

Request for Proposals
ARC Regional Household Travel Survey
Questions and Answers

1. Q. ActivitySim / Modeling Scope

Task 9 references ActivitySim, the Estimation Data Bundle (EDB), and Larch. Can ARC confirm that the consultant is not responsible for running ActivitySim model estimation, estimating utility parameters, calibrating models, or performing ongoing model tuning, and that the intent is limited to delivering survey data and documentation compatible with ARC’s modeling workflow?

Answer: ARC confirms that the consultant is not responsible for running ActivitySim model estimation, estimating utility parameters, calibrating models, or performing ongoing model tuning, and that the intent is limited to delivering survey data pipelines and documentation compatible with ARC’s modeling workflow pertaining to ActivitySim, the Estimation Data Bundle, and others such as Larch and ALOGIT.

2. Q. 8,000 Household Requirement

Can ARC confirm that the required 8,000 household travel surveys must be newly collected under this contract, and that the approximately 3,500 Atlanta-region households from the GDOT 2024–2025 NextGen NHTS add-on survey do not count toward the 8,000-household minimum?

Answer: ARC confirms that the required 8,000 household travel surveys must be newly collected under this contract, and that the approximately 3,500 Atlanta-region households from the GDOT 2024–2025 NextGen NHTS add-on survey do not count toward the 8,000-household minimum. Furthermore, exceeding the 8,000-household minimum, within budget, is perfectly fine and strongly encouraged, though not required.

3. Q. Survey vs. Modeling Responsibility

Can ARC confirm that this contract is for household travel survey data collection, processing, and preparation, and that travel demand model estimation and calibration will be performed separately by ARC or another modeling consultant?

Answer: ARC confirms that this contract is for household travel survey data collection, processing, and preparation, and that travel demand model estimation

and calibration will be performed separately by ARC and/or another modeling consultant.

4. Q. Machine Learning QA/QC Expectations

Task 2 references the use of machine learning for QA/QC. Can ARC clarify whether rule-based automated checks and anomaly detection are sufficient to meet this requirement, or whether ARC expects the development of custom machine-learning models?

Answer: Rule-based automated checks and survey responses anomaly detection are sufficient to meet this requirement, though ARC welcomes creative machine learning QA/QC applications.

5. Q. DBE Goal Interpretation

ARC's DBE goal for FTA-assisted contracts is 28.72%. Can ARC confirm that this is a goal rather than a pass/fail requirement, and that proposals demonstrating good-faith efforts and commercially useful DBE participation will be considered responsive even if the goal is not fully met? Does an inability to meet this goal impact scoring?

Answer: It's a goal and not a pass/fail requirement. Inability to meet the goal does not impact scoring.

6. Q. On page 5, Exhibit A: Scope of Work, the solicitation states that “work will involve the development, deployment, data collection, and administration of the Atlanta Regional Household Travel Survey.” Can ARC clarify whether historical household travel survey datasets and instruments (e.g., prior questionnaires, methodologies, raw or cleaned data from previous surveys) will be provided in full to the selected contractor?

Answer: The previous (2011) ARC household travel survey documentation is available at <https://atlantaregional.org/what-we-do/transportation-planning/modeling/household-travel-survey/>.

7. Q. On page 5, Exhibit A: Scope of Work, the solicitation states that “the Consultant will conduct project management meetings once a month throughout the duration

of the contract... [and] will attend ARC committee, planning team, external stakeholder meetings, and other meetings critical to the successful performance of this scope of services.” Can ARC clarify whether these meetings are expected to occur in person, virtually, or as a hybrid over the life of the contract?

Answer: These meetings will occur virtually, unless otherwise specified by ARC on an as-needed basis requiring an in-person presence.

8. **Q.** On page 6, Task 1 – Project Management Work Plan & Schedule, the solicitation states that “all survey questionnaires and materials must be in compliance with Section 508... and available in both English and Spanish language forms, including the survey smartphone app and telephone support.” Can ARC provide additional details regarding the scope and expectations for telephone support (e.g., hours of operation, languages supported, anticipated call volume, or whether this function will be contractor- or ARC-managed)?

Answer: Telephone support will be provided as needed by the selected contractor via a toll-free number during regular business hours in English and Spanish to surveyed households needing assistance filling out the survey. ARC does not anticipate a large call volume.

