

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Town of Lunenburg, Vermont
Gilman Village Revitalization Plan
Date of Issue: January 23, 2026
Proposals Due: February 25, 2026, 5:00 pm

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Summary

The Town of Lunenburg has received a Better Connections grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) to develop a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to revitalization in the Village of Gilman. The plan will focus on integrating transportation planning with broader community development and economic opportunity tied to the return of rail service, land use, as well as addressing specific transportation safety needs (see attached Project Map Area). Award includes Clean Water Initiative funding to study stormwater impacts and develop mitigation options. Anticipated outcomes from this master planning project are:

- Multimodal and intermodal planning including consideration of the reintroduction of rail line to the Village with a focus on safety for community and complete streets
- A master plan that safely integrates community needs and rail with trail opportunities
- Village Center development and redevelopment opportunities
- Infrastructure needs analysis to include building rehabilitation, redevelopment of sites, housing needs and stormwater management to create a more resilient and vibrant village center, including the evaluation of Ampersand Energy mill property
- Development of a Stormwater Master Plan for Gilman Village that builds off of the 2014 Stormwater Infrastructure Map. Master Plan, with three identified sites brought to 30% design consistent with the Clean Water Project Types.
- Recommendations for improved recreational opportunities, land use, and conservation within the village
- Development of streetscape designs, conceptual designs for transportation improvements and other improvement recommendations

Context and Background

The Village of Gilman was a thriving community while the Gilman Paper Mill prospered. During the height of mill operations, over 300 people, mostly community residents, worked at the mill. After several years of decline, the sale to new operators, and attempts to revitalize operations, the mill shuttered its doors in 2007. The owners of the mill provided 90% of the infrastructure to Gilman residents. The Gilman family paid for an extensive water and wastewater system for Gilman. Recreational opportunities, including a ski tow and skating rink were funded by the mill. During the height of operations, Gilman had 2 variety stores, a gas station, restaurants, a bowling alley, to name just a few community resources. The mill built over 30 houses for employees and paid for redecorating of those homes on an annual basis. To put it simply, the mill was the economic and community development resource for Gilman.

Gilman has several positive, impactful projects currently in development, including the redevelopment of Fox Field & Forest, bringing robust recreational opportunities to the community. The Lunenburg-Gilman Community Trust is in the process of redeveloping the former Gilman Middle School into a multi-use community center. The Gilman Senior Center, after being closed for 3 years, reopened in a new location in 2023. The former Gilman Methodist Church was purchased by a non-profit group and has been redeveloped into the George L. Fox Memorial Chapel. Vermont Rail Systems will bring rail transportation back to the Ampersand Energy yard (former mill yard). Several home-based businesses, including Multitude Takeaway Restaurant and Kate's Seamstress Creations, have sprouted in the Village. Riverside Rescue and Grooming has refocused their mission to become a full-service pet rescue center which includes a sizeable addition to the building's footprint.

Despite these initiatives, the Village lacks a comprehensive plan for impending changes. The Better Connections supported Master Plan will focus on planning for multi-modal transportation services, infrastructure, economic development, Safe Streets, stormwater runoff and storm drain infrastructure and how all these components can mesh to support community and economic revitalization for the Village. Additional consideration should be given to bike and pedestrian travel throughout the Village, possible uses for the old Whitcomb Bridge, the return of rail service to the community and the challenges and opportunities it presents and community revitalization opportunities.

Detailed Project Plan

1. A Project Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from various community organizations, including Gilman Head Start, Gilman Senior Center, Ampersand Energy, Vermont Rail Systems, Lunenburg-Gilman Community Trust, George L. Fox Memorial Chapel, Select Board, Highway Foreman, business owners and residents and VTRANS and ACCD representatives, envision a workplan with the following milestones and deliverables. While deadlines for deliverables may be adjusted as needed, all work must be completed by February 28, 2027. The Final Master Plan and revisions are due by February 15, 2027.

Milestones:

Task 1 - Project Kickoff and Management:

Selected consultant will meet with the project steering committee to walk through project area, review project activities, anticipate outcomes and deliverables and prepare a project outline with timeline.

