

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
East Hardwick Village Comprehensive Plan
Community Development and Planning Consultant Services
Town of Hardwick Vermont

RFP Posted: Tuesday, January 16, 2024

Proposals Due: on or before 3:00 PM, Wednesday, February 7, 2024

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Summary: This project will engage the community in a planning process for the historic village of East Hardwick. The planning consultant will work with a broad range of stakeholders including village residents, property owners, businesses, and organizations. The completed comprehensive plan will create a blueprint for undertaking future projects in East Hardwick including: multimodal transportation improvements (streetscaping, wayfinding, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, parking, and access management), revised land use regulations and design standards, redevelopment and infill projects, marketing initiatives, recreation connections, and other community development activities.

Additionally, the project will identify opportunities to integrate green stormwater infrastructure into Village streetscaping, using the Vermont Green Streets Guide as inspiration, and also address key stormwater runoff issues at and around the Main Street Bridge.

Context and Background: The Village is located along falls of the Lamoille River, once the site of numerous mills, small industry, and other commercial activities. The project area includes East Hardwick's Designated Village Center and adjacent residential areas. In 1912 East Hardwick was incorporated as a fire district. East Hardwick Fire District #1 had broad authority, including the power to tax, undertake infrastructure projects (sidewalks, street lights, etc.), build and maintain the Village water system, and respond to fires. Today the only responsibility remaining with the Fire District is the management of the Village water system.

Over the last year, a newly expanded five-member Fire District board has begun critical work to address deferred maintenance of the village water system. Another new development is the recently completed Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. The trail runs through the Designated Historic District, bringing new visitors to our community and improving the quality of life for many residents. Other significant capital and/or facility improvement projects on the horizon in the Village include:

- East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization – Overlook Park development
- Caledonia Grange #9 Hall - accessibility project
- First Congregational Church of East Hardwick - foundation project

The Better Connections project is intended to support continued community development, and to identify new opportunities to revitalize East Hardwick Village through a comprehensive planning process. Public input will be essential to the success of the process. The resulting comprehensive plan will be action-oriented and will include both short term projects that can be implemented quickly, and longer-term, more complex projects that may need additional planning and funding. The plan will provide cost estimates and information on funding sources to enable the implementation of community priorities.

Reports from several recent projects are available to inform aspects of the Better Connections planning process. These include:

- AARP-style Walkability Audit of East Hardwick (May 2022)
<https://hardwickvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/East-Hardwick-Audit.pdf>
- Local Motion Bike Safety Improvement Concepts for East Hardwick (September 2022)
[https://hardwickvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Draft-East-Hardwick-Walk Bike-Safety-Improvement-Concepts_7112230404.pdf](https://hardwickvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Draft-East-Hardwick-Walk-Bike-Safety-Improvement-Concepts_7112230404.pdf)
- East Hardwick LVRT Trailhead Scoping Study carried out by Wall Consulting Group (October 2022)
<https://hardwickvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/East-Hardwick-LVRT-Trailhead-Scoping-Study-1.pdf>

Detailed Project Work Plan:

Task Name	Description of Task	Deliverables	Task Cost	Schedule
1. Kick-off Meeting	Consultant group meets with Project Steering Committee to review project activities, outcomes, timelines and develop project management plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project outline and timeline ✓ Project branding ✓ Outreach strategy (including approach to inclusive planning process) 	\$2,000	March 2024
2. Existing Conditions Analysis	Review background documents, prepare base map, collect baseline transportation, land use, and economic data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Base mapping ✓ Baseline data ✓ Descriptive report, maps, and illustrations of existing conditions ✓ Site visit with State agencies (VTrans, ACCD, DEC) ✓ Socio-economic profile of town/village residents) 	\$8,000	April - June 2024
3. Initial Public Engagement	Develop project website to be updated with latest progress and project deliverables, create print marketing materials; host initial small group stakeholder meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Project website ✓ Project poster and/or flier ✓ Project Kickoff @ East Hardwick community event (TBD) ✓ Post community event summary of outcomes 	\$3,000	July 2024
4. Ongoing Public Outreach	Display reports, maps, and progress plans on project website and at "open studios" located at key local businesses, utilize email listservs and social media (Front Porch Forum, Facebook, etc.) to publicize project milestones and events, advertise at Farmer's Market and other public events, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Update project website ✓ Social media posts ✓ Project team presence at community events 	\$4,000	July 2024 - March 2025
5. Community Dinner (Workshop #1)	Steering Committee and Consultant group present results of Task 3 to solicit comments and community input at community event, if possible (<i>other methods will be used to solicit additional feedback – see Tasks 3 and 4</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One (1) facilitated meeting ✓ Draft report of findings ✓ Final report of findings with incorporated feedback 	\$3,000	August 2024

