

I. NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

A. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from qualified firms for the creation of a regional economic impact study, analyzing the economic inputs and outputs of the QueensLink project on the borough of Queens and the region as a whole. The study will evaluate the catalytic growth in direct, indirect, and induced impact on New York *because* of the development of the QueensLink project.

Specifically, this project will measure the direct impact of spending to build the project and related germane costs, including payroll and employee compensation. Indirect costs are B2B, second-order effects that trickle down the supply chain. Induced effects are akin to household spending—what employees will then spend their payroll dollars on into the local economy. The output of this study will be a report documenting a suite of returns to the New York State economy in spending, jobs, and tax receipts that can then be reinvested into the community.

QueensRail Corporation

QueensRail Corporation is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization created in 2015 to advocate for the reintroduction of rail transit on the abandoned Rockaway Beach Branch (RBB) in the New York City borough of Queens. In 2019, the name “QueensLink” was adopted to better describe the combined rails AND trails vision for the RBB corridor. For the purposes of this RFP, all references to “QueensRail Corp.” and “QueensLink” refer to the same entity.

QueensLink Project Background





Connecting Communities with Rails & Trails

QueensLink's goal is to reactivate the abandoned RBB as part of New York City's subway network, bringing four new stations to critical transit deserts and struggling commercial corridors. The QueensLink vision will also provide bicycle trails, walking paths, and park space on the remaining 33 acres of land in the right-of-way. In addition to reconnecting north and south Queens with the M train, the QueensLink project includes bringing the G train back to Forest Hills.

QueensLink is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a new backbone for sustainable transportation and recreation within New York City.

In early 2026, QueensLink released an Initial Business Case (IBC) study, authored by the Steer Group, solidifying the socioeconomic value the rail reactivation would bring to riders, nonriders, nearby community members, the MTA, and the State budget. The IBC should be used as a positioning document for future refinement and should keep the need for QueensLink urgent and relevant. Its findings demonstrated that the requisite ridership exists and will grow as the corridor develops and that the net benefit to the community means that New York State and the MTA should invest in this project over warehousing the investment dollars long-term.

Reconnecting Communities Grant Background

QueensLink intends to build upon the success of the IBC study by running three simultaneous projects under the Reconnecting Communities Program grant administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). These concurrent projects are:

- ***Regional Input/Output Analysis Study (This Project)***
- Housing Tenure & Antidisplacement Study
- Community Engagement Plan and Program Delivery

Firms selected for these studies will work together on a parent timeline to deliver intermittent findings to be collated and distributed to interested stakeholders, elected officials, local champions, developers, and nonprofit organizations with keen interest in the success of the project. For the purposes of this study, the QueensLink primary impact area includes Forest Hills south to the Rockaways and LIC east to Rego Park.

Regional Economic Input/Output Analysis Study Background

As a generational, catalytic project, QueensLink takes economic impact seriously, including the potential for the development of this project to generate good jobs for local residents, to improve the economic vitality of local businesses, and to tie the region together under the auspices of an ongoing development project. Not only will the QueensLink bring much needed access to opportunity for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, it will bring a much needed economic trigger that leaving the site untouched or developed differently.

General Information

Proposed Timeline

September 30, 2026 - Advertisement of Request for Proposals

October 14, 2026 - RFP Q&A for Proposers (3:00pm EDT, RSVP on the **RFI Form in Section III** required)

November 18, 2026 - Deadline for Proposal Submission

December 13, 2026 - Selection of Consultant Team

January 4, 2027 - Notice to Proceed Issued to Consultant

July 31, 2027 - Target Completion Date for Study

QueensRail Corp. reserves the right to modify this timeline at any time. The consultant must include a timeline in their proposal that identifies key milestones to complete work by the Target Completion Date. Upon contract execution, the consultant must adhere to the timeline outlined in their proposal, unless otherwise directed by QueensRail Corp.

Budget

The consultant should provide a competitive cost estimate for completion of tasks as defined in Section II, “Scope of Services.”

Submission Deadline

Prospective consultants must submit their proposals by November 18th, 2026, at 11:59:59 PM Eastern Standard Time.

Qualification and Requirements

QueensRail Corp. is seeking consultants who have the following qualifications and experience.

1. Experience conducting economic impact studies, particularly in the New York City Metropolitan Area and particularly with rail projects.
2. Expertise in practices and models used for economic and public and private investment analyses and expertise in specific software used to conduct I/O analyses, including, but not limited to IMPLAN.
3. Proposers must submit a package that includes a cover letter, a detailed response to the below Scope of Work, a Project Schedule and Budget expanded by staff and hours expected on each task, resumes/CVs of key project personnel, and examples of similar projects as described below.

4. Proposers must also submit three reference projects with contact information for similar studies. All references must entail studies with completion dates within the last ten years of the advertisement date of this RFP.

