

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:

\$84,231

Project Title:

Regional Transfer Station 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 waste transfer station facilities and operations in the Western Connecticut Planning Region. Using a consultant with experience in the area of waste management and disposal, the project will:

1. Evaluate costs and operations at all transfer stations in the region.
2. Determine achievable economies of scale and no-cost service improvements through the consolidation of transfer station facilities and operations. Both enlargement of existing stations, as well as creation of new stations 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 transfer station 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 transfer station; a more likely outcome will be a recommendation for creation of an array of subregional transfer stations, each serving no more than ca. four to five communities, or a resident human population of $\pm 80,000$. Some transfer stations, 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 transfer station 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, all municipalities in the region operate municipal transfer stations or comparable services. With changing dynamics in the waste market, including sharp increases in solid waste and recycling tipping fees, the cost of operating and accepting waste at these stations is increasing. Solutions to these problems exist (e.g., pay/weight as you throw, separate collection of specialized waste); however, the fragmentation of the waste market into many small transfer stations, and their resulting low utilization diminishes the return on investment for such solutions.

Due to low utilization, operating hours and service at most transfer stations in the region are limited, inconveniencing and creating costs for residents and businesses, and likely contributing to the disposal of products such as hazardous waste, electronics, and paint in regular waste, in sewers and septic systems, or via illegal dumping, rather than proper disposal at the transfer station.

A reduction in the number of transfer stations would:

- Provide economies of scale in management, operations, and disposal, reducing the cost of waste to municipalities and to household/businesses;
- Provide a sufficient volume of waste for the dedicated collection and appropriate disposal of special wastes not currently accepted by all transfer stations (e.g., batteries, smoke detectors, electronics, pharmaceuticals, paint, clothing, compost);
- Provide the critical mass needed to deploy technology, including pay/weigh as you throw and online permitting;
- Provide longer, more regular operating hours and improved service for users, reducing costs, facilitating proper disposal of special wastes, reducing household waste volumes, and benefiting the environment.

Consolidation to fewer transfer stations could result in slightly longer travel distances for some users; however, the longer hours, lower costs, enhanced capabilities, and online access of the new stations it is expected would make up for the increased travel time.

(C) Method of Delivery

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

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.

(E) Recipients Benefited

The project will benefit all participating municipalities and to taxpayers in those municipalities by reducing the public costs associated with transfer station operations, and that use or potentially would use a transfer station, and by providing new options for disposing of waste and by reducing the cost of waste disposal to users.

(F) Economies of Scale

The purpose of the project is to assess the current landscape of single-municipality transfer stations and to determine whether consolidation to fewer transfer stations would offer economies of scale in management and operations. It is expected that the project will propose scenarios that consolidate the existing 18 transfer stations/programs to a smaller number of subregional stations; while a study could be undertaken for each proposed subregional station, studying the entire

region (including participating neighbors) at once reduces the duplication of many, smaller studies and enables the evaluation of more scenarios.

(L) Proposed Match

WestCOG and the participating municipalities can provide up a 5% cash match (\$4,433.35 of a total project cost of \$88,667).

(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." Existing transfer station operations have limited hours, limited acceptance of special wastes, and limited (if any) online presence and customer service. Through achieving critical mass and economies of scale, the project will reduce the costs of waste disposal to municipalities, residents, and businesses, and provide transfer station users with greater convenience, longer hours, and sustainable 'one stop' waste disposal.