

River Cities Public Transit Request for Qualification

Developing a Transit Development Plan for Tribal and Persistently High Poverty Regions in South Dakota

Introduction

River Cities Public Transit (RCPT), headquartered in Pierre, S.D., coordinates transportation for agencies and businesses in the Pierre – Fort Pierre area and around the State of South Dakota. In this case, the RCPT, Executive Director, Ron Baumgart, will be coordinating with three transit agencies in the state; they include Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton Inc., co-Directors Kathy Holman and Terry Hoffman; Prairie Hills Transit, Barb Cline, Executive Director and Rural Office of Community Services (ROCS) Scott D. Finck, Director of Transit.

These agencies to explore the nine tribal reservations and other areas of persistent high poverty in South Dakota to determine if the existing transit service in these regions are being served appropriately or if there is room to improve. This requires developing a Transit Development Plan for these regions, looking at gaps in services, cost of improving service, sources of funds for the desired improvements, and gaining tribal local political support for the plan/services. In addition to the tribal reservations, this group will be investigating other areas in S.D. designated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as Areas of Persistent Poverty.

The FTA has recently announced the Fiscal Year 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Areas of Persistent Poverty Program. The above-described team is interested in applying for a grant under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The NOFO states that funds will be awarded competitively for planning, engineering, or the development of technical or financing plans for projects to assist Areas of Persistent Poverty or Historically Disadvantaged Communities with transportation needs. This program supports FTA's strategic goals and objectives through the timely and efficient investment in public transportation for safety, economic strength and global competitiveness, equity, climate and sustainability, transformation, and organizational excellence. The AoPP Program grants are competitively awarded to local entities to assist Areas of Persistent Poverty as defined under section 6702(a)(1) of title 49, United States Code, or Historically Disadvantaged Communities.

Desired Knowledge and Experience

River Cities Public Transit and the additional coordinating agencies are seeking proposals assistance to develop a Transit Development Plan for the regions in South Dakota that fit the criteria described in the Fiscal Year 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Areas of Persistent Poverty Program. FTA provides a mapping tool to assist applicants in identifying whether a project is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty or any identified Areas of Persistent Poverty: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a> Copy and paste in your web browser, Then click on SD, the blue is tribal and yellow is areas of persistent poverty outside the reservations.

The above entity/group is seeking an agency or entity experienced in the following activity:

1. Shows proof responding agency have Knowledge and experience in writing grants seeking funding from the Federal Transit Administration and has a history of some grants being funded. (10 Points)
2. Shows proof responding agencies has knowledge and experience developing and writing transit development plans within tribal regions in other states. (10 points)
3. Shows proof responding agency has knowledge and experience in developing surveys exploring the given area of unmet needs, customers desired services in those areas, and getting surveys delivered to the desired sample populations.
4. Shows proof responding agency has the skill set to work with various coordinating agencies, finding a general consensus that all agencies can support. (16 points)
5. Shows proof the responding agency has a good understanding of the terms, services, and operating criteria of transit agencies in the industry: such as ride times, dispatching and dispatching software, operational effectiveness and efficiencies, and miles per trip. (24 points)
6. Shows proof that the responding agencies or entities have the capable staff with time to work on this project. (26 points)

Scope of Work

1. The primary task will be to write a transit development plan for the tribal reservations in South Dakota and other areas of persistent high poverty. The South Dakota Native American reservations include Cheyenne River Reservation, Crow Creek Reservation, Flandreau Santee Sioux Reservation, Lower Brule Reservation, Pine Ridge Reservation, Rosebud Reservation, Lake Traverse Reservation and Standing Rock Sioux Reservation Communities in South Dakota.

2. To develop and conduct surveys and in person interviews in these areas to verify the current level of services, determine the gaps that exist in these areas and any possible funding sources for proposed services.
3. To collect and evaluate the surveys and with the help of the coordinating agencies specified in the above text, explore possible solutions to provide some additional services where and when needed.

Selection Criteria / Timeline

The selection criteria will be subjective and based on the responses to the six desired skill sets listed above, and the points the selection committee determines are earned based on the answers to each skill set.

Gary Hegland will answer questions on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, by calling or texting 701.866.3185 or emailing ghegland@i29.net.

Due to time constraints on this Federal grant request, there will be a very short window of time to respond to this request for qualification. The Statements of Qualifications need to be received by River Cities Public Transit either

1. Electronically to: rbaumgart@rcptransit.com
2. By express mail to:

***River Cities Public Transit
Attn: Ron Baumgart
1600 E. Dakota Ave.
Pierre, S.D 57501***

Either electronically or by mail, responses are due no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on Thursday, March 2, 2023.

**Ron Baumgart
Executive Director
River Cities Public Transit**