

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
for
Conceptual Development of Congestion Reduction Projects

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) invites *Statements of Qualification* from consultants and/or firms with experience in transportation planning, transportation engineering, traffic engineering and public involvement.

WestCOG will use funding from the Federal Highway Administration and Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) for a study to identify and mitigate traffic congestion at various locations through region.

WestCOG will accept complete *Statements of Qualification*, by mail or in person, until 1:00 p.m. ET on Wednesday, April 27, 2022. Respondents must submit one (1) original and five (5) hard copies and one (1) digital PDF copy on a flash drive or compact disc (CD) of their *Statements of Qualification* to:

Cricket Carpenter
Office Manager
Western Connecticut Council of Governments
1 Riverside Road
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Statements of Qualifications that are incomplete will not be considered. Applications will not be deemed complete until all copies are received.

I. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Inquiries

Questions regarding this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) should be directed to Cricket Carpenter at the address noted above or via e-mail at ccarpenter@westcog.org by 11:59 p.m. ET, Wednesday, April 20, 2022. Questions will be posted on the WestCOG website by Friday, April 22, 2022 by 5:00 p.m. ET. Please note that it is WestCOG's policy to respond only to technical questions that are received by the above-stated deadline. Under no circumstances will WestCOG provide interpretive guidance.

CTDOT Prequalified Consultants

Respondents must be prequalified by CTDOT for the year 2022 in the following categories:

3. Highway Design
5. Traffic and Safety Engineering

Freedom of Information

Respondents are advised that any and all material submitted in response to this RFQ and received by WestCOG shall be subject to the applicable provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information law (CONN. GEN. STAT. §1-200 et seq.)

Signature Requirements

Statements of Qualifications must be signed by a representative of the firm having legal authority to contract on behalf of the firm. *Statements of Qualifications* will be treated as bona fide offers and must remain open for a period of ninety (90) days from the closing date for submissions.

Statements of Qualifications from Consortia, Joint Ventures and Teams

Qualifications statements from consortia, joint ventures or teams will be accepted. In such cases, a lead firm must be identified for contracting purposes. A qualifications statement must be prepared for each member of the consortia, joint venture or team, and each qualifications statement should clearly identify the lead firm.

In selecting a lead firm, consortia, joint ventures and teams should consider the following: (1) the lead firm should have sufficient experience and expertise to perform or supervise all facets of the proposed project; (2) the lead firm will be legally responsible to WestCOG for performance of the total contract; (3) the lead firm must have sufficient resources to carry out the contractual responsibilities of the consortium, joint venture or team; and the lead firm must perform at least fifty one percent (51%) of the total work awarded under any contract issued as a result of this RFQ. Please note that firms that are subsidiaries or affiliates of another may not rely on the experience, expertise or resources of its parent firm to meet these requirements.

Submission of Qualifications Statements

WestCOG will accept complete *Statements of Qualification* by mail or in person, until 1:00 p.m. ET on Wednesday, April 27, 2022. Qualifications statements submitted via email or facsimile will not be accepted.

Please see the section entitled “Required Format” for additional guidance.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Requirement

DBE firms are strongly encouraged to respond to this RFQ. WestCOG will make its best efforts to ensure that DBEs have the maximum practicable opportunity to compete for work on this project.

The selected Consultant must meet WestCOG, State, and federal affirmative action and equal opportunity employment practices. A Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) set aside is not required.

Equal Employment and Nondiscrimination

All contracts awarded by WestCOG as a result of this RFQ are subject to Section 4a-60 of the Connecticut General Statutes, “Nondiscrimination and affirmative action provisions in contracts of the state and political sub-divisions other than municipalities.” Contracts also are subject to all other applicable state and federal laws concerning civil rights, nondiscrimination, and equal opportunities for employment.

Insurance Requirements

Successful firms are required to maintain insurance coverage as required by State and federal law.

