

Transylvania County Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA)
Request for Proposals (RFP)

1. **INTRODUCTION** Land of Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced Consultants (“Consultant”) to develop a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) for Transylvania in Motion, (TIM’s) Transylvania County’s local transit services. The LOSRC seeks a COA that includes a Microtransit Feasibility Assessment and Bus Stop Improvement Plan. The selected Consultant will be one that has demonstrated experience and professionalism in the preparation of Comprehensive Operational Analyses in the Transit sector. All services provided by the Consultant shall be performed by individuals who meet the qualifications, education, and certification/licensing requirements for the position. The successful Consultant shall also have the resources to provide cost-effective and timely services, including providing customer service to LOSRC and the County.

Qualified firms that submit a proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the requirements defined within this Request for Proposals (“RFP”). Upon successful negotiations with LOSRC and the County, the selected firm will provide a COA as described in this RFP. Responses must conform to the requirements of this RFP. LOSRC and the County reserves the right to waive any irregularity in any proposal, withdraw or amend this RFP or reject any proposal that does not comply with this RFP or LOSRC policies.

Transylvania County - Transylvania County is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina, and is situated between Asheville, NC and Greenville, SC. The county seat is Brevard, NC. Transylvania County is called the “Land of Waterfalls” as there are 250 waterfalls located throughout the county. Also located within the county, Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests, Gorges State Park and DuPont State Forest. All these natural resources provide locals and visitors opportunities for a range of outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, camping, and more. There is also a rich cultural scene in the county – World-Renowned Brevard Music Center, Brevard Philharmonic, Brevard Little Theatre, Brevard Community Band, Paul Porter Center for Performing Arts at Brevard College, Transylvania Choral Society, Transylvania Community Arts Council and more.

The county operates a public transportation system, Transylvania in Motion (TIMS). There is a fixed route that operates Monday – Friday 6:30AM to 4:25PM. There is a North Route which runs through the City of Brevard with 22 stops and a South Route that runs in the Town of Rosman with 5 stops. There is also Demand Response Public Transportation that operates Monday – Friday 8:30AM to 5:00PM. Ride requests must be made at least one day in advance before 10:00AM. This service provides trips within Transylvania County for the general public, as well as non-emergency medical trips, shopping trips and trips to senior meal sites.

2. **PURPOSE** The County is committed to enhancing the overall experience for passengers and ensuring that transit operations are efficient, sustainable, and accessible. The purpose of this RFP is to select a consultant to conduct a comprehensive study aimed at optimizing transit

operations, exploring innovative transit solutions, and improving ridership within existing resources. Objectives include, but are not limited to:

- Assessing Current Operations: Conduct a thorough analysis of existing transit operations to identify inefficiencies, gaps, and opportunities for improvement to processes and operational protocols.
 - Improving Transit Services: Provide actionable recommendations to improve service quality and increase ridership within existing financial constraints.
 - Community Engagement: Ensure the project incorporates broad community involvement and addresses residents' goals and objectives.
 - Exploring Alternative Services: Assess the feasibility and potential implementation of additional service area including providing out-of-county medical trips.
 - Long-term Planning and Forecasting: Provide recommendations for future transit planning, ranging from immediate to long-term (1-10 years).
 - Microtransit Analysis: Evaluate the feasibility and potential implementation of micro transit within the service area. Compare expected outcomes to expected outcomes with more efficient existing services (fixed route, demand response and paratransit)
 - Bus Stop Location and Improvement Plan: Develop a plan to locate stops to decrease headways and efficiency, and enhance bus stop usability, accessibility, and safety for riders.
3. SCOPE OF WORK The County seeks a qualified Consultant to provide a detailed and thorough analysis of its transit system. The following tasks outline the minimum required services to be provided by the Consultant. Additional innovative approaches or services proposed by the Consultant to achieve the objectives are welcome.

Comprehensive Operational Analysis Task 1 – Public Engagement Objective: To engage with internal and external stakeholders, gather community input, and ensure transparency throughout the analysis process.

