



MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

THE TOWN OF
ANTIGONISH

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Review and Development of Operations, Human Resources, and Governance Solutions for Antigonish Community Transit Society

Abstract

A comprehensive review and development of operations, human resources, and governance solutions for ACTS's fixed-route and book-a-ride services. This initiative aims to assess current organizational structures and processes, benchmark performance against industry best practices, and deliver targeted recommendations that enhance service quality, operational efficiency, fiscal sustainability, and board / governance effectiveness. The outcome will position the community transit system in Antigonish, Nova Scotia for strategic growth and long-term viability.

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Request for Proposal (RFP): Review and Development of Operations, Human Resources, and Governance Solutions for Antigonish Community Transit Society

1. Introduction

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish (County), Town of Antigonish (Town), and Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS; collectively referred to as the Partners) are seeking submissions from qualified individuals and organizations for the review, assessment and development of solutions for the fixed route and book-a-ride services provided by the non-profit organization ACTS.

The goal of this project is to improve organizational effectiveness and prepare for future growth by assessing the operational processes, human resources functions and governance structure of the public transportation service and creating solutions that are fiscally responsible and sustainable.

2. Background

The Antigonish Community Transit Society (ACTS) is a registered non-profit organization with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies dedicated to providing accessible, affordable transportation services to residents in the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish. Founded in 2010, and registered as a society in 2013, ACTS provides both fixed route and book-a-ride services. In 2024-2025 ACTS supplied 16,288 book-a-rides and 10,627 fixed route rides. The fleet consists of 9 vehicles with a staff compliment of 19 employees and 9 Board members.

3. Project Objectives

The selected consultant will conduct a thorough assessment of current operations, human resources practices, and governance structure with the following objectives:

3.1 Operational Review

- a) Assess route optimization for the book-a-ride service (fixed route is underway in a separate project).
- b) Assess scheduling processes for the fixed route and book-a-ride operations.
- c) Assess utilization of the booking and dispatch system.
- d) Identify key indicators available in the dispatch system and assess their usage/ potential usage by ACTS management and the Partners to improve operations.
- e) Review of fleet, maintenance and asset management procedures.
- f) Analyze financial sustainability of current service model.
- g) Identify opportunities for improved service delivery and cost efficiency for book-a-ride service.

- h) Benchmark operations against industry best practices and peer organizations for the book-a-ride service (fixed route benchmarking has been completed).

3.2 Human Resources Review

- a) Assess organizational structure and staffing levels.
- b) Review compensation and benefits packages for competitiveness.
- c) Evaluate recruitment, hiring, and retention practices.
- d) Assess employee training and development programs.
- e) Review HR policies, procedures, and compliance with applicable regulations.
- f) Evaluate staff performance management systems.
- g) Assess workplace culture and employee engagement.

3.3 Governance Review

- a) Evaluate board composition, structure, and effectiveness.
- b) Assess board roles, responsibilities, and term limits.
- c) Review board recruitment, orientation, and development practices.
- d) Assess board-staff relationships and communication.
- e) Review bylaws, policies, and decision-making processes.
- f) Evaluate strategic planning and oversight processes.
- g) Assess compliance with regulatory requirements and non-profit/ society organization best practices.
- h) Evaluate alternative governance options for the operation.

4. Scope of Work

The selected consultant will be responsible for the following tasks with resources listed in Appendix A and upon request from the partners:

4.1 Discovery and Assessment

- a) Review existing documentation, policies, and procedures.
- b) Conduct interviews with key staff, board members, and stakeholders.
- c) Analyze operational and financial data.
- d) Observe current operations and processes.
- e) Conduct employee surveys or focus groups as appropriate.
- f) Review board meeting minutes, bylaws, and governance documents.
- g) Observe board and committee meetings as appropriate.

4.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Identify and conduct meaningful engagement with key stakeholders, including the Partners' respective organizations.

4.3 Analysis and Benchmarking

- a) Identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in current practices.
- b) Compare performance metrics against industry standards.
- c) Assess compliance with relevant regulations and requirements.
- d) Evaluate organizational capacity for growth and change.
- e) Present alternative governance options with feasibility analysis for each option.

