

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consulting Services | Regional Accessibility Plan
P2021-057

October 7, 2021



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For the Creation of a Regional Accessibility Plan for the Truro-Colchester Region

1. Organization

1. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is organized into the following 9 parts:

Parts

- Part 1: Organization
- Part 2: Introduction
- Part 3: Objectives
- Part 4: Proposal Content and Submission Requirements
- Part 5: General Conditions
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- Part 8: Additional Information
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2. This Request for Proposal ("RFP") document and any addenda may be obtained from the Nova Scotia Provincial Tender Site: <https://procurement.novascotia.ca/ns-tenders.aspx>

2. Introduction

2.1 Services Required

The Regional Accessibility Committee (The Committee) is comprised of citizen and elected officials representing the Town of Truro, Municipality of Colchester, Town of Stewiacke as well as the Villages of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche (the Participating Public Sector Bodies). The Committee requires the services of a qualified consulting firm or consulting team to undertake a process that will produce a Regional Accessibility Plan for the Region in a manner prescribed by the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act (2017).

2.2 Project Context

The Truro-Colchester Region is an area rich in historical, cultural, economic and social diversity. With a population in excess of 45,000 people, the Region is home to the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, the Nova Scotia Community College, numerous businesses and industries and is supported by strong agricultural, forestry, mining, manufacturing and distribution sectors. The Region is also fortunate to have a strong inter-jurisdictional spirit, enabling significant infrastructure and amenity investments that have benefited dozens of communities within its boundaries.

In June 2021, a Regional Accessibility Committee was formally ratified by the Councils and Commissions of Truro, Colchester, Stewiacke, Bible Hill and Tatamagouche which is mandated to:

- Provide advice to the participating public sector bodies on identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to access faced by individuals living with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiative and facilities;
- Gather information on best practices pertaining to accessibility needs of citizens, living, working and visiting the Region;
- Provide a forum to hear and consider the needs of any individual, organization, or resident group in terms of accessibility;
- Educate citizens of the Region on the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act and local initiatives that address accessibility issues and opportunities; and
- Act on any matters that are delegated by statute or by Council/Commission which are not limited to but including the preparation of an Accessibility Plan.

The Regional Accessibility Committee is comprised of 11 voting members including:

- 6 citizen representatives who are disabled or represent a disability group;
- 5 elected officials from each of the Participating Public Sector Bodies; and,
- 5 non-voting staff members from each of the Participating Public Sector Bodies who act in a resource capacity to the Committee.

2.3 Project Description

The Regional Accessibility Committee wish to create an Accessibility Plan that identifies constraints and opportunities aimed to improve accessibility within the Region. For the purposes of this study, a disability is a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment including an episodic disability that, interaction with a barrier hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society (Nova scotia Accessibility Act, SNS, 2017, c.2). The Committee recognizes accessibility is a human right and have been mandated by the Act to become accessible by 2030 by removing barriers that restrict people from fully participating in society. To this end, the Committee is committed to establishing a long-lasting living environment that is inclusive and representative of the full range of human experience, across all public and private sectors and within each of the communities it represents.

The "Accessibility Planning Toolkit for Municipalities (2019)" was created by the Province of Nova Scotia to assist in the creation of accessibility plans. It highlights several key focus areas that should be addressed by the Consulting Team through the planning process:

- *Awareness*: Promoting awareness throughout the Municipality including the Towns and Villages about the importance of accessibility.
- *Goods and Services*: Ensuring people with a disability have equitable access to the goods and services provided by the Municipality, Towns and Villages.
- *Information and Communication*: Ensuring all people can receive, understand, and share information provided by the Municipality, Towns and Villages.
- *Transportation*: Making it easier for everyone to get where they need to go throughout the Municipality, Towns, and villages.
- *Employment*: Making the Municipality, Towns and Villages accessible workplaces and supporting people with disabilities in finding and maintaining meaningful employment.
- *Built Environment*: Making all buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces accessible to all.

