

NH Rail Transit Authority Public Relations/Education Services Request for Proposals

SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF RFP

The State of New Hampshire's Department of Transportation (NHDOT), in partnership with the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA), seeks proposals from qualified firm to provide the NHRTA with public outreach, public relations, and information management. The NHDOT and NHRTA intend to contract with a qualified firm, or collaborative team, possessing demonstrated capacity, technical background and communication skills to complete this effort in a manner, which provides maximum benefit and transparency to the missions of the public entities.

This RFP is designed to provide interested firms with sufficient background information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements. This RFP is not intended to limit a proposal's content or exclude any relevant or essential information. Firms are at liberty and are encouraged to expand beyond the minimum specifications to provide evidence of relevant qualifications and service capability under any agreement.

SECTION: 2: BACKGROUND

The New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority was established under NH RSA 238-A in 2007 for the purpose of developing and providing commuter rail or other similar forms of passenger rail service in the State of New Hampshire.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding, dated September 8, 2010, between the NHRTA and NHDOT, the NHRTA has primary responsibility, after consultation with NHDOT, to:

1. Provide guidance and direction on the priorities for planning and implementing passenger rail projects
2. Manage and coordinate marketing and public relations for passenger rail projects
3. Provide a lead person for inquiries and information on passenger rail projects
4. Represent communities, MPOs and regional planning commissions on its board of directors in reviewing local interest for passenger rail projects

A subsequent Memorandum of Agreement specifically describing the roles and responsibilities of NHRTA and NHDOT was approved by the Governor and Executive Council on June 5, 2013 and is included as an attachment.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF SERVICES

This project seeks to engage a professional firm with sufficient technical, public outreach and media expertise for the sole purpose of developing outreach, communications and educational products and materials in order to increase awareness of the mission of the NHRTA and its activities. The selected firm will provide NHRTA with effective strategies to inform citizens as to potential mobility, economic development (state, regional and local), transportation, environmental and quality of life benefits to the State that may accrue from enhanced rail infrastructure and services developed as part of a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system. The services provided by the selected firm should further a transparent statewide and informed dialog among citizens, elected officials, and stakeholders relative to the ongoing efforts of the NHRTA and NHDOT to enhance the transit options available for the transportation system of the State of New Hampshire.

A maximum of \$40,000 has been made available for this project and funding limitations require the services to be completed by December 31, 2014. Anticipated assignments may include, but are not limited to, the following tasks:

- Modify the existing NHRTA website hosted on NHDOT servers to facilitate improved outreach, visualization, communication and public input, capture strategies and modes, including potential social media integration.
- Create briefing materials and presentations about the NHRTA
- Develop and maintain media and stakeholder database information
- Create and implement a media plan, including writing and distributing press releases about NHRTA activities
- Develop an outreach/public information training program for NHRTA members
- Establish and maintain effective communications and relationships with the NHDOT, public and private organizations, stakeholders, and the public
- Coordinate with the NHDOT to promote the visibility of the NHRTA.

SECTION 4: CONTACT INFORMATION

The official point of contact for this solicitation is:

Patrick Herlihy
Director of Aeronautics, Rail, and Transit
NH Department of Transportation
PO Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483
E-mail: pherlihy@dot.state.nh.us

During the proposal preparation, all questions and requests for clarifications and/or additional information should be submitted via email or mail to Patrick Herlihy, as noted above; phone calls will not be accepted. Final questions and requests for clarification must be received at least two weeks prior to the proposal due date.

All clarifications and interpretations of the proposal specifications, individual questions and supplemental instructions will be in the form of written Addenda to the proposal documents and will be posted on the NHRTA website <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/nhrt/index.htm> with the Final Addenda being posted no later than one week before the proposal due date.

SECTION 5: COST LIABILITY

The State of New Hampshire and the NHRTA assumes no responsibility for costs incurred by the firm(s) to prepare or submit their proposals or for samples included in the response to this RFP.

SECTION 6: LENGTH OF CONTRACT

The contract shall commence upon the approval of the contract by the State, including the NH Governor & Executive Council, and shall have a completion date of December 31, 2014.

