



*“Serving the Transportation Needs of the Southeast Missouri Region”*

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS PACKAGE  
FOR  
**SEMPO REGION TRAIL CONNECTION STUDY**  
FOR  
THE SOUTHEAST METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



RFP# 23-02

CITY OF CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI  
SOUTHEAST METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
44 NORTH LORIMIER STREET  
CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO 63701  
(573) 339-6734

**All responses are due Friday, December 1, 2023 by 4:00 pm CST.**

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### SEMPO REGION TRAIL CONNECTION STUDY

#### FOR

### SOUTHEAST METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit qualified and experienced consultants to conduct a comprehensive Trail Connection Study. This study aims to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of our community's trail network while promoting active lifestyles, environmental stewardship, and economic development.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

SEMPO is a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), which is a federally mandated and funded policy-making organization that oversees transportation planning for an urbanized area (UA). As the MPO for the Cape Girardeau – Jackson UA, SEMPO is responsible for meeting the federal metropolitan planning regulations for the specified geographic area that includes the urbanized area of Cape Girardeau-Jackson and portions of unincorporated, non-urbanized areas within Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties in Missouri and Alexander County in Illinois. The approximate population of the MPA is 55,079 according to the 2021 American Communities Survey (ACS) five (5)-year estimate. The MPA covers approximately 117 square miles, with 111.7 square miles in Cape Girardeau County, 4.7 in Alexander County, and 0.6 in Scott County. SEMPO is comprised of a Board of Directors, a Technical Planning Committee (TPC), and the planning and administrative staff.

#### PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2018, SEMPO adopted a Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan to establish a framework for future investments in non-motorized transportation infrastructure across the region. This plan evaluated the current state of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and proposed recommendations for enhancing sidewalk, trail, and bike lane connections, as well as outlining potential improvements. While progress has been made in line with these recommendations, there is now a growing interest in focusing specifically on trail infrastructure that can connect the two urbanized areas and various community destinations within the SEMPO Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA), a sentiment shared by SEMPO member entities and the general public. SEMPO is actively seeking a consultant to collaborate on the development of a SEMPO Region Trail Connection Study, with the primary goal of conducting a comprehensive analysis of the most feasible and preferred trail connections and alignments that will effectively link residents and visitors to these desired locations.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

SEMPO anticipates a project that includes the activities outlined within the Project Scope section below; however, applicants should detail a clear project approach that will effectively assess the needs of the SEMPO MPA and meet SEMPO's purpose of creating a Study with a vision, goals, and action-based strategies and recommendations. This solicitation seeks an accomplished firm to offer consulting services for the execution of a SEMPO Region Trail Connection Study. The primary objective of this undertaking is to produce a thorough examination of trail infrastructure that will serve as the blueprint for upcoming trail expansion and connectivity. This comprehensive study will facilitate SEMPO in identifying the most feasible and preferred trail connections and alignment through identification of property ownership, rights of way, and essential infrastructure components required to link the existing and planned trail systems within the SEMPO MPA. The selection of a consultant with a proven record of accomplishment in successful trails master planning will be at the forefront of this selection process.

## SCOPE OF SERVICES

### Project Overview

The purpose of this project is to identify, evaluate, and recommend potential connections between two municipal trail systems located within the SEMPO MPA (City of Cape Girardeau and City of Jackson). The consultant will facilitate a process that ends with identifying the top three options for connecting the two trail systems. The options should be ranked and each one should include a conceptual alignment and a planning level cost estimate.

The study will result in recommendations of the most feasible and preferred alignments, which can be carried forward for further planning and development. The most feasible route should be safe, cost-effective, and consistent with stakeholder and community input preferences. The study will include a strong implementation strategy, aligning near and mid-term actions with available financial resources.

