



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Board

**From:** Stephane Phifer, Interim Finance Deputy

**Date:** April 1, 2024

**Subject:** Authorization to enter into a contract with High Street Consulting Group as a result of RFQ 295 for 2026 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) consulting services for a term up to 24-months with three, one-year optional renewals, in an amount not to exceed \$880,000

**Action Requested:** Approval

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### Purpose

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is seeking to enter into a contract with a consultant to support in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to augment existing staff capacity to coordinate with member agencies, conduct public outreach, perform regional analysis, develop static and online mapping products, and draft and finalize a plan document that can be referenced and understood by decision makers, member agency staff, and the public.

### Background

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is developing the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the seven-county CMAP region, which will serve as the next Metropolitan Transportation Plan as required by 23 CFR §450.324. The 2026 RTP will build upon previous work to develop the ON TO 2050 comprehensive plan, while integrating recent policy and planning work from CMAP and its member agencies and new requirements from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

CMAP is seeking consultant support in the development of the RTP to augment existing staff capacity to coordinate with member agencies, conduct public outreach, perform regional analysis, develop static and online mapping products, and draft and finalize a plan document that can be referenced and understood by decision makers, member agency staff, and the public.

## Review Process

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was circulated and posted on the CMAP website on January 31, 2024. CMAP hosted a non-mandatory, virtual pre-bid meeting on February 8 to provide an overview to the RFQ and answer consultant questions. There were 22 attendees that joined the pre-bid meeting, representing 17 unique consulting firms. On March 5, CMAP received two proposals, one from High Street and one from HNTB. Each proposal was a joint submission in partnership with several other agencies. High Street serves as the prime for their submission, with CDM Smith, Cempel ITC, and Morreale Communications joining their team. HNTB is the lead agency for their submission, joined by partners Cambridge Systematics and MUSE Community & Design.

Proposals were reviewed by CMAP staff, who scored each proposal independently. The criteria for selection included the following:

1. Accurate and full understanding of the project, including familiarity with northeastern Illinois, regional transportation issues, and key stakeholders.
2. Demonstrated success in similar past or current projects.
3. Availability and qualifications of committed personnel.
4. The cost-effectiveness of the proposal relative to the quality and scope of services.

Following consideration of the two proposals, the evaluation panel determined that both teams submitted complete proposals and should both be interviewed. Interviews were conducted on March 13 with both teams respectively. Each consulting team gave a presentation of their proposal and responded to previously provided questions submitted by the evaluation panel. The evaluation panel used the information from the interview to finalize their scoresheets.

Table 1 below shows the average score of each firm that submitted a response to the RFQ.

*Table1 Average team scores for all proposals*

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Max Score</i>	<i>High Street</i>	<i>HNTB</i>
1. Project Understanding	30	27	21
2. Experience	30	25.5	21
3. Project team	20	17	15.5
4. Cost effectiveness	20	18	17.5
Total	100	87.5	75
Price proposal		\$799,964.99	\$799,962.86

## Recommendation for Contractor Selection

Following consideration of the two proposals, the evaluation panel determined that High Street represented the strongest understanding, experience, project team, and cost effectiveness to execute the work.

The approach proposed by High Street resonated strongly with the evaluation team and showed a high level of project understanding. Additionally, High Street demonstrated significant familiarity with CMAP as well as the challenges and opportunities facing the region.

High Street's emphasis on both the CMAP core values, particularly Drive Innovation and Pursue Equity, and data-driven prioritized investment to maximize regional benefits showed strong alignment with CMAP's goals for the RTP project and region at large. High Street's project team also demonstrated strong qualifications and significant experience in developing metropolitan planning area plans and state-wide long-range transportation plans. The approach to communications and engagement and High Street's understanding of key stakeholders were also strengths of the proposal.

The submission from HNTB was highlighted by the team's regional planning experience and track record of working with implementing agencies throughout the region. The project administration approach, including dedicated time of project quality managers, provided by HNTB was organized and strong. The evaluation panel appreciated HNTB's impressive submission yet determined that High Street's application more closely aligned to the needs of the project.

The evaluation panel concluded that High Street's excellent understanding of the RTP project, significant relevant experience of the firm, dedicated involvement of key staff in the project team, as well as their cost-effective proposal makes their application the strongest received. High Street's project approach provides a clear roadmap to the completion of a successful RTP project and the component pieces and policy topics of which it consists.

The evaluation panel recommends entering into a contract with High Street Consulting for a term of up to 24-months, with three one-year renewal options in an amount not to exceed \$800,000, being the price proposal rounded to the nearest thousand. The board authorization request includes an additional 10% increase for a total authorization of \$880,000. Support for this project will be provided by IDOT UWP funds.

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