

# **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

## **City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge Master Plan**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge is accepting qualifications from professional consulting parties to assist in the preparation of a new Master Plan. The consultant and planning staff will work together to create a comprehensive plan and accompanying communication and interagency coordination plans to address the impact of growth and development in the City of Baton Rouge – Parish of East Baton Rouge. This scope of services details the tasks to be performed by the consultant.

The Mayor-President believes that this is the appropriate time to initiate an overall update to the existing Master Plan to provide direction in the areas of land use, infrastructure, community services, growth management, and quality of life for the community. The goals and objectives set forth in the new Master Plan will be implemented by modification to the Unified Development Code and other development-related ordinances where appropriate.

### **II. PROJECT OVERSIGHT**

#### **Administrative Committee**

The Administrative Committee, appointed by the Mayor-President, was responsible for the initial recommendations to develop the process to guide the update to the Master Plan. Administrative Committee members were selected based upon their leadership activities in the community and their understanding of the social and political context of planning in Baton Rouge.

#### **Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee, appointed by the Mayor-President, includes representatives from many of the major stakeholder organizations, community groups, and neighborhoods throughout the City-Parish. The Master Plan Advisory Committee consists of individuals who are committed to the community and who can provide broad policy direction on the future physical development and quality of life for the City-Parish.

The mission of the Advisory Committee is to facilitate, provide recommendations and oversee the preparation of the Master Plan for the City-Parish. The Master Plan Advisory Committee is committed to providing a forum for meaningful public participation throughout the planning process.

The Advisory Committee will make recommendations to the Planning Commission, the City-Parish Metropolitan Council and the Mayor-President. By representing the broad interests of the community, the Advisory Committee will help to facilitate the formal review and adoption of the updated Master Plan by the Planning Commission and Metropolitan Council.

#### **Important Dates**

The following dates are intended to provide a guideline for this process, and are subject to change.

RFQ available (*November 3, 2008*)

- Pre-proposal meeting in Mayor's Office (*October 13, 2008*)
- Deadline for submitting questions and submitting email for RFQ updates (*November 24, 2008*)
- Deadline for Qualifications (*December 18, 2008*)

Notification of short list (top 3 teams) (*January 15, 2009*)

- Deadline for Proposals (*February 26, 2009*)
- Consultant interviews (*February 26, 2009*)
- Selection announced (*March 5, 2009*)

## Questions

Questions regarding this RFQ should be addressed in writing and sent to: Office of the Planning Commission, Attn: Troy L. Bunch, Planning Director, P.O. Box 1471, Baton Rouge, LA 70821 OR via email at [tbunch@brgov.com](mailto:tbunch@brgov.com). All telephone inquiries should be made to (225) 389-3144.

## III. BACKGROUND

### Project Area

East Baton Rouge Parish and the City of Baton Rouge are located in the southeast area of the State of Louisiana. The City is situated on the Eastern bank of the Mississippi River along the Istrouma Bluffs. The Parish itself is bounded by the Mississippi River on the west and southwest, by Bayou Manchac on the south, by the Amite River on the east and by East Feliciana Parish on the north. The average elevation is 19 feet above sea level, total area is 470 square miles or 302,144 square acres, land area is 455 square miles, water area is 15 square miles. Fifty (50) percent of all Parish land area is within the 100 Year Flood Plain.

The City of Baton Rouge is located primarily in the central eastern portion of the Parish, but also stretches into the southern area of the Parish. The average elevation is 46 feet above sea level, total area is 76.5 square miles or approximately 49,000 square acres, land area is 74.3 square miles, and the water area is 2.2 square miles.

Transportation for the Parish includes highways, bus, an airport, and access to port facilities on the Mississippi River. About 1,809 miles of roadway currently exist in East Baton Rouge Parish, including three (3) sections of interstate and various state and local highways. A study is being conducted to investigate the feasibility of an interstate loop that would pass through portions of East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston and Iberville Parishes. Public transit is provided in part by the Capital Area Transportation System (CATS). There are 17 routes, with some buses providing bike racks. Additionally, a trolley bus services portions of the downtown area. Bus service between Baton Rouge and other areas is provided by Greyhound and LA Swift bus services.

The Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport is located in the northwest portion of East Baton Rouge Parish, about five (5) miles north of downtown Baton Rouge. The airport is adjacent to US Interstate 110 and surrounded by three (3), four-lane highways, LA Highway 67; LA Highway 408; and Veterans Boulevard. Five (5) air carriers serve the airport with a volume of over a million passengers each year.

The City of Baton Rouge–Parish of East Baton Rouge is home to two (2) major universities, state government offices, Exxon Mobil facilities and the Port of Baton Rouge, which is fourth in the nation in waterborne commerce. The City-Parish is jointly administered by the Mayor-President and a 12-member Metropolitan Council. The Cities of Baker, Central, and Zachary are incorporated with their own governing boards. The Office of the Planning Commission guides growth and development for the Parish, and coordinates implementation of the comprehensive plan.

The Parish is home to a significant amount of wetlands area and waterbodies and impacts an even larger wetland area. Louisiana water bodies are significantly impaired and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is currently developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for permissible discharge.

### City-Parish Government General

The City of Baton Rouge - Parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana are managed by a single, consolidated form of government. This form of government efficiently combines all executive, legislative, and judicial functions for both the City and the Parish under one umbrella organization, thereby eliminating duplication of services and functions, as well as providing a streamlined and efficient system of governing. This consolidation was accomplished in 1947, through a referendum of the citizens. The Master Plan governs future development for all areas within the City of Baton Rouge, and all unincorporated areas of East Baton Rouge Parish. This does not include the cities of Baker, Central, or Zachary.

### Role of the Planning Commission and Staff

The City-Parish Planning Commission was created by the Metropolitan Council in 1949 as a single body charged with the power to enforce and enact land development regulations. The Planning Commission is authorized by state law and the Metropolitan Charter to guide the physical growth of Baton Rouge and the Parish through comprehensive planning and the establishment of land use controls. The Commission consists of nine members, seven appointed for a five-year term, on a rotating basis, by the Metropolitan Council. Four of these appointees are selected from residents inside the city limits, and three are selected from residents outside the city limits. Of the remaining two members, one Commissioner is a representative from the Office of the Mayor-President and the other Commissioner is a representative from the Metropolitan Council. Any action taken by the Planning Commission, as it relates to the creation or update of the comprehensive plan, must be ratified by the Metropolitan Council.

### **Role of Metropolitan Council**

The East Baton Rouge Parish Metropolitan Council, comprised of one member elected from each of the twelve Council Districts in East Baton Rouge Parish, is responsible for implementing the legislative policy of the City-Parish government. This includes enacting new legislation and approving the appropriation and allocation of funds.

### **Role of Mayor-President**

The Mayor-President is the Mayor of the City of Baton Rouge and the President of East Baton Rouge Parish. The Mayor-President sets the government's agenda, vision and manages the day-to-day operation of the government. The Mayor-President appoints many, not all, department heads and directs the creation of executive policies and programs.

### **Comprehensive Master Plan Requirements**

As required by the Plan of Government, the Master Plan guides the physical development of the metropolitan area for the City of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish. The Master Plan is required to include, but is not limited to, the following elements: (1) a future land-use element; (2) a traffic circulation and mass-transit element; (3) a wastewater, solid waste, and drainage element; (4) a conservation and environmental resources element; (5) a recreation and open space element; (6) a housing element; (7) a public services and facilities element, which includes, but is not limited to, a capital improvement program; (8) a public buildings and related facilities element; (9) development and redevelopment; (10) health and human service element; and (11) methods of financing to implement recommendations. Each element must include policy recommendations for its implementation and shall be implemented, in part, by the adoption and enforcement of appropriate land development regulations. The Metropolitan Council is responsible for recommending methods to finance the policies created by the Master Plan.

The Master Plan requires that no subdivision, street, park or public way, ground or space, drainage, building development or structure, whether publicly or privately owned, may be in conflict with the Master Plan or Zoning Ordinance of the City-Parish. Amendments to the Master Plan require a 2/3 vote of the Metropolitan Council.

All land development regulations including zoning and mapping, subdivision regulations, roadway planning, and all public improvements, public facilities and all City-Parish regulatory actions relating to land use, subdivision and development approval must be consistent with the Master Plan, element or portion thereof as adopted.

