

**Request for Qualifications to Conduct a
Study of the Wilkinson Boulevard Corridor
for the City of Belmont, Town of Cramerton, and
Town of McAdenville, NC**

Request for Qualifications: City of Belmont Planning and Zoning Department

Project: Wilkinson Boulevard Corridor Study
Project Manager: Adrian Miller
Phone Number: 704-901-2067
Email: amiller@cityofbelmont.org
Date of Advertisement: **February 3, 2014**
Qualification Due Date: **March 3, 2014**

The City of Belmont, Town of Cramerton, and Town of McAdenville invite firms to submit qualifications for consulting services to perform transportation planning, transportation engineering, and landscape architectural and urban design for physical improvements to improve the character and functional design of the Wilkinson Boulevard (US Highways 29 and 74) Corridor. A qualified multi-disciplinary engineering, design, and planning team will be selected based on the proved excellence in preparing studies that encompass the following elements:

- Analysis of existing transportation conditions
- Substantive community and stakeholder engagement
- Analysis of complete street transportation options and impacts
- Urban design and placemaking strategies
- Communication of technical issues to multiple audiences
- Cost estimating, implementation strategies

Consultant services will be required from the date of a fully executed contract through the end of December 2014, or the date of successful completion of performing the tasks and work products defined in this RFQ.

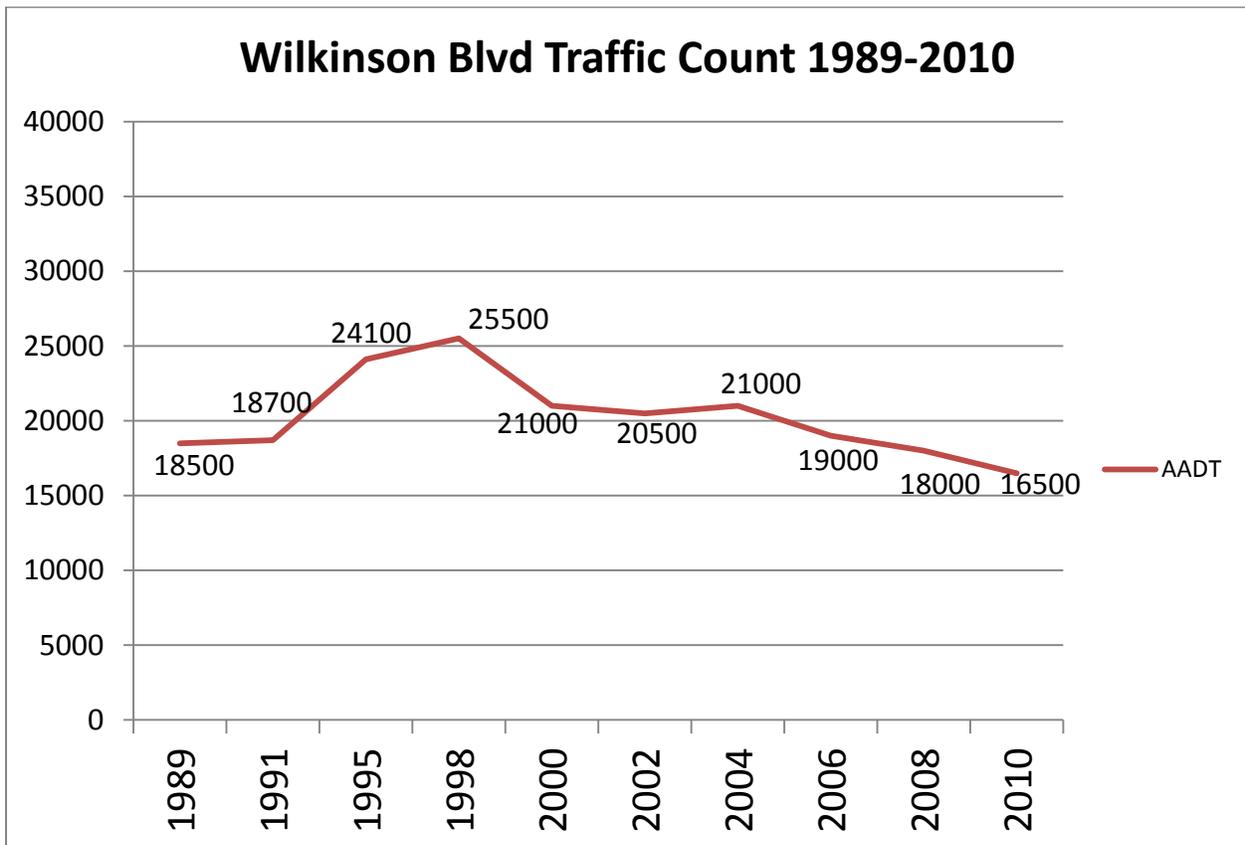
I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Wilkinson Boulevard (US Highway 29/74) runs east-west through the center of Cramerton and Belmont. The highway opened in 1926 and was the first four-lane highway in North Carolina (Tom Hanchett, *Charlotte Observer*, November 2000). It was designed to connect the region's banking city of Charlotte to the region's textile factories in Gaston County. It was the primary access between Gaston County and Charlotte prior to the construction of Interstate 85.

