



April 7, 2021

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO PREPARE A FEASIBILITY STUDY:
NORTH-CENTRAL ALABAMA INLAND PORT FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. on May 7, 2021.

GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) is seeking the services of a qualified consultant to prepare a feasibility study. The study area consists of four counties in North-central Alabama. The counties include the following: Cullman, Lawrence, Limestone, and Morgan. A map is included with this RFP.

The purpose of the proposed North-central Alabama Inland Port Feasibility Study is to identify and assess multiple sites within the NARCOG three-county region (Morgan, Cullman, and Lawrence Counties) along with sites in Limestone County for the development of an inland port in North-central Alabama to support the aviation and automotive industries.

Primary stakeholders and project partners in this study will include: NARCOG; Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG); the Alabama Mountains, Rivers, and Valleys Resource Conservation & Development Council (AMRV RC&D); the Morgan County Commission; the Cullman County Industrial Development Authority; the Cullman Industrial Development Board; the Lawrence County Industrial Development Board; the Limestone County Economic Development Association; the Morgan County Economic Development Association; and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The NARCOG is the lead agency for this project.

The consultant selected for the project will work under the supervision of the NARCOG Planning Department.

ESTIMATED START DATE: June 1, 2021

BACKGROUND

Originally created in 1966 as the North Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, NARCOG was re-established with its new name and subsequently certified by Governor George Wallace on November 1, 1971. NARCOG operates under the authority of Section 3 of Act No. 1126 of the 1969 Regular Session of the Legislature of Alabama. This Section provides for the creation and operation of regional planning and development commissions which have among their many purposes to “carry on continuous, comprehensive planning for the region, assessing needs, resources, and development opportunities and formulating goals, objectives, policies, and standards to guide physical, economic, and human resource development.” Since its creation, NARCOG has arranged for various designations through partnerships with other Federal and State agencies in order to carry out their joint purposes. These designations include the Local Development District designation by the Appalachian Regional Commission for the purpose of supporting local and regional governments and organizations in the development of community resources, facilities, and infrastructure as well as the development of human resources.

Developing an inland port in the North-central Alabama region is critically important to ensure that the State of Alabama stays competitive within the Southeastern Region of the United States. The Port of Mobile is the only seaport in Alabama with numerous rail systems directly connected to the port. Additionally, the I-65 corridor is the primary north/south spine for moving truck traffic through Alabama from the Port of Mobile. The CSX Railroad roughly parallels the I-65 corridor and intersects with the east/west Norfolk Southern Railroad in Decatur. The NARCOG/TARCOG regions are bisected by the I-65 corridor, which provides great access to an interstate highway that begins in Mobile and terminates just south of Chicago. As the Port of Mobile continues to see an ever-increasing volume of shipping traffic since the expansion of the Panama Canal, the inland port will be an important piece of the solution to efficiently moving goods in and out of the port. NARCOG has developed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the NARCOG Region. The proposed Inland Port Feasibility Study project will implement Goal 4: Investing in Modern Transportation and Infrastructure; Objective 4.5: Promote the Inland Port Initiative for Transportation Based Economic Development; and specifically, Strategy 4.5.1: Seek Funding for a Feasibility Study in our most recent CEDS Update.

On March 17, 2021, the Appalachian Regional Commission awarded the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments a grant in the amount of \$65,000 to support the study. In addition to the ARC funds, state sources will provide \$30,000, and local sources will provide \$25,000.

SCOPE OF WORK

The specific deliverable will be a data-driven North-central Alabama Inland Port Feasibility Study to facilitate the construction of an inland port facility in North-central Alabama. The NARCOG is requesting proposals from, and will procure services from, an expert in this field. The project is anticipated to be completed within four (4) months of contract award.

The proposed scope of work for this project includes:

1. Site identification and site assessment based on various physical and environmental factors such as location, highway and rail access, surrounding land uses, and the estimated cost of development amongst others.
2. Once the most feasible site/or sites is/are identified, a detailed cost estimate, estimated economic impact (cost-benefit analysis), and potential funding sources and partners will be identified as part of the study to aid in the development of an inland port project. It is anticipated that the funding sources and partners will be both public and private.
3. Attend in-person meetings with identified stakeholders in conjunction with site visits.
4. Attend “Kick-Off” presentations to announce the study in the four counties associated with the study.