Completion date: April 1, 2026

Task 2 - Evaluate Current Conditions:

Consultant will compile information on existing transportation, land use and economic conditions in the Village. Resources available include published traffic counts, the Lunenburg Municipal Plan, the Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Visit publication, the 2024 AARP Walk Audit, the Agency of Transportation's Complete Streets guidelines and any

other published reports on the Village. This will also include evaluation of existing wayfinding and signage in the Village as it relates to Complete Streets guidelines.

Consultant will review and compile information on existing storm water management, identifying sites where stormwater mitigation needs to occur, and including review of existing storm water system. The evaluation will consider the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Environmental Conservation Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division and Division of Environmental Protection's Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules adopted in April 2019.

Completion date: May 30, 2026.

Task 3 - Public Outreach:

Engaging the residents of Gilman to assess current needs, concerns, ideas and questions. The consultant should consider how to engage the whole community via a variety of methods, including community members that may be hard to reach.

The Project Steering Committee anticipates conducting at least two public engagement events at critical junctures in the planning process (public outreach for existing conditions and for community input on potential improvements). The consultant will be responsible for facilitating and marketing these events to allow opportunity for input from the public and stakeholders. While public engagement events are likely to be traditional community visioning session, the use of innovative technologies for gathering feedback from the public is strongly encouraged.

Additionally, the Consultant will be responsible for engaging stakeholders and the Steering Committee throughout the process, so the proposal should delineate an effective engagement strategy for stakeholders, who will be identified in the project kickoff.

Task 4 - Identify Potential Village Improvements:

Consultant will:

- Propose and evaluate Village improvements on activity nodes based on existing conditions, standards costs and public input.
- Develop conceptual designs, maps, and illustrations of improvements.
- Develop a wayfinding plan that links Village attractions and businesses.
- Conduct Market Study for Village to evaluate economic development strategies that will assist in funding implementation of projects.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for the return of rail traffic into the community that considers safety, noise, resident concerns, support of railroad operations and rail-with-trail opportunities.
- Develop a strategy for land use and conservation.
- Make recommendations for improvements and/or additions to recreational spaces and propose additional recreational spaces, inclusive of evaluating a rail with trail option on the Twin State Line.
- Design & conduct a demonstration project to test one of the suggested implementation ideas.

- Develop Stormwater Masterplan for Gilman village area with a minimum of three project sites brought to 30% design per ANR Clean Water Projects Table. Stormwater mitigation strategies should include an exploration of nature based solutions and green infrastructure to mitigate stormwater issues within the project area.
- Completion Date: November 15, 2026

Task 5 - Implementation Plan:

Consultant will incorporate public feedback into a long-range implementation plan with cost estimates, recommended prioritization for infrastructure improvements and a list of potential funding sources and partners for each proposed improvement.

Completion date: January 15, 2027

Task 6 - Final Presentations:

Consultant will review final recommendations with the Steering Committee, host a public hearing to present findings and provide recommendations for a final report.

Completion date: January 30, 2026

Task 7 - Master Plan:

Consultant will prepare a final Master Plan, which will be reviewed with the Steering Committee.

Completion Date: February 15, 2027

Additional Information

Ongoing Project Meetings: The Project Steering Committee anticipates monthly project update meetings and/or conference calls.

Project Funding: A total of \$75,000 is available for consultant services from the Better Connections Grant Program administered by VTrans and ACCD. Additionally, \$30,000 is available for the consultant to focus on the clean water portion of this RFP. Total funding available if \$105,000. Funding and match funding has already been secured.

Submission Requirements

All responses to the RFP shall include the following information:

1. **Cover Letter:** A cover letter of interest and general description of recommended approaches, and information about your skill set to complete this project.
2. **Scope of Work:** Provide a detailed scope of work based on the work plan provided in the RFP, including:
 - a. Describe the project approach and overviews of engagement, including a detailed scope of work with associated list of tasks broken down by task and team member.
 - b. Describe the schedule and proposed deliverables.

