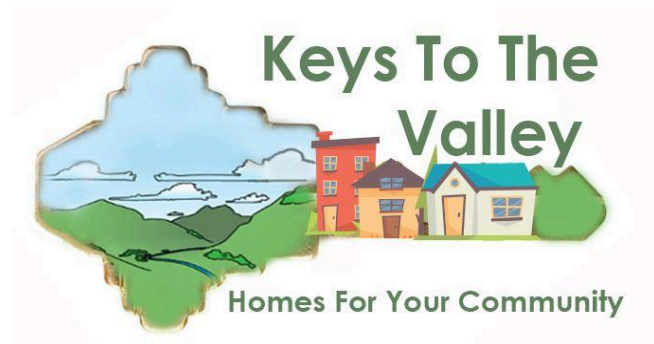
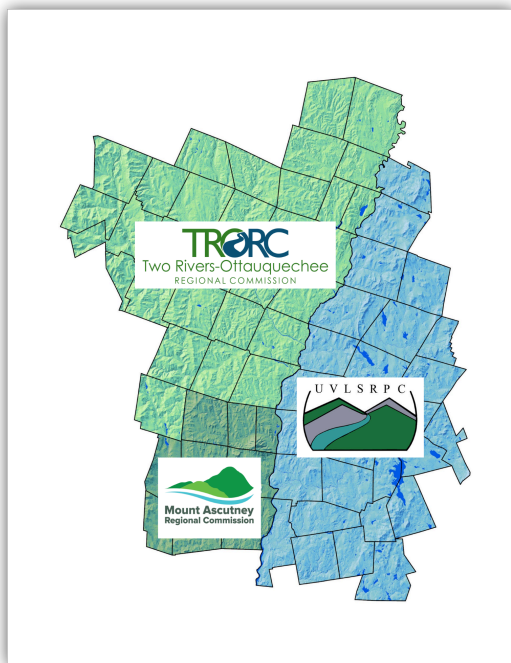


Request for Proposals

Craft a Business Plan to Establish a Home Creators Utility in the Greater Upper Valley Region of New Hampshire and Vermont

Released: July 8, 2024

Submissions Deadline: August 16th, 2024 at 5pm



Background Information

The Keys to the Valley Initiative (www.keystothevalley.com) is led by three regional planning commissions – the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission of New Hampshire, and the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Planning and Mount Ascutney Regional Commissions of Vermont, in close partnership with the non-profit Vital Communities. The initiative covers 67 communities on both sides of the Connecticut River of the greater Upper Valley. The initiative has been active since 2018.

Our region's economic well-being and quality of life depends on us all rising to the challenge of the housing crisis. This initiative seeks to inform and focus the rising housing efforts, in the Upper Valley and its neighboring communities, with an action plan, toolbox of solutions & data, and honest conversations. The initiative is guided by a set of tenets and principles.

Keys to the Valley Tenets

- Regional Planning Commissions have a duty to plan for and promote housing for all income levels.
- Having residents with diverse income levels makes a community stronger.
- Having employees live in or near the town they work makes families, communities, and businesses stronger.
- Having many residents in central core areas makes them more vibrant centers.
- A home's location, energy use, price, and access to services all serve to make the home functional for its tenant.
- Access to transit near homes is essential to making them suitable for independent living.

- Homes shall not be segregated by public action based on their occupants.

Principles for Future Homes

- People should be able to afford to live in the town in which they work.
- To meet the needs of residents at all stages in their lives, communities should have a mix of home sizes and types.
- The environmental quality and safety of homes shall not be compromised for affordability.
- Homes must be energy efficient.
- Municipalities have a duty to plan for and promote housing for all.
- Every community should foster an adaptable housing stock and regulatory system that may shift with changing desires, demographics, and environmental and health concerns.

Project Purpose and Goals

Given the existing need and the drive of local entities (such as town-level housing groups) to scale ADU+ production, it seems the most effective way to support local homeowners and

developers is to create a system through which they can more easily produce units – Home Creators Utility. That production requires an understanding of the benefits and feasibility to make units, design and permitting assistance, financing, construction management, legal aid, and rental management.

The Home Creators Utility will work with non-professional, resident developers (or Home Creators) to add new homes. Home Creators supported by this Utility would build on existing lots, often at a small scale.

The most common types are accessory dwelling units; conversion of single-family homes into duplexes; tiny homes; cottage courts; and other similar housing types. Collectively we call these types – ADU+ Homes. These ADU+ homes would diversify the region's housing stock, add homes in closer proximity to services and community, fit well with the existing architecture of the Region, and preserve our valuable forest and agricultural lands.

This program is intended to transform a concept, research, and pilot program into a business plan. This business plan will sustain a permanent organization that can function successfully in part or all of the greater Upper Valley region.

Budget, Timeline and Scope of Work

The budget for this project is \$20,000.

This project's deadline is March of 2025.

