

Request for Proposals for Flood Hazard Mitigation Planning and Engineering
Poultney River D&H Rail Trail Bridge

Issued by: The Town of Poultney
9 Main Street, Poultney, VT 05764

Purpose: Prepare an alternatives analysis and a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) for projects that would mitigate flood hazards at the D&H Rail Trail Bridge in the Town of Poultney, Rutland County, VT.

Date Issued: December 21, 2023

Questions Due: January 11, 2024 by 4:00 PM EDT via email to poultneymanager@comcast.net

Answers Available: January 18, 2024

Proposal Due Date: February 8, 2024 by 4:00 PM EDT via email to poultneymanager@comcast.net or by U.S. mail or hand delivery at the address shown above.

Award Date: February 12, 2024

Funding Source: Vermont Department of Public Safety
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities 2021 Grant

Available Funding: \$45,000.00

Attachments: Poultney River Project Area Map

Project Contact: Paul Donaldson, Town/Village Manager
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I. Background

The proposed project is to perform an alternatives analysis, develop conceptual engineering plans, and prepare a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) for a project that would mitigate flood hazards at the D&H Rail Trail Bridge over the Poultney River in Poultney, VT. The location has been identified in the Poultney Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan as being vulnerable to flooding due to the bridge alignment and span over the Poultney River. The current bridge is a single span bridge and is primarily used for hiking, biking, and snowmobile crossings over the river.

The Town will hire a consulting engineering firm or team to prepare hydrologic and hydraulic models for evaluating alternatives to improve management of flood waters in this section of the Poultney River. The goals of the project are to reduce future flood risks to infrastructure and investments while maintaining water quality, protecting floodplain functions and aquatic habitat, and improving public safety through flood resiliency. With informed river science-based alternatives and community acceptance of the alternatives, future rounds of state or federal hazard mitigation funds will be requested for final design and construction costs to implement selected alternative(s).

The Town of Poultney and other partners will make existing information they have available to the selected consultant, as well as provide staff time to discuss existing conditions and the evaluation of study findings.

II. Proposal Format

Submitted proposals shall include, at a minimum:

1. An overall description of the proposed scope of work necessary to evaluate potential mitigation alternatives.
2. A table describing the steps or tasks, associated costs (labor and expenses), supplies and other resources needed, and a time frame to complete the alternatives evaluation and engineering work. The table shall include a schedule of expected timing of public meetings as well as work with partner organizations.
3. Suggested modifications to the listed scope of services and deliverables with associated costs and an explanation of the benefit related to the proposed changes to the scope.
4. Brief descriptions of any similar projects that have been completed by the consultant.
5. Name, address, phone, and email of three (3) references from recently completed projects.

III. Deliverables

Overall project tasks include:

1. Evaluating 3-5 potential alternatives to mitigate flooding at project site.
2. Gathering information needed to complete a BCA for the selected alternative.
3. Developing plans for the preferred alternative.
4. Reviewing and documenting potential environmental and historic resource impacts.

The consultant will be expected to coordinate with key project partners, including Town of Poultney staff and members of the Selectboard, the VTDEC River Management Engineer, and/or Vermont Emergency Management. Below is a list of tasks to be included in the scope of work.

1. Participation in up to four (4) meetings with the Town and partners to further define the project scope, clarify background information needs and other aspects of the project, and to discuss draft and final reports. Some of these initial meetings may be via online software platforms though in-person attendance is expected for the draft/final report presentation to the Town Selectboard.
2. Analysis to evaluate 3-5 mitigation alternatives including the no action alternative. The analysis will include evaluation of potential impacts of each of these alternatives on the D&H Rail Trail, nearby developed and undeveloped properties, state and local roads, and other Town infrastructure as appropriate.
3. Completion of 2-dimensional (2-d) hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) modeling which incorporates a range of flows (i.e., 2-yr, 10-yr, 25-yr, 50-yr, 100-yr) to compare how water surface elevations and velocities would differ with alternatives described above. The H&H model analysis will utilize existing FEMA Flood Insurance Study (FIS) data to tie the project into ground surfaces and Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) of the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) vertical and horizontal datums.
4. Coordination with project partners on preliminary results of modeling alternatives and the development of conceptual plans prior to the presentation of the draft report and plans.
5. Draft report on project feasibility and alternatives analysis identifying needed actions within the study area, including the summary of the alternatives, identification of potential areas for acquisition of easements, report on H&H evaluation of alternatives, cost estimates for alternatives, and conceptual design plans. The draft report will also outline potential federal and state funding sources and any regulatory permitting for each of the alternatives.

