

FY2021-2023

Better Connections Grant Program

Grant Administration Toolkit for Local Officials

Program Website: <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/projects-programs/better-connections>



Vermont Agency of Transportation
Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
in collaboration with:
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
Vermont Department of Health



FY21 Better Connections Grant Administration Toolkit for Local Officials

Vermont Agency of Transportation
Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

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Key Program Dates

April 2, 2021: Signed Project Commitment Form due to AOT.

May 21, 2021: Grant Agreement due.

Summer 2021 – Fall 2022: Invoices and Progress Reports due at project milestones.

December 1, 2022: Project completion/all funds spent.

December 31, 2022: Final invoice, report documentation and products, and close out survey submitted electronically to Jackie.cassino@vermont.gov by 4:00PM.

Funding Reference Required in all Public Project Communications

All press releases, public communications or products related to the grant project must reference funding support from a Better Connections Grant awarded by the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development. This helps promote the program and ensure funding is available in the future.



A sample press release is included in the Appendices.

PROJECT START-UP

1

Review and sign the Project Commitment Form (PCF)

Awardees receive the Project Commitment Form via email with the official award notification. The Local Representative must review and sign this document within 10 business days. Submit the signed form electronically to Jackie Cassino at Jackie.Cassino@vermont.gov. Once the signed form is received, VTrans begins the grant agreement process.

2

Project Initiation Meeting

Once the PCF has been signed, awardees will be required to meet with BC Program Managers to discuss grant administration requirements and any refinements to the project's scope of work stemming from the selection committee review comments.

3

Finalize Project Steering Committee.

The community is responsible for establishing the people who will manage and complete the project. We advise the community to recruit a Project Steering Committee that represents a broad cross-section of the community and many different interest groups. The BC Program Manager will work with the community to determine the optimal mix of stakeholders and community members.

4

Prepare your Request for Proposals (RFP) to consultants.

BC Program Managers can assist with structure and content. Before issuing the RFP, BC Program Managers must review the draft RFP and the VTrans Grant Agreement must be in place. If the award includes Clean Water Funds, the appropriate Department of Environmental Conservation Basin Planner will also review and approve the draft RFP.



A sample request for proposals (RFP) template is included in the Appendices.

5

Review and sign the Grant Agreement by May 21, 2021

Within 30 days of submitting the necessary grant agreement paperwork (i.e. project commitment form, finalized scope of work), VTrans will send the Grant Agreement to the Local Representative via email. The Local Representative should review the terms of the agreement and confirm all information is correct. After reviewing, the Local Representative will sign the Grant Agreement via E-Sign.

Once the signed Grant Agreement is received by VTrans, you will then:

- Receive an email notification of the “Grant Awarded” status of your grant;
- Receive an electronic copy of your fully executed Grant Agreement; and
- Be enabled to begin the consultant procurement process.

6

Begin consultant procurement.

Once the Grant Agreement is signed, and BC Program Managers have reviewed the draft RFP, consultant procurement can begin. To satisfy federal and state requirements, use of an appropriate means of consultant solicitation and selection is required prior to selection of a consultant. If consultant assistance was used in preparation of the Program grant submission (i.e. in the development of the scope of work for the study), that consultant will not be eligible to conduct the work.



Guidance on where to advertise the RFP is located in the Appendices.

7

Prepare financial tracking.

Local/RPC Project Managers or designated grant administrators must maintain financial records throughout the progress of the grant project. They will need to:

1. Develop a summary ledger or similar document providing an overview of all grant-related financial transactions.
2. Dedicate a separate accounting number for the grant for tracking purposes, if possible.
3. Inform the Municipal Clerk/Treasurer of the grant award and provide the Clerk/Treasurer a copy of the invoice template.
4. Utilize the provided invoice template. If using Clean Water Funds, track this component of the billing separately.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

BC Program Managers Role

Planning and project start-up: BC program managers will assist the municipality throughout the project planning process. This includes, but is not limited to:

- review of the RFP;
- participating in the consultant procurement process, including serving on the consultant selection committee;
- cooperatively developing the final scope of work, schedule, budget, and contract for each individual project, in partnership with the municipal local project manager, local representative, and where appropriate, RPC representative; and
- assist in determining the optimal mix of stakeholders and community members to serve on the Project Steering Committee.

