

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:

\$222,948

Project Title:

Regional Planimetric Dataset Update

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

(A) Description

The project will create an updated planimetric dataset from new aerial imagery. A planimetric dataset captures the location, dimensions, and area of manmade features in the environment. These features include buildings, sheds, decks, and pools; roads, driveways, parking areas, and sidewalks; utility infrastructure such as poles, catch basins, and manholes; and amenities such as street trees, walls, and fences. These data serve as the inputs into GIS-based systems for the identification, inventory, depiction, planning for, and management of these assets.

WestCOG has a comprehensive planimetric dataset for the region; these data have been widely distributed and heavily used by all municipalities in the region. This dataset, however, is temporally disjointed, having been prepared in two different cycles, and is reaching the end of its useful life (five years). The project will bring all municipalities in the region onto one cycle, producing a new planimetric dataset that reflects the most recent aerial imagery (2019). The updated data will be shared with the region, where it will be used by departments including planning, assessment, finance, public works, public safety, as well as by boards of education.

(B) Need

The useful life of planimetric data depends on the rate of change in the local built environment. In areas with scant development, the data has a long lifespan. In areas with rapid development, it has a shorter life. The Western Connecticut Planning Region is the fastest growing region in the state. The rising skylines of Stamford, Norwalk, and Danbury (and spillover development in neighboring communities) attest to this. The project will support continued development in the region by bringing a key data source used by planners, developers, and site selectors up-to-date, reducing the need—due to data aging—for expensive field data collection or verification in the conception of and pursuance of projects.

With changes in the built environment over the last five years, many assets and improvements are not reflected in municipal systems, which use existing, increasingly dated planimetric data. This discrepancy between the real world and its digital representation creates problems for local and regional activities in the areas of planning, assessment, finance, public works, public safety, and education. The project will dramatically improve congruence between digital systems and the real world, reducing error rates, the need for manual identification of missing records and their correction, and freeing up resources for the further development and implementation of digital systems.

The project will enable municipalities to screen for changes in the built environment at low cost, so that unlisted and unpermitted improvements may be identified and added to the grand list, reducing the tax burden on property owners who follow proper permitting procedures.

(C) Method of Delivery

WestCOG will collaborate with the Capitol Region COG on a RFP process to select a vendor to perform the planimetric update. Once complete, WestCOG will host the data on its website, and, together with CRCOG, distribute it to the state, all municipalities, and to other data users in the public and private sector (e.g., site selection firms, search engines, mapping providers).

As part of the project, a change analysis will be performed. This analysis will compare the new planimetric dataset with its predecessor, to identify changes approximately over the last five years. Any changes that are not documented in relevant municipal systems (e.g., real property cards, asset management) will be noted and shared with the municipalities. In addition, WestCOG will, compare the new planimetric data with information in nonspatial databases, such as assessors' Computer-Aided Mass Appraisal systems, with significant discrepancies being flagged and shared with municipalities. A primary thrust of this work will be to assist assessors with the identification and listing of properties that may not be accurately captured on current tax rolls. Past, manual efforts to add untaxed property have added value to municipal grand lists far in excess of (manual) discovery and listing costs, resulting in fairer and more equitable taxation, and reducing the burden on property owners whose property is fully taxed. It is expected that the return on investment for a largely automated effort such as this will be even greater.

(D) Responsible Entity

Overall grant management and the fiduciary role will be assumed by the Capitol Region COG, with WestCOG responsible for overseeing vendor performance and intraregional coordination in the Western Connecticut Planning Region. The planimetric update and change analysis will be performed by an external vendor selected through a competitive process.

(E) Recipients Benefited

Planimetric data is widely used. In the public sector, the data is used by functions including planning, public works, economic development, public safety, and education, both within municipal departments and by municipal commissions. In the private sector, planimetric data are heavily used by branches including search/mapping firms and their users (e.g., user of Google or Apple maps, GPS users), logistics and shipping/delivery, real estate buyers and sellers, developers, site selectors, and utility and telecommunications companies. The availability of information such as planimetric data, which the project will provide, reduces transaction costs, promoting development and economic growth. Any application that involves the location or size of buildings, roads, or other manmade assets will benefit from this project.

(F) Economies of Scale

Substantial volume discounts are generally obtainable in the creation of GIS data. In addition to these savings, update of data through a single contract will produce a single, consistent dataset across all contract participants. The availability of consistent data on a broad basis obviates the need to integrate disparate (and sometimes incompatible) data formats and schemas, and to attempt to account for differences in data precision, accuracy, comprehensiveness, and age. This makes data use substantially easier, saving user resources and likely increasing the number of users who use the data.

(L) Proposed Match

WestCOG and the participating municipalities can provide up a 5% cash match (\$11,734 of a total project cost of \$234,682).

(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.” Systems that give the public information on property, structures, and the environment—basically any application for which the location and size of manmade features matters—rely on complete, accurate, and up-to-date planimetric data. These include applications in planning, building, public works, assessment, health, and emergency functions and departments. In addition to their public role, planimetric data are also vital to manifold internal municipal processes. By updating the region’s planimetric dataset, the project will ensure that data do not become obsolete and create problems (or are retired), but rather retain the accuracy necessary to for continued use in external and internal line-of-business GIS applications, and for further development and deployment of new GIS applications and systems.