



## Rock Point Commons

### Call for Expression of Interest for Residential Community Partnerships

Solicitation Number:	RPC-EOI-001
Issuance Date:	March 16, 2023
Open House:	Friday, March 24, 2023 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm and Tuesday, April 4 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm
Deadline for Questions	April 5, 2023 at 5:00 pm EST
Deadline for Expressions of Interest:	May 1, 2023 at 5:00 pm EST

Dear Community Partner,

Rock Point Commons invites your organization to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for prospective residential partnership at Rock Point in Burlington, Vermont. Prospective partner EOIs will be evaluated by a committee comprised of the Rock Point Commons board and staff, and will be used to assess opportunities for innovative, sustainable and mission-based community partnerships based at Rock Point. Prospective partner EOIs will be considered as part of Rock Point Commons strategic development planning process for 2023-2028.

EOIs that are highly ranked by the evaluation committee may be invited to participate in strategic planning discussions in May 2023. Following the strategic planning process, prospective partners may be invited to submit a proposal for seasonal or year-round residential partnership at Rock Point. Rock Point Commons is not bound to accept any of the expressions of interest submitted.

#### Section 1: Background

Rock Point Commons encompasses 130 acres of publicly accessible conserved lands on the shores of Lake Champlain in Burlington, Vermont. A uniquely intact and valuable wilderness area within the City of Burlington, the property includes hiking trails, a conference center, lodging space, spiritual gathering areas, community micro-agriculture, as well as private housing, Episcopal Diocese of Vermont offices, and the separately managed Rock Point School. The property is owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont and managed by a non-denominational board that delegates management to a small staff.

The mission of Rock Point Commons is to cultivate an inclusive, place-based community for education, spirituality, and environmental stewardship. The four pillars of our mission are:

- **Education:** To foster and promote learning opportunities for diverse communities at Rock Point.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** To encourage community members to understand, care for, and protect the rich ecosystems at Rock Point and beyond.
- **Spirituality:** To make space for people with diverse beliefs and interpretations of spirituality to connect to the earth, self, and others; refreshing the spirit through the quiet beauty and majesty of nature.



- ***Sustainable Micro-Agriculture:*** To welcome small-scale agricultural projects that center connection and stewardship.

To this end, we engage a diverse array of community partners who, through their work, support one or more pillars of the Rock Point Commons mission. Community partners also support the sustainable development of Rock Point Commons by contributing sustained financial support for our mission and operations, as well as for the stewardship of Rock Point's land.

In May 2023, Rock Point Commons will embark on a strategic planning process for 2023-2028. The purpose of this call for Expressions of Interest is to allow Rock Point Commons to take stock of opportunities for innovative, sustainable and mission-based community partnerships.

Residential partnerships can be varied in their physical footprint and seasonal presence. For example, a partnership may be based at Rock Point only in the summer months, or may be a long-term, year-round presence. A partnership may require a significant amount of dedicated facility space, such as the conference center, or may require access to a smaller facility, such office or classroom space in Rock Point's conference center. As part of the strategic planning process, Rock Point Commons will assess opportunities to host a broad array of residential partners with the goal of supporting Rock Point Common's mission and ensuring the sustainable development of this community resource.

## **Section 2: Considerations and Constraints**

### **1. Conservation Easement**

An unspoiled wilderness within the City of Burlington, Rock Point is governed by a conservation easement. The purpose of the conservation easement is to conserve and protect the biological diversity and important wildlife habitat and natural communities on this land. Rock Point is one of the most significant rare plant sites in Vermont; it contains rare and fragile plant species, upland wetland and cliff habitats for wildlife, the most visible exposure of a dolomite thrust fault in North America, and at least two native American archeological sites. It is critically important that all partners and community visitors at Rock Point serve as responsible stewards of this protected land, in accordance with the requirements of the conservation easement (Annex A).

### **2. Vehicle Traffic and Parking**

Rock Point's facilities, including the conference center, Van Dyck building, Kerr building, and five three-season cabins are accessible by a one-lane, residential road. As such, the property has very limited capacity to accommodate vehicle traffic and parking. Prospective partners are encouraged to consider ways to limit the impacts of vehicle traffic and parking, including by providing shuttle services for program participants, accessing the property by walking or biking, or utilizing the parking lot at Leddy Park and traveling the short distance to Rock Point on the Burlington Greenway by foot.

## **Section 3: Evaluation Criteria**

Expressions of interest will be evaluated based on the following criteria:



- How would the proposed partnership support one or more key pillars of the overarching mission of Rock Point Commons (education, environmental stewardship spirituality, and sustainable micro-agriculture)?
- How would the proposed partnership support compliance with the requirements of the property’s conservation easement?
- How would the operations of the proposed partnership support environmentally friendly practices on the property?
- How would the proposed partnership impact vehicle traffic and parking at Rock Point?
- How would the proposed partnership provide enhanced access and connection with the natural world for diverse communities, including by eliminating barriers related to transportation, economic status, limited mobility, or lack of ensured physical and emotional safety for vulnerable or marginalized populations?
- Who are the primary and secondary beneficiaries of the proposed partnership? Approximately how many community members would the proposed partnership serve annually?
- What is the proposed partnership’s anticipated contribution to Rock Point’s revenue?

**Section 4: Description of Available Space:**

Expressions of interest will be accepted for seasonal or year-round residential programs. Expressions of interests may be submitted for use of all or some of the below available facilities:

1. Van Dyck Building
2. Kerr Building
3. Conference center
4. Cabins

Architectural plans for the Conference Center are attached as Annex B. Architectural plans for the Van Dyck Building are attached as Annex C. A description of Rock Point’s facilities is attached as Annex C. A Map of Rock Point natural area is attached Annex D.

