



Issue date: November 28, 2022

Please respond by: 4:00pm, December 9, 4:00

Request for Proposals: REGIONAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), the regional planning commission serving Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties, is seeking qualified consultants to assist in the update of the [Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom](#). Staff is rewriting the plan, but we will need assistance with engagement, editing, and organizational structure. We anticipate that this plan update process will take one year. **Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, December 12th.** An FAQ document answering any questions about this RFQ will be available on the NVDA website (<http://www.nvda.net/rfp.php>)

Note: This Request for Proposals replaces the original Request for Proposals, which was issued on October 19, 2022.

BACKGROUND

NVDA is one of 11 regional planning commissions (RPCs) in the State of Vermont. RPCs are political subdivisions of the State created by their member municipalities and act as a link between municipal and state government. RPCs work in fields that directly and indirectly affect the public at large: land use, transportation, housing, economic development, environmental quality, and more. NVDA also serves as the Economic Development Corporation for the region. NVDA is the only regional entity in the state to serve this dual purpose.

NVDA is responsible for preparing and regularly updating a regional plan in accordance with Vermont statute. The plan provides a set of goals and policies for the region in the areas of land use, transportation, economic development, natural resources, housing, energy, and public facilities. The NVDA uses the plan as a basis for its day-to-day operations and to guide its regional planning efforts.

We are seeking proposals from consulting firms to support NVDA and its staff in updating and editing the Regional Plan for conciseness, consistency, and improved messaging. The Regional Plan currently consists of:

Volume 1: Regional Goals and Strategies

Volume 2: Analysis of Land Use; Energy; Utilities and Facilities; Historic, Cultural and Scenic Resources; Housing; Economic Development; Natural Resources; and Flood Resilience

Volume 3: Transportation

The Regional Plan Update will be reorganized accordingly:

- Volume 1: Regional Goals and Strategies will contain an Executive Summary of the Plan that is high-level and capable of quickly conveying key planning issues and challenges to a broad and diverse audience. Volume 1 will continue to include an implementation plan and will be updated



to include transportation planning goals and strategies.

- Volume 2: Analysis will contain an element on Transportation, and Volume 3 will be eliminated.
- Maps: Maps are currently static images integrated into Volume 2. NVDA is able to produce maps as required to meet statutory requirements, but we are exploring the possibility of an ARGIS hub with web-based mapping.
- All volumes will incorporate edits from NVDA staff for relevance, brevity, and consistency.

SCOPE OF WORK & TIMELINE

The NVDA is readopting its current plan (which is set to expire in August 2023) so that staff and consultant(s) can devote more time to a reorganized and visionary regional plan. We anticipate that the redevelopment of the new plan will take one year.

- January-February 1 2023: Staff identifies engagement plan
- February 1-March 1 2023: Staff completes outline
- March 1-October 1, 2023: Plan elements researched and written. Successive drafts available for public comment
- November 1-January 1, 2024: Adoption process

NVDA’s total budget for consultant assistance is \$30,000. To use consultant time cost-effectively, we have identified a set of core deliverables, as well as add alternates. Interested consultants are invited to submit proposals on the core deliverables, and, as their budget allows, bid on add alternates.

Core Deliverable	Description	Consultant Role	Timeframe
Inclusive engagement process	Discourse on topics affecting our region include housing shortage, PFAS and water quality, flood resilience, and climate change. Outreach effort can include web-based portals and surveys, and a combination of in-person and virtual engagement. Staff is also considering equity measures such as stipends or childcare during public meetings	<p>Consultant will review our proposed engagement plan and make suggestions for more inclusive outreach strategies.</p> <p>Consultant will design a web page portal for online engagement.</p> <p>Staff will remain responsible for execution of the engagement program.</p>	<p>Engagement plan will be complete by February 1 and will be launched one month later.</p> <p>Engagement will occur throughout plan development (one year).</p>
Engaging format and graphic design	A user-friendly format can eliminate some of the “white paper” feel of our existing plan. Graphics can better illustrative technical concepts, and our municipalities can use them in their own plans as relevant.	NVDA staff will prepare a proposed outline of the plan, and the consultant, using the outline as a guide, will design a master document or style sheet that can be edited by staff	Plan outline will be ready for review by March 1. Master document will be ready one month later. Graphics



		in-house in the future. Consultant will also create up to a dozen graphics in a common (i.e. .jpeg)	can be created alongside plan development over the next six months.
Executive Summary/ Introduction	The regional plan needs a condensed, visually appealing summary that provide high-level perspective and can be understood by a general audience. The executive summary will integrate goals and strategies and include a crosswalk that explains how to use the plan. Conceptually, we are thinking of something like the ECOS plan: http://www.ecosproject.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2018-ECOS-Plan-Summary_20180807_FINAL.pdf	Consultant will work with us to identify the core issues to go into the executive summary and create it.	Executive summary needs to be complete by November 1, 2023

Add alternates

If consultant budget allows, consultants can bid on the following additional services:

Alternate	Description	Consultant Responsibility
Edits for clarity	The plan needs to read less like a white paper, and it needs to be accessible to a general audience without planning jargon.	Consultant could review each draft chapter once and suggest some redline edits.
Consistent organization	The plan needs to take a singular approach to organizing a large amount of information. Transportation plan needs to follow the same format. Data-heavy elements should either be deleted or moved to an appendix. Additionally, the structure of the plan does not have to follow the outline of required elements in statute. Rather, it can be organized into planning realms. Regardless of final structure, the plan will need a crosswalk that tells readers where to find required elements.	Consultant could review our outline and suggest a unified outline with common elements, such as snapshot of core issues/challenges, planning considerations, etc.

Interested firms are encouraged to visit the NVDA website to gain a better understanding of the organization’s work and to review the existing [Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom](#).



HOW TO APPLY

To be considered, please submit a proposal explaining your interest in this opportunity and addressing the categories below.

- **Cover Letter:** Please provide a letter of interest summarizing qualifications and scope of work.
- **Qualifications:** Please provide a summary of the qualifications of your organization with a focus on those who would be leading this work and identify familiarity with relevant legislative and statewide planning initiatives.
- **Availability:** Please provide your anticipated availability for this work.
- **Costs:** Please provide a cost estimate detailed by the three core deliverables identified above, as well as any add alternates. Include how you would bill this work including typical task or hourly rate costs.
- **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 if not already referenced.
- **Licensing:** Please indicate if you are licensed to do business in the State of Vermont. Contractors are not required to be licensed to respond to this RFP, but they will be required to obtain a license prior to being awarded this contract.
- **Schedule:** Please provide a schedule that includes completion of work tasks and deliverables including meetings.

Please email this information in a single .pdf document by 4:00pm on December 12, 2022 to Dave Snedeker at dsnedeker@nvda.net. Note that if your organization is selected there will be additional contracting requirements due to the use of federal funds for this effort.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND TITLE VI

NVDA is an Equal Opportunity lender, provider, and employer. NVDA 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.

QUESTIONS

Please email Dave Snedeker at dsnedeker@nvda.net if you have any questions about this request for proposals. Questions will be accepted until Tuesday, December 6, 2022. NVDA will post the questions and answers on the NVDA <http://www.nvda.net/rfp.php> until Thursday, December 8th.

EVALUATION & SELECTION

All proposals will become the property of NVDA. We reserve the right to reject any and all proposals. Evaluation criteria will include:

- Relevant experience



NVDA

*Northeastern Vermont
Development Association*

- Availability to begin work and complete work according to the schedule
- Effective communication
- Information provided to us by your references
- Completeness of proposal