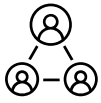
Project Work: The BC program manager, and/or assigned AOT Planning Coordinators, will actively work with the awarded communities during the life of the project, including:

- serving on the local steering committee;
- attending public outreach meetings;
- reviewing draft plans and work products;
- coordinating with relevant State subject matter experts early and often for technical assistance; and
- providing targeted assistance and resources to support the development and implementation of the local planning effort.

A Note on Required Technical Assistance

If the project area includes the State Highway Right-of-Way and/or other VTrans assets such as an active rail line or rail trail, a project initiation meeting with VTrans staff post consultant procurement and scope refinement is required. A Class 1 Town Highway Takeover analysis will be strongly encouraged where appropriate. For all projects, a technical review of the final plan draft and proposed alternatives by the appropriate State staff is required. This review should be incorporated into the Final Plan Appendices for future reference. The BC Program Managers will assist the LPM and consultant team in organizing these project components.

Implementation: BC program managers help ensure implementation is considered throughout the project, provide post-plan technical assistance, and connect the municipality to funding resources and partners to support plan implementation.



For those projects that are using Clean Water Funds, DEC Basin Planners will also provide technical assistance throughout the planning and implementation process.

Local/RPC Project Management Role

Local commitment and engaged project management are critical to the success of the project.

Manage Project Steering Committee: Successful project managers establish, define, and actively manage the Project Steering Committee, considering the following:

- Recruit a broad cross-section of the community and many different interest groups.
- Clearly communicate the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee to the members early in the project, including: how decisions will be made; how participation will be managed; what happens when there is disagreement; and what happens between meetings.

Collaborate with the State as a partner: The Local/RPC Project Manager should collaborate regularly, throughout the life of the project, with State subject matter experts for technical review.

Prepare for Implementation: The Local/RPC Project Manager, in collaboration with the Steering Committee and the consultant team, should keep implementation in mind throughout the life of the project, including:

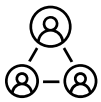
- Ensure that adequate time is devoted to the prioritization of plan strategies.
- Ensure that decision-makers (municipal governing body), local leadership in private and public sectors, and key stakeholders for implementation, such as Local Road Foremen, are briefed on the prioritized strategies. This can be accomplished through a briefing memo prepared by the consultant team and a presentation to the municipal governing body.
- Consider how the plan will be regularly revisited and who is responsible for ensuring this happens.
- Consider future funding opportunities (such as the Vermont Department of Health “Quick Build” grants for implementation) and plan for local match requirements with budgetary decision-makers, which could include the development of a regular budget item in the Municipal Budget for implementation of planning projects. BC Program Managers can assist with organizing a post-project “fundings” meeting.

General Project Management: Project management tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Serve as principal contact person for the project;
- Develop the Request for Proposals (RPF) in accordance with AOT procurement and advertisement standards (review the RFP template and RFP Advertisement Guidance documents online);
- Monitor and coordinate work, including managing the consultant and their work products;
- Inform local decision makers about the process regularly;
- Provide logistical arrangements for stakeholder meetings, public meetings and other engagements as necessary;
- Provide public notification for all local meetings and public events;
- Work with the Program grant managers and consultant to ensure the completion of all work is on time and within budget;
- Review consultant work products and payment requests, and; Prepare progress reports, financial invoicing/reimbursement requests, and close-out reports.



A project management role clarification tool is included in the Appendices.



Current BC Communities will have the opportunity mid-way through the project to apply for “Quick-Build” implementation funds- for projects directly related to their BC scope and that will have an impact on healthy eating and active living. These funds are made possible through the Department of Health.

RPC Project Management

If RPC project management services are used, is incumbent upon the municipality and the RPC to coordinate responsibility for all project management tasks. RPC technical assistance of projects funded through the Program are eligible to be reimbursed directly through BC Program, and/or through Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI) program funds. The BC Program does not fund municipal staff time.

Project Steering Committee Role

Purpose

The Project Steering Committee is a group of stakeholders who provide strategic direction for the project and support to the Project Manager. The role of the Project Steering Committee is not to control or manage the project or task at hand, but to contribute their expertise to determine the tasks required of the project, assist with community outreach and engagement, and to help pave the way for successful project implementation. Members of a Project Steering Committee should determine what must be done to ensure the success of the project, identify what challenges exist, and reveal what other business or external events need to be considered.