The proposal must include a detailed description of how the Consulting Team intends to produce a 10-to-15-year Accessibility Plan which addresses the mandatory requirements and accessibility standards from the Province.

2.4 Project Costs

A project budget and corresponding level of effort for the consulting services required shall not exceed \$25,000 plus HST. Should respondents to this RFP feel this budget requires an adjustment, an explanation of any changes should be outlined and justified in the Proposal.

3. Objectives

3.1 Consultant Qualifications

The Regional Accessibility Committee seeks a qualified Consultant or Consulting Team with demonstrated experience in accessibility planning with a proven commitment to accessibility, diversity, equity and inclusion of all people regardless of ability, race, culture, gender / sexual identity and

expression, family status, religion and age. The Proponent will undertake research and stakeholder engagement initiatives as a means of developing a comprehensive framework that will guide the development of accessibility initiatives and establish priorities. Additionally, a robust knowledge of accessibility issues, best practices, legislative requirements, social equity and planning processes is essential.

3.2 Consultant Responsibilities

The Consultant's primary responsibility will be to complete a detailed and comprehensive accessibility plan that will lay a foundation from which improved accessibility initiatives can be identified and prioritized. To this end, the Consultant's scope of work will include but not be limited to the following tasks:

1. Project Management, Coordination & Meetings

Manage and coordinate project team. Participate in project startup meeting and in ongoing coordination meetings and reviews as required. The Committee will assist in arranging for meetings and coordinating schedules of the Consultant Team and stakeholders. The successful proponent will be required to work in close coordination with the Regional Accessibility Committee in preparing and delivering a cost-effective Regional Accessibility Plan.

2. Interviews & Consultations with Committee Members, Stakeholders & Specialists

Undertake interviews with key stakeholder groups and individuals to help establish a knowledge base for the project, specifically related to local accessibility issues, standards and best practices as well as identifying barriers and opportunities for community-wide equity.

3. Background Research & Review of Resources

Undertake research and review of relevant resources and the built environment that will inform opportunities and challenges related to achieving full accessibility.

4. Stakeholder Engagement, Workshops and Interviews

Deliver facilitated workshops and/or other engagement initiatives with community stakeholder groups to explore and develop a deeper understanding of lived experiences, perspectives, ideas, interventions, and unique challenges faced by people experiencing disabilities, support organizations, and generally citizens interested or associated with efforts to improve community accessibility. Interview subject matter experts and other identified stakeholders as required to assist in developing planning recommendations.

5. Develop an Accessibility Plan

Develop a 10-to-15-year plan that, at a minimum, is comprised of the following components:

- a) General
 - i) A statement of the Plan's goals and objectives;
 - ii) Scalable, cost effective and interim solutions that address urgent accessibility needs;
 - iii) Phasing and recommendations for future actions and implementation steps.
 - iv) Methods, timelines and processes to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan.
- b) Policies, Programs and Services:
 - i) Review and recommend new, or changes to bylaws, policies, programs, practices and services.
 - ii) Identify methods by which the participating public bodies will identify, remove and prevent barriers in such areas moving forward.
 - iii) Prioritize recommended actions and assign timelines based on urgency.

- c) Public Capital Assets:
 - i) Prioritize a list of capital projects outlining the required modifications to ensure accessibility standards are met in the built environment owned by each of the participating public sector bodies;
 - ii) Determine relative timelines for such improvements over a 5-to-10-year span for each capital asset;
 - iii) The cost of capital projects is not required under this assessment.

6. Presentations

Present an interim report on draft findings and recommendations to the Committee and at approximately the two-thirds completion point of the study. One final presentation to the Committee and/or the participating public sector bodies shall also be provided for upon completion of the final report and recommendations.

7. Documentation

Prepare one Draft, and one Final Report document for submittal to and review by the Committee at agreed-upon stages. Costs for reproductions of documents should be included in expense estimates, independent of professional fees. Five (5) copies of the reports (draft and final) are to be included as well as a digital PDF copy.

