



Request for Proposals

Economic Impact Study: Cabot Trail, Cape Breton, NS

August 2022

Proposals and inquiries can be submitted to:

Erica Holgate
Economic Development Officer, Victoria County
Cape Breton Partnership
erica@capebretonpartnership.com
(c) 902-322-0558

Deadline: Thursday, September 29, 2022

THE CAPE BRETON PARTNERSHIP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS OR TO ACCEPT ANY OR ALL PROPOSAL OR PART THEREOF CONSIDERED TO BE IN ITS BEST INTEREST. WE THANK ALL INQUIRIES IN ADVANCE AND ADVISE THAT ONLY THOSE PROPOSALS SELECTED WILL BE CONTACTED. PROPONENT(S) SHOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE A PRESENTATION OR PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS REQUIRED.

BIDS RECEIVED BY EMAIL WILL BE ACCEPTED AS OFFICIAL.

BIDS RECEIVED IN-PERSON OR BY COURIER MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED.

The only acceptable email address for responses to the bid solicitation is erica@capebretonpartnership.com. Bids submitted by email to any email address other than erica@capebretonpartnership.com will not be accepted.

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Cape Breton Partnership invites interested vendor(s) to submit proposals for a Tourism Economic Impact Study encompassing the area known as the Cabot Trail, located in Victoria and Inverness Counties in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

BACKGROUND

Ingonish, along the World-Famous Cabot Trail, was perceived to be a thriving economic zone in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s. Since then, it has regressed to become an economically depressed area that relies heavily on seasonal industries.

Some of the current economic challenges are believed to be rooted in the early 1990s when the federal government became party to a convention that restricted the fishing industry; which happened at the same time as the local industry and mining were also declining. The situation changed practically overnight, as many lost their livelihood.

A notable asset of real value to this region is the Cabot Trail, which attracts a healthy number of visitors each year. It provides significant economic potential; yet, much of it has not materialized given there are few opportunities to spend money on the Trail and practically zero opportunities in the winter when many businesses close. Seasonal taxation breaks are given under the government program known as Bill 191; however, in the recent #RiseAgain2030 strategy presented by Destination Cape Breton, there was a suggestion to: *“Create a pilot project in Cape Breton that explore alternatives to the Seasonal Tourist Business Designation as a means of providing a tax incentive to operators who open for the winter season.”*

Part of solving this problem is to understand how it arose. We would like to understand the causes of the perceived economic depression. The analysis should pinpoint areas ripe for mitigation and demonstrate a path forward for the sustainable growth of four-season tourism facilities and operations.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Economic Impact Study: Cabot Trail, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia

This request for proposal (RFP) document consists of the following:

1. Scope of work

- 1.1Tasks and specifications
- 1.2Meetings
- 2. Key deliverables
 - 2.1Deliverables and format
 - 2.2Timelines, milestones, and payment schedule
- 3. Submission requirements
- 4. Selection process
 - 4.1Proposal submission
 - 4.2Maximum budget

1.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of this RFP is to invite qualified firms to submit proposals to perform an economic impact study of tourism for the Cabot Trail region. The Economic Impact Study will analyze the economic and positive community impact of proposed private-sector investment in year-round tourism operations.

1.1 TASKS AND SPECIFICATIONS

The Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton are advocating for year-round tourism operations in the Cabot Trail region. To inspire greater private-sector confidence and garnish public-sector support, an economic impact study is needed to prove the viability of year-round tourism operations and also identify barriers to investor confidence and gaps in services to businesses and investors that currently challenge new investment and/or four-season operations at existing tourism establishments.

The proponent will be responsible for the following through a combination of public data and stakeholder engagement (Destination Cape Smokey, Golf North, and Cabot Golf):

Economic indicators of interest to the Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton include, but are not limited to:

- employment and job creation (direct, indirect and induced impacts);
- impact of seasonal EI;
- neighbourhood revitalization and property values;
- housing impact (AirBnB);
- investment in year-round tourism;
- tourism incentives (e.g., grants, contributions);

- changes to the Cape Breton National Park Operations (i.e. winter opening);
- contribution to GDP; and
- contribution to tax revenue through tourism and developmental spending.

