

BEDFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR BEDFORD COUNTY MASTER TRAIL CONNECTIVITY STUDY

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

**4:00PM EST
FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024**

**ADDRESS ALL PROPOSALS TO:
BEDFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
ATTENTION: JEN MARSH, VICE PRESIDENT
EMAIL: JMARSH@BCDA.ORG**

GENERAL INFORMATION AND SUMMARY

SUBMITTAL DUE DATE

To be eligible for consideration, one (1) electronic copy, in pdf format, of the Consultant's response to this Request for Proposals must be received by Bedford County Development Association no later than close of business, 4:00PM EST on Friday, April 26, 2024. The response must be submitted via email to Jen Marsh, Vice President at jmarsh@bcda.org. Submissions received after this time and date will not be considered.

ADDENDA

Any matter of this RFP that requires explanation or interpretation must be inquired by the Consultant in writing by 4:00PM on Monday, April 8, 2024 EST. All questions should be emailed to Jen Marsh at jmarsh@bcda.org. All questions will be responded to in the form of an emailed addenda to all Consultants.

TERM OF CONTRACT

The term of the Contract will be from the date of selection of a Consultant, approximately May 1, 2024 for eleven (11) months until completion, no later than April 1, 2025. The total Contract value should not exceed Ninety-Nine Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Dollars (\$99,590).

ORGANIZATION REQUESTING PROPOSALS

Bedford County Development Association
1 Corporate Drive, Suite 301
Bedford, PA 15522-7983

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jen Marsh, Vice President
Bedford County Development Association
Phone: (814) 623-4816
Email: jmarsh@bcda.org

BEDFORD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Bedford County Development Association is a 501 (c)3 organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Bedford County through economic development while preserving heritage and natural resources. Over the last three decades, Bedford County Development Association has been a driving force in business development and job creation in Bedford County – attracting 4,000 new jobs to Bedford County, generating millions in property tax revenue, and financing several of the business community's biggest expansions.

Bedford County Development Association was formed by local government and business leaders in Bedford County and is funded by office leases, Bedford County, federal and state grants, and other miscellaneous sources. Bedford County Development Association has a 19-member board, including three (3) County Commissioners that serve ex-officio. Bedford County Development Association has three (3) employees: President, Vice President, and Office Manager.

PURPOSE OF REQUEST

Bedford County Development Association (“BCDA”) is soliciting proposals from qualified professionals for the Bedford County Master Trail Connectivity Study (“Study”). The Consultant will be tasked to create and deliver a Bedford County Master Trail Connectivity Plan. This Study will identify a feasible route to connect additional users (via hiking, cycling or water) to five major existing trails in Bedford County. BCDA will manage all Contracts associated with this RFP.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Bedford County is located along Pennsylvania’s southern border with Maryland. Adjacent communities include Fulton County to the east, Huntingdon County to the northeast, Blair County to the north, Cambria County to the northwest, and Somerset County to the west. Allegheny County, Maryland lies to the south. At the crossroads of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Interstates 70 and 99, and U.S. Routes 220 and 30, Bedford County serves as a nexus for travel along Central Pennsylvania and is less than three hours from Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia.

Bedford County has a myriad of outdoor activities — from canoeing down the Juniata River, to waterskiing in 27-mile Lake Raystown, to hiking through State Forests and Game lands, to snow skiing at Pennsylvania’s highest ski-resort, Blue Knob. Bedford County may be a rural county, but there is always plenty to do including endless entertainment like visiting a winery or brewery, enjoying a festival, visiting agrotourism attractions and more.

The goal of this Study is to effectively designate Bedford County as a “trail town” and spur economic development by enhancing trail connectivity between five (5) major trails within Bedford County and subsequently increasing tourism. Creating outdoor health and recreation opportunities for Bedford County and the Southern Alleghenies Region is also an important impetus for this Study.

The following five (5) major trails within Bedford County are the focus of this study:

- 1) Huntington & Broad Top Trail (H&BT Trail)
- 2) Mid-State Trail
- 3) Shuster Way Heritage Trail (Heritage Trail)
- 4) TOPP Trail (Abandoned Turnpike)
- 5) Shawnee State Park Trail System
- 6) Blue Knob State Park Trail System

In addition to these 6 trail systems, the Study will initiate and advance conversations among regional partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to develop a vision for a regional trail network to connect Bedford County with their neighboring counties. The expected outcome of this Project will be a completed Bedford County Master Trail Connectivity Plan that identifies potential partners for future implementation of the recommended trail connections identified within the Study. The location of the 5-primary trails of interest are explained below.

