

Capital District
Transportation Committee

January 26, 2021

**2021-2022 Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program
(Linkage Program) Project Evaluation Summary**

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) reserved \$175,000 in federal planning funds for up to three consultant led Linkage Program projects in its 2020-2022 Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. An additional \$100,000 was reserved for CDTC staff technical assistance to support these projects. CDTC issued a solicitation in October 2020 and received four proposals by the December 16, 2020 deadline requesting over \$221,250 in federal funds, exceeding the available resources. The following summarizes the proposals, the evaluation process and the evaluation results.

Proposal Summaries

City of Albany: Mid-City Hub Study

The City of Albany will conduct a transportation study of the Mid-City Campus area, bounded by Partridge Street, Lark Street, Western Avenue and Central Avenue. The Mid-City Hub is in close proximity to the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany Downtown Campus, Alumni Quad, and SUNY Albany College of Engineering and Applied Sciences slated to open 2022-23. The study will analyze the intersections of Central Avenue and Washington Avenue at Henry Johnson Boulevard, Washington Avenue and Western Avenue between Sprague Place and Lexington Avenue, Washington Avenue, Western Avenue and State Street between Englewood Place and Robin Street, and recommend bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular improvements to enable these roadways to better serve those who live and work in the area.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	Local In-Kind Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$71,250	\$23,750	\$95,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$125,000

Towns of East Greenbush and North Greenbush
Route 4 Corridor Study: Inter-Municipal Update

The Towns of East and North Greenbush will examine the US Route 4 corridor between Mannix Road and NY Route 43 to ensure that the transportation network can meet the demand of continued job growth, support mixed-use development, integrate quality of life desires, and is consistent with the East Greenbush Comprehensive Plan Update. Existing and future land uses will be reviewed to identify potential multi-modal and operational transportation improvements. Improvements and site plan reviews have helped initiate and encourage walkable infrastructure, but current traffic congestion is beyond the scope of any one development proposal. This study will provide a potential NYS DOT-style scoping report to be used for further project development as funds become available for implementation. The Towns of East and North Greenbush will collaboratively advance the effort, with East Greenbush serving as the Project Sponsor. This

project will update the 2006 Route 4 Corridor Study which has had many of its recommendations implemented by the Town of East Greenbush.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	Local In-Kind Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$67,500	\$22,500	\$90,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	\$132,500

City of Rensselaer: Waterfront Connectivity Study

The City of Rensselaer will explore multi-modal transportation options to support Hudson River waterfront redevelopment in the north end of the City. The study area is bounded by the waterfront to the west, to the north by open space south of I-90, to the east by Van Rensselaer Drive and Washington Avenue and to the south by Broadway and Tracy Street. Options will be evaluated for implementing complete streets principles on study area roadways including traffic calming, access management, pedestrian and bicycle access, public transit access, emergency access, and overall safety and operational improvements between the existing schools (Doane Stuart School, Rensselaer Junior/Senior High School), existing residential neighborhoods, and planned mixed-use developments near the Hudson River. The goal is to enhance the bicycle and pedestrian network for both safety and convenience, promote healthy and sustainable modes of transportation, and spur economic reinvestment.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	Local In-Kind Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	\$102,500

City of Troy: Federal Street Corridor Study

The City of Troy is experiencing a rebirth of downtown but Federal Street, which has a dated Urban Renewal era design, separates downtown from new development. Based on preliminary concept work completed in 2020, the City would like to explore repurposing Federal Street into a raised boulevard bookended with Roundabouts at River Street and Sixth Avenue. The traffic implications with the vertical lift Green Island Bridge, River Street and BRT traffic, 5th Avenue, the Sixth Avenue/Peoples Avenue intersection, and RPI traffic will all need to be studied to ensure traffic continues to circulate while also providing the pedestrian connectivity the City stresses, access management, and bicycle connections to the Empire State Trail. This study would provide a potential, but partial, draft of a NYSDOT style scoping report to be used for further project development as funds become available for implementation.

Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	Local In-Kind Staff Contribution	Project Total
Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
\$37,500	\$12,500	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$80,000

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. Is the sponsor's plan for engaging disadvantaged populations in the study per the demographics of the study area reasonable? (Improves priority)
5. 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)
6. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)
7. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)
8. Is the local match being provided in cash? Is an overmatch of cash or in-kind support being provided? Are there complementary activities being undertaken to support the project? (improves priority)
9. 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 seven criteria will help improve the priority of the submission. CDTC staff will use past history with Linkage Program studies to evaluate the scope of work versus budget and the sponsor's past performance. Submissions that best meet all nine 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.

Funding Options

A summary of how each project relates to the evaluation criteria is provided in Table 2 (see page 5) along with the evaluation committee's assessment 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 developed two funding options for CDTC Planning Committee consideration. The distinction between the options is that while Albany had a stronger application, it has benefited from a great deal of Linkage Program and other CDTC

planning assistance in recent years while CDTC has not worked with Rensselaer since completing Linkage Program plans in 2004.

