# Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

### Engineering Services for Upper Valley Transit Signal Priority Feasibility Study

## Overview

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) intends to enter into a contract with a professional engineering firm to provide engineering services for the project described below.

To qualify for selection, the submitting firm must have a professional engineer overseeing the work to be performed under the contract.

To be considered for evaluation, firms shall submit a specific Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) in the manner described below and may not submit more than one response to the RFQ. Any firm submitting a SOQ that does not conform to all of the requirements of this RFQ will be subject to disqualification.

## Project Background Information

The UVLSRPC is currently working with Advance Transit, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), and the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) to evaluate the feasibility of implementing a transit signal priority system for signalized intersections within Advance Transit's fixed-route service area in the City of Lebanon and Town of Hanover, New Hampshire, and the towns of Hartford and Norwich, Vermont.

Advance Transit (AT) is the second largest fixed-route transit operator by boardings in the State of New Hampshire and first in small-town boardings per hour in the State of Vermont. Residential and non-residential development pressure in Advance Transit's service area is straining the capacity of existing transportation infrastructure. The level of service (LOS) is at or near "F" for many signalized intersections. Queues at Interstate 89 Exit 18 in Lebanon, NH are backing up onto the Interstate 89 travel way, and similar conditions are occurring on VT Route 10A over the Ledyard Bridge from Norwich, VT to Hanover, NH during the morning peak hour. Fortunately, transit ridership in the region is continually growing, and transit is becoming increasingly important as one of the few available options to maximize the capacity of existing transportation infrastructure. In FY 2014, Advance Transit provided more than 878,000 fixed-route and shuttle service trips.

Increasing ridership and increasing traffic delays are placing strain on transit schedules, particularly on Advance Transit's Blue Route that serves the NH Route 120 corridor between Lebanon and Hanover and on the Green Route that serves the U.S. Route 5 and VT Route 10A corridors between Hartford & Norwich, VT and Hanover, NH. Over time, transit schedule reliability will degrade and the cost of providing a given level of service will increase due to time delays. Transit signal priority can be an effective tool to improve transit schedules by decreasing delay and improving on-time reliability for public transit commuters. Transit signal priority for buses can improve travel times for commuters and can be coordinated such that emergency vehicles always have priority. Coordination of the planning and management of traffic signals in multiple political jurisdictions, particularly along corridors such as NH Route 120 in Hanover & Lebanon, New Hampshire, and U.S. Route 5 and VT Route 10A in Hartford & Norwich, Vermont can help to improve traffic management further.

Since 1997, the use of traffic signal priority and pre-emption technology has become more commonly used in the United States. Within Northern New England, the Chittenden County Transit Authority (CCTA) is currently in the process of deploying a transit signal priority system following an evaluative study published by the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization in 2006. Despite the existence of differing traffic signal technologies and manufacturers, a regional consensus was reached and a standard for future traffic signal technology was agreed upon by a variety of municipal stakeholders within the region.

## Preliminary Scope of Work

The preliminary scope of work for this project is detailed below and encompasses five tasks.

Task 1- Technology Scan:

- Conduct a literature review of Transit Signal Priority studies in rural and small urban areas.
- Review and provide a summary report of current Transit Signal Priority technologies.
- Review the traffic signal technology currently in place in Lebanon and Hanover, NH & Hartford and Norwich, VT to identify any potential interoperability issues.
- Evaluate the integration potential of Transit Signal Priority technologies with the existing traffic signals in Lebanon and Hanover, NH & Hartford and Norwich, VT.

Task 2- Analysis of Benefits:

- Complete microsimulation modeling of a minimum of two sample routes, as determined by the Project Steering Committee.
- Estimate the route-level benefits of implementing a Transit Signal Priority system.
- Estimate the system-level benefits of implementing a Transit Signal Priority system.

Task 3- Determination of Feasibility:

- Determine the capital and operating (i.e. maintenance) costs of implementing a Transit Signal Priority system, and evaluate the costs in the context of the benefits estimated in Task 2.
- Identify and estimate the traffic impacts of implementing a Transit Signal Priority system.
- Identify joint Transit Signal Priority procurement opportunities, if any, between the states of Vermont and New Hampshire and the municipalities within Advance Transit's service area.

Task 4- Identification of Institutional and Implementation Issues:

- Determine the Lead Agency (or agencies) for implementation of a Transit Signal Priority system.
- Coordinate with municipalities in Advance Transit's service area on the development of an Implementation Plan.
- Coordinate with public safety agencies in Advance Transit's service area on the development of an Implementation Plan.
- Determine the consistency of a Transit Signal Priority system with New Hampshire and Vermont Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) architectures.
- Outline roles and responsibilities for implementation.

