

Regional Performance Incentive Program

Application Guidelines: https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=51757

Pursuant to CGS Section 4-124s.

Proposal for Joint Provision of Services or Study to be filed with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management

Submit to:

Office of Policy and Management,
450 Capitol Ave. MS #54 SLP
Hartford, CT 06106-1379,
Attn: RPI Program

Applicant Entity

Name	Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG)
Address	1 Riverside Road
City/State/Zip	Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Contact Person(s):

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Amount Requested:

\$106,731

Project Title:

Regional Animal Control Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan

Required Proposal Elements (A-F, L, M):

(A) Description

The project will evaluate the feasibility and potential savings of regionalization of animal control facilities and services in the Western Connecticut Planning Region. Using a consultant with experience in animal control, the project will:

1. Evaluate costs and operations of all municipal animal control facilities and services in the region. These will be compared with facilities/services costs in comparable areas; the experience of the Northeast Connecticut COG, which manages a regional animal control program for its region will be included in the evaluation.
2. Determine achievable economies of scale and no-cost service improvements through the consolidation of animal control facilities and services. Both enlargement/expansion of existing facilities and services, as well as creation of new facilities and services will be considered.
3. Create a shortlist of realistic and feasible consolidation scenarios for presentation to and discussion with the municipalities involved.
4. Based on these discussions, develop implementation plans for an orderly transition to consolidated animal control facilities. The plans will identify a range of expected costs, timelines, necessary legal/contractual arrangements, critical steps/paths, and assignment of responsibility for implementation.

Due to the large population and geographic extent of the region, it is not expected that the project will propose consolidation to a single animal control facility; a more likely outcome will be a recommendation for creation of an array of subregional animal control facilities, each serving no more than ca. four to five communities, or a resident human population of ±80,000. Some animal control facilities, particularly those in larger communities, may continue without change; however, recommendations to extend access to them to neighboring communities may be made. The project will consider a range of ownership, governance, operations, and financial models for facilities serving more than one municipality, including regional, interlocal entity, intermunicipal contracting, and nonprofit options.

It is expected that invitations to participate in the project will be extended to municipalities that neighbor the region; these will be incorporated into the project to the extent that doing so advances the project purposes and can be financially accommodated.

Responsibility for execution of the implementation plans will be a local responsibility, with WestCOG playing a supporting role as requested. Municipalities in the region have expressed a strong interest in animal control facility consolidation and are looking to this project to give them guidance on what to do, so WestCOG expects that the project's findings will be implemented.

(B) Need

Currently, at least half of the municipality's members in the region operate municipal animal control facilities and services, with others relying on nonprofit shelters or other communities.

Due to the small scale of many of these facilities/services, operations are limited. Limitations include:

- Limited capacity to house animals;
- Limited service hours, both at facilities and for services (including in the field);
- Limited availability of medical services;
- No online notification of animals to be claimed or available for rehoming/adoption;

In addition to these limitations, the small scale of many facilities/services limits economies of scale, producing higher unit costs for services.

A reduction in the number of animal control facilities and services would:

- Provide economies of scale in the management and operations of facilities and services, reducing the cost of animal control to municipalities and to household/businesses;
- Provide a sufficient volume of calls and animals to add capacity, enhance capabilities, and broaden service offerings;
- Provide the critical mass needed to deploy technology, including online services;
- Provide longer, more regular operating hours, both of facilities and services (including field and on call services); and
- Reduce unit costs.

Consolidation to fewer animal control facilities could result in slightly longer travel distances for some users; however, the longer hours, lower costs, enhanced capabilities, and online access of the new facilities and services it is expected would make up for these.

(C) Method of Delivery

The project will be undertaken by a consultant with expertise in animal control, selected through an open and competitive process by WestCOG.

The project will be informed by an advisory committee, consisting of persons with expertise in the respective area and/or responsibility for implementation. Recommendations and implementation plans will be developed with consultation of and involvement of the committee and of WestCOG.

(D) Responsible Entity

WestCOG will manage the project, including monitoring of consultant performance and payment. Coordination with municipalities will be shared between WestCOG and the consultant.

(E) Recipients Benefited

The project will benefit all participating municipalities and to taxpayers in those municipalities by reducing the public costs associated with animal control, and by improving service for residents/businesses in those municipalities that use or potentially that use animal control.

(F) Economies of Scale

The purpose of the project is to assess the current landscape of single-municipality animal control facilities/services and to determine whether consolidation to fewer facilities/services would offer economies of scale in management and operations. It is expected that the project will propose

scenarios that consolidate the existing facilities and services to a smaller number of subregional facilities and services; while a study could be undertaken for each proposed subregional operation, studying the entire region (including participating neighbors) at once reduces the duplication of many, smaller studies and enables the evaluation of more consolidation scenarios.

(L) Proposed Match

WestCOG and the participating municipalities can provide up a 5% cash match (\$5,617.45 of a total project cost of \$112,349).

(M) Connections to Lamont Administration

This project supports a major theme of Governor Lamont's Administration to make "Government more effective, efficient, and customer friendly." Through achieving critical mass and economies of scale, the project will reduce the costs of animal control to municipalities and local taxpayers and give the users of animal control access to longer hours, greater capacity, and more options.