



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

RFQ25191

ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY (AAM) PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES SMITH REYNOLDS AIRPORT, WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA



Proposals shall be complete and comply with the requirements listed herein.

Submit Proposals electronically by **4:00 pm, February 7, 2025** to the attention of Mark Davidson at mark.davidson@smithreynolds.org Responses received after this date and time will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered.

Any questions regarding the RFQ should be submitted **in writing** by email and directed to Mark Davidson at mark.davidson@smithreynolds.org If a question of general concern is asked by any firm or individual with regards to this RFQ, a copy of the written response will be issued by addendum and posted on the same websites as originally advertised. The deadline for inquiries is **4:00 pm, January 24, 2025**.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will in no manner be construed as a commitment on the part of the County to award a contract. The County reserves the right to request additional information or clarification of the information provided in the responses without changing the terms of the RFQ. The County further reserves the right to reject any or all responses; to waive minor irregularities in the RFQ process or in the responses; to re-advertise this RFQ; to postpone or cancel this process; select and procure parts of services; and to change or modify the RFQ schedule at any time.

Any cost incurred by respondents in preparing or submitting a response for the project shall be the respondents' sole responsibility. All responses, inquiries or correspondence relating to this RFQ will become the property of Forsyth County when received. Respondents are to refrain from contact with the selection committee members.

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

It is the policy of the County of Forsyth that an employee, officer, or agent of the County may not participate in any manner in the bidding, awarding, or administering of contracts or agreements in which they, or a member of their immediate family, their business partner, or any organization in which they serve as an officer, director, trustee, or employee, have a financial interest.

Successful Proposers must comply with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all rules and regulations promulgated thereunder. By submitting a proposal, the successful Proposers agrees to indemnify the County from and against all claims, suits, damages, costs, losses, and expenses in any manner arising out of, or connected with, the failure of the Company, its subcontractors, agents, successors, assigns, officers, or employees to comply with the provisions of the ADA or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

All proposals must be firm and not subject to increase, unless specified within the provisions of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and mutually agreed upon by the County and the Proposer. No special inducements will be considered that are not a part of the original proposal document.

County Rights and Options

The County, at its sole discretion, reserves the following rights:

- To supplement, amend, substitute or otherwise modify this RFQ at any time
- To cancel this RFQ with or without the substitution of another RFQ
- To take any action affecting this RFQ, this RFQ process, or the services subject to this RFQ that would be in the best interests of the County
- To issue additional requests for information or clarification from proposers or to allow corrections of errors or omissions
- To require one or more Service Providers to supplement, clarify or provide additional information in order for the County to evaluate the Responses submitted
- To negotiate an agreement with one or more Service Providers based on the information provided in response to this RFQ.
- This RFQ does not obligate Forsyth County to contract for services specified herein.

Public Records / Confidentiality of Documents:

In general, documents that are submitted as part of the response to this RFQ will become public records, and will be subject to public disclosure. North Carolina General Statutes Section 132-1.2 and 66-152 provide a method for protecting some documents from public disclosure.

Any material submitted in response to this RFQ will become a "public record" once the Proposer's document(s) is opened and the Proposer is determined to be a participant in the solicitation process and shall be subject to public disclosure consistent with Chapter 132, North Carolina Statutes. Proposers must claim any applicable exemptions to disclosure provided by law in their response to this RFQ. Proposers must identify materials to be protected, and must state the reasons why such exclusion from public disclosure is necessary and legal. The County reserves the right to make all final determination(s) of the applicability of North Carolina General Statutes § 132-1.2, Confidential Information.

Trade Secrets/Confidentiality

Proposers must claim any material that qualifies as "trade secret" information under N.C.G.S. 66-152(3) in their response to this RFQ and must state the reasons why such exclusion from public disclosure is necessary and legal.

To properly designate material as trade secret under these circumstances, each Proposer must take the following precautions: (a) any trade secrets submitted by a Proposer should be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope marked "Trade Secret - Confidential and Proprietary Information - Do Not Disclose Except for the Purpose of Evaluating this Proposal," and (b) the same trade secret/confidentiality designation should be stamped on each page of the trade secret materials contained in the envelope.

