

# Cherokee Nation

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## ADDENDUM 03 – CHEROKEE NATIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM STRATEGIC PLAN



**CHEROKEE NATION**

**P.O. Box 948**

**Tahlequah, OK 74465**

**(918) 453-5000**

**REQUEST FOR SEALED PROPOSALS**  
**CHEROKEE NATION TRAIL SYSTEM STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**ADDENDUM 03**

**The following questions and requests for information were received by the stipulated deadline.**

- 1. QUESTION: Proposal Deadline:** Page 3 of the RFP states, "Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 01, 2026." But page 15 of the RFP states, "Proposal Due Date: 4/30/2026." Can you clarify the due date for proposals?  
**RESPONSE:** The Proposal deadline is May 08, 2026 @ 5:00pm must be mailed or hand delivered in a Sealed Envelope with the "Cherokee National Trail System Strategic Plan" placed on the front.
- 2. QUESTION: Submission:** Page 3 states that "proposals must be emailed," but page 10 states that submissions should be mailed or delivered in person. May we submit proposals via email?  
**RESPONSE:** The Proposals must be mailed or hand delivered in a sealed envelope with the "Cherokee National Trail System Strategic Plan" placed on the front.
- 3. QUESTION: Budget:** Do you have a range or specific budget in mind for this project?  
**RESPONSE:** The budget will not be shared by Cherokee Nation.
- 4. QUESTION: For Task 3: Existing Conditions Assessment,** does Cherokee Nation already have GIS data for existing conditions? Or will the consultant need to include a surveyor to complete existing conditions mapping?  
**RESPONSE:** Please refer to page 13 of the RFP under Existing Conditions Assessment. The Nation does not anticipate extensive need for formal surveying to complete the Plan.
- 5. QUESTION: For Task 4: Benefit Analysis,** can the "approximate economic impact" be based on existing literature and case studies? Will a comparative analysis suffice, or does the CN want the consultant to complete a tailored economic impact analysis of the proposed trail system after completion? We can also submit a proposal and budget that includes both a simpler comparative analysis and a fuller tailored analysis, if helpful.  
**RESPONSE:** At minimum, a comparative analysis will suffice, so long as the basis for comparison is adequately substantiated. Cherokee Nation would be interested in reviewing pricing and scope details for both a simpler comparative analysis and a fuller tailored analysis, if available.

**6. QUESTION: Contract Term / Deliverable Schedule Clarification**

Please confirm the intended contract performance period. Page 6 states that the Nation anticipates a contract with a performance period ending September 30, 2026, while pages 14 and 15 require a Draft CNTS Strategic Plan by October 1, 2026 and Final Deliverables by December 31, 2026. Please clarify whether the contract term will be extended to align with the stated deliverable schedule.

**RESPONSE:** The contract term will extend from date of award through delivery of the final Plan. The Nation is requesting that a draft of the complete Plan be submitted by October 1, 2026 for review with the final Plan completed by December 31, 2026. The Nation will review alternative timelines for deliverables should this timeline be unfeasible.

**7. QUESTION: Award Structure Clarification**

Please clarify whether the Nation intends to make a single award or reserves the right to make multiple awards under this RFP. Page 3 states that Cherokee Nation reserves the right to award to multiple offerors, while page 11 states that the vendor with the highest score will be selected.

**RESPONSE:** The Nation would prefer to make a single award if a firm can meet all requirements.

**8. QUESTION: Evaluation Criteria Clarification**

Please clarify the evaluation factor titled “Service Portal and on-line access/reports” listed on page 11. Since this procurement is for a strategic planning effort, please confirm how this criterion applies to professional planning and design consultant teams. This factor does not appear in the summary Evaluation Criteria listed on page 15.

