



## **Request for Proposals – Community Transit Service Review**

### **1. Purpose**

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish (County), Town of Antigonish (Town), and Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS; collectively referred to as the Partners) are seeking submissions from qualified individuals and organizations for the review of community transit services in Antigonish.

The goal of this project is to assess the needs of the community related to community / public transportation services, determine the most effective means of addressing those needs, and developing a strategy with a governance and service delivery model that is accessible and fiscally responsible.

Services are required for the provision of professional and impartial insight to assess the accessibility and equity of services, determine the appropriateness of the current system structure, and provide expert recommendations. The awarded consultant must be familiar with rural transit challenges and solutions, municipal service delivery and budgeting, provincial regulations related to public passenger carriers, and the development of transit service operational plans.

Submissions will be accepted by email until the closing time of 4:00 p.m. local time, Thursday, February 1, 2024. Incomplete or late submissions will not be eligible. All RFP requirements, outlined in Section 3, must be included in the submission.

### **2. Background Reference Material**

The following documents should be reviewed as part of the submission preparation process and are available from Primary Contact (Section 9.7):

- Antigonish Community Transit Feasibility Study (2014)
- Antigonish Community Transit, Board minutes
- Antigonish Community Transit, budget & financial statements (2023/24).
- Antigonish Community Transit Business Plan (2020)
- Antigonish Community Transit, Fixed Bus Route Report (2023)
- Municipal of the County of Antigonish, Accessibility Plan (2022)
- Town of Antigonish, Accessibility Plan (2023)

### **3. Deliverables and Expectations**

The following shall be used to develop the submission for the community transit service review. Submissions are to include all items outlined in Sections 3, 4, and 5.

3.1. A review and evaluation of current structures and programs, including:

- Existing transit network to identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps, overlaps, and inefficiencies.
- Historic and current ridership numbers & trends.
- Revenue sources, trends and generating opportunities.
- Expense categories, trends and mitigating strategies.
- Systems for booking, tracking ridership, fleet maintenance, scheduling and other common areas of transit operations.
- Viability as a sustainable long-term model.
- Comparable examples of existing transit models.
- Opportunities and best-practices to increase ridership.
- Opportunities for better connections and more efficient travel.
- Accessibility considerations.
- Climate change resilience considerations.
- Current market and advertising schemes, and awareness-raising opportunities,

3.2. Recommendations for service delivery improvements that reflect the following considerations:

- Best and innovative transit systems or practices for rural communities.
- Meeting the demonstrated needs of the community.
- Geographic size, population, and amenity distribution.
- Future population growth, density and changing demographics.
- Equity & accessibility.
- Financial sustainability.
- Organizational capacity.

3.3. The consultant shall prepare six (6) copies of the report and provide a digital copy.

### **4. Process**

The following process shall be used as a basis for carrying out the community transit service review for the awarded consultant:

- The review is to be conducted based on a timeline prepared by the consultant, with the final report completed and presented to the Partners by March 31, 2024.
- The consultant will jointly meet with a steering committee comprised of representatives from each of the Partners to develop a better understanding of the issues and objectives of this service review, confirm the consultant's work plan and deliverable timeline, and establish communication channels and areas of responsibility.

4.1..1. Additional meetings during the process may be held at the discretion of the Partners.

- Collect and analyze statistical data such as population, vulnerable groups, and socio-economic considerations.
- Collect and analyze information on comparable community transit systems.
- Hold consultations with County, Town and ACTS officials, and other identified stakeholder groups including ACTS staff and high-frequency riders.
- The consultant shall meet with senior administrators of both the Town, the County, and Antigonish Community Transit to review the options presented and the rationale for their recommendation.
- The consultant will prepare and submit the final report and present the findings and recommendations to the councils of the Town, the County, and the Antigonish Community Transit Board.

## 5. Submission Requirements

The following items are required for the submission:

- 5.1. A work plan with a schedule, including deliverables and associated timelines.
- 5.2. A resume and qualifications of the lead consultant and team members assigned to the project.
- 5.3. A minimum of three (3) references whose work has been completed within the past 5-years.
- 5.4. A detailed budget, including a fee structure with upper limits of project cost and a payment schedule for the entirety of the project, including but not limited to all material costs, labour costs, applicable taxes, and any other cost associated with the completion of the project.
- 5.5. A copy of the consultant's letter of good standing from the Workplace Compensation Board of Nova Scotia.
- 5.6. A copy of the insurance certification.

