

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

2026 Planning Grant

Notice of Request for Qualifications

The Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) is seeking Qualifications from interested firms to conduct a planning study for the city of Munroe Falls. This is a joint effort between AMATS and the city of Munroe Falls with AMATS contributing Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) funds. The purpose of the planning study is to increase connectivity and improve livability in the community in accordance with AMATS' Connecting Communities Initiative. The cost of the study is not to exceed \$50,000 and will be completed within twelve months of the contract date.

It is anticipated that the selected Consultant will be authorized to proceed by February 2027.

Selection Procedures

The completeness and content of the Response will be the basis for the initial evaluation. Further information, including the interview of one or more of the Consultants, may serve in the final selection of the Consultant.

Firms interested in being considered for selection should respond by submitting an **electronic copy** to the following address **by 4:30 PM on Friday, October 23, 2026**.

Heather Davis Reidl

1 Cascade Plaza Suite 1300

Akron, OH 44308

hreidl@akronohio.gov

330-375-2436 ext. 4434

Responses received after the close of business on the specified due date will not be considered.

For more information, visit <https://www.amatsplanning.org/connecting-communities>

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Planning Grant Process

The planning grant process is broken into four phases, starting with the Discovery phase. The Discovery phase kicks off with an initial AMATS-Recipient meeting to start discussing key issues, focus areas, expectations and outcomes and ends with the selection of a consultant. AMATS will complete initial data collection and analysis before the consultant selection process begins, with the intent of limiting the consultant's time spent on gathering data. If additional data collection is necessary, the consultant is welcome to do so and is not limited to the data AMATS provides. Once a consultant is selected, the Development phase begins. The consultant will take the community's identified key issues and goals and begin working on ideas, design concepts, recommendations and other potential solutions and put them into a Draft Plan. Recommendation and Review is the third phase whereby the community, the consultant and AMATS will be working to finalize recommendations and review the Draft Plan provided by the consultant. Once the Draft Plan has been reviewed and revised and feedback has been given, the consultant will provide the community with a Final Plan. After the Plan has been presented, AMATS will remain a partner with the city of Munroe Falls to help implement the Plan.

Public involvement is an important part of the process. Efforts to engage the public, either online or in person, will be agreed upon by all parties and may take place at any time during the Planning Grant Process.

Goals of the Planning Process

- Identify appropriate locations for alternative modes of transportation (bike lanes, pedestrian walkways, multi-purpose trails, sidewalks);
- Provide alternative methods of transportation to employment, education and recreational centers, which in turn will support economic development activities;
- Ensure an equity focus on the community planning process by including residents of all abilities and income;
- Improve community collaboration (internally and externally);
- Identify community action items and implementation strategies.

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Munroe Falls Trails Master Plan

The Planning Issues at Hand

Munroe Falls is launching a study to develop an implementable, citywide framework of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure for residents and visitors. Within its 2.74-square-mile footprint, the City includes a vibrant commercial corridor, Munroe Falls Metro Park, the Freedom Trail, and the Summit Metro Parks Bike & Hike Trail. The study will evaluate connections among neighborhoods, parks, schools, civic and commercial destinations, senior living and health-care facilities, transit, waterways, and regional trails. The Cuyahoga River, two active rail lines, constrained rights-of-way, steep grades, utilities, and intermittent pedestrian facilities create significant barriers to a connected multimodal network. Munroe Falls also ranks highly in the AMATS region for older adults and adults with disabilities, making safety, accessibility, health, and independence central considerations. With public and stakeholder input, the study will identify a citywide network, pedestrian gaps, trailhead and regional connection opportunities, and safe crossings of roadways, rail lines, and waterways, supported by priorities, planning-level costs, and implementation strategies.

Additional information related to the project area can be found within the city of Munroe Falls' application for the Connecting Communities grant program (attached).

Anticipated Deliverables

The selected Consultant shall prepare a final Trails Master Plan in a clear, engaging format that is easily understood by the public and suitable for implementation and future funding applications. The Plan shall include:

1. Existing conditions and needs assessment using inventory data provided by AMATS, supplemented by any additional data identified by the Consultant;
2. A citywide recommended bicycle and pedestrian network identifying gaps, safe and accessible crossings at barriers (such as roadways, active rail lines, waterways, and bridges) as well as the location and type for each improvement;
3. Concept-level recommendations (typical sections, representative concepts, design guidance) for priority corridors and connections, such as SR-91, Munroe Falls Avenue, North River Road, Northmoreland Avenue, South River Road, North Munroe Road, the Freedom Trail, and the Bike & Hike Trail;
4. A transparent prioritization plan with near-, mid-, and long-term implementation schedules including probable costs and potential funding sources and recommended next steps for capital planning, grant applications, feasibility studies, preliminary engineering right-of-way coordination, and further environmental review. Potential partnerships, policy considerations, and early-action opportunities should also be identified;
5. A public involvement summary and findings, educational resources, technical appendices, and supporting maps, tables, and graphics.