Today Wilkinson Boulevard connects Belmont, Cramerton, and McAdenville to Charlotte on the east and Gastonia on the west. The highway is four miles long in Belmont and Cramerton (2.5 miles in Belmont and 1.5 miles in Cramerton). It extends from the Catawba River on the eastern boundary of Belmont four miles west to the intersection of Market Street in Cramerton and Wesleyan Street in McAdenville. The highway serves as a primarily commercial corridor with a mixture of retail, office, institutional, and residential uses along it.

The Wilkinson Boulevard corridor serves as a thoroughfare for commuter traffic, a local commercial corridor, and an alternative east-west route of Interstate 85. The corridor provides direct access to Charlotte-Douglas International Airport and Uptown Charlotte. The corridor in Belmont, Cramerton, and McAdenville contains few new buildings, as most of the existing buildings are more than 20 years old. There is a satellite campus of Gaston Community College and a new State Employees Credit Union in Belmont and a new multifamily segment of a mixed-use development under construction in Cramerton. There is a large amount of vacant or underutilized property on the corridor. Many of the existing businesses along the corridor are small retail, automotive repair, and offices, and strip shopping centers.

The corridor has seen vehicular traffic counts decrease over the past twenty years. In 1989, the corridor carried an average of 18,500 vehicles per day. The traffic peaked around 1998 at 25,500 vehicles per day, and had 16,500 vehicles per day in 2010. These traffic counts were obtained from the NCDOT. Traffic counts during this period are shown below.



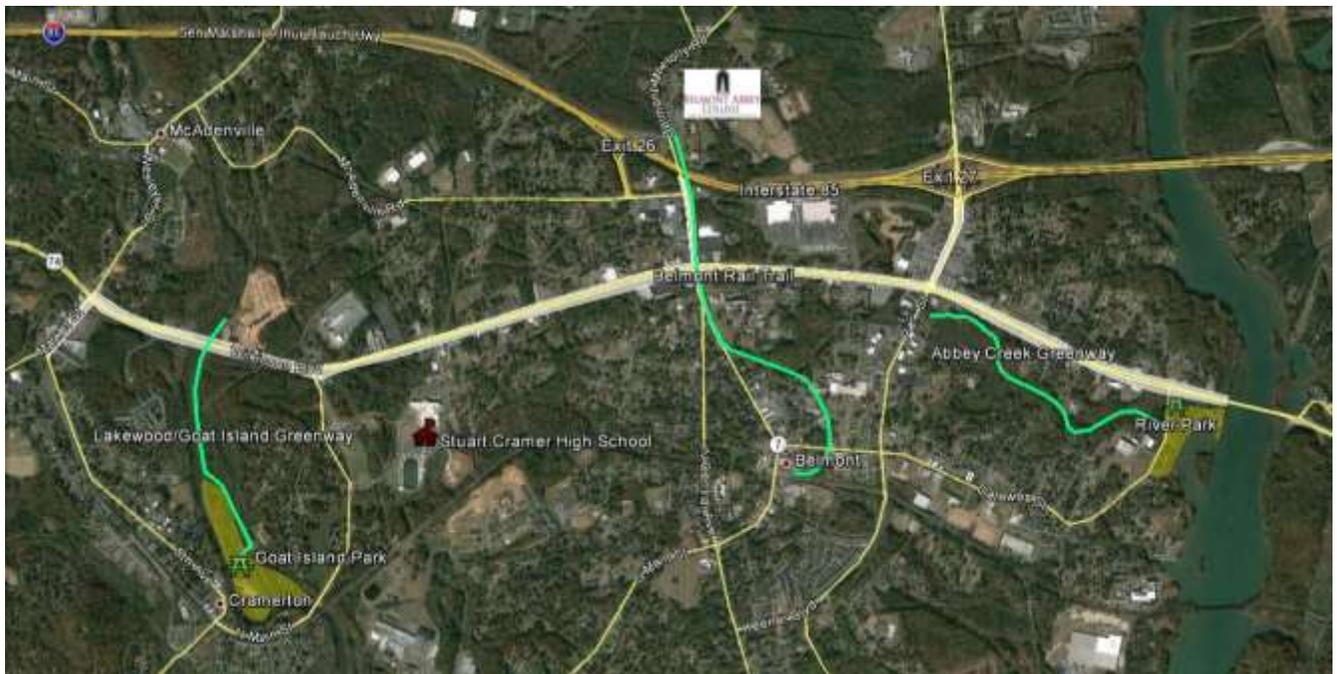
The Wilkinson Boulevard Corridor Study will identify multi-modal transportation and streetscape design options and strategies to improve the corridor at all scales, with a particular focus on how transportation and streetscape strategies impact placemaking and economic development. The study will take into account the current design of the highway, recommendations of any changes to the design of the highway, existing zoning and land uses, as well as the goals and priorities of the communities the corridor impacts.

