

Request for Qualifications: Whittier Covered Bridge Rehabilitation

MEMORANDUM

TO: Timber Frame Bridge Builders (Bridgewrights)
Timber Frame Bridge Designers/Engineers

FROM: Board of Selectmen
Town of Ossipee, New Hampshire

DATE: February 16, 2010

SUBJECT: Request for Qualifications / Letters of Interest – Design-Build Rehabilitation of Whittier Covered Bridge

The Town of Ossipee has obtained local, state and federal funding under the National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation program for the restoration of Whittier Covered Bridge, NHDOT Nr. 108/333, hereinafter WCB, on the New Hampshire Department of Transportation list of bridges, located on Nudd Road near Route 25 in the Town of Ossipee.

The Town of Ossipee (the Town) now seeks expressions of interest for the award of a contract for restoration and preservation of WCB and its re-installation over the Bearcamp River under a Design/Build process of project delivery. This memorandum will serve as an announcement of this project and a solicitation for Letters of Interest from qualified engineers, contractors and craftsmen.

Potential teams for this project will ideally consist of engineers, contractors and timber-frame/bridge craftsmen. It is intended that engineering and craft components of a team will closely cooperate throughout the project. Submissions from interested teams will be scored according to the criteria listed below. The highest-graded teams, *not to exceed three in number*, will be invited to make a comprehensive proposal for the Whittier Covered Bridge restoration project.

The selected team will be responsible for the conduct of all phases of this project. A separately funded consulting engineering firm will provide oversight for project design and construction.

Whittier Covered Bridge is a Paddleford Truss bridge with supplemental arches, built ca.1870. With a clear span of 114 feet and a total length of 132'-7", it is one of the longest of these bridges still in existence. It has an overall width of 20'-6" with a roadway width of 14'-10" and a maximum vertical clearance of 12'-6". It is owned by the Town of Ossipee and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Town intends to rely on the goals of the *Burlington Charter for the Preservation of Historic Covered Bridges* (attached) as a standard for this preservation and restoration project. When evaluating each team's proposal, the first goal of this charter, "to preserve the historic structural and material integrity of covered bridges to the maximum extent possible, consistent with public safety," will be heavily weighted in selecting a winning bid.

This project will also comply with applicable provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470) and the attached “*Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act.*”.

In addition, this project will comply with applicable current standards and specifications of AASHTO Standard Specifications for highway bridges, and New Hampshire Department of Transportation Standard Specifications for Road & Bridge Construction, requirements and procedures applicable to NHDOT Bridge Aid, and labor compliance laws and regulations. This solicitation is based on the Qualifications Based Selection process of the State of New Hampshire.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The sixteen-panel Paddleford trusses of the Whittier Covered Bridge were built with their counterbraces jointed into the upper and lower chords, and the counterbrace was deleted from the end panels. The vertical posts extend through the upper chords to support the roof trusses. The upper chords are extended six feet at each end to support the overhanging portals. Heavy portal braces from the end posts support these extensions of the upper chords. Short vertical timbers were suspended from the ends of the upper chords, so that braces could be added from the short timbers to support the roof trusses at the gable ends.

Located near the village of West Ossipee, the WCB is a significant feature of regional historical identity. It played an important role in the Carroll County transportation system in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

In the 20th century the state highway department laid out Route 25, still one of the region’s major east-west highways, over WCB. Only with construction in 1955 of a new steel and concrete bridge nearby was WCB relegated to a minor role serving as a West Ossipee village street.

WCB was closed to vehicular traffic in 1989, but has remained an important link in the New Hampshire state recreational trail system extending to White Lake State Park and being part of a popular snowmobile route, until severe decay in the lower downstream chord placed the structure in jeopardy of failure and led the Town to close the bridge to the public in October 2006.

Preparatory to rehabilitation, WCB was removed from its abutments on the Bearcamp River in July 2008 to a location approximately 60 feet from the river edge, on a town right-of-way

The rehabilitation project shall consist of the following components:

- A. An engineering and condition survey, subject to acceptance by the Town, NHDOT and the NH Division of Historic Resources, to define the extent of rehabilitation required in the form of studies, preliminary plans, and final plans and specifications;
- B. Environmental and Historical/Cultural Review
- C. Presentation of the proposed project at up to three public meetings to be held in the Town of Ossipee

- D. Rehabilitation of the bridge to meet a 6 ton vehicular load;
- E. Installation of heat detection' fire retardant agents, and lighting as determined by the town during the early phases of design.

The restoration of the WCB will be conducted in two phases, with Phase 1 consisting of rehabilitation of WCB in its current location on land; and Phase 2 consisting of repair and modification of the abutments and re-emplacment of the bridge across the Bearcamp River. This RFQ pertains to Phase 1 only.

The design capacity of the restored bridge shall be a 6-ton vehicular load in accordance with AAASHTO Standard Specifications for Highway Bridges. The bridge shall also be designed for snow and wind loadings in accordance with the International Building Code, 2006 Edition. Portals shall be restored to match those shown in photographs prior to the 1940s, to be provided by the Town.

The extent of siding installation should seek to balance existing access to views of the river with a need to protect the bridge structure from exposure to moisture.

Teams should be available for start of design work no later than early 2010.

This restoration project will be coordinated with various federal, state and local agencies and should allow, where practicable, for in-kind contributions of materials and labor. (For further information on allowable matching funds for Federal-aid projects, refer to the Flexible Match portion of <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovativefinance/ifp/innoman.htm>)

The Town has separately contracted with Hoyle Tanner & Associates to provide project oversight and construction inspection. This firm shall be ineligible to participate in proposals in response to this solicitation.

SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS:

Firms/teams interested in being considered for this project should follow the procedures outlined below.

1. A Design/Build "Team" will submit a Letter of Interest no later than 30 days from date of issue of this memorandum. Each Team shall consist of at least one qualified and experienced **timber frame bridge designer** licensed in the State of New Hampshire and having experience with the design and construction/reconstruction of timber structures (see Item 3 below) and one qualified and experienced **timber frame bridge builder (bridgewright)**. Other qualified professional members may be included in the Team.
2. The Letter of Interest will be dated, and submitted in an 8 ½" x 11" manila envelope identified as follows:

LETTER OF INTEREST FOR DESIGN/BUILD WHITTIER COVERED BRIDGE RESTORATION

And addressed to:

Martha Eldridge, Town Administrator
55 Main Street / Post Office Box 67
Center Ossipee, NH 03814

3. The Letter of Interest will list the name, address, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail address of all “Design Build Team” members and will indicate the primary contact for the “Team”. In Order to be considered, the timber frame bridge builder (bridgewright) and the timber frame/bridge engineering designer will meet the following minimum requirements:

A. TIMBER FRAME BRIDGE BUILDER (BRIDGEWRIGHT)

- (1) Demonstrate through documentation, résumé and references a principal contribution to the successful restoration of at least three historic covered bridges within the United States with a construction dollar value of at least \$150,000. Experience in restoration of comparable timber-frame historic structures is also of interest. Include current contact information for references.

B. TIMBER FRAME BRIDGE DESIGNER

- (1) The timber frame bridge designer will be a Professional Engineer (civil/structural) licensed in the state of New Hampshire, or demonstrate the ability to obtain that qualification; and,
- (2) Demonstrate through plans, résumé and references the successful design of at least three historic covered bridge restorations within the United States with a construction dollar value of at least \$150,000. The qualifying projects must have been successfully built;
- (3) Respond to the following requests for information consistent with the New Hampshire Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) process as described at <http://www.nhqbs.org/>:

List similar covered bridge projects for which the respondent has provided engineering services in the last ten (10) years. The following information shall be included for each project:

- a) Bridge location, type, clear span, load capacity, and date completed or scheduled for completion
- b) Owner contact with address and phone number;
- c) Include brief scope of the engineering services provided;
- d) Construction cost;
- e) Subconsultants, if any, and their role in the project.

C. NOTES:

- (1) For the minimum requirements listed above, a qualifying timber frame bridge consists of traditional wood joinery containing with a 40-foot span or greater;
- (2) Additional information or a presentation to the Selection Committee and/or the Town Board of Selectmen may be required for Teams that are selected to present a final proposal to the Selection Committee;

SELECTION PROCESS

Qualifications will be reviewed and scored by a Selection Committee consisting of:

- One member of the Town of Ossipee Selectboard
- The nine members of Town of Ossipee Whittier Covered Bridge Advisory Committee

The Selection Committee reserves the right to seek technical advice from its consulting engineering firm in the course of scoring submissions; however, such firm shall not be represented on the Selection Committee. Committee members shall be free of conflict of interest in compliance with 23CFR636.117. Proposers shall reveal any association with a Committee member within the meaning of this regulation, or shall affirm that no such association exists.

It is anticipated that no more than three design/build teams will be invited to submit final proposals to the Selection Committee. While unlikely, the Selection Committee reserves the right to reject all Letters of Interest and pursue an alternative approach to this project. The same Selection Committee will select the final project proposal.

Letters of Interest should be thorough but concise and provide descriptions of recent and relevant experience with similar timber frame restoration projects, including both the type and scope of work. Questions and comments concerning this project or the Letters of Interest should be directed to: Martha Eldridge, Ossipee Town Administrator at 55 Main Street / Post Office Box 67, Center Ossipee, NH 03814, telephone (603) 539-4181. E-mail inquiries will be accepted at tossipee@myfairpoint.net

WCB may be inspected by arrangement with the Selectmen's Office, Town of Ossipee, at the above address and telephone number.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Letters of Interest will be evaluated according to the following criteria for purposes of selecting those Teams to be invited to submit contract proposals:

A. Scope of experience of design-build team members with covered bridge and/or comparable historic timber-frame restorations (40 points possible):

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| (1) Timber Frame/Bridge Builder | 20 points (possible) |
| (2) Timber Frame/Bridge Designer | 20 points (possible) |

B. Management experience of individual to be designated Project Manager. May be one of the two team members in A., or a third person. 10 points (possible)

C. Past record of performance on timber-frame/bridge restoration projects comparable to or greater than WCB in scale and complexity, based on documented evidence and references , including ability to complete projects on schedule and on or near budget (30 points possible):

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| (1) Timber Frame/Bridge Designer (See QBS above) | 15 points (possible) |
| (2) Timber Frame/Bridge Builder | 15 points (possible) |

D. Historic Preservation (15 points possible):

- (1) Specific examples of how the design/build team will incorporate the “*Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties*” into WCB restoration. (5 points possible)
- (2) Specific examples of how the design/build team will incorporate the principles of the “*Burlington Charter for the Preservation of Historic Covered Bridges*” into WCB restoration. (5 points possible)
- (3) Examples of previous work by members of the design/build team that incorporated one or both of the above two sets of preservation principles (3 points possible)
- (4) Experience with the NHDOT Municipal Bridge Aid program (2 points possible)

E. Successful completion of other design/build projects with the same partners as identified in the initial Letter-of-Interest (5 points possible)

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| (1) Two or more projects | 5 points (possible) |
| (2) One project | 3 points (possible) |
| (3) No such project | 0 points |

[End]