



# THE SHAWANGUNK MOUNTAINS REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

8 White Oaks Lane New Paltz New York 12561 845-399-0002 alabyway@gmail.com

## **Request for Qualifications for Planning and Design Services for the "Scenic Views Project"**

December 2, 2009

**This is a request for qualifications from landscape design and planning firms to assist the Shawangunk Mountains Regional Partnership in developing an innovative program to help local municipal planning boards minimize the impact of development on scenic resources in the Shawangunk Mountains Region of New York State. The program is funded with a budget for these services of \$57,000.**

Issued by:

Al Wegener, Executive Director  
Shawangunk Mountains Regional Partnership  
8 White Oaks Lane  
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### **A. Background:**

The Shawangunk Mountains Regional Partnership is a functioning and productive 11-member intermunicipal partnership of the nine towns and two villages in southern Ulster and northern Orange counties that participate in the management of the New York State-designated Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway.

The byway is an 88-mile network of roads that encircle the northern Shawangunk Mountains and link these municipalities together, forming the Shawangunk Mountains Region. The byway was designated on the basis of the scenic, natural, recreational and historic resources of the region, which include such well-known places as the Mohonk Mountain House, the Mohonk Preserve, Sam's Point Preserve, Minnewaska State Park Preserve, the D&H Canal Museum and the Huguenot Street National Historic Landmark District.

Goals of the byway are to (a) stimulate economic growth through tourism; (b) preserve the intrinsic resources of the Shawangunk Mountains Region; and (c) enhance the transportation system.

The partnership prepared the inventory of resources and Corridor Management Plan required by the NYS DOT for state designation, which was achieved in the fall of 2006 by acts of the state legislature and governor. The original 82-mile route was expanded to 88 miles by a similar process completed in the fall of 2009.

The partnership received funding for a Regional Open Space Plan from the Federal Highway Administration, the NYS Department of State and all 11 municipalities. The plan was approved unanimously by our executive committee in December 2008.

The Scenic Views Project is a recommendation of the Corridor Management Plan and the Regional Open Space Plan.

**Executive Committee:** Shawangunk Supervisor, *John Valk Jr.*—Chairman; New Paltz Town Supervisor, *Toni Hokanson*—Vice Chair; Rochester Supervisor, *Carl Chipman*—Vice Chair; Crawford Planning Board Chair, *Phil Jamison*; Village of Ellenville Mayor, *Jeff Kaplan*; Gardiner Supervisor, *Joe Katz*; Marletown Supervisor, *Brooke Pickering-Cole*; Montgomery Supervisor, *Mike Hayes*; Village of New Paltz Mayor, *Terry Dungan*; Rosendale Supervisor, *Patrick McDonough*; Wawarsing Supervisor, *Ed Jennings*; Mohonk Preserve Administrative Projects Manager, *Ellen Sticker*—Secretary; **Executive Director, Al Wegener**

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Funding for the project is provided by the Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byways Program, administered by the NYS Scenic Byways Program, and by the NYS Department of Economic Development.

## **B. The Scenic Views Project**

The views along the scenic byway and throughout the Shawangunk Mountains Region are critical to the allure and character of the region. Thus, the theme of our region is that "it's beautiful here."

The views are of the northern Shawangunk mountains, the centerpiece of the byway, across the farm fields and woodlands of the Rondout and Wallkill valleys, the farm lands, orchards and vineyards themselves, the historic sites and the views observers experience in our hamlets and villages.

Our priorities for this project are the scenic views of the mountains from along the byway and the scenic views throughout the region of our rural countryside

Over the past 12 years or so, our municipalities have updated their Comprehensive Plans and have enacted regulatory measures which each, consistent with NYS's home rule provisions, feel is appropriate for their communities. It is not the intention of the Scenic Views Project to supplant these regulatory measures.

With the Scenic Views Project, the partnership recognizes the key role local planning boards play by participation in the SEQR process and in site plan review and wishes to provide our planning boards with strategies and planning tools to enable this participation to be most effective in regard to conserving scenic views.

Our purpose is to create a process which planning boards would utilize when a development project is presented which may interfere with a significant scenic viewshed, as determined by the planning board. (We do not intend to inventory these views throughout the region.) Such a process may (a) identify the visual elements that make the landscape scenic, (b) assess the impact of the development on the elements of the scenic resource and (c) collaborate with developers in the consideration of an array of design tools and other options that offer opportunities to reduce these visual impacts.

We care greatly about the receptiveness of the planning boards to this process, and we appreciate the need to consider the turnover in planning board members that occurs each year. We very much want this process and the design options to be understood, utilized and, of course, helpful on a continuing basis over time in preserving our scenic views.

The partnership intends to select a qualified consultant based on RFQ submittals, including references. We will possibly interview two and no more than three candidate firms and will subsequently negotiate a scope of work with the preferred consultant for a cost not to exceed \$57,000 for services and materials needed to execute the program.

## **C. Criteria for selection.**

Directly relevant experience in working with local municipalities in regard to initiatives to protect and preserve scenic landscape beauty.

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Familiarity with NYS development processes including SEQR, subdivision, site plan review and the roles of municipal and planning boards in these processes.

Understanding of the project and insight into how to make it successful.

Demonstrated ability to work with a diverse community and stakeholders as well as with a regional organization.

Ability to communicate information and ideas clearly and effectively.

Depth and quality of services to be provided, including use of technological resources, such as GIS mapping, simulation, etc.

Professional references.

## **D. Submittal**

Interested consultants should respond with a brief statement of qualifications and an indication of their approach to the project. Not more than four pages. Total submittal should not exceed 10 pages complete. Please provide five copies.

Please send to:

Al Wegener, Executive Director  
Shawangunk Mountains Regional Partnership  
8 White Oaks Lane  
New Paltz, NY 12561

Submittal must be received at this address no later than 6 pm of January 8, 2010. Our intended start date is March 1, 2010. Completion by November 2010.

Information on the regional partnership and the byway is available at [www.mtnscenicbyway.org](http://www.mtnscenicbyway.org) and may also be requested from Al Wegener at 845-399-0002 or [aweg@earthlink.net](mailto:aweg@earthlink.net).

The Partnership reserves the right to negotiate with one or more firms, and to reject any and all submittals as it may determine in its sole and absolute discretion.

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