

# Request for Proposals – Regional Animal Control Consulting Services

## Announcement

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) is initiating a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify a qualified vendor to prepare a study of the potential for improvements, including intermunicipal or regional sharing, of animal control facilities and/or services in Western Connecticut and an implementation plan.

## Eligible Respondents

WestCOG seeks a consultant who has experience in consulting with municipalities and regional officials on municipal animal control, including developing regional approaches to managing same. The successful consultant will have strong facilitation skills, proven experience in working with government organizations as well as key actors and stakeholders in the area of animal control, and an understanding of current and projected trends in local/regional animal control.

## About WestCOG

Founded in 2014, WestCOG is one of nine regional Councils of Governments established pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-124i et seq. WestCOG serves the Western Connecticut Planning Region, the second most populous and fastest growing region in Connecticut, with an estimated population of 610,000.

WestCOG is governed by a board of the Chief Elected Officials (Mayors and First Selectmen) of its members, who include three principal cities (Stamford, Norwalk and Danbury) and fifteen surrounding towns (Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, Sherman, Weston, Westport and Wilton).

State policy since 2013 has been to incentivize COGs to diversify beyond their well-established roles in regional land use and transportation planning into the regional delivery of services currently or expected to be provided by local governments, either through direct provision (“regional services”) or through facilitating interlocal cooperation (“shared services”). Accordingly, WestCOG is working with its members to find ways to improve animal control management, for the purpose of containing costs and developing efficiencies.

More information on WestCOG is available at <http://westcog.org>.

## Project Background

Animal control is a vital public service that helps ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of the humans and domestic and wild animals that inhabit a community. Animal control's importance, however, has not rendered it immune to the budget pressures that affect government in general, and, like many public services, it is having to find ways to do more with the same, if not less.

Intermunicipal or regional sharing of animal control facilities and services, together with the deployment of advanced technology, may provide opportunities to achieve economies of scale, potentially reducing costs without any diminution in service. Multijurisdictional approaches to animal control have delivered positive results in many areas, including, reportedly, at least in one region in Connecticut.

## Project Framework

The project will evaluate opportunities for efficiencies and improvements in animal control, through the coordination of operations, sharing of facilities and services, technology, and other means in the municipalities of Western Connecticut. These are: Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Sherman, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

Using a consultant with expertise and experience in the area of animal control, at both the municipal and regional levels, the project will:

1. Evaluate existing animal control operations (facilities and services) in the study area.
2. Determine achievable economies of scale and service improvements through adjustments to existing operations, shared approaches, and any other applicable strategies.
3. Create a shortlist of realistic and feasible improvement scenarios for presentation to and discussion with the municipalities involved. Scenarios may cover the region in its entirety, subregional group(s) of (non)contiguous municipalities, or individual jurisdictions, as circumstances warrant.
4. Based on these discussions, develop implementation plans for the municipalities involved. The plans will identify a range of expected costs, timelines, necessary legal/contractual arrangements, critical steps/paths, and assignment of responsibility for implementation.

The project will consider a range of ownership, governance, operations, and financial models for proposed changes to existing animal control operations, including regional, interlocal entity, intermunicipal contracting, and nonprofit options.

It is expected the consultant will coordinate with key public, private, and nonprofit participants and stakeholders in animal control (e.g., local/state police, Wildlife Division of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, shelters) as applicable. In addition, the consultant may be asked to solicit involvement from municipalities outside the region where doing so advances the project goals and is acceptable to participants.

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 operations and seek guidance in these areas.

## Scope of Work and Deliverables

The Consultant may accomplish its work under this RFP by conducting:

- Qualitative/quantitative research and analysis;
- Case studies and success stories from other locations;
- Focus groups, interviews, surveys, and/or other methods to gather stakeholder input,
- Facilitating meetings and/or workshops with municipal/regional officials to collect data and arrive at shared understandings; and
- Other methods as proposed.

The Consultant will be expected to prepare:

- Inventory and evaluation of existing facilities and services, including analysis of performance, costs, and identification of deficiencies/opportunities for improvement;
- Recommendations that represent stable cost savings/improvements over the status quo;
- Development of probable implementation scenarios for these recommendations, recognizing that timing and extent of implementation for each of the latter may vary by municipality and thus may affect the overall benefit/cost or feasibility calculus;
- Estimation of performance, costs, and any other relevant indicators of the scenarios;
- Comparison of the scenarios against each other and a business-as-usual case, including evaluation of economies of scale, cost savings, and no/low-cost service improvements
- A report with the information listed above, in a format that can be easily understood and acted on by the municipalities participating;
- Implementation plan that identifies a range of expected costs, timelines, necessary legal/contractual arrangements, critical steps/paths, and assignment of responsibility.

The project will involve interaction with an advisory committee, consisting of persons with expertise in the respective area and/or responsibility for implementation. The recommendations, scenarios and implementation plan will be developed with consultation of and involvement of the committee and of WestCOG.

While a primary goal of the project is financial efficiency (cost reduction), viability, service quality, and humaneness/animal welfare are important and should also be evaluated in the analysis of existing operations, facilities, and services and the development of future scenarios.

## Application Process

### Format

Each application should include the following components:

1. Cover page with project title; proposing firm, and name, telephone number, and e-mail address for the project manager.
2. Scope of work, timeline, and fee schedule. An outline of the project by task should be given. These tasks should correspond to the Project description. Timing, duration, and cost should be specified for each task.

