



THE NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT  
**REGIONAL PLANNING COLLABORATIVE**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Prospective Consultants  
**From:** Christopher S. Wood, AICP  
**Date:** December 30, 2009

**Re:** Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative Village Center  
Vitality Program

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The Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative, through the Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments and the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials, is seeking proposals from qualified individuals or firms with small town economic development expertise to support the design of a Village Center Vitality Program for small towns in northwestern Connecticut. The project and proposal requirements are described in the attached RFP.

Response deadline is January 22, 2010 and selection is anticipated by early February 2010. The project completion date is mid-August 2010.

Your review and response is appreciated.

# Request for Proposals

Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative  
Village Center Vitality Program

## **Design Phase Assistance**

### **Overview**

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The Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative (RPC) has been working with northwestern Connecticut towns for nearly three years to address critical land use issues. In conjunction with town officials and stakeholders in several area towns and the two regional planning agencies (Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments and Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials), the RPC has identified the need for a focused effort to promote revitalization of village centers in northwestern Connecticut towns. Current and ongoing economic conditions have resulted in vacant storefronts and existing businesses struggle to survive. These historic small town centers are vital to the quality of life in the Northwest Corner but economic stagnation threatens their survival. Our Village Center Vitality (VCV) program is being designed provide resources and tools to sustain these essential community assets.

The Design Phase of the VCV program will entail identification of specific action steps applicable to promoting village center economic activity with an emphasis on actions that may be implemented collaboratively to attain synergy and cost efficiency. This information will be used to support applications or otherwise qualify the RPC for funding through federal, state, and private programs for the Implementation Phase of the VCV program, which will implement regional and town-specific marketing, regulatory, and structural actions to promote economic development in northwestern Connecticut.

The Design Phase of the program is supported in part by a grant from the Northwestern Connecticut Community Foundation, which will be used to engage professional assistance with the program design. Qualified consultants with recent experience pertaining to small town economic and community development are invited to submit qualifications and proposals as specified below.

### **VCV Goals**

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The ultimate goal of the VCV program is the implementation of specific action steps to promote economic revitalization of village centers in northwest Connecticut.

The immediate goal of the Design Phase effort is to identify potential promotional and marketing tools, regulatory improvements, and structural improvements to encourage collaborative implementation and to seek funding support through state, federal, and private programs.

## **Design Phase Time Frame and Resources**

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The RPC has up to \$12,000 available for outside consulting services in support of this project and expects to contribute up to 200 hours of staff time to the design phase by current staff planners. RPC staff contribution will be determined in the negotiated Scope of Work with the successful firm or individual. The consultant's work will be completed by mid-August 2010.

## **Design Phase Tasks**

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The following are examples of tasks intended to accomplish the goals and objectives. Actual project tasks and responsibilities will be negotiated in a scope of work based on the accepted proposal.

- Identify common interests and objectives for village areas in northwestern Connecticut towns, including assessment of existing plans and economic development strategies and outreach and interviews with town officials and stakeholders.
- Identify key business characteristics, business and market conditions, primary assets for economic development, and necessary physical and infrastructure considerations that apply to village areas in northwestern Connecticut.
- Conduct focus groups sessions and/or a regional village vitality summit meeting.
- Develop a matrix of collaborative and synergistic action steps, including promotional and marketing tools, regulatory improvements, and structural improvements.
- Identify potential funding sources, and necessary supporting materials and documentation, for implementation of economic development action steps.

RPC staff expects to work in partnership with the consultant by collecting and assembling existing regional and town reports on economic development issues, organizing stakeholder meetings, researching the regulatory issues that affect development, and performing other tasks as appropriate. Program administration and additional technical support will also be provided by the staffs of the NWCCOG and LHCEO.

## **Required Submittals**

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Interested consultants should provide the following

1. Name and address of firm or individual and contact name.
2. Size of firm and organizational structure.
3. Resumes of proposed personnel.
4. Typical hourly fee rates for proposed personnel.
5. Sample of any economic development plans or programs prepared by the proposed personnel.
6. Description of similar projects done by the firm and contacts for professional reference.
7. Statement of understanding of the project scope and goals.
8. An outline of the specific tasks recommended by the prospective consultant that may be accomplished within the available budget, including RPC staff contributions.

## Request for Proposals – Village Center Vitality Program Design

### **Additional Information**

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This RFP is seeking creative suggestions for designing a program that promotes the ultimate program goal of village revitalization in northwest Connecticut.

The consultant may be selected based solely on the responses received. The RPC may conduct interviews of the most highly qualified respondents, if determined necessary. Consulting fees will be negotiated with the selected consultant(s) based on a mutually developed work plan and budget and may be based on hourly rates or a set fee.

To be considered, proposals must be submitted in electronic form by email to [jocelyn@nwctplanning.org](mailto:jocelyn@nwctplanning.org) by 4:00 PM January 22, 2010.

Additionally, three (3) paper copies must be received by 4:00 PM January 26, 2010 at

Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments  
17 Sackett Hill Road  
Warren, Connecticut 06790  
Attn: Dan McGuinness

Prospective respondents are encouraged to call for additional information and clarifications. Contact:

Christopher S. Wood, AICP  
Collaborative Planner  
[chris@nwctplanning.org](mailto:chris@nwctplanning.org)  
203 558-0654

The Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative currently supports planning for housing, economic development and conservation efforts in the towns of Kent, Cornwall, Sharon, Salisbury, North Canaan, Norfolk, Falls Village, and Goshen. Additional information about the RPC may be found at our website [www.nwctplanning.org](http://www.nwctplanning.org).

LHCEO and NWCOG are Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity Employers. M/F/V/H/EOE

LHCEO and NWCOG retain the right to reject any submittals, request additional information, or re-issue this RFP.