Do not attempt to designate your entire proposal as a trade secret, and do not attempt to designate pricing information as a trade secret. Doing so may result in your proposal being disqualified.

In submitting a proposal, each Proposer agrees that the County may reveal any trade secret materials contained in such response *only* to County staff and/or officials involved in vendor selection.

Familiarity with Laws and Ordinances

The submission of a proposal on the equipment requested herein shall be considered as a representation that the Proposer is familiar with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations which affect those engaged or employed in the provision of such services, or equipment used in the provision of such services, or which in any way affects the conduct of the provision of such services; and no plea of misunderstanding will be considered on account of ignorance thereof. If the Proposer discovers any provisions in the RFQ documents that are contrary to or inconsistent with any law, ordinance, or regulation, it shall be reported to the County in writing without delay.

E-Verify Compliance

Per N.C.G.S. 143-133.3, provider shall comply with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes. Further, if the Provider utilizes a subcontractor, the Provider shall require the subcontractor to comply with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Iran Divestment Act

Provider hereby certifies that it is not on the North Carolina State Treasurer's list of persons engaging in business activities in Iran, prepared pursuant to NCGS 147-86.58, nor will Provider utilize on this agreement any subcontractor on such list.

Divestment from Companies that Boycott Israel

Contractor hereby certifies that it is not on the North Carolina State Treasurer's list of companies engaged in a boycott of Israel in violation of NCGS 147-86.80 et. seq. and that it will not utilize on this agreement any subcontractor on said list.

INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Location of Project:

Smith Reynolds Airport
3801 N. Liberty Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27105

2. Description of Project:

Forsyth County intends to contract for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) planning and consulting services with one firm or individual for a period of five (5) years from the time of the contract signing and retains the right to add to or delete from the services listed in the following section. Fees will be negotiated with the selected firm or individual for each individual project.

The goal is to build off of previous County-funded AAM studies and continue the County's progress toward developing a comprehensive transportation system that embodies safety, sustainability, efficiency, resilience and equity for all residents in the Winston-Salem region. The use of uncrewed aerial systems (UAS), electric conventional, vertical takeoff and landing, electric short takeoff and landing aircraft (eCTOL, eVTOL and eSTOL) and hybrid (hydrogen/electrical) aircraft -- collectively called Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), is anticipated to scale up in the United States over the next two to five years as an emerging low-cost, green and sustainable transportation option for passengers and cargo. As such, in 2021, Forsyth County funded the AeroX Advisory Council and the AeroX: First in Flight to Next in Flight strategic plan to aid in propelling the Winston-Salem region as a state and national leader in AAM. Building on this previous strategic plan as well as local partnerships between Forsyth Technical Community College, AeroX, the City of Winston-Salem, and the Winston-Salem Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WSUAMPO), Forsyth County will use the integration plan to seamlessly integrate AAM technologies into the transportation ecosystem and will ensure that the broad societal benefits of AAM are realized across the region.

It is intention of Forsyth County to move the Winston-Salem metro area into the forefront of innovative multimodal transportation, offering a significant economic and technical benefit to the region. Additionally, this project will further the establishment of Smith Reynolds Airport as an AAM test site that will beta test and improve the technologies that will support the emerging AAM industry. The test site will also offer the local underserved demographic population access to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) training and full-time employment in the high-skilled job classifications of aircraft pilot, aircraft mechanic, air traffic management, flight instruction, logistics management and urban/vertiport planning.

The purpose of the project can be defined through several **core goals**:

1. Improving Transportation Efficiency
2. Supporting Economic Development
3. Sustainability and Environmental Goals
4. Equity and Accessibility
5. Supporting Innovation and Research

3. Scope of services:

Forsyth County proposes to engage the services of a qualified firm or individual to provide AAM planning and consulting services for various related projects in Forsyth County and at the Smith Reynolds Airport. Firm will

assist with airspace integration, safety protocols, environmental impact, public engagement, site selection, infrastructure assessment, economic development, and policy alignment.