PRODUCTS and DELIVERABLES

- One (1) bound color copy of draft study for comments
- One (1) unbound color copy of draft study
- One (1) digital copy of draft study (format to be determined, print ready, graphics included)
- Final study copies to include: Twenty (20) bound color copies
- One (1) unbound color copy of final study
- One (1) digital copy of final study (format to be determined, print ready, graphics included)
- Maps (High-resolution presentation maps in .PDF or.JPG format)
- High-resolution presentation graphics

GENERAL FRAMEWORK for PROPOSALS

1. Introduction: A brief introduction of the individual(s) or firm(s) involved in the proposal and relevant experience with similar projects.
2. Work Plan: Proposed work plan for project tasks and work products. The work plan must show how each task outlined in the scope of services is accomplished and the format of the work products. The work plan may show additional suggested tasks or work products that would improve this project's ability to fulfill stated objectives.
3. Personnel: Tasking of personnel including expertise and qualifications of key team members assigned to the project should be included. A project manager should also be identified.
4. Budget: Provide a detailed breakdown of the proposal cost including (at a minimum): Personnel costs by staff person assigned, and general/administrative overhead, travel expenses, subcontractors (if applicable), other direct expenses, fixed fee and total proposal cost.
5. References: Provide a list of past clients for whom the firm has performed work of a similar nature. For each reference include a contact name, phone number, and email address. Include a minimum of four references and no more than seven.
6. Capacity of the respondent: Does the respondent's current workload and future obligations allow for the timely completion of this project.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In order to be considered, a proposal must comply with all requested information/data in this Request for Proposals. Proposals will be judged according to the standards listed below; with a maximum of **100 points** awarded based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications, including relevant experience, financial capacity, and staff capabilities (**30 Points**).
2. Creativity in project design, as well as identification of other work tasks that should be considered (**30 points**).
3. Ability to meet the scheduled requirements (**20 points**).
4. Conformance with submission requirements (**10 points**).
5. Budget (**10 points**).

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) will select the consultant that is deemed by the NARCOG to provide the best overall value. The consultant that is awarded the project must be prepared to then enter into a contract with the NARCOG. The NARCOG expects to begin work on the study by June 1, 2021.

SUBMITTALS

Completed proposals must be received by the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) by May 7, 2021 at 4:00 PM CST. Interested firms shall submit one (1) original paper copy and one (1) reproducible electronic copy of the requested materials. Late proposals will be disqualified. In order to be considered for selection, consultants must submit a complete response to the RFP.

Submissions by mail:

NARCOG
P.O. Box C
Decatur, AL 35602

Submissions by in-person delivery:

NARCOG Office
216 Jackson Street SE
Decatur, AL 35601

Digital submissions by email: robby.cantrell@adss.alabama.gov

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) reserves the right to reject any, and all proposals submitted and to request additional information. Any contract awarded will be awarded to the consultant who, based upon evaluation of all proposals, is determined to have submitted the best proposal, considering both technical factors and cost.