Option 1: Fund projects in East Greenbush, Troy and Albany

Sponsor	Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	Local In-Kind Staff Contribution	Project Total
	Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
East Greenbush	\$67,500	\$22,500	\$90,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	\$132,500
Troy	\$37,500	\$12,500	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$80,000
Albany	\$71,250	\$23,750	\$95,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$125,000
Total	\$176,250	\$58,750	\$235,000	\$90,000	\$12,500	\$337,500

Option 2: Fund projects in East Greenbush, Troy and Rensselaer

Sponsor	Consultant Budget			Additional CDTC Staff Technical Assistance	Local In-Kind Staff Contribution	Project Total
	Federal Share (75%)	Local Cash (25%)	Total Federal and Local Share			
East Greenbush	\$67,500	\$22,500	\$90,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	\$132,500
Troy	\$37,500	\$12,500	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$80,000
Rensselaer	\$45,000	\$15,000	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$12,500	\$102,500
Total	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$90,000	\$25,000	\$315,000

The funding option approved by the Planning Committee will be added to the 2020-2022 Unified Planning Work Program for CDTC Policy Board approval. CDTC staff will collect the Local In-Kind Match Contribution from the project sponsor. Each project will also receive \$30,000 in CDTC staff technical support for each project.

Table 2: Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Criteria	Albany Mid-City Hub Study	East & North Greenbush Route 4 Corridor Study Update
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)	Project relates to five Linkage strategies; is well timed with the new U. Albany engineering school opening in 2022, other redevelopment and bus rapid transit implementation. Can potentially benefit the largest number of people of the proposals.	Project relates to six Linkage strategies; previous corridor plan is 15 years old and needs to be aligned with the updated East Greenbush comprehensive plan. Study area is experiencing significant development pressure especially with Regeneron expansion.
2. Is the proposed scope of work reasonable for the proposed budget? (mandatory)	Small study area but scope is broad and needs more focus for the budget. Asks for concept drawings on three major arterials, north-south streets and at key intersections.	Yes, solid scope outline in the proposal, bulk of technical work will be in a primary study area with some coordination effort in a secondary study area.
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)	No capital funding identified but the City and CDTA have invested in bus rapid transit and safety. City has a Complete Streets Policy, several linkage studies including the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan and the Albany TOD Study, in the area.	No Capital funding identified but the East Greenbush adopted a Complete Streets policy and will adopt a new comprehensive plan in early 2021 and new zoning in late 2021/early 2022. Project will update the 2006 Route 4 Linkage study.
4. Is the sponsor's plan for engaging disadvantaged populations in the study per the demographics of the study area reasonable? (Improves priority)	City's equity agenda highlighted, propose a Citizens Advisory Committee, and process will engage those with different abilities and disadvantaged populations.	Proposal acknowledges the study area demographics and outlines an outreach strategy using various platforms.
5. 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)	Sponsor to accept the plan and move recommendations into a future design process.	Both towns intend to adopt the plan. East Greenbush to use the plan to update its GEIS mitigation strategies. Coordination with NYSDOT will be necessary.
6. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)	Yes, will support walking, biking and transit user safety. City continues to put a lot of effort into improving the transportation system.	Yes, will support walkability and seek to reduce study area traffic using operational strategies that are supported by both Towns and NYSDOT.
7. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)	No	Yes - Strong support and resolutions from both towns. Third time project has been submitted.
8. Is the local match being provided in cash? Is an overmatch of cash or in-kind support being provided? Are there complementary activities being undertaken to support the project? (improves priority)	Will provide required 25% cash match. No mention of in-kind support.	Will provide required 25% cash match. \$12,500 in local in-kind staff support to be provided.
9. 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)	A good sponsor but has received many award, three in the last six years. Bike/Ped Master Plan funded through Linkage is not yet complete.	Last worked with East Greenbush in 2011-12; North Greenbush is new to Linkage.

Table 2: Evaluation Summary (Continued)

Evaluation Criteria	Rensselaer Waterfront Connectivity Study	Troy Federal Street Corridor 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)	Project relates to five Linkage strategies; will explore creating new connections, integrating complete streets principles and improving existing transportation infrastructure to support waterfront redevelopment, neighborhood and school connections.	Project relates to seven Linkage strategies. Will explore complete street transportation concepts in a study area focused on about three blocks of Federal Street. New development and planned redevelopment in and around the study area.
2. Is the proposed scope of work reasonable for the proposed budget? (mandatory)	Targeted study area allows for a smaller budget. Scope limited to exploring options for new transportation access and complete streets improvements.	Smallest budget but is the smallest study area of the proposals. Scope is more like a feasibility study. City is asking for a traffic study and draft design concepts.
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)	No capital funding identified. The City has a complete streets policy and has three nearby TIP projects connecting to the area.	No capital funding identified. City has a complete streets policy. Study builds off of several other planning efforts including the recently completed Hoosick Hillside Study.
4. Is the sponsor's plan for engaging disadvantaged populations in the study per the demographics of the study area reasonable? (Improves priority)	Proposal includes demographic data illustrating disadvantaged populations in the study area but does not explicitly discuss how they will be engaged.	Proposal mentions disadvantaged populations but does not explicitly discuss how they will be engaged.
5. 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)	City intends to adopt the plan.	City intends to adopt the plan.
6. Will the project have a positive impact on the transportation system when implemented? (improves priority)	If implemented, this project could result in new trail connections and complete streets for waterfront access to support redevelopment.	Small study area with a largely local impact complementing redevelopment of the Federal Street corridor.
7. Is the proposal an inter-municipal initiative? (improves priority)	No	No
8. Is the local match being provided in cash? Is an overmatch of cash or in-kind support being provided? Are there complementary activities being undertaken to support the project? (improves priority)	Will provide required 25% cash match. \$12.5k in local in-kind support to be provided.	Will provide required 25% cash match. No local in-kind staff support identified.
9. 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)	The City has not been a recipient of Linkage funding since 2004.	Troy has been the recipient of several recent Linkage Studies, including the 2020 Hoosick Hillside Study. Troy performed well on the Hoosick Study.