



State of Vermont
Agency of
Transportation
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, Vermont
05633-5001

VTrans

Working to Get You There

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
Contract Administration
Phone: (802) 828-2641
Fax: (802) 828-5545

September 9, 2010

RE: Request for Proposals (RFP) - NY-VT Bi-State Intercity Passenger Rail Study

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The State of Vermont, acting through the Agency of Transportation (VTrans), is requesting proposals for consultant services to develop passenger rail planning documents, including a corridor analysis, service development plan, preliminary engineering documents and NEPA documents. This project was funded under a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Track 3 discretionary planning grant award to Vermont.

All work will be accomplished in accordance with the Scope of Work, (SOW), dated August 30, 2010 and the Procedures for Selecting Contractors and Specifications for Contractor Services, including Customary State Contract Provisions, dated August 28, 2008, Revised December 29, 2008, both of which are attached hereto.

VTrans intends to select a Consultant to perform these services and will enter into a cost plus fixed fee contract covering a 20 month period. All work on this project must be completed by June, 2012. Because the results of this work will be used as the basis of a future FRA High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail discretionary grant application, study timelines will be strictly enforced and late work products will not be tolerated.

Anticipated funds available for this project is \$900,000.00.

The selected Consultant's proposals become public record and are available for public review and inspection upon execution of the contract. The contents of the successful Consultant's proposal, as accepted by VTrans, will become part of the contract awarded as a result of this process.

In the event it becomes necessary to revise, modify, clarify, or otherwise alter this RFP, revisions will be made in the form of a written RFP change.

All questions related to this RFP shall be forwarded to Laura Cornell, Contracts Specialist V in writing to the address above, by e-mail at laura.cornell@state.vt.us or by fax at (802) 828-5545 no later than September 28, 2010. All questions received will be documented and answered after this date. A compiled list of all questions and answers will be created and copies provided in the form of a written RFP change.

In order to be considered responsive to this RFP, each prospective Consultant shall conform to the following requirements:

1. **Required Information for the Technical Proposal**

- A. Submit one (1) envelope, or package, containing ten (10) copies of the technical proposal.
- B. The technical proposal shall be clear and concise, not exceeding a maximum of twenty-five (25) double-sided pages, all inclusive. The pages shall be 8 ½" x 11" in size, and shall be printed in a size twelve (12) (times new roman) font or greater. The pages shall be numbered consecutively therefore the page number may reach fifty (50) but the physical pages shall not exceed twenty-five (25). If you have any question regarding what is included in the page limit or how many numbered pages this consists of, please submit your question(s) for clarification by the due date listed in this RFP.
- C. In order to assist in the evaluation process, all technical proposals shall include the following information:

Cover letter;

Project Abstract: This section should summarize the Consultant's overall understanding of the project. It should briefly describe the proposed approach to be taken to achieve the stated project goals and objectives listed in the SOW;

Introduction to the Consultant Firm(s): Consultants shall provide the following information relative to their firm. Similar information must be provided for each sub-consultant and member of a joint venture. Sub-consultant roles should be clearly defined.

- (a) Firm name and business address, including telephone number and email contact.
- (b) Year firm was established. Include former firm names and years established if applicable.

Methodology: This section shall address the work tasks listed in the SOW. Specify in detail the methods and data to be used in addressing all work tasks. Also include a set of deliverables and timelines.

Public Involvement Plan: A public involvement plan shall be provided which specifies at a minimum: number, format and timing of any meetings, briefings, focus groups or other methods proposed by the Consultant; methods to manage the flow and exchange of information, and discuss other innovative ways to receive public input, including the design of an interactive website. The interactive website is a critical component of this project and the Consultant should provide model websites as part of their bid proposal.

The proposed Public Involvement Plan shall take into account the following required meetings and presentations:

- VTrans and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Executive Staff (**8 meetings**)
- Public Meetings (**8 meetings**)
- Stakeholder Meetings (**15 meetings**)

Note that these are the minimum required meetings and presentations. Consultants may propose additional meetings, focus groups or other methods to engage stakeholders and the general public.

The project will be managed by VTrans' project manager with the assistance of a Project Management Team composed of members of VTrans, NYSDOT and study area Regional Planning Commissions. This team will provide or make available to the Consultant documents and other information for the preparation of work products and deliverables. In addition, a project Stakeholders Group will be utilized to solicit feedback on the contents work products and deliverables. The Consultant should expect to hold conference calls with the Project Management Team that can range from weekly to monthly, depending on the requirements of particular work tasks.

Qualifications and Experience of the Firm(s): This section shall detail the Consultant firm's previous experience relating specifically to intercity passenger rail corridor analysis, service development planning, preliminary engineering and service/project NEPA.