### **Existing Comprehensive Master Plan (Horizon Plan)**

The current 20-year Master Plan for the City-Parish, hereafter referred to as the Horizon Plan, was adopted by the Metropolitan Council in January 1992, and became effective in April 1992. The Plan was created with substantial citizen involvement and is the "blueprint for the future." Economic vitality, a high quality of living and an efficient use of community resources are important goals of the Horizon Plan.

The Horizon Plan focuses on seven (7) major planning elements listed and described below:

1. Land Use (in relation to transportation, housing, jobs, etc.);
2. Transportation (recommend Land Use and Transportation relationship element, multi-modal transportation);
3. Wastewater, Solid Waste and Drainage (Infrastructure);
4. Conservation and Environmental Resources (Environment and Natural Resources);
5. Recreation and Open Space;
6. Housing (Housing Choice, Location, and Quality); and
7. Public Services (Concurrency in Public Service Development).

### **Substantial Changes**

The City-Parish has experienced unprecedented growth because of the population shifts that followed Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita in 2005. Immediately following the hurricanes, the population of Baton Rouge doubled. This rapid population increase resulted in immediate demands on housing, public safety, and transportation. Significant opportunities and needs remain in all these areas, and must be addressed by the Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

## **IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **Advisory Services Panel Recommendations**

The City-Parish engaged the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to provide an Advisory Services Panel. This panel focused on strategies to identify the elements necessary to serve as the basis for this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to update the existing Master Plan (Horizon Plan). The ULI Advisory Services Panel stated that the Planning Consultant responsible for updating the Master Plan should have the ability to create a Master Plan with a “strong vision which will provide the direction, clarity, and purpose Baton Rouge needs to become *America’s Next Great City*.”

The ULI Advisory Services Panel emphasized that “implementation holds the key to a successful plan”. The Panel identified the following keys to successful plan implementation:

1. extensive community involvement and education;
2. thorough mapping and understanding of opportunities and constraints to development. A map to identify the best and least likely areas for development, prior to the preparation of any land use, concepts would be essential;
3. priority of action items, based on the Vision of the City-Parish;
4. constant and careful monitoring of the Plan as it is implemented;
5. periodic, cautious amendment of the Plan; and
6. appropriate and adequate resources provided to implement the plan goals.

The selected Planning Consultant must develop a Master Plan that incorporates all of these keys to successful implementation. Also, the Panel identified the need to focus on comprehensive transportation planning and interagency coordination. Presently, plan implementation is coordinated by the Planning Commission as the lead agency for the existing Master Plan. Additionally, the new Master Plan must be proactive, not reactive or “Zoning driven”.

The panel stressed the importance of “crafting a clear vision and creating a simple, usable plan with clear implementation strategies. The plan should be both visionary and simple to understand and implement. The plan should clearly state a vision, prioritize implementation measures, and recommend specific incentives to achieve the vision.”

## Transportation Element

The ULI Panel recognizes the importance of ensuring a very in-depth scope of work related to transportation. The Transportation Element shall address all modes of transportation. To ensure a comprehensive approach, it is essential that the selected planning consultant coordinate data sharing between the Baton Rouge Loop, the Baton Rouge Green Light Plan, and Plan Baton Rouge 2.

This collaboration should result in the development of the following:

