



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Request for Qualifications – Transportation Planners, Urban Designers, and Related Fields CAMPUS TRANSIT STUDY

The University of Arkansas Fayetteville, in accordance with the policies of the Board of Trustees, is soliciting responses from qualified teams including expertise in transportation planning, urban design and architecture, and related fields for the *Campus Transit Study*.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Arkansas is the state's flagship institution of higher education. It is classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as an R1 Doctoral University based on its research activity and other measures of scholarly productivity. Current total enrollment is 32,140, a number which has doubled during a twenty-year period of record growth. The university is made up of ten colleges and schools, several auxiliaries, and the various departments which serve to enable its academic mission and operate the campus. The campus is made up of 240 buildings on 540 acres at five main locations: Central Campus, Art and Design District, Arkansas Research and Technology Park, Uptown Campus, and Athletic South.

ABOUT RAZORBACK TRANSIT

Transit and Parking operates the Razorback Transit system, which provides fare-free service to an 18-square mile area, including the Central Campus, outlying campus districts, neighborhoods with a high density of student housing, major shopping destinations, social service organizations, medical providers, and workforce destinations. Razorback Transit provides nine fixed routes during the academic year with accompanying paratransit service, seven reduced routes during Summer, and special service on football and basketball game days.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background.

The University of Arkansas maintained a stable enrollment of around 15,000 students during the 1970s, 80, and 90s, allowing the transit and parking systems to grow incrementally in response to relatively predictable patterns of behavior driven by slow, concentrated growth of private student housing near campus, and the dominance of a few major shopping destinations like the Northwest Arkansas Mall, etc. Starting in 2001, enrollment increased rapidly, passing 16,000 students for the first time in 2002 and 17,000 students in 2004. At the same time, the population of Fayetteville and the surrounding region began to grow, starting a shift in development patterns that has only quickened since.

Because the campus did not have a comprehensive approach to managing parking or its transportation systems in general, in 2004 the university commissioned the Campus Transportation Plan¹. This study—which involved significant data collection and analysis—was intended to address all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bikes, private vehicles, buses, rideshare, etc., and how to better plan for them in the context of expected campus, city, and regional growth. The study recommended that the campus implement travel demand management measures, support growth of active transportation modes (walking and biking), and collect surface parking into garages so that campus landholdings could be used more effectively for academic and student life space. A number of recommendations from the 2005 plan were implemented, including the construction in 2010 of the Garland Center, a mixed-use complex that included structured parking fronted by retail shops along with a new University Bookstore.

Enrollment growth continued to rapidly increase, reaching over 24,000 in 2012 as the university neared its stated enrollment goal of 25,000. That year, university administration announced a new enrollment goal of 28,000 students, signaling that the campus's expansion would continue. The city of Fayetteville saw substantial growth alongside the university, with a population increase between 2000 and 2010 of 26.8 percent.

Because the underlying assumptions about university affiliate population in the 2005 plan were no longer valid, the university commissioned a new Campus Transportation Plan² in 2013 to reevaluate the campus. This study, which was completed in 2015, was more exhaustive than the first, and involved much in-depth data collection and analysis, financial modeling, lengthy stakeholder engagement and outreach, and a focus on creating clear, implementable strategies based on institutional goals. The university's stated goal for the study was to *“reshape the University of Arkansas transportation system into one that is effective and efficient, transit-oriented, environmentally sustainable, and financially viable for the next twenty years and beyond.”* The study recommended demand-based pricing zones to fully use existing parking inventory, more effective transit routes to increase bus usage, bike routes connected to the regional network to allow affiliates to bike to campus, and travel demand management to decrease the need for parking expansion. Some key strategies from the study were implemented, such as License Plate Recognition and new transit routes, while others have yet to be addressed.