Members

The Steering Committee is generally made up of five to eight people, but it can be larger to obtain buy-in from all concerned areas of the community. Diversity is critical to a successful Steering Committee, and it should be comprised of local decision makers and practitioners (i.e. municipal leadership such as a Town Manager and/or Selectboard Members, local business owners, other key leaders in the community, and marginalized groups or those not typically represented in such a process).

Decision-making

The Project Steering Committee is typically a group of individuals who share a common purpose but whose opinions and agendas may not always be completely aligned. For this reason, clearly defining the decision-making process is critical. For example, oftentimes the final decision-making power falls to the Project Steering Committee chair when there is disagreement. It is essential that the chair be an individual with the actual authority and empowerment to make such decisions as may be necessary in the best interests of the community and the project.

Factors for success

A successful Project Steering Committee will increase the chance for project success and implementation post-planning process, by:

- closely aligning project goals to community goals and needs;
- ensuring diverse community representation and engagement;
- clearly communicating with the local governing body and the community at-large throughout the project lifecycle;
- considering project implementation early and often (i.e. taking advantage of funding opportunities; supporting the development of a regular budget item in the Municipal Budget for implementation of planning projects; etc.); and
- considering the sustainability of the group long after the planning process is completed.

INVOICING AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Invoicing and Progress Reports shall occur at project milestones, which will be determined during the consultant procurement process, and should be submitted as one document. Progress Reports shall be broken up by tasks and based on the final work plan. Invoices shall include:

- a. the time period billed for,
- b. the grant agreement number,
- c. the amount of grant funds requested - noting local match funds utilized for that billing cycle, and
- d. a copy of the consultant billing to the municipality and evidence of payment.



An Invoice Template, inclusive of the Progress Report can be found in the Appendices. If Clean Water Funds are utilized, these must be tracked separately.

Final Reimbursement

Invoices must show that grantees have spent or obligated all grant funds and match funds, if applicable, no later than December 1, 2022. Funds that are unused as of December 1, 2022, as well as money spent on expenditures that are ineligible or have not been documented, must be returned to VTrans. While grant activities must be completed by December 1, 2022, grantees have until the end of that month (12/31/2022) to assemble the final report.

Final reimbursement is made when the project and its deliverables, as detailed in the Grant Agreement, are complete, and the expenditures are budgeted and documented (copies of invoices and processed checks or a detailed transaction report), showing that the funds were spent for the purposes specified in the grant agreement.

PROJECT AMENDMENTS

Minor alterations to the work plan or the approved budget may be allowed but only upon written request and approval from VTrans. Substantial alterations are not allowed and the final product must remain the same. Projects that cannot be completed within the grant period under the terms of the grant agreement are closed out. The grant will cover eligible work completed and documented costs. However, ineligible or undocumented costs will not be funded and associated funds must be returned.

To request approval for changes, contact the BC program manager with a proposed amended work plan and budget. BC program managers will review the revised work plan and budget and will either approved your amendment, deny your amendment, or require modifications to your amendment. **VTrans approval is required to change a task or product in your Work Plan and Budget.** Major changes to the scope of work and final product are not allowed.

PROJECT CLOSE OUT

The final close-out report and the project reports/files must be submitted electronically via email no later than December 31, 2022. The following details the Project Close out process and requirements:

1. Make certain all outstanding grant expenses have been incurred by December 1, 2022.
2. Provide a copy of all studies or other products developed with grant funds, making sure that all the Grant Agreement requirements have been met.
3. Compile and submit the following financial documentation:
 - a. Summary ledger or similar document: Grant Administrators must maintain financial records throughout the progress of the grant project providing an overview of all your grant-related financial transactions.
 - b. All receipts and invoices for grant expenditures showing grant work was completed within the grant period, including any work covered by match funds;
 - c. Copies of cancelled checks OR a detailed transactions report, certified by the Treasurer, including date/recipient/check # and amount showing that payments were made for all project expenses (including evidence of match payments, if applicable).
4. Complete the program close out survey, to be emailed to the Local Representative by the BC Program Managers.

