

Capitol Region Council of Governments

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

I-84 Viaduct Study:

An Integrated Transportation & Community Planning Study

Introduction

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) seeks to obtain the services of a consulting firm to conduct a study of the I-84 viaduct in Hartford and of the neighborhoods and business districts impacted by the viaduct and its traffic. The consultant must have expertise in:

- (1) *Transportation Planning and Engineering.* This should include expertise in the design of transportation structures such as viaducts and tunnels.
- (2) *Community Planning, Urban Design, and Economic Development.* As explained below, expertise in these areas is considered to be as important as expertise in transportation planning and engineering.

The goal of the study is to identify and evaluate viaduct options relative to their ability to remediate adverse community impacts resultant from the viaduct, and their ability to provide opportunities for creating more livable neighborhoods and fostering business growth and economic development. These community goals must be considered while at the same time assessing the difficult engineering challenges posed by the question of how to reconstruct, replace, or remove a major freeway viaduct located in a complex urban environment that includes large office buildings, parks, rail lines, and a river that was buried and piped as part of a major flood control system.

Given the strong community interest in this study and the challenges of satisfying both the community goals and engineering challenges, it is important that the consultant also have expertise in the following:

- (3) *Facilitating a Community Decision-Making Process.* The consultant must have the capability to lead a comprehensive and participatory planning process to identify and evaluate alternatives for I-84 that incorporate the interests of neighborhoods, businesses, and local and state governments.
- (4) *Producing High-Quality Communications Materials.* The consultant must be capable of producing both written and graphic materials that can be used to effectively communicate the plans to the general public, stakeholders, and decision makers. While this is not listed as one of the evaluation criteria on pages 4-5, consultants will not be considered unless they demonstrate this expertise.

The consultant's role will be to facilitate the development of strategic alternatives that will be carried forward to a subsequent alternatives analysis and environmental assessment to be conducted under separate study by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The purpose of our study is to identify an array of preliminary alternatives for modifying or replacing the viaduct that can serve the many

transportation functions of this section of I-84, and also improve the quality of life and the economy of the City. The consultant must also be able to explain, illustrate, and document the alternatives in a way that will inform and enthruse stakeholders and decision makers about the opportunities for achieving important community and transportation objectives with this major investment in public infrastructure.

Study Organization

CRCOG is the study administrator and will select, contract with, and manage the consultant for the I-84 viaduct study. However, we are administering the study on behalf of a coalition of interested parties represented by the Hub of Hartford Committee. The Committee is chaired by the City of Hartford which is the primary funder of this study. The general membership of the Committee is provided below, but is subject to change as the study progresses.

Hub of Hartford Committee:

- City of Hartford
- city neighborhoods affected by I-84
- major employers in the area of the viaduct
- the Hartford Business Improvement District
- Connecticut Department of Transportation
- Capitol Region Council of Governments
- other interested parties

Hub of Hartford Committee. The Hub of Hartford Committee's role will be that of a 'steering' committee rather than an advisory committee. They will provide general policy guidance to the consultant, and they will provide the primary guidance for development of evaluation criteria as well as subsequent evaluation of the alternatives.

City of Hartford. The City of Hartford is the primary funder of the study, a key stakeholder, and appoints the chair to the Hub Committee.

Connecticut Department of Transportation. ConnDOT is a key stakeholder and member of the Hub Committee.

Federal Highway Administration. FHWA is a key stakeholder and will be informed of all study related activities.

Capitol Region Council of Governments. CRCOG is a funder of the study, will act as the project administrator, and is a member of the Hub Committee. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Hartford area, it is also a key stakeholder.

Project Schedule. Phase 1 has an extremely short timeline for a planning study. The goal is to complete the entire study within 12 months of consultant selection. This includes time spent on fee and scope negotiation as well as execution of a CRCOG-consultant contract.

Overall Project Description

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) recently completed an evaluation of the I-84 viaduct in Hartford. The study concluded that the ¾ mile long structure through the central area of Hartford is in need of immediate repairs, but will also need to be fully reconstructed or replaced within 10-15 years. While the DOT is already preparing the designs for the repair of the viaduct, they agreed

that there is a need to also begin the planning and community involvement process for the longer-term reconstruction or replacement. This is viewed as a two-phased process.

Phase 1. The first step is a preliminary evaluation of alternatives that includes a general assessment of the technical feasibility of the alternatives. More importantly, it includes a comprehensive assessment of how each alternative might help improve the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods, support existing businesses, and promote economic development. The purpose of phase 1 is to:

1. develop a set of alternatives that will be carried forward for further evaluation in phase 2, and
2. develop guidance and evaluation criteria that can be used by ConnDOT as it conducts a more detailed assessment in phase 2.

