Request for Proposals

Oxoboxo Heritage Multi-Use Path & Thames River Blueway

October 9, 2026

Overview

The Town of Montville has been awarded a CT Recreational Trails Program Grant for the planning and conceptual design of the Oxoboxo Heritage Multi-Use Path & Thames River Blueway. This project is a cornerstone of the town's broader strategy to revitalize the Uncasville core, anchoring community life around the Town Hall and Senior Center while overcoming the challenges posed by Route 32 and its intersection with Route 163.

Building on recommendations from the Revive and Renew Route 163 / 32 Strategic Investment Plan (a CIF Round 5 grant award), this initiative helps establish a Town Center hub and primary trailhead. Picker's Pond Park (with a final name to be determined through the planning process) sits at the northwest corner of the Route 32 and Route 163 intersection, serving as a gateway and focal point for the Town Center. It will complement the future Town Green and connect directly via a pedestrian plaza at 350 Route 32 (locally known as the Dot's Café site, which is currently the subject of a Greyfield Pilot Grant request and identified as a potential future municipal acquisition).

Project Components & Connectivity

- **The Oxoboxo Trail Junction:** Picker's Pond will function as a vital trail junction traversing Oxoboxo Brook, forming the nexus between east-west and north-south trail networks. The east-west corridor will link the Thames River to western Montville, providing active transportation linkages to schools, the community center, and the recreation complex. A future Route 32 bikeway is also envisioned and will be accommodated in this conceptual junction design only.
- **The Thames River Blueway:** This initiative expands upon the recently renovated municipal boat launch and new fishing pier, aiming to establish a unique regional recreation amenity for paddle sports and niche user groups that draws visitors to Montville. To expand limited public coastal access, the Town has initiated outreach regarding DEEP-owned land at Point Breeze Road. The consultant will help identify potential passive recreational uses for this site, at a high level. Plans not expected.
- **Cultural Heritage & Interpretation:** The narrative of the corridor is deeply rooted in the natural and industrial history of Oxoboxo Brook—shaped by historical dams, mills, and, most profoundly, the heritage of the Mohegan Tribe. The selected consultant will help formulate creative interpretive elements to weave these stories into trail and blueway amenities, including direct engagement with the Mohegan Tribe. Regionally, the Blueway is envisioned as part of a broader network, with a long-range goal of connecting to Uncas Leap Heritage Park on the Yantic River in Norwich. Strategic located rest areas will be a critical component of this experience.

In May 2026, Montville applied for a Long Island Sound Futures Fund grant. If awarded—with notification anticipated in mid-November—these funds will support ecological assessments of Oxoboxo Brook, water quality enhancement, scenic public access points, and the ecological restoration of the Picker's Pond area (which has grown over since the dam's removal approximately ten years ago).

Because the Trails Program Grant and the anticipated Long Island Sound Futures Fund grant are related, this Request for Proposals encompasses services supporting both funding streams as a seamless, natural extension of the project scope. Consultant qualifications should reflect the multidisciplinary expertise required to address both active transportation planning and natural resource restoration.

Grant Information and the Revive and Renew final report can be found on the Land Use Departments webpage, and located within the Department's submenu.

Scope of Services

The following scope of work was provided in the grant application and shall be used as the basis of the firm's response. The selected consultant will be responsible for meeting all grant requirements as outlined throughout the grant documents. Thus, the scope of work and corresponding fee shall be commensurate with the award.

1. Component 1: Oxoboxo Heritage Trail – Camp Oakdale to Palmertown

(Auxiliary Planning Segment Supported by Town Match)

Component 1 establishes the feasibility of a northern connection between Camp Oakdale, the Community Center, the schools, and the Palmertown district. Work is primarily desktop- and field-observation–based, intended to identify whether viable routing options exist and what level of investment may be needed in the future.

1.1 Base Mapping & Inventory

The consultant will assemble GIS layers, roadway widths, parcel boundaries, environmental constraints, topography, and utility locations to frame the routing environment. This mapping will serve as the foundation for alignment alternatives.

An inventory will document land use patterns, ROW widths, potential pinch points, environmental constraints (wetland, rock outcrops, NDDB), and logical connection points to schools, Camp Oakdale, and Palmertown. The intent is to identify the corridor's natural opportunities and friction points.