Contract will be subject to applicable State and Federal laws.

SECTION 7: TOTAL BUDGET

The total budget for this contract is not to exceed \$40,000.

SECTION 8: PROPOSAL FORMAT

Firm(s) shall ensure that all information required herein is submitted with their proposal. Provision of inaccurate information or failure to provide all information required may be sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal or rescission of an award. Firm(s) should be mindful of the Evaluation Criteria (see Section 10) and shall provide information in the proposal that will permit an objective evaluation thereof.

Proposals shall be typed and submitted on 8.5" x 11" paper, bound securely, and shall not be more than 12 pages, excluding Appendix. Additional material, samples of client work, and references may be included in the Appendix. Also an electronic copy of the full proposal shall be submitted with the proposal packet.

Proposals should be prepared providing a straight forward, concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content. The following format should be followed and contain the following information:

Summary of Understanding

A brief summary of the consultant's understanding of the project and relevant policy issue knowledge and communication strategies/experience relevant to rail and integrated transportation systems in New Hampshire, the New England region, and nationally.

Work Plan

An outline of the approach proposed to accomplish the scope of services and the manner in which the consultant will work with NHDOT and the NHRTA in providing the services. Suggestions for additional or more developed tasks may be included.

Qualifications

Describe the Firm(s) qualifications, capabilities and organizational structure. List all persons providing services including qualifications, experience, and specific responsibilities (include a resume for each person). Subcontractors, if any, should be included.

Relevant Work Experience and References

Provide a brief description of projects similar in scope and scale completed by the Firm(s) (by the individuals who would provide the services), including completion date, type and scope of project. Provide a list of two to four clients (including contact information so that they may be contacted by NHDOT) with whom the Firm(s) has done business in the last five years that is similar to that required in this RFP. Additional information or samples of materials may be submitted with this proposal as an appendix. The lead Firm must designate one person to be the Account Manager of this RFP. This person will be the primary point of contact with NHRTA and NHDOT if they are the successful Firm(s). Once designated this point of contact can only be changed with the consent of NHRTA and NHDOT.

Work Schedule

A detailed schedule indicating how the project tasks will be organized and the estimated time allotted to each. Schedule to include a matrix of the project tasks and hours assigned broken down by personnel assigned.

Cost Proposal

Cost will be evaluated independently from the technical proposal. The firm shall enumerate all costs on a separate pricing cost proposal form supplied by the respondent.

SECTION 9: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed package and contain: one (1) original SIGNED hard copy (identify as such), plus eight (8) additional hard copies and one electronic copy (thumb drive or CD) of all materials required for acceptance of their proposal. Sealed proposal packages must be clearly marked with the Firm's return address and the notation: "NHDOT Proposal: NH Rail Transit Authority Public Relations & Education Services" and be submitted on or before 4:00pm, September 16, 2013, to:

Patrick Herlihy
Director of Aeronautics, Rail, and Transit
NH Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive / PO Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

All proposals must be date-stamped by NHDOT staff by the stated time to be considered. NHDOT will not accept facsimile or emailed submitted proposals for this solicitation. Only proposals physically received at NHDOT (7 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH), prior to the stated time will be considered. Proposals received after the 4:00 PM deadline will be rejected, without exception. The State assumes no responsibility for delays caused by any package or mail delivery service. Postmarking by the due date WILL NOT suffice.

SECTION 10: EVALUATION CRITERIA

The proposals will be initially reviewed to determine if mandatory requirements are met. Failure to meet mandatory requirements shall result in the proposal being rejected. In the event that all Firms do not meet one or more of the mandatory requirements, NHDOT reserves the right to continue the evaluation of the proposals that most closely meet the mandatory requirements of this RFP. NHDOT also reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted.

Evaluation Criteria

- Overall firm experience/ expertise and past performance on similar projects (25%)
- Demonstrated ability to perform tasks as indicated in the Scope of Services resulting in effective strategies for the client (25%)
- Thoroughness and comprehensiveness of proposal (20%)
- Sufficient assigned resources and staffing to complete (15%)
- Concept and process creativity (15%)