



MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Board

From: Stephane Phifer, Interim Deputy of Finance

Date: April 1, 2024

Subject: Authorization to enter into a contract with ICF as a result of RFP 296 for Congestion Management Strategy for a term up to 24-months with three, one-year optional renewals, in an amount not to exceed \$330,000

Action Requested: Approval

Purpose

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is seeking to enter into a contract with a consultant to work with CMAP, as well as local, state, and federal partners, to create an updated and cohesive regional strategy to manage congestion while considering other regional goals.

Background

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is developing a Congestion Management Strategy and is seeking a consultant to provide professional services to lead this work. The Chicago region is federally mandated to have a Congestion Management Process (CMP) to systematically manage congestion by providing information on system performance and assessing alternative strategies, as defined in 23 CFR 450.322. The region's CMP currently meets federal requirements through various staff activities; however, CMAP is looking to hire a consultant to work with CMAP staff, as well as local, state, and federal partners, to create an updated and cohesive regional strategy to manage congestion while considering other regional goals. This project will encompass three areas of focus:

1. A data and modeling tools optimization assessment, to conduct an evaluation of CMAPs models and research best practices to identify recommendations to improve accounting for congestion impacts of projects.
2. Development of a strategy for the Congestion Management Process, and
3. Development of a Congestion Management Guidebook to assist CMAP and the region's implementing agencies in evaluating and implementing CMP strategies, including a comprehensive corridor study template.

Review Process

A Request for Proposals (RFP) 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 RFP and answer consultant questions. There were 12 attendees that joined the pre-bid meeting, representing 10 unique consulting firms. On March 5, CMAP received one (1) proposal which was submitted by ICF. The proposal was a joint submission in partnership with Resource Systems Group (RSG) and Jacobs.

In response to having only received one submission, CMAP staff contacted several firms that attended the pre-bid meeting to assess obstacles or concerns that could have precluded potential bidders from pursuing this RFP.

It was revealed that while several of these firms were highly interested in submitting proposals to CMAP's solicitation, factors including bandwidth (numerous climate-related procurements around the region and ongoing IJA planning work) and compatibility (disconnect between skillset and project scope) were the main reasons why bids were not submitted.

The proposal was reviewed and independently scored by CMAP staff. The criteria for selection included the following:

1. Qualification and experience of the consultant and team members
2. Methodology and approach
3. Understanding of congestion management planning and induced demand
4. Demonstrated capacity to engage stakeholders effectively
5. Previous work examples and references
6. Budget and cost-effectiveness

Following consideration of the proposal, the evaluation panel decided to send a written list of technical questions responsive to the team's proposed approach. Questions were sent to the applicant on March 11th and responses were returned to CMAP on March 13th. Responses to the posed technical questions were strong and informative and did not cause adjustments to the scoring of the proposal.

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

Table 1 Average team scores for proposals

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Max Score</i>	<i>ICF</i>
Qualifications and experience	20	16.67
Methodology and approach	25	22.5
Understanding	20	18
Effective engagement	10	8
Examples and references	10	9.67
Cost-effectiveness	15	14.5
Total	100	89.33
Price Proposal		\$299,827.83

Recommendation for Contractor Selection

Following consideration of the proposal, the selection committee determined that ICF's proposal presented a strong approach, experience, similar work examples, and specialized skills required to execute the work.

ICF's experience in the field of congestion management planning is extensive and impressive. ICF led the development of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Guidebook, FHWA's national guidebook on the CMP, and they have led on the development of CMPs and similar system management and operations plans for numerous peer regions. The full team brings extensive experience in best practices related to modeling the congestion impacts of projects, especially Resource Systems Group, which has provided significant modeling support to CMAP in previous efforts.

The proposal demonstrates a strong understanding of each area of focus in this project. The reviewers are confident that ICF will prepare a CMP that complies with federal requirements, fits into the broader regional transportation planning process as required for MPOs, and systematically identifies effective strategies to manage congestion while also achieving other regional goals. ICF's proposal reinforces that the project will be pursued in partnership with key stakeholders. The proposal also demonstrates an understanding of the importance of associated deliverables within this project scope, such as the Congestion Management Guidebook and Comprehensive Corridor Study Template, which will be critical for CMAP and partners to successfully implement identified strategies.

The evaluation panel recommends entering into a contract with ICF for a term of up to 24-months, with three one-year renewal options in an amount not to exceed \$300,000, being the price proposal rounded to the nearest thousand. The board authorization request includes an additional 10% increase for a total authorization of \$330,000. Support for this project will be provided by IDOT UWP funds.

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