**RESPONSE:** Please see “Evaluation Criteria” listed on page 15. **The evaluation criteria for proposals is as follows:**

Factors	Points
Alignment with organizational needs and values	20
Quality and clarity of proposed approach	20
Relevant experience and qualifications	20
Cost-effectiveness	20
Indian Preference/TERO – Copy of Certification must be included in response	10
Ability to meet established timeframes and deliverables	5
References	5

Cherokee Nation additionally requests that respondents provide line-item cost breakdowns (e.g., per-unit costs, per-activity costs) in their budget proposals.

**9. QUESTION: Scope & Level of Detail**

Can the Nation clarify whether the Strategic Plan is expected to include conceptual design for individual trail segments, or only system level concepts and typologies?

**RESPONSE:** The final Strategic Plan is intended to include system level concepts and typologies.

**10. QUESTION: GIS Data & File Standards**

Will the Nation own all GIS and design files, and are specific file formats or metadata standards required?

Will the Nation provide existing GIS datasets (ownership, environmental constraints, cultural sites, ROWs), or should respondents budget for original data collection?

**RESPONSE:** Respondents should budget for original data collection. The Nation will work with the selected contractor to provide any relevant existing data; however, the contractor should budget for original data collection. Cherokee Nation will own all data provided, collected, and/or generated by this project.

**11. QUESTION: Field Verification**

Does the Nation expect the consultant to conduct field verification of existing trails and potential corridors, or will Cherokee Nation staff support this component?

**RESPONSE:** Consultant will be expected to verify existing trails and potential corridors. The Nation does not expect that abundant field verification would be needed to accomplish requested deliverables.

**12. QUESTION: Cultural Engagement Protocols**

Are there established Cherokee Nation protocols for culturally sensitive engagement that the consultant must follow?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to provide relevant information regarding culturally sensitive engagement.

**13. QUESTION: Inter-Agency Coordination**

Will Cherokee Nation lead coordination with counties, municipalities, ODOT, and federal land managers, or should the consultant budget for leading those engagements?

Are there existing MOUs or agreements with local governments that will influence trail routing or access?

**RESPONSE:** Cherokee Nation will serve as the primary coordinator, collaborating closely with the awarded agency to establish connections and collect relevant information.

**14. QUESTION: Budget Range**

To ensure proposals are scoped realistically and competitively, can the Nation provide a target or expected budget range for the Strategic Plan?

**RESPONSE:** The budget will not be shared by Cherokee Nation.

**15. QUESTION: Proposal Submission Method Clarification**

Please confirm the required method of proposal submission. Page 3 states that proposals must be emailed to the listed contacts, while page 10 states that sealed proposals may be mailed or hand delivered. Please advise whether electronic submission is acceptable, or whether a physical sealed proposal is required.

**RESPONSE:** The Proposal deadline is May 08, 2026 @ 5:00pm CT must be mailed or hand delivered in a Sealed Envelope with the “Cherokee National Trail System Strategic Plan” placed on the front.

**16. QUESTION: Land Title Status Level of Detail**

The RFP states that the proposed trail system is to include the “basic land title status” through which each proposed component passes. Please clarify the expected level of detail for this analysis. Would a planning-level land status screening and categorization be sufficient, or is the Nation expecting parcel-specific title review for each proposed route segment?

**RESPONSE:** A planning-level land status screening and categorization will be sufficient for the purpose of this RFP.

**17. QUESTION: Available GIS / Base Mapping Data**

Please confirm whether Cherokee Nation will provide any existing GIS base data, including available mapping for existing trails, public lands, rights-of-way, environmental constraints, land ownership, and cultural resources, to support preparation of the CNTS Strategic Plan.

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to provide any relevant existing data; however, the contractor should budget for original data collection. Cherokee Nation will own all data provided, collected, and/or generated by this project.

**18. QUESTION: Insurance Requirement Clarification**

Please confirm whether the stated insurance requirements, including the Pollution Liability coverage, apply as written to this strategic planning contract, or whether adjustments may be considered for consultant teams providing planning, mapping, engagement, and implementation strategy services rather than construction or environmental remediation services.

