a firm propose staff for just one of the positions, or must the firm propose all three?

A3. SJTPO had not intended to award more than one contract for staff augmentation. Our need and desire are to fill all three positions. The main objective of this effort is to ensure that the activities and products outlined in SJTPO's FY 2025 UPWP are completed as documented.

While the RFP refers to a group of firms within the Introduction, the intention was that there could be a prime and one or more subconsultants that partner together to form a team.

Q4. Is the Assistant Planner position part-time or full-time?

A4. All three vacant positions (Program Manager and Assistant Planner under the Capital Programming & Project Development program area and a Principal Planner under the Regional Planning & System Performance program area) are intended to be full-time positions if filled through the normal hiring procedures. However, after unsuccessful attempts to fill these and other full-time positions, SJTPO chose to solicit proposals from qualified firms for staff augmentation.

The primary objective of this effort is to ensure that the Activities and Products outlined in SJTPO's FY 2025 UPWP are completed as documented. The consultant firm should propose the number of staff



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members and the capacity that staff members shall dedicate to successfully completing the Activities and Products as outlined in the RFP.

Q5. Is the Assistant Planner position in-person, remote, or hybrid?

A5. For all three positions, the consultant firm may work remotely from their office and come to the SJTPO office or attend other regionally important meetings as necessary.

Q6. Will the list of attendees for the Live Q&A session be provided?

A6. The attendee list will not be provided. However, a list of the companies that attended the session includes:

- AECOM
- Envision Consultants, Ltd.
- McCormick Taylor
- Michael Baker International
- Net2Source
- NV5
- Parsons
- Urban Engineers
- WSP
- STV

Q7. According to Page 5 of the RFP, the Technical Proposal and Costs should be included in the response submission. Kindly verify if costs should be included with the technical proposal in the same submission.

A7. Section III. of the RFP notes that SJTPO's consultant selection is a qualifications-driven process. Selection is based primarily on assessing the technical qualifications of responding firms. However, as a project that does not relate to a direct Planning or Engineering element, the value, quality, and cost of each proposal will also be considered to ensure that public funds are utilized efficiently and in accordance with the SJTPO's mission. Specifically, the Value Given Stated Cost is weighted at 20 percent of the total score with the Technical Approach, Firm/Staff Qualifications, and DBE/ESBE Utilization all as additional factors considered.

As such, the Technical Proposal and Costs can be included in the same submission. The cost should not be provided in a separate sealed envelope, and it should be provided with the consultant firm's digital submission.

Q8. What is your expectation for how many hours per week that each staff person would work? / Given the level of detail of deliverables identified in the work plan, should consultants assume 40 hours per week per position from date of execution through June 30?

A8. The primary objective of this effort is to ensure that the Activities and Products outlined in SJTPO's FY 2025 UPWP are completed as documented. The consultant firm should propose the number of staff and hours necessary to successfully complete the Activities and Products outlined in the RFP.



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The expected project completion of the consultant effort is through the end of FY 2025 UPWP. No work shall be billed after June 30, 2025, the end of the state fiscal year.

If the consultant believes that the Activities and Products cannot be completed in that timeframe, it should be noted in their response with an appropriate schedule of work developed.

Q9. Will travel to the SJTPO office to work or to a meeting be a billable expense?

A9. Consultant firms are not required to have a member of their staff report to the SJTPO office daily. Consultants may work remotely from the consultant office and come to the SJTPO office or attend other regionally important meetings as necessary.

Travel reimbursement is a billable expense at the current federal per diem rate.

Q10. How should consultants anticipate addressing the DBE requirement?

A10. Federal and State goals for DBE/ESBE participation must be addressed explicitly in the proposal. This is satisfied by stating the percentage of total project cost devoted to DBE/ESBE firm involvement in the Technical Proposal. Section IV of the RFP includes a definition of DBE/ESBE firms. SJTPO utilizes the NJDOT federally approved DBE/ESBE goal (effective 10/1/2022 through 9/30/2025), which is 9.95 percent.

If a proposer cannot secure a DBE/ESBE firm to meet the DBE/ESBE goal, the proposer would need to document in their proposal that a good-faith effort was made to meet the goal. Section IV of the RFP includes information about documenting a good-faith effort. SJTPO will, at its discretion, award points to firms that meet/exceed the DBE goal or satisfactorily document in their proposal that a good-faith effort was made to meet the DBE goal.

Q11. Should we expect that the contract ends on June 30, 2025?

A11. SJTPO's FY 2025 UPWP is effective July 1st through June 30. Consultant selection for this effort will be made at SJTPO's Policy Board meeting on Monday, November 25, 2024, with a Notice to Proceed anticipated in Late November. The expected project completion is through the end of FY 2025 UPWP. No work shall be billed after June 30, 2025, the end of the state fiscal year.