9. **Q.** On page 8, Task 5 – Incentive Plan, the solicitation notes that “contractual deliveries of this task will describe the incentive plan and corresponding monetary amounts and methods (gift cards, cash, etc.)” Can ARC share any historical information on incentive levels or structures used during the 2011 Household Travel Survey and/or the more recent NextGen NHTS survey, to help inform proposal development?

Answer: The incentives levels from the 2011 ARC household travel survey are available in <https://atlantaregional.org/what-we-do/transportation-planning/modeling/household-travel-survey/>. As for the more recent NextGen NHTS survey, incentive information is available at <https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2024-09516.pdf?1714567529#:~:text=DOT%20Response:,participation%20from%20the%20general%20public.>

10. Q. On page 6, under Task 1 – Project Management Work Plan & Schedule, the solicitation states that “all survey questionnaires and materials must be in compliance with Section 508 ... including the survey smartphone app and telephone support” (page 6). Additionally, on page 8, under Task 6 – Mail-Based Household Survey Recruitment & Recruitment Mailings, the solicitation notes that survey data collection will include “a smartphone app” and that ARC intends to leverage the Georgia Add-On NextGen NHTS questionnaire (page 8). Can ARC confirm whether proposers may utilize an existing proprietary smartphone application, or whether ARC anticipates that the selected contractor will develop or customize an app specifically for this project?

Answer: ARC confirms that, while a proposer can leverage its own proprietary travel survey smartphone application, ARC anticipates that the selected contractor will customize it specifically for this project and it will be available for download from Google Play (for Android mobile device users) and the Apple App Store (for iPhone mobile device users).

11. Q. On page 9, under Task 8 – From Travel Survey Data Analytics to Travel Behavior Storytelling, the solicitation states that contractual deliverables will include “a series of insightful dashboards and visualization tools, as well as thematic narratives describing travel behavior in the Atlanta region” (page 9). Can ARC clarify whether these dashboards and visualization tools are intended for internal ARC use only or for public-facing dissemination? In addition, can ARC confirm whether ARC will provide an existing platform or hosting environment for these dashboards, or whether proposers should assume responsibility for developing, hosting, and maintaining the dashboards as part of their proposed scope and budget?

Answer: ARC confirms that these dashboards and visualization tools are intended for both internal use at ARC and for public-facing dissemination and could be developed in an iterative manner using version control (for instance GitHub) and statistical / data science programming tools (such as Python and/or R as an example). While proposers should assume responsibility for developing, hosting, and maintaining the dashboards, ARC reserves the right to provide its own existing platform and hosting environment, such as ARC’s Open Data Geoportal and/or web-hosted visualization dashboards supporting the ARC.

12. Q. On page 9, Task 8, about “telecommuting frequency by NAICS code” and references “attitudinal variables.” Please confirm whether ARHTS must collect NAICS/attitudinal questions directly, or whether those analyses rely solely on the statewide add-on.

Answer: While that analysis will rely on the statewide add-on, as well as the core survey questions from the Georgia statewide survey, the ARHTS will also collect that information from survey questions utilized in the Georgia statewide survey.

13. Q. Article 13, Financial Reports, of the Sample Consultant Agreement the Consultant to provide to ARC such additional financial reports in such form and frequency as ARC may require. Would ARC please share a template/sample of such reports?

Answer: ARC will work with the selected consultant to determine frequency and template for financial forms should they be required.

14. Q. We note that Exhibit B-1 requests a breakdown of budget by cost category (e.g. Direct Labor, Overhead Costs, etc.), while Exhibit B-2 requests a budget by tasks. Please confirm the anticipated type of contract. Will it be a Firm-Fixed Price, a Time-and-Materials, or a Cost-Reimbursement contract

Answer: Contract will be a Firm-Fixed price

15. Q. Is the deliverable for Task 9 survey data that is ready for ActivitySim’s estimation mode (aka “override tables” in ActivitySim parlance) or the actual Estimation Data Bundles output from the ARC model?