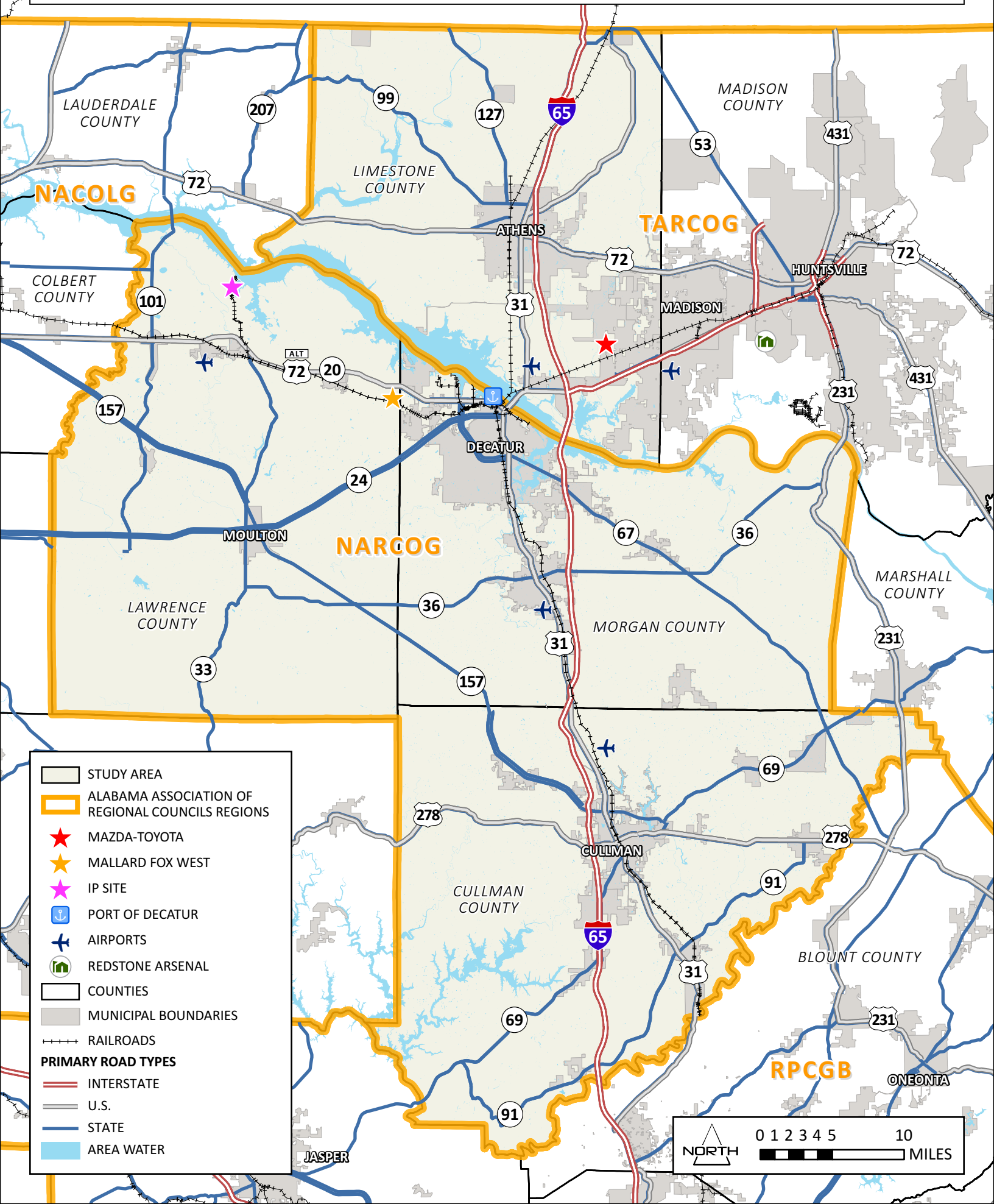
Upon completion and submittal, all materials produced pursuant to this RFP and any subsequent contract will become the sole property of the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG). No copyright or proprietary interest in such products will be retained by the submitting party.

CONTACT INFORMATION

All inquiries and questions for clarification concerning this RFP should be directed to the following person: Robby Cantrell, NARCOG, P.O. Box C, Decatur, AL 35602, Telephone: 256-355-4515, e-mail: robby.cantrell@adss.alabama.gov.

All questions must be in writing and mailed or e-mailed to the contact person. Responses to questions will be in writing and will be available to anyone who inquires to ensure uniformity. The deadline for questions or clarifications is noon, Friday, April 30, 2021.

INLAND PORT STUDY AREA



- STUDY AREA
- ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS REGIONS
- MAZDA-TOYOTA
- MALLARD FOX WEST
- IP SITE
- PORT OF DECATUR
- AIRPORTS
- REDSTONE ARSENAL
- COUNTIES
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
- RAILROADS
- PRIMARY ROAD TYPES**
- INTERSTATE
- U.S.
- STATE
- AREA WATER