HUNTINGTON & BROAD TOP TRAIL (H&BT TRAIL):

Stretching 12.6 miles through south-central Pennsylvania, this rail-trail follows the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River then goes overland through forested valleys providing beautiful vistas and river access. The trail rail connects Riddlesburg and Tatesville, intersecting with two public parks, Riddlesburg Park at the north and Cooper Park at the trail’s center. The trail passes through an 80-acre recreation area that is open to the public for camping and recreational activities at no cost.

MID-STATE TRAIL:

The Mid State Trail System (MST) is a 327-mile linear hiking trail located in the Appalachian Mountains and Allegheny Plateau of Central PA. It is the longest hiking trail in PA and one of just three to traverse

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the state from one border to another. The MST begins at the southern edge of Pennsylvania, at the Maryland Border with Bedford County and continues north through Pennsylvania. The Mid State Greenway is a recreational corridor that runs north/south through. The 91-mile corridor includes the Mid State Trail and Mid State Trail Extension, both existing improved land trails that together run the entire length of the corridor. These trails are part of a larger network that extends into both Maryland and Central Pennsylvania, near State College.

SHUSTER WAY HERITAGE TRAIL (HERITAGE TRAIL):

The Shuster Way Heritage Trail (formerly known as the Bedford Heritage Trail) provides a safe and picturesque connection between a topnotch resort and a nationally recognized downtown. From the Omni Bedford Springs Resort and Spa, the trail snakes across Shober's Run creek, passes Elks Lodge and Golf Course before entering historic downtown Bedford. The trail signage borrows from the flag emblem of Fort Bedford, which lies at the northern terminus of the Heritage Trail. The Bedford Joint Municipal Authority is also planning to extend the trail 1.75 miles northwards to Old Bedford Village and Friendship Village. This trail invites users to explore the cultural and historic assets of Bedford County. In addition to downtown dining, shopping, museums, architecture, and monuments, the trail offers five educational displays and a self-guided historic walking tour.

TOPP TRAIL (ABANDONED TURNPIKE):

The TOPP Trail is a 13-mile stretch of the original PA Turnpike that includes the Ray Hill Tunnel (0.7 miles) on the border of Bedford and Fulton Counties, and the Sideling Hill Tunnel (1.3 miles; the longest tunnel on the Turnpike) in Fulton County. Arguably the "crown jewel" of the TOPP Trail, the Rays Hill and Sideling Hill tunnels caused severe traffic back-ups which led to this stretch of highway (and the tunnels) being abandoned in 1968 when a bypass around the tunnels and up over the mountains was opened in 1968.

Over the years, the 13- mile stretch of Abandoned Turnpike quietly attracted a variety of visitors, drawn to the natural setting which runs through the Buchanan State Forest. Some envisioned the aging roadway as a unique, recreational treasure, and in 2001, the Turnpike sold 8.5 miles of the abandoned stretch (including the Rays Hill and Sideling Hill tunnels) for \$1 to the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy (SAC) for use as a biking and hiking trail which became known as Pike2Bike (subsequently renamed the TOPP Trail).

Today, the TOPP trail traverses through the Sideling Hill Division of the Buchanan State Forest connecting with several trails within the state park. Additional regional connections are proposed via North Breezewood Road, Ramsey Road, French Creek Road, and Ritchey Bridge Road to make trail connections to the future Juniata College Environmental Center at the Sparks Farm and the Huntingdon and Broad Top Trail (H&BT Trail).

SHAWNEE STATE PARK TRAIL SYSTEM

Shawnee State Park is 3,983 acres of Pennsylvania's scenic Ridge and Valley Province. Ten miles west of the historic town of Bedford along US 30, Shawnee has modern recreational facilities that blend into the natural environment. There are 16 miles of trails at Shawnee State Park, with the 3.4-mile Lake Shore Loop Trail being the most popular.

BLUE KNOB STATE PARK TRAIL SYSTEM

Blue Knob State Park boasts 23 miles of trails on 6,128 acres. Th wilderness adventures that include hiking, skiing, overnight camping, fishing, hunting and mountain biking.

STATE FUNDING PROVISIONS

The professional services sought in this RFP will be state funded by the Commonwealth Financing Authority (“CFA”). The Consultant agree to adhere to the terms and conditions identified in Exhibits A-B, which will be included in any Contract executed with the Consultant for services.