II. Scope of Services

Consultants will evaluate the tasks below and provide a comprehensive report detailing their findings as the final end product of this regional economic input/output analysis. Proposals must explain how the proposer plans to approach/address both throughout the report creation process and the final report. Explain how your group is best suited to analyze the following items. Proposers may also suggest alternative approaches to the Tasks with justification. We are seeking the best approach, and are open to being convinced.

The QueensLink team expects the outputs of these tasks to be organized in milestones to coordinate with the Community Engagement Plan team's (another study funded by this Reconnecting Communities Grant) ability to deliver results to stakeholders and community members.

Task 1: Project Management and Coordination

The consultant will produce concise, 1-2 page monthly progress updates on the study process sharing progress in addition to regular standing meetings. The consultant will also maintain a parent project schedule and inform QueensLink in advance any changes that affect the project's delivery. The consultant will also be responsible for providing a coordination plan that syncs milestones developed within this project's scope with the other two projects QueensLink is running concurrently: the Housing Tenure & Anti-Displacement Study and the Community Engagement Plan.

Task 2: Economic and Demographic Trends in Central, Eastern, and Southern Queens

The consultant will be responsible for developing a comprehensive and compelling, data-driven existing conditions chapter, highlighting the demographic and socioeconomic baseline for the study area. The consultant will define this study area boundary or boundaries. Essential to this exercise is ensuring the QueensLink-as-catalyst story is rooted in truths about who lives in the area, who would benefit from the project, and the current drivers that supply employment and economic growth and development. The goal here is a narrative supported by relevant maps, graphs, tables, and charts to connect the eventual positive impact with the people who will benefit from it.

Task 3: Economic Impact of Capital Investment in Central, Eastern, and Southern Queens: 2005-2025

The consultant will endeavor to identify and explore a handful of past projects within the study area boundary or boundaries to build a benchmark of comparable projects that have spurred regional economic growth. The affected years are not set in stone, but earlier projects' benefits may no longer be catalytic, relevant, or germane to the impact we expect from QueensLink. You may also shrink the study period with a compelling reason.

The consultant will first identify and justify projects selected and develop a short profile of each, and will then use IMPLAN or other software or model to conduct a local and regional or statewide analysis of relevant I/O elements, including direct, indirect, and induced economic benefits and fiscal impacts, including ROI to eligible public entities. In this response, please describe in detail the methodological and/or pedagogical approach you intend to use and outcomes you expect to use as benchmarks for current projects and QueensLink in Tasks 4 and 5.

Task 4: Economic Impact of Capital Investment in Central, Eastern, and Southern Queens: Active and Planned Projects

Similar to Task 3, the consultant will provide a detailed approach to active and planned projects within the study area boundaries, noting any changes to methodology or pedagogy, if applicable. The goal here is to contextualize QueensLink (Task 5) within the litany of development for the region.

Task 5: Alternatives Analysis and the Catalytic Economic Impact of QueensLink

The consultant will conduct an I/O and/or fiscal impact analysis for QueensLink using their described methodology. Describe any additional regional economic impact outputs your team will develop past the initial findings for projects in Tasks 3 and 4. The consultant team will also be responsible for developing I/O findings for project alternatives along the corridor, including a no-build scenario (measured as opportunity cost). The consultant will be responsible for developing these alternatives.

Task 6: Final Report & Presentation, Spreadsheets, Methodology, and Data

The consultant will build a final report and presentation for integration into QueensLink's larger advocacy efforts that includes findings from Task 1-5 and a detailed, plain English explanation of methodology used to develop these results. The consultant will also provide the data in the appropriate format in a timely manner to support QueensLink's ongoing development of Open Data for interested stakeholders to use.

III. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted to the following email address with the following in the subject line: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION for QueensLink Regional Economic Input/Output Analysis 2026 from *Your Firm's Name*.

Proposal Submission Email: info@queenslink.org



Connecting Communities with Rails & Trails

QueensLink will provide a confirmation response upon receipt of the proposal. If you do not receive a receipt confirmation within 3 days of proposal submission, please follow up at the above email address as necessary.

All Requests for Information (RFI) regarding questions or clarifications must be submitted via the following web form **before 11:59:59 EDT on October 13, 2026**.

[CLICK HERE FOR THE RFI FORM](#)

If necessary, interpretations or clarifications in response to such questions will be made by issuance of an “Addendum” within a reasonable time prior to proposal closing. QueensRail Corp. may, at its discretion, extend the submission deadline date with written notice. It is the Proposer’s responsibility to ensure that proposals are received prior to the stated closing time. QueensRail Corp. shall not be responsible for the proper identification and handling of any proposals submitted incorrectly. **Late proposals, late modifications, or late withdrawals will not be considered** after the stated submission deadline. The submission and signing of a proposal shall indicate the intention of the consultant to adhere to the provisions described in this RFP.