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6. Conceptual plans to include sufficient information to communicate, at a minimum; property boundaries, natural resources, above and below ground infrastructure, and hazard zones. Plans for each alternative to clearly convey impacts to the natural resources and properties.
7. Public meeting with Town of Poultney Selectboard (evening meeting schedule) and the interested public to discuss the draft report, evaluated alternatives, and answer questions. Illustrations from model results and concepts will be of sufficient detail and quality to properly convey information on the alternatives to Selectboard members and the public.
8. Final report with incorporated public and Town comments, delivered in both paper and electronic format. All electronic files and documents. All become the property of the Town of Poultney for their use and distribution after completion of the project. There shall be no restrictions placed by the consultant on the use of the project files by the Town or their representatives.

IV. Questions

Any questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to poultneymanager@comcast.net by 4:00 PM EDT on 01/11/2024. Consultants interested in the project who do not have questions must identify themselves by this date.

Questions and answers will be emailed to all interested consulting firms by 4:00 PM EDT on 01/18/2024.

V. Required Submission Format

Electronic (Adobe Acrobat .pdf or Microsoft Word .doc) versions of proposals from interested consultants must be received by the Town of Poultney via email (poultneymanager@comcast.net) no later than 4:00 PM EDT on 2/8/2024. Proposals should be no more than **twenty (20) pages in length**, excluding staff resumes. Submitted proposals must include the name, address, phone, and email of the preparer and may include webpage links for related documents for the evaluation of the consultant's experience by the RFP review team.

VI. Proposal Evaluation

- Clarity, conciseness, and organization of the proposal, consultant's ability to complete the project within the specified time frame, and proposed modifications to the stated scope of services.
- Consultant knowledge and familiarity with the Town of Poultney flooding issues and specifically the D&H Rail Trail.
- Clarity and value in the proposed budget.
- Consultant's qualifications and prior experience in completing similar studies.
- Submitted proposals will be evaluated and rated by Town Staff and Selectboard members.

VII. Anticipated Schedule

- February 2024: Proposal review and consultant selection.
- March 2024: Consultant contract finalized with Town.
- April 2024: Initial kick off meeting with Town and partners.
- May 2024 – July 2024: All necessary field work completed by consultant.
- January 2025: Draft report on alternatives analysis presented to Selectboard.
- January 2025 – February 2025: Review of draft completed by Town and partners.
- April 2025: Final plan presented publicly at Town Selectboard.
- June 2025: Final report and conceptual plans provided to Town.

The final report of alternatives is to be completed no later than July 1, 2025.

VIII. Disclaimers

1. The Town may accept or reject any proposal and/or may cancel the project at any time.
2. The Town may modify and reissue the RFP following review of submitted proposals.
3. The Town is not responsible for any costs incurred by the consultant prior to issuing a contract; the consultant shall bear the full cost of proposal preparation and contract negotiations.
4. The Town may negotiate a contract with the consultant whose proposal would be the most advantageous for the project, based on the proposal evaluation criteria described above.
5. All proposals submitted as part of this RFP shall become the property of the Town. As such, they are public information and may be reviewed by anyone requesting to review them.

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6. The Town may request additional information or clarifications as part of the proposal review.
7. All received proposals shall remain valid for sixty (60) days from the date of submittal.
8. Project schedule may be revised by the Town due to unforeseen issues related to funding sources.
9. The selected consultant will need to show proof of adequate insurance.