

Capital District
Transportation Committee

January 29, 2020

**2020-2021 Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program
(Linkage Program) Project Evaluation Summary**

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) reserved \$175,000 for consultant assistance and \$100,000 for staff technical assistance to support its Linkage Program in Fiscal Year 2020-2021. CDTC solicited for new projects in October 2019 and received nine proposals by the December 13, 2019 deadline. Table 1 lists the proposed projects and the value of requested consultant assistance. The value of requested federal funds far exceeds the available resources for this cycle of the Linkage Program.

Table1: Proposed Projects and Consultant Budget Requests

Sponsor	Project Name	Federal Consultant Share	Local Consultant Share	Total Consultant Budget
Albany County	Rail Trail Expansion Feasibility Study	\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000
City of Albany	Washington Avenue Connection Study	\$71,250	\$23,750	\$95,000
Village of Ballston Spa	Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Linkage Study	\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000
Town of Colonie	Bicycle Master Plan	\$71,250	\$23,750	\$95,000
Village of Colonie	Sand Creek Road Complete Street Feasibility Study	\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000
Town of East Greenbush	Route 4 Corridor Study: Inter-Municipal Update	\$67,500	\$22,500	\$90,000
Village of Menands	Land Use Regulations Update	\$60,000	\$20,000	\$80,000
Saratoga County	Zim Smith Northern Trail Expansion	\$52,500	\$17,500	\$70,000
Village of Scotia	Downtown Connections Plan	\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000
Total:		\$502,500	\$167,500	\$670,000

Evaluation Process

CDTC staff screened the applications to ensure they were complete and met all program requirements. An evaluation committee comprised of staff from CDTC, NYSDOT, CDTA and CDRPC then evaluated the proposals using the following criteria:

1. Is the initiative eligible and consistent with the Linkage Program strategies? What is the need for the project? Is there a sense of urgency? (mandatory and improves priority)

2. Is the proposed scope of work reasonable for the proposed budget? (mandatory)
3. Is funding available for a related capital transportation project? Is there a completed Linkage Study, other locally adopted plan or adopted complete streets policy in place related to the effort? (improves priority)
4. What is the sponsors' plan for implementation? Is the intent to adopt, endorse or accept the plan? Does the proposal indicate a path for success? (improves priority)
5. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)
6. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)
7. Is the submission supported locally through complementary activities and/or funding commitments beyond the minimum match requirements? (improves priority)
8. New sponsors will receive additional consideration in project selection. For past sponsors, was the sponsor's performance adequate and appropriate as determined by CDTC staff? (improves priority)

CDTC's evaluation process is qualitative in nature. All efforts are required to meet the first two criteria. Addressing the remaining six criteria will improve the priority of the proposal. Experience with past Linkage Program projects was used to evaluate the scope of work versus budget and the sponsor's past performance. Submissions that best meet all eight evaluation criteria will be considered first for funding. If there are more worthy submissions than available funding, project selection will consider geographic balance and project type.

Recommendation

A summary of how each project relates to the evaluation criteria is provided in Table 2 along with the evaluation committee's assessment and priority of each project for funding. After considering the evaluation criteria, geographic balance, project type and the opportunity to work with new project sponsors, the evaluation committee recommends funding the projects in the Village of Ballston Spa, the Village of Menands and the Village of Scotia.

If approved by CDTC's Planning Committee, these projects will be added to the 2020-2022 Unified Planning Work Program. The combined federal funding for these projects is \$150,000 matched with a combined \$50,000 in local cash for consultant work. Each project will also receive \$30,000 in additional CDTC staff technical support for each project.