Note that prospective partners are invited to tour the facilities and property during the open house sessions on Friday, March 24, 2023 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm and on Tuesday, April 4 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm.

**Section 5: Evaluation Criteria**

Criteria	Score	Max Score
1. Demonstrates clear support for key pillars of the overarching mission of Rock Point Commons		20
2. Supports compliance with the requirements of the property’s conservation easement and land use plan		8
3. Aligns with the conservation goals of Rock Point Commons		8
4. Low impact of vehicle traffic and parking at Rock Point		8
5. Provides enhanced access and connection to nature for diverse communities, including by eliminating barriers related to transportation, economic status, limited mobility, or lack of		8



ensured physical and emotional safety for vulnerable or marginalized populations		
6. Estimated number of beneficiaries served annually		8
7. Anticipated contribution to Rock Point’s revenue (e.g. monthly rental fee)		40
Total Points (Maximum)		100

**Section 6: Guidelines for submissions of Questions and Expressions of Interest**

1. **Introduction.** Prospective partners are responsible for ensuring that their EOI is received by Rock Point Commons in accordance with the instructions, terms, and conditions described in this solicitation. Failure to adhere with instructions described in this solicitation may lead to disqualification of an EOI from consideration.
2. **Open House:** Prospective partners are invited to tour the facilities and property during the open house sessions on Friday, March 24, 2023 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm and on Tuesday, April 4 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm. Individuals and groups interested in participating in an open house should email [RockPointCommonsEOI@diovermont.org](mailto:RockPointCommonsEOI@diovermont.org) no later than Wednesday, March 23 at 5:00 pm EST. The subject line of the email should read “**RPC-EOI-001 Open House**”.
3. **Questions:** Questions regarding the solicitation may be submitted no later than April 5, 2023 at 5:00 pm EST by email to [RockPointCommonsEOI@diovermont.org](mailto:RockPointCommonsEOI@diovermont.org). The subject line of the email should read “**RPC-EOI-001 Questions**”. Questions must be submitted in writing; phone calls will not be accepted. Questions and requests for clarification—and the responses thereto—that Rock Point Commons believes may be of interest to other prospective partners will be circulated to all solicitation recipients who have indicated an interest in submitting an expression of interest.
4. **Submission Deadline and protocol:** Submissions must be received no later than May 1, 2023 at 5:00 pm EST by email. Any emailed offers must be emailed to [RockPointCommonsEOI@diovermont.org](mailto:RockPointCommonsEOI@diovermont.org). The subject line of the email should read “**RPC-EOI-001- Expression of Interest**”. Offers received after the specified time and date will be considered late and will be considered only at the discretion of Rock Point Commons.
5. **Evaluation and Next Steps:** Expressions of Interest will be evaluated by Rock Point Common’s evaluation committee in accordance with the criteria presented in Section 5.
6. **EOI Instructions and Required Format:** It is requested that prospective partners organize their Expressions of Interest as noted below. This request is made to facilitate Rock Point Common’s review of the submitted material thus enabling a rapid evaluation process.

Expression of Interest (Narrative):

Rock Point Commons requests that a maximum of six (6) type-written pages (Font Size 11). The expression of interest should address the questions outlined below:

1. What is the name, address and contact information for your organization?
2. Please provide a brief description of the proposed partnership program, including purpose, space requirements, timeline.



3. How would the proposed partnership support one or more key pillars of the overarching mission of Rock Point Commons (education, spirituality, and environmental stewardship)?
4. How would the proposed partnership support compliance with the requirements of the property's conservation easement?
5. How would the operations of the proposed partnership support environmentally friendly practices on the property?
6. How would the proposed partnership impact vehicle traffic and parking at Rock Point (i.e. what are the estimated number of cars traveling to and from Rock Point Commons daily, estimated number of parking spaces needed)?
7. How would the proposed partnership provide enhanced access and connection to nature for diverse communities, including by eliminating barriers related to transportation, economic status, limited mobility, or lack of ensured physical and emotional safety for vulnerable or marginalized populations?
8. Who are the primary and secondary beneficiaries of the proposed partnership? How many community members would the proposed partnership serve annually?

Expression of Interest (Financial Contribution):

Rock Point Commons requests that expressions of interest include the anticipated contribution the prospective partner would make to Rock Point's revenue in exchange for use of the proposed facility space or land access. Rock Point Commons requests that this be presented as a projected monthly contribution, beginning in September 2023 and ending in August 2028. It is not necessary that proposed partnerships commence in September 2023; prospective partners are invited to submit Expressions of Interest that would commence at any time within the five year period. Prospective partners are requested to use the template in **Annex F**.

**Section 7. Evaluation and Selection Process:**

Expressions of interest will be evaluated by an evaluation committee comprised of Rock Point Commons Board staff and board members. Individuals affiliated with proposed partners will recuse themselves from the evaluation committee to mitigate any conflicts of interest.

Expressions of interest will be scored based on the above criteria. Representatives from highly evaluated expressions of interest may be invited to participate in a strategic planning discussions in May 2023.

As part of Rock Point Common's strategic plan development, Rock Point Commons may invite select offerors to submit detailed proposals for residential partnership.

**List of Attachments:**

Annex A: Rock Point Conservation Easement

Annex B: Architectural plans for the Conference Center

Annex C. Architectural plans for the Van Dyck Building

Annex D. Rock Point Commons Facility Descriptions



Annex E: Map of Rock Point

Annex F. Anticipated Revenue Contribution Template