6. Propose Improvements and Schematics	Propose and evaluate desired improvements based on existing constraints, standards, costs, State agency technical review, community input (<i>including feedback from website and outreach materials at local businesses</i>), develop maps and graphics to illustrate desired improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Draft summary ✓ Report/Matrix ✓ Draft comprehensive plan maps and graphics ✓ Final summary report/matrix ✓ Final comprehensive plan maps and graphics 	\$16,000	September 2024
7. Market Analysis	Qualitative data collection, develop baseline economic data and strategies for prioritizing infrastructure investments and attracting future investment that integrates with proposed corridor improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completion of focus groups, ✓ interviews, trail and intercept surveys ✓ Focus groups, interviews, trail and intercept surveys raw data ✓ Market Analysis 	\$13,500	September - October 2023
8. Community Dinner (Workshop #2)	Steering Committee and consultant group present findings of Tasks 5, 6, and 7 to solicit community input on proposed improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One (1) facilitated meeting (could include demonstration project(s) to test potential design alternatives) ✓ Draft report of findings ✓ Final report of findings 	\$3,500	October 2024
9. Implementation Plan	Develop an implementation plan, include cost estimates, identify funding resources and partners to help implement recommendations for proposed improvement strategies and marketing initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implementation Plan ✓ Formal review by State agencies (VTrans, ACCD, DEC) 	\$7,000	October - November 2024
10. Final Presentations	Meet with Steering Committee and Community to review implementation plan and findings from Task 8. Present the findings at a Select Board meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Two (2) facilitated meetings ✓ Draft report of findings ✓ Final report of findings with incorporated feedback 	\$3,000	December 2024 - January 2025
11. Master Plan Report	Prepare a final comprehensive plan. Review a draft with the Steering Committee. Finalize report based on input received. Provide hard copies and digital files.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Draft comprehensive plan document(s) ✓ Final comprehensive plan with incorporated feedback. 	\$12,000	February 2025
12. Submit Final Report	Submit completed report package to VTrans Better Connections Program Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Final comprehensive plan document(s) 	NA	March 2025
	Total Project Cost:		\$75,000	

Clean Water Project Plan:

Task Name	Description of Task	Deliverables	Task Cost	Schedule
1. Project Initiation	Consultant group meets with subcommittee.	✓ A review of project activities, outcomes, and timelines.	\$2,000	April 2024
2. Need Assessment & Evaluation	Consultant(s) review existing stormwater, water quality, and transportation studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Summary report of potential stormwater problem areas ✓ Summary of socially, economically, and culturally inequities related to potential stormwater problem areas. ✓ Design of Main St. Bridge mitigation project and other priority sites with cost estimates for construction. 	\$16,000	May - October 2024
3. Development of intersection stormwater plan and project stormwater designs	Consultant and Project Team develop proposals for moving projects into final design or implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete stormwater plan. ✓ Make a presentation of the stormwater plan to the community. 	\$12,000	November 2024 - March 2025
Total Project Cost:			\$30,000	

Project Funding: A total of \$75,000 is available for consultant services from Vermont Better Connections Grant Program, administered by the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Another \$30,000 is available from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation for the clean water portion of the project.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Submission Requirements: All responses to the RFP shall include the following information: [customize and alter as needed]

1. Cover Letter - A cover letter of interest and general description of recommended approaches, scope of work, processes, and deliverables for the project.
2. Scope of Work – Provide a detailed scope of work based on the work plan provided in the RFP for the project broken down by task. Describe the project approach and overview of engagement, and provide examples of previous community engagement efforts. The consultant may also propose additional supplemental items to the scope of work. While the work plan in the RFP serves to illustrate a general process and structure for creating the plan, we are very much open to and interested in hearing any new/creative approaches to this type of plan and our approach.
3. Proposed Schedule – Provide a schedule that includes completion of work task and deliverables, as well as key meetings, and complies with timeline given in the RFP.
4. Project Budget – Provide a detailed budget broken down by task and team member. Include your overhead and hourly rates for the individuals involved. Also, provide an estimated budget with staff hours for completing each phase of the proposed scope of work.