More recently, university administration set a new enrollment goal of at least 34,000 students, and the city and Northwest Arkansas region have continued to grow at an astonishing pace.³ The university continues to implement ad hoc improvements to its transportation networks, with much emphasis in recent years on active transportation, including a network of natural surface trails. New city-wide micromobility options like electric bikes and scooters have changed the perception of travel time from nearby neighborhoods and opened up new commuting opportunities, particularly from a new generation of

¹ The 2005 Campus Transportation Plan is available here (*scroll down*):
<https://fama.uark.edu/campus-planning/master-plan-documents.php>

² The 2015 Campus Transportation Plan is available here (*scroll down*):
<https://fama.uark.edu/campus-planning/master-plan-documents.php>

³ You can read more about the region here:
<https://nwacouncil.org/regions-by-the-numbers>

privately-built urban apartments within walking distance of campus. In late 2023 the university hired consultants for a Parking Garage Assessment Study intended to address short- and long-term demand for and supply of parking on campus. That study—still underway—is focused mostly on accommodating private car use, but it has prompted discussions that have made apparent the need to revisit the university's transit operations in the context of campus, city, and regional growth.

Purpose.

This study is intended to create a comprehensive strategic plan for the future functional and financial operations of Razorback Transit within the context of current capacity constraints and continued growth in enrollment.

POSSIBLE SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following tasks and outcomes are meant to be a *possible* framework for putting together your consultant team. Based on your team's subject matter expertise, you may suggest alternate tasks or ways of creating outcomes that you think would better guide the university's decision-making process. Statements of Qualifications do not have to follow this outline, and are not intended to be full proposals.

Task 1 / Document the existing transit system.

Collect and catalogue all available data that describes the current operation of the university's transit system, including fleet size and makeup. Study how effectively transit routes and frequency support current demand, and where there are gaps in service. Determine the ridership split between university affiliates and the general public. Understand how transit service interacts with the distribution of and demand for campus parking. Understand how Razorback Transit complements other transportation modes like biking, electric scooters, etc. Understand how transit operations fit within the regional transportation framework and regional governance structures.

Task 2 / Assess future needs.

Analyze the effectiveness of the current system and project future needs. This will include a market analysis and service analysis. Be aware of the university's upcoming residence hall projects and surrounding new private student housing developments. Integrate information from other campus planning efforts, such as the ongoing *Parking Garage Assessment Study* and *Campus Space Use Study*, to anticipate how current behaviors may change over time, and how right-sizing transit might help manage demand for campus parking. Integrate information from city and regional planning efforts to anticipate how changes in surrounding urban development may affect future demand.

The team should expect to conduct stakeholder outreach via an online survey, focus groups, and public sessions involving students and other transit constituents. Support for study recommendations will depend on a transparent and inclusive process.

Task 3 / **Create a transit service plan.**

Based on the needs assessment, create recommendations for fixed routes, paratransit, special service, options for possible park and ride, bus stops, etc. Recommend how Union Station's role as a hub should change within the expanded system. Create recommendations for fleet size and makeup (bus sizes and types) and driver staffing. This task may require working through a number of possible scenarios before arriving at the final recommendation, so the team should be prepared to facilitate discussions needed to achieve consensus. The transit service plan should demonstrate how transit, private parking, and other transport modes can work together to collectively address the transportation needs of the campus community.

Task 4 / **Model financial operations.**

Determine all capital and operational costs required to build out and maintain the recommended service plan. This will include the cost of purchasing and maintaining the fleet, any new passenger facilities like bus shelters, new fleet maintenance facility, etc. Develop a funding strategy that includes all applicable Federal, state, and regional agency programs. Provide an interactive financial model for ongoing use by Transit and Parking.

Task 5 / **Create a conceptual plan for a new fleet maintenance facility.**

Study the technical requirements, ideal layout, design features, and cost of a new maintenance facility and identify state or federal funding opportunities that will allow for construction. Study existing campus landholdings or identify possible land acquisition needed to accommodate the scale of the new facility. Coordinate with existing campus planning efforts. This task may require several fit tests to determine the best location, and several rounds of design options before a final conceptual plan is approved.

Task 6 / **Document the path forward.**

Develop an implementation plan that represents all analysis and recommendations in a concise way. The team may be asked to meet with university administrators to review and explain key study recommendations.

PROJECT TEAM

The selected consultants will work with a project committee that includes University Administration, Transit and Parking, Facilities Management, and other campus stakeholders as needed.

