



CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

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Northwest Vermont TOD RAISE GRANT: Transit, Finance, and Governance Planning Request for Proposals (RFP)

Issue Date: Friday, April 11, 2025

Proposal Deadline: Friday, May 9, 2025, 4:00 pm EST

Questions Due: Monday, April 21, 2025, 4:00 pm EST

Answers Posted: Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Questions and Submissions sent to:

Bryan Davis, Senior Transportation Planner, bdavis@ccrpcvt.org

1. Introduction & Background

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) was awarded a 2022 USDOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant to create a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan for Northwest Vermont (Project webpage:

<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/transportation/2022-raise-grant/>). This project will develop comprehensive TOD plans for 10 communities across a five-county region in Northwest Vermont. In conjunction with TOD planning, viable transit options will be assessed to connect economically disadvantaged rural residents to employment opportunities and services in the economic hub of the greater Burlington area and other employment areas. The project envisions that developing transit-oriented developments with accessible and convenient public transportation services will provide a viable alternative to automobile-dependent living for Vermonters, reduce household transportation costs, and provide rural residents with job opportunities. Furthermore, it will support the development of walkable centers in village areas while also providing new transit connections for rural, mobility-challenged Vermonters.

This multi-phase project includes the tasks listed below. The CCRPC is managing this project and with this RFP it seeks qualified consultant services to complete the transit, financing, and governance planning (Tasks 3 and 4).

1. **Real estate market demand analysis** (substantially complete) which included identifying regional/community goals and objectives for this project, socio-economic data collection and analysis, current real estate market for each of the 10 target communities, forecasts for population growth and housing real estate demand in 2035 and 2050, and recommendations to inform master planning and identify barriers to development in the target areas that could interfere with the level of development envisioned for successful TOD.
2. **Community master planning and municipal zoning updates** (in process) for the 10 communities—St Albans, Milton, Essex Junction, Ferrisburgh, Vergennes/Ferrisburgh, Middlebury, Rutland, Berlin, Barre, Northfield—that support the development of dense, walkable, and human-oriented communities. Integrating transit and land use policies through increased density will make transit more viable and accessible in these communities. See the [Connect the Junction](#) website for an example project in this task.
3. **Transit ridership forecast and evaluation of various transit services** (bus or rail) to determine what service(s) would be viable and supported by the increased population and zoning changes in these TOD areas to connect them with employment centers within the five-county study area.
4. **Evaluate how to finance TOD and transit operations, while also assessing the most viable governance structure** to finance and manage the new services improving connections among communities across Northwest Vermont. Depending on the ridership forecasts for the TOD areas and transit service evaluations, ways to finance the new transit services should be assessed including using revenue generated by increased economic activity, value capture strategies, opportunity zone investment funds, and other innovative financing options. In addition, existing and new governance structures should be evaluated to determine the best option to manage potential new services.

2. Submission Requirements

Please submit a: **1) Technical Proposal**, **2) Cost Proposal**, and **3) Contractor Financial Background Questionnaire** (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Contractor-Financial->

[Background-Questionnaire.pdf](#)) as separate pdf email attachments to Bryan Davis, bdavis@ccrpcvt.org, by **Friday, May 9, 2025 at 4:00 pm EST**. Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Technical proposals are limited to **15 pages** for the project understanding, scope, team experience, allocation of team member hours for each task, schedule, and stakeholder engagement plan; **up to 5 additional pages** are allowed for the summary of team members' experience developing similar plans. Table of contents and section dividers are not included in the page count. If the respondent does not receive an acknowledgement email from the CCRPC of the submittal, it is the respondent's responsibility to verify the proposal receipt with the CCRPC Project Manager (bdavis@ccrpcvt.org).

Please indicate if you are licensed to do business in the State of Vermont; consultants are not required to be licensed to respond to this RFP, but they will be required to obtain the license prior to being awarded a contract.

