



Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Consultant Services to Develop an Alternative Transportation Plan For Main Street (Route 67) in Oxford, CT

Purpose:

The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) in partnership with the Town of Oxford is seeking consultant services to perform planning activities related to the development of an Alternative Transportation Plan for the Main Street/ Route 67 corridor in Oxford Connecticut.

Unlike many of its neighbors, Oxford does not have a typical walkable New England downtown or Main Street. Instead, municipal and commercial areas are dispersed along State Route 67. Although Route 67 is fundamentally Oxford's "Main Street," it currently has no sidewalks or any safe bicycle or pedestrian access, and traffic speeds are excessive with no visual cues to alert motorists that they are driving through an area where they may encounter walkers or bicyclists. In addition, no public transit is operated along Route 67 that could provide residents an alternative transportation option. The Seymour commuter rail station on the Waterbury branch line is only four miles from the center of Oxford and one mile from the town line. Although there are sidewalks along Route 67 in Seymour that connect pedestrians to the train station and the town's downtown, the network does not extend into Oxford.

The lack of pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections results in a personal motor vehicle-centric community with no way to access government services, commerce or transit without a car. The town of Oxford has recognized that the current emphasis on the private automobile is not conducive to a sustainable community and good quality of life. For the purposes of increased access, equity, health and quality of life, Oxford is interested in developing alternative transportation options along the Route 67 corridor.

The purpose of the planning study is to address the lack of pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and access along Route 67 in Oxford and development a comprehensive plan that identifies the termini for a pedestrian and bicycle network along Route 67. Specifically, the plan will determine actions for the following:

- Linking to the sidewalk network in Seymour;
- Calming traffic and creating pedestrian walkways in the vicinity of the Oxford government and municipal center;
- Constructing a multi-use path along the Little River which parallels Route 67 and crosses it at several locations;
- Constructing a walkway to connect the municipal government center with the newly opened Quarry Walk development and extending it to Seymour
- Connecting the walkways and multi-use paths along Route 67 to the Larkin State Park Trail; and
- Defining a trolley/bus shuttle service and route to operate along Route 67 to provide an option for residents and connect the government center, commercial and retail uses, and the Quarry Walk development to the Seymour train station.

Background:

The town has initiated the Oxford Main Street Project (OMSP), overseen by a town committee, to begin making these improvements. In order to proceed, a clear, well thought out plan is needed to envision the corridor as a whole and plan for a phased implementation. As described above, there are several critical areas and destinations along Route 67 and within walking distance of Oxford center including businesses and municipal offices, the Larkin State Bridle Trail, the Naugatuck River Greenway, and the Seymour rail station. Quarry Walk, a new mixed-use development with commercial retailers, offices, a grocery store, and planned residential units included a pedestrian walkway in the development. A lack of safe pedestrian or bicycle routes make non-motorized travel to these locations impossible.

Oxford has developed some conceptual plans for local pedestrian improvements. Plans for the Little River Walkway have been developed that propose a 3,300 linear foot multi-use trail on town owned land along the Little River and Route 67 between West Street and Echo Valley Road. The Little River Walkway plan also provided for future shuttle bus service along Route 67; however, there is not a clear plan for how such a service would be operated and no clear understanding of the costs involved. The Main Street Municipal Walkway in the vicinity of Town Hall and a sidewalk extension from the Seymour Town Line to Quarry Walk are also planned by the town, but are only conceptual at this point. The town is planning to build a trail network and trailhead in the Little River Nature Preserve, located across Route 67 from Town Hall. While the town's ultimate goal is to connect these places with sidewalks and multiuse trails, there is currently no overarching plan to do so.

There is a need for a comprehensive "Master Plan" that will collect information about existing conditions, determine preferred improvements based on input and support from key stakeholders and the public, and provide estimated construction costs and future project phasing. In order to compete for state, federal and private funding for construction of these improvements, the town needs to have a clearly defined plan for their development.