Include a listing of relevant recent work which would indicate experience in these fields of expertise. This listing shall include a description of the work, the approximate date the work was completed, project budget, and whether the project's time schedule and budget were met. Expertise in all aspects of these fields of expertise should be highlighted.

Qualifications, Experience and Role of Key Staff: This section shall contain brief resumes' for only those individuals that will participate in the project emphasizing previous experience in intercity passenger rail activities identified in Qualification and Experience of the Firm listed above. Resumes' shall detail the specific roles and contributions individual team members played in these areas.

Include an organizational chart which clearly identifies the project manager and other key individuals assigned to this project, their function and/or responsibility, along with their level of involvement in this project.

Include a Gantt chart indicating study timetable and major milestones (meetings and deliverables), consistent with the schedule contained in the FRA-VTrans Statement of Work. Tables indicating estimated labor hours per task per class of labor shall be provided. This section shall also include a staff availability chart, detailing the availability of each staff member based on the percentage of time he/she will have to devote to this project, taking into consideration their other project commitments.

D. The technical proposals will be evaluated considering the following criteria:

<u>CRITERIA</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
1. Project understanding and approach	30
2. Quality and clarity of technical proposal	10
3. Previous experience of the firm in conducting similar work.	20
4. Previous experience of key personnel in conducting similar work	20
5. Responsiveness of proposal to the RFP requirements	10
6. Reasonableness of labor hour estimate	10

E. The following plans and studies are available for Consultants assistance in preparing their technical proposals. These may be viewed via the links provided below, or, upon request, in the Office of Contract Administration:

- NY-VT Bi-State Intercity Passenger Rail Track 3 Grant Application
<http://railroads.vermont.gov/ARRA.htm>
- Vision for High-Speed Rail in America (April 2009)
<http://www.fra.dot.gov/Downloads/Final%20FRA%20HSR%20Strat%20Plan.pdf>
- Railroad Corridor Transportation Plans: A Guidance Manual (2005)
http://www.fra.dot.gov/Downloads/RRdev/corridor_planning.pdf
- High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program Interim Guidance Federal Register Notice (June 23, 2009)
http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/RRDev/fr_hsipr_guidance.pdf
- Notice of Funding Availability for Service Development Programs: Issuance of Interim Program Guidance, Federal Register Notice (July 1, 2010) Conduct search at:
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>
- Vision for the New England High-Speed and Intercity Rail Network (n.d) <http://www.mass.gov/Agov3/docs/PR071309.pdf>
- VTrans Track 1a Grant Application
<http://railroads.vermont.gov/ARRA.htm>
- VTrans Track 2 Grant Application
<http://railroads.vermont.gov/ARRA.htm>
- New York State Rail Plan (2009)
<https://www.nysdot.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/planning-bureau/state-rail-plan>
- Vermont State Rail and Policy Plan (2006)
<http://railroads.vermont.gov/railpolicyplan.htm>

Please call Laura Cornell at (802) 828-2641 or (802) 828-3776 to make an appointment, only if necessary, to view in the Office of Contract Administration.

2. **Required Information for the Cost Proposal**

- A. Submit one (1) envelope, or package, containing four (4) copies of the cost proposal.
- B. Provide in the cost proposal a detailed estimate of personnel hours by task and class of labor. The prime and each sub-consultant (as appropriate) shall provide separate schedules.
- C. Meals and mileage will be reimbursed at actual cost up to the maximum State rates except that the mileage reimbursement may be increased if the Consultant can document higher rates based on past company records or audited rates. Lodging will be reimbursed on the basis of reasonable rates as determined by VTrans. **Please be aware that the mid-day meal is not eligible for reimbursement.**
- D. If the audited indirect cost rate includes costs which provide no benefit to VTrans projects or costs otherwise not allowable under 48 CFR, Part 31, an adjusted indirect cost rate may be required. If a Consultant submits an overhead rate that is arbitrarily lower than their latest certified overhead rate and they are subsequently awarded the contract, then VTrans reserves the right to require that the lower rate be used on this contract for pricing and billing purposes. Supporting documentation justifying the alternate indirect cost rate may be requested. This also applies to all sub-consultants utilized by the selected Consultant.
- E. If the prime Consultant intends to utilize the services of a sub-consultant(s), the following should be accomplished:
 - a) Provide justification and documentation in the cost proposal regarding the basis for selecting each sub-Consultant (low bid, competitive negotiation, technical capabilities, etc.) you intend to use. Documentation needs to include all technical and cost information for all sub-Consultants contacted.
 - b) For sub-consultants named in the proposal, provide labor cost information as described in section 2 part B above for sub-consultant personnel.

c) The successful Consultant will be expected to execute sub-agreements for each sub-consultant named in the proposal upon award of this contract.

