

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### TRAIL USER SURVEY AND ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL LAND OWNER SURVEY

issued by

**Capital District Transportation Committee  
Albany, N.Y.**

**April 2006**

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) carrying out federal requirements for cooperative transportation planning and programming within the metropolitan area surrounding the Albany-Schenectady-Troy urbanized area. The study to conduct a regional trail user survey and adjoining land owner survey was proposed by CDTC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues Task Force to make comparisons to existing surveys, develop base-line data for other trail segments and to create a 'trail user profile'. This project is included in CDTC's 2006-2007 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and has a budget of \$40,000 for consultant services.

CDTC will administer the consultant contract for the study and will serve as project manager. CDTC seeks proposals from qualified firms or individuals to conduct a trail user survey and adjoining land owner survey as described below.

#### **Background**

In 1996-97, the Schenectady County Department of Planning spearheaded a cooperative effort with CDTC, the Albany County Department of Economic Development, Conservation and Planning, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), and the SUNY Albany Planning graduate department to conduct two different surveys along the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail; a User Survey and an Adjoining Residential Properties Survey.

The Adjoining Residential Property Survey, a component of the larger User Survey project, resulted in the November 1997 document: **The Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail & Its Impacts on Adjoining Residential Properties**. This report documented the results of a questionnaire mailed to all owners of residential property along the trail. In addition to identifying pertinent characteristics of landowners and their properties, the survey gave landowners the opportunity to express their opinions regarding the impact(s) the trail had on their lives and property.

The User Survey resulted in the November 1998 document: **Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail: Analysis of Trail Use, Regional Benefits & Economic Impact**. The primary purpose of the report was to heighten the awareness of the trail as a regional

recreational and economic asset and bolster then current efforts to extend and improve the facility. In addition to documenting the extent and type of use that occurred, the study identified user attitudes toward the trail and helped develop a user profile. The report also attempted to quantify the existing and potential economic and quality of life benefits to the Capital District.

**It is very important for interested consultants to become familiar with the 1997-98 documents. Printable versions can be viewed at the following links on CDTC's website:**

**User Survey:** <http://www.cdtmpo.org/bike/usersurvey.pdf>

**Residential Property Owners:** <http://www.cdtmpo.org/bike/residential.pdf>

**If you do not have access to the web or are unable to view the files, please contact CDTC at 518-458-2161 for assistance.**

### **Project Description**

The Task Force suggests a new User Survey be conducted similar to and in a similar manner to that completed in 1998. While the earlier study looked at such things as seasonal variation and weather, this study will be more condensed and the primary focus would be on the purpose of the trip (recreation, commuting, health, etc.), the attitudes/perceptions of the users, the type of use (walking, bicycling, in-line skating, etc.), the users origin and in the further development of the user profile. It is anticipated that there will be some modifications to the survey form with the intent of asking the same questions asked in the earlier study.

### **Scope of Work**

**A detailed scope of work is outlined below. Consultants are encouraged to suggest changes to this scope of work that, if based on knowledge and experience will make the process be more efficient, creating a better product. Consultants will not be required to reproduce or recreate this scope of work in their letters of interest. Only modifications to what is requested will be required and considered in consultant evaluations.**

#### **Task 1: Project Coordination Meeting (3% of effort)**

The initial meeting will set the stage for the development of the project. At this meeting, key issues regarding the standards for the surveys will be identified and discussed. The project scope and schedule will be reviewed and refined, project responsibilities will be clarified, and the process will be reviewed.

Major discussion items for Task 1:

- Refine draft survey questions (attached)
- User Count Sheet (attached)
- Review times, locations, and number of people required for each
- How to handle cancellations due to inclement weather
- Develop a recording strategy by location, time of day, and weekend/weekday
- Review of product(s) required
- Developing a tentative schedule for survey completion

CDTC responsibilities for Task 1:

- Host the meeting
- Provide draft survey questions
- Share information with the Bike/Ped Task Force

Consultant responsibilities for Task 1:

- Key staff to attend the meeting
- Offer input on discussion items listed above.
- Prepare a written summary of the meeting to be distributed to all attendees

## **Task 2: Conducting the User Survey/User Counts (up to 50% of effort)**

This will be a coordinated effort. The consultant will not be required to provide all of the staff required to complete this task. CDTC staff and Task Force volunteers will assist with conducting the survey.

In order to better capture the characteristics of the trail users throughout the Capital District, it is suggested that the user survey be conducted along the off-street segments of the three largest bicycle/pedestrian facilities in the Capital District [1) Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail in Albany and Schenectady Counties, 2) Zim Smith Trail in Saratoga County and 3) the Uncle Sam Trail in Rensselaer County].

### Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail-

One objective of this study will be to compare the findings with the results of the earlier study. Data for the 1998 study was collected at five highly used trail-head locations. With this in mind, it makes the most sense to conduct the survey at the same five locations. These locations include: 1) Corning Preserve, 2) Colonie Town Park, 3) The Niskayuna Train Station, 4) Nott Street in the City of Schenectady and 5) Schenectady County Community College.

It is suggested that with the recent improvements made to the MHBHT that a few additional sites be surveyed. These include: 1) the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Parking Area in Watervliet and 2) Kiwanis Park in Rotterdam. These locations will give base-line data for highly used trail-heads and will be very useful for future comparisons.

### Zim Smith Trail

Three locations along the Zim Smith Trail are recommended to establish base line information. They include: [1) Shenantaha Creek Park in Malta, 2) Parking Area near Curry Ave in Round Lake and 3) the parking area in Halfmoon near Coons Crossing Road]

### Uncle Sam Bikeway

Two locations along the Uncle Sam Bikeway are recommended to establish base line information. They include: [1) Knickerbacker Park and 2) the entrance on Northern Drive (NY 142).]

It is very important for the survey to be conducted on both weekdays and weekends. The time of day is also important. It is recommended that all of the locations be surveyed as follows to capture representative (not necessarily statistically significant) weekdays and weekends:

- Two weekdays (Tues, Wed, or Thurs), one Saturday and one Sunday for each location
  - 7:30AM-7:30PM at each location each of the 4 days. It is desirable to conduct the survey for 12 hours per day per location. Please indicate if data collection for 12 hours per day is not feasible and why. However, a minimum of 6 hours per day per location is required.
- At least two people will be at each location while data is being collected. One person will be responsible for conducting the user count (sheet attached) and the other(s) will be responsible for facilitating the survey

CDTC responsibilities for Task 2:

- CDTC staff will coordinate the scheduling of people and locations and will assist with conducting the survey (number of hours and availability not yet determined)
- Provide copies of the survey questionnaires
- Provide user count sheets for the development of a user profile
- Input raw data into a spreadsheet for analysis by the consultant

Consultant responsibilities for Task 2:

- Assist with coordination and provide staff to conduct the survey at the locations and times listed

### **Task 3: Conduct Adjoining Residential Property Owner Survey (2% of effort)**

A second and equally important aspect of this project would be an Adjoining Residential Property Owner Survey along the three facilities studied in the User Survey.

CDTC responsibilities for Task 3:

- Research and develop mailing lists for the survey
- Mail the surveys
- Receive the completed surveys
- Input raw data into a spreadsheet for analysis by the consultant

Consultant responsibilities for Task 3:

- Work with CDTC on the questions to be asked (also part of Task 1)
- Work with CDTC to decide on a “due date” for surveys to be returned
- Analyze raw survey data provided in a spreadsheet format

**Task 4: Analysis of completed surveys (45% of effort)**

Prior to this task starting, CDTC and the consultant will meet to discuss the format and content of the final document.

This task will result in a document(s) that provides detailed statistical and rational analysis of the completed survey forms. A narrative describing the findings should be complemented by color graphics that provide a visual understanding of the findings. Also, based on the responses, a user profile will be developed and provided in an agreed upon format.

CDTC responsibilities for Task 4:

- Host the meeting
- Review and comment on all materials prepared by the consultant
- Prepare any GIS mapping relevant to the surveys for inclusion in the final document
- Share the results and distribute the document

Consultant responsibilities for Task 4:

- Analyze the data and put into tabular and graphic formats for easy use
- Make useful comparisons for both the user and adjoining residential property owner surveys
  - o Between the three trail facilities
  - o Based on time of day (user survey only)
  - o Based on day of week, weekend/weekday (user survey only)
  - o Identify changes in type of use, user profile, and attitudes and perceptions since the 1997-98 study (Mohawk Hudson Trail Only).
  - o Others as necessary
- Calculate estimates for the number of annual trail users by purpose, activity and facility
- Develop comprehensive findings related to trip purpose and mode choice
- Provide useful base-line data for “first-time” locations
- Document all findings and comparisons in an agreed upon report format
- Provide CDTC with 5 color paper copies of the final document and a copy of the final document on CD as a Microsoft Word/Excel file and as a .pdf

## **Administrative Aspects**

CDTC will be responsible for study oversight. CDTC will guide the study and meet with the consultant at least two times—at study initiation, and at the completion of Task 3. Regular correspondence between the consultant and CDTC via email and/or phone will be included. Any interim documents will be provided to CDTC in MS Word and/or Excel and in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format to allow for comments.

The final report will be provided in electronic and hardcopy formats. CDTC will receive five color copies of the final report. CDTC will receive a copy of the final report on CD in MS Word and/or Excel **and** Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format. **CDTC will assume ownership of all materials, studies, graphics etc., which are part of the document and/or planning process.**

The consultant contract will be administered by CDTC. Jason Purvis from the CDTC staff will serve as the contact for expressions of interest and administrative questions. His telephone number is 518-458-2161.