### Major Considerations

In order to identify potential alignments, evaluate feasibility, and make recommendations for a preferred route, the Study will need to consider a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- Safety issues, both real and perceived
- Existing bicycle and pedestrian systems
- Programmed or near-term improvements
- Feasibility and desirability of both off-street and on-street options along the different potential routes
- Overall trail length and directness of the trail route
- Identification of barriers within proposed routes

- Roadway and intersection classification and characteristics
- Environmental concerns or impediments (e.g. drainage, utilities, private ownership, etc.)
- Adjacent land uses and destinations that may affect route choices

### Existing Trail Infrastructure

The study should consider how existing trail infrastructure may contribute and connect to the larger region trail network. The study should consider public and stakeholder interest in these future network connections when researching and evaluating the feasibility of potential routes, and ensure they are consistent and would advance current plans.

### Multi-jurisdictional Nature of the Project

As this study focuses on establishing connections throughout the SEMPO MPA, any potential trail or bikeway connection may pass through multiple jurisdictions utilizing lands and/or roadway rights-of-way that are under different ownership and regulatory purview. Each jurisdiction has its own policies, requirements, ordinances, and intended future land uses which will need to be considered and addressed within the study.

### Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will be formed at the initiation of the project and will be comprised of SEMPO member entity representatives and identified stakeholders. Steering Committee members will serve to inform and guide the development of the Study.

### Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Consultants should include a plan for stakeholder and public engagement which aligns with the SEMPO Public Participation Plan and in conformance with SEMPO's Title VI Plan. Consultant shall specify public engagement methods and the number of public events scheduled during the project process. At a minimum, there should be at least two public events scheduled during the study process. Consultants are encourage to propose other innovative methods to reach key stakeholders and the general public within their proposal.

### Identification of Alternatives

The Study should consider the 2018 SEMPO Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan while developing and describing potential alternative routes and alignments for extending existing trail infrastructure as well as proposed new trail developments and connections. This process is intended to culminate in the delivery of a document that identifies and elaborates on these potential alternatives.

### Evaluation Criteria

Well-defined criteria and method of analysis will be used to guide the evaluation of alternatives. This stage should result in a deliverable describing the thought process behind and method that will be used to select a preferred route. In response to the solicitation,

consultants should provide a general description of the criteria and method that they anticipate using to analyze and evaluate the potential alternatives. Sample criteria may include safety, directness, consistency with other segments of the trail, environmental concerns, and cost, but many others are possible. Criteria may be qualitative, quantitative, or (most likely) a mixture of both. The method should be clearly described and documented before the evaluation of alternatives occurs.

### Alternatives Evaluation and Recommendation Development

After the Steering Committee reaches an agreement on the proposed criteria and analytical approach, the study will move forward to analyze and assess potential alternate routes. This phase is expected to yield a deliverable that offers a detailed description of the preferred route and outlines the methodology employed to identify and evaluate it.

It is important to emphasize that this project is not intended to produce an intricate design of the preferred route. Instead, it is acknowledged that a comprehensive project development process, including preliminary engineering, will be required subsequent to the completion of this study. Nevertheless, the study should supply relevant information about the route, encompassing facility types and characteristics for each segment, infrastructure requirements, their approximate locations, construction methods, and any other pertinent details related to route planning. Additionally, the study should furnish planning-level cost estimates for alternative alignments, breaking down the costs of specific elements or segments within the routes.

In response to this solicitation, consultants shall describe the anticipated process for conducting this evaluation. Consultants shall also describe how the results of their analysis and the feedback received from the Steering Committee will lead to recommendations for a most feasible and preferred route.

### Implementation

An implementation plan shall be developed by the Consultant as a blueprint to meet the needs and achieve the vision, goals, and objectives of the Study. The implementation plan should include prioritization of policies and projects including proposed timeframes and strategies. In addition, the Consultant should expect to provide planning level cost estimates, identification of property acquisition (if applicable), and conceptual layouts.

### Draft Report

The Consultant shall provide a draft report for review by SEMPO members and the public. The draft report should be easy to understand by the public while providing useful information for local decision-makers. Tables, photos, maps, and graphics will be necessary to make the report informative and user-friendly.