**RESPONSE:** Lower limits will be accepted for this planning contract.

**19. QUESTION: TERO/Indian Preference**

Please clarify if the Indian Preference applies only to the "prime" bidder, or if TERO/Cherokee Owned sub-consultants under a non-TERO or non-Indian "prime" bidder firm would receive the Indian Preference points in lieu of.

**RESPONSE:** Indian preference will apply to the prime bidder.

20. **QUESTION:** Could you please clarify what is defined as “performance period” as referenced in “Term of Proposed Contract” on page 6 of the RFP?  
**RESPONSE:** The Nation defines “performance period” as the timeframe from contract execution to completion of final deliverable. The Nation will work with the selected contractor to identify additional interim milestones, but a complete draft of the Plan is requested to the Nation by October 1, 2026, with the final approved Plan completed no later than December 31, 2026. The Nation will review alternative timelines for completion if these dates are unfeasible.
21. **QUESTION:** We are not able to sign a contract with the indemnification clause as listed in the RFP. We will provide redlines with our submittal.  
**RESPONSE:** The contractor has submitted their proposal agreeing to the terms and conditions provided in the RFP. Cherokee Nation will make the final decision on the contract format. Upon completion of the evaluation process, Cherokee Nation is receptive to negotiations.
22. **QUESTION:** We assume the contract terms and conditions for this project will be consistent with a previously executed Master Services Agreement with Cherokee Nation.  
**RESPONSE:** The contractor has submitted their proposal agreeing to the terms and conditions provided in the RFP. Cherokee Nation will make the final decision on the contract format. Upon completion of the evaluation process, Cherokee Nation is receptive to negotiations.
23. **QUESTION:** Does having TERO-certified subconsultants award the respondent any points as part of the selection criteria?  
**RESPONSE:** Indian preference will apply to the prime bidder.
24. **QUESTION:** Regarding insurance, we do not have a separate pollution liability policy but we do have pollution coverage under our professional liability policy with limits of \$3M per Claim/\$4M. Would the client be willing to accept our coverage limits and provide a waiver of the requirement?  
**RESPONSE:** Yes.
25. **QUESTION:** Proposal Details  
Can you confirm when the final proposal document is due and in what format? The RFP states that both emailed proposals (page 3) and hard copies (page 10) are required by the Friday, May 1st deadline– which format is preferred? Given the number of questions we have that impact the team we pull together and the proposed answer turnaround time for end of day Friday, May 1st, alongside the need for printed copies to be delivered by Friday, May 1st (we would need to post the hard copies by Wednesday morning), is it possible to extend the proposal deadline?

**RESPONSE:** The Proposal deadline is May 08, 2026 @ 5:00pm must be mailed or hand delivered in a Sealed Envelope with the “Cherokee National Trail System Strategic Plan” placed on the front.

26. **QUESTION:** Is there a page limit for the proposal document?

**RESPONSE:** There is not a page limit, but concise responses are expected and appreciated.

27. **QUESTION:** References are listed under the Evaluation Criteria on page 15 but are not listed anywhere else in the RFP. Do we need to include project references?

**RESPONSE:** References are required.

28. **QUESTION:** It is noted in a few places within the RFP that TERO Certification must be included in the proposal- can you confirm whether or not we can submit a proposal if we are not TERO certified?

**RESPONSE:** All sealed proposals will be accepted from Indian and non-Indian owned firms. To receive Indian Preference, TERO certification is required.

29. **QUESTION:** Project Budget + Timeline

What is the anticipated budget, or budget range, for this project? Can we assume the \$250,000 designated by the Cherokee Nation Trail System Act is the budget for this phase?

**RESPONSE:** The budget will not be shared by Cherokee Nation.

30. **QUESTION:** Do you have an example Plan that includes the level of detail you are hoping for, to share with proposing teams?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation does not have an example Plan for this type of project.