APPENDIX

Better Connections Project Commitment Form

This Project Commitment Form represents a formal agreement between the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) and {ENTER MUNICIPALITY NAME} for the information below, consistent with the application submitted by {ENTER MUNICIPALITY NAME} to AOT for assistance through the Better Connections Program. We understand that a copy of this form will be appended to the grant agreement.

1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	
Project Manager:	
Manager Email:	
Manager Phone:	

2. MATCH AGREEMENT

- a. We acknowledge that we are responsible for providing the local share of the project funding, in the amount of {ENTER LOCAL SHARE CASH MATCH AMOUNT} and have submitted a resolution that confirms our local match commitment.

3. GENERAL TIMELINE

- a. We are ready to move forward with this project and will sign and submit the grant agreement by [DATE].
- b. We will begin the procurement process for the project consultant by [DATE].
 - i. The grantee shall obtain a detailed proposed schedule from the project consultant, which indicates the time duration for key steps which advance the project within 1 month of the consultant contract being executed. Better Connections (BC) Program Managers will review and verify that adequate timeframes are included for reviews of draft deliverables and required project milestones. We agree to work with BC Program Managers to develop a mutually-agreeable initial baseline project schedule, against which project progress will be evaluated.

4. REPORTING AND INVOICES

- a. We will submit quarterly reports that detail project progress, as compared to the baseline schedule. We will notify the BC Program Managers of any proposed changes to the baseline schedule in a timely manner. These will be discussed and reviewed. Impacts to key milestones resulting from an approved schedule change will be identified and discussed.
- b. Project invoices requesting reimbursement for eligible expenses will be submitted at project milestones.

X _____

Authorized municipal official/Local Project Manager (Name and Signature)

Date

Better Connections Project Management Role Chart

Project Management Task	Local Representative	RPC
Serve as principal contact person for the project		
Develop the Request for Proposals (RPF) in accordance with AOT procurement and advertisement standards (see Appendices for guidance)		
Manage and coordinate consultant work		
Inform local decision makers and elected officials about project milestones in a timely manner		
Make logistical arrangements for stakeholder meetings, public meetings, and other engagements as necessary		
Provide public notification for all local meetings and public events		
Work with the state Program grant managers and consultant to ensure the completion of all work is on time and within budget		
Coordinate with BC Program Managers to arrange state agency review of the draft plan in progress		
Review consultant work produces and payment requests		
Prepare progress reports, match reports, close-out reports, and reimbursement requests		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		

Better Connections Sample Local Press Release

Use applicable information below to populate the sample:

- The Town of Bethel will create an action plan to improve accessibility and safety in the village, strengthen connections to their recreational assets, and leverage economic opportunities to revitalize their village center. (Nicole Cyr, Town of Bethel Energy Committee, ncyr@vtc.edu)
- The Town of Lyndon will use a complete streets approach in developing a village master plan to improve the safety, walkability, and vibrancy of their historic commercial center. (Annie McLean, NVDA, amclean@nvda.net)
- The Town of Poultney will create a master plan to better connect the downtown to their recreational centers by enhancing the streetscape and improving the economic vitality of the downtown. (Paul Donaldson, Town of Poultney, poultneymanager@comcast.net)

[Town name] awarded [grant amount \$] in state planning funds

[Date]

[Contact]

[Town name], Vt. – The Agency of Transportation (AOT) and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) awarded [grant amount \$] to [Town Name] in Better Connections Grant funds to [\[insert your project name/description\]](#). The Better Connections Grant Program seeks to help cities and towns build stronger communities that are more livable and walkable.

[\[“Insert quote from local leader or planning commission describing the project and why it matters to the community”.\]](#) [Town Name] will have a year and a half to complete this project.

“Vermont’s downtowns and village centers are economic drivers and enhance Vermont’s quality of life, as well as our brand,” said Governor Phil Scott. “As we rebuild from the pandemic, investments like this will help support projects that strengthen and improve local economies and transportation connections for Vermonters.”

“This interagency collaboration allows communities to plan and grow in a way that integrates transportation and land-use planning with economic development decision-making,” said Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn.