Task 1.A. Community and Internal Engagement

- a. Kick-off Meeting - Conduct an initial meeting with County, LOSRC staff and transit stakeholders to gather input on the County's operational strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
- b. On-going Engagement - Engage stakeholders through in-person/virtual meetings, surveys, and social media to gather input at various stages. This includes, but is not limited to riders, the local community, transit operators, Council on Aging and Transportation Advisory Board.
- c. Comment Opportunity - Conduct a public meeting to present draft findings and recommendations. Collect and incorporate feedback into the final COA.
- d. Final Presentation - Conduct a public meeting to present the final COA. Prepare a formal written summary of public comments and how they were incorporated into the plans.

Task 1.B. Rider Feedback

- a. Survey for all riders - Conduct a survey that targets riders across all service types (fixed route, demand response and paratransit) using multiple channels (in-person, online, and mobile). The survey should gather insights into travel behaviors, service preferences, and areas for improvement from a broad demographic. Surveys should collect at least the following data:
 - i. Demographics: i.e., Age, gender, household income, employment status, disability or mobility limitations, access to a vehicle, home location (ZIP code), primary language spoken at home.
 - ii. Travel Patterns and Behaviors: i.e., Trip purpose, frequency, time of use, mode of access to transit, alternative transportation modes when transit is unavailable.
 - iii. Service Satisfaction and Perceptions: i.e., On-time performance, travel times, safety, cleanliness, accessibility, affordability, driver interactions.
- b. Key Improvements and Priorities - Ranking of priorities (frequency, extended hours, stop amenities, safety, cleanliness, affordability) and open-ended feedback on needed changes and suggestions.

Task 2 – Data Collection Objective: To collect and analyze comprehensive data to evaluate current transit operations and inform service recommendations.

Task 2.A. Required Data Collection - Operational Data

- a. Travel Patterns: Analyze current travel patterns, including trip origins and destinations, peak travel times, and modal splits.
- b. Stop-Level Data: Collect boarding and alighting data at each stop to identify high- and low-usage locations.
- c. Performance Metric Data:
 - i. Farebox Recovery Ratio: Evaluate the farebox recovery ratio to assess whether it meets any mandatory requirements of federal funds.
 - ii. Service Reliability: Measure on-time performance across different times of the day, week, and service types (fixed route, demand response and paratransit).
 - iii. Customer Wait Times: Assess average and peak wait times at key stops to identify areas where service frequency improvements are needed.
 - iv. Scheduling Efficiency: Assess the efficiency of current scheduling policies, procedures and practices
- d. Land Use Data:
 - i. Current Land Use: Assess the relationship between current transit routes and existing land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and public facilities (e.g., schools, hospitals, shopping centers).

- ii. Pedestrian and Bike Accessibility: Evaluate pedestrian and bike access to transit stops and identify opportunities for improving first- and last-mile connectivity.
- e. Comparative Data:
 - i. Peer Agency Comparison: Collect and analyze data from comparable transit agencies in comparable size populations to benchmark service quality, performance, and customer satisfaction.
 - ii. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Benchmark KPIs such as cost per passenger trip, ridership per revenue hour, farebox recovery ratio, and vehicle utilization against industry standards.
- f. Demographic and Socioeconomic Data:
 - i. Population and Demographics: Analyze population density, growth trends, and demographic characteristics (age, income, disability) within the service area to inform route planning and service allocation.
 - ii. Employment and Housing Locations: Map key employment centers, residential areas, and future growth areas to assess current service alignment and identify potential new service areas.
- g. Infrastructure Data:
 - i. Bus Stop Infrastructure: Inventory existing bus stop locations, make recommendations for shelters, benches, etc. to inform a bus stop location and improvement plan should fixed route remain
- h. County-Provided Data: Data that the County will provide includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Fixed Route, demand response and Paratransit Schedule Information: Current and historical schedules for all fixed routes, demand response and paratransit services.
 - ii. Ridership Data: Ridership data for fixed routes, on demand and paratransit services.
 - iii. Paratransit Demand Response Origins and Destinations: Data for the past two years, including trip request locations, and pick-up and drop-off points.
 - iv. Access to Software: Access to the County's software with tools for reporting on ridership
 - v. Operating Data: Yard and revenue hours/miles for current and prior years, including vehicle assignments.
 - vi. Financial Data: Operating cost data for current and prior years, broken down by cost category (e.g., labor, fuel, maintenance) to support cost-benefit and fare analysis.