3. Required Financial Information

A. Submit one (1) envelope or package containing:

- 1) A completed **VTrans Form AF38** for the prime Consultant.
- 2) One (1) copy of the financial information for the prime Consultant.
- 3) A completed **VTrans Form AF38** for each sub-consultant named in the proposal.
- 4) One (1) copy of the financial information for each sub-consultant named in the proposal.

B. For this submittal, the prime Consultant shall complete **Sections One and Three of VTrans Form AF38.**

C. The documentation listed above in Section 3, Part B, shall also be required for each sub-consultant listed in the proposal at the time of submittal. The information submitted shall meet the requirements of VTrans Form AF-38 at a level commensurate with the anticipated magnitude of each sub-consultant's proposed work. Provide an audited field office overhead rate or offsite overhead rate where applicable. For guidance, see 48 CFR, Part 31.203.

D. The financial information for the Consultant and each sub-Consultant shall be current for each firm's fiscal year ending within 18 months of the date the proposal is due.

4. Required Shipping Information

A. Clearly indicate the following on the outside of each of the **three (3) sealed** envelopes or packages containing the technical proposals, and financial information:

- 1) Name and address of the prime Consultant
- 2) Due date and time (**10/13/2010 - 2:00 p.m.**)
- 3) Envelope contents (i.e. technical proposal, cost proposal, or financial information)
- 4) "NY-VT Bi-State Intercity Passenger Rail Study"

- B. Submit the three (3) sealed envelopes or packages to the Office of Contract Administration, Agency of Transportation, One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05633-5001, prior to 2:00 p.m., on Wednesday, October 13, 2010.**
- C. Proposals or unsolicited revisions submitted after the specified due date and time will not be accepted and will be returned to the Consultant.**

5. Rejection Conditions

- A. VTrans reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received as a result of this RFP. A proposal may be rejected for one or more of the following reasons, or for any other reason deemed to be in the best interest of VTrans:**
 - 1) Failure of the Consultant to adhere to one or more provisions of this RFP.
 - 2) Failure of the Consultant to submit information required by this RFP.
 - 3) Failure of the Consultant to follow generally accepted ethical and professional standards during the RFP process.
 - 4) Communications about this RFP with VTrans personnel other than those listed in this RFP.
 - 5) Technical proposals exceeding the page limit.

VTrans reserves the right to request and consider the opinions of any local, State and/or Federal Agency relative to the qualifications, capability and performance of any consulting firms and/or sub-consultants identified in responses to requests for proposals.

Once the technical proposal is discussed and ranked, the cost proposal will be reviewed for consistency with, and in light of, the evaluation of the technical proposal. VTrans reserves the right to seek clarification of any proposal submitted and to select the proposal considered to best promote the public interest.

The Selection Committee may elect to have selected Consultants present their proposals and interview them prior to final selection. If interviews are desired, the following procedure will be employed. Each selected Consultant will be permitted 30 minutes to make an oral

presentation with a question and answer session to follow not to exceed 30 minutes. The Consultant teams may wish to present the following information: introduction to key personnel, descriptions, sketches, photos or plans of projects of a similar nature which have been completed by each firm; any unique features of the project(s); and relevant methodology/experience in dealing with intercity passenger rail corridor analyses, service development planning, preliminary engineering and NEPA. Consultants may also wish to provide samples of materials they developed for public informational meetings. Interviews/presentations will take place at an agreed upon location by VTrans and NYSDOT.

Each Consultant awarded a contract shall, upon notification of award, apply for registration with the Vermont Secretary of State's Office to do business in the State of Vermont, if not already so registered. The registration form may be obtained from the Vermont Secretary of State, 109 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05609-1104. The telephone number is (802) 828-2386. VTrans **will NOT execute the contract** until the Consultant is registered with the Secretary of State's Office. You may check the status of your registration at www.sec.state.vt.us/seek/keysrch.htm.

The current Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Registry can be found on-line at <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/civilrights/DBEDirectory.htm>.

If any Consultant is aggrieved by the proposed award of the contract, the Consultant may appeal in writing to the Chief of Contract Administration. The appeal must be postmarked within fourteen (14) calendar days following the date of the written notice to award the contract.

All proposals become the property of VTrans upon submission. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the proposing Consultant. VTrans 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 this RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interests of VTrans. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates VTrans to award a contract.

Sincerely,

Laura Cornell
Contract Specialist V

Enclosures: Scope of Work dated August 30, 2010
Procedures for Selecting Contractors and Specifications for
Contractor Services, including Customary State Contract
Provisions dated August 2008, Revised December 29, 2008
VTrans Form AF38 (Revised 6/30/04)