TOWN OF ARLINGTON, VERMONT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Engineering Services for Structural Evaluation of Bridge Abutments

RFP Title:	Engineering Services for Evaluation of Bridge Abutments – Benedict Crossing Bridge
Issuing Entity:	Town of Arlington, Vermont
Issue Date:	August 4, 2026
Questions Due:	August 21, by 12:00 PM local time
Proposals Due:	September 4, by 12:00 PM local time
Submit To:	Katie Dixon, Town Administrator P.O. Box 268, Arlington, VT 05250 Katie.Dixon@arlingtonvermont.org

1. Introduction and Background

The Town of Arlington, Vermont (the "Town") is soliciting proposals from qualified professional engineering firms to perform a detailed structural evaluation of the existing abutments at the Benedict Crossing Bridge (the "Bridge"), located at Benedict Crossing Road, Arlington, Vermont.

In 2020, the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) rated the Bridge's condition as at risk of imminent failure. In response, the Town retained an engineering firm to conduct a scoping study and feasibility analysis evaluating reconstruction and preservation alternatives for the structure. Following review of the alternatives presented, the Town selected "Superstructure Replacement" as the preferred course of action.

Under the Superstructure Replacement alternative, the existing timber truss will be replaced with a steel girder and reinforced concrete deck superstructure. The new bridge will be a single-lane structure matching the span length of the existing bridge and will be designed to meet current load requirements. The existing bridge seats will be reconstructed to accommodate the new girders and bearings. A steel girder superstructure was selected in lieu of prestressed concrete beams due to the significant weight of a concrete superstructure and the need to limit additional loading on the existing abutments.

Because the superstructure replacement depends on the continued adequacy of the existing substructure, the Town now requires an independent, in-depth engineering evaluation of the existing abutments to confirm their suitability to support the new superstructure and to inform any necessary repairs, rehabilitation, or foundation investigation prior to final design.

1.1 Summary of Known Abutment Conditions

The 2020 feasibility study documented the abutment conditions as generally "satisfactory," but noted several items of concern that this evaluation is intended to investigate further, including:

- Hairline cracking, with and without efflorescence, observed on both abutments and wingwalls, particularly in the lower portions below the bridge seat elevation.
- Scaling below the waterline at the eastern abutment, along with a number of voids up to 3 inches deep.
- The western abutment is heavily armored; the eastern abutment shows potential footing exposure.
- The nature and depth of the bridge foundations (e.g., shallow spread footings versus deep foundations) are currently unknown, and scour susceptibility has not been determined.
- If the Bridge is founded on shallow spread footings, the observed footing exposure at the eastern abutment would suggest susceptibility to scour, particularly given that the existing bridge constricts the channel.

This information is provided for background only. The selected firm is expected to independently verify existing conditions through field investigation as part of the scope of services described below.

2. Scope of Services

The Town seeks a qualified structural/geotechnical engineering firm (or team) to provide the following services, at a minimum. Respondents may propose additional tasks they believe are necessary to achieve a thorough evaluation.

2.1 Data Review

1. Review the 2020 scoping study/feasibility analysis, prior inspection reports, VTrans bridge inspection records, and any available as-built plans or construction records for the Bridge.
2. Identify data gaps relevant to evaluating abutment condition, capacity, and foundation type.

2.2 Field Investigation

3. Perform a detailed, hands-on condition assessment of both abutments and wingwalls, including documentation of cracking, efflorescence, scaling, spalling, voids, and any other visible deterioration.
4. Investigate and document the extent and depth of voids and scaling identified at the eastern abutment below the waterline, including underwater/diving inspection if warranted.
5. Evaluate the eastern abutment for footing exposure and assess apparent scour conditions at both abutments.
6. Determine the type, depth, and condition of the existing foundations (e.g., spread footings, piles) through appropriate means, as proposed by the firm.
7. Perform a scour susceptibility/scour analysis consistent with current VTrans and FHWA hydraulic engineering guidance, accounting for the channel constriction caused by the existing structure.
8. Collect any survey or material sampling (e.g., concrete coring) necessary to support a structural capacity evaluation.