Note: This list is not comprehensive and other data points recommended by the Consultant are welcome.

Task 3 – Current and Projected Funding Levels Analysis Objective: Evaluate current and future funding levels, including fare structures and potential revenue enhancements, to ensure the sustainability of transit operations and service expansions. Analyze the impact of farebox recovery on funding availability and service proposals. Task 3.A. Funding and Cost Analysis

Evaluation of Funding Sources:

- a. Review existing operating and capital funding sources, funding conditions, and constraints. Collaborate with the County to identify funding sources over the next 10 years.
- b. Explore new funding opportunities (e.g., federal grants, public-private partnerships) and innovative revenue strategies like advertising if allowed under existing grant requirements. Consider the impact of farebox recovery on funding potential.
- c. Assess funding shortfalls or surpluses under constrained and unconstrained scenarios, factoring in the financial feasibility of service expansions

Operational Cost Analysis:

- a. Compare current funding against operational costs, identifying areas for service reduction under constrained funding.
- b. Evaluate how funding levels affect service continuity, especially under farebox recovery constraints, and how additional funding in unconstrained scenarios can support growth.

Task 3.B. Fare Equity Analysis

Detailed Fare Structure Review:

- a. Examine the current fare structure, including full fares, discounted fares, and special fare programs (e.g., student or senior discounts).
- b. Assess the equity of the current fare structure in terms of income levels, geographic areas, and demographics served.

Comparative Analysis:

- a. Benchmark current fare structures and other revenue streams against peer agencies to understand the competitiveness and fairness of fare levels.
- b. Evaluate the balance between farebox recovery and affordability and propose adjustments to achieve a fair and sustainable model.

Revenue Impact Assessment:

- a. Model the potential revenue impacts of proposed fare adjustments or changes in fare policies, including scenarios for fare increases, decreases, or restructuring (e.g., distance-based fares, flat fares, free transit zones, fare capping).
- b. Analyze the impact of these changes on ridership, revenue, and equity.

Recommendations for Fare Adjustments:

- a. Develop actionable phased recommendations for potential changes to fare categories, pricing, or new programs to increase ridership or revenues while ensuring access.

Task 4 – Fixed Route, demand response and Paratransit Service Analysis Objective: To evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of current transit services and develop detailed route profiles to inform service optimization and planning decisions.

Task 4.A. Route Profiles

Assess Route Productivity - Utilize multiple performance metrics such as ridership per hour, cost per passenger trip, and subsidy per passenger trip.

Visual Mapping - Provide visual maps and heat maps indicating high-ridership areas, underserved zones, and potential opportunities for route realignment or expansion.

Service Span and Frequency Evaluation Evaluate service span and frequency to determine if adjustments are needed to better align with ridership demand.

Travel Time and Performance Analysis - Analyze travel times, on-time performance, and load factors to identify delays, bottlenecks, or inefficiencies affecting service reliability and quality.

Accessibility Mapping - Develop accessibility maps to assess access to transit services by different population groups, including seniors, low-income residents, and people with disabilities.

Task 4.B. Service Analysis

Fixed Route Evaluation - Conduct a fixed route evaluation to identify underperforming services and provide data-driven recommendations for modification, consolidation, or elimination.

Demand Response Service Evaluation - Evaluate demand response service in terms of cost-effectiveness and efficiency

Paratransit Service Evaluation - Evaluate paratransit service in terms of cost-effectiveness and efficiency

Explore Alternative Service Strategies - Evaluate the feasibility of integrating micro-transit or other on-demand solutions to maximize current resources while maintaining or enhancing services.

Financial Impact Analysis - Perform a financial impact analysis for each proposed service change, including potential cost savings, revenue impacts, and resource reallocations.

Microtransit Feasibility Assessment

Task 1 – Analysis of Current Services and Existing Microtransit Models Objective: To assess the County's current transit services and evaluate existing microtransit models from other transit agencies to understand best practices and potential applications for the County.

