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COMMISSION SEEKS PROPOSALS TO ASSIST WITH PROCUREMENT OF PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR SCUDDER FALLS BRIDGE PROJECT

NEW HOPE, PA – The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission today issued a request for proposals seeking financial and legal advisory services to assist the agency with the potential procurement of a Public Private Partnership (P3) to carry out the Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project.

“This is the first step in a process to utilize a public private partnership as a means of expediting this important regional transportation project,” said Frank G. McCartney, executive director of the Commission. “We want to get shovels in the ground as soon as possible and the procurement of a financial/legal advisory team should enable us to put this project on a track for quicker completion.”

On Tuesday, August 17, Commissioners met at the request of Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and authorized the issuance of a request for proposals from financial consultants in association with an independent legal consultant to provide services necessary to conduct and complete a procurement of a P3 for the project. The Commission is seeking experienced, qualified consultants to provide a variety of services, including: updating existing traffic/toll revenue studies for the project; providing P3 market analysis; preparing financial models; identifying potential P3 participants; preparing procurement documents; and assisting with the procurement process.

McCartney said the goal of the financial and legal advisory services procurement is to have a P3 in place within a year after the consultant team is chosen and issued authorization to proceed. McCartney also stated that this procurement does not obligate the agency to proceed with the potential P3 procurement at a later.

The RFP was posted today to the Commission’s website, www.drjtbc.org. It may be viewed on the Request for Proposals page in the website’s Doing Business section. The direct link for the page is: <http://www.drjtbc.org/default.aspx?pageid=222>. The direct link for the RFP is: http://www.drjtbc.org/assets/delawareriver/PDF/RFP_Financial_Advisor_082010.pdf.

The Commission is in the midst of a comprehensive \$1 billion capital improvement program enabling the agency to refurbish, expand and modernize its 20 Delaware River bridges and other facilities.

The Scudder Falls Bridge was constructed in 1959 and marked its 50th Anniversary last year. Preparations for the Scudder Falls Rehabilitation Project commenced in 2003 following a study in 2000 that attributed the Scudder Falls Bridge's congestion and safety problems to its narrow configuration, a lack of shoulders, and the close proximity of adjoining interchanges with entrance/exit ramps merging onto and off of I-95.

Congestion on the bridge results in average delays for motorists of 27 minutes per day. Those delays are expected to grow more severe, with traffic volumes on the bridge projected to rise an additional 35 percent -- to 77,500 vehicles per day - by the year 2030. Safety of motorists is also a major concern, with approximately 105 accidents occurring at the bridge, its interchanges and approach roadways each year.

The Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project will be the largest single capital initiative in the Commission's 75 year history, with a current estimated project cost of \$310 million. The project area extends 4.4 miles along I-95 from PA Route 332 in Bucks County, PA to Bear Tavern Road in Mercer County, N.J. The project includes replacement of the existing functionally obsolete four-lane Scudder Falls Bridge with new twin structures -- one on the upstream side of the existing bridge and the other overlapping the current bridge's footprint.

The new structures will have six lanes of through traffic (three in each direction) with two auxiliary northbound lanes for entry/exit travel and one auxiliary southbound lane entry/exit travel. The project calls for full inside and outside roadway shoulders on the bridge crossing to handle breakdowns and emergencies. The two inside shoulder lanes would have the capacity to serve proposed bus/rapid-transit routes.

The project includes safety upgrades to the two highway interchanges at both ends of the bridge, widening of I-95 to the inside from the bridge to Route 322 in Pennsylvania, and construction of a bike/ped walkway on the upstream side of the bridge. For more information, please visit the project web site at www.scudderfallsbridge.com

A "cashless tolling" system in the southbound direction would be used to collect revenues, averting the need for conventional cash toll booths. In December 2009, the Commission moved to toll the Scudder Falls Bridge because it felt it was the most equitable means of financing the project under the capital program in the absence of federal and state funding. Commissioners did not feel it was reasonable or fair to expect users of the agency's other toll bridges to shoulder the entire financial burden of the capital improvements of the Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project.

About the Commission

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission was formed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey in 1934. It operates seven toll bridges and 13 toll-supported bridges, two of which are pedestrian-only spans. The Commission's jurisdiction extends along the Delaware River from the Philadelphia-Bucks County line north to the New Jersey/New York border. The bridges carried more than 139.5 million cars and trucks in 2009. For more information about the Commission and its various initiatives to deliver safer and more convenient bridge travel for its customers, please see: www.drjtbc.org.