

# Regional Performance Incentive Program

Application Guidelines: [https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP\\_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=51757](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):

Name Michael Towle  
Title Deputy Director  
Telephone 475.323.2064  
E-mail mtowle@westcog.org

## Amount Requested:

\$852,612

## Project Title:

Statewide Municipal Boundary Survey (Class D) Update

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

### (A) Description

The project will create a statewide municipal boundary layer that meets Class D survey standards, as defined Sec. 20-300b-11 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Connecticut state and local governments currently use a variety of boundary layers, most of which are not based on survey, and often differ among municipalities. As a result, GIS applications are often grossly inaccurate, placing the boundary up to a quarter mile from where it should stand, and acreage is often depicted as being in two municipalities or no municipality.

The project will rectify this by establishing a single municipal boundary based on survey (class D), consistent with the FGDC Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata, that will be shared among all governments (state, regional, and local) in Connecticut, as well as with the federal government and with private sector data users and vendors. Agreement on and use of a single set of municipal boundaries is a prerequisite for effective intergovernmental data sharing, pooling of state and municipal data, and sharing of GIS and spatially-aware IT resources. Once the boundaries are developed, it is expected that municipal GIS layers will be adjusted as needed to reflect and conform to the boundaries. When this process is complete, it will be possible to 'stitch' together parcel data from all municipalities in Connecticut to create a statewide parcel map, from which a single, state parcel dataset can be built.

Note that a boundary layer created under this project is intended to be enduring; modification to it will only be necessary in the event of a change in municipal or state boundaries, or in a change to state regulations that render existing surveys invalid.

While the project will cover and benefit the entire state, for administrative efficiency, WestCOG intends to act as the applicant and manager of the project. The project was approved by members of the Connecticut Association of Councils of Governments (CTCOG) at its December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting. WestCOG will work with CTCOG to coordinate project execution.

### (B) Need

This project is a foundational and necessary step for the creation of a statewide property datasets and for the proper scaling of GIS applications across municipal boundaries. Discrepancies in current datasets produce errors that impede the deployment and use of GIS applications of interest to municipalities, the private sector, and, potentially, the state. The inability to roll out GIS on a broad basis results in higher costs and delays, both for public and private actors, as compared to other states, counties, and regions, which have uniform data sets and have rolled out advanced GIS in internal and in public-facing applications.

The project will replace both the municipal boundaries defined by CT DEP (now DEEP) and those defined by Connecticut municipalities. The DEEP boundaries are of insufficient accuracy for many purposes; the municipal boundaries often were created in isolation from one another and thus disagree. These discrepancies (grossly incorrect boundary siting, unclaimed land, and doubly claimed land), force users to fall back on paper documents and processes at significant cost, and disincentivize data authors from creating more advanced datasets. (Existing data, with their numerous errors, are a poor framework onto which to hang additional data and build applications.)

The project will create all-new municipal boundaries for the Capitol, Connecticut Metropolitan, Naugatuck Valley, Northwest Hills, Southeastern, Northeastern Connecticut, and Western Connecticut Planning Regions. Boundaries have already been updated to class D for the remaining regions (Lower Connecticut River Valley and South Central Connecticut), demonstrating the feasibility of this project; however, these regions' boundaries with their neighbors must still be created and will be included in this project.

### (C) Method of Delivery

WestCOG will act as fiduciary for the grant administration and will manage procurement and contracting on behalf all regions. Each COG will monitor consultant performance within its respective region.

Once grant funding is received, WestCOG, in coordination with participating COGs, will issue a request of proposals and will choose and enter into a contract with a qualified consultant(s), to define municipal boundaries to Class D survey standards. Consistent with class D standards, the consultants will review existing survey documents and, as needed, on-ground monumentation. Once the consultant completes work, the data will be provided to the COGs, which will review the products with their member communities and provide feedback as needed. Once consensus on boundaries has been reached, the new, seamless municipal boundaries will be provided to OPM and DEEP for distribution to state agencies and dissemination through online portals, as well as shared with all COGs, municipalities, and relevant major data vendors/users.

### (D) Responsible Entity

Western Connecticut Council of Governments will oversee delivery of the service via management of the project and the respective consultant(s). Partner COGs will be involved as described above.

### (E) Recipients Population(s)

Public users of the data include federal and state agencies, Councils of Governments, and municipalities. Public uses include economic development; planning; emergency preparedness and response; rights-of-way acquisition; and fiscal impact analyses; and environmental studies. Private users include data providers; real estate developers and buyers/sellers; site selectors; engineers and architects; shipping and logistics.

### (F) Economies of Scale

Savings are achieved in three ways: first, because each boundary between a pair of municipalities will be jointly created, rather than individually created by each of the two municipalities, a savings of at least 50% is obtainable; second, because lines will be agreed on by all abutting municipalities, no future disagreements—and costs to address them—will emerge; and third, advantageous prices are expected to be obtained through bulk purchase.

The data produced by the project will create savings for future users across a range of fields, by enabling the deployment of GIS applications (e.g., electronic field reporting, online permitting, asset management systems, and spatially-aware enterprise resource planning) that eliminate costly paper processes and spatially integrate currently separate digital systems. The project will

also reduce effective impediments to data creation, by providing a solid framework on which to build new data products (for instance, survey-grade parcel maps in municipalities that lack them, regional assessor databases, or electronic deed repositories).

### **(L) Proposed Match**

This project aligns with and serves state interests, the development of a statewide parcel dataset. In this regard, no regional match is provided. The project estimate was developed based on actual costs from a similar project successfully undertaken by RiverCOG in 2013.

The project will investigate opportunities to reduce project costs or further improve boundaries, such as by finding historic metadata on DEP's municipal boundary data creation process, or data used in the creation of USGS topographic maps. The extent of the cost reduction and/or further boundary enhancement depends on the availability or quality of such data, so no estimates are currently available.

### **(M) Lamont Administration Themes**

The project corresponds to the theme of making government more effective, efficient, and customer-friendly. The lack of accurate and internally consistent municipal boundaries presents serious challenges to the growth of spatial data and systems in the state: first, existing data are insufficiently accurate to justify using as a framework on which to 'hang' other data; and second, internal conflicts, including topological errors, make automated processing of the data difficult. The project will address both challenges, eliminating barriers to the development and deployment of online public GIS applications (and associated data) that enable residents, visitors, businesses, and government employees to do more on their own, and to do more altogether.

In addition to providing an important component for the development/deployment of GIS data systems and products, the project will also reduce costs in processes that rely on clear boundaries. These include real estate sales, right-of-way acquisition, planning permitting, design/engineering (preliminary).

Finally, by enabling data to be easily aggregated at the regional or state level, the project will enable low-cost data mining and 'big data' analyses. With state and local governments facing flat budgets yet growing challenges, such analyses are becoming more critical in informing policy solutions and advising resource allocation decisions.