- I. A local, multi-modal traffic model. At a minimum, this traffic model should accurately represent current traffic patterns for vehicles and transit on the entire road network and be able to project future transportation demands based on various land use scenarios and development proposals. Ideally, this traffic model will also include variables that consider an area's existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle qualities, and other policy variables that impact transportation demand, such as parking pricing. The model should also integrate evacuation and truck routes.
- II. Policies and Tools
  - a. Review the set of ordinances, standards, manuals, specifications for street designs used by DPW that may need to be brought up-to-date to accomplish the transportation goals set forth in the comprehensive plan
  - b. Complete Streets planning and design
  - c. Evaluate and Improve Traffic and Sewer Impact Fees
    - i. Assessment
    - ii. Usage
    - iii. Waivers and Incentives
  - d. Evaluate development review process in implementing transportation elements
- III. An analysis of local and regional transportation networks
  - a. Obtain and inventory existing transportation plans:
    - i. **City/Parish:** Major Street Plan, Green Light Plan, other planned improvements, Road Rehab Program, Development-Related Projects, etc.
    - ii. **State/Federal:** TIP (MPO), STIP (DOTD), State Long Range Plan (DOTD), Regional Long Range Plan (MPO), etc.
  - b. Inventory other potential and funded transportation projects / studies (I-10 widening, commuter rail to New Orleans, Loop, etc.)
  - c. Obtain existing and proposed transit operations and plans
  - d. Identify Freight Corridors and future needs, etc.
  - e. Identify Evacuation Routes and their significance to the plan
  - f. Identify Emergency Vehicle Operations and future needs
- IV. Analyze and Prioritize Future Projects
  - a. Identify solutions for future transportation demand
    - i. Regional commuter shed (Ascension, Livingston, West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, etc)
    - ii. Major Transportation Corridors and future transit corridors
    - iii. Arterials, Collectors, Local Streets, etc.
    - iv. Develop regional transit plan
    - v. Identify needs not met by existing plans
- V. Coordinate and Develop Strategy for Recreation Corridors
  - a. Creation of a bicycle/pedestrian master plan to be incorporated into drainage ways and into the overall transportation model
  - b. Corridor preservation strategies and funding

- VI. Develop Connectivity Strategy and Access Management Plan
  - a. Existing System and network completion
  - b. Requirements for future roads (enforcement)
  
- VII. Integrate environmental sustainability with transportation solutions
  - a. Materials and best practices – BMPs for stormwater
  - b. Air Quality – non-attainment issues
  - c. Preservation of the natural eco-systems
  
- VIII. Coordinate with major infrastructure improvement program – to be developed as part of the new Comprehensive Plan
  
- IX. Implementation and Funding Plan
  - a. Schedule
  - b. Prioritization
  - c. Potential Funding Sources
  - d. Presentations

The deliverable is to be a Sustainable Regional Comprehensive Transportation Plan that integrates into the Land Use Master Plan with prioritized future projects. The creation of the multi-modal model and a comprehensive integrated transportation plan will assist key agencies in their planning and review processes and in assessing which projects best reduce congestion, minimize vehicle miles traveled, reduce energy consumption, enhance air quality, enhance pedestrian/bicycle safety, and reduce travel time. The model can play a key role in restructuring transit services to provide better service and attract more riders. Creation of the model will require coordination and data-sharing between the MPO, CATS and DPW.

### **Public Participation**

Public participation and outreach are critical to the Master Plan process. From the outset of the planning process, the citizenry must be thoroughly involved and educated about the process to encourage proactive plan development and implementation. The consultant will be responsible for developing a user-focused communication plan, conducting public meetings and disseminating information about updates during the comprehensive plan process. This includes preparing agendas and other materials required for the meetings, attending the meetings, and leading the discussion to ascertain the consensus of the group. The outcome of these meetings is to generate broad community engagement, foster ownership of plan among all stakeholders, and encourage public and private leadership to shape a bold and focused Parish-wide vision. The City-Parish Planning Commission will dedicate several key staff members to assist the consultant in the set up, facilitation and follow up for any public meetings that are created by this update process.

## V. CURRENT AND PAST STUDIES AND PLANS

Any effective comprehensive plan will ensure consistency with plans already in place and will re-evaluate and build upon their objectives.

- [ULI PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT \(LINK\)](#)
- [HORIZON PLAN 2007 FIVE YEAR UPDATE \(FIFTEEN YEAR\)](#)
- [GREEN LIGHT PLAN](#)
- [BATON ROUGE LOOP](#)
- [PLAN BATON ROUGE 1 and 2](#)
- [LOUISIANA SPEAKS](#)
- [BATON ROUGE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION CAPITAL AREA PATHWAY PROJECT](#)
- [CAPITAL REGION PLANNING COMMISSION TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN](#)
- [SMART GROWTH AUDIT](#)
- [BATON ROUGE MAJOR STREET PLAN](#)
- [BATON ROUGE AREA FOUNDATION](#)
- [CENTER FOR PLANNING EXCELLENCE](#)
- [LSU MASTER PLAN](#)
- [SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AND A&M COLLEGE AT BATON ROUGE STRATEGIC PLAN](#)
- [BATON ROUGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

## VI. CONTRACT DELIVERABLES

The final deliverables may potentially include, but are not limited to:

