

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

An Assessment of LADOTD's Consultant Plan Development and Performance Rating Processes

LTRC Project No. 18-6SS, SIO No. DOTLT1000224

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In discussions with various sections of the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (DOTD) responsible for delivering completed plans, many have expressed dissatisfaction, at times, with plan quality provided by consultants, either through DOTD contracts or through 3rd party contracts (e.g. LPA, Urban Systems, permit projects, etc.). Some noted issues include incomplete plans, errors in quantities, not following DOTD-specific design guidelines or EDSM's, and others. The combination of the aforementioned issues can lead to unnecessary delays in project delivery, potential risks to public safety, potentially costly change orders, and other issues.

The consultant community has indicated that DOTD has no transparent and systematic method for documenting and tracking project comments. Consultants receive written and verbal comments (sometimes conflicting) independently from all DOTD sections involved in the project development process and it is difficult to determine what the priorities are. Consultants have also indicated that past performance ratings are not indicative of work product. Additionally, inconsistencies may exist among the over 100 project managers and raters within the various sections at DOTD.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify best practices among other state DOTs for the evaluation of consultant plan deliverables
2. Conduct a thorough review and assessment of the DOTD consultant plan delivery process
3. Identify best practices among other state DOTs for the evaluation of consultant rating systems
4. Evaluate the effectiveness and subjectivity of DOTD's current consultant rating system
5. Provide recommendations for 2 and 4

RESEARCH APPROACH

LTRC is seeking the insights of proposers on how best to achieve the research objective. Proposers are expected to describe research plans that can realistically be accomplished within the constraints of available funds and contract time. Proposals must present the proposer's current thinking in sufficient detail to demonstrate their understanding of the issues and the soundness of their approach to meeting the research objective.

For each phase of the proposed research, itemize and discuss the tasks necessary to fulfill the objectives. These task-by-task descriptions are intended to provide a framework for conducting the research and identifying deliverables. ***Refer to section 3.3.5 of the LTRC Manual of Research Procedures (2016 edition) for more guidance.***

The research shall address a broad range of issues related to consultant contract processes such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Literature review documenting the state of the practice among peer states
- Identification of “common” design errors and how to track, communicate, resolve, and prevent future occurrences
- Stakeholder perspective of DOTD’s plan delivery process (i.e. DOTD, consultant community, LPAs, FHWA, etc.)
- Barriers restricting expedient project delivery (i.e. communication, EDSM, design policies, PM preferences, differences in review timelines from one DOTD section to another, etc.)
- potential restructuring of the current Consultant Past Performance Rating (CPPR) system
- software alternatives for documenting, communicating, evaluating, and resolving plan review comments (including feasibility and cost of acquiring/implementing software)
- direct consultant contracting vs. 3rd party contracting with consultant (i.e. contracts between DOTD and consultant vs. contracts between other than DOTD and consultant)

DELIVERABLES

The proposal shall include project deliverables for appropriate tasks. Deliverables shall be due as defined in the proposal. The proposal shall include at a minimum the following deliverables:

- Interim Report and Presentation to the PRC
- Final Report, Technical Summary, and summary presentation
 - The researcher shall provide a final report that documents the entire research effort. A Final Draft Report, Technical Summary document (two pages), and summary presentation to the PRC are due three (3) months prior to the project completion date for review and approval. The final report shall direct and recommend future steps toward the incorporation/implementation of the research into department policy (i.e. EDSMs, SOPs, etc.), and include recommendations on other areas that could be further expanded in subsequent research projects.
- Presentation to DOTD Executive Leadership and other stakeholders (i.e. ACEC/L)
- Annotated presentation file (Powerpoint) summarizing the entire research effort that can be tailored for specific audiences for follow-up presentations to be given by others

SPECIAL NOTES

- A. LTRC research projects will be conducted in accordance with the LTRC Manual of

Research Procedures, 2016 edition.

http://www.ltrc.lsu.edu/pdf/2016/LTRC_RESEARCH_MANUAL_FINAL.pdf)

- B. Any work that is anticipated to be required from LTRC or DOTD shall be specifically detailed in the proposal.
- C. Any surveys or questionnaires developed by the research team shall be reviewed and approved by the PRC prior to distribution.
- D. LTRC projects are intended to produce results that will be applied in practice. It is expected that the implementation of the results of this research into practice will evolve as a concerted effort during this project. The final report must contain an implementation plan to include, as a minimum, the following:
 - a. The “product” expected from the research;
 - b. A realistic assessment of impediments to successful implementation;
 - c. The activities necessary for successful implementation; and
 - d. The criteria for judging the progress and consequences of implementation.
- E. To assist in the implementation process, the investigators of this research shall present the final results to LA DOTD officials in an oral presentation to be held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana at LA DOTD Headquarters after acceptance of the final report.
- F. The proposal should include travel to meet with the Project Review Committee for a “kick off” meeting, presentation of interim report, and presentation of the final report at a minimum. Funds budgeted for travel shall be limited to what is necessary for the conduct of the research. Funds shall not be budgeted for conference travel. Funding for technology transfer of research results are available upon request subject to LTRC approval and available funds.
- G. LTRC’s mission includes the support of higher education in Louisiana. Consultant and out-of-state institutions submitting proposals are encouraged to cooperate and collaborate with Louisiana universities for the purpose of sharing of knowledge and increasing transportation expertise in the academic community.
- H. Graduate assistance stipends are allowed. Tuition reimbursement or tuition remission rates applied to stipends are not allowed.
- I. To equitably answer any questions regarding this Request for Proposals, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) website will be updated with questions and answers and related documents regarding the project. <http://webmail.dotd.louisiana.gov/agrestat.nsf/WebAdvertisements?OpenPage> LA DOTD makes these documents available for informational purposes only to aid in the efficient dissemination of information to interested parties. LA DOTD does not warrant the documents against deficiencies of any kind. The data contained within this web site will be periodically updated. Interested parties are responsible to be aware of any updates. Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing to the LTRC contact person. Questions must be received by close of business seven calendar days prior to deadline date.
- J. Consultants and business entities shall be registered with the Secretary of State in order to be able to work in Louisiana prior to award of contract. <http://www.sos.la.gov/tabid/1011/Default.aspx>
- K. If Sub-Consultants/Entities are used, the Prime Consultant/Entity must perform a minimum of 51% of the work for the overall project.

L. LTRC reserves the right to withhold invoice payments for delinquent deliverables as defined in the proposal.

ESTIMATED COST OF RESEARCH

\$150,000 - \$175,000

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME

12 - 18 months (*includes 3 months for review and approval of final report - i.e. draft final report due in 9 – 15 months*)

LTRC PRIMARY CONTACT

Kirk Zeringue, P.E.
LTRC, Special Studies Research Administrator
225-767-9169
kirk.zeringue@la.gov

AUTHORIZATION TO BEGIN WORK:

August 1, 2018 (estimated)

PROPOSAL FORMAT

All proposals are required to be formatted according to LTRC Manual of Research Procedures. Chapter 2 provides guidance on proposal development. A copy of the Manual may be downloaded from our website (<http://www.ltrc.lsu.edu/publications.html>).

PROPOSAL SELECTION

The Project Review Committee selected for this project will review, evaluate and rank all proposals received using the criteria established on the attached proposal review form.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS

Ten copies of the proposal must be received by LTRC by the close of business day of July 19, 2018.

Proposals should be submitted to:

Samuel B. Cooper, Jr. Ph.D., P.E.
Director
Louisiana Transportation Research Center
4101 Gourrier Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70808