Task 5- Development of Standards, Policies, and Final Report:

- Develop draft local and agency-level standards and policies related to Transit Signal Priority infrastructure.
- Collate implementation recommendations into an Action Plan.
- Complete a final report detailing the work completed in Tasks 1-5.
- Meet with up to four local boards (e.g. City Council, Selectboard) to determine community acceptance.

The following are tentative, milestone dates for the progress of this project.

- **August 31- September 11, 2015:** Review qualifications
- **September 14- September 18, 2015:** Conduct interviews (if necessary) and select top firm to negotiate final scope and fee agreement
- **September 21- October 2, 2015:** Negotiate final scope and fee agreement
- **October 5, 2015:** Begin Project Work
- **June 30, 2016**: Project Completion

## Statement of Qualifications

The Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) must be organized in sections containing the following information and demonstrate the firm's capability to complete the scope of work as described above. The SOQ may not be more than ten (10) pages.

- **Description of Firm.** Describe your firm's legal structure, areas of expertise, length of time in business, number of employees, and other information that would help to characterize the firm. Provide the address of the main office and the address of the office that will manage the project.
- **Experience.** Briefly describe other federally-funded projects executed by your firm that demonstrate directly-relevant experience. Extensive descriptions of vaguely related projects are discouraged. List all public sector clients for whom you have performed similar work in the past five years. For each project mentioned, include the name, address and phone number of a person who can be contacted regarding your performance on the project. When submitting projects for which your firm worked in an auxiliary capacity or in a joint venture or partnership, include the name of the lead firm.
- **Personnel.** Provide a professional resume for the key personnel proposed to be assigned to the project (including any important sub-consultants), and describe relevant related experience. Describe key personnel's proposed roles and responsibilities on this project. Submittals must identify a proposed Project Manager, who would be responsible for the day-to-day management of project tasks and would be the primary point of contact with your firm. An organizational chart of the project team may be appropriate.
- **Project Approach.** Describe the key tasks that you believe should be accomplished to complete the project. Provide a narrative description of how you propose to execute the tasks. If applicable, discuss any unique aspects of the project, alternative approaches that the UVLSRPC and project partners might wish to consider, or special considerations related to programmatic/ funding requirements. Your firm should rely on its expertise and experience with similar projects to demonstrate how it will effectively complete the project.
- **Project Schedule.** Describe your staff workload and availability and ability of the firm to provide the resources needed.

Brochures or other material that may be helpful in evaluating your firm may be included in an appendix of the SOQ. Appendices to the SOQ may not be more than three (3) pages

## Additional Information

Questions regarding the project may be directed to:

Nathan Miller, AICP
UVLSRPC
10 Water Street, Suite 225
Lebanon, NH 03766
(603) 448-1680
nmiller@uvlsrpc.org

Questions shall be submitted by 4:00 PM on Wednesday, August 19, 2015. Written responses to questions will be provided to all interested firms and posted on the UVLSRPC website (www.uvlsrpc.org) by the close of business on Friday, August 21, 2015.

## Submittal Deadline

Eight (8) copies of the qualifications submittal must be received no later than 4:00 PM on Friday, August, 28 2015 by:

Nathan Miller, AICP
UVLSRPC
10 Water Street, Suite 225
Lebanon, NH 03766
(603) 448-1680
nmiller@uvlsrpc.org

## Selection Process

Firms will be ranked based on qualifications and the UVLSRPC may choose to interview several of the top ranked firms. However, at its discretion, the UVLSRPC may dispense with interviews and select a firm to perform the work. Firms will be evaluated on the following factors:

- Firm History and Capability to Perform Project (20%);
- Relevant Federally-Funded Project Experience (15%);
- Qualifications of Project Team and Backup (15%);
- Familiarity with Area and Project (10%);
- Project Approach (10%);
- References (10%);
- Availability of the Project Personnel to Begin Work According to the Project Timeline (10%);
- Ability to Complete Work According to the Project Timeline (10%).

A selection committee appointed by the Executive Director of the UVLSRPC will assist with firm evaluations. The UVLSRPC will seek to negotiate a contract, a detailed scope of work, fee, schedule, etc. with the preferred firm. If unable to reach agreement, the UVLSRPC will terminate negotiations, and commence negotiations with the second-ranked firm, and so forth.

In the evaluation of the Qualifications, the UVLSRPC, at its discretion, may obtain technical support from outside sources. The Respondents will agree to fully cooperate with the personnel of any such organization.

The UVLSRPC expects to evaluate proposals and provide written notification of the results within 30 days of receipt of qualifications. If interviews are held, you will be contacted at least seven (7) days before the interview date.

## Limitations

This Request for Qualifications does not commit the UVLSRPC to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this Request for Qualifications, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

The UVLSRPC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of the Request for Qualifications, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this Request for Qualifications, if in the sole judgment of the UVLSRPC that it is in the best interest of the UVLSRPC to do so.