



PAL: Play. Advocate. Live Well.
Request for Qualifications ("RFQ") Addendum
September 24, 2025

The RFQ is hereby amended as follows:

1. Item #4: **Submission Requirements**, Section a(iv.) is hereby deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:
 - iv. Submission of Fee Schedule.

RFQ Informational Questions & Responses

1. **Question: Page 1 of the RFQ states: "*PAL is currently exploring a Construction Manager at Risk hybrid model, where the firm selected under this RFQ would become part of the CMAR team.*"**

Could you please confirm that the consultant team selected under this contract would be a member of the CMAR team, but would not be expected to lead it?

PAL Response: Correct, if ultimately a hybrid CMAR approach is taken with the project delivery, the firm selected for the scope of work outlined in the RFQ would be expected to participate in the CMAR process/team, but would not be the ones expected to lead it.

2. **Question: Has it been made public who won the Community Engagement Strategic Plan and Regional Economic Development and Marketing Plan?**

PAL Response: The proposal submitted jointly by Blue Ion and Tourism Impact Services was the chosen proposal.

3. **Question: What are the additional project elements included in the \$6 million in funding?**

PAL Response: The referenced funding is budgeted to cover design of the trail, NEPA, community engagement, a first phase of construction, and indirect costs.

4. **Question: What segment is slated for construction under the grant?**
 - **Question: How much is slated for construction funding of said segment?**

PAL Response: A first segment of construction will be determined after the design of the trail has been completed.



- 5. Question: Is the May 30, 2027, completion date the date to complete design and permitting or construction of the one segment?**

PAL Response: May 30, 2027 is the goal completion date to complete design and permitting.

- 6. Question: What determines whether the supplemental design tasks in NC move forward under this contract?**

PAL Response: PAL, in partnership with Conserving Carolina, intends to move forward with the supplemental design tasks in NC once funding is secured.

- 7. Question: Due to the request for billable hours, reimbursables, and billing rates: Is it PAL's intention for the consultant to be under an hourly contract versus lump sum billing?**

PAL Response: The RFQ has been amended as referenced above.

- 8. Question: In our experience, structures for information signage and content for information signage have been separated. Are we designing the wayfinding structures (and the hierarchy of those structures)? Or are we just designing the associated informational signage content for said structures?**

PAL Response: PAL and Conserving Carolina are working to incorporate Wayfinding Signage into a Marketing Plan for consistency among signage for both the North and South Carolina portions of the trail. We will ask the selected firm to incorporate the report of best wayfinding practices into design, if appropriate.

- 9. Question: Should lighting design be including for the roadway crossings and/or the entire trail?**

PAL Response: Yes, lighting design should be included for portions of the trail. PAL will rely on public input for contributions to the lighting discussion, as lighting along the entirety of the trail will be unlikely.

- 10. Question: Is Conserving Carolina or another Non-Profit going to prepare the invasive species removal plan or is that included in the scope of work for this project?**

PAL Response: Invasive species removal and clearing of the track will be handled as part of the track removal and salvage of the materials.



11. Question: Is there a potential for Federal or State (NC or SC) transportation dollars to be applied to this project?

PAL Response: The design and engineering component of the South Carolina portion of the trail will be fully funded through a grant to PAL by HUD. However, as we progress, we will continue to look for all potential funding sources to continue with additional phases of construction, including public and private opportunities.

12. Question: For Supplemental Task 2, at the terminus of the project at Bell Park Trail should the bridge rehabilitation be included?

PAL Response: Yes, the bridge rehabilitation over US 176 should be included as the end of the project would terminate across the street from the entrance to Bell Park on the north side of the bridge.

13. Question: Should full NEPA be included assuming Federal Transportation Dollars may be obtained for the project?

PAL Response: NEPA is already underway and will not be included in this contract.

14. Question: Is demolition of the rail tracks included in this scope of work or will it be under a separate contract?

PAL Response: Demolition of the rail tracks is not included in this scope of work and will be under a separate contract.

15. Question: Is there an Obligation Deadline for Construction Funding tied to federal funding for the project?

PAL Response: The Budget Period End Date for the specified funding is August 31, 2032.

16. Question: How many hard copies of the proposal are requested?

PAL Response: Digital submissions are preferred; however, if hard copies are provided, at least three copies are requested.

17. Question: Given the short time frame between responses to questions and the submittal deadline, is there an opportunity to extend the submittal deadline to ensure proper incorporation of PAL response?

PAL Response: It is PAL's intention to get started as soon as possible. The deadline for submissions shall be extended to end of business on October 6th.



18. Question: Is the May 30, 2027 deadline tied to the 15.4 mile segment of trail and/or to all supplemental segments?

PAL Response: The May 30, 2027 deadline is limited to the 15.4 mile segment of trail in South Carolina.

19. Question: Can you clarify what is meant by “Estimate cost for each phase of the project”?

PAL Response: The RFQ has been amended as referenced above.

20. Question: Is pricing (fee) information required for the supplemental tasks?

PAL Response: The RFQ has been amended, and pricing information is not required for the supplemental tasks.

21. Reminder Regarding Submission Schedule and Key Dates

- RFQ Release – August 29, 2025
- Deadline for Submission of Questions – September 19, 2025
- **Deadline for Submission of Qualifications – October 06, 2025**
- Interviews with Firms – October 2025
- Firm Selection and Notification – November 2025
- Anticipated Notice to Proceed – November 2025
- Flexible Timeline for Planning & Feasibility

The Feasibility Study and associated appendices can be found on the Saluda Grade Website at <https://www.saludagraderail.org/>.

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