DETAILED REQUIREMENTS OF THE RFP

SCOPE OF SERVICES

At a minimum, the Consultant shall be capable of providing the following services.

1) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND MEETINGS

- a) Advisory Committee Meetings (5):
 - Facilitate meetings to review previous studies and plans, set project schedule, and discuss goals.
 - Meetings occur once every two months for an 8 – 10-month planning process.
 - Prepare meeting agendas and summaries.
- b) Community Workshops (2):
 - Host two in-person workshops to engage residents and stakeholders in study related discussions.
 - Workshops structured to introduce project, discuss goals, and gather input.
 - Prepare interactive activities and materials for workshops.
- c) Public Meetings (2):
 - Present project updates, goals, and implementation strategies for public feedback.
 - Solicit input from attendees to refine project plans.
 - Dates, time, and location to be determined in coordination with BCDA.
- d) Online Survey (1):
 - Develop and distribute digital survey to understand the county’s perspectives on barriers, opportunities, desired trail uses, preferred alignments, and important destinations located within the county and the neighboring regions
 - Coordinate with Advisory Committee to promote survey and ensure wide participation.
- e) Online Interactive Mapping Tool:
 - Develop an interactive map for public input on proposed trail alignments.
 - Update mapping tool to reflect preferred trail alignments for final public review.
- f) Regional Round Table Discussion (2):
 - Conduct virtual discussions with potential regional partners to gauge interest and collaboration.
 - Identify areas of mutual interest and potential partnerships.

2) FEASIBILITY STUDY

- a) Define study goals, objectives, and planning principles:
 - Facilitate discussion with Advisory Committee to establish project direction and guiding principles.
- b) Prepare study area base mapping:
 - Compile data from various sources to create comprehensive mapping for project planning.

- c) Conduct legal feasibility analysis:
 - Assess land ownership, right-of-way issues, and regulatory considerations for proposed trail alignments.
- d) Prepare Situational Trail Profile:
 - Evaluate environmental, infrastructural, and historical factors to determine trail feasibility.
- e) Delineate and Assess Alternative Trail Connections:
 - Develop and evaluate alternative trail alignments to identify preferred options.
- f) Create an evaluation of all alternative alignments:
 - Develop ranking table to compare and assess advantages and disadvantages of each alignment.
- g) Develop an Opinion of Probable Development Cost (OPDC) for each alternative alignment:
 - Estimate costs for each alignment option to inform decision-making.
- h) Confirm final trail alignment with Advisory Committee:
 - Work with stakeholders to finalize trail alignments based on feedback and analysis.
- i) Prepare the final Bedford County Connectivity Study
 - Develop comprehensive Study outlining trail network, connections, and key features.
- j) Develop descriptions for each trail segment:
 - Provide detailed descriptions of trail segments, including regional connections and potential enhancements.
- k) Refine the OPDC for the final trail alignment:
 - Fine-tune cost estimates for chosen trail alignments to inform budgeting and planning.
- l) Develop an Implementation Strategy Action Plan:
 - Outline recommendations, timelines, and funding sources for trail implementation.

3) DESIGN DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS, TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- a) Prepare first draft of Narrative for the Study (75% completion):
 - Draft comprehensive narrative detailing project findings, recommendations, and next steps.
- b) Initial Draft Review Meeting (1):
 - Gather feedback from Advisory Committee to refine and finalize narrative for the Study.
- c) Refine Narrative for final review:
 - Incorporate feedback from initial review meeting to enhance Study content and clarity.
- d) Final Draft Review Meeting (1):
 - Present final draft of Study for last-minute feedback and approval.
- e) Finalize Study:
 - Incorporate final feedback and provide completed report digitally to BCDA for distribution.

FINAL DELIVERABLES

At a minimum, deliverables will include:

1. Monthly update reports which describe the work completed to date.
2. A comprehensive written report presented in-person to BCDA and Study partners, at the direction of BCDA, upon completion of the Study. Drafts of the final report will be submitted for comment and required changes to be incorporated into the final report.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that BCDA may properly evaluate capabilities to provide the required services. Consultants are required to submit a written narrative that includes the following sections:

Business Identification – State name of individual or business, including subconsultants, address of home and branch offices, nature of the organization (individual partnership, or corporation; private or public; profit or non-profit), number of years in business and the number of employees. Identify the state in which the firm is incorporated or chiefly located. Provide a brief history of the firm. Include name, title, and telephone number of person(s) authorized to negotiate the proposed Contract.