Review of Current Transit Services

- a. Conduct a detailed analysis of the County's existing transit services, including fixed routes, demand response, and paratransit service.
- b. Evaluate the operational performance, ridership levels, and geographic coverage to identify gaps that microtransit could address.

Task 2 – Identification of Service Gaps and Development of Microtransit Zones Objective: To identify geographic gaps, key destinations, and priority areas lacking adequate public transportation and develop potential microtransit service zones.

Identification of Service Gaps and Key Destinations

- a. Use demographic, socio-economic, and land use data to identify areas within the County's service area that are underserved or lack sufficient transit options.
- b. Pinpoint key destinations and priority areas for potential microtransit service, considering community needs and transit demand.

Development of Potential Microtransit Zones

- a. Create and map multiple potential zones for the implementation of microtransit services, considering various service models such as flexible routes, on-demand services, or first-mile/last-mile solutions.
- b. Evaluate the viability of each zone based on ridership potential, cost efficiency, and integration with existing transit services.

Task 3 – Financial and Operational Feasibility Analysis Objective: To assess the financial and operational feasibility of proposed micro-transit zones and service models to ensure sustainability and alignment with the County's transit goals.

Ridership Forecast and Fare Structure Development

- a. Conduct a ridership forecast for each proposed zone, taking into account current and projected demand.
- b. Develop a sustainable fare schedule and pricing strategy to balance affordability, ridership growth, and revenue generation.

Cost-Benefit Analysis of Service Models

- a. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of different microtransit service models (bus-stop-to-bus-stop vs. curb-to-curb) and operational scenarios, including hours of operation, vehicle requirements, and technology integration.
- b. Prepare itemized cost estimates for implementation, vehicle procurement, technology investment, and ongoing operational costs for each proposed zone.

Task 4 – Microtransit Recommendation and Implementation Plan Objective: To provide a comprehensive recommendation and phased implementation plan for microtransit services, including potential funding sources and partnerships.

Recommendation for Microtransit Implementation

- a. Based on the findings from the feasibility assessment, recommend whether the County should consider pursuing microtransit services.
- b. Outline the most viable options, including preferred zones, service models, and operational strategies.

Implementation Plan and Funding Strategy

- a. Develop a phased implementation plan with timelines, resource requirements, and milestones.
- b. Identify potential funding sources, public-private partnerships, and grant opportunities to support the implementation and sustainable operation of microtransit services.

Bus Stop Location and Improvement Plan

Task 1 – Analysis Location of Existing Bus Stops and Bus Stop Infrastructure Objective: To evaluate the current condition of bus stops within the County's transit service area and identify deficiencies in safety, accessibility, and infrastructure to enhance passenger experience and meet regulatory standards.

Comprehensive Bus Stop Inventory Location and Condition Assessment:

- a. Conduct a detailed inventory of all existing bus stops, documenting their condition with respect to shelters, signage, lighting, seating, ADA compliance, and other amenities.
- b. Evaluate each bus stop for safety and accessibility issues, including visibility, pedestrian access, and proximity to crosswalks or traffic signals.

Benchmarking Against Best Practices:

- a. Review and analyze best practices and standards from similar transit systems to establish benchmarks for bus stop design and amenities.
- b. Identify opportunities for improvement based on peer agency comparisons and industry standards.

Task 2 – Identification of Priority Areas and New Bus Stop Locations Objective: To prioritize bus stop locations for improvement and evaluate potential sites for new bus stops based on community needs, demand, and connectivity.

Identification of Priority Areas:

- a. Analyze ridership data, demographic information, and land use patterns to identify high traffic stops and areas with inadequate facilities.
- b. Prioritize bus stops for improvements based on location, safety concerns, high ridership, and strategic importance to the transit network.

Evaluation of Potential New Bus Stop Sites:

- a. Identify potential locations for new bus stops to enhance network coverage and connectivity, focusing on underserved areas, key destinations, and activity hubs.

- b. Provide proposed designs and justifications for each new bus stop location, considering factors such as pedestrian access, safety, property owner's willingness to host signage or other amenities and community input.

