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meet Chittenden County's transportation needs*

CHITTENDEN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION

Chittenden County Safe Routes to Schools Program Coordination

Request for Qualifications

June 12, 2006

**Qualifications Due
1:00 PM, Friday, July 7, 2006**

CCMPO
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1. BACKGROUND

The Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) seeks proposals from qualified applicants (consulting firms, consultant teams, or individuals) to coordinate a regional Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Program under a newly established federal program administered by VTrans.

A regional SR2S Pilot Program has run at three County schools over the past two school years. That program has demonstrated that with the right combination of, 1) education and encouragement activities, 2) school and parent commitment, 3) law enforcement participation, and 4) outside help coordinating the program, the number of students walking and bicycling to school can be increased – in some cases significantly.

The VTrans Safe Routes to School program, as required by the recently passed Federal Transportation Bill - SAFETEA-LU - is intended to benefit children in primary and middle schools (K-8). Safe Routes to School (SR2S) is about kids walking and biking to school: regularly, routinely, and safely. SR2S integrates elements of transportation, economics, health and physical activity, environmental awareness and safety into one program.

The Vermont SR2S program will provide support in the form of funding and services to participating schools/school districts around the state. Schools will conduct self assessments, actively promote walking and bicycling by students and will identify infrastructure projects to make walking and bicycling safer.

Section 1404(f) of SAFETEA-LU requires each State DOT to establish a statewide Safe Routes to School program for the benefit of children in primary and middle schools. The purpose of this program is:

1. To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
2. To facilitate the planning, development and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

There are two components of the statewide Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program; Non-infrastructure (education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation) activities and infrastructure (planning, design and construction) activities. The purpose of the work conducted under this first phase is to provide support to participating schools with the non-infrastructure activities. Participating schools have been selected by VTrans through an open competitive solicitation process.

Each participating school is required to form a local Safe Routes to School Team. The CCMPO Regional SR2S Coordinator will work with these local teams as they implement their local SR2S initiatives by undertaking the tasks described in more detail under the Scope of Work below. It is expected that the Regional SR2S Coordinator will be in regular contact with the VTrans SR2S Coordinator. While the Regional SR2S Coordinator will have a certain level of independence, the SR2S effort will be recognized as a VTrans program.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

The CCMPO seeks a Regional Coordinator who will act as the principal point of contact and support person to Safe Routes to School Teams in participating Chittenden County schools. The following seven schools/districts have been selected to participate:

- Winooski School District
- Jericho Elementary
- CP Smith Elementary, Burlington
- Shelburne Community School
- Hinesburg Community School
- Westford Elementary
- JJ Flynn Elementary, Burlington

The Regional Coordinator is expected to attend local SR2S meetings as necessary, and be available by phone and email to answer day to day questions and offer advice about the implementation of SR2S initiatives at each school. It is acknowledged that each school will be implementing a unique version of SR2S and the scope of work includes some items that are expected to be implemented at every participating school with the remaining items being ones that may be included, depending on local initiatives at each school. The tasks reflect the needed flexibility that will encourage individual school creativity.

The scope of work under this agreement is detailed in the following tasks:

Mandatory tasks for each participating school

1. **Assist with before and after survey work.** Using forms provided by VTrans, the Regional Coordinator will assist the SR2S Team with conducting behavior and attitude surveys of students, parents and teachers. The surveys are intended to quantify the current levels of bicycling and walking, provide insight into parent attitudes and concerns about letting their children walk or bike to school and to document changes that occur as promotion and encouragement efforts are implemented. The main effort will be to address any logistical challenges in conducting the surveys and following up with SR2S Teams to ensure that surveys are completed in a timely manner. The Regional Coordinator will work with the CCMPO and VTrans to distribute the results (see Task #6).
2. **Assist with development of a School Travel Plan.** Each participating school will develop a School Travel Plan (STP). The STP serves as the planning document that summarizes a school's SR2S activities. The STP must include the following elements:
 - a. Identification of individuals and organizations involved in the local SR2S Team
 - b. An assessment of the current levels of walking and biking,
 - c. An identification of the physical and cultural barriers students face,
 - d. An outline of what steps will be taken to overcome these barriers, with
 - e. A timeline for action steps and identification of who will take the lead for each step.