Socio-economic indicators of interest to the Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton include, but are not limited to:

- visitation and tourism attraction attendance;
- visitor demographic, expenditure, and behaviour;
- current challenges limiting Ingonish and other Cabot Trail communities from becoming a year-round destination.

The case study should include Cape Smokey and Golf North (Keltic Lodge, Highland Links) as some of the important drivers of the tourism related activities; if time and budget permits, Cabot Golf, in neighbouring Inverness County, should also be included. These large developments already create sizable employment and revenue levels for local contractors and will create additional employment for running and maintaining Destination Cape Smokey after project completion.

Tourism operators, government and the local community need to understand where we are now, in order to fully appreciate the impact of the year-round investment, as well as direction of where we need to go.

The Cape Breton Partnership will work with the successful proponent to provide current reports and documents for background information and reference. The following reference documents shall be reviewed to provide context:

- Nova Scotia Commission on Building our New Economy, 2014 Ivany Report;
- Destination Cape Breton, #RiseAgain2030;
- Destination Cape Breton, Adventure Tourism Opportunity Strategy;
- Province of Nova Scotia, Accommodations Needs Assessment;
- Cape Breton Partnership, Island-wide Growth Strategy; and
- Examine Bill 191: Tax incentive to businesses closing for at least 4 months per year.

1.2 MEETINGS

The proponent must attend the following virtual meetings with the Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton:

- a) Kick off meeting: The proponent must attend a kick-off meeting via a video-conferencing platform that the Cape Breton Partnership will schedule to take place one week after the contract award.
- b) Progress meeting #1: The proponent must present the work plan to the Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton. The Cape Breton Partnership will schedule a meeting to take place via a video-conferencing platform 2 weeks after the contract award.
- c) Progress meeting #2: The Cape Breton Partnership will schedule a meeting with the proponent to take place via a video-conferencing platform 10 weeks after the contract award to review the submission of existing data (see timeline). The Cape Breton Partnership will comment and ask for adjustments, if required.
- d) Progress meeting #3: The Cape Breton Partnership will schedule a meeting with the proponent to take place via a video-conferencing platform 17 weeks after the contract award to discuss the draft report of the data strategy being developed. The Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton will comment on the draft report and ask for adjustments, if required.
- e) Demonstration meeting: The proponent must present the final report describing the data strategy to the Cape Breton Partnership. The Cape Breton Partnership will schedule a meeting to take place via a video-conferencing platform 20 weeks after the contract award.

2.0 KEY DELIVERABLES

The successful proponent will assemble all of the components described above, in addition to other key findings, into a comprehensive economic impact report for the Cabot Trail region. A draft of the analysis (local market research, stakeholder engagement, and economic impact analysis) will be provided to the Cape Breton Partnership for review and comment. Based on comments and recommendations, the proponent will prepare a final draft, which will be presented to stakeholders. The proponent will edit/revise the strategic direction based on stakeholder input and direction. The final document shall be made available in both hardcopy and digital format.

2.1 DELIVERABLES AND FORMAT

The study will be presented to the following Interested parties: federal government, provincial government, municipality, local businesses, and the community.

The proponent is responsible for the following:

a) **Work Plan:** The proponent must produce a detailed work plan outlining all tasks and requirements of the Scope of Work. A table of contents must be submitted with the detailed work plan, as well as a glossary of concepts and definitions used. **Existing Data:** The proponent must produce a report detailing the data that currently exists to describe the economic, socio-economic, and overall impacts of tourism. The report must include a complete list of available data, sources for the data (including possibility to obtain the original data set and cost for acquiring data), an assessment of the data reliability and validity, and the frequency of data collection.

