

Request for Qualifications

Pursuant to the authority granted under Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 223, (enabling legislation), the Texas Department of Transportation (department) may enter into public-private partnership agreements, also known as comprehensive development agreements, for the design, development, construction, financing, maintenance, or operation of a toll project on the state highway system. The enabling legislation authorizes private involvement in toll projects and provides a process for the department to solicit proposals for such projects. Transportation Code, §223.203 prescribes requirements for a proposal and requires the department to publish a notice in the *Texas Register* if the department decides to issue a request for qualifications for a project. The Texas Transportation Commission (commission) has promulgated rules located at Title 43, Texas Administrative Code, §§27.1-27.10 (the rules), governing the submission and processing of qualification submittals, and providing for publication of notice that the department is requesting qualifications submittals, and setting forth the basic criteria for professional experience, technical competence, and capability to complete a proposed project, and such other information the department considers relevant or necessary in the request for qualifications. The commission has authorized the issuance of a request for qualifications to develop, design, construct, finance, operate, and maintain tolled managed lanes, main lanes and associated facilities along I-35E in Denton and Dallas Counties from I-635 to US 380 (project), through a public-private partnership agreement (P3A).

On September 29, 2011, in Minute Order 112840, the commission authorized the department to commence the procurement process for the project under the enabling legislation. This notice represents the next step in the process.

Through this notice, the department is seeking qualifications submittals (QS) from teams

interested in entering into a design-build and/or a toll concession P3A in response to a request for qualifications (RFQ). The department intends to evaluate any QS received and may request submission of detailed proposals, potentially leading to negotiation, award, and execution of a P3A. The department will accept for consideration any QS received in accordance with the rules and the RFQ on or before the deadline in this notice. The department anticipates issuing the RFQ, receiving and analyzing the QSs, developing a shortlist of proposing entities or consortia, and issuing a request for detailed proposals (RFP) to the shortlisted entities. After review and a best value evaluation of the responses to the RFP, the department may negotiate and enter into a P3A for the project.

RFQ Evaluation Criteria. QSs for a design-build delivery model will be evaluated by the department for shortlisting purposes using the following general criteria: technical qualifications and capability and statement of technical approach. QSs for a toll concession delivery model will be evaluated by the department for shortlisting purposes using the following general criteria: technical qualifications and capability, statement of technical approach, toll concession project finance qualifications and capability, and conceptual project financing discussion. The specific criteria under the foregoing categories will be identified in the RFQ, as will the relative weighting of the criteria.

Release of RFQ and Due Date. The department currently anticipates that the RFQ will be available on January 23, 2012. The RFQ will include a conceptual project concept. Copies of the RFQ will be available at the department's Dallas District office located at 4777 E. Highway 80, Mesquite, Texas 75150-6643 or on the following website:

http://www.txdot.gov/project_information/projects/dallas/i35e/default.htm. QSs will be due at 12:00 p.m. Central Time on March 23, 2012 at the address specified in the RFQ.