“This program’s focus on community engagement empowers local leaders to plan transportation investments that are more equitable to all users, improve public health, revitalize communities, and clean our waters,” said Housing and Community Development Commissioner Josh Hanford.

The Program is led by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) and the Vermont Agency of Community Development (ACCD) in collaboration with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and the Vermont Department of Health (VDH). Municipalities bi-annually compete for approximately \$260,000 in projects funds. For a complete list of current and past projects, visit the [program’s story map](#).

For more information, visit the [Better Connections website](#).

###

Better Connections Sample Request for Proposals (RFP)

A Request for Proposals (RFP) is a common method used to solicit consultants for a project which requires respondents to describe their approach to the project with a detailed scope of services, schedule, and budget as part of their initial submission. The municipality and selection committee will review and compare proposals and select the best candidate using an established evaluation and selection process. The below template can be used as a guide in developing your local RFP.

Items in red are intended to be informational only and should be replaced and/or deleted before the RFP is finalized.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

[Project Name]

[Type of Services]

[Municipality Name] Vermont

[DATE RFP ISSUED]

[DATE RFP DUE]

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Summary

[Provide a concise summary of the overall project and the consultant services sought in the Request for Proposals. The project summary can draw from the Better Connections Grant Application. Customize and evolve as needed.]

Context and Background

[Describe the background for the project and the context in your community. Include any maps and plans that would help explain the context and reference any documents available online that can provide supporting information.]

Detailed Project Work Plan

[In this section the municipality should provide the detailed work plan for the project broken down by task. The work plan should outline the general process, goals and structure of the project, the desired work products, engagement, schedule, budget, and deliverables. The project work plan can draw from the Better Connections Grant Application. Project implementation should be a key consideration of the consultant. Customize and evolve as needed]

Project Funding

A total of *[Enter Total Project Amount]* is available for consultant services from the Better

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Submission Requirements

All responses to the RFP shall include the following information: *[customize and alter as needed]*

1. **Cover Letter** - A cover letter of interest and general description of recommended approaches, scope of work, processes, and deliverables for the project.
2. **Scope of Work** – Provide a detailed scope of work based on the work plan provided in the RFP for the project broken down by task. Describe the project approach and overview of engagement. The consultant may also propose additional supplemental items to the scope of work. While the work plan in the RFP serves to illustrate a general process and structure for creating the plan, we are very much open to and interested in hearing any new/creative approaches to this type of plan and our approach.
3. **Proposed Schedule** – Provide a schedule that includes completion of work task and deliverables, as well as key meetings, and complies with timeline given in the RFP.
4. **Project Budget** – Provide a detailed budget broken down by task and team member. Include your overhead and hourly rates for the individuals involved. Also, provide an estimated budget with staff hours for completing each phase of the proposed scope of work.
5. **Qualifications and Staffing** – Provide a qualifications profile of the lead consultant and sub-consultants, including indication of the lead consultant, the role of each consultant on the team with organizational staffing chart and percentage of time devoted to the project by each consultant. Also provide detailed information on each consultant, including the name of the firm, year established, including a description of relevant experience on similar projects for each firm and detailed resume listing of their individual work experience in this role on similar projects;
6. **References** - A minimum of three (3) professional references for whom a similar project has been completed within the last five (5) years.
7. **Page Limit** - The proposal, encompassing items 1-6 above, shall not exceed 20 double-sided pages (40 total pages) including cover letter, table of contents and resumes.

All information submitted becomes property of the *[municipality name]* upon submission. The municipality *[municipality name]* reserves the right to issue supplemental information or guidelines relating to the RFP as well as make modifications to the RFP or withdraw the RFP. Once submitted, the consultant team (including specific staff assigned to the project) may not be changed without written notice to and consent of *[municipality name]*. The cost of preparing, submitting, and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the consultant. The *[municipality*

name] 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 the RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the *[municipality name]*. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the *[municipality name]* to award a contract. *[feel free to customize and alter as needed]*

Submission Requirements:

Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy (PDF) and *[enter number (#)]* printed copies of the submittal by *[Enter Date]* to:

Municipality/Local Project Manager Contact Information

[Municipality Name]

[Local Project Manager's Name]

[Mailing Address]

[Phone]

[Email]

Please expect a confirmation email upon the *[municipality name]* receipt of your proposal. If you have any questions about this project or the RFP, please address them via email to *[local project manager]*. We will respond to all questions in writing within *[enter #]* days. Both the question and response will be shared with the other consultants.

