



Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources Collaborative Laboratory
SITE LOCATION PROPOSAL

August 8, 2014

The statutory request:

On or before August 15, 2014, the Department of Buildings and General Services, the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and the Agency of Natural Resources shall submit a site location proposal for a shared laboratory to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions. It is the intent of the General Assembly that when evaluating site locations, preference shall be given to State-owned property. (Act 178 of 2014, Section 33)

Dear House Corrections & Institutions and Senate Institutions Committees:

Buildings and General Services was charged by the Legislature to evaluate and propose a site for new shared laboratory facilities for the Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The search for a site has been methodical. A comprehensive list of criteria was developed, and BGS advertised in area newspapers for land offers. Fifteen sites were offered, and these were analyzed in addition to four State-owned sites. The details and summary of this process may be found in our two-volume report.

After conducting due diligence, BGS proposes the laboratory be located at VTC in Randolph.

In our search, Randolph ranked first in physical characteristics as well as benefits for both Agencies' programs and the State of Vermont. When shared heating is factored in, VTC is the most economical site. While it ranked lower in benefits to program staff and users, it ranked #1 overall.

| RANK | SITE | BUILDABILITY | PROGRAM BENEFITS | SOV BENEFITS | TOTAL | COST |
|------|------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|
| | | 30 points (rank) | 5 points (rank) | 5 points (rank) | 40 points (rank) | |
| 1 | Randolph | 25.8 (#1) | 3.6 (#8) | 4.6 (#1) | 34.0 (#1) | \$890,000 |
| 2 | Waterbury | 22.6 (#6) | 4.0 (#3) | 4.0 (#2) | 30.6 (#2) | \$1,170,000 |
| 3 | Colchester | 24.3 (#4) | 2.2 (#12) | 3.3 (#8) | 29.8 (#3) | \$690,000 |
| 4 | Berlin | 21.9 (#8) | 3.7 (#6) | 3.7 (#4) | 29.3 (#4) | \$2,230,000 |

The Waterbury complex, ranked #2 overall, offers reduced upfront costs and operational savings by sharing heating/cooling infrastructure. These savings significantly affect cost comparisons, and it may seem prudent to realize them now. However, these savings are available for any future State project, and the benefits of collaboration for both the laboratory and VTC outweigh this immediate savings.

The Department of Buildings and General Services and the Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources are excited about the positive impact this project will on laboratory staff and all users, from Vermont farmers and businesses, to fish hatcheries and regulatory programs. We also envision substantial benefits for VTC students pursuing careers in agriculture and environmental science. This site offers the richest long-term benefits to Vermont's natural environment and its stewards.

Chuck Ross
 Chuck Ross, Secretary, Agency of Agriculture

Deb Markowitz D.M.
 Deb Markowitz, Secretary, Agency of Natural Resources

Michael J. Obuchowski 8/8/2014
 Michael J. Obuchowski, Commissioner of Buildings & General Services

VERMONT TECH

August 7, 2014

Dear House Corrections & Institutions and Senate Institutions Committees:

Vermont Technical College proposes partnering with the state of Vermont in locating the laboratories for the Vermont Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources Labs on the College's Randolph Center campus.

A decision to locate the Agency of Agriculture and Agency of Natural Resources State Laboratory on Vermont Technical College's Randolph campus will have longstanding positive implications for the Agencies, the College and the state of Vermont. A collocated facility approximately a mile from Exit 4 of 1-89 in the geographic heart of Vermont will become a natural focal point for the agricultural, food, and environmental economies of the state.

Locating the state's collaborative laboratory on campus would be mutually and highly beneficial. Having the laboratory on campus is consistent with Vermont Technical College's public responsibility to provide educational opportunities in science, engineering and agriculture for Vermonters and will also provide not only physical resources but also workforce resources to the state agencies through our students and faculty.

Programming Commitments from Vermont Technical College:

Appointment of a Campus Liaison to the State Laboratory: A Science Department faculty member, Michelle Sama, Ph.D, who will be the point person for all collaboration between the College and the Laboratory.

Designation of Faculty Leads from each appropriate academic department responsible for program collaboration by department: Agriculture, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Veterinary Technology, Sustainable Design & Technology, Mechanical Engineering (specifically, Metrology), Architectural Engineering Technology (specifically, Air Quality Technology) and Landscape Design & Sustainable Horticulture (specifically, Plant Pathology).

Student interns and work-study staff: Internship, applied undergraduate research and work-study opportunities for our students will provide a significant workforce resource to the State Laboratory, providing substantial leverage and increasing the service capacity of the Agencies. The collaborative laboratory would provide work-study and internship opportunities for Vermont Tech students enrolled and skilled in appropriate disciplines. Faculty would be available to provide expertise and consultation for the agencies' laboratory whenever needed and Agency experts would have the opportunity to engage Vermont students, then entrepreneurs, engineers and farmers of the future in the classroom, on the Vermont Tech farm and in the Lab.

Faculty/Scientist Collaboration: Vermont Technical College's 65 full-time faculty's similar academic and professional backgrounds with the State Laboratory staff provide opportunities for collaboration, especially in the summer months. In addition State Laboratory staff interested in teaching will be welcome to teach, where appropriate, and will be mentored by Vermont Tech faculty.

College Classroom and Laboratory Space for state training needs, research and flex capacity for testing: Scheduling priority to the State Laboratory and the Agencies will be provided by the College in the months of June, July and August. Space will be provided where possible during the academic year.

Vermont Interactive Technologies studios: Scheduling priority to the State Laboratory will be provided by the College for State Laboratory staff meetings with staff off-site and other training or meeting needs. Vermont Interactive Technologies has 16 studios located strategically throughout the state of Vermont, including a location in Morrill Hall on Vermont Tech's Randolph Center campus, four hundred yards from the proposed State Laboratory site.

Development of a Collaborative Business Model: College entities including Continuing Education & Workforce Development, the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center and the Department of External Degree Programs are self-sustaining through revenue generating programming, many of which are custom designed to meet the needs of our partners. The College will lend its entrepreneurial expertise and business office operations to assist the State Laboratory in providing fee for service testing that leads to significant revenue generation for the State Laboratory.

Grant Writing: The College will pursue appropriate grant opportunities that lend themselves to the expertise of the State Laboratory staff, including applications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute for Standards and Technology and the National Science Foundation.

Town of Randolph: Randolph is a uniquely enjoyable place to visit, work and live, just thirty minutes from Lebanon, NH and just two and a half hours from Boston. The Downtown is part of the National Main Street Program. The Village area is registered as a National Historic District, and the recreation opportunities offered locally all provide services that many other small town residents need to go elsewhere to find. **Chandler Center for the Arts** is a community-based arts organization in Randolph, Vermont, serving Central Vermont and the Upper Valley region with a year-round series of performances, art exhibits and educational opportunities in historic Chandler Music Hall and Gallery.

Locating the lab in Randolph will embed it with an institution where Vermont students come to learn a set of skills and knowledge that lead them to jobs in industries, often as business owners and entrepreneurs, overseen by and partnered with both of these state agencies, not to mention the opportunity for the training of Vermont's future inspectors and field staff. Over time, it has the potential to create a culture of deep collaboration between Vermont entrepreneurs and businesses and the agencies because of the natural cross pollination and acquaintance that happens when facilities and staff are co-located.

The significance of locating the state's collaborative laboratory on the Vermont Technical College campus should not be underestimated. This is not just another building on a college campus to us; instead, this is an opportunity to maximize the state's limited resources in a way that serves the most Vermonters and that will benefit generations of Vermonters to come.

Warmest regards,



Dan Smith
Interim President