Develop a business plan(s) whereby an independent organization can sustain the Home Creators Utility program. This Plan will evaluate organizational purpose, structure, market opportunities, programs and services, and financial health.

This ready to go business plan is expected to include the following:

1. Business plan for two utility scenarios. For example:
 - A resource broker who acts as a facilitator or connector of homeowners with resources to build, finance, and rent new ADU+
 - An all-around services organization with in house building contractor staff or apprenticeship program for needed contractor expertise.
2. Background Research.
 - Build on TRORC work on national ADU+ research.
 - Develop an understanding of the existing business (including products/services, customers, competitors, the overall market and trends) through careful research and analysis (e.g., Backyard ADU, Livable Real Estate).
3. Purpose. Name the housing problem, target customer, and housing market intervention point(s) that the proposed business seeks to address.
4. Organizational structure.
 - This is expected to be a non-profit although other options may be considered, such as the extension of an organization that already exists, or for-profit organization.

- This part of the plan will also frame the people – leadership, staffing and volunteers (e.g., board, administrative staffing, specialized staffing, and volunteer).
 - Review compensation plans and organizational structure to align incentives and ensure the health of the organization in the long-run.
5. Market opportunities.
 - Review research reports and conduct primary research to hone in on ideal buyer type and assess customer demand for the company's existing products and services. Competitive analysis to include that of local demand from homeowners and potential renters of ADU+.
 - The analysis will consider the feasibility of different geographic types (i.e., urban and rural) and business geographic service scales (i.e., town specific, multi-town, region-wide).
 - Conduct a total addressable market analysis for the business' core market, assess major industry trends affecting the business, and describe what impact these trends may have on the business
 6. Programs and services. List of those fundamental to each of the two business plans.
 7. Contingencies. What could change?
 8. Financial health.
 - What are the sources of revenue to operate programs and advance the mission?
 - Expected utility costs through an understanding of utility administration and local construction industry and supply chain.
 - Potential areas for utility to gain efficiencies to achieve stated goals (e.g., lower construction costs by streamlining many small projects through a single entity)
 - Funding mechanisms to enhance affordability of new units (e.g., employer or municipal contributions, sliding scale fees)
 - Opportunities and challenges to leverage local, state, and federal funding opportunities (e.g. VHIP)
 - Map out direct and indirect competitors, including potential future competitors, for existing and potential revenue channels
 9. Assumptions and proposed changes: What do the business plans require to be implemented with the best chance for success. This might include needed startup costs, community buy-in, and identified organizational leadership.

Deliverables.

- Monthly virtual meetings with Keys to the Valley Initiative and Vital Communities for the project duration.
- Two housing utility business plans as described earlier in this section.
- A final virtual presentation to project partners and invited advisors.

Selection Criteria

A business plan consultant provides strategic direction by creating and refining an organization's business plan, using an understanding of the target operations, potential competitive advantages, and achievable goals to provide direction on how to structure, run, and grow the business. The ideal candidate will have some experience in running or advising early stage businesses, combining analytical abilities with broad vision to provide a roadmap to growth.

The consultant qualifications include the following:

- Bachelor's degree in finance, operations, research, statistics, math, economics, or related analytical discipline preferred
- Financial management experience with planning, forecasting, and business analysis; prior experience as an advisor to or executive at an early-stage company a plus
- Experience within the affordable housing market
- A natural curiosity and a "big picture" mentality
- Experience conducting market research, including analyzing and synthesizing research reports and conducting primary research

Submission Process

Submission Information

Submissions may be sent electronically by Friday, August 16th at 5pm.

- Project Name: Business Plans for a Home Creators Utility
- Hiring Organization: Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
- Partner Organizations: Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission, and Vital Communities
- Contact Person: Olivia Uyizeye, Planner and Senior GIS Analyst at UVLSRPC
 - Telephone Number of Contact Person: (603) 349-0021
 - Email Address of Contact Person: ouyizeye@uvlsrpc.org

Submission Process

Proposals must be submitted by August 16th at 5pm. Finalists may be interviewed as part of the evaluation process. The contract will be granted no later than October 1st.

Submission Criteria

A submission must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

- A one-page narrative outlining the firm's strengths and distinguishing skills or capabilities as they might relate to the home creators utility project.
- Project Proposal - limited to 10 pages for the following details, not including the narrative and budget.
 - The Work Plan shall include an outline of the approach proposed to accomplish each item of the scope of services. Suggestions for additional work, which may be beneficial, are invited.
 - Description of the firm that includes a general overview, names and credentials of team, and number of full-time employees.

- Include three (3) examples of projects similar in scope and scale completed by the staff that will be assigned to this project. Provide a brief description including completion date, type, and scope of project, and contact person with telephone number for reference.
- The consultant's proposed budget and cost for providing services must include a task breakdown of project cost by task for each staff/team member and hours assigned to each staff/team member.