3.3 Consultant's Fees

The proposal shall include a schedule of fees and expenses detailing the hourly rates for project team members, an estimate of the amount of time each member will devote to the project and the resulting cost excluding HST, all subtotaled by task. A breakdown of estimated disbursements and expenses excluding HST shall similarly be included. Fees and expenses for meetings with the Committee and stakeholders shall be included in the proposed total cost.

The Consultant may also wish to propose a payment schedule for work components or milestones. Monthly progress payments, less a ten percent (10%) holdback on the value of the work, may be disbursed by the Town of Truro in accordance with its policies and practices as outlined in Section 5.9.

3.4 Project Schedule

Consultants shall include a detailed schedule, including proposed milestone dates, meeting dates, and deliverable dates. While the anticipated milestone dates follow, the Consultant may recommend changes that better serve outcomes of the project:

Request for Proposal Issued	October 7, 2021
Deadline for Questions from Proponents	October 21, 2021
Submission of Proposals	October 28, 2021
Award of Contract	November 5, 2021
Start -up Meeting	November 15, 2021
Stakeholder Engagement	December 15, 2021
Draft Report	February 14, 2022
Final Report	March 14, 2022

4. Proposal Content and Submission Requirements

4.1 Proposal Content

Proposals shall contain the following information:

1. A brief description of the Consultant's understanding of the project requirements.

2. Project methodology including an itemized list of services, tasks, and tasks to be provided by the Consultant to accomplish the requirements in the scope of work.
3. A statement of any perceived challenges and risks this project may present and how the Consultant intends to mitigate those as part of their process.
4. Brief description of the Consultant's organization (corporate profile) and a list of similar recent projects carried out by the Consultant together with references.
5. Resumes of key personnel proposed to be deployed for the project, as well as an organizational chart for the Consulting Team showing lines of responsibility and roles.
6. Profile and key personnel of sub-contractors/consultants proposed to be employed for the completion of the project and the scope of work that would be sub-contracted out to them. Sub-Consultants shall be subject to the approval of the Committee.
7. A minimum of three recently completed and relevant project examples.
8. A Gantt Chart showing the project time schedule. Please include a minimum of 1 week for each client review and acceptance wherever the time schedule requires.
9. Consultant's fee and cost breakdown as referenced in the Work Description.

4.2 Proposal Submission

1. All proposals must be received in their entirety at, or before 3pm (AST), October 28th, 2021. Submissions shall be clearly marked 'Regional Accessibility Plan RFP' on the outside of a sealed envelope. Proponents shall submit 3 paper copies and 1 digital (PDF on a USB key). The proposal must be signed by an appropriate authorized official of the firm submitting the proposal. Prices are to be quoted in Canadian Dollars and exclusive of HST.
2. Proposals must be delivered by mail, courier, or hand delivered to:
Edwina Renaux
Purchasing Officer
Town of Truro - Finance Office
695 Prince Street
Truro, NS
B2N 1G5
3. Late proposals will not be accepted and will be returned unopened.
4. Faxed or e-mailed proposals will not be accepted.
5. Incomplete proposals may be rejected.
6. The successful proponent will be required to work in close coordination with Committee and a designated Project Coordinator in preparing and delivering a cost-effective Regional Accessibility Plan.
7. All proposals are to be submitted in accordance with the RFP
8. Proponents will be advised of the results after the Contract has been awarded.

4.3 Proposal Acceptance

1. The Committee reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. The Committee reserves the right to accept a proposal that is not the lowest price or to accept any proposal which it may consider to be in its best interests. The Committee reserves the right to waive formality, informality or technicality with the acceptance of proposals for this work. Any proposal not supported by the information requested in this RFP may be rejected. The Committee reserves

the right to negotiate with any Consultant who has submitted a proposal or with other parties as deemed in the best interest of the Committee. The Consultant whose proposal is accepted by the Committee is hereafter referred to as the "Accepted Consultant."