Table 2: 2020-2021 Linkage Program Evaluation Results

Evaluation Criteria:	Albany County Rail Trail Expansion Feasibility Study	City of Albany Washington Avenue Connection Study	Village of Ballston Spa Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Linkage Study
1. Is the initiative eligible and consistent with the Linkage Program strategies? What is the need for the project? Is there a sense of urgency? (mandatory and improves priority)	Relates to two Linkage strategies; County to develop feasibility plans for three potential trail extensions.	Relates to four Linkage strategies; City needs a plan for Washington Avenue between two other planned sections of the corridor; City is beginning the bike/ped master plan Linkage study.	Relates to five Linkage strategies; Study area would be a section of the community to plan for complete streets, traffic calming and a Zim Smith Trail connection.
2. Is the proposed scope of work reasonable for the proposed budget? (mandatory)	Yes. Scope is well defined. No mention of equity.	Scope is reasonable but expectations for data collection will need to be managed. Scope considers Environmental Justice populations and ADA.	Expectations using the proposed modest budget will need to be managed. Detailed equity discussion and offered ways to engage those populations.
3. Is funding available for a related capital transportation project? Is there a completed Linkage Study, other locally adopted plan or adopted complete streets policy in place related to the effort? (improves priority)	Capital resources not specifically noted; Project will conduct feasibility studies supporting Capital District Trails Plan implementation.	Capital resources not specifically noted; Project relates to the City's Complete Street ordinance and planning studies including the 2019 Washington Avenue/Patroun Creek Corridor Study.	Plan will be incorporated together with the Economic Development Plan currently underway into a Master Plan for the Village.
4. What is the sponsors' plan for implementation? Is the intent to adopt, endorse or accept the plan? Does the proposal indicate a path for success? (improves priority)	Not commitments but the County recognized its role with managing the environmental review process toward implementation.	Not specifically mentioned.	Village intends to integrate plan recommendations into local capital project programming.
5. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)	Yes - expansion of the regional trail network.	Yes - traffic calming and complete street design.	Yes - will improve the walking and bicycling environment in the Village.
6. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)	Yes, coordination noted with Guilderland and Altamont.	No	Yes - Town of Ballston has offered support.
7. Is the submission supported locally through complementary activities and/or funding commitments beyond the minimum match requirements? (improves priority)	Required 25% cash match; NYSDOT willing to coordinate on planning related to NY Route 155.	Required 25% cash match; no additional in-kind commitment.	Required 25% cash match; multiple support letters; coordination with Saratoga County on Zim Smith Trail expected.
8. New sponsors will receive additional consideration in project selection. For past sponsors, was the sponsor's performance adequate and appropriate as determined by CDTC staff? (improves priority)	Recent experience on the 2018 Albany Shaker Road Corridor Study was positive.	Good past performance but has had many recent Linkage Program awards.	New to CDTC's Linkage Program.

Priority and Evaluation Committee Assessment:

Low - Lower number of Linkage strategies addressed, other resources available for trail planning through CDTC.

Low - City received several Linkage awards in recent years and is just starting a Linkage study now. Consider other candidates first.

High - New sponsor, small community with limited planning resources; project will strengthen urban form and support local planning.

Table 2 Continued

<p>Evaluation Criteria:</p>	<p>Town of Colonie Bicycle Master Plan</p>	<p>Village of Colonie Sand Creek Road Complete Street Feasibility Study</p>	<p>Town of East Greenbush Route 4 Corridor Study: Inter-Municipal Update</p>
<p>1. Is the initiative eligible and consistent with the Linkage Program strategies? What is the need for the project? Is there a sense of urgency? (mandatory and improves priority)</p>	<p>Relates to two Linkage strategies; Town to develop a bicycle master plan.</p>	<p>Relates to four Linkage strategies; Focus on corridor traffic operations and complete streets.</p>	<p>Relates to five Linkage strategies; 2nd year for the application showing the need; urgency related to Regeneron expansion.</p>
<p>2. Is the proposed scope of work reasonable for the proposed budget? (mandatory)</p>	<p>Scope expectations will need to be managed given the geographic size of the Town. Scope considers low income populations and those without personal vehicles.</p>	<p>Yes. Scope is well defined. No mention of equity.</p>	<p>Budget is very tight for the scope of work. Expectations will need to be managed. Ideas to engage equity populations included in the proposal.</p>
<p>3. Is funding available for a related capital transportation project? Is there a completed Linkage Study, other locally adopted plan or adopted complete streets policy in place related to the effort? (improves priority)</p>	<p>Capital resources not specifically noted; Will support implementation of the Town Pathways Plan and Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>Town indicates willingness to implement sidewalk recommendations on town owned sections of the corridor.</p>	<p>Comprehensive plan update should be completed in May 2020; project would update the US Route 4 Corridor study; Town participated in CDTC Complete Streets Workshop program.</p>
<p>4. What is the sponsors' plan for implementation? Is the intent to adopt, endorse or accept the plan? Does the proposal indicate a path for success? (improves priority)</p>	<p>Town intends to adopt the plan when completed.</p>	<p>The Village intends to accept the findings of the study.</p>	<p>Town intends to adopt the study and plan for implementation.</p>
<p>5. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)</p>	<p>Yes - will create a plan to expand bicycling infrastructure throughout the Town.</p>	<p>Yes - will improve walking and biking, address traffic operations and integrate traffic calming measures.</p>	<p>Yes - will address traffic operations, pedestrian, bicycle and transit users.</p>
<p>6. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes - Town of Colonie has offered support.</p>	<p>Yes - North Greenbush part of study area boundary. Support letter provided.</p>
<p>7. Is the submission supported locally through complementary activities and/or funding commitments beyond the minimum match requirements? (improves priority)</p>	<p>Required 25% cash match would need to be bonded; No support letters; Furthers trail planning initiatives.</p>	<p>Required 25% cash match; Town support letter.</p>	<p>Required 25% cash match;</p>
<p>8. New sponsors will receive additional consideration in project selection. For past sponsors, was the sponsor's performance adequate and appropriate as determined by CDTC staff? (improves priority)</p>	<p>Recent experience on the 2018 Albany Shaker Road Corridor Study was positive.</p>	<p>Only one Linkage study in 2006. Many changes in Village since that time.</p>	<p>Past good performance on Linkage studies.</p>
<p>Priority and Evaluation Committee Assessment:</p>	<p>Medium - Large community with limited bicycling facilities. Lower number of Linkage strategies addressed.</p>	<p>Medium - Small community with limited planning resources, study focuses on a single roadway, geographic balance was a considered as another Albany County Village had higher priority.</p>	<p>Medium - Transportation planning assistance likely needed with new development. Comprehensive Plan not yet completed to understand the future land use vision. May be premature to fund at this time.</p>