Information & Inquiries:

Updates and amendments to this RFQ can be found at <http://nvcogct.org/content/vendors> or can be obtained by contacting the NVCOG directly. Interested consultants are responsible for monitoring updates and amendments.

All inquiries regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing via email to Aaron Budris, Senior Regional Planner at abudris@nvcogct.org

Questions will be responded to up to seven days before the RFQ response deadline. All questions and their responses will be posted at <http://nvcogct.org/content/vendors>. No contact with any other NVCOG staff, town personnel or project partner other than the authorized contact person is allowed until such time as an award has been made.

Submission Requirements:

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFQ, the prospective consultant represents that they have read, examined and understand the anticipated work as described in the Scope of Services and is capable of performing the work to achieve the objectives of this planned project.

Prospective consultant firm or team must be currently pre-qualified by the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

Proposers are asked to submit responses in two parts: Letter of Interest and Technical Response.

The **Letter of Interest** must specify the following:

- The name and address of the consultant(s).
- General Information on the firm and any proposed sub-consultants
- Name, title and telephone number of the individuals within the firm authorized to commit the company to this contract.
- The name, title and telephone number of the individual NVCOG should contact regarding questions and clarifications.
- A statement that the Consultant's proposal will remain in effect for ninety (90) days after acceptance of the Consultant's proposal by NVCOG.

The **Technical Response** must contain a description of the consultant's proposed approach to performing the Scope of Services and demonstrate a commitment of sufficient staff resources with appropriate qualifications with specific reference to:

- Understanding and approach to scope of services (Schedule A).
- Description of any special services required.
- Description of services offered by the consulting firm or team that support the Scope of Services described in Schedule A.
- Name and required services of any subcontractors, including those intended to be used to meet the required DBE or SBE goals established for this project.
- Resumes of key personnel proposed to work on the assignment with emphasis on relevant experience.
- A detailed organization chart.
- A description and status of comparable project experience.
- Three references from comparable types of projects.
- Pertinent examples of related work prepared by the consultant.

The proposer must provide six (6) paper copies and one (1) digital copy of their submission in a sealed envelope bearing on the outside the name of each firm, full address, and the date and time proposal is due. All submissions shall be clearly marked "Alternative Transportation Plan for Main Street (Route 67) in Oxford, CT", and shall be delivered to:

Aaron Budris, Senior Regional Planner
Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
49 Leavenworth Street, 3rd Floor
Waterbury, CT 06702

The proposal must be received no later than **4:00 pm on Wednesday, May 15th, 2019**. Proposals received after the date and time prescribed shall not be considered.

Selection Process:

The NVCOG will follow a Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) process for selecting the preferred Consultant(s). Consultants or consortia of consultants will be asked to demonstrate expertise and experience in all skill areas that may be appropriate to the work required in the Scope of Services. All RFQs received will be reviewed and evaluated by the selection committee that may be comprised of representatives of the NVCOG and the Town of Oxford or other stakeholders. A minimum of three and up to five prospective consultants will be selected and requested to participate in an interview and presentation to the selection committee.

The proposals and consultants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Corporate experience and capacity.
- Understanding of work to be performed.
- Project organization and staff commitment.
- Professional expertise of team.
- Prior experience relative to project.
- Completeness, feasibility and quality of scope of services and project schedule.
- Clarity and conciseness of presentation.

The selected consultant will be notified of their selection within 14 days from the culmination of the interview process and contract negotiations will commence immediately upon notification. A 30-day fee negotiation period will be provided for the selected consultant and NVCOG to finalize the contract fees, scope of service and agreement. The selection committee will develop an independent estimate for the defined scope of work prior to receipt or review of the most highly qualified consultant's cost proposal. The independent estimate shall serve as the basis for negotiations of the fee for services. At the end of the 60 day negotiation period, the contract shall be awarded. If a negotiated fee cannot be mutually agreed to by both parties, the NVCOG will terminate negotiation and begin negotiation with the second ranked firm.