2. This Request for Proposals is not to be construed as an offer. The Committee reserves the right to not proceed with any or all aspects of this work without compensation for expenses to Consultants.

4.4 Proposal Validity

Proposals shall be valid for acceptance for a period of sixty (60) days from the closing date or such additional time as may be mutually agreed upon in writing.

4.5 Fees, Expenses and Disbursements

The Committee wishes to firmly establish the total cost of the consulting work prior to entering into a Contract. The Committee requires that Consultants supply a detailed estimate of the total cost including all fees, expenses and disbursements. Actual costs that exceed the estimated total cost without prior written approval of the Municipality will not be paid.

5. General Conditions

5.1 Schedule and Cost

The Consultant shall contact the Committee's designated Project Coordinator biweekly to provide an update on the progress of the work. A copy of the updated Contract Schedule indicating progress to date shall be produced for the Committee monthly or more frequently, if requested.

The Consultant shall promptly advise the Town's Purchasing Officer of any differences or expected changes from the cost and schedule included in their proposal. No expenditures beyond the agreed amount will be permitted without prior written approval by the Committee. If the Accepted Consultant is of the opinion that tasks being requested are outside the scope of the contract, they must immediately advise the Town's Purchasing Officer in writing within five (5) working days of the request being made for costs associated therewith to be considered an additional expense.

5.2 Personnel

The Consultant is advised that the Committee expects the personnel listed in the proposal to perform the work indicated and written permission must be obtained before changing any member of the work team. In the case of personnel being changed, the Committee requires that the new personnel being assigned have a similar length and breadth of experience relevant to this project as the personnel being replaced and otherwise be acceptable to the Committee.

5.3 Sub-consultants

The Consultant is advised that the listed sub-consultants/sub-contractors and their work scope cannot be changed without the written permission of the Committee. Failure to comply with this provision will be considered a breach of contract and may result in termination of the Contract.

5.4 Confidentiality

Information provided by the Committee is to be treated as confidential and is not to be disclosed to any third party without the written permission of the Committee except as necessary to perform the Contract.

5.5 Ownership of Information

The Consultant is advised that all information produced in the course of this Contract including but not limited to models, design notes, criteria, graphs, figures, maps, specifications and drawings, is to be considered the property of the Committee and Participating Public Sector Bodies and

a reproducible copy and an electronic copy of the final design criteria, notes, models, reports, specifications and drawings shall be turned over to the Committee upon completion. This includes a softcopy of all reports in PDF format.

5.6 Consultant's Responsibility

The Consultant shall indemnify and save harmless the Committee and Participating Public Sector Bodies, its officers and employees from and against all claims, demands, losses, damages and costs of any kind based upon injury or death of a person or damage to or loss of property arising from any willful or negligent act, omission or error on the part of the Accepted Consultant or their servants in carrying out this Contract.

5.7 Insurance

The Consultant shall, without limiting its obligations or liabilities, maintain commercial general liability insurance coverage to a minimum of \$1,000,000, and professional liability (errors and omissions) insurance coverage to a minimum of \$1,000,000, and shall include proof of coverage and level of coverage in their proposal submission.

5.8 Regulations

The Consultant shall comply with all existing Federal, Provincial and Municipal regulations, guidelines and standards and other authorities having jurisdiction.

5.9 Payments

Payments shall be based on invoices submitted monthly by the Consultant and supported in such detail as the Town's Purchasing Officer may request. Invoices shall indicate individual person hours, rate and extended amount; individual mileage, rate and extended amount; and expenses by category.

Payment will be made on a net thirty (30) days basis from receipt of invoice provided that the Town's Purchasing Officer has approved the work that is being billed. Incomplete or unsatisfactory work will result in reduced compensation to the Consultant as deemed appropriate by the Town's Purchasing Officer. No payment made under this Contract shall constitute acceptance of work or products that are not in accordance with the requirements of the Contract.

