

Memorandum

To: Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, and
Christine Jacobs, Interim Executive Director

From: Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Transportation Planner

Date: April 1, 2021

Topic: Albemarle County Transit Expansion – Selection Committee Decision

Purpose:

The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) received a grant award for \$106,215 (with half coming from Department of Rail and Public Transit and the other half coming from Albemarle County as local match) to complete an Albemarle County transit expansion feasibility study and implementation plan. This project will investigate and recommend service improvements to population and employment centers within Albemarle County, particularly the Pantops area, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, and along Route 29 North (from Albemarle County/City of Charlottesville limits to Boulders Road). Innovative transit options that emphasize accessibility and responsiveness to customer needs should be investigated alongside traditional fixed-route options.

This project will rely heavily upon the skills and expertise of an experienced consulting team to conduct a needs assessment of the study area and local transit resources, identify at least two transit service options for each study area, conduct public engagement and meet with stakeholders to determine a preferred transit service option for each study area, and then develop an implementation plan for the preferred transit service for each study area. These tasks were detailed in a scope of work included in a request for proposals to all DRPT bench contracting firms.

This memorandum describes how staff determined which consulting team would be best suited for collaboration on this project.

Background:

On February 3rd, 2021, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission staff requested proposals from the four DRPT bench contractors that specialize in transit planning – KFH Group, Kimley Horn, AECOM, and Michael Baker. Proposals were received from Kimley Horn and Michael Baker (with Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning as their sub-consultant) and reviewed by a team composed of Trevor Henry (Albemarle County Assistant County Executive), Kevin Mcdermott (Albemarle County Planning Manager), Siri Russell (Albemarle County Director of Equity and Inclusion), and Jessica Hersh-Ballering (TJPDC). Reviewers independently scored the proposals and then met to discuss; scoresheets have been kept on file.

Proposals were scored from zero to fifty points in total with those points distributed among four categories:

1. The vendor's **understanding of the project scope** (0-15 points);
2. The proposed **project team**, its qualifications and ability to complete the proposed workload in the designated time frame (0-15 points);
3. The proposed **plans or methodology** to perform all project tasks (0-15 points);
4. The vendor's **past performance** (0-5 points).

Scoring indicated that Michael Baker International along with their sub-consultant Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning have the strongest proposal. In discussions during the scoring, staff felt that the Michael Baker/Foursquare team had a more thorough understanding of the scope of the project and the study areas and more clearly indicated a willingness to consider non-fixed route transit service options. Furthermore, staff felt that the Michael Baker/Foursquare team had a larger and more diverse skill set that included specialized data scientists; this will be helpful for keeping the project on its tight timeline. Finally, the estimated cost of the project was within the project's budget.

Contract negotiations with Michael Baker/Foursquare will need to clarify that the implementation plan technical memo deliverable will be received in time for the appropriate agency to apply for funding to commence service operation in FY23. There were no other concerns noted among staff during scoring discussions.

The project team from Michael Baker and Foursquare is as follows:

- Josh Diamond (Foursquare) – Principal-in-charge
- Boris Palchik (Foursquare) – Project Manager
- Jeremy Strauss (Foursquare) – Senior Transportation Planner
- Rebecca Martin (Foursquare) – Transportation Planner and Data Scientist
- Rebecca Slocum (Foursquare) – Transportation Planner and Data Scientist
- Nick Britton (Michael Baker) – Project Manager
- Ryan Ferguson (Michael Baker) – Project Manager
- Jacob Thornton (Michael Baker) – GIS Specialist
- Catherine Koval (Michael Baker) – Planning/Engineering
- Joshua Mallow (Michael Baker) – Urban Planner

The consultants estimated that their total cost would be \$89,826 and the project would be completed by end of March 2022.

Recommendation:

TJPDC staff recommend that the Planning District Commission support the resolution to approve contract negotiations/commitment with Michael Baker and Foursquare for the Albemarle County transit expansion feasibility study and implementation plan.

Please send any questions to Jessica Hersh-Ballering at jballering@tjpd.org.