II. PROJECT SCOPE

Project Boundaries: The Study will cover the Wilkinson Boulevard corridor, from the intersection of Wilkinson Boulevard at Market Street in Cramerton and Wesleyan Drive in McAdenville east to the Catawba River. This covers four miles of Wilkinson Boulevard through Cramerton, McAdenville and Belmont. The corridor study also includes Market Street in Cramerton between Wilkinson Boulevard and Eighth Avenue, Wesleyan Drive in McAdenville between Wilkinson Boulevard and Church Street, North Main Street in Belmont between

Wilkinson Boulevard and Exit 26 of Interstate 85, and the area along Park Street in Belmont between Wilkinson Boulevard and Exit 27 of Interstate 85. The width of the study area is typically from one property to one block deep.

A map of the study area is below. The study area is shown in white on the map and three proposed greenways that are in or adjacent to the study area are shown in green. The western greenway is the Lakewood/Goat Island Greenway in Cramerton that will run along the South Fork River and will connect the new apartments on the north side of Wilkinson Boulevard to Goat Island Park. The Belmont Rail Trail is a proposed 10' wide asphalt greenway beside NCDOT Railroad Division railroad tracks that are parallel to North Main Street and intersects Wilkinson Boulevard. The Abbey Creek greenway is a proposed greenway connecting the commercial and residential area around Wilkinson Boulevard and Park Street with the new park on the Catawba River.



III. PROJECT COMPONENTS

The Wilkinson Boulevard Corridor Plan will provide implementable strategies for improving the multi-modal functionality of the corridor and will determine the best cross-section for providing service to all modes of transportation. It will investigate economic development opportunities and strategies for the corridor. The plan will also investigate changes in urban form that may result in land use and urban design revisions to the comprehensive plans and development codes for Cramerton, McAdenville and Belmont. Project components will include:

- Economic development opportunities and strategies for the redevelopment of the corridor
- Recommendations on appropriate land uses and zoning to achieve economic development strategies
- Recommended street cross-sections for the various blocks along the corridor
- Recommended intersection improvements to the intersections of Market Street/Wesleyan Drive, Main Street, and Park Street to improve conditions for all modes of transportation
- Streetscape design for corridor, including entrances on the east and west sides
- Recommendations for improvements to adjacent properties to support streetscape design
- Placemaking and wayfinding /interpretative signage strategies
- Policy, comprehensive plan, and development code amendment recommendations where appropriate.

Project Outreach: The corridor study will include input from various property owners and stakeholders from the study area and well as from users of the corridor and the general public. Belmont, Cramerton, and McAdenville staff will create a stakeholder group for the study, and the consultant will work with staff and the stakeholder group to conduct workshops and input sessions. The consultant will also create a project website to obtain public input and to update the public on the project. The consultant will present the study findings to the stakeholders group, the Cramerton Board of Commissioners, the Belmont City Council, and the McAdenville Town Council.

Project Staffing: The Belmont assistant city manager and Cramerton planning director will serve as the project managers. Belmont, Cramerton, and McAdenville planning, police, engineering, and public works staff will provide project insight and design feedback as necessary.

IV. KEY PROJECT FACTS

Wilkinson Boulevard Corridor Transportation Characteristics	
Total Corridor Length	4 miles (2.5 in Belmont, 1.13 in Cramerton, and .37 in McAdenville)
Speed Limit	50 mph
Maintained by	NCDOT
Number of Street Intersections	19
Number of Signalized Intersections	7
Number of Driveways	134
2010 AADT Volume (NCDOT)	15,000 to 18,000 throughout corridor

Zoning of Corridor: The portion of the Wilkinson Corridor study area in Cramerton’s zoning jurisdiction is zoned B-2, B-3 Business; R-1 Residential; O-I Office and Institutional; and TND/CUD Traditional Neighborhood Development/Conditional Use District. Please note that

the northern side of Wilkinson Boulevard between Wesleyan Drive and the South Fork River is in McAdenville's zoning jurisdiction and is zoned G-B General Business. This section of the corridor is 0.37 miles long.