Task 3 – Community Engagement and Regulatory Compliance Objective: To engage the community in the planning process and ensure proposed bus stop improvements comply with transit regulations.

Community Engagement:

- a. Gather public input from residents, transit riders, and other stakeholders on bus stop improvements and new locations.
- b. Incorporate community feedback into the final recommendations to ensure alignment with public needs and preferences.

Task 4 – Financial Analysis and Implementation Plan Objective: To provide a detailed financial analysis and phased implementation plan for bus stop improvements, ensuring sustainability and alignment with the County's transit goals.

Financial Analysis and Cost Estimation:

- a. Prepare cost estimates for each proposed bus stop improvement and new bus stop location, including capital and long-term operational costs.

Development of Implementation Plan:

- a. Create a phased implementation plan that outlines a timeline, budget, and resource allocation for bus stop improvements.
- b. Establish priority levels for each improvement and provide recommendations for securing funding, including potential grants, public private partnerships, and other funding sources.

Task 5 – Service Recommendations Objective: To provide data-driven, actionable recommendations to optimize service delivery, improve customer experience, and ensure long-term sustainability and growth of the transit system. Recommendations should be organized by priority and feasibility, with clear differentiation between constrained and unconstrained funding scenarios to reflect both funding limitations and opportunities.

Task 5.A. Short-Term Service Recommendations (1-3 years)

Immediate Service Adjustments:

- a. Identify short-term adjustments to address operational inefficiencies, improve customer satisfaction, and respond to ridership trends.
- b. Recommendations may include optimizing route frequencies, adjusting schedules, improving connections and transfers, improving real-time information systems, and addressing accessibility at key stops and stations. These recommendations should be provided for both constrained and unconstrained funding scenarios, specifying the trade-offs in service levels based on funding availability.

- c. Ensure that all short-term recommendations align with the graduated farebox recovery ratio, maintaining financial sustainability requirements.

Task 5.B. Mid-Term Service Recommendations (4-7 years)

Service Restructuring and Expansion:

- a. Reassess and realign the route network based on ridership data, demographic changes, and community feedback to better meet evolving needs.
- b. Propose high-frequency corridors, restructuring of underperforming routes, or introduction of express services where feasible, noting how each option fits into constrained vs. unconstrained funding scenarios.
- c. Integrate multimodal options to enhance connectivity, such as partnerships with bike-share programs or ride-hailing services.

Task 5.C. Long-Term Service Recommendations (8-10 years)

Plan for Population Growth, Development and Technological Progress:

- a. Develop a long-term transit plan that addresses anticipated population growth, urban development, and technology integration, considering the funding realities of both constrained and unconstrained scenarios.
- b. Propose a financial plan that aligns with the long-term service expansion and sustainability goals, including potential funding sources and investment needs, and how constrained funding may limit or modify some of the proposed expansions.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Comprehensive Operational Analysis

Public Engagement and Data Collection Include a report of all public comments and rider surveys, summarizing all engagement activities, key findings, and how public input was incorporated into the COA.

Documentation of all data collected, including a database and visual representations (e.g., maps, charts) of key data points should be submitted. All data used for the study will remain the domain and property of the County upon completion of the project and may be used in the future at the County's discretion.

Route Profiles and Service Analysis - Provide route profiles for each fixed route, demand response and paratransit service. These profiles should highlight key performance metrics and findings, highlighting underperforming routes. Include recommendations for route modifications, consolidations, or eliminations, with supporting data and rationale. Additionally, project the impacts on ridership, fare revenue, and service levels for each proposed recommendation.

Funding and Cost Analysis - Develop a comprehensive funding and cost analysis report. This report should offer a detailed review of current and potential funding sources and include an operational cost analysis. Provide recommendations for addressing any potential funding gaps and ensuring financial

sustainability. Include a list of potential new funding opportunities and innovative financing strategies, along with assessments of their feasibility, risks, and potential impacts.

Fare Analysis - Prepare a fare equity analysis report with recommendations for changes to the fare structure. This report should outline an implementation plan for proposed fare adjustments and phasing strategies.