RFP Schedule Summary:

Requests for Proposals due *[enter date]*.

Interviews on *[optional, enter date]*.

Consultant selection by *[enter date]*.

Project Work to begin *[enter date]*.

Complete project on or by *[enter date]*.

Proposal Selection *[customize and evolve as needed]* Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from *[municipality, RPC, VTrans, and ACCD representatives]*. A short-list of consultants may be selected for interviews. *[Optional – only if interview is desired by the municipality]*

Proposal Evaluation *[customize and evolve as needed]*

Respondents will be evaluated according to the following factors:

1. Consultant Qualifications with Similar Projects and the Project Area - 25%
2. Scope of work, methodology, public engagement, and scheduling - 35%
3. Overall Quality, Completeness and Clarity in the Proposal - 25%
4. Consultant Costs and Fee Schedule – 15%

Interview Framework *[Optional, only if interview is desired by municipality]*

The *[municipality name]* reserves the right to select the top two to three highly scored consultants and invite them for an interview prior to awarding the contract. In this process, the selection committee may ask the respondents to give an oral presentation of their respective proposals. The purpose of this oral presentation is to provide an in-depth analysis of certain qualifications, experience in performing similar services, and an opportunity for the consultant to clarify or elaborate on their qualifications without restating the proposal. The interview and presentation is merely to present facts and explanation to the review committee and allow the selection committee to ask targeted questions of the consultant team. The interview and presentation, if deemed necessary by the review committee, will be held at the *[meeting location]* in *[municipality]* Vermont. The day and time will be notified to the respondents at least *[#]* week prior to the meeting. Each interview will last *[number]* minutes, and will be comprised of a presentation and Q&A. The interviews will be conducted by a selection committee comprised of representatives from *[municipality, RPC, VTrans, and ACCD representatives]*. All costs and expenses incurred in traveling for the purpose of interview and presentation shall be the responsibility of the consultant.

Final Consultant Selection *[customize and evolve as needed]*

Following the selection process, one team will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of work with specified deliverables may be modified through negotiation of the final contract. The final project team may also be modified through negotiation of the final contract. Any expenses resulting from the interview and proposal process will be the sole responsibility of the consultant.

Contract Requirements *[customize and evolve as needed]*

The *[municipality name]* will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by the municipality's legal counsel. The contract shall not start until the successful applicant enters into a written contract with the municipality. The *[municipality name]* is not liable for any cost incurred by consultant prior to issuance of a contract. The consultant and subcontractors must comply with all State and Federal covenants required by virtue of the funding source or contained or referenced in all the municipality's subcontracts including, but not limited to the following provisions:

- Insurance Coverage
- Indemnification
- Workers Compensation
- Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) Obligation
- Audit and Record Retention
- Lobbying restrictions

Mapping and Graphic Standards *[customize and evolve as needed]*

The planning project may have mapping to inventory, assess, and communicate geographic concepts. Consultants will develop data layers in GIS. Data should be in Vermont State Plane coordinates, meters NAD 1983. These data layers can be developed from existing data layers and/or augmented with additional engineering work. Any artistic renderings or other graphical illustrations should be provided in pdf or jpeg file format along with native editable file formats in Adobe Illustrator/Photoshop and InDesign format. Upon completion, the data will be transmitted in ESRI shapefiles format and associated mapping in Adobe Acrobat formats to the municipality.

Better Connections Request for Proposals (RFP) Advertisement Guidance

Municipalities must publicize their RFP widely through various media outlets and websites to reach as many qualified professional consultants working in Vermont and New England as possible. ACCD maintains a Consultant Directory that can be used to contact consultants directly, but the list is not comprehensive so other avenues should be pursued as well.

