



Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources Collaborative Laboratory
SITE LOCATION PROPOSAL

August 8, 2014

The statutory request:

On or before August 15, 2014, the Department of Buildings and General Services, the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and the Agency of Natural Resources shall submit a site location proposal for a shared laboratory to the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Institutions. It is the intent of the General Assembly that when evaluating site locations, preference shall be given to State-owned property. (Act 178 of 2014, Section 33)

Dear House Corrections & Institutions and Senate Institutions Committees:

Buildings and General Services was charged by the Legislature to evaluate and propose a site for new shared laboratory facilities for the Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The search for a site has been methodical. A comprehensive list of criteria was developed, and BGS advertised in area newspapers for land offers. Fifteen sites were offered, and these were analyzed in addition to four State-owned sites. The details and summary of this process may be found in our two-volume report.

After conducting due diligence, BGS proposes the laboratory be located at VTC in Randolph.

In our search, Randolph ranked first in physical characteristics as well as benefits for both Agencies' programs and the State of Vermont. When shared heating is factored in, VTC is the most economical site. While it ranked lower in benefits to program staff and users, it ranked #1 overall.

RANK	SITE	BUILDABILITY	PROGRAM BENEFITS	SOV BENEFITS	TOTAL	COST
		30 points (rank)	5 points (rank)	5 points (rank)	40 points (rank)	
1	Randolph	25.8 (#1)	3.6 (#8)	4.6 (#1)	34.0 (#1)	\$890,000
2	Waterbury	22.6 (#6)	4.0 (#3)	4.0 (#2)	30.6 (#2)	\$1,170,000
3	Colchester	24.3 (#4)	2.2 (#12)	3.3 (#8)	29.8 (#3)	\$690,000
4	Berlin	21.9 (#8)	3.7 (#6)	3.7 (#4)	29.3 (#4)	\$2,230,000

The Waterbury complex, ranked #2 overall, offers reduced upfront costs and operational savings by sharing heating/cooling infrastructure. These savings significantly affect cost comparisons, and it may seem prudent to realize them now. However, these savings are available for any future State project, and the benefits of collaboration for both the laboratory and VTC outweigh this immediate savings.

The Department of Buildings and General Services and the Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources are excited about the positive impact this project will on laboratory staff and all users, from Vermont farmers and businesses, to fish hatcheries and regulatory programs. We also envision substantial benefits for VTC students pursuing careers in agriculture and environmental science. This site offers the richest long-term benefits to Vermont's natural environment and its stewards.


 Chuck Ross, Secretary, Agency of Agriculture


 Deb Markowitz, Secretary, Agency of Natural Resources


 Michael J. Obuchowski, Commissioner of Buildings & General Services