5.10 Proponents qualifications

- a) No contract will be awarded except to responsible proponents capable of providing the Services.
- b) Proponents must be primarily engaged in providing the Services as outlined in this RFP.
- c) Proponents must have a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter in this RFP. Such understanding and previous experience in all aspects of similar projects are essential criteria in the qualifying process. The Committee reserves the right to consider past performance on Municipal contracts in the evaluation of a proponent's qualifications.
- d) Proponents must have a proven record of having provided similar services. The Committee reserves the right to check all client contacts furnished and to consider the responses received in evaluating proposals.
- e) Proponents must use personnel and management knowledgeable in their areas of expertise. The Committee reserves the right to perform investigations as may be deemed necessary to ensure that competent persons will be used in the performance of the Services.

5.11 Purchasing Policy

This RFP is subject to the Town's Standard Terms and Conditions - Goods and Services: <https://www.truro.ca/cs/463-purchasing-policy-final-2016/file.html> and the Town's Purchasing Policy.

6. Evaluation of Submissions

6.1 Proposal Evaluation

Responses to this "Request for Proposals" will be reviewed by the Regional Accessibility Committee and other specialists as appropriate. All proposals must comply with all requirements outlined in this document and all submissions will be evaluated and ranked against the following criteria and associated weights.

45% Consulting Team Information & Experience

- team composition and representation by all necessary disciplines of the primary consultant and sub-consultants assigned to the project;
- relevant creative design experience in completing assignments of similar scope and complexity;
- experience of the proponent and key team members with similar projects and the range of specified services;
- completeness of consulting team and demonstrated experience / expertise of all individual members;
- proposed organizational structure and coordination of the individual team members including reporting relationships, identification of lead members, and communications;
- availability of back-up personnel and/or provision to access specialized skills;
- results of reference checks for previous projects;

25% Project Approach, Methodology & Management

- approach to the scope of the creative and technical services required;
- understanding of project requirements;
- management of project and suitability of the proposed work plan, including work program components, Gantt chart of time schedule and contribution matrix of all personnel showing anticipated hours of involvement together with individual rates;
- compliance with the Work Description outlined in Section 2;
- ability to meet the project timelines;

25% Proposed costs, value for money and acceptance of terms and conditions

- Fees for services required and any contingencies if applicable;
- Value for money represented by the proposed level of effort and other considerations regarding cost effective solutions.

5% Proposal Quality

- Quality and completeness of submission.

To assist in the review and evaluation process of submissions received under this RFP, the Committee may wish to conduct interviews of the proponents as a means of developing a better understanding of the proponent's experience and approach to the scope of services required. Mutually convenient times will be arranged (if required) shortly after the Committee has had an opportunity to review the submissions to this RFP.

It will be understood that the degree to which a proposal meets the project requirements by means of the proposed point score system will be the sole judgment of the Committee.

7. Inquiries

All questions related to this Request for Proposal shall be submitted in writing to the attention of:

Edwina Renaux
Purchasing Officer, Town of Truro
Email: erenaux@truro.ca

Additional information or clarification can be obtained by emailing the Purchasing Officer at erenaux@truro.ca. Questions will be answered in the form of an addendum and posted on the Provincial Government Web Portal. It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure any questions emailed have been received by the Purchasing Officer. It will be the responsibility of the Proponent to contact the Purchasing Department prior to submitting a Proposal to ascertain if any Addenda have been issued, to obtain the Addenda and to return executed Addenda with the Proposal.

Any proponent finding any discrepancy in or omission from this RFP, in doubt as to the meaning of any provision(s) herein, or feeling that the RFP is discriminatory, shall notify the Town of Truro Procurement Office in writing within 10 (10) days of the scheduled opening of proposals. Inquiries and exceptions taken by proponents in no way constitute a change the RFP; however any interpretations given by the Town of Truro Procurement Office and any changes made to the RFP will be reflected in addenda duly issued by the Town of Truro Procurement Office.