Free RFP advertisement checklist:

- [VT Business Registry and Bid System](http://www.vermontbidsystem.com/) - Post a RFP at www.vermontbidsystem.com/
- [Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association RFP Listing](http://necapa.org/blog/category/jobrfp-listings/) - To post a RFP, send a WORD document to necapa.pio@gmail.com
necapa.org/blog/category/jobrfp-listings/
- [Vermont Planners Association \(VPA\)](http://www.vermontplanners.org/) - Email Richard.amore@vermont.gov to post your municipality's RFP to the VPA list serve. www.vermontplanners.org/
- [New York Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association](mailto:nyupstate.apa@gmail.com) – To submit a RFP, email nyupstate.apa@gmail.com.
- [Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association](http://www.ccapa.org/jobs-information/rfp-rfq/) – To submit a RFP, email employment@ccapa.org. www.ccapa.org/jobs-information/rfp-rfq/
- [American Planning Association \(APA\)](http://www.planning.org/consultants/) – Post a RFP at www.planning.org/consultants/
- [American Society of Landscape Architects \(ASLA\)](http://www.asla.org/SubmitEvent.aspx) –Post a RFP at www.asla.org/SubmitEvent.aspx

Additional paid RFP advertisement options:

- [Local and Regional Newspaper in Vermont and surrounding New England States](http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/usstate/usvermon.htm) – a listing of newspapers in Vermont. www.onlinenewspapers.com/usstate/usvermon.htm
- [Planetizen](http://www.planetizen.com/announce/submit) – a national public-interest information exchange for the community planning and design community. www.planetizen.com/announce/submit
- [Congress for New Urbanism \(CNU\)](http://www.cnu.org/resources/jobs-rfps) – national nonprofit that helps create vibrant, walkable cities, towns, and neighborhoods. www.cnu.org/resources/jobs-rfps

Better Connections Sample Invoice and Progress Report

[DATE]

Jackie Cassino
Better Connections Program Manager
Vermont Agency of Transportation
Barre City Place, 219 N. Main Street Barre, VT 05641

RE: Better Connections Grant Agreement- [GRANT NUMBER]

Dear Jackie,

Enclosed please find Invoice #[X] for services rendered [DATES] for the Strong Communities Better Connections Grant Program in the amount due of [TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTING FROM AGENCY]. We certify that our match portion for this invoice, in the amount of [CASH MATCH AMOUNT], does not include any sources of federal dollars. The quarterly report for the same period is enclosed for your review and approval.

By signing this report, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the report is true, complete, and accurate, and the expenditures, disbursements, and cash receipts are for the purposes and objectives set forth in the terms and conditions of the Federal award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties for fraud, false statements, false claims, or otherwise. (U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1001 and Title 31, Sections 3729-3730 and 3801-3812).

Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[LOCAL PROJECT MANAGER]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]

PROJECT BILLING SUMMARY
SERVICES FROM [DATES INVOICE REFLECTS]

Billing Phase	Contract Amount	Percent Complete	Total Invoice to Date	Previously Billed	Due this Invoice
Task 1: Project Kick off Meeting					
Task 2: Existing Conditions Assessment					
Task 3: Public Meeting Round 1					
Task 4: Alternative Scenarios & Prioritization					
Task 5: Public Meeting Round 2					
Task 6: Final Recommendations & Report					
Total Fees					

Reimbursable Expenses			
[DATE]	[STAFF]	[DESCRIPTION]	[AMOUNT]
Total Reimbursable			
TOTAL THIS INVOICE			

PROGRESS REPORT MEMO

[PROJECT NAME]

[GRANT NUMBER]

Our progress report follows on the above referenced project for the period ending [DATE].

TASK 1. PROJECT KICK OFF MEETING

- 100% complete

TASK 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

- 95% complete
- Draft document has been delivered
- TO DO: update based on steering committee and public input

TASK 3. PUBLIC MEETING 1

- 0% complete
- TO DO: [BASED ON IDENTIFIED SUBTASKS & DELIVERABLES]

TASK 4. ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS & PRIORITIZATION

- 0% complete
- TO DO: [BASED ON IDENTIFIED SUBTASKS & DELIVERABLES]

TASK 5. PUBLIC MEETING 2

- 0% complete
- TO DO: [BASED ON IDENTIFIED SUBTASKS & DELIVERABLES]

TASK 6. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORT

- 0% complete
- TO DO: [BASED ON IDENTIFIED SUBTASKS & DELIVERABLES]

ATTACHMENTS

[ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION FOR REIMBURSEABLES SUCH AS RECEIPTS, CAR RENTAL FORMS, ETC.]