The proponent must provide an electronic copy of the work plan in Microsoft Word format.

b) **Report on Existing Data:** The proponent must provide the Cape Breton Partnership with a complete list of existing data and their sources (including data format, the possibility of obtaining the original data set and cost for acquiring data), an assessment of the data reliability and validity, and the frequency of data collection. This should be presented in the form of a complete list data with a narrative report providing an overview for a non-specialized audience.

The proponent must provide an electronic copy of the report in Microsoft Word format and pdf.

The proponent must provide the complete list of data in Microsoft Word or Excel.

c) **Draft Report:** The proponent must produce a report describing the gaps in the data and the methodologies or strategies that will enable the Cape Breton Partnership to measure evidence of these impacts. The draft report must describe the work and analyses to be conducted as part of the data strategy, including: a summary of the approach taken to data sources, assessment and selection; definitions of concepts; the proposed framework; the methodology and analytical approach to be used; all data analytics programming or statistical software; potential issues and steps to be taken to address them; and the estimated cost of implementation.

The proponent must provide an electronic copy of the draft report in Microsoft Word format and in pdf.

d) **Final Report:** The proponent must produce a final report responding to all comments on the draft report from the Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton, including final implementation costing, executive summary, and KPIs.

The proponent must provide an electronic copy of the final report in Microsoft Word format and in pdf. The proponent must also provide a PowerPoint presentation of the final report.

e) **Data Sources:** The proponent must provide the Cape Breton Partnership with a complete list of existing data and their sources (including data format, the possibility of obtaining the original data set and cost for acquiring data), an assessment of the data reliability and validity, and the frequency of data collection, as well as potential strategies for filling any gaps, including required methodology and tools for data analysis.

The proponent must provide a complete list of existing data, their sources and potential strategies to fill any data gaps in Microsoft Word format and pdf.

*The proponent will have to work with public data. All reports, deliverables, documents and services provided under this requirement are subject to inspection by the Cape Breton Partnership and Destination Cape Breton. If any report, deliverable, document or service is not to the satisfaction of the Cape Breton Partnership or Destination Cape Breton, as submitted, the Cape Breton Partnership may reject it or request its correction prior to authorization of payment.

f) **Table of Contents:** The proponent must provide, as part of the draft and final report, a table of contents including, but not limited to: executive summary, methodology, introduction, description of the strategy for data collection and analysis and references.

The proponent must include an electronic copy of the table of contents in the draft and final report in Microsoft Word format and in pdf.

The proponent must ensure that all deliverables produced under this contract will be as described in the deliverable format above. All parts incorporated into the reports (images, tables, graphs, etc.) must be provided to the Cape Breton Partnership in separate editable electronic files in an acceptable format. Where possible, the Cape Breton Partnership will retain the intellectual property rights arising from this contract.

2.2 TIMELINES, MILESTONES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The proponent must agree to and meet the following:

I. **Week 1:** The proponent must attend the kick-off meeting.

II. **Week 2:** The proponent must present the *work plan* to the Cape Breton Partnership at the first progress meeting two weeks after the contract award.

III. **Week 9:** The proponent must submit a report of *existing data* on year-round tourism to the Cape Breton Partnership nine weeks after the contract award.

IV. **Week 13:** The proponent must submit the *draft report* describing the data strategy to the Cape Breton Partnership 13 weeks after the contract award. The proponent must also include the *draft table of contents*.

V. **Week 17:** The proponent must attend the second progress meeting for feedback on the draft report from the Cape Breton Partnership. The proponent must also include the draft *table of contents* in the draft report presented to the Cape Breton Partnership 17 weeks after the contract award.

