A Request for Information (RFI) for a Regional GIS and Parcel Viewer Platform for the Western Connecticut Region

*We seek Vendors with expertise in the IT/geospatial, CAMA data, and Parcel domains for the creation of a Regional GIS and Parcel Viewer Platform for 39 municipalities in Western Connecticut. Vendors should describe solutions that are highly cost-effective, simple to maintain, and allow participation by new municipalities in the future. This is the first step in a two-part process that **will include a full RFP for these services in mid-June, 2018.** Participation in this RFI will provide additional weight for your proposal scoring in the upcoming RFP round. **RFI is due at 5 pm on Monday, June 11th, 2018.***

Introduction

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG)[1] and Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG)[2] are voluntary associations of cities and towns. The thirty-nine municipalities in the Region (henceforth "Western Connecticut") vary in land-use character from small and rural, such as Bridgewater and Sherman, to more urban communities, such as Danbury, Norwalk, and Torrington.

The State of Connecticut and its' municipalities are undergoing budgetary pressures because of continued revenue declines and structural changes in the economy. Because of this issue, new types of cooperation for economic efficiencies are being sought between municipalities across our Regions. They are looking to realize significant cost savings by optimizing operations and cooperating with adjacent communities. One of these potential regionalization areas is Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) and related parcel management, visualization, and maintenance.

We are seeking qualified Vendor(s) who have expertise with IT, CAMA, and GIS skills sets to support and manage a Regional GIS Web and Parcel Viewer Application using CAMA and parcels data (Regional GIS) for local governments over a 5-year period. **The intention of this Request for**

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[1] WestCOG communities include Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Norwalk, Redding, Reidgefield, Sherman, Stamford, Weston, Westport, Wilton.
[2] NHCOG communities include Barkhamsted, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, Norfolk, North Canann, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, Washington, Winchester.

Information (RFI) is to describe how this system would look and how regional efficiencies can be achieved. This project is the initial phase in a multi-year effort to support regional cooperation and reduce collective costs.   The expectation is that communities without fully realized municipal GIS CAMA/parcel systems will make up the initial batch of participating communities and others may follow later.

This (RFI) will inform the final structure of a soon-to-be released Request for Proposals (RFP). Vendors who participate in the RFI will receive an additional scoring boost when the Review Committee receives RFPs for phase two of this project in the near future.

The components in the Regional GIS include:

- GIS visualization web tool with mapped parcels and supporting GIS layers;
- Basic property card functionality;
- and integrated CAMA data in a flat file format that allows for basic search and view functionality.

This level of integration and functionality has become commonplace for individual municipalities across Connecticut, New England and the United States. The intention is that the project will start with 15 to 20 smaller municipalities in the two regions and grow to include more municipalities as our local communities' cycle through their revaluation plans.

Please review the Regional GIS Web Report on the Past Publications link on the homepage of the WestCOG website to learn more about this effort.[1] It is a planning document produced by WestCOG in conjunction with a consultant to determine the viability for regional cooperation on Property Appraisal, and a regionalized Real Property Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) system. The deliverables for this RFI include a Regional GIS platform, a common schema, parcel conversions, an ETL migration plan for participating communities, and 5-year maintenance plan.

WestCOG will accept written RFI proposals by e-mail, mail, or in person, *until June 11th, 2018.* A digital copy in PDF format is required. It can be e-mailed, placed on a thumb drive, or sent on a CD/DVD as part of the submittal. Email submissions must be smaller than 10 MB because of email server limitations. The primary narrative text should be no more than seven pages in length.

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[1] See Regional GIS Web Report found at
https://westcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/WESTCOG_Regional_GIS_Web_Report_2017_12_12.pdf

Additional technical materials may be added in an appendix by the Vendor(s). Proposal materials including technical specifications, schemas, administrative documents (e.g. resumes of staff and project managers), and other reference materials (e.g. marketing materials or project examples) may be placed in an appendix of the applicant's proposal with no page limit so that the Vendor is not unduly hindered. Questions regarding this RFP s*hall be conducted through email correspondence only*. No phone calls please.