Table 2: Continued

Evaluation Criteria:	Village of Menands Menands Land Use Regulations Update	Saratoga County Zim Smith Northern Trail Extension	Village of Scotia Downtown Connections Plan
1. Is the initiative eligible and consistent with the Linkage Program strategies? What is the need for the project? Is there a sense of urgency? (mandatory and improves priority)	Relates to seven Linkage strategies; 2nd year for the application showing the need; will implement Village comprehensive plan and support River Corridor BRT.	Relates to two Linkage strategies; limited to extension of Zim Smith Trail.	Relates to four Linkage strategies; Focus on corridor traffic operations and complete streets.
2. Is the proposed scope of work reasonable for the proposed budget? (mandatory)	Scope is reasonable as much is documented in draft Comprehensive Plan. Expectations will need to be managed. Equity will be considered in the process.	Scope is reasonable for the budget. Benefits of trails to disadvantaged populations discussed.	Yes. Will build upon the NYS Routes 5 and 50 Traffic Data & Case Study Review as part of the CDTC/CDRPC Community Planning Technical Assistance Program. Equity is considered.
3. Is funding available for a related capital transportation project? Is there a completed Linkage Study, other locally adopted plan or adopted complete streets policy in place related to the effort? (improves priority)	Project will implement the Comprehensive Plan in development and will refine the 2013 Zoning update.	Capital resources not specifically noted; will implement the Capital District Trails Plan.	The Village has a complete streets policy and held a CDTC Complete Streets Workshop; will revisit concepts in the Scotia Waterfront Concept Implementation Plan.
4. What is the sponsors' plan for implementation? Is the intent to adopt, endorse or accept the plan? Does the proposal indicate a path for success? (improves priority)	Village intends to adopt the zoning and will do the SEQR assessment itself.	County will seek implementation grants.	Village intends to take Village Board action on the plan, method to be determined.
5. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)	Yes - will support concentrated development plans, walkability and support transit.	Yes - expansion of the regional trail network.	Yes - traffic calming and complete streets.
6. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)	No	No coordination noted with local governments but anticipated.	No
7. Is the submission supported locally through complementary activities and/or funding commitments beyond the minimum match requirements? (improves priority)	Required 25% cash match; Comprehensive Plan implementation.	Match amount would need to be confirmed but 25% is assumed.	Required 25% cash match; complements the Technical Assistance project and previous planning work.
8. New sponsors will receive additional consideration in project selection. For past sponsors, was the sponsor's performance adequate and appropriate as determined by CDTC staff? (improves priority)	Good past history. Most recent Linkage study in 2011.	New as a direct sponsor but has participated in community Linkage planning work within Saratoga County.	Good past performance.

Priority and Evaluation Committee Assessment:

High - Small Village, limited planning resources, updated zoning needed on the Broadway corridor and throughout the Village to implement Comprehensive Plan. Will complement River Corridor BRT.

Low - Lower number of Linkage strategies addressed, other resources available for trail planning through CDTC.

High - Small Village with limited planning resources, traffic calming and complete streets will strengthen urban form in the Business District and support local planning.