### Final Report

Once comments on the draft report have been received and addressed, the Consultant shall assemble the final report. The final report shall be provided to the SEMPO Board of Directors in electronic and print format. An original editing file in a format such as InDesign, Word, or other program file used to layout and produce the final report, shall be provided to SEMPO. The report shall include an appendix containing all meeting summaries, public engagement details, and other highly technical analyses.

### Data Deliverables

Data collected and GIS files developed as part of this Study shall be provided to SEMPO upon project completion. Of key importance to SEMPO member entities are the GIS file(s) showing recommended investments and improvements. Consultant proposals, which demonstrate an ability to create public facing GIS maps displaying the identified trail routes and connections, will be prioritized.

### Executive Summary

Upon completion of the Study, the Consultant will develop an executive summary which relays all pertinent information in a user-friendly format. The summary should be concise and graphic-heavy, highlighting all major recommendations of the Study, including brief summaries relating to issues identified, community engagement, plan development, vision and goals, and implementation strategies. The executive summary may also be used as a tool by SEMPO member entities to provide simple, clear, and site-specific information related to future development projects and/or grant applications. An online/GIS compilation of key information or map elements is highly desirable.

### Adoption Process

As part of the study's adoption process, the consultant team will prepare and present the study's findings and recommendations to the SEMPO Board of Directors and committees prior to the SEMPO Board of Director's consideration of adoption.

### Plan Delivery

Upon adoption of the Study, the consultant will be responsible for providing a high-resolution document in **PDF format and eight (8) bound hard copies**. All files generated to produce the study shall be made available to SEMPO upon completion of the study.

## PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

All proposals must include the following information:

1. **Proposal Length:** Proposals shall not exceed 30 pages, including the cover sheet.
2. **Cover Sheet:** The cover sheet shall list the name of the Consultant with names, email addresses and phone numbers of persons who may be contacted to answer questions. In

addition, the cover sheet shall state who prepared the submittal and how they can be reached including phone number and email address.

3. **Project Understanding:** Provide a brief narrative explaining the team's understanding of the project goals and scope. Highlight the perceived unique opportunities, challenges, and priorities of this project and how the team will address them.
4. **Project Team and Qualifications:** The Consultant qualification information shall include:
  - a. **Firm Information:** Provide information on firm size, years in business, locations, and primary services. Include the same information for any subcontractors on this project.
  - b. **Project Team:** Provide a project organizational chart showing the proposed team structure for this contract. Identify the project manager, key personnel, and their roles and responsibilities on the project. Include short bios addressing knowledge and experience related to these roles and responsibilities. Clearly identify the roles of any subcontractors.
  - c. **Representative Projects:** Describe specific experience of both individuals and firms with projects of a similar type that demonstrate the knowledge and experience of the personnel proposed in the areas identified in the scope of work. Describe the client/community, project, location, common issues, and links to electronic versions of work products, if possible.
  - d. **References:** Identify at least three references for similar projects completed by the personnel proposed for this project. Include the client, contact person, mailing address, email address, and telephone number for each reference.
  - e. **Resume:** Provide professional resumes for all personnel proposed for work on this project in an appendix.
5. **Project Approach:** Describe the team's approach to the project's scope of work. Include information on methods, meetings, deliverables, and other project related information for the tasks. Include any project approaches or ideas not included in the scope of work that would be applied to this project to enhance the quality of the team's services. The Consultant is encouraged to offer additional insights and may propose modifications to the scope of work identified above.
6. **Project Management:** Describe the team's project management approach including coordination across disciplines and managing the work of subcontractors, if applicable. Describe the methods and timeline of communication the team will use with SEMPO staff and other parties. Describe the team's expectations and requirements of SEMPO and its partners in order to effectively perform the services outlined in the RFP.
7. **Schedule:** Provide a project schedule identifying milestones and completion dates. Provide a summary of personnel workload and availability to complete this project within the desired schedule.

