



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CAPITAL REGION SMART COMMUNITIES TOOLBOX

Issued by

Capital District Transportation Committee

Albany, NY

February 2021

Introduction

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 and Saratoga Springs urbanized areas. The project being proposed, Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox, is funded through CDTC's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Task 4.30 Smart Communities. The project has a budget of \$100,000 for consultant services.

CDTC will administer the consultant contract for the study and will act as project manager. CDTC seeks Expressions of Interest from qualified firms or individuals to develop a "toolbox" or resource guide for local governments interested in implementing "smart" projects that are consistent with the goals of the [New Visions 2050](#) metropolitan transportation plan. The plan must identify feasible projects and technologies for Capital Region local governments, provide guidance on how they can be integrated into existing operations and organizations, and available funds and resources that can support these projects.

Project Objective

The proposed project is related to CDTC's *New Visions'* commitment to build a 21st Century transportation system. This means the strategic deployment of technology or innovative solutions to address congestion, safety, mobility, and fiscal sustainability of maintaining the region's network of roads, bridges, transit facilities, trails, sidewalks, and other transportation infrastructure. CDTC launched a Smart Communities Task Force in 2018 to provide a forum for local governments and the private sector to share and exchange experiences adopting new technology and improve local knowledge in the field of "Smart Cities."

CDTC solicited for its first consultant-led study under Task 4.30 in 2019. As part of this Task, CDTC funded the Municipal Smart City Street Light Conversion & Evolving Technology Guidebook. This project was developed with the City of Saratoga Springs but is a valuable reference for all size and types of municipalities in the region that are interested in or planning to convert their street lights to LED and looking to maximize their benefits. A solicitation for new Smart Communities projects was released in 2020 but due to a combination of factors related to the ongoing pandemic, CDTC received no project



proposals. In order to maintain momentum and continue to serve as a resource in this topic area, CDTC has shifted funding within this task to support a Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox.

The Smart Communities Toolbox will serve as a guide for implementing Smart City projects in the Capital Region. It will identify common interests and opportunities in the region for introducing technology. Technologies recommended must provide at least one or more of the following benefits to the transportation system:

- Automate data collection
- Improve efficiency
- Expand access to mobility
- Improve safety
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Create connections

The specific objectives of the Toolbox are:

- Define “Smart Cities” in the context of the Capital Region.
- Describe what “big data” and the internet of things” are.
- Outline benefits and approaches to Smart City projects.
- Identify underutilized and evolving technologies that can be deployed in the Capital Region to enhance the regional transportation system.
- Compile case studies on Smart Cities projects in comparable cities and towns – including small- and medium-size cities with populations under 100,000, small rural towns with populations as small as 1,000 and large suburban towns with populations over 80,000, as well as polycentric metropolitan areas with populations under 1 million.
- Create an implementation roadmap – what software, data management strategies, or organizational changes must be made to implement the recommended technologies?
- Create a Toolbox that can be delivered virtually, in an online format that is informative, engaging, and comprehensive.
- Identify potential resources and partnerships that can be developed with colleges and universities and the local technology sector.

Scope of Work

Consultants will be required to complete the scope of work as outlined below. If, based on consultant knowledge or experience, the consultant believes the required scope of work should be changed in any way or is too ambitious, the suggested changes should be outlined in the letter of interest [as described in the instructions for letter of interest preparation section of the Request for Expressions of Interest (REI)]. 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.



The consultant will take a lead role in all public forums, workshops, meetings, and hearings. The consultant will conduct periodic review meetings (either in person, via telephone, virtual platform(s), or via email) with the Study Advisory Committee for review.

Task 1a: Assemble Study Advisory Committee

A diverse set of stakeholders from the CDTC Smart Communities Task Force and Regional Operations and Safety Advisory Committee (ROSAC) will be invited to participate in this project as Study Advisory Committee (SAC) members. The consultant will be expected to keep the SAC well-informed of the project's progress and SAC members will be expected to provide input in each step of the project. SAC members may also be asked to assist with public engagement activities.

Task 1b: Project Coordination / Initiation Meeting

The initial meeting will set the stage for the development of the Toolbox. At this meeting, key issues regarding safety, operations, and mobility in the Capital Region will be identified and discussed. The project scope and schedule will be reviewed and refined, project tasks will be delineated, and the planning process will be reviewed. Meeting attendance will include project consultant, CDTC staff, and the SAC.