To successfully integrate AAM into existing transportation planning, we will engage with firms to consider several key strategies.

1. Collaborative Urban Planning - Partnerships with Municipalities
2. Multimodal Transportation Integration - Seamless Connectivity
3. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) - Infrastructure Investment
4. Regulatory and Safety Framework - Policy Alignment
5. Technological Integration - Data Driven Planning

In addition to these AAM planning and consulting services, Forsyth County seeks a skilled, qualified consultant with experience in researching, seeking and writing grants to support the County's efforts in pursuing additional grant awards for planning, design, infrastructure, programmatic, and/or operational projects. As applications for competitive grants typically require a considerable amount of work and preparation, the County seeks grant writing support that includes, but isn't limited to:

Research – Research and identify potential grant funding sources through federal, state, regional or local programs. Research shall include grant requirements and criteria; matching fund requirements; reporting requirements; and terms and conditions of the grant.

Grant Writing – Facilitate and compose responses to federal, state, regional, and/or local grant proposals that may range from simple to complex. This includes requesting information and conducting research; synthesizing gathered information and transforming it into compelling narratives, exhibits, attachments, and other supplemental materials that demonstrate eligibility, need and competitiveness of the grant request; coordination with additional stakeholders or co-sponsoring agencies; draft letters of support for stakeholders, agencies, and/or elected officials; preparing grant budgets and budget justifications; uploading information into agency grant portals; and preparing and managing grant application submittal schedule, milestones and County staff review/approval timeline to successfully submit grant applications by their stated due date.

4. Selection Criteria:

Interested firms or individuals should submit their letter of interest addressing the following criteria:

- A. Familiarity with the AAM industry and the infrastructure required at airports and the region to support the emerging industry.
- B. Capability to perform all aspects of the advanced air mobility planning and consulting services, as well as grant writing.
- C. Experience level of the project manager.
- D. North Carolina Department of Transportation Prequalified for Code 141 – Multimodal Transportation Planning
- E. Current workload and capacity to meet schedules.
- F. Ability to meet DBE Goals for professional services. Provide information/qualifications on proposed DBE firms(s) to be used, including where and when the DBE firms have worked with your firm on past airport projects.

G. Evidence of minimum insurance limits:

\$5M Professional Liability

\$1M Commercial General Liability

\$1M Business Automobile Liability

Workers Compensation: NC statutory limits and not less than \$100,000 each accident.

5. Selection Process:

One firm or individual will be selected by a committee in a fair and uniform manner based in part on appropriate qualifications, experience for this type of work, and current workload. Selection will be made from the information submitted unless an interview is requested by the selection committee.

The selection committee is comprised of County staff. Upon receipt of proposals from respondents, the committee members will review the proposals in detail, make its selection, and provide written recommendation to the Deputy and County Manager for his and her approval. If the Deputy and County Managers agree with the recommendation, the Airport Director will request approval from the Forsyth County Commissioners. Following approval from the Board of Commissioners, the contract terms, conditions and fee will be negotiated with the selected firm or individual. In the event contract negotiations prove unsuccessful with the selected firm or individual, the committee will select another firm or individual with which to begin negotiations.

6. Schedule:

The key activities and milestone dates for the selection process are listed below:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Milestone Date</u>
RFQ Published	1/10/25
Deadline for Respondent Questions	1/24/25
Proposal Submission Deadline	2/07/25
Selection Committee meeting to review	2/20/25
Firm or Individual Selection Notification	2/27/25

7. RFQ Responses should include the following:

- A. Letter of interest
- B. Firm or individual history
- C. Current project list. Include current stage of the project and projected completion date.
- D. List previous projects of similar scope.
- E. Resumes for staff who would be assigned to the project.
- F. List of proposed sub-consultants.

8. RFQ Response Format:

- A. Responses are limited to a maximum of twenty (20) pages.
- B. All documentation shall be typed in minimum 10-point font. Photos and charts are welcome.
- C. All responses are to be signed by an official agent or representative of the company submitting the response. Signatures may be digital on company letterhead.