



STATE OF VERMONT
General Assembly
Commission on Act 250:
the Next 50 Years

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ISSUED FEBRUARY 2, 2018

This document responds to questions received by the question deadline of February 9, 2018.

1. **Q:** Please clarify the invoicing procedure outlined in Section 3.1. Is it to be interpreted that the consultant can bill for each individual task once complete, or that the consultant can only bill once all the tasks are complete at end of project?
A: The intent of the RFP is that the consultant will bill once all the tasks are complete at the end of the project. However, the Commission is open to considering other proposed billing arrangements.
2. **Q:** Can you confirm that the purpose of the public outreach is to collect public input - not simply to educate the public regarding possible changes to Act 250 proposed by the committee?
A: Yes. However, in order to elicit specific input, members of the public may be given options on issues to which they can respond. For example, rather than generally asking how Act 250 might be modified to address climate change, potential options to make such changes are likely to be presented.
3. **Q:** How many people do you envision reaching through this process?
A: As many as possible. This public engagement process is being conducted by a legislative commission to report back to the General Assembly and is open to all Vermonters.
4. **Q:** Are the six meetings required to be "in person" meetings?
A: For each of the six public meetings, the Commission, staff, facilitator, and other attendees are expected to be physically present at a location in the state.
5. **Q:** What is the process for "working with the Commission members" to create a plan and materials? Will individual Commission members communicate or work directly with the consultants outside of scheduled Commission meetings?
A: No particular process has been set. It is expected that the contractor will work outside of meetings directly with the Chair, who may involve other Commission members and staff and advisors to the Commission, as appropriate. The facilitator also will work with Commission members and advisors at scheduled Commission meetings.
6. **Q:** What is the process and timeline for review and approval of materials and deliverables in the scope? (Does the whole commission review and sign off, or is that in the purview of a project manager?)

A: No particular process or timeline has been set. It is expected that the full Commission will meet to review and approve the materials to be used in the public engagement process before the process commences. It is possible that some deliverables will be approvable by the Chair.

7. Q: What is the expected role/commitment for Commission members on engagement activities? The RFP highlights a deliverable of training on breakout group facilitation. Can you elaborate on how the Commission members expect or are willing to be involved in events or facilitation?

A: It is expected that Commission members will attend all public meetings and facilitate break-out groups.

8. Q: Is there a schedule of Commission meetings through the contract time period?

A: No particular schedule has been set. Please see answer to no. 10, below.

9. Q: The RFP notes a due date of September 15, but a 1-year contract period. Do you expect any work to occur after September 15?

A: It is not clear what the questioner means by a “due date of September 15.” Most of the work is to be completed by or before that date, but the due date for collation and summary of input at the public meetings is within two weeks of each meeting. No work is expected after delivery of the final deliverable.

10. Q: Are the public meeting dates firmly set? (The RFP specifies two public meetings in September and a final report due date of Sept. 15. It would be very difficult to hold two public meetings, analyze all the data, and complete a report all within the first two weeks of September.)

A: The specific dates are not set. The parameters of the public meeting schedule are as set forth in the request for proposals (RFP). As indicated in the RFP, the due date for collation and summary of input from public meetings will be within two weeks of each meeting. Therefore, if a public meeting were completed on September 12, 2018, the collation and summary of input from that particular meeting would be due on September 26, 2018.

11. Q: What is the availability/capacity of staff to provide assistance on this project? Will there be a staff or project manager working closely with the consultant? What tasks might they take on, and how much time is available?

A: Please see answer to no. five, above. Staff availability and capacity to assist on this project is limited. A response to the RFP should assume that the contractor performs all actions necessary to the deliverables.

12. Q: Can the Office of Legislative Counsel provide any materials or resources (such as printing, meeting supplies), or should that be included in the budget?

A: A response to the RFP should assume that the contractor performs all actions necessary to the deliverables, including providing materials and resources.

13. Q: Are there legislative or other state communication channels that will be available for outreach and publicity? (i.e. website, social media accounts, press channels)?

A: For outreach and publicity, the Commission expects that the General Assembly’s website, including its [page for the Commission](#), will be available, along with issuing press releases. The Commission has not determined what other State communication channels may be available.

14. Q: Is there a particular format you expect for the final deliverables (report and synthesis of public input)?

A: No such format has been set.