Project Methodology – Describe in written narrative the Consultant’s understanding and approach to the Study. Provide a description of the services/tasks proposed to satisfy the specific requirements described in the RFP. This section shall include:

1. Specific techniques and plans that demonstrate the Study will proceed smoothly; and
2. The firm’s understanding of Bedford County’s uniqueness and greatest trail connection challenges; and
4. Description of technical approach to the Study; and
5. Description of methodology; and
6. Explanation of any assumptions and constraints.

Qualifications and Experience

1. Provide an Executive Summary which highlights the qualifications and experience of the Consultant. If subcontractors will be used, they should be identified and their qualifications included in the proposal.
2. List key staff to be assigned work under the Contract and describe their experience as project team members. Show only experience directly related to their assigned duties under the Study. List team members’ names and titles in the listed project, project title, brief project description, year completed and name, address, and phone number of the client. Include resumes of key personnel and sub-consultants.
3. Describe all proposed subcontracting activities. Include the full legal name and address of all subcontractors, the type of work to be performed, and the percentage of the total work they will perform.
4. Include a list of projects that contained work similar or related to that called for in this RFP. List Pennsylvania contracts first, including the following information:
 - a. Project name, brief project description and location of the office responsible for the project; and
 - b. Name of team members who worked on this project with their job title and brief description of their responsibilities in the listed project; and
 - c. Scheduled completion date; and
 - d. Actual completion date.

Schedule – Provide a detailed timeline and schedule for completing the project in order to meet the 11-month completion requirement.

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References – Provide four (4) project references describing the Consultant’s experience conducting a trail connectivity study similar in scope to this RFP. Also provide the dates of completion, client contact name, email and phone number for each reference. Demonstrate trail study consulting capabilities. Describe any experience the firm has in working in Bedford County.

Proposed Price – Full cost information should be provided that shows the minimum number of hours to be provided by each person assigned to the proposed work by the Consultant’s organizational levels. The proposed hourly rate for billing shall be included for each person. The hours of work and cost shall be itemized for each major work element of the proposal. An itemized estimate of reimbursable expenses must be included.

The total amount of maximum payment must be stated. The cost shall be based on the hours of work provided and “out-of-pocket expenses” and shall not exceed the maximum cost proposed unless an amendment to the Contract is negotiated and approved by the proper authority of BCDA. The Consultant’s method of billing must be indicated.

Other proposal format requirements include:

1. The entire proposal response shall **be limited to 50 typed pages**.
2. No font smaller than 12 point on 8 ½ x 11 inch page with margins no smaller than ¾ inch.
3. The proposal response should include a table of contents.
4. All pages should be numbered.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION

All proposals will be evaluated by BCDA using the following criteria:

Step 1 – Proposals meeting all requirements of the RFP will be evaluated by the BCDA selection committee and ranked based on the following selection criteria. The top-ranking proposals may be asked to participate and present via video conference.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	WEIGHT
Project Methodology	30
Qualifications and Experience	20
Schedule	20
References	10
Proposed Price	20
Total	100

Step 2 - A Contract will be awarded to the Consultant whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the project, taking into consideration the criteria set forth in this RFP. Upon completing the selection process under this RFP, BCDA will notify the selected Consultant and all other Consultants who were not selected. BCDA’s evaluations of proposals are confidential and as such, BCDA is unable to respond to any questions and/or requests for information as to why a Consultant was not selected.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

1. All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Consultant and will not be reimbursed by BCDA.
2. BCDA reserves the right to, at any time, abandon or terminate its efforts to contract for any or all of said services without any obligation to any Consultant.

