II. Procurement Requirements

A. Overview

North Central Area Transit (NCAT) anticipates that this project will be funded in whole or part by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5339 grant funds. FTA's enabling legislation at 49 U.S.C. § 5325(b)(1) requires the use of the qualifications-based procurement procedures contained in the "Brooks Act," 40 U.S.C. § 1101 through 1104, to acquire architectural and engineering (A&E) services. The evaluation and selection process for this qualifications-based procurement is described under Section D below.

By submitting Qualifications, the proposing firm certifies that it has fully read and understands the RFQ and all supporting documents and Appendices, has full knowledge of the Scope of Work to be provided, and accepts the terms and conditions under which the services are to be performed.

Those submitting Qualifications do so entirely at their expense. There is no expressed or implied obligation by NCAT to reimburse any individual or firm for costs incurred in preparing or submitting Qualifications, providing additional information if requested, or participating in negotiations with NCAT.

NCAT may postpone the deadline for submitting Qualifications and may revise or amend this RFQ at any time before the submission deadline. Such changes, revisions, or amendments, if any, will be announced to each firm by written addenda to this RFQ. If applicable, the addenda will identify a new submission deadline, which will be at least seven (7) calendar days after the last addendum.

The NCAT intends to award a Firm fixed-price contract as a result of this solicitation. No contract arising from this solicitation is implied or guaranteed. NCAT reserves the right to take no action regarding any contract solicited by this RFQ, including the right to reject all offers.

B. Timeline

(Note: All times are according to Eastern Time. NCAT reserves the right to modify these dates at its sole discretion.)

Event	Date
RFQ Advertised	**June 1, 2026**
Request for Clarifications	**June 8, 2026**, 4:00 pm
Response for Clarification	**June 18, 2026**
Site Visits	**June 23, 2026**
Deadline for Submission of Questions to NCAT	**June 30, 2026**
NCAT response to questions published	**July 10, 2026**
Deadline for Submission of Qualifications	**July 24, 2026**
Negotiations with Firm(s)	**August 7, 2026**
Anticipated Notice to Proceed	**August 28, 2026**

C. Submission Contents and Format

Qualifications in response to this RFQ must be submitted via email to m.habig@ncatohio.org PDF format no later than **4:00 PM Eastern on Friday July 24, 2026**. The subject line of the email shall be, **"TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS"**. Any submission received after the exact day/time specified for receipt will not be considered.

Cost Proposals shall NOT be submitted at the Proposal Due Date. Firms are advised to prepare, but NOT SUBMIT a Cost Proposal unless/until it is requested by NCAT. Once a Cost Proposal is requested, the firm will have five (5) business days to submit it to NCAT.

NCAT must receive submissions by the time and date specified in the Procurement Timeline in Section II. (B) and in the manner specified in Section II. (C)

Qualifications must be submitted with the following elements:

- Transmittal Letter. On company letterhead, describe the firm's commitment to successfully completing the Scope of Work contained in this RFQ. The letter should also indicate the legal status of the firm (i.e., sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, etc.), provide a primary point of contact, and be signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposing firm to a contract.

- Firm Experience. Discuss the firm's recent experience successfully completing A&E engagements similar to the Scope of Work in this RFQ. Include examples of client communication, project management, and stakeholder satisfaction.

- References. Provide contact information for three (3) current and/or former clients to serve as references. Include each reference's name, title, organization, email address, and phone number. Also indicate the dates and length of time the firm has served each client and the specific service(s) provided.

- Project Approach and Timeline. Describe in detail the firm's understanding of and proposed approach to successfully completing each task identified in the Scope of Work. Included should be an overall project timeline that identifies the period of performance and key milestones and deliverables associated with each task.

- Project Team. Discuss the organization of the project team as well as the specific qualifications and experience of each team member. Included should be the availability of each team member over the anticipated duration of this engagement. The firm shall provide an organizational chart, resumes, and qualifications for A&E Services. The resumes and organizational charts shall exhibit the capacity and capability to execute the necessary tasks effectively. Meaningful use of

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) as a part of the project team is encouraged. A link to the ODOT DBE Directory is included below. Click on "DBE Directory" for the latest list.

ODOT DBE Directory: https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/working/data-tools/resources/dbedirectory

- **All offerors must be actively registered in the System for Award Management (SAM)** (www.sam.gov) **at the time of proposal submission and contract award, in accordance with FAR 52.204-7.**

    - Signed "Certification and Restrictions on Lobbying" form
    - Signed "Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension Certification" form
    - Signed "Acknowledgement of Addenda" form, if applicable
    - Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms

- Proposals will be limited to no more than ten (10) pages, excluding personnel resumes/experience profiles, Organizational Charts, Disclosure/Certification forms, and Table of Contents. All text in the proposal, excluding headings/titles, must be a size 12 font.