The firm awarded the contract as a result of being pre-qualified under this RFQ, must meet all Municipal, State and Federal affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices. This will include compliance with E.O. 11246, "Equal Employment Opportunity," as amended by E.O. 11375, "Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity," and as supplemented by regulations at 41 CFR part 60, "Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity," Department of Labor."

Other Requirements:

Freedom of Information

Respondents are advised that any and all materials submitted in response to this RFQ shall become the sole property of NVCOG and shall be subject to the provisions of Section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (re: Freedom of Information).

Incurred Costs

This RFQ does not commit the NVCOG or any of its Municipalities to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request. Neither the NVCOG nor its member municipalities will be liable in any way for any costs incurred by respondents in replying to this RFQ.

Insurance

The NVCOG requires Consultants to provide and maintain adequate professional liability for errors and omissions in the minimum amount of Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) and automobile liability insurance in the minimum amount of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000). The Consultant(s) and subcontractors shall carry workman's compensation insurance. Proof of adequate insurance must be included in the bid application.

Personnel

The Contractor shall provide the professional services identified in this Scope of Services and requested by the NVCOG. The proposal must identify the person or persons who will be responsible for conducting the work as listed in this scope of services, and include a copy of each person's resume, experiences with municipal/government clients and listing of references.

The NVCOG is requesting that a senior experienced person be the primary representative for your firm in actually performing the services.

Length of Service

It is expected that the agreement and work covered by this RFQ and Scope of Services shall extend for one year from the date of execution of an agreement between the NVCOG and the consulting firm or team with an NVCOG option to extend the agreement by one year. No delivery of services shall start without written contract issued by the NVCOG.

Contract/ Agreement

The successful bidder shall enter into a contract with the NVCOG and agree to abide by all state and federal contractual requirements. By signing the agreement with the NVCOG, the Consultant agrees to perform work as specified in the Scope of Services and accepts the terms and conditions set forth in the contract.

Acceptance or Rejection by the NVCOG

The NVCOG reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses submitted for consideration, to waive any informalities and/or technicalities, or to negotiate separately in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the NVCOG. Respondents whose responses are not accepted shall be notified in writing.

Amending or Canceling RFQ

The NVCOG reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFQ, prior to the due date and time, if it is deemed to be in its best interest to do so.

Affirmative Action

The NVCOG and its member municipalities participating in this RFQ are equal opportunity employers and require an affirmative action policy from all consultants as a condition of doing business with the

NVCOG or its member municipalities, as per Federal Order 11246. By responding to this RFQ, all consultants agree to this condition of doing business with the NVCOG or its member municipalities and, should they choose to audit for compliance, the consultant agrees to cooperate fully.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)/Small Business Enterprise (SBE)

It is the policy of NVCOG to practice nondiscrimination based on race, color, sex, or national origin in the award or performance of this contract. All firms qualifying under this solicitation are encouraged to submit a proposal and selection will be based on and conditioned upon satisfying the requirements described in this RFQ and Scope of Services. These requirements apply to all proposers, including those who qualify as a DBE or SBE. Contracts awarded under this RFQ will be subject to a 10% DBE or SBE requirement

Schedule A- Scope of Services

Consultant Services to Develop an Alternative Transportation Plan For Main Street (Route 67) in Oxford, CT

Task A: Define Study Area & Catalogue Existing Conditions

Task A1: Define Study Area. Working with stakeholders, the Study Area will be defined to clearly identify the extent of the corridor and critical features within the corridor that need to be catalogued and inventoried.

Task A2: Catalogue Existing Conditions. The project team will identify and catalogue existing conditions within the corridor, including existing land uses, environmental features and transportation infrastructure. This inventory will identify existing pedestrian facilities including Seymour's sidewalk network. These features will be located and mapped. In addition, land parcels and approximate rights-of-way will be determined and shown on the base map.