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3. BCDA reserves the right to waive any informalities or minor defects or reject any and all proposals.
4. BCDA reserves the right to reject any submittal if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such respondent demonstrates that such respondent or its subcontractors, in BCDA's opinion, is not properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the Contract.
5. BCDA reserves the right to negotiate modifications prior to the awarding of a Contract. If negotiations with the selected Consultant fail to produce a Contract, BCDA reserves the right to enter negotiations with one or more other Consultants.
6. All applicable laws, ordinances, and the rules and regulations of all governmental authorities having jurisdiction shall apply to the Contract.
7. The Consultant, at its expense, shall carry and maintain in full force at all times during the term of the Contract, the below insurance.
 - a. The Consultant must carry professional liability insurance (including subcontractors) in minimum amounts of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence and three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00) in the aggregate annually. The Consultant must carry separate comprehensive general liability insurance (including subcontractors) covering bodily injury, personal injury and property damage in the amount of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence and three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00) in the aggregate annually.
 - b. Prior to commencement of performance of a Contract, the Consultant shall furnish to BCDA a certificate of insurance evidencing all required coverage in at least the limits required herein, naming BCDA, its elected officials, agents, and employees as additional insured under the Comprehensive General Liability coverage, and providing that no policies may be cancelled without ten (10) days advance written notice to BCDA. Such certificate shall be issued to: BCDA, Attn: Jen Marsh, 1 Corporate Drive, Suite 101, Bedford County, PA 15522-7983.
 - c. Said policies shall remain in full force and effect until the expiration of the terms of the Contract or until completion of all duties to be performed hereunder by the Consultant, whichever shall occur later.

EXHIBIT A – SEXUAL HARASSMENT/NON-DISCRIMINATION

1. In the hiring of any employee(s) for the manufacture of supplies, performance of work, or any other activity required under the contract or any subcontract, the Contractor, each subcontractor, or any person acting on behalf of the Contractor or subcontractor shall not discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA) and applicable federal laws, against any citizen of this commonwealth who is qualified and available to perform the work to which the employment relates.
2. Neither the Contractor nor any subcontractor nor any person on their behalf shall in any manner discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the PHRA and applicable federal laws, against or intimidate any employee involved in the manufacture of supplies, the performance of work, or any other activity required under the contract.
3. Neither the Contractor nor any subcontractor nor any person on their behalf shall in any manner discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the PHRA and applicable federal laws, in the provision of services under the contract.
4. Neither the Contractor nor any subcontractor nor any person on their behalf shall in any manner discriminate against employees by reason of participation in or decision to refrain from participating in labor activities protected under the Public Employee Relations Act, Pennsylvania Labor Relations Act, or National Labor Relations Act, as applicable and to the extent determined by entities charged with such Acts' enforcement, and shall comply with any provision of law establishing organizations as employees' exclusive representatives.
5. The Contractor and each subcontractor shall establish and maintain a written nondiscrimination and sexual harassment policy and shall inform their employees in writing of the policy. The policy must contain a provision that sexual harassment will not be tolerated and employees who practice it will be disciplined. Posting this Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause conspicuously in easily-accessible and well-lighted places customarily frequented by employees and at or near where the contracted services are performed shall satisfy this requirement for employees with an established work site.
6. The Contractor and each subcontractor shall not discriminate by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of PHRA and applicable federal laws, against any subcontractor or supplier who is qualified to perform the work to which the contract relates.
7. The Contractor and each subcontractor represents that it is presently in compliance with and will maintain compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and policies relating to nondiscrimination and sexual harassment. The Contractor and each subcontractor further represents that it has filed a Standard Form 100 Employer Information Report ("EEO-1") with the U.S. Equal Employment Enclosure 1 to Management Directive 215.16 Amended Page 2 of 2 Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") and shall file an annual EEO-1 report with the EEOC as required for employers' subject to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, that have 100 or more employees and employers that have federal government contracts or first-tier

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subcontracts and have 50 or more employees. The Contractor and each subcontractor shall, upon request and within the time periods requested by the commonwealth, furnish all necessary employment documents and records, including EEO-1 reports, and permit access to their books, records, and accounts by the contracting agency and the Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunities for purpose of ascertaining compliance with provisions of this Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause.

8. The Contractor shall include the provisions of this Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause in every subcontract so that those provisions applicable to subcontractors will be binding upon each subcontractor.
9. The Contractor's and each subcontractor's obligations pursuant to these provisions are ongoing from and after the effective date of the contract through the termination date thereof. Accordingly, the Contractor and each subcontractor shall have an obligation to inform the commonwealth if, at any time during the term of the contract, it becomes aware of any actions or occurrences that would result in violation of these provisions.
10. The Commonwealth may cancel or terminate the contract and all money due or to become due under the contract may be forfeited for a violation of the terms and conditions of this Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Clause. In addition, the agency may proceed with debarment or suspension and may place the Contractor in the Contractor Responsibility File.



EXHIBIT B – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

Any publication concerning a project financed by the Commonwealth Financing Authority will acknowledge Commonwealth financial assistance as follows:

“This Project was financed in part by a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth Financing Authority.”

Acknowledgement of Commonwealth financial assistance may be combined with acknowledgement of other funding sources on project signs or in project publications.