Questions and Contact

Questions about this RFP should be directed to Bryan Davis at bdavis@ccrpcvt.org. CCRPC will maintain a list of questions and answers on the CCRPC RFP website (<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfqgrants/>). **Questions will be accepted until Monday, April 21, 2025 with responses posted by Wednesday, April 23, 2025** to ensure all parties have adequate time to review the answers.

Technical Proposal

The Technical Proposal should demonstrate that the consultant understands the intent and scope of the project; the character of the deliverables required for completion; and the tasks that must be performed to supply these services. In addition, consultant qualifications necessary to successfully complete this project should be demonstrated. Please include the following information in the technical proposal:

Cover Letter & Project Abstract

This section should introduce the consulting firm and summarize the consultant's overall understanding of the project. It should briefly describe the proposed approach to be taken to achieve project goals and objectives.

Methodology

This section should provide a detailed methodology on how to accomplish tasks described in the Introduction and subsequent Scope of Work (SOW) sections of this RFP. Consultants are encouraged to propose additional tasks and methodologies that are relevant and will enhance this project, and should provide detailed descriptions for each proposed task, deliverables, and milestones. Outreach to stakeholders should also be included in appropriate tasks and deliverables identified.

Role of Key Staff, Qualifications & Timeline

The consultant should identify key individuals assigned to this project and describe their role and responsibilities in this work. Clearly identify the project manager and other key individuals assigned to this project and include their function and/or responsibility along with their level of involvement in the project. Submit resumes for only those individuals who will participate in the project. Tables indicating estimated labor hours per task as outlined in the SOW should be provided. Include a Gantt chart indicating the proposed project timetable and major milestones (e.g., meetings and deliverables).

References

Please provide names and contact information for three references who can speak to your qualifications along with a brief description of the work performed for them.

Cost Proposal

The Cost Proposal should be emailed as a separate pdf attachment and list the prime consultant and any subconsultants separately and include the following:

- Assigned personnel hours and costs for the completion of each task as detailed in the SOW, including direct expenses, overhead rate, and fee. Please provide the same information for any new/proposed task.
- Detailed cost proposal for each proposed subconsultant.

Budget

The maximum limiting amount for this project is expected to be \$250,000.

3. Project Scope of Work

The Northwest Vermont TOD project is unique in that it investigates the possibility of Transit-Oriented Development in a rural state like Vermont with limited transit (bus) connections outside the urban core of Chittenden County. This SOW section provides high-level information about the specific tasks to be accomplished, and consultants are encouraged to propose additional sub-tasks to meet the goals of the project as articulated in this RFP.

Task 1: Transit Ridership Forecast and New or Improved Services

Develop a comprehensive transit ridership forecast and investigate the feasibility of new and improved bus (first priority) and/or rail (second priority) services; please note that all TOD areas are close to existing and active rail lines. These forecasts should take into account the increased land use density and increased ridership potential of the TOD areas.

- Conduct detailed transit demand analysis using future demographic, land-use, and economic data (e.g., current, and projected population, employment, and activity centers within the five-county study area).
- Based on ridership forecasts developed, identify potential new or improved bus and/or commuter rail services and estimate their capital and operating costs. Use forecasting tools and models to determine the feasibility and efficiency of bus and/or rail transit services connecting TOD areas with employment centers in the five-county area.
- During this task there will be extensive engagement with the transit providers, rail operators, state agencies, participating municipalities, and other stakeholders.

Task 2: Financing and Governance Strategy

A transit Financial Plan and potential new Governance Structure will then be developed in partnership with participating regional planning commissions (RPC) and municipalities, transit providers, rail operators (if applicable), and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Activities under this task could include (as appropriate) but are not limited to the following:

- Value capture strategies to leverage increases in land value and TOD revenues.

- Opportunity Zone investment funds.
- Public-private partnerships and other innovative financing mechanisms.
- Examine transit governance structures including existing transit providers, public/private partnerships, or new organizations.