Answer: The deliverable for Task 9 is simply the pipeline that will enable survey data to be format-ready with data from the survey for the ActivitySim Estimation Data Bundle, hence allowing the ActivitySim software estimation mode to receive format-ready empirical observations from true survey-based observed choices and survey data to ultimately prepare ARC to estimate new model parameters. ARC will then take the contractually delivered survey data tables and ARC will append additional fields, as deemed necessary, to create override tables that will be used as input to the ActivitySim estimation mode.

1. If the latter, are we to assume that ARC will handle all other inputs, such as skims, land use, model specifications, etc., needed to create the EDBs?

Answer: ARC will handle all other inputs, such as land use, model specifications, etc. needed to create the ActivitySim Estimation Data Bundles.

- 16. Q.** Could ARC please confirm whether there are any specific minimum coverage limits, additional insured requirements, or other insurance provisions (e.g., professional liability or cybersecurity insurance) that will be required under the contract?

Answer: The requirements are outlined in the contract boilerplate template included in the RFP in Exhibit D.

- 17. Q.** Page 9 of the example contract #31b states, "In addition, the Consultant further agrees to comply with the DBE Utilization Plan submitted to ARC as part of its proposal."

1. Are we required to submit a DBE Utilization Plan in response to this RFP?

Answer: DBE Utilization Plan is not required.

- 18. Q.** Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest (Page 4): Can ARC please clarify what section of a bidder's proposal is made public or if the proposal is posted in its entirety? Does a bidder need to insert a redacted copy of the proposal, or confirm the selected bidder will have an opportunity to request redactions after an award decision is made?

Answer: ARC is subject to the Georgia Open Records law. All proposals submitted will become public records to be provided upon request. Any information containing trade secrets or proprietary information, as defined by state law, must be marked as Proprietary to prevent disclosure. Confidential markings must be limited to protected information. Entire proposals marked confidential will not be honored

19. Q. Exhibit D Sample Contract: For Article 12 Reports and Article 13 Financial Reports, can ARC please elaborate on the content / format for each?

Answer: ARC will work with the selected consultant to determine frequency and template for financial forms should they be requested.

20. Q. Exhibit D Sample Contract: For Article 24 Compliance with Requirements of the Concerned Funding, can ARC provide a copy of the Grant Contract between ARC + Concerned Funded Agencies?

Answer: This will be provided to the awarded Consultant upon request or for work product's needs.

21. Q. Exhibit D Sample Contract: For Article 27 Data and Software Licensing, can ARC clarify if any information / data / software will be provided to the selected awardee and in what format such information will be transferred? For example, will any ARC-furnished information be provided via ARC-hosted enclave? ARC-issued laptops?

Answer: ARC will not issue the contractor any laptops for the survey. That said, at the appropriate time, ARC will provide the selected awardee with the necessary data via a secure IT environment for this contract. ARC assumes that the selected contractor has its own computing environment to handle survey data collection and processing.

22. Q. Exhibit D Sample Contract: For Article 31 Other Requirements, there's still a reference to a "DBE Utilization Plan" in the revised RFP even though the requirement for a DBE Utilization Plan has been removed. Please confirm a DBE Utilization Plan is not required.

Answer: DBE Utilization Plan is not required.

23. Q. We note that a consultant agreement template is included with the RFP. Please confirm whether ARC expects offerors to submit proposed redlines to the consultant agreement as part of the proposal submission, or whether contract terms will be subject to negotiation with the selected offeror after award.

Answer: Redlines for the sample contract template are not required at this time.

24. Q. The RFP indicates that confidential proprietary information may be marked in accordance with applicable Georgia law. Please confirm whether offerors are required to submit both (i) a redacted PDF version and (ii) ten hard copies of the redacted version, or whether only a redacted PDF submission is required.

Answer: Per the RFP, any information containing trade secrets or proprietary information, as defined by state law, must be marked as confidential to prevent disclosure. Confidential markings must be limited to protected information. Entire proposals marked confidential will not be honored

25. Q. Regarding the DBE participation requirements, please confirm whether eligible Disadvantaged Business Enterprises must be certified within the State of Georgia, or if DBEs certified in other states are acceptable for purposes of meeting the requirement.

Answer: Yes

26. Q. The RFP references a 28.72% DBE participation goal. Please confirm whether this goal is required to be met on an annual basis, or whether the 28.72% applies cumulatively over the full three fiscal-year period of performance (i.e., approximately 9.57% per year).

