

## Memorandum

**To:** Christine Jacobs, Interim Executive Director

**From:** Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Transportation Planner

**Date:** June 7, 2021

**Topic:** Regional Transit Vision Plan – Selection Committee Decision

### **Purpose:**

The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) received a grant award for \$350,000 (with half coming from Department of Rail and Public Transit, a quarter coming from Albemarle County, and a quarter coming from City of Charlottesville – with the half coming from the localities as local match) to complete a regional transit vision plan. This project will work with local leaders, transit agencies, and a wide variety of stakeholders to collaboratively develop a clear vision for the future of transit in our region.

This project will rely heavily upon the skills and expertise of an experienced consulting team to conduct public engagement to develop a local definition of “high-quality” transit service, conduct land use and transit propensity assessments, make region-wide transit service recommendations, analyze and compare those recommendations to a no-build scenario, and – ultimately – recommend actions the community must take to support the community's vision for high-quality transit. These tasks were detailed in a scope of work included in a request for proposals sent to all DRPT bench contracting firms.

This memorandum describes how the RTP-appointed selection committee determined which consulting team would be best suited for collaboration on this project.

### **Background:**

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, TJPDC staff recommended to the Regional Transit Partnership (RTP) seven individuals who, together, would make a strong selection committee and represent a variety of transit/community interests. The RTP voted to approve the recommended selection committee membership: Trevor Henry (Albemarle County), Chip Boyles (City of Charlottesville), Garland Williams (Charlottesville Area Transit), Randy Parker (Jaunt), Julia Monteith (UVA), Siri Russell (Albemarle County Office of Equity and Inclusion), and Christine Jacobs (TJPDC).

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 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 (with Connetics Transportation Group), Michael Baker (with Foursquare, SIR, and Renaissance Planning Group), and AECOM (with Jarret Walker and EPR). Members of the selection committee independently reviewed the proposals and then met to discuss.

The selection committee indicated that while all proposals were strong, they felt that the Michael Baker and AECOM teams had the strongest project teams with the most experience; they were also pleased with the methodology described by each team. They decided to virtually interview both teams.

Interviews with the Michael Baker and AECOM teams were held on May 25<sup>th</sup>. TJPDC staff worked with the selection committee to develop a set of five questions for the interview, which were shared with the interviewees ahead of their interviews to ensure that their responses were thoroughly informative and

succinct. The selection committee asked one follow-up question by email, to which the consulting teams had 48 hours to respond.

Selection committee members used the proposals and interviews to determine final scores for the consulting teams. Scoresheets have been kept on file.

Proposals were scored from zero to one hundred 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 **plans or methodology** to perform all project tasks (0-50 points);
3. The proposed **project team**, its qualifications and ability to complete the proposed workload in the designated time frame (0-15 points)
4. The vendor's **past performance** (0-20 points).

Scoring indicated that AECOM (along with Jarret Walker and EPR) had the strongest proposal. In discussions, the selection committee felt that the AECOM team had a more thorough understanding of the scope of the project and were committed to a strong, technical approach. Furthermore, they indicated that they liked the combination of experiences on the project team, especially the inclusion of the nationally-recognized Jarret Walker staff and the locally-focused staff from EPR. Finally, the estimated cost of the project was the most affordable.

The only concern from the selection committee is that the estimated project cost, while the most affordable, is slightly above the amount of funding dedicated to consulting costs. This will require either a slight reduction in the project scope and/or additional funds. This will be addressed in conversations with the AECOM consulting team, the Regional Transit Partnership, and/or relevant stakeholders.

The consultants estimated that their total cost would be \$315,861 and the project would be completed by end of June 2022.

Please send any questions to Jessica Hersh-Ballering at [jballerling@tjpd.org](mailto:jballerling@tjpd.org).