## 6. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Ranking	Total	Score	Comments
Evidence of the consultant's general ability to fulfill the services required as outlined in this RFP.	15	15		
	10			
	5			
	0			
Has provided and met the required certifications	5	5		
	2.5			
	0			

Proposed approach to initiate and complete the project	15	Extremely detailed and very realistic	15		
	10	Good detail and realistic			
	5	Little detail and somewhat realistic			
	0	Not realistic/not addressed			
Demonstrated ability to provide a high quality, cost effective final report based on provided examples of similar work within the proposed budget range.	15	Quality examples included and demonstrated clear ability to meet requirements	15		
	10	Examples provided and demonstrated an understanding of the needs of the requirement			
	5	Examples don't align with project and have limited description of ability to meet the requirements			
	0	Not addressed			
Ability to provide alternatives, options, and flexibility should anticipated additional resources become available.	5	Alternatives provided	5		
	0	Not addressed			
Qualifications and experience of the consultant and staff that will be assigned to this project. Evidence of corporate support and structure.	5	Qualifications and evidence provided	5		
	0	Not addressed			
Consultants are requested to provide references from similar sized/types of projects completed within the previous five years.	5	Positive references provided	5		
	0	No references or unsatisfactory references			
Consultant's timelines provided with an anticipated completion date; including strategies and indication of how timelines will be met.	5	Realistic timeline and strategy	5		
	2.5	Timeline with unrealistic or no strategy			
	0	Not addressed			
Overall clarity and quality of the submission.	5	Extremely clear, concise, and thorough	5		
	2.5	Somewhat clear descriptions			

	0	Vague and unclear descriptions		
Level of effort.			5	
Locally based (NS) firms may be given preference if selection criteria values of all proposals are within 5%.				
COST/PRICE EVALUATION SHEET				
$\left( \frac{\text{Lowest Bid}}{\text{Bidder's Price}} \right) \times \text{Price Weighting}$			20	
Total Score			100	

## 7. Terms and Conditions

7.1. Inquiries: All inquiries are to be directed to Primary Contact (see Section 9.7).

7.2. Clarification and Addenda: Any errors, omissions, questions, or ambiguities found in this document may be brought to the attention of the Primary Contact no less than four (4) working days before the closing date.

7.3. H.S.T.: All pricing and estimates shall include H.S.T.

7.4. Indemnification: The consultant agrees to indemnify the Partners and hold harmless against all claims, suits, demands, damages, expenses, disbursements, and costs on a solicitor-client basis that the Partners may incur as a result of any act or omission by the consultant. The consultant acknowledges that it is not an employee of any of the Partners but is an independent contractor.

7.5. Amendment or Withdrawal of Submission: Submissions must be amended or withdrawn by email and received prior to the date and time of closing.

- The only acceptable price amendment is the amendment of individual unit prices.

7.6. Ownership of Material: All documents submitted to the Partners, including but not limited to final reports, budgets, forecasts, maps, analytical data, and working papers, shall become the property of the Partners, and the consultant shall assign copyright accordingly.

## 8. Privilege

This RFP neither expresses nor implies any obligation on the part of the Partners to enter a contract with any consultant submitting a response or responses.

A table of evaluation criteria is included within this RFP document to be used as a guideline (Section 6.0). The Partners reserve the right to deviate from the evaluation criteria where it is in the best interests of the project.

The Partners reserve the right to reject all or any submission and to not necessarily accept the lowest submission, and they may accept any submission or any portion of any submission that may be considered in the best interests of the project. The Partners reserve the right to waive formality, informality, or technicality in any submission. This includes the right to accept a submission that is not strictly compliant with the instructions in the RFP document.

The Partners reserve the right to negotiate after the RFP closing date to finalize service arrangements in the best interests of the project.

The Partners shall not be bound by trade or custom in dealing with and/or evaluating the responses to the RFP and reserve the right to interpret all aspects of this RFP in a manner most favorable to the project.

Consultants will be deemed to have familiarized themselves with existing site and working conditions and all other conditions that may affect the performance of the contract. No plea of ignorance of such conditions because of failure to make all necessary examinations will be accepted as a basis for any claims for extra compensation or an extension of time.

## **9. Timeline and Contact Information**

9.1. Invitation calls for submission: Tuesday, January 9, 2024.

9.2. Deadline for queries: Thursday, January 25, 2024.

9.3. Addendum released (if required): 24 hours following query deadline.

9.4. Submission closing: Thursday, February 1, 4pm.

9.5. Submission title: "Community Transit Service Review"

9.6. Submission via email: [antigonishcommunitytransit@gmail.com](mailto:antigonishcommunitytransit@gmail.com)

9.7. Primary contact:

- Madonna van Vonderen, Executive Director
- [antigonishcommunitytransit@gmail.com](mailto:antigonishcommunitytransit@gmail.com)
- 902.870.5433