1. A Master Plan for the City of Baton Rouge–Parish of East Baton Rouge with all elements and a presentation of the Plan;
2. Recommended changes to the Unified Development Code as a mechanism to implement the long-range goals of the Master Plan;
3. The creation of all plans, models, and studies called for under the Transportation Element section of this RFQ;
4. An interactive web site for the dual purpose of marketing the Master Plan and receiving input about the Master Plan;
5. A communication strategy and public education plan for the purpose of marketing the new Master Plan and engaging the public in its implementation; and
6. An interagency coordination plan to implement the Master Plan. The implementation plan should include, but is not limited to, the following Agencies:
  - East Baton Rouge Department of Public Works;
  - Parish Attorney’s Office;
  - East Baton Rouge Schools;
  - East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority;
  - Capital Region Planning Commission;
  - Metropolitan Planning Commission;
  - Louisiana Statewide Office of Planning;
  - Louisiana Recovery Authority;
  - Louisiana Department of Transportation;
  - Adjacent Parishes; and
  - State Agencies.

## VII. SUBMISSION DETAILS

### Deadline for Submission

Qualifications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. CST on **December 18, 2008**. Packages should be delivered via UPS, FedEx, or DHL to: Office of the Planning Commission, Attn: Troy L. Bunch, Planning Director, 1755 Florida Street, Third Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

### Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit **ten (10)** copies of a qualifications package that includes the following components:

1. A statement of qualifications, no more than three (3) pages in length summarizing the team for this RFQ and relative experience.
2. Identify project manager and project team members with summaries of education and experience.
3. A statement describing what unique qualifications and experience the applicant(s) brings to this project. Attention should be given to outlining why the applicant(s) wants to be selected for the project, planning approach, what makes them uniquely qualified, and how they propose to ensure constant and efficient communication. The applicant(s) should clearly indicate the individual experience and expertise of all team members.
4. Provide examples of up to three (3) similar projects and references, as well as examples of up to three (3) implementation plans for comprehensive plans developed by the applicant(s). Examples of implementation plans should state if they were prepared by the applicant(s), who they were prepared for, and what means were employed to implement or affect the plan they created.
5. A statement describing how the applicant(s) will identify local experts and encourage their participation for this project.
6. List of references that have the ability to convey the suitability of the applicant(s) for this type of project.
7. An authorized individual representing the applicant(s) must sign the proposal. The signature will indicate certification by the applicant(s) that all information submitted is true and accurate.
8. A timeline for completion of tasks set forth in this RFQ, based on the contract term of eighteen (18) months as specified in this RFQ.

### Selection Criteria

1. Consultant's specialized experience, expertise, and performance in providing similar or related services.
2. Qualifications and experience of the project team.
3. Record of implementation ability via public participation process, plan development, and past plan adoption.
4. Demonstration of experience conducting effective outreach to elected and appointed officials.
5. Knowledge of key planning issues and influences impacting Louisiana and its Parishes.
6. Consultant's overall suitability to provide the required services within the time and budget constraints.
7. Consultant's ability to access, incorporate, and utilize local experts in the creation of this plan. How these experts will be identified and what role they will play in the overall formulation of the plan, must be clearly indicated.
8. Consultant's ability to integrate environmentally and socially sustainable planning principles (such as Smart Growth Principles) into the Master Plan

Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFQ or in making any appearance before the Review Committee are at the respondents' own expense and risk.

### Point-of-Contact

All concerns and questions regarding this RFQ and selection process shall be directed to the individual named herein. Questions concerning terms, conditions and technical specifications shall be directed in writing to: Office of the Planning Commission, Attn: Troy L. Bunch, Planning Director, P.O. Box 1471, Baton Rouge, LA 70821 OR via

email at [tbunch@brgov.com](mailto:tbunch@brgov.com). All telephone inquiries should be made to (225) 389-3144, and should be received no later than **November 24, 2008**.

Any concerns or questions, along with the response and answer, will subsequently be available to all respondents to this RFQ on the Planning Commission's website at <http://brgov.com/dept/planning>.

**Direct contact with the Mayor-President or Office of the Mayor-President, or Metropolitan Council member, or Planning Commission member, or any Administrative Committee or Advisory Committee member is NOT allowed. Any attempts to establish contact with any of the aforementioned individuals will result in disqualification.**