15. Q: Are there any existing educational materials that could form the basis for new versions, or will they all be developed from scratch? If there are, could you direct us to them or provide copies?

A: Some materials may need to be developed from scratch. However, there are numerous materials on Act 250 that could provide the basis for materials used in the public engagement process. For example, there are many such materials on the [Commission's web page](#) and on the [web page of the Natural Resources Board](#). These are referred to as examples only and no particular document is endorsed. In addition, the Commission has formed topic-oriented subcommittees that are expected to develop questions for the public engagement process.

16. Q: The RFP notes interest in feedback from all Vermonters. Are there specific key audiences or stakeholders the Commission would prioritize for engagement?

A: No.

17. Q: Contract Period - The Contract period is listed as one year, but it appears that the final deliverables date is September 15th. If the work required under the contract extends beyond September 15th, would additional funds be allocated to continue the work?

A: Please see answers to nos. nine and 10 above regarding the "final deliverables date." No work is contemplated beyond the final deliverable. There are no additional funds available.

18. Q: What, if any, work has already been done with respect to the outreach plan requested under Section 2.2.1? Can you share any existing information with respect to outreach planning objectives, stakeholders identified as having an interest in the Commission's work etc?

A: [2017 Acts and Resolves No. 47](#) (Act 47) and the RFP set forth the Commission's objectives. The Commission discussed the public engagement process during its meetings of December 13, 2017 and January 18, 2018. The meetings were recorded. The recordings are available from committee assistant Faith Brown at fbrown@leg.state.vt.us.

19. Q: Section 2.2 says that the list of tasks is "suggested." Can you clarify whether there is flexibility for the contractor to propose which tasks are achievable within the allotted timeframe and budget or is the expectation that all tasks listed be completed within the \$20,000 budget allocated?

A: The Commission's expectation is that the listed tasks will be completed within the allocated amount of funds.

20. Q: For Task 2.2.4, is the contractor expected to facilitate the public meetings and present the materials or is the contractor's role limited to logistics and preparation for the meetings?

A: The contractor is expected to facilitate the public meetings and to present at least some materials. Commission members, advisors, or staff may be involved in presentation of materials. The contractor's role will include logistics and preparation for meetings.

21. Q: Are individuals who have provided testimony to the Commission on Act 250 eligible to bid on this RFP?

A: The Commission has not established a *per se* rule that individuals who have provided testimony are ineligible to bid. However, the contractor must be neutral and not identified with particular views on Act 250 and how it should be changed or identified with a particular stakeholder group.

22. Q: Can you provide a link to the Executive Branch Working Group's Act 250 recommendations report due on October 17, 2017, as mentioned in Act 47?

A: The report can be found [here](#).

23. Q: As the Act 250 Commission seems to meet the middle of each month, is it assumed that the contractor would report to the Commission on those dates? Typically we would bill at the end of each month and include a brief progress report at that time.

A: It is expected that the contractor would attend Commission meetings at which the outreach plan, educational materials, and other matters relevant to the public engagement process are discussed. Please also see answers to nos. one, five, 10, and 20, above.

24. Q: As a follow up, is the Commissioners' training intended to encourage them to serve as possible break-out facilitators at public meetings? We assume that a number of Commission members will attend each meeting.

A: Please see answers to nos. four and seven, above.

25. Q: May we assume that there will be legislative counsel or other staff available to supplement the contractor's notes from public meetings?

A: No.

26. Q: The RFP reads as though all materials, posters, handouts at meetings, etc. are to be covered by the contractor within the \$20,000 limitation. Is this your intent or are there other materials that the State has or will have to be included in materials available at public meetings?

A: The first sentence of the question is a correct reading of the RFP. Please also see answers to nos. 11, 12, and 15, above.

27. Q: Given the tight budget, can we assume that space for public meetings will be made available free of charge? Will the choice of meeting venues be a joint decision?

A: The Commission does not control all possible venues or the price for their use. The Commission is open to using venues for which there may be no or a small fee, such as those that might be owned by public institutions including State, regional, and local governments. The contractor would be expected to locate and recommend venues for approval.

28. Q: Do you or does anyone else have plans to videotape the proceedings of the public meetings?

A: The Commission ordinarily makes an audio recording of its meetings. It does not have plans to visually record the proceedings, although it is open to a proposal that includes visual recording. The Commission cannot speak to plans that other persons may have.