Contact Information and Questions:

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Other Critical Dates:

Date	Title	Additional Notes
May 25th, 2018	RFI is released	
June 4th, 2018	Questions are due	
June 6th, 2018	Answers are released	Answers will be posted at www.westcog.org/
June 11th, 2018	RFI is due.	
June 25th, 2018	RFP will be released	See westcog.org

Scope of Work

The intention of this project is to create a Regional GIS and Parcel Viewer using a CAMA data Flat File for the communities of Western Connecticut including a Web GIS website with parcels, supporting GIS layers, and integrated flat CAMA. This is the most basic level of CAMA and parcel integration and allows for viewing of GIS information and the ability to search and view basic property attributes with a Property Card. This type of integration has become common place for individual municipalities across Connecticut, New England and the US. This project requires low ongoing maintenance costs.

The proposed work tasks for this project include:

1. The data collection of Parcel, CAMA, GIS and Tax Map data from the participating municipalities;
2. The conversion of paper Tax Maps into digital parcel data for those communities still using paper;
3. The conversion of existing GIS parcel data layers into a "Parcel Fabric";
4. The standardization of CAMA schemas using an Extract, Transform, and Load (ETL) process for participating towns that already have digital parcel data;
5. The creation of a Regional GIS and Parcel Viewer and access to Property Card information with basic search capabilities;
6. Ongoing maintenance of parcel information and the GIS;
7. Enrollment of new municipalities and potential future flexibility for the participation of more sophisticated towns.

This RFI is intended to provide the framework and platform for continued Regional CAMA integration so that other towns can join in as their revaluation cycle, funding, or political interest permit. Consultants that address the necessary flexibility will score higher in the proposal review process. The core GIS mapping functionality that is provided by the existing sites of municipalities must be present and fully-operational at the time of application launch.

Tasks

It is anticipated that 15-20 municipalities will initially participate with half of the towns having a population of less than 10,000 and half having a population between 10,000 and 30,000. The intention is to migrate another 10-15 over the five years of the anticipated contract. Initially the largest towns (e.g. Danbury, Torrington, Norwalk, and Stamford) in Western Connecticut are not expected to participate.

Task 1: Data Collection
WestCOG and NWHillsCOG can assist with this process as we have GIS planimetric data and parcel geometry for the 18 WestCOG towns and some similar information for NHCOG.

Task 2: Conversion of Tax Maps
Describe the process by which the Vendor will convert and modernize paper Tax Maps to fit a GIS parcel fabric.

Task 3:

Many of the participating municipalities have existing GIS parcel geometry but are not necessarily modernized to include a parcel fabric. Describe the process and requirements to update all of them.

Task 4: ETL Conversions of CAMA data

The expectation is that this system will use a Massachusetts land coding system which is utilized by the Vision CAMA. Most, but not all, of the participating communities, utilize the Vision CAMA portal. The ETL conversion should use commonly available low-cost or widely utilized open source software and WestCOG and NHCOG will own the rights to conversion scripting. Describe how you will cost efficiently handle the conversion processes given the multiple CAMA formats and municipalities with different IT capabilities.

Task 5: Regional GIS and Parcel Viewer and Access to a Property Card

The project shall have a Regional GIS web and parcel viewer with basic search and layer viewing capabilities and flexibility with imagery availability. The parcels should be selectable with links to property cards in a standard format. The system should have the lowest possible costs over the 5-year life of the project with an emphasis on minimizing annual maintenance costs. Please describe how you will address this critical concern.

Task 6: Ongoing Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance and updates are a requirement for any CAMA system and their related parcels in a municipality. Describe the most cost-effective and accurate approach to handling and updating CAMA and parcel data given the size of the municipalities involved and the necessities of maintaining the lowest possible annual costs. Address how you will handle data integration and IT stack issues.

Task 7: Future Enrollment

The structure of this project is intended to keep long-term annual costs low so that additional communities in Western Connecticut will be incentivized to join the Regional GIS. The expectation is that new municipalities joining will be small or medium sized communities. Describe how you will facilitate future enrollment and participation of new communities to the Regional GIS as part of your proposal while keeping annual costs low.