The first phase is to be managed by CRCOG working under the direction of the Hub of Hartford Committee. The Hub of Hartford Committee is the steering committee established by the City and includes representatives from the affected neighborhoods, major employers, the City, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and CRCOG.

Phase 2. The second phase (for which no funding or schedule has been set), would be managed by ConnDOT. This phase would include a more thorough technical and engineering analysis of the viaduct alternatives. It would use the alternatives identified in phase 1 as a base, but might include other alternatives as well. Phase 2 would use evaluation criteria recommended in phase 1. The second phase would be conducted in collaboration with the stakeholders identified in phase 1.

Phase 2 is not included as part of this RFQ. While we refer to these studies as two phases in a study process, they will be conducted as two separate studies. Phase 1 has funding and will be initiated as soon as a consultant is selected. However, phase 2 is dependent on securing its own source of funding, and no timeframe for the study has been established.

Related Work & Reports

Vision Statement of the Hub of Hartford Committee. The impetus for this study was provided by a coalition of neighborhoods, businesses, and City agencies that are now formally organized as the Hub of Hartford Committee. The Committee drafted a vision statement, statement of goals, and outline of a scope of work that will help guide the consultant selection process as well as the study itself. A copy of the document is available on the CRCOG website at www.crcog.org/viaduct.html.

Viaduct Engineering Assessment. The Connecticut Department of Transportation recently completed an engineering assessment of the existing structure, which identified the need for immediate repairs and spurred the call to start the planning process for the longer term reconstruction or replacement of the viaduct. The report is listed below and a copy is available at www.crcog.org/viaduct.html.

A Study Report for the Aetna Viaduct, Hanover and Hardesty, 2006

Other Plans, Projects, & Facilities. Consultants should become familiar with the numerous studies, plans, projects, and facilities that are relevant to the viaduct planning process. CRCOG has compiled information on some of these, and have made the information available on its website at www.crcog.org/viaduct.html. A sample of these relevant items include the following:

- New Britain – Hartford Busway

- New Haven – Hartford – Springfield Commuter Rail project
- Union Station
- Amtrak rail line
- Park River (piped and buried as part for the Hartford flood control system)
- State Capitol
- Bushnell Park
- Hartford 2010
- Meeting minutes and materials produced by the HUB Committee

Statement of Qualifications

Consultants must demonstrate that they have sufficient and appropriate resources to complete the project. Consultants must indicate who the project manager will be and where his/her primary office is located. The selected firm(s) must meet CRCOG, City, State, and Federal affirmative action and equal opportunity employment practices. A minimum set aside of **15%** for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) is required. The fee will be negotiated on a Lump Sum basis.

Basic Information. Any firm wishing to be considered must submit six(6) copies of a statement of qualifications. The statement must include: a letter of interest, general information on the firm and its sub-consultants, name and resume of project manager, resumes of key personnel to be assigned to the project, and federal GSA form 330, parts 1 and 2. The statement must also include a description of staff experience in the areas of expertise listed in the Introduction above.

Proposed Approach to Study. The statement should include an overview of the firm's proposed approach to the study. The overview should demonstrate the firm's understanding of the issues and indicate how it will:

- Conduct the technical analysis of transportation and structural issues
- Conduct the process of visioning and planning to identify and evaluate opportunities for improving quality of life and economic growth,
- Integrate the two processes to facilitate a community decision-making process.

Experience & Expertise. The statement should include listings of the firm's experience pertinent to this project.

Consultant Selection Process & Criteria

A two-step selection process will be utilized. In step 1, a selection committee will evaluate all of the written statements of qualifications using the evaluation criteria listed below. Based on that evaluation, the most qualified consultants will be invited to a second phase of the evaluation. The second step will include consultant interviews conducted by the selection committee.

Consultant Evaluation Criteria

Step 1. The evaluation of the qualifications statements will be based on the following criteria:

Technical skills and experience	60%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation planning & engineering 	25%

• Community planning, urban design, economic development	25%
• Facilitating community decision-making	10%
Understanding of issues & proposed approach	30%
Project management	10%

Step 2. The firms with the highest rated qualifications will be selected for further evaluation that will include preparation of a preliminary scope of work and an interview. The final evaluation criteria for step 2 have not been established, but they will include performance at the interview and quality of the proposed scope of work.

Additional Information

Project questions should be directed via e-mail to Tom Maziarz, Director of Transportation Planning Manager (tmaziarz@crcog.org). **No questions will be accepted after 4 PM on August 27, 2008.** CRCOG will post our response to questions and clarifications on the CRCOG website (www.crcog.org). The final posting will be made by the end of the workday **August 28, 2008** with a link posted from the home page titled "I-84 Viaduct Planning RFQ responses". **IT IS THE RESPONDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THIS WEBSITE FOR THE ADDENDUM.**

Deadline:

The statement of qualifications must be received by CRCOG, no later than **4 PM, September 5, 2008.** Statements should be marked "I-84 Viaduct" and addressed to Tom Maziarz, Director of Transportation Planning, 241 Main Street, Hartford, CT, 06106-5310. Any responses received after this deadline will not be considered.