31. **QUESTION:** The project timeline (final Plan deadline of end of December 2026) seems very tight for such a large area and expansive set of systems, fragmented lands, and opportunities—in particular, while ensuring adequate time for review and feedback along the way. While we see the submittal date is mandated by the Act, is the timeline or deadline for the Report flexible? Can the Act be amended to issue the plan after December 30th?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to identify additional interim milestones, but a complete draft of the Plan is requested to the Nation by October 1, 2026, with the final approved Plan completed no later than December 31, 2026. The Nation will consider proposals with alternative timelines for completion if these dates are unfeasible.

32. **QUESTION:** Is there an additional 60-day review period after December 30th or just the single review period beginning October 1st?

**RESPONSE:** No. 60 days starts on October 1. The Nation will consider proposals with alternative timelines for completion if these dates are unfeasible; however, the Nation requests a minimum of 60 days to review the draft Plan before it is finalized.

33. **QUESTION:** Cherokee Community Engagement

Can you please provide more information about your expectations for Community Engagement?

**RESPONSE:** Community engagement activities should provide a variety of methods to provide information to the community including, but not limited to surveys, in-person meetings, virtual meetings, interviews, small group, or other ways the community can submit feedback.

34. **QUESTION:** Considering a spectrum of possible public participation (from inform, consult, involve, collaborate, to co-design) what level of influence should the Cherokee community have in guiding and defining the Framework Plan?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to solidify stakeholder engagement plans.

35. **QUESTION:** What does success look like for the project's community relations when the Plan is finished?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to solidify stakeholder engagement plans.

36. **QUESTION:** Will the Cherokee Nation Project Team and Tribal Council be the only reviewing groups for the Framework Plan? Will there be any other advisory or stakeholder groups for approval or coordination of the Plan (Landowners, OK State, NPS, or other agencies)?

**RESPONSE:** The selected contractor should work with the project team to finalize and formalize the Plan in accordance with established timelines.

37. **QUESTION:** Land Title status - process for coordination/review with these entities during the Planning process?

**RESPONSE:** A planning-level land status screening and categorization will be sufficient for the purpose of this RFP.

38. **QUESTION:** Framework Plan

Has the Cherokee Nation completed any other Plans that operate at the scale of the reservation at 7,000 square miles (i.e. housing, natural resource management, etc.)?

**RESPONSE:** Yes.

39. **QUESTION:** As part of the Existing Conditions Assessment, how much mapping of sensitive ecological and cultural areas has already been completed (i.e. Traditional Cultural Properties survey, LiDAR, aerial drone surveys, Geophysical Surveys (GPR or magnetometry), Cultural Landscape Report/Inventory, Archeological Surveys, or Ethnographic Surveys? Has the entire reservation been surveyed by archaeological and/or Tribal representatives? If not, is it expected that cultural resource surveys, as noted above, will be required as part of this plan?

**RESPONSE:** Because no construction is taking place at this time, need for cultural resource surveys is not anticipated.

40. **QUESTION:** What is the expected format for digital map files compatible with Cherokee Nation GIS? Is it digital maps or Shapefiles/Geodatabases?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation would like to receive .kmz files primarily, with any relevant flat, digital maps produced for the purpose of display in the final Plan document.

41. **QUESTION:** How many trail systems already exist within the Cherokee Nation Reservation? Are they projects already underway to connect these networks?

**RESPONSE:** This RFP is to develop a strategic plan for the Cherokee Nation Trail System. This document will assist in guiding efforts to strategically plan, build, and connect trails across the reservation.

42. **QUESTION:** How will this project overlap with the Trail of Tears (NPS), the historic 1849 “Cherokee Trail”, and the Monroe County Off-Road Adventures initiative to map and utilize forgotten service roads for tourism?

**RESPONSE:** Connection to trail systems beyond the Cherokee Nation should be demonstrated in the finalized strategic plan. Please refer to Prioritization & Implementation Strategy on page 14.

43. **QUESTION:** For M+O, if the system ultimately combines existing and new trail systems, how are current maintenance needs being managed?

**RESPONSE:** This RFP is to develop a strategic plan for the Cherokee Nation Trail System. The Nation expects the final Plan to provide high-level overview of maintenance and operations considerations associated with the proposed trail system.

