

Sun News, The (Myrtle Beach, SC)  
December 7, 2006  
Section: LOCAL  
Page: C3

DOT SEEKS CONSULTANT FOR I-73  
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C.

The state Transportation Department is searching for a financial consultant to help with Interstate 73 and other toll projects, but the advice could cost the agency \$200 per hour or more.

An audit recently criticized the agency, saying it wasted millions of dollars on consultants. The Legislative Audit Council report claimed the agency did not get the best deal on consultants, a charge disputed by DOT officials.

However, state highway commissioners on Tuesday approved the agency's request to search for a consultant after an official said he didn't have the expertise to analyze financial matters on I-73.

Mo Denny, acting deputy director for finance and administration, told commissioners he didn't know how much a consultant firm would cost until a contract was negotiated.

Funding for the firm would come from congressional money earmarked for the project, officials said.

Also Tuesday:

The board's chairman asked the agency's engineers for a priority list of road and bridge projects based on need. Chairman Tee Hooper noted criticism that some projects reflect more political influence than need.