5. Qualifications and Staffing – Provide a qualifications profile of the lead consultant and sub-consultants, including indication of the lead consultant, the role of each consultant on the team with organizational staffing chart and percentage of time devoted to the project by each consultant. Also provide detailed information on each consultant, including the name of the firm, year established, including a description of relevant experience on similar projects for each firm and detailed resume listing of their individual work experience in this role on similar projects;
6. References - A minimum of three (3) professional references for whom a similar project has been completed within the last five (5) years.
7. Examples of previous similar projects (3) completed by the consultant.
8. Page Limit - The proposal, encompassing items 1-6 above, shall not exceed 20 double-sided pages (40 total pages) including cover letter, table of contents and resumes. All information submitted becomes property of the Town of Hardwick upon submission. The Town of Hardwick reserves the right to issue supplemental information or guidelines relating to the RFP as well as make modifications to the RFP or withdraw the RFP. Once submitted, the consultant team (including specific staff assigned to the project) may not be changed without written notice to and consent of the Town of Hardwick. The cost of preparing, submitting, and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the consultant. The Town of Hardwick 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 if it is in the best interest of the Town of Hardwick. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the Town of Hardwick to award a contract.

Submission Requirements: Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy (PDF) and (2) printed copies of the submittal by 3:00 PM, Wednesday, February 7, 2024 to:

Town of Hardwick
David Upson
20 Church Street/P.O. Box 523
(802) 472-6120
david.upson@hardwickvt.org

Please expect a confirmation email from the Town of Hardwick upon the receipt of your proposal. If you have any questions about this project or the RFP, please address them via email to David Upson. We will respond to all questions in writing within 3 days. Both the question and response will be shared with the other consultants.

The Town of Hardwick strives to be a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community, where all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity or expression of sexual orientation, immigration status, religious or political affiliation can feel protected, included, secure, safe, and ensured of equal justice under the law.

RFP Schedule Summary: Proposals are due by 3:00 PM, Wednesday, February 7, 2024. Consultant selection will be made by Wednesday, February 16, 2024. Project work will begin on Monday, March 4, 2024. Project will be completed on or before Monday, March 24, 2025. Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee that may include representatives from [the Town of Hardwick, NVDA, VTrans, and ACCD].

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Respondents will be evaluated according to the following factors:

1. Consultant Qualifications with Similar Projects and the Project Area - 25%
2. Scope of work, methodology, public engagement, and scheduling - 35%
3. Overall Quality, Completeness and Clarity in the Proposal - 25%
4. Consultant Costs and Fee Schedule – 15%

INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK

The Town of Hardwick reserves the right to select the top two to three highly scored consultants and invite them for an interview prior to awarding the contract. In this process, the selection committee may ask the respondents to give an oral presentation of their respective proposals. The purpose of this oral presentation is to provide an in-depth analysis of certain qualifications, experience in performing similar services, and an opportunity for the consultant to clarify or elaborate on their qualifications without restating the proposal. The interview and presentation are merely to present facts and explanation to the review committee and allow the selection committee to ask targeted questions of the consultant team. The interview and presentation, if deemed necessary by the review committee, will be held at the Hardwick Memorial Building in Hardwick Vermont. The day and time will be notified to the respondents at least 1 week prior to the meeting. Each interview will last up to 45 minutes, and will be comprised of a presentation and Q&A. The interviews will be conducted by the selection committee. All costs and expenses incurred in traveling for the purpose of interview and presentation shall be the responsibility of the consultant.

FINAL CONSULTANT SELECTION

Following the selection process, one team will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of work with specified deliverables may be modified through negotiation of the final contract. The final project team may also be modified through negotiation of the final contract. Any expenses resulting from the proposal process will be the sole responsibility of the consultant.

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

The Town of Hardwick will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by the municipality's legal counsel. The project shall not start until the successful applicant enters into a written contract with the municipality. The Town of Hardwick is not liable for any cost incurred by consultant prior to issuance of a contract. The consultant and subcontractors must comply with all State and Federal covenants required by virtue of the funding source or contained or referenced in all the municipality's subcontracts including, but not limited to the following provisions:

- Insurance Coverage
- Indemnification
- Workers Compensation
- Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) Obligation
- Audit and Record Retention
- Lobbying restrictions

MAPPING AND GRAPHIC STANDARDS

The planning project may have mapping to inventory, assess, and communicate geographic concepts. Consultants will develop data layers in GIS. Data should be in Vermont State Plane coordinates, meters NAD 1983. These data layers can be developed from existing data layers and/or augmented with additional engineering work. Any artistic renderings or other graphical illustrations should be provided in pdf or jpeg file format along with native editable file formats in Adobe Illustrator/Photoshop and InDesign format. Upon completion, the data will be transmitted in ESRI shapefiles format and associated mapping in Adobe Acrobat formats to the municipality