1.2 Field Visits & Desktop Review

Curbside field visits will be conducted at strategic locations, such as possible road crossings, tight ROW areas, or segments where a trail may need to deviate from roadway shoulders. These visits serve to validate desktop assumptions rather than establish engineering-level detail. The consultant will evaluate all base conditions using aerial imagery, GIS, and available town data, identifying logical routing corridors and likely easement needs. This step synthesizes the environmental, mobility, and ownership factors that shape alignment feasibility.

1.3 Routing with Alternatives / Order-of-Magnitude Costs /Phasing

A primary routing concept and up to two alternate concepts will be prepared. These alignments will reflect physical constraints, safety considerations, and long-term connectivity goals, including the eventual link to the core Palmertown–Thames River corridor. Cost ranges will be prepared for each alignment alternative. Estimates will reflect trail type, surface, crossing needs, shoulder enhancements, and any anticipated structures. Based on routing complexity and cost, the consultant will outline potential

phasing strategies that could allow Montville to implement the connection in stages as funding becomes available.

1.4 Deliverable: Summary Memo

A concise written summary will compile the base mapping, existing conditions, feasibility routing, cost ranges, and recommended next steps. Component 1 findings will be presented at the project-wide 70 percent open house.

2. Component 2: Oxoboxo Heritage Trail – Palmertown to Thames River

(Primary Focus Area and Core of Grant-Funded Work)

Component 2 provides the technical backbone of the project: establishing a feasible, culturally rich, and environmentally grounded trail from Palmertown to the Thames River using an abandoned rail corridor, public ROW, and strategic utility corridors. The work here becomes the conceptual foundation for future permitting, design, and capital budgeting.

2.1 Base Mapping & Site Visits

The consultant will prepare detailed GIS mapping of ownership, ROW, wetlands, watercourses, slopes, utilities, drainage easements, SFHAs, and street geometry. This base map will serve as the central reference for all routing, environmental, and structural decisions across the four segments depicted in Attachment C.

Field reconnaissance will be conducted along the entire corridor, with special attention to the former dam area, the rail corridor, the I-395 underpass, Route 163 shoulders, and transition zones between public ROW and private parcels. Field notes will identify practical opportunities for crossing, alignment refinement, and trailhead placement.

2.2 Land Records Review & Limited Field Survey (2–3 Locations)

A targeted review will be completed to determine ownership conditions, outstanding easements, historic encumbrances, and any property complications relevant to trail routing. This is focused research, intended to clarify issues rather than complete full title histories.

Survey crews will collect spot elevation data, structural information, or topographic reference points at up to three critical locations. Likely survey points include the former dam crossing, steep slope areas, and alignment transition points where precise data improves feasibility assessments.

2.3 Wetland Evaluation – Field Review

A wetland scientist will conduct field reconnaissance to verify mapping, sketch approximate boundaries, and flag any areas that appear sensitive for routing decisions. This is not a full delineation but a feasibility-level assessment to identify avoidance opportunities and likely permitting needs.

2.4 Alternative Routing Analysis

Primary and alternative route concepts will be developed for each segment. Alternatives may be driven by property rights, environmental avoidance, user experience, or engineering feasibility. Concepts will illustrate transitions from rail corridor to roadway shoulders, segments under I-395, and the link to the future Route 32 multi-use path.

2.5 Cost Estimates (Segment/Phase-Based)

Construction cost estimates will be prepared for each of the four segments. Costs will be broken into logical project phases and will include trail surfacing, drainage improvements, structural needs at the dam site, site amenities, and potential acquisition or easement elements.

2.6 Oxoboxo Heritage Park – Concept Design

At Route 163/32, the consultant will prepare a concept plan for **Oxoboxo Heritage Park**, a proposed trailhead and interpretive focal point. The concept will illustrate circulation, gathering space, overlooks, interpretive locations, parking opportunities, site furnishings, and integration with Town Center improvements and the future Route 32 multi-use path.

2.7 Permitting Requirements Overview

A feasibility-level permitting matrix will identify which state, federal, and local permits are expected for future construction. This may include inland wetlands, floodplain management, CTDOT encroachment, and Army Corps considerations. Early clarity will support Montville's ability to plan for next steps following the study.

2.8 Deliverable Report

A comprehensive narrative report will compile all tasks, mapping, routing alternatives, park concept design rendering showing integration with town center and future town green with 350 Route 32 plaza connector, one perspective rending, cost estimates, and permitting considerations. This document becomes the Town's principal planning tool to advance the project into design and implementation.