Please note that while the study may propose a range of possible capital improvements, any projects that result from study recommendations will be considered as separate from the study and be subject to their own selection process for professional design consultants per University of Arkansas Board of Trustees requirements.

ANTICIPATED PROJECT SCHEDULE

<i>Request for Qualifications (RFQ) issued</i>	<i>August 1</i>
<i>Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) due</i>	<i>August 20</i>
<i>interviews of shortlisted firms</i>	<i>September 27</i>
<i>selection announced</i>	<i>October 3</i>
<i>contract negotiations</i>	<i>October 2024</i>
<i>study starts</i>	<i>November 2024</i>

SUBMISSION

The deadline for responses is 1:00pm local time on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

All respondents will be notified of the results by EMAIL, so please provide accurate contact information.

Address ten (10) copies of responses to: Todd Furgason, Senior Campus Planner
University of Arkansas
Facilities Management Planning and Design
521 S. Razorback Road, FAMA C-100
Fayetteville, AR 72701

Format requirements:

Printed responses should be no larger than 8.5in x 11in, limited to **50 sheets maximum (100 pages)**, fully recyclable (i.e. no plastic covers, plastic tabs, etc.) and bound with glue, staples, or thread (i.e. perfect bound, saddle stitching, etc.). No metal or plastic coils allowed. No loose pages. **Responses that do not meet these requirements will be disqualified.**

Please send a digital copy of the response via email to toddf@uark.edu in addition to the printed booklets.

To avoid potential conflicts of interest, respondents should not communicate with university faculty or staff about this project. This document provides the relevant information for assembling a Statement of Qualifications. If you have questions about the selection process or the project scope, you can send them via email to toddf@uark.edu.

Content requirements:

Include the information below and organize it in an easily accessible manner. You do not need to divide the response into chapters exactly matching the descriptions below. **Responses that do not include the required licensure information will be disqualified.**

1. Proof of licensure or eligibility:

Engineers: All engineers shall hold individual licenses in the State of Arkansas, and all engineering firms shall hold a valid Certificate of Authorization (COA) issued by the Arkansas State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Professional Surveyors. Joint venture firms are also required to hold a COA. **A COPY OF A VALID ARKANSAS CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORIZATION MUST BE INCLUDED WITH THE SUBMITTAL.**

Architects: All firms shall be licensed, or eligible for licensure, in the State of Arkansas. Eligible firms not currently licensed in Arkansas must send a letter to the Arkansas State Board of Architects (501-682-3171/501-682-3172 fax) stating their intent to respond to an RFQ issued by the University of Arkansas. Please include project name, submittal date, and proof of valid NCARB certification in the letter. Consulting and joint venture firms are also required to be licensed by the Arkansas State Board of Architects. Notification to the State Board must be made PRIOR to responding to this solicitation, and **A COPY OF EITHER A VALID ARKANSAS LICENSE OR THE LETTER OF INTENT TO THE STATE BOARD DESCRIBED ABOVE FOR ALL TEAM MEMBER FIRMS MUST BE INCLUDED WITH THE RESPONSE.** The final selected firm(s) will have 30 days to make application for corporate licensure after they are awarded the contract.

2. Organizational chart for design team and all consultants
3. **Specific project experience** (within the past five years) with data collection, market analysis, demand projection, etc., with particular focus on transit systems
4. **Specific project experience** (within the past five years) with financial modeling and cost projections
5. **Specific project experience** (within the past five years) with fleet maintenance facilities and their spatial and technical requirements
6. Current office size, personnel description, and workload
7. Experience constructing projects under nationally-recognized sustainable rating systems
8. Proof of current professional liability insurance coverage (\$1,000,000 minimum required)
9. List of projects currently under contract with state agencies or educational facilities
10. Statement of diversity in the workforce, if applicable
11. Certificate of women-owned or minority-owned business, if applicable

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REQUIRED

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS, STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH, FINANCIAL PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENTS, GRAPHIC PRESENTATION, SITE PLANNING, CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, COST EVALUATION.