8. **Project Budget:** In FY 2024 (from July 1 to June 30), SEMPO has **designated \$125,000** for the completion of this study. Proposals should be based on this budgetary allocation, and submissions should refrain from proposing any study that cannot be executed within this specified amount.

**All responses are due Friday, December 1, 2023 by 4:00 pm CST.** Proposals shall be submitted electronically in PDF format via email sent to [amcelroy@cityofcape.org](mailto:amcelroy@cityofcape.org), uploaded to Consultant's FTP site with download access and instructions emailed, or placed on a USB drive and delivered to:

Southeast Metropolitan Planning Organization  
C/O Alex McElroy, SEMPO Executive Director  
City of Cape Girardeau  
44 North Lorimier Street  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

## SELECTION PROCESS

The proposal evaluation process will be managed by the Steering Committee, comprised of SEMPO members, staff, and other representatives as determined. The Steering Committee will employ a standardized scoring system to evaluate each consultant proposal. The scoring system's criteria and weighting for initial reviews and potential interviews are as follows:

### Point Range Legend

30 – 21 = excellent      20-11 = adequate      10 – 1 = fair      0 = inadequate

1. **Experience and Technical Competence (30 points max):** Rate the qualifications of employees designated to this specific job, for example, assigning between 30 and 21 points for the most qualified personnel. Those rated between 20 and 11 points are considered good but lack extensive experience in the particular type of service desired. A value of 10 or less points is assigned to firms with well-qualified personnel who have no experience in the proposed area of work.
2. **Capacity and Capability (30 points max):** Evaluate the consulting firm for experience on similar and related types of work it has performed. For example, assigning between 30 and 21 points is for many years of established practice in the proposed type of work and related studies. A value of between 20 and 11 points may be assigned for above average experience, while 10 or less points may be given for experience adequate to perform the contract. The points for a firm with little operating experience in the selected field may be reduced further. Reduce the rating for a level of personnel inadequate to handle the firm's indicated workload. The submitted schedule will also be evaluated as part of this portion of the rankings.

3. **Past Record and Performance (30 points max):** Rate the adequacy of firms that have previously performed work under contract in related fields, assigning a maximum and reducing the points for less experience.

SEMPO expects to complete an initial assessment of the proposals by **December 15, 2023**. Following this initial review, a short list of firms may be invited to engage in scheduled interviews for further evaluation.

The Consultant with the highest total score will be asked to enter into negotiations for a contract based on their proposal. If a contract cannot be successfully negotiated with the first selected Consultant, then negotiations with that Consultant will be terminated and SEMPO will ask the Consultant with the next highest score to enter into negotiations. This process will continue until a contract is successfully negotiated or said process is suspended by SEMPO.

The City of Cape Girardeau, Missouri (City) provides staffing and administrative services for SEMPO. By submitting a proposal, Consultants acknowledge and agree that if they are selected to enter into contract negotiations, such contract will be between that Consultant and the City, and all financial transactions will be conducted by the City on behalf of SEMPO.

SEMPO reserves the right to follow any of the below listed courses of action if an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated:

- To reject any and all proposals;
- To consider alternatives;
- To waive irregularities;
- To re-solicit proposals;
- To accept any proposals deemed most advantageous to SEMPO;
- To obtain information concerning any and all Consultants from any source;
- To request additional information and/or clarification from any and all proposers to this RFP;
- To approve any substitute personnel or terminate services at SEMPO's sole discretion if the selected Consultant undergoes a change of key personnel; and
- To seek new submissions when such a procedure is reasonable and in the best interests of SEMPO.

SEMPO operates its programs and services without regard to race, sex, religion, age, national origin, or disability, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended. The successful Consultant shall provide written assurance that no person shall be denied employment or fair treatment, or in any way discriminated against, on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, or disability. In addition, since federal funds will be used to finance this project, the successful Consultant shall comply with all civil rights and federal contracting requirements applicable to

transportation-related projects. For more information, refer to the attached Federally Required Contract Terms.