The Participating Public Sector Bodies will assume no responsibility or liability for oral instructions or suggestions. All official correspondence in regard to the RFP should be directed to the Town of Truro Procurement Office.

8. Additional Information

The following is a list of documents and materials the Committee considers necessary to be reviewed and/or utilized by the Consultant to undertake this work. A digital copy of these documents will be provided upon request by the Proponent through Microsoft Office OneDrive.

- a) The Accessibility Planning Toolkit for Municipalities (Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate)
- b) Access by Design 2030 (Province of Nova Scotia)
- c) Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Plan 2018 - 2021
- d) Wolfville: Access by Design, an Accessibility Plan for 2019 - 2022
- e) Central Colchester Municipal Planning Strategy (2002)
- f) Village of Tatamagouche Municipal Planning Strategy (2001)
- g) Stewiacke Municipal Planning Strategy
- h) Town of Truro Municipal Planning Strategy
- i) Municipality of Colchester Active Transportation Strategy 2017

9. Other Terms & Conditions

9.1 RFP - No Legal Obligation

This is a Request for Proposals and not a tender. There shall be no legal obligations on the part of the Participating Public Sector Bodies to any proponent arising from this RFP, unless and until a written contract has been entered into with the successful proponent.

9.2 Right to Negotiate

Following the closing of this RFP, the Participating Public Sector Bodies may enter into negotiations with one or more of the proponents with respect to any aspect of the proposal(s), including price.

9.3 Addenda, Corrections, or Extensions of the Invitation

The Participating Public Sector Bodies reserve the right to modify the terms of this RFP at any time prior to closing, at its sole discretion.

9.4 Acceptance of Proposal/Right to Reject

Failure to comply with any of the terms or conditions contained or reference in this RFP document may result in the rejection of a proposal. Except as otherwise stated, all of terms, conditions and/or specifications stated or reference in this RFP are assumed to be accepted by the proponent and incorporated in the proposal. Issuing this RFP implies no obligation on the Participating Public Sector Bodies to accept any proposal, or a portion of the proposal submitted. All proposals will be awarded contingent on budget availability.

9.5 Cancellation

This RFP may be cancelled in whole or in part without penalty, when in the opinion of the Committee:

- a) There has been substantial change in the requirements after this RFP has been issued.
- b) Information has been received by the Committee after this RFP has been issued that they feel has substantially altered the procurement.
- c) There was sufficient competition in order to provide the level of service, quality of goods, or pricing required; or
- d) Any one of the Participating Public Sector Bodies, decides that there is any other sufficient justification to cancel this RFP.

9.6 Proposals Property of Town

All physical documents submitted become property of the Town of Truro. The Participating Public Sector Bodies will not be liable for any costs incurred by a proponent in responding to this RFP, regardless of whether the Committee awards the contract through this process, decides not to go forward with the project, cancel this RFP for any reason, or contracts for the project through some other process, including by issuing another RFP.

9.7 Accuracy of RFP Document

While ever reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this RFP, it is not guaranteed or warranted by the Participating Public Sector Bodies to be accurate, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive.

9.8 Right to Seek Clarification

The Committee reserves the right in their sole discretion to clarify any proposal after closing by seeking further information from that proponent, without becoming obligated to clarify or seek further information from any or all other proponents.

9.9 Formal Contract

The successful proponent will be required to execute a formal contract, in a form acceptable to the Participating Public Sector Bodies to give effect of services required.



Town of Truro Purchasing Department
695 Prince Street
Truro, NS, B2N 1G5
T: (902) 895-7821 F: (902) 895-0482

Submission Form – please include with your proposal as well as any addenda.

Respondent	
Address	
Province & Postal Code	
Name of person signing for Respondent	
Position of person signing	
Phone Number	
HST Number	
Email Address	

Signature of Respondent _____

Date _____

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