2020-2021 Linkage Program Proposals

Albany County Rail Trail Expansion Feasibility Study

Evaluate possible extensions and connections from the Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail into the Town of Guilderland. First, explore options to continue the trail from the Village of Voorheesville along the rail bed to the Village of Altamont. Second, explore a path along Route 155 (State Farm Road) running to New Karner Road (the Albany Loop). Third, explore a potential connection to a proposed development near the Albany Country Club.

City of Albany Washington Avenue Connection Study

Examine Washington Avenue between Brevator Street and Henry Johnson Boulevard to improve connections to major institutions, reduce conflicts between different modes of transportation, identify preferred design solutions, incorporate elements of green infrastructure, and identify opportunities for community art, branding, and economic development.

Village of Ballston Spa Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Linkage Study (Recommended)

Develop a pedestrian and bicycle master plan and evaluate multi-use options to connect the Village to the Zim Smith Trail which ends in the Town of Ballston. Using a Complete Streets framework, the plan will describe where to improve, replace or add sidewalks in a focus area to improve access to the central business district, recreational facilities and the Malta Avenue school; provide safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists; establish a link from the Zim Smith Trail to downtown Ballston Spa; and provide traffic calming on cut through village streets.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	In-Kind Village Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$100,000

Town of Colonie Bicycle Master Plan

Develop a network of on-road and off-road bicycle facilities to facilitate bicycle connections to key destinations throughout the Town and to the regional trail system. Creating such a system would encourage people to choose bicycling for short trips thus alleviating traffic. The Town has several off-street paths and is actively working to expand them through the development review process and as opportunities arise through infrastructure projects and property acquisition. As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, the Town revised its 2008 Pathways Plan which will provide a starting point for the development of a Bicycle Master Plan Network.

**Village of Colonie
Sand Creek Road Complete Street Feasibility Study**

Examine Sand Creek Road, from Watervliet Shaker Road to Wolf Road for the feasibility of a Complete Street. The study will consider the current access and mobility of all modes of transportation which include motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists and develop a Concept Plan for future implementation that will involve a more welcoming transportation environment accommodating all modes of travel. The study will also integrate safety improvements such as options to reduce vehicular speed and congestion, minimize environmental impacts and encourage economic growth. Transit infrastructure is also non-existent in the corridor and this study will look at options to improve transit access.

**Town of East Greenbush
Route 4 Corridor Study: Inter-Municipal Update**

Examine the current US 4 corridor between Mannix Road and NY Route 43 (North Greenbush) in the context of both the existing adjacent land use and likely future conditions in order make transportation improvements which are needed to address multi-modal needs, current operations, and advance larger concepts to accommodate the area’s continued growth. Improvements and site plan reviews have helped initiate and encourage a walkable infrastructure, but current traffic congestion is beyond the scope of any one development proposal. This effort will update the 2006 Route 4 Corridor Study recommendations, many of which have been completed.

**Village of Menands
Menands Land Use Regulations Update (Recommended)**

Update and revise the Village land use regulations to improve walkability, encourage redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial sites, and foster infill development and compact design. This effort will audit Village zoning and subdivision regulations with a focus on updating street standards using complete street principles, parking requirements, multi-modal facilities, access management measures and address impediments to mixed uses. The Village is particularly interested in addressing its commercial core and encouraging reactivation of several key sites along the Broadway Corridor.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	In-Kind Village Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$60,000	\$20,000	\$80,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$110,000

**Saratoga County
Zim Smith Northern Trail Extension**

Examine a feasible route for an approximately 4-mile northern extension of the Zim Smith Trail from the trail’s current terminus on Oak Street in the Village of Ballston Spa to the Saratoga Spa State Park. In the past, this trail extension has been mentioned in multiple planning studies, but

a potential route has never been identified. If a connection can be made, this portion of trail will add to the previously constructed 12-mile-long Zim Smith Trail.

**Village of Scotia
Downtown Connections Plan (Recommended)**

The Downtown Connections Plan intends to improve the pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit experience in the Village’s Central Business District along Mohawk Avenue (NYS Route 5). The current focus of this corridor, especially at the intersection with NYS Route 50, is the quick and efficient movement of commuters and freight through the Village. Although the importance of that cannot be minimized, the Village intends to increase the focus on other user groups and how their safety and enjoyment of the area can be enhanced. Additionally, the connection from the Central Business District to Collins Park will be analyzed with the goal of improving pedestrian flow and enhancing the user experience.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	In-Kind Village Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$5,000	\$95,000