- The proposal shall be irrevocable unless the proposal is withdrawn. A firm may withdraw a proposal in writing up to the date and time deadline for submission of qualifications as noted in Section II. (B). The written request must be signed by an authorized representative of the firm and submitted to the Single Point of Contact as noted in Section I (C). If a previously submitted proposal is withdrawn before the deadline date and time, the firm may submit another proposal at any time up to the deadline date and time.

D. Evaluation and Selection Process

FTA requires that A&E services be procured according to qualifications-based procedures. Unlike other procurement methods, qualifications-based procedures exclude price as an evaluation factor. Submitted Qualifications will instead be evaluated and ranked according to the criteria described in Section 1 below. NCAT intends to award a contract to the most qualified, responsive proposal submitted by a responsible firm as required by 49 U.S.C. § 5325(j). A responsive proposal includes all elements as requested in Section C of the RFQ and conforms to the essential requirements and specifications of the solicitation.

NCAT will conduct an initial screening of all proposals to verify each firm's compliance with the requirements of this solicitation. NCAT may waive or offer a limited opportunity for a firm to cure immaterial deviations from the solicitation requirements if it is deemed to be in the best interest of NCAT.

Following the initial screening, NCAT's Evaluation Committee will evaluate and rate all responsive proposals based on the criteria in Section 1. Interviews may be conducted if NCAT deems it to be necessary. The highest-ranking firm shall be invited to submit a cost proposal, and negotiation shall be conducted. Only after failing to agree on a fair and reasonable price, negotiations may be conducted with the next most qualified firm. Then, if necessary, negotiations with successive firms in descending order may be conducted until contract award can be made to a responsive and responsible firm whose price NCAT believes is fair and reasonable.

1. Criteria and Weighting

North Central Area Transit 's (NCAT's) Evaluation Committee will evaluate all responsive Qualifications submissions according to a 100-point scale based on the following criteria:

Criteria	**Points**
Project Approach and Timeline	0-40
Project Team	0-25
Firm Experience	0-20
Client Satisfaction	0-15
Total	**100**

Project Approach and Timeline. The Evaluation Committee will be looking for a detailed and actionable approach to successfully completing each of the tasks identified in the Scope of Work. Firms must provide a timeline showing the anticipated completion of specific deliverables and/or outcomes. Firms must also demonstrate their firm's quality control program to ensure a complete, accurate, and quality product. Further, firms should describe any innovative approaches in assisting NCAT as it relates to this project.

Project Team. Discuss the organization of the project team as well as the specific qualifications and experience of each team member. Included should be the availability of each team member over the

anticipated duration of this engagement. The firm shall provide an organizational chart, resumes, and qualifications for A&E Services. The resumes and organizational charts shall exhibit the capacity and capability to execute the necessary tasks effectively.

Small Business & Inclusion. ODOT is committed to program continuity through the Small Business Enterprise (SBE) program while federal DBE goals are being re-evaluated. Meaningful use of SBE and DBE firms as part of the project team is strongly encouraged. Proposers are encouraged to utilize firms that are race- and gender-neutral SBE certified to ensure project goals are met without interruption.

Firm Experience. The Evaluation Committee will be looking for a history of successfully delivering similar projects on time and budget, as well as the relevant qualifications of the firm as an entity.

Client Satisfaction. The Evaluation Committee will be looking for a record of excellent client communication, project management, and stakeholder satisfaction.

2. Pre-Award Audit

Upon determination of the most qualified, responsible firm with a fair and reasonable price proposal and prior to consideration of contract award, NCAT will request from the firm, Professional Licenses, Certificate of Insurance, and any other documents the Evaluation Committee may deem necessary.

3. Notice of Award and Contract Award

Upon successful completion of the Pre-Award Audit, the Evaluation Committee shall prepare a recommendation for contract award for approval by the NCAT Board of Director. Upon approval, NCAT shall inform the successful firm of its selection. NCAT shall also inform, in writing, all firms that were not selected. It is the intent of NCAT to execute the contract documents as soon as practical but not earlier than seven (7) business days after the Notice of Intent to Award is sent to all firms.

4. Conflicts of Interest

The firm selected and awarded a contract as a result of this RFQ shall be ineligible to participate in any capacity in the construction bid and/or contract that stems directly from the firm's performance of work under this RFQ. Furthermore, firms for this RFQ and the firm that is awarded a contract as a result of this RFQ are required to adhere to the Conflicts of Interest procedures noted in Section b. of the General Requirements Section of this RFQ.

E. Insurance Requirements

The successful firm shall provide a certificate of insurance that, at a minimum, meets the requirements set forth in Appendix A of this RFQ.