2.3 Geotechnical Investigation (Required Scope)

The Town's prior engineering consultant for the 2020 feasibility study has recommended that the geotechnical scope for this project include soil test borings at both the existing abutment locations and the potential replacement abutment locations identified in that study. Gathering this data now, while a drill rig is mobilized on site, will provide an early and complete picture of the existing abutment foundation capacity and, at relatively low incremental cost, will also give the Town the subsurface data needed to pivot to a full abutment replacement alternative without delay should that become necessary. Respondents should include the following as part of their scope and fee proposal:

9. Soil test borings at each existing abutment location, sufficient to characterize foundation soils and support the abutment capacity evaluation described in Section 2.4.
10. Soil test borings at the potential replacement abutment locations identified in the 2020 feasibility study (or as otherwise directed by the Town), to provide subsurface data in the event the project needs to transition to an abutment replacement alternative.
11. Test pits adjacent to the existing abutments, as needed, to directly expose and observe footing conditions. The Town recognizes that results from test pits in this location can be inconsistent depending on field conditions encountered and does not expect this task to substitute for the boring program described above.
12. A geotechnical data report summarizing boring logs, test pit logs, laboratory results, and recommendations relevant to both the existing and potential replacement abutment locations.

Because the incremental cost of additional borings is relatively low once a drill rig is mobilized, firms should price the full boring program described above (existing and potential replacement locations) as part of the base scope, rather than a reduced set of borings, so that subsurface data is available early to support both the existing abutment evaluation and any future abutment replacement design.

2.4 Structural Capacity Evaluation

13. Evaluate the structural adequacy of the existing abutments and wingwalls to support the proposed steel girder and reinforced concrete deck superstructure described in Section 1, including reconstructed bridge seats and new bearings.
14. Identify any required repairs, strengthening, or foundation improvements needed for the abutments to support the new superstructure and meet current design/load requirements.
15. Evaluate the abutments against current AASHTO LRFD Bridge Design Specifications and applicable VTrans design standards.

2.5 Reporting and Recommendations

16. Prepare a written engineering evaluation report summarizing findings, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations, including engineering opinion of probable cost for any recommended abutment repairs or foundation improvements.
17. Provide clear recommendations regarding the suitability of the existing abutments for reuse, and any conditions, repairs, or further investigation required prior to advancing to final design of the superstructure replacement.
18. Include annotated photographs, sketches, and/or drawings sufficient to document existing conditions and support the findings.
19. Present findings to the Select Board and/or other Town officials, as requested, in a public meeting format (may be virtual).

3. Deliverables

- Draft Abutment Evaluation Report (electronic PDF) for Town review.
- Final Abutment Evaluation Report (electronic PDF and 3 bound hard copies), incorporating Town comments.
- Supporting field data, photographs, and calculations, in electronic format.
- Geotechnical data report, including boring logs and test pit logs, for both the existing abutment locations and the potential replacement abutment locations.
- Engineering opinion of probable construction cost for recommended repairs, if any.
- Summary presentation materials for one (1) public meeting.

4. Firm Qualifications

Proposals will be considered only from firms that meet the following minimum qualifications. Respondents should clearly demonstrate how they meet each item.

- Licensed to practice engineering in the State of Vermont, with a Professional Engineer (P.E.) licensed in Vermont to stamp all final deliverables.
- Demonstrated experience performing bridge abutment, substructure, and/or scour evaluations for municipal, county, or state-owned bridges, including at least three (3) comparable projects completed within the last seven (7) years.
- Experience working within VTrans structural and hydraulic design standards and inspection protocols.
- Availability of, or subconsultant access to, geotechnical engineering and underwater/diving inspection capabilities, if not provided in-house.
- Sufficient staff capacity to complete the scope of services within the schedule described in Section 6.

5. Proposal Content and Submission Requirements

Interested firms should submit one (1) electronic copy (PDF) of their proposal to the contact listed on the cover page by the proposal due date and time. Late submissions will not be considered. Proposals should be organized as follows:

20. Cover Letter – Identifying the firm, primary contact, and a brief statement of interest and understanding of the project.
21. Firm Qualifications and Experience – Summary of relevant project experience, including references and contact information for at least three (3) comparable projects.
22. Project Team – Identification of key personnel, their roles, relevant licensure, and resumes; identification of any subconsultants (e.g., geotechnical, diving/underwater inspection).
23. Project Understanding and Approach – Narrative describing the firm's proposed methodology for the field investigation, structural evaluation, and scour analysis described in Section 2.
24. Project Schedule – Proposed schedule identifying key milestones and the anticipated date of final report delivery.
25. Fee Proposal – A not-to-exceed lump sum or hourly fee estimate, with a breakdown of tasks, labor hours, and any anticipated reimbursable expenses (e.g., diving inspection, geotechnical subcontractor, testing).
26. Insurance and Licensing – Certificate of insurance (or statement of ability to obtain) and copy of Vermont P.E. license(s).