If the consultant believes that the Activities and Products cannot be completed in that timeframe, it should be noted in their response with an appropriate schedule of work developed.

Q12. What is SJTPO's work-from-home policy for central staff? How many days a week is common for staff to be in person?

A12. SJTPO employees are permitted to telework no more than two (2) days in a calendar week. The two days can be full workdays or otherwise taken as no more than 16 hours. This applies to all full-time and part-time employees who may perform their specific job responsibilities while teleworking.



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Q13. Each task within SJTPO's Central Staff Work Program includes a funding allocation, is this budget available?

A13. The RFP duplicates the details found under each task with the Central Staff Work Program, except for the funding allocated to each task. The funding noted in the UPWP document represents the individual budgets allocated for SJTPO staff to complete the task. This funding is not available to the consultants for the Staff Augmentation effort.

Q14. Can final invoices be submitted after June 30, 2025, for activities completed within that period?

A14. In accordance with Program Monitoring and Reporting outlined in the task order for SJTPO's FY 2025 UPWP, an annual or final report is due to the funding agency (NJDOT) no later than 90 days following the end of the program year. To ensure that SJTPO meets that deadline, all consultant invoices are requested by mid-August 2025. However, no work shall be billed after June 30, 2025, the end of the state fiscal year.

Q15. Will the schedule of products outlined in the RFP be updated? For example, several products suggest completion by Summer 2024, but the Notice to Proceed is not expected to be issued until late November 2024.

A15. The RFP duplicates the details found under each task with the Central Staff Work Program, including the due date for Products. The dates were established with the expectation that they would be completed by SJTPO staff. We know that is no longer the case, and the specific Activities and Products will be completed through the Staff Augmentation effort.

The consultant should propose new due dates for the products to be completed based on a project kick-off in early December.

It should be noted that the UPWP is to be used as guidance. The consultant firm is responsible for proposing a detailed scope of work that will produce the Product(s) listed under each task.

Q16. For Task 25/131 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will the consultant be required to manage the public outreach process or will SJTPO manage the public outreach process?

A16. SJTPO's Public Outreach efforts are initiated by Melissa Melora, SJTPO's Public Outreach Coordinator, in collaboration with other staff depending on the program area. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is produced on a bi-annual basis. In accordance with SJTPO's Public Involvement Plan (PIP), the TIP must be released for a comment period of at least 30 days. The draft document will be available for at least 30 days of public comment, and at least one public meeting will be held.

SJTPO will lead the public outreach for the TIP, holding at least one hybrid meeting, with in-person attendance at the SJTPO office, which is centrally located in the region. If the consultant believes that additional public outreach should be conducted, it should be noted in their response.



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Q17. Could you please confirm the number of documents that need to be notarized for this submission?

A17. No documents to be submitted as part of a response to this RFP require notarization. If selected as the consultant for this effort, four copies of the Subcontract Agreement must be printed and returned with signature, attest, and seal.

Q18. As we are not a DBE/SBE firm, are there mandatory requirements for subcontracting in this case?

A18. Federal and State goals for DBE/ESBE participation must be addressed explicitly in the proposal. This is satisfied by stating the percentage of total project cost devoted to DBE/ESBE firm involvement in the Technical Proposal.

If a proposer cannot secure a DBE/ESBE firm to meet the DBE/ESBE goal, the proposer needs to document that a good-faith effort was made to meet the goal. SJTPO will, at its discretion, award points to firms that meet/exceed the DBE goal or satisfactorily document in their proposal that a good-faith effort was made to meet the DBE goal.

Q19. If we choose not to subcontract and therefore do not meet the established goals, will there be any penalties or negative scoring?

A19. Section III. CONSULTANT SELECTION includes the criteria that should be used to guide the evaluation of each consultant proposal. For this RFP, the following criteria and weight shall be used: **Technical Approach** (Criterion weight: 40 percent), **Value Given Stated Cost** (Criterion weight: 20 percent), **Firm/Staff Qualifications** (Criterion weight: 30 percent), and **DBE/ESBE Utilization** (Criterion weight: 10 percent).

If a proposer cannot secure a DBE/ESBE firm to meet the DBE/ESBE goal, the proposer would need to document that a good-faith effort was made to meet the goal. SJTPO will, at its discretion, award points to firms that meet/exceed the DBE goal or satisfactorily document in their proposal that a good-faith effort was made to meet the DBE goal. If a specific DBE/ESBE firm is not identified, a zero percent DBE/ESBE commitment will be assumed.