

Staff Observations on Parking Proposals and Presentations

All three firms submitted proposals that address the goals and objectives set out in the RFP. They all have relevant experience with similar work and seem capable of completing the project successfully and on time. The firms offer very different approaches toward completing the project, and they possess different strengths and weaknesses.

JM Teague is a combination of small firms that seems to reflect the local/small town feel of Carrboro more than the other firms. They seem to be more in touch with the community and better equipped to respond to Carrboro's unique needs and vision. JB Culpepper has lived in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro community for more than 30 years and has intimate knowledge of public outreach strategies and perceptions in this area from her career as the Planning Director in Chapel Hill. JM Teague has experience doing parking studies in small, dense communities like Carrboro. Their proposal explicitly and repeatedly states that the firm will consult with the Town of Carrboro in all steps of the project to ensure that the strategies and methodology fit with the Town's needs. In both the proposal and in the presentation the firm expressed a heavy focus on the public outreach aspect of the project, which the Aldermen have expressed as an important component of the study. They are the only firm that has a Spanish language interpreter to aid in the public outreach to non-English and underserved communities, and was the only firm to reference our growing Asian population. The firm gave detailed examples of methodology and strategies of how they will complete the tasks outlined in the RFP, particularly in public outreach and data collection. Quality Counts, the data collection firm, contracts with the DCHC-MPO and has experience with transportation data collection in Carrboro. Finally, this firm provided a proposal that came in under budget. As requested in the RFP, they outlined several additional tasks that could be completed for an extra cost, for which funds will be available due to the low cost estimate.

JM Teague's presentation was less formal, and with four speakers, somewhat disjointed. This may have cast some doubt on how their public meetings or presentations would be conducted. Many of the examples of previous projects and public outreach experience were related to bike or pedestrian planning and not to parking. The firm focused perhaps too much on bike and pedestrian issues in Carrboro and not as much on vehicle parking issues in their presentation, though this was not the case in the written proposal. Finally, they did not provide a timeline in their proposal or presentation, though this has been requested as part of the follow up questions.

Kimley-Horn is a large firm with extensive experience with parking studies. They have state-of-the-art data collection tools and a large, specialized staff. The Park+ parking model can develop community-specific parking generation rates, rather than relying on Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) or Urban Land Institute rates. Their full proposal provides detail and a comprehensive approach to the project as outlined in the RFP. Alta Planning + Design, local experts in bike and pedestrian planning, will be their subconsultant for the bike parking and walkability audit aspects of the study.

Kimley-Horn's experience is primarily in larger cities that have paid parking. The presentation and the ethos of the firm seem to be heavily focused on paid parking as an end result, prior to conducting data collection or analysis. Both the original (and alternate) proposal and the presentation seem to indicate a top-down approach to the project, with little interaction or reliance on staff for local knowledge and Town needs. The original proposal was more than twice the allocated budget. The presentation focused mostly on Kimley-Horn's alternate proposal, which does not address the goals and objectives of the RFP. It does not include public participation or data collection to inform policy decisions. It does not include a cost for the 'additional Phase 1' or 'Phase 2' tasks, though the need for these to subsequently occur was noted. These costs have been requested along with the additional questions. The presentation stated that the firm does not think that a parking plan that follows what is outlined in the RFP would give the Town what it needs. The Board of Aldermen and staff spent almost two years developing and refining the scope of work to reflect exactly what we believe the Town needs in a parking study. The firm's apparent lack of interest in conducting public outreach contradicts the Town's assigned level of importance to this aspect of the study. Finally, if the details of the alternate proposal had been included as part of their response to the RFP, or if the alternative proposal had been their only submittal, the firm would not have been selected to present to the Board of Aldermen because it addresses few of the required tasks set out in the scope of work.

VHB also has extensive experience doing parking plans and studies in small North Carolina towns. They also have previous experience doing transportation studies in Carrboro and Chapel Hill. Though the written proposal was lacking in this area, the presentation really focused on the unique character and needs of Carrboro. The presentation focused on balancing the need for parking with the vision and goals for Carrboro, which shows a broader focus than just studying parking. The firm seems to be aware that a boiler-plate plan is not what the Town wants, and that the perceptions and the character of Carrboro are important to the success of the study. VHB has a large staff with broad experience that they can draw on if needed, though the two staff who presented at the meeting are local and would be the primary contacts. The firm exhibits advanced technical and visual skill and uses a data platform that is consistent and compatible with the Town's. The presentation was well-organized and engaging and may suggest public meetings and presentations would be as well. The proposal was within budget and the timeline they provided seems feasible.

VHB provided a limited explanation of the actual methodology for completing the project. The proposal and the presentation explained the steps necessary to do the project and the tasks outlined in the RFP, but did not provide much detail on *how* they will perform the tasks. The firm did not provide a very strong public outreach strategy, other than essentially repeating what was outlined in the RFP. They proposed doing a strictly online survey, which is not a comprehensive approach and does not address the need to outreach to non-English, underserved populations, or those without regular access to the internet.