## **Submission Instructions:**

**Offerors may be firms or qualified individuals. Responses to this REI must include all of the following elements (the letter of interest is supplemented by the additional material):**

1. ***A letter of interest*** (no more than three pages) that demonstrates the offeror has a clear understanding of the issues associated with this study and communicates the offeror's ability to complete the scope of work as required. The offeror is encouraged to propose adjustments to the required scope of work in this letter if the offeror believes that those adjustments would add value to the study or would be more appropriate for the allotted budget. There is no need to repeat the required scope of work in the letter of interest. Attached is a proposed contract form for this agreement, containing standard CDTA language for a federally assisted contract. Any exceptions to this agreement must be clearly identified in the offeror's letter of interest.
2. ***Examples of relevant previous work*** that demonstrate the offeror has the staff, technical capabilities, experience, and inter-personal skills to perform the required tasks. Demonstrated experience of the personnel assigned to the study with similar surveys and statistical analysis should be included.
3. ***A management plan identifying the contractor's personnel*** who will be working on the study ***including resumes***. The project manager should be clearly identified. If a team of firms is responding to this REI, please identify the personnel and include the resumes of the lead firm as well as all sub-

consultant firms. Please ensure that the titles of the identified personnel match those on the resumes and in the price proposal described below in number 5.

4. ***Signed Consultant Disclosure of Contacts Form.*** This form which is included as Schedule A in this REI shall be completed and submitted with your letter of interest in accordance with Executive Order Number 127 (EO 127). Failure to complete and submit this form shall result in a determination of non-responsiveness to the REI and disqualification of the submission. If at the time of submission of this form, the specific name of a person authorized to attempt to influence a decision on your behalf is unknown, you agree to provide the specific person's information when it is available. You also agree to update this information during the negotiation or evaluation process of this procurement, and throughout the term of any contract awarded to your firm/company pursuant to this offer.
5. ***A price proposal including all costs anticipated.*** Hours and hourly wages by task and by personnel should be included. This should be completed for both the lead consultant and any sub-consultants, if they are utilized for the study. In addition, a timeline for the study by task should be included.

The breakdown of the budget should be considered as follows:

- Task 1: 3% of effort
- Task 2: **up to** 50% of effort
- Task 3: 2% of effort
- Task 4: 45% of effort

**Based on the budget breakdown, the consultant is required to identify the exact number of people they can provide, the number of hours per person, and the hourly wage for each person. CDTC will be responsible for coordinating where and when surveys will be conducted.**

CDTC is anxious to have this study conducted in an expeditious manner. The survey portion of this study should be completed within 3 calendar months from the Project Coordination Meeting (Task 1). The time frame for the entire study is expected to run for ***no greater than 5*** calendar months from the date of contract execution. **CDTC has budgeted \$40,000 for consultant services. This figure should be considered the upset amount of the contract.**

**Submission Deadline:**

Letters of interest will be due at **5:00 PM on Thursday April 27, 2006** at the Capital District Transportation Committee offices (Attn: Jason Purvis), One Park Place, Main Floor, Albany, NY 12205. Four (4) copies of the submission shall be furnished.

### **Submission Evaluation:**

CDTC reserves the right to reject any or all submissions associated with this work. Based on the mix of qualified offerors responding to this REI, CDTC may request qualified offerors to consider contracting for only certain elements of the study or to consider partnering with other qualified offerors. CDTC may also require offerors to clarify aspects of their understanding of and approach to the study in writing, in person, or by telephone.

A qualified offeror will be selected based on the following criteria:

1. Relevant experience (Knowledge, understanding, and experience with conducting similar surveys and analyzing the raw data received).
2. Familiarity with the Capital District/knowledge of the area (not necessary but considered a plus).
3. Qualified personnel assigned to the project. **Those that can be paid to conduct the survey should be consultant staff, interns, or co-ops.**
4. Ability to meet the desired schedule or propose a shorter schedule while maintaining quality and coordination.
5. Responsiveness to the REI and understanding of the scope of products.
6. Amount of work indicated to be accomplished within the budgeted amount for the study.
7. Past performance of the offeror on other CDTC funded studies, if applicable.

### **Federal Requirements and Compensation:**

This study will be financed through the United States Department of Transportation. Federal contracting requirements will govern the solicitation. The contract will be executed by the Capital District Transportation Authority on behalf of CDTC.

CDTC will pay the Contractor on a reimbursement basis using invoices. Invoices shall document the number of hours worked, salary rate, and expenses by individual summarized by project task (tasks one to four in this REI). Any other direct expenses should also be identified. With each invoice, the Contractor must submit a brief progress report describing the progress on each task. The progress report will serve as the basis for payment.