44. **QUESTION:** Who will operate and maintain the CNTS?

**RESPONSE:** Maintenance and operations considerations should be included in the final Plan.

45. **QUESTION:** For the Prioritization and Implementation Strategy, what kind of key outputs or deliverables are you wanting in terms of operations and maintenance?

**RESPONSE:** Maintenance and operational planning should account for estimated expenses, staffing requirements, scheduling, and necessary resources.

46. **QUESTION:** Benefit Analysis

Are there focus areas or hubs within the 7,000 square miles for cultural tourism and development that can be identified to guide the Economic and Health Impact?

**RESPONSE:** The selected contractor should conduct relevant research to support Economic and Health impacts.

47. **QUESTION:** What are the specific, actionable goals of the Benefit Analysis? Is it for funding justification, community approval, long-term cost savings, or internal decision-making?

**RESPONSE:** Conducting a benefit analysis enables the Nation to make well-informed decisions.

48. **QUESTION:** Are we measuring net change within the reservation or just the total activity the project/opportunities produce? Who benefits? How are the benefits distributed among different sub-groups?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to establish framework for evaluation and reporting.

49. **QUESTION:** What are the key ripple effects? What are the expected direct and indirect impacts?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to establish framework for evaluation and reporting.

50. **QUESTION:** What are the primary health metrics of concern?

**RESPONSE:** Higher levels of physical activity and positive impacts on mental health

51. **QUESTION:** How should this project change community behavior?

**RESPONSE:** The strategic plan will support:

- Community wellness and active transportation
- Cultural and historical interpretation
- Environmental conservation and land stewardship
- Economic development and tourism
- Partnerships with other sovereigns and external entities
- Long-term statutory milestones, reporting and oversight mechanisms

52. **QUESTION:** Could you please confirm the official proposal due date and time? The RFP references both April 30, 2026, and May 1, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. as the deadline.

**RESPONSE:** The Proposal deadline is May 08, 2026 @ 5:00pm must be mailed or hand delivered in a Sealed Envelope with the “Cherokee National Trail System Strategic Plan” placed on the front.

53. **QUESTION:** Could you confirm the required submission method? The RFP references both email submission and sealed mailed/hand-delivered proposals.

**RESPONSE:** The Proposal deadline is May 08, 2026 @ 5:00pm must be mailed or hand delivered in a Sealed Envelope with the “Cherokee National Trail System Strategic Plan” placed on the front.

54. **QUESTION:** Could you clarify the intended contract term, given that the RFP lists a contract period ending September 30, 2026, while draft and final deliverables are due October 1 and December 31, 2026?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation will work with the selected contractor to identify additional interim milestones, but a complete draft of the Plan is due to the Nation by October 1, 2026, with the final approved Plan completed no later than December 31, 2026. The Nation will review proposals with alternative timelines if these dates are unfeasible, but the Nation requests a minimum of 60 days for review of a complete draft before the plan is finalized. As such, the contract term is expected to extend through December 31, 2026, or until the final deliverable is received.

55. **QUESTION:** How will Indian Preference/TERO be evaluated for consultant teams? Will scoring be based solely on the prime consultant, or can a subconsultant/team member’s certification also be considered?

**RESPONSE:** Indian preference will apply to the prime bidder.

56. **QUESTION:** Could you clarify what existing technical data and background materials will be provided to the selected consultant, including GIS data, trail inventories, land ownership/title information, rights-of-way, environmental constraints, cultural resources data, and relevant planning documents?

**RESPONSE:** Respondents should budget for original data collection. The Nation will work with the selected contractor to provide any relevant existing data; however, the contractor should budget for original data collection. Cherokee Nation will own all data provided, collected, and/or generated by this project.

57. **QUESTION:** Could you provide additional guidance on the expected level of effort and detail for the existing conditions assessment and mapping tasks, including inventory development and analysis of the “basic land title status” for proposed trail segments?