During this meeting, the consultant will also discuss options and platforms available for sharing information and drafts with the SAC. In coordination with the SAC, there will also be a determination on how to present the final Toolbox and where a project webpage will be located (utilizing existing or new website).

Due to Covid-19 and limitations on public gatherings, meeting and public engagement activities must be adaptable to an online format. Any Proposal should address online meeting capabilities, innovations, additional software offered and previous experiences in holding collaborative and engaging online meetings.

Deliverables:

- Establish Study Advisory Committee
- Initiation Meeting (Meeting #1) notes

Task 3: Focus Group Discussions

The consultant will schedule and hold 2-3 focus group discussions with local government officials, staff and/or representatives from regional transportation organizations. The objective of these discussions is to learn about the challenges of adopting emerging technologies, managing big data, integrating new technologies into existing organizations and bureaucracies, and other real and perceived limits on implementing Smart Cities projects.

Deliverables:

- Summary of findings of focus group discussions



Task 4: Review of Local Policies and Planning Documents

A review of all applicable documents, including the *New Visions 2050* Plan and local Smart Cities plans. Identify and review available data and other information that is related to the key issues identified by the SAC in Task 1b. The consultant will also describe approaches to these issues.

Deliverables:

- Summary of previous reports.
- Recommendations for Smart City approaches to key issues and findings from review of local policies and planning documents.
- Set up project website or webpage using free web-based software, or other CDTC-owned platform.

Task 5: SAC Meeting #2

At this meeting, the consultant will describe their findings of the focus group discussions and review of complete regional and local plans, and what recommendations they have based on this. The SAC will provide feedback to these summaries and recommendations.

Deliverables:

- Meeting # 2 notes

Task 6: Draft Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox

The consultant will draft the Smart Communities Toolbox. The toolbox must be developed in a creative and innovative manner, in a format determined based on discussions with the SAC in Task 1a. This draft will be an outline that consists of ideas and recommendations rather than being a first pass at the final document. The toolbox contents must include:

- Define “Smart Cities.”
- Describe what “big data” and the internet of things” are.
- Outline benefits and approaches to Smart City projects.
- Identify underutilized and evolving technologies that can be deployed in the Capital Region to enhance the regional transportation system.
- Compile case studies on Smart Cities projects in comparable cities and towns from across the country that could be implemented locally. These case studies should be chosen based on similarities between community size, character, organizational structure(s), and key issues.
- Create an implementation roadmap – what software, data management strategies, or organizational changes must be made to implement the recommended technologies? Rate each strategy by criteria such as ease of deployment, cost, benefits, etc.
- Identify potential resources and partnerships that can be developed with the local tech sector.



Deliverables:

- Draft Toolbox

Task 7: SAC Meeting #3: Present Draft Toolbox

At this meeting, the consultant will present the draft toolbox to the SAC and accept feedback. The draft toolbox should be provided to the SAC at least 7 days prior to the scheduled meeting to allow members to review and prepare comments and questions that will generate discussion. At this meeting, the consultant and SAC will also discuss strategies for engaging the public and collecting feedback on the recommended projects and/or technologies. Public engagement will focus on the level of comfort and familiarity with emerging technologies, big data, and the internet of the things. The goal will be to understand any concerns the public may have (i.e. privacy), provide examples of how a technology or data point may be used, what benefits will be available to the public from these projects, and the level of comfort and knowledge with technology(ies).

Deliverables:

- SAC Meeting #3 notes
- Public engagement material(s) (i.e. survey)

Task 8: Public Engagement

In this task, the consultant, in coordination with CDTC staff and the SAC, will engage the public to determine level of comfort and opinions of the recommendations in the draft toolbox. As mentioned in the task above, the public will be solicited for comment specifically on the technology(ies) being proposed. Engagement strategies must be innovative and adaptable to the diverse populations and communities throughout the Capital Region. The consultant will be required to develop social media content that educates the public on “Smart Cities” and promotes engagement opportunities. The consultant may be asked to develop social media content that fits various platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

At the end of the public comment period, the consultant is expected to prepare a summary of the feedback received. This summary should also include comments and feedback received from the SAC. Lastly, the summary will include a description of the methods of outreach used for public engagement - the number of people reached, and related demographic / geographic data. Public engagement activities must comply with CDTC’s [2021 Public Participation Policy](#).