Only questions answered by formal written addenda will be binding. Oral and other interpretations of clarifications will be without legal effect.

IV. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

Consultants should prepare their proposal in the format specified below.

1. Title Page - Proposer should identify the RFP subject, name and title of contact person, address, telephone number, email address, and date of submission.
2. Transmittal Letter - The transmittal letter should be no more than two (2) pages long and should include, as a minimum, the following:
 - a. A brief statement of the Proposer’s understanding of the project and services to be performed.
 - b. A positive commitment to perform the services within the time period specified, starting and completing the project within the deadlines stated in the RFP, the names of persons authorized to represent the Consultant, their title, address, and telephone number (if different from the individual who signs the transmittal letter).
3. Table of Contents - The table of contents should include a clear and complete identification by section and page number of the materials submitted.
4. Scope of Work - Submit a work plan, broken down by task, to accomplish the work defined in the “Scope of Services” section in this RFP. The work plan should include time estimates (in hours) for each significant segment of the project and the staff level to be assigned. The planned use of subconsultants (if any) should be described and justified.

5. Experience - Provide a description of the Consultant's experience in performing similar studies that address the key elements of the proposed scope of work. A minimum of 2 Statements of Experience (SOEs) are required that demonstrate previous experience delivering regional input/output analyses/studies (some or all). Provide a resume (1 page each) for each key project team member and an organization chart.
6. Coordination Plan - Provide a short (< 1 page) description of how your firm will coordinate with other firms and commitment to developing findings consistent with other project needs. NB: If you are submitting a proposal for *more than one* of these related RFPs please also include a narrative (>1 page) describing how you will coordinate internally. Please submit this with each proposal and note which *other* proposals you are submitting. Please do not submit a single, joining proposal for 2 or 3 projects within this larger grant.
7. References - Provide a list of three (3) references that may be contacted about the Consultant's qualifications and experience. Include the contact's name(s), email address, and telephone number for each reference.
8. Cost Proposal - Sealed fee proposal (via password-protected PDF) shall include the total hours and fully-loaded costs, including direct and indirect costs, organized by task.

V. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPECTED TIMELINE

The estimated budget of this project is ~\$150,000 and final report and data should be delivered by July 2027.

VI. PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES

QueensLink will evaluate proposals based on the five criteria below to determine the Consultant or Consultant team that best fulfills the requirements of the RFP using the following rubric. The proposals will be evaluated on both their technical and fee aspects. QueensLink reserves the right to modify, alter, or adjust the review and evaluation process. In addition, QueensLink will treat all proposals and related communication confidentially.

1. **Task Evaluation Factors:**
 - a. Articulated understanding of the project and project approach
 - b. Cost competitiveness
 - c. Pertinent experience and past performance of the consultant
 - d. Quality of experience of the key personnel
 - e. Overall quality of the proposal and references

Each of the scoring areas has a possible minimum to maximum score of one (1) to four (4) points for a maximum of 20 points.

2. **Interview:** At QueensLink's discretion, the top two or three Consultants may be required to make a short presentation of their proposal. This will provide an opportunity to clarify or elaborate on the proposal, but will not, in any way, provide an opportunity to change any fee amount originally

proposed. QueensLink will schedule the time and location of these presentations (if necessary) and notify the selected Consultants.

3. **Investigation of References:** QueensLink reserves the right to investigate references and the past performance of any proposer with respect to its successful performance of similar projects, compliance with specifications and contractual obligations, its completion or delivery of a project on schedule, and its lawful payment of employees and workers.

Additional Submission Notes:

1. **Generative AI policy:** Please do not submit responses to this RFP that have been generated by an AI or LLM tool. It will be rejected and disqualified at our discretion. QueensLink will use available LLM-detection software to determine the veracity of responses.
2. **Clarification of Proposals:** QueensLink reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a consultant's proposal or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal. Failure of a Proposer to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification within a reasonable timeframe could result in rejection of the Consultant's proposal.
3. **Reservation in Evaluation:** QueensLink reserves the right to either:
 - a. Select a consultant directly from the written proposals, or
 - b. Request "Best and Final Offers" from the two finalist consultants and select based on the most competitive price.
4. **Intent of Award:** Upon review of the proposals submitted, QueensLink will negotiate a Professional Services Agreement with a Consultant(s).
5. **Proposal Rejection:** QueensLink reserves the right:
 - a. To reject any or all proposals not in compliance with these requirements.
 - b. To reject any proposal not meeting the specifications set forth herein.
 - c. To waive any or all irregularities in proposals submitted.
 - d. To reject all proposals.
 - e. To award any or all parts of any proposal.
 - f. To request additional references and other data to determine responsiveness.