Microtransit Feasibility Assessment - Prepare an assessment that contains a summary of the current transit services and neighboring microtransit models, highlighting the key findings and insights. The report should include maps and detailed descriptions of proposed microtransit zones, providing clear justifications for the selection and prioritization of each zone. It should also feature a financial analysis that encompasses ridership forecasts, fare schedule options, cost estimates, and a cost-benefit analysis of different service models. Alongside this, include a detailed feasibility report for microtransit with specific recommendations for implementation. Finally, outline a phased implementation plan and funding strategy, identifying potential partnerships and grants to support the initiative.

Bus Stop Location and Improvement Plan - Include a comprehensive report on the location and condition of existing bus stops, containing a detailed inventory and assessment of findings. The plan should include a comparative analysis that highlights gaps and opportunities for improvement against industry benchmarks. A prioritized list of bus stops for improvement should be developed, along with a rationale for each priority. Additionally, a report should propose new bus stop locations and designs, incorporating site evaluations and community feedback. Alongside this, a comprehensive financial analysis report should be created, featuring cost estimates and a cost-benefit analysis. Finally, a phased implementation plan will be outlined, including a prioritized timeline, budget considerations, and a funding strategy.

Service Recommendations - Create a comprehensive service plan that covers short-, mid-, and long-term recommendations. Include the rationale behind these recommendations, potential impacts, cost implications, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for monitoring success. Include a strategic financial plan outlining funding requirements, potential revenue sources, and cost management strategies to support the service recommendations. Include any policy, procedure or practice changes to make the existing operation more efficient.

ADDITIONAL CONSULTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Consultant is solely responsible for maintaining a high standard of professional quality in research, data analysis, and timely project completion. This responsibility exists regardless of any general guidance provided by the County for the Consultant's services. The Consultant will assign a single qualified project manager (the "Consultant Project Manager") to coordinate with LOSRC and the County on all project activities. The Consultant Project Manager will be responsible for overseeing the project activities and will be the single point of contact between LOSRC, the County and the Consultant and will be responsible for all administrative and management duties under this scope of work. This project will be led by the Consultant with general direction and oversight provided by LOSRC and County staff. The Consultant will be directed by the project manager (the "County Project Manager") designated by the County and the Consultant Project Manager will work in close coordination with a committee comprised of transit stakeholders and representatives from LOSRC and the County (the "Steering Committee") to review, clarify, refine, and finalize all work leading to the preparation of the COA report. The Steering

Committee will meet monthly and/or as directed by the County Project Manager. The Consultant will prepare a draft final report which includes all project deliverables. The report should summarize all the task reports and include an executive summary, narrative description of the work performed, the project objectives met, methodologies used, analyses of the data collected utilizing charts, tables, graphs and maps, and specific recommendations based on the results of the analysis. After review by the County Project Manager, LOSRC staff and Steering Committee the Consultant will prepare a final report incorporating comments for the draft final report. The Consultant will deploy sufficient qualified personnel to ensure the timely and professional delivery of all project requirements. * If the County's Project Manager identifies inadequate performance by the Consultant's Project Manager, the County may request the Consultant to replace the project manager within fourteen (14) days to successfully complete this project within budget and schedule. If such actions are required, the Consultant will provide credentials for review and approval by LOSRC and the County. The Consultant shall be responsible for completing the specified services in accordance with the County's Professional Services Agreement (Exhibit A).