Answer: The DBE goal is an overall agency goal across the federal transportation planning programs.

27. Q. We note that a detailed budget breakout is required and that invoices are due monthly. Can you please confirm what type of contract will be awarded: Fixed Price, Time & Materials, etc....

Answer: Contract will be a Firm-Fixed price

28. Q. Is there an existing app that ARC would prefer to use for household travel survey data collection, or will the consultant develop/procure its own app? (p. 8)

Answer: ARC does not have an existing app for the survey. The consultant will need to develop its own app in both Android and iPhone formats.

29. Q. Will the household travel survey collect travel data for all household members regardless of age and including children aged 5 and up to reflect the design of the 2024-2025 NextGen NHTS Georgia Add-On? (p. 8)

Answer: The ARC household travel survey needs to mirror and reflect the design of the 2024-2025 NextGen NHTS Georgia survey for data compatibility purposes.

30. Q. Task 8 indicates that deliverables will include insightful dashboards and visualization tools. Please confirm whether ARC expects these deliverables to be available in both English and Spanish, or whether English-only versions are acceptable. (p. 9)

Answer: Consistent with currently existing ARC visualization dashboards, English-only versions are sufficient and acceptable.

31. Q. Regarding Task 8, please confirm whether ARC is open to the contractor developing and hosting a standalone microsite for the dashboards and visualization tools (e.g., hosted on the contractor's domain), or whether ARC expects these tools to be integrated into and hosted on ARC's existing website infrastructure. (p. 9)

Answer: ARC confirms that these dashboards and visualization tools could be developed in an iterative manner using version control (for instance GitHub) and statistical / data science programming tools (such as Python and/or R as an example). While ARC is open to the contractor developing and hosting a standalone microsite, ARC reserves the right to provide its own existing platform and hosting environment, such as ARC's Open Data Geoportal and/or web-hosted visualization dashboards supporting the ARC.

32. Q. Task 8 references a series of dashboards, visualization tools, and thematic narratives to be completed in 2027. Assuming approximately \$1,256,250 of available funds for the project in 2027, can ARC provide guidance on the approximate percentage of that budget that should be allocated to Task 8, or should offerors propose a budget allocation based on the scope described in the RFP? (p. 9)

Answer: Offerors should propose a budget allocation based on the scope described in the RFP.

33. Q. The RFP budget template requires disclosure of detailed cost and pricing information (including direct salaries, overhead, fees, and profit), which our company considers proprietary and confidential. Would ARC permit submission of an alternative budget format (e.g., a fully loaded or summarized budget) that satisfies the evaluation requirements while limiting disclosure of proprietary information?

Answer: The budget must be submitted as outlined in the RFP using the forms required. Any proprietary and confidential information should be clearly marked as such as instructed in the RFP.

34. Q. If the submission of an alternative budget format is not permissible, alternatively would ARC be open to signing an NDA to not disclose our proprietary and confidential information?

Answer: ARC will not sign an NDA

35. Q. Will the contractor be provided with information on which households have already been selected for the 2024-2025 NextGen NHTS statewide add-on survey to avoid duplication?

Answer: While ARC will attempt to obtain that information from FHWA, ARC cannot guarantee at this time that such information will be provided to the contractor in a timely manner. Furthermore, recruited-but-not-completed households may not be available.

36. Q. What is the response rate for the 2024-2025 NextGen NHTS statewide add-on survey?

Answer: Based upon an interim unweighted data file, the response rate for the 2024-2025 NextGen NHTS Georgia statewide survey varies by socio-economic and demographic strata and appears typical (declining over time in the US) compared to

any other large-scale regional household travel survey in the US from recent years, averaging approximately 11%.

37. Q. Does a complete mean that a separate diary has to be complete for every HH member or just that every HH member's travel must be accounted for, i.e. if household members travel together, can that be captured in a single entry?

Answer: While proxy reporting is allowed, the definition of a "complete" will follow guidelines highlighted by the recent FHWA NextGen NHTS program (including the Georgia statewide survey) for survey data consistency purposes.

38. Q. Do all subcontractors, including the prime, need to sign all three required forms?

Answer: Only the Prime Consultant is obligated to complete and sign all three contract forms.