**THE HUB OF HARTFORD STUDY:
INTEGRATED LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

Statement of Hub of Hartford Committee's Vision & Goals for the Study

adopted March 24, 2008

edited May 26, 2008

I. THE BACKGROUND

The "Aetna Viaduct" is an elevated section of Interstate 84 approximately 3/5 of a mile long in the very center of the City of Hartford, extending from Exit 46 (Sisson Avenue) through Exit 48 (Asylum/Capitol). This structure, completed in 1965, consists of a series of connected bridges ranging in condition from "poor" to "satisfactory"¹.

In the introduction to "A Study Report for the Aetna Viaduct"² the authors say their goal:

'...is to recommend a feasible, cost effective, and constructible solution to rehabilitate this deteriorating, heavily traveled bridge. Future roadway capacity and serviceability issues, beyond construction impacts, will not be addressed in this study...A long-term strategy for replacement of the viaduct structures, with an emphasis on alternative facilities improvement and a general upgrade of the transportation system through the greater Hartford region should be developed, and implementation should proceed within the next 10-15 years.'

The design of the short-term rehabilitation work, which has been estimated at \$110-120 million, has begun. Construction is projected to begin in 2009 and be finished in 2012. The short-term project would make this section of I-84 serviceable for another ten years.

The report also states that:

'...This section of highway has extremely high volumes, high speeds, high truck percentages, and entering and exiting roadways. Safety, economic and pollution issues need to be thoroughly addressed in any planned reconstruction of this section of I-84.'

This restrained assessment is an understatement to the many who regard the Aetna Viaduct, the most heavily traveled highway in the state (187,000 vehicles per day) as the most dangerous, ugly, and economically detrimental section of highway in Connecticut. The Hub of Hartford project, with the agreement and support of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), is a way to plan comprehensively for the entire area, including the long-term redesign of this section of I-84.

¹ Hardesty & Hanover, LLP, "A Study Report for the Aetna Viaduct", prepared for State of Connecticut, Department of Transportation (State Project No. 63-616), 2006

² Ibid.

II. THE VISION FOR THE HUB OF HARTFORD

The problems caused by I-84 in Hartford are like those of many American communities where highways were literally bulldozed through the middle of neighborhoods and downtowns during the interstate highway construction boom. Pollution, noise, separation of neighborhoods, and ultimately blight and economic decay resulted.

Access to the city is essential to Hartford's economy and future. The opportunity to create a comprehensive, integrated strategy makes it possible to re-imagine the entire central area of the city with a new vision worthy of its historic setting, while building a new economic engine based on the tenets of responsible growth, improved regional transportation, and inter-modalism. Fourteen separate community, economic development, transportation, business and environmental projects that are currently being planned or implemented near this section of I-84 make it possible to realize the explosive synergy of coordination and mutual reinforcement when all are considered together. The Hub of Hartford Project has been conceived to take advantage of these opportunities -- beginning with structuring a meaningful partnership among City, State, regional, business and community interests for its overall planning.

Using the redesign and de-emphasis of I-84 as the central theme for change, the Hub of Hartford can become a lively and walkable, mixed-use, mixed-income urban place, and a regional crossroads where business, government, community and recreational uses integrate seamlessly in a historic context supplemented by compatible new development. The buildings, trees and landscaped areas will define public streets and spaces that reconnect previously separated city precincts: the state government complex, the Frog Hollow, Asylum Hill and Downtown neighborhoods and employment centers, and Bushnell Park. Cyclists, walkers and transit riders will share the road comfortably with automobiles.

The re-design of I-84 can allow Asylum Hill to become an iconic entry to Downtown, a place where connections among people are made, and where views across the city are accessible from the public way. Capitol Avenue can become a grand multi-modal boulevard – a “complete street” -- worthy of the street's name. Retail establishments, new compact housing, hotels, and new office buildings will serve the government, business and community constituencies that meet in this place. Union Station will be connected gracefully to Asylum Hill, and will function as a true multi-modal regional center that incorporates a direct connection to Bradley Airport, comfortable and easy connections by walkers, bikers, rapid transit busway passengers, city bus or shuttle riders, and commuter and inter-city rail travelers. Automobiles will be accommodated by on-street parking and in garages that are well hidden.