Existing conditions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Existing Trails
- Existing pedestrian features – sidewalks (width, material, condition), crosswalks, curb ramps
- Topography/Geography
- Restrictions/Constraints
- Current Land Uses
- Proximity to Amenities and Destinations
- Property Ownership
- Accessibility

Task A3: Data Collection. Data will be collected on existing traffic operations along Route 67 and local bus and rail operations serving the area will be identified. An overview of all services in the Study Area will be developed.

Traffic and transportation data collection efforts include, but are not limited to the following:

- Average Daily Traffic counts – ADTs
- Turning movement counts at key intersections
- Commuter travel patterns along the Route 67 corridor and Oxford
- Travel speeds
- Travel times along Route 67
- Transit ridership data

Task B: Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements

Task B1: Identify Potential Bicycle & Pedestrian Routes and Improvements. Working with stakeholders, the project team will identify potential bicycle and pedestrian routes along Route 67 and

develop a long list of potential improvements, likely consisting of a mix of sidewalks, multi-use trails, bike lanes/bike routes, and transit services.

Task B2: Analyze and Assess Potential Bicycle & Pedestrian Routes and Improvements. Using existing data and information collected in the field, the project team will assess the strengths and weaknesses of each identified improvement and route. Analysis will take into account but will not be limited to the following considerations:

- Construction Cost
- Constructability
- Right of Way Concerns
- Environmental Constraints – wetlands, steep slopes, etc.
- Potential Permitting needs
- Cultural and Natural Resources
- Recreational Opportunities
- Conflicting Land Uses
- Scenic Value
- Accessibility
- Stakeholder Concerns
- Public Concerns
- Flooding of Little River
- Safety
- Permitting Issues
- Brownfield Issues
- Other Transportation Issues

Task B3: Refine Route Preferences and Define Preferred improvements Agreed Upon by Stakeholders.

The project team will develop a short list of preferred actions in consultation with the Oxford Main Street Project Committee and identify those that are most feasible. Stakeholder involvement will be critical and will be achieved by working closely with the OMSP committee, municipality, NVCOG and other identified stakeholders. Public input will also be critical and will be solicited through workshops, surveys, websites, social media or other means deemed appropriate.

Task B4: Provide Conceptual Designs, Phasing Recommendations and Cost Estimates. Once a preferred options have been agreed upon, the project team will develop conceptual design plans depicting the preferred alternative. The conceptual layouts will included the following:

- Trail/ sidewalk type, width, materials, etc.
- Project phasing recommendations
- High level construction cost estimates by phase
- Drawings or photo renderings of critical features
- Maps of defined routes and improvements
- Recommended amenities and features to include in construction
- List of potential funding sources

Task C: Transit Study

Task C1: Review of Current Conditions. As no fixed route transit service currently exists along this corridor, the project team will review demographic data for the region to estimate demand.

- Demographic indicators of transit demand include:
 - Household density
 - Residents with disabilities
 - Residents living in poverty
 - Number seniors and youths living in the corridor
- Economic indicators of transit demand:
 - Job density and location within the corridor
 - High transit complementary recreational activities along the corridor
- Identification of current transit service available to residents such as dial-a-ride

In addition to reviewing available data, the project team will conduct interviews with business and community stakeholders to identify future planning goals that are complemented by and complement new transit options.

Task C2: Analysis of Potential Transit Solutions. The findings from the current transit conditions report will be presented to municipal stakeholders and transit providers and reviewed for priorities. Once a priority list of transit options is developed, projects will be further refined for financial and logistical feasibility.

Task C3: Provide Transit Recommendations. To include preferred actions, expected operating costs and potential funding sources.

Task D: Public Outreach & Presentation of Findings.

The Oxford Main Street Alternative Transportation Plan will include a proactive and informative public outreach effort. It will include continuous coordination and interaction with the Oxford Main Street Project committee, public information meetings, creation of a project webpage and posting of project information, documents and plans on the project webpage. The public will be provided on-going opportunity to provide input and comment. Presentations to town boards or committees will be made throughout the project and findings and concepts will be provided through a written report, project website, interactive maps and web applications, and press releases.