Additionally, depending on the status of the SR2S initiative at a school, the Regional Coordinator will perform one or more of the following tasks:

3. **Assist school Safe Routes to School Teams with building their capacity in the community.** The Regional Coordinator will work closely with the school Community Contact to help establish and build the capacity of local SR2S Teams. The Regional Coordinator will assist them with identifying potential stakeholders that will result in representation and buy-in from diverse members of the community. This would include the municipal government, local health/medical organizations, environmental organizations, law enforcement and other stakeholders who will help support this effort in an ongoing fashion. This task will include coordination with the School Health liaison in the Vermont Department of Health District office in Burlington – 863-7323.
4. **Assist with organizing special events.** One of the key components of successful SR2S efforts is participation in special events such as Walk to School Day that provide an opportunity to highlight efforts to increase levels of bicycling and walking. The Regional Coordinator will assist the school SR2S Teams in promoting, organizing and implementing successful special events that will generate interest and participation in bicycling and walking to school. Special events often include safety presentations (to be provided by VTrans) or events like a bicycle safety fair. A limited stipend will be available to participating schools for incentive item expenses and supporting school SR2S Teams. One component of this task will be to incorporate ongoing Vermont Department of Health and Department of Education physical activity initiatives that could be used to support SR2S encouragement/promotion efforts (e.g. Daylight Savings Challenge, Fit and Healthy Kids initiative). Typically, a school participates in 2-4 special events during the school year.
5. **Assist with ongoing encouragement programs.** The Regional Coordinator will work with the SR2S Teams on efforts to encourage increased levels of walking or bicycling to school. Examples are the establishment of a specific week day when walking or bicycling are encouraged (e.g. Walking Wednesdays), integration of walking into the curriculum (e.g. Walking across the U.S.A. or around the world). An event that has successfully been used in some schools to address common parent fears about child safety is to organize chaperoned walking or bicycling groups. Often called “Walking School Bus” or “Bicycle Train” initiatives, these require some coordinated effort to map out routes that are most commonly used by kids who walk or bicycle to school, organize adults or older children to be chaperones and publicize their availability. While the SR2S Teams at each participating school will be primarily responsible for implementing these initiatives, the Regional Coordinator will assist them. The Regional Coordinator will be primarily in a supporting role for the encouragement activities, providing resources such as helpful web sites or toolkits from other successful SR2S programs that can be modeled locally.
6. **Provide assistance with communication.** Using material provided by VTrans and through conducting independent research, assist SR2S teams with tasks such as writing articles for school newsletters, contacting local media to cover special events, speaking at public meetings about the goals and purpose of SR2S, and any other outreach/public

relations opportunities. Using data provided by VTrans, the Regional Coordinator will help SR2S teams report on the results of the school survey work conducted in Task #1.

Identify law enforcement issues. The Regional Coordinator will work with the SR2S team to help identify barriers to walking and bicycling that could be solved by law enforcement. The goal of law enforcement's involvement with the program is to provide targeted enforcement of traffic laws where local problems have been identified by the SR2S Team or members of the school. The Regional Coordinator will help SR2S Teams identify resources to address these issues.

Deliverables

As part of this agreement, the Regional Coordinator will provide:

1. Monthly invoices that includes a Task and hours summary, accompanied by a progress report summarizing SR2S activities undertaken with participating schools.
2. A media file that includes any local newspaper or school newsletter articles about SR2S activities.
3. Copies of flyers or other promotional media used to encourage children to walk or bicycle to school.
4. School Travel Plan for each school.

CCMPO Support

The CCMPO will support the SR2S effort in the following ways:

1. Providing mapping and general assessment of infrastructure around schools including sidewalks, paths, crossings, etc.
2. Prioritizing locally identified improvements and identifying next steps that the community would need to take.
3. Classifying locally identified infrastructure needs as either minor or major projects (Note: minor projects would include simple signing or pavement markings only while major projects include feasibility study before moving forward. If a feasibility study is required, it would be pursued by the community through a traditional process and not this SR2S outreach effort.)
4. As a supplement to existing and planned traffic counts conducted by VTrans, the CCMPO will assist with collecting and analyzing traffic data (i.e., 2 hour counts) in close proximity to schools and on streets impacted by student walking or bicycling.

VTrans Support

The VTrans SR2S Coordinator will provide the following to the CCMPO and its Regional Coordinator using the existing state and local models of SR2S programs and guidance from National organizations:

1. Staff training to ensure consistent delivery of the program.
2. Templates for behavior and attitude surveys, promotions, newsletters, etc.
3. Ongoing assistance and coordination between participating schools and the CCMPO

4. Regular meetings with all Regional SR2S Coordinators to share information about what is/is not working.

Project Timeline

The Program Coordinator's contract will be for two years beginning in the summer of 2006 and ending in the summer of 2008.