**RESPONSE:** The inventory should encompass all existing trails, parks, public lands, and rights-of-way, with particular emphasis on priority areas identified for expansion,

enhancement, improved connectivity, or new trail development opportunities over the next decade. The assessment should be comprehensive and focus on those locations most likely to contribute to the strategic goals of the Cherokee National Trail System. This includes evaluating the potential for new trail segments, upgrades to current facilities, and connections between key recreational and cultural sites. The consultant is expected to provide detailed analysis and mapping to support these priorities, ensuring that the inventory informs the broader planning and decision-making process.

58. **QUESTION:** Could you provide more detail on Cherokee Nation’s expectations for the community and stakeholder engagement process, including the anticipated number and type of meetings, workshops, or outreach activities?

**RESPONSE:** Respondent is expected to develop and submit a comprehensive plan detailing the process for collecting meaningful community and stakeholder feedback. This plan should ensure sufficient time is allocated for gathering input from all relevant groups to inform the development of the strategic plan. Additionally, the contractor must include provisions for follow-up engagement as necessary to address outstanding questions or gather further insights. Cherokee Nation will work with the selected contractor to solidify stakeholder engagement strategies.

59. **QUESTION:** The RFP notes that proposals will be evaluated on references, but the proposal requirements section does not specifically request them. Should proposers include project references as part of the submission, and if so, how many are preferred?

**RESPONSE:** Please list references for previous projects in the Background and qualifications section, if applicable. It is recommended to include two or three projects that are specifically relevant.

60. **QUESTION:** Could you confirm whether the pollution liability insurance requirement applies as written to this planning scope?

**RESPONSE:** See above, lower limits will be accepted.

61. **QUESTION:** Could you clarify what Cherokee Nation is looking for under the “Service Portal and on-line access/reports” evaluation criterion for this project?

**RESPONSE:** Please see question 8 above for amended evaluation criteria for this project.

62. **QUESTION:** Do you have a proposed or target budget in mind for the strategic plan that you are able to share with proposers?

**RESPONSE:** The budget will not be shared by Cherokee Nation.

63. **QUESTION:** On page 6, the RFP references a “performance period” ending September 30, 2026, as the term of the contract. Could you clarify how “performance period” is defined in this context, particularly in relation to the October 1 and December 31, 2026 deliverable dates?

**RESPONSE:** The Nation defines “performance period” as the timeframe from contract execution to completion of final deliverable. The Nation will work with the selected contractor to identify additional interim milestones, but a complete draft of the Plan is due to the Nation by October 1, 2026, with the final approved Plan completed no later than December 31, 2026. The Nation will review proposals with alternative timelines if these dates are unfeasible, but the Nation requests a minimum of 60 days for review of a complete draft before the Plan is finalized. As such, the contract term is expected to extend through December 31, 2026, or until the final deliverable is received.

**IMPORTANT UPDATE:**

- **REQUEST FOR SEALED PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA UPDATE & SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS.**

**The following evaluation criteria will be utilized by the Cherokee Nation Selection Committee to review sealed RFP submittals**

Please see “Evaluation Criteria” listed on page 15. **The evaluation criteria for proposals is as follows:**

Factors	Points
Alignment with organizational needs and values	20
Quality and clarity of proposed approach	20
Relevant experience and qualifications	20
Cost-effectiveness	20
Indian Preference/TERO – Copy of Certification must be included in response	10
Ability to meet established timeframes and deliverables	5
References	5

Cherokee Nation additionally requests that respondents provide line-item cost breakdowns (e.g., per-unit costs, per-activity costs) in their budget proposals.

**Interested parties are required to submit one (1) original and two (2) copies of the proposal and one (1) USB drive with proposal.**

**Sealed proposal submittals are due May 08, 2025 by 5:00 pm CT. Sealed proposals are to be sent by carrier services (Fed-Ex or UPS) to: Cherokee Nation Purchasing Department, attn: Janice Vaughan, 17665 S. Muskogee Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464.**