4.4 Recommendations and Implementation Planning

- a) Develop specific, actionable recommendations for improvement.
- b) Prioritize recommendations based on impact and feasibility.
- c) Create a realistic implementation timeline.
- d) Provide guidance on change management strategies.
- e) Identify resource requirements for implementation.
- f) Develop performance metrics to measure success.

4.5 Final Report and Presentation

- a) Prepare a comprehensive written report of findings and recommendations.
- b) Deliver a presentation to the ACTS board, ACTS leadership team and key Partner stakeholders as identified.
- c) Provide executive summary for broader distribution to the municipal Councils (public).
- d) Submit all supporting documentation, analysis and data.

5. Deliverables

The consultant shall provide the following deliverables:

- 5.1. Four (4) paper copies and one (1) digital pdf file of the final comprehensive report summarizing all findings and analysis, recommendations, and implementation plans.
- 5.2. One (1) digital pdf file of the executive summary for broader public distribution.
- 5.3. A presentation for the ACTS Board and leadership team, and key stakeholders as identified, in a hybrid in-person and online format.

6. Proposal Requirements

Interested firms must submit a proposal that includes:

6.1 A statement of qualifications, including:

- a) Team qualifications with resumes/ profiles of project team and relevant experience in the previous 5 years with:
 - i) Familiarity and experience with rural transit challenges and solutions,
 - ii) municipal service delivery and budgeting,
 - iii) human resources best practices for non-profit organizations,
 - iv) governance models for public and non-profit organizations,
 - v) provincial regulations related to public passenger carriers, and
 - vi) the development of transit service operational plans.

6.2. Firm's areas of expertise, including unique capabilities or strengths well suited to this project.

6.3. Firm's experience in leading meaningful consultation that includes historically underrepresented people and groups of people, facilitating stakeholder engagement with examples of successful strategies and innovative approaches.

6.4. An outline of the proposed methodology to complete the scope of work.

6.5. A timeline for completing the project, including key milestones and risk mitigation for timeline adherence.

6.6. A fee proposal detailing costs for each Project Objective within the budget. All pricing and estimates shall include H.S.T. and be submitted in Canadian dollars.

6.7. Contact information for three references from similar projects with a municipal government, regional or provincial public authority.

7. Budget

The budget of this project is based on a partial funding allocation from the Housing Accelerator Fund. The total project cost should not exceed \$40,000 +HST (\$45,600 including HST). Applicants are asked to outline the estimated cost per Project Objective in the final proposal. The Town and County thank all those for their interest, however, only submissions from individuals and/or vendors based in Canada will be accepted.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Understanding of project objectives and requirements; comprehensiveness and clarity of the proposed methodology and approach.	25%
Qualifications and experience of the firm and assigned personnel.	20%
Demonstrated experience with similar projects, particularly in the transportation, non-profit and government sectors.	25%
Value and cost effectiveness.	20%
Values of the firm and experience with respect to underrepresented and underserved groups and community members.	10%

9. Terms and Conditions

- 9.1. By submitting a proposal the consultant agrees to comply with all the terms and conditions of this RFP and this document, or any portion thereof, and may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals.
- 9.2. The Partners reserve the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any minor informality or irregularity in proposals received.
- 9.3. All submitted proposals shall remain valid for a period of **45 days** after the submission deadline. All respondents will be notified when the contract is awarded.
- 9.4. Submissions must be amended or withdrawn by email and received prior to the date and time of closing.
- 9.5. This RFP neither expresses nor implies any obligations on the part of the Partners to enter into a contract with any individual or firm submitted a response or responses. The award of any contract is subject to further negotiations.
- 9.6. The consultant agrees to indemnify the Partners and hold harmless against all claims, suits, demands, damages, expenses, disbursements, and costs on a solicitor-client basis that the Partners may incur as a result of any act or omission by the consultant.
- 9.7. The consultant acknowledges that it is not an employee of any of the Partners but is an independent contractor.
- 9.8. All documents submitted for this project, including but not limited to final reports, budgets, forecasts, maps, analytical data, and working papers, shall become the property of the of the Partners, and the consultant shall assign copyright accordingly.
- 9.9. The Partners shall not be bound by trade or custom in dealing with and/or evaluating the responses to the RFP and reserve the right to interpret all aspects of this RFP in a manner most favorable to the project.