3. Component 3: Thames River Heritage Blueway

Component 3 establishes the conceptual framework for a cultural, environmental, and recreational water route extending from the Dock Road boat launch north to Haughton Cove, Uncas Leap, and Norwich Harbor. The consultant will assess access points, paddling conditions, interpretive opportunities, and collaborative roles with the Mohegan Tribe and the City of Norwich.

Deliverables include a storyboard of Blueway themes, a definition and implementation outline, an inventory of cultural and natural points of interest, and recommendations for future access and programming.

4. Public Participation (Provided by In-kind services with Consultant support)

4.1 Meetings

Throughout the project outreach with land owners and stakeholders will occur. It is envisioned that up to 12 property owner meetings will be required and conducted on a single day, coordinated for attendance and efficiency. Town staff will lead majority of the outreach efforts and coordinate all meetings and events.

4.2 Open House

One public open house will be conducted from 4-7pm at Town Hall. Staff will be present to answer questions and discuss the trail alignment, features and overall vision. A representative from the Consultant team will be asked to attend and prepare the necessary materials.

4.3 Web based

Town Staff will prepare necessary materials and update a webpage designated to the project. The website will outline the project, components and provide updates associated with the each stage of the projects stage.

4.4 Town Council Presentation

A final presentation of findings will be provided to the Town Council in an open meeting format and at which time Council members, and if Council so allows, public may ask questions.

5. Deliverables

The consultant will shall provide periodic deliverables commensurate with monthly invoicing. Deliverables shall be organized in a way which forms the final report, telling the story of findings and decisions along the way. The final document is not envisioned as an exhaustive narrative but rather a concise document of findings and recommendations.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS NOTE: FEMA is updating mapping and some trail routing areas, while depicted within the grant application as traversing a current flood AE/A areas, may no longer be located in a flood prone area. The consultant shall advise the town on how to proceed with decision making on this matter since new FEMA maps will not be official until late 2027, or later.

6. Possible Additional Services

Town reserves the right to negotiate additional services associated with the NFWF, pending award and procurement policies of said grant. this submission shall reflect an understanding of these additional services and the necessary expertise to carry out said services.

Submission Requirements

Submit twelve (12) bound copies and a USB drive by the date noted herein to:

Julie Chapman
Finance Director
Town of Montville
310 Norwich-New London Tpke
Uncasville, CT 06382

Submission shall at minimum include the following information:

- Letter of interest
- Project Understanding associated with both grants.
- For the Trails Grant:
    - Approach and Scope of Work. Provide a detailed scope of work based upon above outlined Tasks. This includes but is not limited to quantifying deliverables, meetings, testing (site/lab) if required, assumptions, and equipment needs/provided. Clearly outline exclusions.
    - Lump Sum Fee. Provide fee proposal itemized by tasks identified in the Scope of Service items listed above; include all assumptions; quantify materials, number of meetings, hours per meetings and field time.

    - Project Schedule by Project/task and milestones; indicate dates of meetings and deliverables
    - Management Approach
    - Project Organization Chart; clearly identify the daily point of contact/project manager
- Associated with both grants, if unique to each grant, identify as such:
    - Hourly rates
    - Team resumes with roles and responsibilities. Identify the lead point of contact.
    - Relevant project experience in housing development and wastewater planning and engineering
    - Firm overview including description of services to be provided; list which services will be provided for each grant
    - List of all subconsultants
    - Three municipal/government/quasi-public agency references from relevant work completed in the last five years
- If available, examples of prior completed relevant trail planning projects via PDF only.

Questions & Selection Criteria/Process

Questions shall be received by email on or before the dated listed herein to:
Dennis Goderre, Director of Land Use & Development
dgoderre@montville-ct.org

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

Points	Criteria
15	Understanding and approach of the project's constraints and goals
15	Scope of Work accuracy and thoroughness
10	Firm's technical and team member expertise
10	Relevant project experience
7	Fee Proposal and Hourly Rates
7	Schedule
5	Ability to outline regulatory and planning requirements
5	Knowledge of grant requirements (DEEP Trail and NWFW)
5	Completeness, accuracy and presentation of response

Schedule

- Release Date: October 9, 2026
- Mandatory Pre-bid: October 20rd @ 10am, Council chambers
- Questions Due: October 26th @ 5pm (see above)
- Answers Provided: October 30th @ 3pm
- Submissions Due: November 13th @ 12pm
- Tentative Shortlist Notification: Week of November 30th
- Tentative Interviews: Week of December 14th
- Award/Contract Negotiation: January 2027 – pending final grant closing with State
- Project Completion: October 2027 (see project schedule requirements in Grant application)