6. Anticipated Schedule

The Town anticipates the following schedule. The Town reserves the right to modify this schedule at its discretion.

- RFP Issued: August 4, 2026
- Deadline for Questions: August 21, 2026
- Proposals Due: September 4, 2026
- Firm Selection / Notice of Award: September 15, 2026
- Notice to Proceed (NTP): September 15, 2026

- Mobilization and Completion of Field Work (borings, test pits, condition survey, diving inspection as applicable): NTP + 6 weeks (Approx. Date: Oct. 27, 2026)
- Laboratory Testing of Soil Samples: NTP + 6 to 9 weeks (Approx. Dates: Oct. 27 – Nov. 17, 2026)
- Structural/Geotechnical Analysis and Draft Report Preparation: NTP + 9 to 13 weeks (Approx. Dates: Nov. 17 – Dec. 15, 2026)
- Draft Report Due: NTP + 13 weeks (Approx. Date: Dec 15, 2026)
- Town Review Period: 2 to 3 weeks following draft submission (Approx. Dates: Dec. 15 – Jan. 5, 2026)
- Final Report Due: NTP + 16 to 17 weeks (Approx. Dates: Jan. 5 – 12, 2026)

Field-Work Weather Constraint: Given Vermont's climate, all field work involving drill rig mobilization, borings, test pits, and any in-water or near-water investigation must be completed no later than November 1 to avoid working in frozen or otherwise unsuitable ground and water conditions. If the Town is unable to execute a contract with the selected firm in sufficient time to complete field work by this date, field work will instead be scheduled for the following spring (April through June), with the remaining schedule shifted accordingly. Respondents should account for this constraint, including drill rig subcontractor availability and lead time, in their proposed schedule.

7. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by the Town based on the following criteria. The Town reserves the right to request interviews with one or more firms prior to final selection.

- Firm and key staff qualifications and relevant experience (30%)
- Understanding of the project and quality/thoroughness of proposed technical approach (30%)
- Proposed schedule and firm capacity to meet it (15%)
- Fee proposal and value (20%)
- References (5%)

8. General Terms and Conditions

- This RFP does not commit the Town to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services.
- The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive minor informalities, and to negotiate with any qualified firm.
- The selected firm will be required to enter into a written contract with the Town, which may incorporate the terms of this RFP, the firm’s proposal, and standard municipal contract terms, including insurance and indemnification requirements.
- The selected firm must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, and, if applicable, any requirements associated with state or federal funding sources.
- All work products, data, reports, and deliverables produced under the resulting contract shall become the property of the Town.

9. Questions and Contact Information

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing (email preferred) to the contact below by the deadline listed on the cover page. Questions and answers of general applicability may be distributed to all firms who have indicated interest.

Katie Dixon, Town Administrator
Town of Arlington, Vermont
P.O. Box 268
Phone: 802-379-9916 | Email: Katie.Dixon@arlingtonvermont.org

10. Submission Instructions

Proposals must be received no later than September 4, 2026, at 12:00 PM (Noon) EST. Late proposals will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Email Submission (Preferred):
Send to: Katie.Dixon@arlingtonvermont.org
Subject line: "RFP: Engineering Services for Evaluation of Bridge Abutments – Benedict Crossing Bridge "

Mail:
Town of Arlington – Attention Town Administrator
P.O. Box 268, Arlington, VT 05250
Envelope must be clearly marked: " Engineering Services for Evaluation of Bridge Abutments – Benedict Crossing Bridge. "

Hand Delivery:
Town of Arlington – Attention Town Administrator
3828 VT Route 7A, Arlington, VT 05250
Envelope must be clearly marked: " Engineering Services for Evaluation of Bridge Abutments – Benedict Crossing Bridge. "

CONTRACTOR SIGNATURE
Company Name:
Authorized Representative:
Title:
Business Address:
Phone:
Email:
Federal Tax ID:

Signature: _____**Date:** _____
The Town welcomes proposers to bring their own professional judgment to this project; if any part of your proposed approach differs from a specific requirement in this RFP, simply identify and describe it so we can consider it on its merits. By signing above, the bidder certifies compliance with all RFP requirements except as specifically identified and described in the proposal.