VI. **Week 22:** The proponent must submit the *final report* describing the data strategy to the Cape Breton Partnership 22 weeks after the contract award. The proponent must also submit the complete list of *data sources*, including existing data, their sources and potential strategies to fill any data gaps 22 weeks after the contract award, as referred to in 2.1 e) in this RFP. The proponent must also include the *final table of contents* in the final report presented to the Cape Breton Partnership 22 weeks after the contract award.

The term of the contract will start from the date of award and end no later than 24 weeks after the date of award.

Milestone No.	Description	Estimated Price	Due On or Before
01	Upon completion and acceptance of the work plan as described in Scope of Work.	10%	October 20, 2022
02	Upon completion and accepted of the report on existing data as described in	30%	November 18, 2022

	2.1 Data Collection and Process.		
03	Upon completion and acceptance of the draft report as described in 2.1 Data Collection and Process.	50%	January 19, 2022
04	Upon completion and acceptance of the final report as described in 2.3 Final Presentation.	10%	February 23, 2023

INVOICING

The proponent shall submit invoices to the Cape Breton Partnership in care of the Accounts Payable Department, 285 Alexandra Street, Sydney, Nova Scotia, B1S 2E8, by email accounting@capebretonpartnership.com with direct reference to the milestone achieved, as listed above. Payment is due within 30 days of receipt by the Partnership.

3.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must include, at minimum, all of the following information. This does not guarantee acceptance of proposal and your proposal may not be considered if it is incomplete:

- The corporate name and company profile of the submission proponent;
- A statement of the proponent’s understanding of the scope of the project;
- A description of the project plan to be followed to meet the project’s goals and requirements;
- A profile of the experience and expertise of the submission proponent;
- A description of each member of the proponent’s project team, including a description of their experience and examples of past work relevant to this project;
- A work breakdown and schedule of fees and expenses setting out rates of remuneration for team members and an estimate of time each member will devote to the project;
- A project timeline and reporting schedule—final work plan to be submitted upon approval of proposal;
- Portfolio examples and references for 3 relevant projects for which the proponent has been the lead, as well as descriptions of experience on projects.

- Any other information you feel may strengthen the presented proposal.

Proposal must be submitted prior to the deadline of Thursday, September 15, 2022 and must be submitted as a single PDF file.

4.0 SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals that are deemed complete will be reviewed by staff of the Cape Breton Partnership and Stakeholders, with input from key partners as required. Proposals will be assessed according to how well they meet the requirements of the project and the experience of the proponents. The proposal with the lowest bid will not necessarily be selected. The Cape Breton Partnership retains the right to accept or reject any or all of the proposals received at their discretion; information on debriefings is included below.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- Project Understanding and Approach (30%)
- Work Plan and Schedule (30%)
- Team Experience (30%)
- Budget (10%)

4.1 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

4.1 a) EMAIL SUBMISSION

The maximum email file size that the Cape Breton Partnership is capable of receiving is 15 MB. The proponent is responsible for any failure attributable to the transmission or receipt of the emailed bid due to file size.

The proponent should be cognizant of the size of the email as a whole and not only the attachments. If the email size is too large, the proponent should send the bid in multiple emails properly labeled with how many emails are included.

4.1 b) SUBMISSION

Submissions should be sent by email, no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, September 29, 2022 to the attention of:

Erica Holgate
Economic Development Officer, Victoria County

Cape Breton Partnership
erica@capebretonpartnership.com
902-322-0558

4.1 c) ENQUIRIES

All enquiries must be submitted to erica@capebretonpartnership.com no later than two (2) calendar days before the RFP closing date. Enquiries received after that time may not be answered.

Proponents are asked to reference as accurately as possible the numbered item of the RFP to which the enquiry relates.

4.1 d) DEBRIEFING

Proponents may request a debriefing on the results of the bid solicitation process. Proponents should make the request to the Cape Breton Partnership within 15 working days from receipt of the results of the bid solicitation process. The debriefing may be in writing, by telephone, or in person.

4.2 MAXIMUM BUDGET

The maximum budget for this project is \$100,000 plus HST.