F. Protest Procedures

1. Pre-Proposal Protests

All protests concerning solicitation specifications, criteria and/or procedures shall be submitted in writing (defined as being sent or received via letter or facsimile on official firm/agency letterhead or by electronic mail) to the Executive Director as specified below not later than ten (10) business days prior to the deadline for submission of bids/proposals.

The Executive Director may, within his or her discretion, postpone the deadline for submission of bids/proposals, but in any case, shall provide a written response to all protests not later than five (5) business days prior to the deadline for submission of bids/proposals. If the deadline for submission of bids/proposals is postponed by the Executive Director as the result of a protest the postponement will be announced through an addendum to the solicitation.

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The decision by the Executive Director shall be the final agency decision on the matter but shall be subject to judicial review as set forth by FTA below.

2. Pre-Award Protests

With respect to protests made after the deadline for submission of bids/proposals but before contract award by North Central Area Transit, protests shall be limited to those protests alleging a violation of Federal or State law, a challenge to the bids/proposal's evaluation and award process, North Central Area Transit 's failure to have or follow its protest procedures or its failure to review a complaint or protest. Such protests shall be submitted in writing (defined as being sent or received via letter or facsimile on official firm/agency letterhead or by electronic mail) to the Executive Director as specified below not later than five (5) business days after the Recommendation for Contract Award announcement by North Central Area Transit.

The Executive Director may, within his or her discretion, postpone the award of the contract, but in any case, shall provide a written response to all protests not later than three (3) business days prior to the date that North Central Area Transit shall announce the contract award.

The decision by the Executive Director shall be the final agency decision on the matter but shall be subject to judicial review as set forth or review by ODOT as specified below.

3. Post-Award Protests

With respect to protests made after contract award by North Central Area Transit, protests shall be limited to those protests alleging a violation of Federal or State law, a challenge to the award process, North Central Area Transit's failure to have or follow its protest procedures or its failure to review a complaint or protest. Such protests shall be submitted in writing (defined as being sent or received via letter or facsimile on official firm/agency letterhead or by electronic mail) to the Executive Director as specified below no later than five (5) business days after the announcement of Intent to Award by North Central Area Transit.

4. Requirements for Protests

All protests must be submitted to North Central Area Transit in writing (defined as being sent or received via letter or facsimile on official firm/agency letterhead or by electronic mail), with sufficient documentation, evidence, and legal authority to demonstrate that the Protestor is entitled to the relief requested. The protest must be certified as being true and correct to the best knowledge and information of the Protestor and be signed by the Protestor. The protest must also include a mailing address to which a response should be sent.

Protests received after the deadlines for receipt of protests specified above are subject to denial without any requirement for review or action by North Central Area Transit.

All protests must be directed in writing (defined as being sent or received via letter or facsimile on official firm/agency letterhead or by electronic mail) to the Executive Director at the address shown in the solicitation documents.

5. Protest Response

The Executive Director shall issue written responses to all protests received by the required protest response dates. All protest responses shall be transmitted by first-class U.S. Postal Service to the address indicated in the protest letter.

For convenience, North Central Area Transit will also send a copy of the response to a protest to the Protester by facsimile and/or electronic mail if a facsimile number and/or electronic mail address are indicated in the protest letter. The protest response transmitted by U.S. Postal Service shall be the official North Central Area Transit response to the protest and North Central Area Transit will not be responsible for the failure of the Protester to receive the protest response by either facsimile or electronic mail.

6. Review of Protests by ODOT

All protests involving contracts financed with Federal assistance shall be disclosed to ODOT. Protesters shall exhaust all administrative remedies with North Central Area Transit prior to pursuing protests with ODOT. ODOT limits its reviews of protests to: a grantee's failure to have or follow its protest procedures; a grantee's failure to review a complaint or protest when presented an opportunity to do so; or violations of Federal law or regulation. Appeals to ODOT must be received within five (5) working days of the date the Protester has received actual or constructive notice of North Central Area Transit final decision or within five (5) working days of the date the Protester has identified other grounds for appeal to ODOT.

III. Project Background

A. Planning Background and Stakeholders:

Seneca County Commissioners own the property. An Environmental Assessment was completed. The Project has been granted a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as it is not expected to involve significant environmental impacts. An appraisal was done; preliminary civil engineering and building cost estimates were completed. The preliminary analysis was based on public information and general industry knowledge, including tax records, square footage, and GPS/Map location. Preliminary project documents are included in Appendix B.

B. Existing Facility:

The subject property is located at 3446 S. Twp. Rd 151, Tiffin, Oh 44883 (hereinafter the "Property"). The existing Property is approximately 3 acres.