

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Public Process for Southern Tier Trail - Design and Alignment

**Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning, and
Tourism**

September 17th, 2024

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1. Summary and Background

Cattaraugus County is located in rural southwestern New York State. It is characterized by wooded hillsides interspersed with farm fields. The County has 42 municipalities, which include two cities, (Olean and Salamanca) nine villages and thirty-two towns.

Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism (EDPT) completed the Countywide Trail System Plan (<https://www.cattco.org/planning/trail-system-plan>) with the purpose to preserve and promote the County's natural resources, maximize opportunities for outdoor recreation, increase the number and options for active transportation, and capitalize on the outdoor tourism industry. The Plan objective included surveying existing trails, determining the feasibility of connecting existing trails (within and beyond Cattaraugus County), identifying potential trail corridors and recommending trail improvements and potential new trails. This study recommended connecting to larger Western NY trail networks, including the Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail and the Genesee Valley Greenway.

EDPT has moved that recommendation forward by partnering with GObike Buffalo, funded by The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, completing a feasibility study in February of 2022 for the Southern Tier Trail (STT) (<https://gobikebuffalo.org/project/southern-tier-trail-feasibility-study/>). The study consisted of community outreach and an assessment for the design and construction of a shared-use bicycle and pedestrian path between the City of Buffalo, NY and the southern end of Genesee Valley Greenway State Park in Hinsdale NY, completing a full regional trail loop of Western New York. The route is intended to follow the Buffalo-Pittsburgh Rail corridor to the greatest extent possible from Buffalo to the City of Salamanca and along the Allegany River from the City of Salamanca to the Town of Hinsdale. The corridor runs through two counties, 11 towns, three villages, and portion of the Seneca Nation of Indian's Allegany Territory.

The Southern Tier Trail (STT) project in Cattaraugus County will be a total of 52 miles of pedestrian infrastructure that will connect 11 communities in Cattaraugus County. Currently along this corridor, there are only 7 miles that have pedestrian, bicycle facilities, of which most are inadequate, and not ADA compliant. The goal of the STT will be to improve and expand the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and ensure that the infrastructure is safe and comfortable for use by persons of all ages and abilities. Once developed, STT will provide a safe, affordable and accessible active transportation option for the lower income and underserved populations by connecting them with the option to walk or bike to the critical amenities in their area, which include jobs, healthcare, grocery stores, libraries and schools.

Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism (EDPT) applied for and was funded by the United States Department of Transportation for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) 2023 Funding to complete the alignment, planning, design and construction documents for 52 miles of trail through

Cattaraugus County. The 52 miles will cross into eleven municipalities.

Southern Tier Trail Cattaraugus Proposed Trail



2. Submission Guidelines

Qualified organizations' or individuals are required to submit (1) hardcopy and (1) Digital copy on USB flash drive in a sealed envelope clearly referencing the title of the RFP delivered to:

**Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development Planning and Tourism
C/O Kate O'Stricker**

303 Court Street

Little Valley, NY 14760

Submission of Proposals:

Advertisement: Monday September 23rdth, 2024

Question Deadline: Monday, October 14th, 2024 at 4:00 pm EST

Posting of Addenda: Monday, October 21st, 2024 at 4:00 pm EST

RFP Proposal Due: Friday November 1st, 2024 at 2:00 pm EST

3. Proposal Guidelines

As this proposal relates to the public process necessary to complete the final alignment, engineering, permitting and construction documents to complete the Southern Tier Trail project (STT), please respond by providing information that supports an established successful record of

performing this type of work. To facilitate review of the information submitted, proposals must contain the following information presented in the order listed:

- A. Organization Information (not to exceed 2 pages)
 - Name of Organization
 - Complete Address
 - Contact Person
 - Telephone Number
 - Website
 - Email address
- B. Respondent's approach to the project & timeline (not to exceed 6 pages)
 - Provide your teams approach and a general statement of qualifications that responds to the project information in the scope, including stakeholder involvement, design processes, working relationships, responsibility of subcontractors and work product.
 - Provide an Outline of project timeline including deliverables for each phase, methods used to maintain schedule and any other pertinent details, i.e. description of your organizations process from preliminary alignment, approvals, environmental permitting, through approval of final design.
- C. Public Process Team Personnel & Technical Experience (not to exceed 8 pages)
 - Identify the Project Manager, Designers, and other important members of your team and included the following information for each:

Key Personnel

- Name
- Roles and Responsibilities on this project by phase
- Experience with projects of similar scope and scale
- Number of Federal Aid Projects/ USDOT projects involved with
- Years with the Organization
- Identify the individual who will assume overall leadership for the project and responsibility for the contract

Consultant and Sub-Contractors

Provide and Organizational Chart and reporting relationships of organizations and individuals proposed to accomplish work. For each organization or individual specialist include:

- Organization Name
- Background of the organization
- Number of professionals (by discipline) and support staff
- Major focus of practice
- Range of Services and references

D. Related Project Experience (Not to exceed 4 pages)

- Provide specific projects to illustrate your teams experience. Please limit to four examples.

E. Project Budget- Not to exceed \$430,000

- Contract Period: January 2025-May 2027
- All costs to be charged to the County monthly: including estimated reimbursable expenses
- Billing Structure
- Assumptions used in determining overall projects costs
- Describe how your organization has successfully managed budgets and prioritized items to successfully complete a project with a similar scope. Provide information about cost controls methods and how cost estimates are established.

