



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P3) – CALL FOR PROJECTS 2018/2019

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Milford-Bennington Railroad Co., Inc. (MBRX)

ADDRESS LINE 1: 62 Elm St.

ADDRESS LINE 2: _____

CITY: Milford

STATE: NH

ZIP CODE: 03055

PHONE NUMBER: 603 365 0621

EMAIL ADDRESS: mbrxnh1@aol.com

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NAME: Scenic Railway

TYPE OF PROJECT

- AERONAUTICS
- HIGHWAY
- RAIL
- TRANSIT
- OTHER _____

EXPLANATION OF PROJECT NEED:

Bringing back the tourist train along the DOT-owned rail corridor between Wilton, NH and Greenfield, NH has four primary objectives:

1) as an economic catalyst for several small NH towns who struggle to sustain vibrant, rural downtown village centers; 2). as a primary family recreation activity to complement local events and parks; 3) as an environmental, and historic education program catalyst;

4) as a way to preserve the rail for future public transportation expansion strategies.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: (Include general scope, limits of work, duration of project, etc.)

Re-establish successful scenic railroad service that operated between Wilton, NH (MP 16.36) to Greenfield, NH (MP 29.6) on the state owned Hillsborough branch. MBRX is currently operating and maintaining the tracks for freight use. During the operation of the Wilton Scenic Railroad, MBRX provided the necessary operating crew (engineers) and maintained the trackage including Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) track, signal, equipment inspections from Wilton to Greenfield.

ESTIMATED COST & FINANCING

ESTIMATED DESIGN/PLANNING COST: No formal estimates have been prepared. Any costs paid by private sector.

COST OF PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS/LEASES: \$0 / Lease-\$45,000

ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST: All costs to be borne by private sector.

ESTIMATED COST OF OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE: \$110,000 per year

TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$155,000 per year

IS THIS PROJECT APPROVED IN A TRANSPORTATION PLAN SUCH AS AN RPC/MPO LONG RANGE PLAN, NHDOT TEN YEAR PLAN OR OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENT?

YES Describe: _____ NO

PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL PLAN: (Description of initial funding proposal including any State, Federal or Local funding that may be required, as well as any fees or tolls that may be necessary to support the project. If the applicant has concerns relative to confidentiality, they should note those concerns and only provide the information they feel could be discussed in a public setting.)

The proposal would require no public investment.

PROJECT READINESS

LEVEL OF PLANNING/DESIGN COMPLETED: (Describe the degree of project planning and/or design that has been completed, including disposition of deliverables such as feasibility studies, conceptual plans, data collection, etc.)

The MBRX has completed a feasibility study which includes an overview of the past tourist operaton and the cost of re-activating the service. As part of the study, we've conducted a comprehensive inspection of the track and bridges on the subject line. Additionally, suitable equipment (RDC railroad passenger cars) has been secured.

PROJECT MILESTONES/DURATIONS: (Provide duration and anticipated completion dates for major milestones such as planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance phases.)

All planning and design has been completed. The construction of a suitable station platform in Wilton and Greenfield will take no more than a month to complete upon approval from the NHDOT. The operation will commence as soon as the equipment arrives on site. All personnel necessary for the operation of the tourist railroad have been contacted and are available when the operation begins.

PRIVATE/PUBLIC PARTNERS/ASSETS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT PROJECT

STATE OR MUNICIPAL AGENCIES IMPACTED:

“The Wilton Economic Development Team and the Greenfield Economic Advisory Committee have identified the return of the tourist train as the #1 game changer needed to stimulate economic growth and help sustain current local businesses. See attachment timeline for documentation of the impact the loss of this tourist magnet has had on local businesses.”

-Jennifer S. Beck, Chair, Wilton Economic Development Team

PRIVATE ENTITIES INVOLVED IN PROPOSAL:

At this time there is the formation of a private investment group comprised of local train enthusiasts and philanthropists, who believe in the goals of this project and have a history of anonymously supporting major projects they believe are investments in the future health and social well-being of their towns.

PUBLIC ASSETS NECESSARY TO ADVANCE PROJECT:

Existing state owned rail line.

PRIVATE ASSETS NECESSARY TO ADVANCE PROJECT:

Passenger railroad cars

Existing MBRX owned equipment (locomotive, hi-rail truck, track maintenance equipment)

PROPERTY/FACILITIES IMPACTED AND CURRENT OWNERSHIP:

State of NH owned rail line

PROJECT BENEFITS

BENEFITS/HOW THIS PROJECT ADDRESSES A NEED:

At the time of the operation of the Wilton Scenic Railroad, a private enterprise with support from DOT, the train attracted hundreds of neighboring townspeople, local residents and visitors who then spent time and money in local shops, restaurants and anchor attractions like the Wilton Town Hall Theatre. Community events like summer fairs and children's programs leveraged the train experience to teach local history, and the history of America's expansion westward. With current goals like establishing a town as a destination, a tourist draw like this can be the single most cost-effective and long-term strategy for economic stability.

BENEFITS OF P3 IMPLEMENTATION VERSUS CONVENTIONAL DELIVERY:

The Wilton Scenic Railroad project went from conception to operation in a matter of months. So time to delivery and accelerated realization of benefits are proven outcomes when private/public partnerships work. Private entrepreneurs also attract new funding sources and individuals willing to donate time and skills to projects they believe in. When you take the knowledge and purchasing power of government entities and the technical and business expertise of the private sector, you have the best of both worlds. These partnerships also are potential models for future investments as they can target the underserved populations and smaller towns across the state that are either under-resourced or not eligible for many state programs.

SIMILAR PROJECT EXAMPLES: (Have any other States or Municipalities to your knowledge pursued a similar P3 project?)

Presently, the Conway Scenic Railroad, the Hobo Railroad, and the Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad, have successfully operated on state owned railroad corridors for many years.