4. Proposal Evaluation and Consultant Selection

Responses to this RFP will be evaluated by a selection committee consisting of staff from CCRPC, other participating RPCs, Green Mountain Transit (GMT), and VTrans.

Evaluation Criteria

Responses will be scored using a predetermined point methodology for each of the factors below for a total of 100 points:

- A demonstrated understanding of the project; providing a clear approach, innovative methodology; and demonstrating an understating of the issues discussed in the scope – **50 points**
 - A thoughtful and innovative approach in addressing the project’s scope and key challenges; and
 - Quality and thoroughness of the proposal and clearly laid out schedule, tasks, and deliverables.
- Relevant experience of the firm and Qualifications of Key Staff – **50 points**
 - Provide examples that demonstrate experience with successful completion of similar projects within the last five years; and
 - Provide information on key staff’s experience in the last 5 years.

Once the Technical Proposal is reviewed and scored, the Cost Proposal will be reviewed for consistency with the Technical Proposal. Project cost will be considered in the selection but is not the deciding factor. Specific attention will be given to the commitment of key staff and the overall labor effort proposed, and their relationship to the estimated project cost.

Interviews and Presentations

CCRPC reserves the right to invite top-ranked consultants for interviews prior to awarding the contract. In this process, the review committee may ask the respondents to give an oral presentation of their respective proposals. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an in-depth analysis of certain qualifications, experience in performing similar services, and an opportunity for the proposer to elaborate on their qualifications without restating the proposal. The interview and presentation, if deemed necessary, could be held either virtually or in-person. The consultants will be notified of the day and time at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

Contract Award

The contract will be awarded based on a competitive selection and scoring process. The Technical Proposal evaluation, Cost Proposal review, and interviews (if held) will be taken into account in making a final decision to award the contract. It should be noted that the consultant with the lowest cost proposal will not necessarily be awarded the contract.

5. General Terms and Conditions

Contract Requirements

This project is using funds from the 2022 USDOT RAISE grant that is being administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Consultants may have standard terms and conditions which are required to be included in the contract, however, the CCRPC reserves the right to negotiate such terms and conditions and will not accept the Consultant's standard form in lieu of the RAISE Grant Program (FTA) **General Terms and Conditions** (<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/raise/raise-fy2025-fta-general-terms-and-conditions-january-10-2025>).

The CCRPC will enter into a contract with the selected consultant that will pay for approved services to achieve the deliverables as articulated in the scope of work, as well as expenses and materials used during the period of the agreement.

Public Participation Plan

The CCRPC adheres to the 2014 Public Participation Plan (<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/aboutus/public/>) for all its activities. The Plan outlines the CCRPC's principles and goals, aligns our strategies and activities with specific levels of engagement appropriate to each, and provides evaluation methods for determining the effectiveness of our initiatives.

Non-Discrimination and Title VI

CCRPC and the consultant shall comply with the provisions of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and subsequent related acts, and all other federal statutory laws which provide in whole or in part that no person or entity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, physical disability, or veteran status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated under the State, federal and USDOT assisted contracts, programs and activities.

Proposal Conditions

The CCRPC may issue addenda/amendments to this RFP which will be available on the CCRPC website at <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/resources/rfprfqgrants/>. It is the proposer's responsibility to check for updated information on the website and submit the amendments available on the CCRPC website.

All proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the requirements set forth in this RFP for consideration. It is the consultant's responsibility to ensure timely submittal of the proposal on or before the due date and time.

The CCRPC is not responsible, in part or whole, for costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal in response to this RFP. The cost of preparing, submitting, and presenting the proposal is at the sole expense of the consultant. All proposals become the property of the CCRPC upon submission. The CCRPC reserves the right to seek clarification of any proposal submitted and to select the proposal that best promotes the public interest.

The CCRPC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this solicitation, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities or to cancel the RFP in part or in its entirety. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the CCRPC to award a contract.