- c. Describe additional supplemental items to the scope of work. We are very open to and interested in hearing any new/creative approaches to this type of plan and approach.
3. **Schedule:** Expand on the schedule of work provided in the RFP to include completion of work task and deliverables, as well as key meetings. The proposed schedule must comply with the timeline outlined in the RPF.
4. **Project Budget:** Provide a detail budget broken down by task. Include overhead and hourly rates for all individuals who will be involved in the project. Also, provide an estimated budget with staff hours for completing each phase of the proposed scope of work.
5. **Qualifications and Staffing:** Provide a profile of the lead consultant for the project, as well as sub-consultants who will be part of the project. Include the role each consultant will play in the project. Also include a description of experience on similar projects for all firms that will be part of the project.
6. **References:** A minimum of three (3) professional references for whom a similar project has been completed within the last five (5) years.
7. **Proposal Limit:** Proposals should be limited to forty (40) single sided pages or twenty (20) double sided pages.

All information submitted becomes the property of the Town of Lunenburg upon submission. The Steering Committee reserves the right to issue supplemental information or guidelines relating to the RFP, make modifications to the RFP or withdraw the RFP. Once submitted, the consultant team outlined in the proposal cannot be changed without written notice and consent by the Steering Committee. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting the proposal is the sole expense of the consultant. The Town of Lunenburg reserves the right to reject all proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities or to cancel the RFP in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the Town of Lunenburg. The solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the Town of Lunenburg to award a contract.

Submission Requirements

Respondents should submit one (1) digital copy of the submittal by Tuesday, February 25, 2026, at 5:00pm to:

Better Connections Steering Committee
Town of Lunenburg
PO Box 54
Lunenburg, VT. 05906
802-892-5959
townclerk@lunenburg-gilmanvt.gov

All proposals submitted will receive a confirmation receipt email.

Questions about this project or RFP should be submitted via email to Gary Briggs at townclerk@lunenburg-gilmanvt.gov.

Proposal Selection:

Proposals will be reviewed by the Steering Committee by Friday, March 6, 2026. A short-list of consultants may be selected for hybrid interviews. If interviews are required, additional information will be provided prior to the interview.

Proposal Evaluation:

Respondents will be evaluated according to the following factors:

1. Consultant experience with similar projects – 25%
2. Scope of work, methodology, public engagement and scheduling – 25%
3. Overall quality, completeness and clarity of the proposal – 35%
4. Consultant costs and fee scheduled – 15%

Final Selection

One consulting team will be selected to negotiate a final contract for services. The final scope of work with specified deliverables may be modified through negotiation of the final contract. Any expenses resulting from interviews will be the sole responsibility of the consultant.

Contract Requirements

The Town of Lunenburg will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by the municipality's legal counsel. The contract shall not start until the successful applicant enters a written contract with the municipality. The Town of Lunenburg is not liable for any cost incurred by consultant prior to issuance of a contract. The consultant and all subcontractors must comply with all State and Federal covenants required by virtue of the funding source or contained or referenced in all the municipality's subcontracts, including, but not limited to the following provisions:

- Insurance coverage
- Indemnification
- Workers Compensation
- Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) Obligation
- Audit and Record Retention
- Lobbying restrictions

Mapping and Graphic Standards

The planning project may have mapping to inventory, assess, and communicate geographic concepts. Consultants will develop data layers in GIS, and if needed, CAD or Microstation. Data should be in Vermont State Plane coordinates, meters NAIP 1983. These data layers can be developed from existing data layers and/or augmented with additional engineering work. Any artistic rendering or other graphical illustration should be provided in .pdf file format along with native editable file formats in Adobe Illustrator. Consultant will work with the Town of Lunenburg to provide associated mapping in a manner acceptable to the municipality.

PROJECT AREA MAP



COMMUNITY ASSETS:

- 1 – Bernard Park
- 2 – Gilman Business Park/Ampersand Gilman Electric
- 3 – Gilman Gazebo Park
- 4 – Gilman Senior Housing
- 5 – Multitude Takeaway Restaurant
- 6 – Rev. George L. Fox Memorial Chapel
- 7 – Gilman Senior Center
- 8 – Gilman Middle School
- 9 – Fox Field & Forest Recreation Area

Village Designation Center



Railroad



Please be aware that Gilman Village Designated Area has expanded since this map was created to include Cedar Street and Commercial Avenue