Deliverables:

- Social media content
- Public participation materials
- Summary of Feedback



Task 9: SAC Meeting #4

The consultant will present the summary of feedback and discuss the final toolbox with the SAC. If any recommendations must be omitted, edited, or added based on public comments and feedback, this should be discussed with the SAC. At the end of this meeting, the consultant should have sufficient information to move forward with finalizing the Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox.

- Meeting minutes

Task 10: Final Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox

The consultant will finalize the Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox. Following the release of the toolbox, the consultant will be expected to do at least one presentation to the CDTC Planning Committee or Policy Board.

Deliverables:

- Capital Region Smart Communities Toolbox
- At least 1 (one) hardcopy of the Toolbox
- Presentation of Toolbox

Administrative Aspects

CDTC will be responsible for study oversight. A Study Advisory Committee (SAC) with representatives from both the existing Smart Communities Task Force and the Regional Operations and Safety Advisory Committee, will guide the study and meet with the consultant on a regular basis.

Materials to be reviewed and discussed at SAC meetings will be available at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting to allow adequate review time by members. Materials will be distributed to SAC members via email, Dropbox, or agreed upon method. Interim documents will be provided to CDTC and SAC members in MS Word or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format.

The final toolbox will be developed in an agreed upon online format. One hardcopy of the toolbox will be provided to CDTC. **CDTC will assume ownership of all materials, studies, and graphics etc., which are part of the document and/or project development process.**

The consultant contract will be administered by CDTC. Jen Ceponis from the CDTC staff will serve as the contact for expressions of interest and administrative questions. Her telephone number is 518-458-2161. CDTC will be solely responsible for study oversight.



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). Please note that materials submitted to CDTC are subject to the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). If respondent provides material(s) of a confidential nature for disclosure to third parties, the respondent should clearly indicate the specific material(s) it considers confidential. Subject to the provisions of FOIL and any other applicable laws, CDTC may agree to maintain confidentiality of such material(s) if requested. CDTC assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage resulting out of any determination requiring disclosure of information pursuant to FOIL.

1. ***A letter of interest*** (no more than two pages) that demonstrates the offeror has a clear understanding of the issues associated with this project and communicates the offeror's ability to complete the scope of work as required. The offeror may 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. Inclusion of a project schedule is essential and should be included as a one-page addendum to this letter of interest. 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 technical capabilities, experience, and inter-personal skills to perform the required tasks. Demonstrated experience of the personnel assigned to the study with innovative and creative bicycle and pedestrian network and facility planning and design should also 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 and reflect a professional experienced in conducting challenging community conversations. If a team of firms is responding to this REI, please include the resumes of the personnel working on the study for 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 4. Failure to properly identify personnel significantly reduces the credibility of the proposal. A project schedule should also be provided that demonstrates how the team will complete the work on time.
4. ***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.



CDTC would like to have this project completed in an expeditious manner. The time frame for the study is expected to run for ***no greater than*** 12 calendar months from the date of contract execution. If circumstances require, a contract extension of up to 6-months will be available. **CDTC has budgeted \$100,000 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 Friday, April 2, 2021** at the Capital District Transportation Committee offices (Attn: Jen Ceponis), One Park Place, Main Floor, Albany, NY 12205. **Six (6) hard copies and an email to jceponis@cdtcmpo.org are required.**

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 person, in writing, or by telephone.

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

1. *Relevant experience and the success of similar studies (in terms of scope and product) completed by the personnel assigned to the study. Extensive experience in transportation planning, including transit, bicycle and pedestrian; intelligent transportation systems (ITS), automated data collection and management, transportation electrification, congestion management, and other Smart Cities types of planning and initiatives.*
2. *Qualified personnel assigned to the study. The experience of the project manager will be heavily weighted in evaluation.*
3. *Responsiveness to the REI and understanding of the scope of products.*
4. *Ability to meet the desired schedule and willingness to be flexible if faced with unexpected delays.*
5. *Past performance of the offeror on CDTC-sponsored studies, such as the Linkage Program, or other relevant planning work.*
6. *Amount of work indicated to be accomplished within the budgeted amount for the study (if the offeror proposes adjustments to the scope of work outlined in this REI).*
7. *Demonstrated understanding of the context of the study area (knowledge of the Capital Region may be a plus).*
8. *CDTC considers Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE). DBE offerors are strongly encouraged.*



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 eight in this REI). Any other direct expenses such as meeting expenses, employee per diem, etc. should also be identified and receipts provided for all expenses with the exception of mileage. 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.