3. Narrative: this should explain the proposer's concept of each task and plan to discharge them. Methodology, including approach, inputs, methods, and outputs should be described in adequate detail. Changes to the framework given in this RFP should be noted.
4. Work history: examples of similar or relevant work conducted by proposer in the past, with information on project outcomes and client references. Name, title, employer, relationship to the project, telephone number, and e-mail address should be given for each reference. Successful proposers should have expertise in relevant areas, including evaluation of the benefits, costs, opportunities, risks, and challenges of the methods proposed, and in the development and execution of implementation plans for said methods.
5. Statement of qualifications: a directory of, task assignments, and resumes for key staff on project. Professional licenses and certifications should be included. The total hours each staff person is expected to spend on each task should be documented.
6. Corporate background. Include the history, location(s), length of time in existence, and structure of the firm; documentation of relevant insurance coverage, and demonstration of the capacity of the firm to carry out the project.
7. Signature of a representative of the firm having legal authority to contract on behalf of the firm.
8. A completed Organizational Conflict of Interest Statement that either warrants that there are no relevant facts or circumstances that could give rise to organizational conflicts of interest, and/or, as applicable, gives a full, written disclosure of any organizational conflicts of interests, including description of the action(s) the proposer has taken or will take to avoid or mitigate such conflict.

The narrative may not exceed 5,000 words. Other components have no word limit.

Material submitted in response to this RFP and received by WestCOG may be subject to the provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information law (CGS §1-200 et seq.).

### How to Apply

Proposals are due by Monday, June 15, 2020 at 8:00 AM ET. Submissions should be directed to: Mr. Michael Towle, Deputy Director at [mtowle@westcog.org](mailto:mtowle@westcog.org).

Submissions should be provided in PDF format, as a single file. The file may be attached to the e-mail, or, in case of a large submission (larger than 10 megabytes), linked in the e-mail. Recipients should enable delivery and read receipts in their e-mail client. No other confirmation will be given.

### Review and contracting

WestCOG will evaluate proposals received. WestCOG may invite additional information from selected proposers, including but not necessarily limited to, samples of other work or an interview.

Should WestCOG determine to proceed with a proposal, WestCOG will begin contract negotiations, including on scope and fee, with the respective proposer. Should WestCOG and the selected proposer be unable to come to an agreement, WestCOG may terminate negotiations with that firm and revisit other proposals submitted.

It is expected that proposers will be notified of decisions on their submission by June 22, 2020. Contract execution may be required by June 30 for the project to commence. WestCOG may award the project in part or in full to one or more proposers, and to cancel or to reissue this RFP. Any award will not be final until a contract has been negotiated and executed.

## Communications

### Location of Posting

This RFP may be found online at <https://westcog.org/about/rfps-grant-opportunities> until July 1, 2020. It is the responsibility of interested parties to retrieve and store a copy of the RFP beyond this date.

### Pre-Bid Meeting

A pre-bid meeting will be held Monday, June 8, 2020 at 12:00 PM ET (noon). The meeting will be held online via Zoom at <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/83883751391>, and by telephone at :

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)  
+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)  
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)  
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 838 8375 1391

Attendance by teleconference or by phone is optional and is not required in order to respond to this RFP.

### Inquiries

Proposers may submit questions on this RFP by Monday, June 8, 2020 at 11:59 AM ET. Questions should be directed to Mr. Michael Towle, Deputy Director at [mtowle@westcog.org](mailto:mtowle@westcog.org). Answers will be posted online where WestCOG posted this RFP on a rolling basis until the close of business on Friday, June 5, 2020.

No questions will be accepted by other forms of communication.

Information about WestCOG can be found at <http://westcog.org>.

### Addenda and Supplements

Should WestCOG amend or adjust this RFP, such changes will be posted online where WestCOG posted this RFP. It is the responsibility of proposers to check for changes to the RFP.

## Conditions

### Legal Requirements

Contracts awarded as a result of this RFP are subject to all applicable federal and state laws, including those concerning civil rights, nondiscrimination, and equal opportunity. Any response to this RFP, as well as any work resulting from it, are subject to freedom of information.

## Insurance Requirements

To be considered, proposers must maintain insurance coverage as required by federal and state law.

## Consortia, Joint Ventures, and Teams

Proposals from consortia, joint ventures, and teams (“groups”) will be accepted. In such cases, a lead firm must be identified for contracting purposes. A work history and statement of qualifications must be provided for each member of the group.

In designating a lead firm, groups should consider the following:

1. The lead firm should have sufficient experience and expertise to perform or supervise all facets of the project and must have sufficient resources to carry out the contractual responsibilities of the group.
2. The lead firm will be legally responsible to WestCOG for the performance of, and must perform at least 51% of, the total work awarded under any contract issued as a result of this RFP.
3. Firms that are subsidiaries may not rely on the experience, expertise, or resources of its parent firm to meet these requirements.

## Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs)

DBE firms are encouraged to respond to this RFP.

If a DBE firm is proposed, the proposal must clearly identify the DBE firm, the role the DBE will play in the project, and the tasks assigned to the DBE. Proof of Connecticut DBE certification must be submitted with the proposal. Responses that fail to give proof of DBE certification and description of project involvement will not be identified as including DBE participation.

## Nonreimbursement of proposal costs

Costs associated with responses to this RFP, including proposal development and participation in a selection process, are the sole responsibility of the respondent firms. WestCOG will not reimburse firms for such costs, nor will any selected firms be permitted to negotiate such costs as part of a contract with WestCOG.

## Conflicts of Interest

All relationships that may pose a conflict of interest, and actions that shall be taken to avoid or mitigate these conflicts, shall be disclosed as part of the response to this RFP.