F. Proposed Scope of Work

The selected Consultant will be expected to include the cost and timeline to perform the following deliverables:

Task 1: Plan Review and Analysis/ Design a Public Process Plan

- Review previous Southern Tier Trail (STT) Feasibility Study, Cattaraugus County Wide Trail Plan, Ellicottville Great Valley Trail Master Plan, and any other work that pertains to the Southern Tier Trail Project.
- Key Stakeholder meetings (To be coordinated with the EDPT staff and Engineering Firm who will be hired by Cattaraugus County for this project)
 - Public Process Plan with clear goals and objectives
 - Preliminary Southern Tier Trail Governance Structure Options
- Communicate the vision of the STT to elected officials, the public and landowners about the benefits of a greenway trail.
- Build a team of supporters that will help to communicate the vision and build community enthusiasm.

Task 2: Establish Advisory Groups

- This task will build on the preliminary investigations and key stakeholder meetings developed in Task 1. The consultant team should provide sufficient staff resources with the expertise necessary to provide the full range of professional services to:
- Establish Advisory Groups that include all 11 municipalities
 - Will include land owners who are affected by the STT
 - Build Leadership Support within the 11 Municipalities and the Seneca Nation of Indians.

- Will include Key stakeholders such as the Rail Road Company, NYSERDA, West Valley Demonstration Project, utility companies, state, regional and local agencies etc.
- Build Trust and Support Among the Communities and Stakeholder
- Explore Issues and opportunities in the communities
- Hold Community Workshops, open houses, educational roundtables

Task 3: With the assistance of EDPT Staff and Engineering Firm, identify the corridor and negotiate trail alignment

- Work with the Engineering contractor and Cattaraugus County to narrow the trail route options, research and map property ownership, and work to determine the most feasible alignment.
- Work towards keeping the STT on existing corridors as much as possible, such as abandoned railbed, rail with trail options, roadway side paths, and utility companies. It is the intent of the Cattaraugus County and the STT to stay away from private lands as much as possible.
- Determine best course of action to obtain legal right to construct the trail either through easements, right of way or other legal use agreement.
- Address liability concerns with stakeholders and work with the engineering firm to design a trail that will minimize risk by identifying potential hazards and dangerous locations.
- Clearly and concisely communicate with stakeholders how private landowners who grant use of their lands for trail purposes are protected from unwarranted Lawsuits by NY's Recreational Use Statute (General Obligations Law 9-103)

Task 4: Establishing Operation and Maintenance Plan

- As Cattaraugus County will not be the owner/ operator or in charge of maintenance after construction, it will be part of this project to garner support and establish the ownership and maintenance operations of the trail.
- A maintenance and operational plan will be developed to identify owners, where the trail will cross jurisdictional boundaries and should clearly define who is responsible for maintenance on which portions.
- It will be the goal to determine if Local, State or Federal Agencies or a non-for-profit organization or any combination, will assume primary responsibility for the management and maintenance. They can be shared and formalized by establishing the terms in a Memorandum of Agreement with the organizations. A trail management system will be required to ensure that the trail will remain accessible and safe for all users, responding to issues as they arise and knowing and tracking potential needs for long term maintenance.

4. Budget: Proposals are not to exceed \$430,000 over contract period

All proposals must include proposed fees, costs to complete the tasks described in the project scope of work. Delineate assumptions used in determining overall project costs. Provide cost control methods and how cost estimates have been established. All costs and fees must be clearly described in each proposal.

5. Request for Proposal and Project Timeline

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6. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

All proposals shall be reviewed and evaluated by EDPT Staff. Those organizations determined acceptable for the award based on an evaluation using the selection criteria reflected below, will be interviewed either in person, on-line or by phone whichever is deemed most appropriate by the selection committee.

- Quality of proposed staff filling key positions and record of previously completed projects of similar scope and size completed within the past 5-10 years. Please include a verifiable record of completing projects on time and on budget. A record of providing services that fully met or exceeded the client's expectations.
- Proposed Project Process Plan that includes a process design that demonstrates a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the project scope of services. The plan/process design includes all the requisite resources and the proposed schedule meets the project required timeline for project completion. The individual proposed to act as the primary contact that has the requisite skills and direct experience necessary to successfully complete the project goals/objectives. The Process Plan accurately identifies all major challenges/opportunities and includes innovative/creative proposed solutions (best practices) that have produced verifiable positive results on past projects.
- Total fee for services.

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7. AWARD OF A CONTRACT

After all interviews have been completed, the selection committee will forward their final recommendation for award to the Cattaraugus County Legislature for approval. The award will be made to the most qualified organization after evaluation of all responses, interviews, a thorough review of their qualifications, completion of negotiations and acceptance of their fee.

The right is reserved to reject any and all responses received; and, in all cases, the CCEDPT will be the sole judge as to whether the response has, or has not, satisfactorily met the requirements of this RFP.

8. Documents

Plans and documents pertaining to this project can be found at the following links:

<https://gobikebuffalo.org/project/southern-tier-trail-feasibility-study/>

<https://www.cattco.org/planning/trail-system-plan>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1szhJKe5kn7CzRTJpOfCWtoYaY3vKFhIm/view?usp=sharing>