

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT

## Department of Highways Professional Services Procurement Bulletin 2026-11 Riverport Study

This document constitutes a Request for Proposals for a Professional Service Contract from qualified individuals and organizations to furnish those services as described herein for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Department of Highways.

### **I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This statewide study is commissioned by the Kentucky Association of Riverports in coordination with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to evaluate the performance, competitiveness, and future investment potential of Kentucky's waterways and public riverport system. One (1) consultant will be selected to provide these services.

### **II. PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project Manager - Jeremy Edgeworth  
User Division - Planning  
Approximate Fee - \$600,000 Planning Study (Lump Sum)  
Project Funding - Federal Funds (SPR Funds)

### **III. PURPOSE AND NEED**

Kentucky's ports and waterways serve as critical multimodal infrastructure supporting industrial development, agricultural distribution, domestic and international trade, and regional economic competitiveness. This project will deliver a comprehensive, data-driven assessment of current freight activity, economic contribution, infrastructure capacity, and emerging market opportunities to guide long-term strategic investment and policy decisions across the statewide riverport network.

This study will provide Kentucky's ports and state partners with a defensible, market-informed framework for prioritizing infrastructure investment, strengthening grant competitiveness, enhancing freight system performance, and maximizing long-term economic return across the statewide riverport system.

### **IV. SCOPE OF WORK**

The project will include all commercially navigable waterways and public riverports in the Commonwealth and will integrate:

- Baseline economic impact modeling (direct, indirect, and induced effects).
- Operational and infrastructure assessments of facilities, capacity, and resiliency.

- Market and competitive analysis of freight volumes, commodities, and positioning.
- Future demand forecasting and industry opportunity identification.
- Return-on-investment evaluation tied to capital, operational, and policy actions.
- Phased strategic investment scenarios spanning 5-, 10-, and 20-year horizons.

**The Consultant Shall:**

- Quantify economic impacts at both individual port and statewide levels.
- Evaluate infrastructure, operational capacity, and multimodal connectivity.
- Analyze freight flows, commodity trends, and competitive positioning.
- Identify emerging industries and growth opportunities aligned with market demand.
- Develop strategic, return-focused investment recommendations.
- Provide a long-range roadmap to inform public funding, planning, and policy.

**Key Deliverables:**

- Comprehensive statewide report with findings and recommendations.
- Executive summary for policymakers and public stakeholders.
- Individual riverport profiles with operational, market, and economic details.
- Economic models, dashboards, and data visualizations.
- Maps, graphics, and formal stakeholder presentations.

**V. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

The Department reserves the option to modify the selected Consultants’ agreement to include any necessary engineering and/or related services for this project. The firm(s) or one of their subconsultants must at that time be prequalified by the Department in the required area(s).

Instructions for Response to Announcement can be found at:

<https://transportation.ky.gov/ProfessionalServices/Pages/Respond-to-an-Announcement.aspx>

Consultants are required to follow the [Commonwealth Office of Technology’s Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) policy](#) and affirmatively disclose any use of AI or Machine Learning undertaken as part of any awarded contract.

The Department will allow for the following modifications to the standard response format for responses to this advertisement only:

- Section 3: Project Team Organizational Chart, may be expanded not to exceed two 8.5” x 11” (A-B) or one 11” x 17” page.
- Section 4 (A-E): Resumes, may be expanded not to exceed 6 pages total (A-F).
- Section 5 (A-B): Workload / commitments does not have a page limit.
- Section 6 (A-E): Project Experience, may be expanded not to exceed 8 pages total (A-H).
- Section 7 (A-D): Project Approach, may be expanded not to exceed 4 pages total (A-D).

**VI. AVAILABLE STUDIES**

[2020 Kentucky Riverports, Highway, and Rail Freight Study](#)

## **VII. AVAILABLE INFORMATION**

The Department will furnish any plans, specifications, reports, or other information in the possession of the Department needed for providing the services desired.

## **VIII. INTERVIEW**

The selection committee may identify a shortlist of proposers who submit a responsive proposal to participate in a virtual interview. Should the Selection Committee elect to hold interviews, each shortlisted Proposer should be prepared to present a short presentation and respond to questions. Each Proposer will be allowed no more than 20 minutes for a presentation without a question and answer session. The presentation shall not be used to fill in missing or incomplete information in the written proposal. The virtual interview will not be scored separately. The interview is used solely for KYTC to seek clarification of the Proposer's proposal. Proposers will not be permitted to ask questions of KYTC.

Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter. Request for accommodations must be made one week in advance of the meeting, to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

Each firm shall be required to bring the Consultant's Project Manager and may include up to four other individuals in the interview.

Members of the KYTC's Selection Committee will attend each virtual interview. Additional subject matter experts and the Kentucky Association of Riverports may also attend the interviews. Elected officials will not be permitted to attend. KYTC will terminate the interview promptly at the end of the allocated time.

KYTC may videotape the virtual interviews. All interviews will be held via video conference.

## **IX. PREQUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

To respond to this project, the Consultant must be prequalified in the following areas by the response due date of this advertisement.

### [TRANSPORTATION PLANNING](#)\* (see note below)

- *Conceptual Transportation Planning\**

*\* Note – This prequalification is not required with the initial proposal as it is uncertain to the extent practicable if it is necessary. Should this service become necessary during the delivery of the project in this or future phases, the selected Consultant team must obtain the required qualifications before providing services or bring on a prequalified subconsultant at that time.*

## **X. PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE**

Dates other than Response Date are tentative and provided for information only.

- Advertisement Date: May 12, 2026

- Response Date: June 3, 2026 by 4:30 PM ET (Frankfort Time)
- First Selection Meeting: June 5, 2026
- Shortlist 3 Meeting: June 15, 2026
- **Consultant Interviews: June 25, 2026**
- Final Selection: June 25, 2026
- Contract Scoping Conference: July 1, 2026
- Fee Proposal Due: July 10, 2026
- Contract Negotiations: July 22, 2026
- Notice to Proceed: August 12, 2026

## **XI. PROJECT SCHEDULE**

- Data Collection – November 30, 2026
- Forecasting, Economic Modeling, Assessments, and Data Analysis – February 28, 2027
- Stakeholder Outreach – March 31, 2027
- Data Presentation and Draft Recommendations – April 30, 2027
- Draft Report – June 30, 2027
- Final Report – August 31, 2027

## **XII. EVALUATION FACTORS**

Consultants will be evaluated by the selection committee based on the following, weighted factors:

1. Demonstrated qualifications, experience, and past record of proposed consultant personnel on projects of similar type and complexity. (30 points)
2. Demonstrated experience and past record on projects relating to economic development. (20 points)
3. Described approach and methodology for quantifying economic impact of waterways and public ports in Kentucky at a statewide and individual port level. (20 points)
4. Relative experience of project manager leading an effort of this magnitude. (15 points)
5. Capacity and availability of team members over the life of the contract. (10 points)
6. Organizational structure of team and approach to managing the development of the project. Clearly state the role of each core team member. (10 points)
7. Outlined approach to gather stakeholder input. (5 points)
8. The Consultant demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of safety strategies and the ability to generate meaningful ideas that can measurably enhance the safety of the completed project. This includes both the immediate effectiveness and the long-term safety impacts of the finished facility. (5 Points)
9. Knowledge of the locality and familiarity of the general geographic area. (2 Points)

**XIII. SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

1. Jeremy Edgeworth, User Division
2. Mikael Pelfrey, P.E., User Division
3. Lauren Meighan, P.E., Secretary's Pool
4. Ben Coomes, P.E., Secretary's Pool
5. Brian Wood, P.E., Governor's Pool