- 9.10. Consultants will be deemed to have familiarized themselves with existing site and working conditions and all other conditions that may affect the performance of the contract. No plea of ignorance of such conditions because of failure to make all the necessary examinations will be accepted as a basis for any claims for extra compensation or an extension of time.
- 9.11. The Partners reserve the right to reject all or any proposal and to not necessarily accept the lowest or any quote or proposal submitted. Partners may accept any quote or any portion of the proposal that may be considered to be in the best interests of either Partner.
- 9.12. The Partners reserve the right to cancel the RFP process at any time.
- 9.13. All proponents acknowledge that they are undertaking all expenses associated with the RFP at their own risk and shall have no claim against the Partners for any matters related to this RFP.
- 9.14. The successful consultant will keep proper and accurate financial accounts and records, including but not limited to its contracts, invoices, statements, receipts and vouchers, in respect of each Project it participates in for at least six (6) years after the Agreement End Date and that Canada and the Province has the contractual right to audit such accounts and records.
- 9.15. The Province, Canada, the Auditor General of Canada, the Auditor General of Nova Scotia and their designated representatives, to the extent permitted by law, will at all times be permitted to inspect the terms and conditions of a Contract and any records and accounts respecting each Project and will have free access to each Project site and to any documentation relevant for the purposes of audit.

10. Questions

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing via email by Thursday, May 29, 2025, at 3:00pm ADT to the Primary Contact listed in 12.1. Responses to all questions will be shared with all potential bidders by Wednesday, June 4, 2025.

Any errors, omissions, or ambiguities found in this document may be brought to the attention of the Primary Contact by May 29, 2025, at 3:00pm ADT.

11. Anticipated Timeline

Thu, May 22, 2025	RFP Release
Thu, May 29, 2025, at 3:00pm ADT	Responses to Questions
Mon, June 9, 2025, at 3:00pm ADT	Proposal Due Date
Wed, June 18, 2025	Consultant Selection
Jun 24-26	Project kick-off
Thu, August 21, 2025	Draft Report Due
Tue, September 23, 2025	Final Report & Presentation

12. Submission Details

All proposals must be submitted by **June 9, 2025 at 3:00pm ADT**. Proposals must be submitted via email in pdf format with the subject line: “Review and Solution Development for Antigonish Community Transit Society”, noting a 20 MB limit for attachments. Submissions should be sent to the Primary Contact listed in 12.1. Late submissions will not be considered.

12.1 Primary Contact Information

Denise Dunn

Housing Accelerator Fund Coordinator | denise.dunn@antigonishcounty.ca | 902-968-1227
285 Beech Hill Road & 247 Main Street, Antigonish, NS

13. Final Remarks

This RFP aims to create a robust framework for the long-term operation and governance of transit services to meet the needs of a growing community with increasing ridership. The selected consultant will play a critical role in helping the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish meet its Housing Accelerator Fund goal of Community Transit Review to support complete communities while ensuring engagement is meaningful and accurately informs the changes required.

- END -

Appendix A

Resource List

Antigonish Community Transit

Antigonish Community Transit Feasibility Study (2014)

Antigonish Community Transit, Board minutes

Antigonish Community Transit, budget & financial statements (2023/24).

Antigonish Community Transit Business Plan (2020)

Antigonish Community Transit, Fixed Bus Route Report (2023)

Antigonish Community Transit, Recommendations Report: Fixed route transit service expansion pilot study (2025)

Town of Antigonish

Town of Antigonish, Accessibility Plan (2023)

Nalikitquniejk - Antigonish Equity, Anti-Hate, & Anti-Racism Plan 2025

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Municipal of the County of Antigonish, Accessibility Plan (2022)

Nalikitquniejk - Antigonish Equity, Anti-Hate, & Anti-Racism Plan 2025