3. QUALIFICATION/SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Technical Proposal

Applicants will be evaluated on related experience and past performance. To assist with the evaluation, please provide the following information in the technical proposal:

- A description of the applicant's qualifications which should include:
 1. Three years minimum project management experience.
 2. Knowledge of the area, the culture, community leaders and preferably the public education system.
 3. Skills in time management, meeting management, and facilitation.
 4. Ability to work successfully with a variety of community leaders and stakeholders.
 5. Professional writing and communications skills.
 6. High degree of computer proficiency.
 7. Flexible schedule to be able to attend day & evening events / meetings.
 8. Personal interest in walking and/or bicycling.
 9. Enthusiasm for working with children.
 10. Background in education, health, and/or transportation.
- A brief description of how the applicant would accomplish the work outlined in the Scope of Work including an explanation of any proposed changes to the scope based on insights/expertise related to the topic or local circumstances.
- Describe the skills and services the applicant offers.
- Describe experience on similar types of projects.
- Provide at least three references.

Cost Proposal

Provide hourly and overtime rates for all personnel to be utilized under this contract. These rates should also be presented and broken down by direct labor costs per class of labor and overhead cost.

In order to be considered responsive to this RFQ, each proposal shall conform to the following requirements. The applicant shall:

- Submit six (6) copies of the technical proposal in one sealed envelope. Number all pages in the Proposal consecutively.
- Submit one (1) copy of the cost proposal in a sealed envelope separate from the technical proposals
- Clearly indicate the following on the outside of each of the two (2) sealed envelopes or packages containing the technical proposals and cost proposals:
 1. Name and address of the applicant.
 2. Due date and time

3. Envelope contents (i.e. technical proposal or cost proposal.)
4. Program name – SR2S Program Coordination.

4. PROGRAM BUDGET

The budget for the Chittenden County SR2S Program is \$9,000 total per school/school district with up to \$1,500 of the total per school/school district available for school team support and program incentives. Levels of effort in the SR2S Program may vary considerably by season/time of year as well as by school.

4. STANDARDS & DELIVERABLES

- All reports/documents prepared by the Program Coordinator should be provided in both hard copy (paper) and digital format (MS Word). Data should be provided in MS compatible formats (Excel or Access). All copies of reports shall be double-sided.
- All data, databases, reports, designs and materials, in digital and hard copy format created under this project shall be transferred to the CCMPO and VTrans upon completion of the project.
- The coordinator will provide brief written monthly progress reports to the CCMPO project manager to be submitted with monthly invoices.

6. COORDINATOR EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The technical proposal will be evaluated and ranked first. The technical proposal evaluation criteria, with corresponding weight factors, are the following:

- Qualifications of the proposed coordinator and their experience with similar projects. (30 Pts.)
- Demonstration of overall project understanding, insights into effective coordination between the selected schools and their related stakeholder groups, and familiarity with the project area. (30 Pts.)
- Clarity of the proposal and creativity/thoroughness in addressing the scope of work. (30 Pts.)
- Completeness of submitted proposal with all elements required by the RFQ (5 Pts.)
- Demonstration of effort to solicit/include Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) (5 Pts.)

The cost proposal will next be reviewed for consistency and in light of the evaluation of the technical proposal, with attention to allocation of budget by task.

The CCMPO reserves the right to seek clarification of any proposal submitted.

A review committee will make a recommendation on a preferred Program Coordinator to the CCMPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC is responsible for the consultant selection decision.

The CCMPO 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 in part or in its entirety this RFQ if it is in the best interests of the CCMPO. This solicitation of qualifications in no way obligates the CCMPO to award a contract.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The CCMPO TAC reserves the right to award the contract to the most qualified bidder, not necessarily the lowest bidder.

All proposals become the property of the CCMPO upon submission. The cost of preparing, submitting, and presenting a proposal lies solely with the proposer.

Technical proposals and cost proposals in two separate sealed envelopes should be submitted no later than 1:00 p.m. on Friday, July 7, 2006 to:

Peter Keating, Senior Planner
Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization
30 Kimball Ave., Suite 206
South Burlington, Vermont 05403

Proposals submitted after the deadline will **not** be accepted.

Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to Peter Keating, CCMPO at (802) 660-4071 ext. 14.