The City and SEMPO are not liable for any cost incurred by any person or firm responding to this RFP or for any other cost incurred prior to the negotiation of the contract and the issuance of a Notice to Proceed.

The submission of a proposal shall be prima facie evidence that the consultant has full knowledge of the scope, nature, quantity, and quality of work to be performed.

After the selection process, the SEMPO staff shall negotiate on behalf of SEMPO and the City, a contract based on the fees and fee structure as submitted in the proposal. SEMPO reserves the right to delete elements or expand the scope of the contract based on the negotiated fees at the time of contract letting.

Consultants submitting proposals are advised to include any information that is relevant to this project given the aforementioned criteria.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Minimum Effective Period of Proposal**

All proposals are required to remain in effect for at least 120 days from the date submitted to SEMPO for review. This should be taken into account during budget preparations.

### **Public Information**

All information, documentation, and other materials submitted in response to this solicitation are considered non-confidential and/or non-proprietary and are subject to public disclosure in accordance with the Missouri Open Meetings and Records Law.

### **Lobbying Restriction**

Consultant acknowledges and accepts that from the Date of Issuance of the RFP until a final decision has been made by the City, it will not take any action, make any effort, or support or engage others on its behalf to take actions or efforts with attempt to influence the decision making process for this RFP in the favor of the Consultant. This includes direct contact with the City Council, City Manager, and City staff of the City of Cape Girardeau, members of the SEMPO Board of Directors, members of the Committee, sub-recipients, and others who may be engaged in the selection process, except for the point of contact, Alex McElroy. Additionally, the Consultant acknowledges and accepts that it will not attempt to use public communication such as the news media, social media, etc. as a means of attempting to influence the RFP evaluation or decision-making process. Any Consultant violating any of the aforementioned conditions is subject to immediate disqualification from consideration.

### **Acceptance of Evaluation Methodology**

By submitting a proposal, Consultant accepts the evaluation process and acknowledges and accepts that the determination of the “most qualified” firm(s) will require subjective judgments by SEMPO.

#### **Amendments to this RFP**

Should it become necessary to amend this RFP for any reason, SEMPO reserves the right to re-issue this RFP as amended and to provide reasonable notification to parties of interest.

#### **Public Records**

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of SEMPO and as such, they will be public records in accordance with the Missouri Open Meetings and Records Law.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

In order to avoid any potential conflict of interest, the Consultant agrees during the term of this Agreement not to undertake any activities which could conflict directly or indirectly with the interest of SEMPO. Consultant shall immediately advise SEMPO of any such conflict of interest. SEMPO shall make the ultimate determination as to whether a conflict of interest exists.

#### **Debarment**

By submitting a proposal, Consultant certifies that it is not currently debarred from submitting proposals for contracts issued by any political subdivision or agency of the State of Missouri or the Federal government.

#### **Questions Regarding This RFP**

Any questions concerning this RFP should be directed to Alex McElroy, SEMPO Executive Director, at (573) 339-6734 or email [amcelroy@cityofcapegirardeau.org](mailto:amcelroy@cityofcapegirardeau.org). If there are changes that might affect the preparation of the Consultants’ submissions, all Consultants will be advised. Any Consultant that wishes to withdraw from consideration after submitting a proposal must submit a written notification to Alex McElroy via email at [amcelroy@cityofcape.org](mailto:amcelroy@cityofcape.org) or via mail at the City of Cape Girardeau, 44 North Lorimier Street Cape Girardeau, MO 63701.

#### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

For persons with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact:

Southeast Metropolitan Planning Organization

C/O Alex McElroy, Executive Director

City of Cape Girardeau

44 North Lorimier Street

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

(573) 339-6734

[amcelroy@cityofcape.org](mailto:amcelroy@cityofcape.org)

Requests for accommodations should be made at least one week prior to the meeting, activity, or function.

**Thank You For Your Interest In This Project!**