OWNERSHIP OF WORK All reports, memos, presentation material, and other documents prepared or obtained by the Contractor or subcontractor(s) in the course of performing the work required by this Contract shall be the property of the County, and the Contractor hereby conveys and transfers to the County all copyrightable interests in such documents. Contractor further affirms that it has obtained all necessary conveyances and transfers from its employees and subcontractors and that it will continue to obtain them as necessary. Under no circumstances shall the Contractor fail to deliver any draft, final reports or memos to County upon written demand by the County for their delivery, notwithstanding any disputes between the Contractor and County concerning payment, performance of this Contract, or otherwise. This covenant shall survive the termination of this Contract as provided in the Contract. The Contractor represents that it has secured all necessary licenses, consents or approvals to use the components of any intellectual property, including computer software, used in the rendering of services and the production of the materials produced under this Contract, and that County has full legal title to and the right to reproduce such materials. The Contractor covenants to defend, indemnify and hold LOSRC and the County harmless of any loss, claim or liability in any way related to a claim that County is violating federal, state or local laws, or any Comprehensive Operational Analysis contractual provisions, relating to trade names, licenses, franchises, patents or other means of protecting interests in products or inventions. The Contractor shall bear all costs arising from the use of patented, copyrighted, trade secret or trademarked materials, equipment, devices or processes used on or incorporated in the services and materials produced under this Contract. In case such materials, equipment, devices or processes are held to constitute an infringement and their use is enjoined, the Contractor, at its expense, shall: (a) secure for the County the right to continue using the materials by suspension of any injunction or by procuring a license or licenses for the County; or (b) modify the materials so that they become non-infringing. This covenant shall survive the termination of this Contract.

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS The following documents are available for consultants responding to the Request for Proposals (RFP) and can be found on the County's website.

Fixed Route and Commuter link Bus Schedules

Fare Schedules

Bus Information

TERM The initial period of the contract is six (6) months. Any extension requests must be approved by the County Commission, subject to the agreement terms and local policy.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

LOSRC and Transylvania County are requesting proposals for a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) that includes a Microtransit Feasibility Assessment and Bus Stop Improvement Plan. Proposals should clearly address all the information as it is outlined in the scope of work. To achieve a uniform review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparability, it is required that proposals be organized and contain all information as specified below.

All proposals must be made and submitted in a non-editable electronic document (PDF) format. Links are not allowed. Proposals shall be addressed to **Vicki Eastland, RPO Director** and must be delivered via email to rpo@landofsky.org by **5:00PM EST December 31st, 2025**. LOSRC and the County take no responsibility for emails that are undeliverable or delayed. Proposals must be clearly identified in the email subject line as **Transylvania County Transit COA Study Proposal**. Proposals are limited to **thirty (30)** pages inclusive of the cover letter and shall be typed on 8-1/2" x 11" sheets, single-spaced, one-sided.

Proposals containing more than **thirty (30)** pages will not be considered.

Late proposals will not be considered. All proposals must be signed by an authorized representative of your organization.

Questions

Inquiries and/or clarifications must be submitted via email by **5:00pm EST December 12, 2025**.

Evaluation Criteria

Qualifications

- a. Include the Project Manager background and qualifications.
- b. Describe firm's qualifications as they pertain to this project.
- c. Include firm's history, names and credentials of project managers, location of home and branch offices, and areas of specialization (if any), etc.

Project Understanding and Approach

- a. Provide a description of your understanding of the scope of work and how your team will approach the project.
- b. Provide a general schedule with anticipated milestones and durations.
- c. Explain any anticipated challenges with the project.
- d. Provide a description of the ability of the firm to commit resources to completing this project and the team to perform project tasks on schedule and in budget. A capacity chart/graph can be included.

Relevant Projects and References

- a. List a maximum of five (5) relevant Projects.
- b. List only projects involving current staff, indicating team members involved in the project, specify their role.
- c. List relevant projects in date order newest listed first.

- d. Describe the services your firm and subcontractors (if any) provided, the outcome of the project (on-time, on-budget)
- e. Describe specific experience from past relevant projects in providing the scope of services listed for this project.

References:

- a. North Carolina clients
- b. Most recent client implementation of similar services

Project Schedule

A timeline for completion should be developed as part of the proposal, to be finalized in consultation with LOSRC and the County. Timelines should not exceed six (6) months.

Evaluation Metrics

Criteria	Points
Qualifications	30
Project Understanding and Approach	30
Relevant Projects and References	20
Project Schedule and Timeline	20

SUBMISSION SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES

RFP Release – **November 24, 2025**

Deadline for Questions – **December 12, 2025**

Deadline for Submission – **December 31, 2025**

Firm Selection and Notification – **January 16, 2026**

Anticipated Notice to Proceed – **January 23, 2026**