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The Consultant shall also provide:

- A project kickoff and periodic work sessions with AMATS, City staff, and key stakeholders, including relevant agencies, trail partners, businesses, property owners, schools, and representatives of older adults and people with disabilities;
- An inclusive public involvement program with accessible in-person and online participation options;
- A Draft Plan for review and a Final Plan incorporating consolidated comments, plus presentation materials and one formal presentation to Munroe Falls City Council;
- A final accessible PDF and editable electronic source files, including native tables, native GIS data, associated metadata, graphics, and presentation files, plus up to five bound hard copies if requested.

Staff from AMATS, Munroe Falls, and Summit Metro Parks will be available to assist the selected Consultant with available data and background materials, including GIS files, existing plans, traffic counts, turning-movement information, specifications, utility information, and engineering standards. Staff will also assist with stakeholder coordination, community outreach, review of work products, and other reasonably available support tasks.

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General Information and Requirements:

Rejection of Qualifications: AMATS and the city of Munroe Falls reserve the right to reject any and all responses received as a result of this RFQ. Failure to provide all requested information in the format stated below may serve as cause for rejection of the response.

Consultant Responsibilities: The Consultant shall be capable of providing all professional services as described under the Anticipated Deliverables and maintaining those capabilities while retained by AMATS and Munroe Falls. Exclusion of any service required under the Anticipated Deliverables may serve as cause for rejection of the proposal or the termination of the contract.

Contract: A formal contract will be entered into with the selected Consultant. This RFQ shall become an attachment, and be made a part of, the formal contract.

Content Requirements: Instructions for Submitting a response to the RFQ:

1. Provide the information requested in the Response Content (below), accompanied by a letter signed by an officer of the firm. Do not send additional forms, resumes, brochures, or other material.
2. Response shall be limited to twelve (12) 8½" x 11" single sided pages (including cover letter) plus two (2) pages for the Project Approach (listed below under Response Content).
3. Please adhere to the following requirements in preparing:
 - a. Use a minimum font size of 10-point and maintain margins of 1" on all four sides.
 - b. Page numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
 - c. Use 8½" x 11" paper only.
4. Responses not adhering to the above instructions are subject to a deduction in the ranking system.

AMATS, as an Equal Opportunity Employer, requires all consultants to affirm that they agree to abide by any and all applicable equal employment opportunity laws, whether state or federal. Consultants agree not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, age, creed, sex, sexual orientation or national origin, and agree to take affirmative action so that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard for their race, color, religion, age, creed, sex, sexual orientation or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Consultants further agree that they will insert the foregoing provision in all subcontracts in connection with services provided. Consultants further agree to comply with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., 49 C.F.R. Part 21.

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Response Content

1. **Project Approach** - Provide a description of your project approach. Describe why your firm is a good fit for this project. Confirm that your firm has a solid understanding of the project area and issues. Describe any innovative ideas and any other relevant information concerning your firm's qualifications for the project. Address your firm's technical approach and cost containment practices. (two-page maximum).
 - a. As stated in the Anticipated Deliverables, AMATS staff will perform initial data collection. Identify any additional data collection, field review, analysis, or technical investigation the Consultant considers necessary to complete the study.
 - b. Describe the proposed public and stakeholder engagement program, including methods, anticipated number and type of activities, strategies for accessible and inclusive participation, and how input will be documented and incorporated into the Plan.
2. **Project Manager, Project Team, Capacity of Staff and Facilities to Perform Work** –
 - a. List the Project Manager and discuss relevant experience managing active transportation, multimodal transportation, trail, accessibility, and land-use planning assignments.
 - b. List the other key individuals of the project team, including planner(s), engineer(s), and other staff responsible for the design of the project and any key sub-consultant staff.
 - c. Discuss the team's relevant experience with active transportation networks, complete streets, and trail planning.
 - d. Describe staff capacity and the ability to perform the work in a timely manner to meet the project schedule referenced in the Request for Qualifications.
 - e. Please include an organizational chart including names, titles, roles, total years' experience, and years with the firm.
3. **Consultant's Past Performance on Similar Projects** - Provide up to five key projects to serve as examples of similar projects completed by the consultant within the last five years. Include reference names with phone numbers and indicate if any of the proposed project team members worked on these key projects.

Items 2 and 3 must be included within the 12-page body of the Response. Remaining space within the twelve (12) pages may be utilized to provide personnel resumes or additional information concerning general qualifications.

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Quality Based Consultant Selection Process

Rating Form

Criteria	Maximum Score	Score
Project Approach	20	
Project Manager, Team & Capacity of Staff	10	
Consultant's Past Performance	15	
Quality of Proposal/Response in Conformance	5	
Total Score	50 points total	