The portion of the Wilkinson Corridor study area in Belmont's zoning jurisdiction is zoned H-C Highway Commercial; IC-D/BC-D Institutional Campus Development/Business Campus Development; and IC-D Institutional Campus Development. Belmont also has a Wilkinson Boulevard Highway Commercial Overlay District (HC-O) along the corridor throughout its entire zoning jurisdiction.

The corridor study area includes landmarks such as the entrance to McAdenville for the Christmastown USA lights, Stuart W. Cramer High School, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Holy Angels, Gaston College Kimbrell Campus, and provides access to the Goat Island Park in Cramerton and to the Kevin Loftin Riverfront Park that will begin construction in summer of 2014.

V. QUALIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The response package shall be limited to twenty (20) 8.5" x 11" pages. Please submit a digital copy of the response document in an Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). Complete responses to qualification requirements shall be organized as follows:

A. Organization of Consultant Team

Provide a list of all firms and specific staff proposed for this project. Identify certified Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) firms, if any. Also provide the responsibilities to be fulfilled by each team member assigned to the project. The consultant shall provide an e-Verify submission for all staff and subconsultant staff involved with the project.

B. Project Personnel Qualifications

Provide detailed resumes for proposed staff.

C. Firm Experience

Summary of at least three (3) projects of similar scope for which the consultant was primarily responsible within the last seven (7) years. Each of the project summaries shall include the following:

- a. Description of the project including size and scope.
- b. Project schedule (initial schedule and actual/final schedule), including an explanation of any delays.
- c. Initial project budget and final project cost.
- d. Description of services rendered by the consultant and degree of involvement (primitive consultant or subconsultant).
- e. Associate firms involved and their assigned responsibilities.

- f. Project references including current names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses.
 - g. Familiarity and relationship with the North Carolina Department of Transportation
- D. Project Approach and Schedule
- a. Process for identification of base conditions, creation of design/engineering alternatives, evaluation of alternatives.
 - b. Management tools, techniques, and procedures used to maintain project schedules.
 - c. Anticipated project schedule.
- E. Experience with public involvement including conducting public meetings, social media, online process, public facilitation techniques, and other innovative public process involvement.
- F. Knowledge and specific experience in multi-modal corridor planning and design.
- G. Billing Rate Structure.
- a. The billing rate for all personnel who will work on the project. Compensation will be negotiated with the selected consultant.
- H. Legal Issues
- a. Listing of any pending or settled lawsuits in which the consultant was involved during the past five (5) years.

VI. SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS

One (1) electronic copy in PDF format must be received at the following address by **March 3, 2014** at 4:00 pm EST:

Adrian Miller
 Wilkinson Corridor Study Project or amiller@cityofbelmont.org
 PO Box 431
 115 North Main Street
 Belmont, NC 28012

Email is preferred method of delivery; however a disk or flash drive may be mailed if file is too large for email. Paper copies may be requested after electronic submission.

VII. QUESTIONS

All questions must be submitted in writing via email to Adrian Miller at amiller@cityofbelmont.org no later than 4 pm EST on **February 14, 2014**. All questions and

answers will be emailed to interested parties by **February 19, 2014**. Please include in the subject line: Wilkinson Boulevard Corridor Study.

VIII. EVALUATION PROCESS

A committee composed of staff from the City of Belmont and Town of Cramerton will review and score the qualifications submitted based upon the evaluation criteria noted below in Section IX of this document. Interviews may be conducted. Once a firm is selected, the committee will prepare a “short list” of the top three firms ranked according to the evaluation criteria scores. The committee will submit the list to the Belmont city council. The city council will be asked to authorize negotiation with the recommended firms in priority order.

Following the city council’s approval to negotiate with the recommended consulting firm, the committee will begin negotiations. In the event that negotiations of specific contract terms, conditions, and fees provide unsuccessful with this firm, the committee will begin negotiations with the second most qualified firm. The city council will award a contract based upon successful negotiations.

IX. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be the basis on which consultants will be selected for further consideration (in no particular order):

1. Team organization and structure
2. Project personnel qualifications
3. Demonstration of an understanding of the area and context of the project location
4. Specialized or appropriate expertise in the type of project
5. Past performance of the lead consulting firm, subconsultants, and members of the project team on similar projects
6. Demonstrated experience in facilitating public meetings
7. Level of HUB participation
8. Recent experience with successfully maintaining project schedules and budgets
9. Current workload and capacity
10. Proposed design approach for the project
11. Demonstration of a project record free of significant technical problems and litigation resulting from errors or omission
12. Experience with NCDOT
13. Other factors that may be relevant to the project.