In summary, we wish to:

- Eliminate the separation of Hartford's neighborhoods, its downtown, the state government complex, and the insurance-industry employment center from one another, as well as eliminate or reduce the traffic noise and pollution, particularly in the adjacent neighborhoods;
- Develop a more efficient use of land to enhance economic development and re-knitting of the fabric of the city, connect the long range improvements to I-84 to a more efficient, less congested, and more attractive connection to the transportation hub of the region;
- Re-evaluate the role of this section of I-84 as a part of the regional system of transportation;
- Ensure that the long-term redesign of this section of highway not be defined solely as an engineering problem and then re-built as is.

III. GOALS OF THE STUDY

The overall goals of the study are to develop strategic alternatives that realize the vision described above, and to provide an array of alternatives for how the viaduct and its surrounding area can be improved. We also wish to document these alternatives in a way that will open the minds of the Hub's numerous stakeholders and constituencies, and make substantial change possible. The specific objectives are listed below.

- 1. DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES:** Shape alternative concepts for transformation of the way highway traffic moves through this area. These may include but are not limited to:
 - Burying the highway in this part of the city;
 - Decking it over, possibly with the lowering of elevated sections to grade;
 - Boulevarding it, with no exit ramps, but with many connections to the local street grid;
 - Re-routing interstate traffic regionally, outside of the Hub.
- 2. UTILIZE OPPORTUNITIES:** Provide for the maximum integration into each of the alternatives for:
 - The 14-plus other community strategic, economic development, transportation, and environmental projects that are planned or under way in the area (see attached list and map);
 - The vision for the Hub of Hartford that is described in Section II, above;
 - Multimodalism that shifts the long-term balance of users away from the single-passenger automobile;

3. **DEVELOP CRITERIA** for assessing each alternative: its complexities, its impacts, its potential for realizing the opportunities named above, and its potential for achieving the vision described in Section II;
4. **INFORM AND GUIDE** the ConnDOT long-range re-design and engineering of this section of I-84, which will follow the Hub of Hartford study.

IV. GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK

The general approach and scope of work for this study should include the following.

1. **RESEARCH AND COLLECT DATA** as necessary to complete the study.
2. **DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS** for the replacement or reconstruction of this section of I-84, which are structurally feasible and in sufficient detail to evaluate the impacts of each. Work closely with the Hub Steering Committee to identify and reach consensus on the alternative concepts to be explored.
3. **PRODUCE A SET OF CRITERIA**, along with a method of measurement for each one, that allows evaluation of the alternative concepts. Criteria might include but are not limited to:
 - Access: Evaluate the ease with which all forms of traffic can enter, exit and transition through each of the alternatives, particularly in support of employment;
 - Intermodal Connections: Assess how well the alternative concepts will connect, coexist, enhance or otherwise impact the existing and planned transportation facilities in the Hub, including inter-city rail, commuter rail, rapid bus transit, city bus service, bikeways and sidewalks, and any future direct connection from Union Station to Bradley Airport.
 - Economic development: Assess the extent to which each alternative impacts land for development, creates or enhances property values, and facilitates job creation.
 - Environment: Assess the extent to which each alternative reduces noise and air pollution, preserves and enhances historic resources, provides opportunities for new recreational facilities such as greenways and water features, provides for storm run-off and flood control, and enhances the opportunities for new green infrastructure.
 - Capacity: Work with CRCOG to model the demand for future vehicular flow, incorporating not only assumptions about the need to accommodate automobile traffic, but also assumptions that recognize the goal of shifting to other modes; consider population and job growth; and consider the price of fuel over time, among others.
 - Safety: Assess the extent to which motorists, transit riders, pedestrians, and cyclists will be able to move safely and comfortably through the Hub area.
 - Comfort, Image and Amenity: Assess the potential for creating a distinctive image for the Capitol area, and for nearby neighborhoods including Asylum Hill, Frog

- Hollow and Downtown; for providing strolling, sitting, and outdoor dining opportunities; and for maximizing the opportunities for attractive views and vistas.
- Community Impact: Assess the ability of each alternative to provide a mix of uses and to serve a mix of ages and incomes, particularly in housing, and to reconnect the neighborhoods to one another and to Downtown.
 - Costs: Assess the order of magnitude of the costs to plan, implement, operate and maintain each alternative.
 - Local circulation: Assess the impact of the alternative on the local transportation patterns - vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle and transit - so that the needs of each are considered along with that of highway access and throughput.
4. **APPLY THE CRITERIA**, working with the Hub Steering Committee, to evaluate and score each alternative concept.
 5. **BUILD CONSENSUS** around a ranking of the alternatives for further study.
 6. **PROVIDE DELIVERABLES** including a detailed technical document to guide further design and engineering by ConnDOT, which will include the evaluation of the alternatives with supporting data and analysis. Other products will be developed, such as summary reports, brochures, and presentation materials to explain results of the study to the general public. These other products should be attractive and easily understood by those without a technical background. It is expected that some products will be necessary for immediate distribution and presentation. Others will be needed to communicate the alternatives and vision for long-term use.