Addenda and Supplements

In the event that revisions or additions to this RFQ are necessary, a copy of such revisions or additions will be posted online where WestCOG posted the RFQ. It is the responsibility of the consultant to check for revisions or additions to this RFQ.

Rejection Rights

WestCOG reserves the right to reject any and all qualifications statements received in response to this RFQ. WestCOG also reserves the right to cancel this RFQ at any time and to reissue this or a substitute RFQ at a later date.

Multiple Awards

WestCOG reserves the right to issue multiple awards. WestCOG also reserves the right to retain portions of the work described in the attached scope of work for performance by its own staff, or to exclude portions of the work described in the attached scope of work from negotiated consultant agreements.

Cost of Qualifications Statement Preparation

All costs associated with any response to this RFQ, including the development of qualifications statements and participation in the 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 any contract or agreement with WestCOG.

Interest of Members or Delegates to Congress

No member of or delegate to the Congress of the United States shall be permitted to share or have interest in or benefit from, directly or indirectly, any contract or agreement resulting from this RFQ.

Prohibited Interest

No member, officer or employee of WestCOG, or member of a local public body having jurisdiction within WestCOG's service area, during his or her tenure or one year thereafter, shall be permitted to share in, have interest in or benefit from, directly or indirectly, any contract or agreement resulting from this RFQ.

Other

Any firm selected to perform any or all work associated with this RFQ may be required to execute an agreement with WestCOG and meet any conditions on the use of funds imposed by WestCOG, Connecticut Department of Transportation, or United States Department of Transportation. All fees will be negotiated and stated in any agreement.

II. REQUIRED FORMAT

The qualifications statement must contain the following information:

1. Letter of interest;
2. A concise statement identifying the point of contact for the statement of qualification, their contact information (mailing address, email, and phone number), and proposed project manager.
3. General information (such as brochures) on the consultant and any proposed sub-consultants including description of current workloads;
4. Statement summarizing the experience of the consultant and any proposed sub-consultants, including at least five references and summaries of comparable projects (type, scale and scope) performed within the last five years that demonstrate knowledge and expertise in evaluating traffic congestion and developing mitigation projects.
5. Statement describing the organizational framework for this project, including clear identification of the lead consultant, project manager, and sub-consultants (if any), the roles and responsibilities of each sub-consultant (if any), identification of DBE contractor (if any), and a clear, concise statement disclosing whether or not there are any shared interests among the firm and proposed sub-consultants, e.g. parent-subsidiary, joint ventures, formal affiliations, etc.
6. Narrative that describes the suggested project delivery approach and addresses the goals and objectives stated in the scope of work (Attachment A), with emphasis on tasks 2, 4, 5 and 6;
7. Resumes of key personnel to be assigned to this project and the percentage of time they will devote to project activities;
8. Proof of Connecticut DBE certification (if applicable); and
9. Current Federal Form SF-330 Part II.

III. SELECTION PROCEDURES

Complete responses to this RFQ that meet all of the listed requirements will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Qualifications of the consultant;
2. Qualifications of sub-consultants (if any);
3. Qualifications of key personnel assigned to this project;
4. Thoroughness, creativity, and clarity of suggested approach;
5. Experience and proven record of success with similar or comparable projects.

A Consultant Selection Team will be convened to evaluate statements of qualification received by the closing date stated in this RFQ. The highest scoring firms will be required to appear for an in-person (i.e., not virtual) interview. WestCOG will notify firms, consortia, joint ventures and teams selected for interview with the Consultant Selection Team within 60 days of the closing date. The Consultant Selection Team will rank the firms, consortia, joint ventures and teams according to the criteria identified in this RFQ and submit its recommendations to WestCOG. Selection of any firm, consortium, joint venture or team for this project may be subject to approval of the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

IV. AWARD

Following selection of the most qualified firm, consortium, joint venture, or team, WestCOG will commence scope and fee negotiations with that firm, consortium, joint venture, or team. The lump sum fee for the project will be based on the scope of work, job titles, certified payroll records, burden, fringe, and overhead (BF&O) rates, and direct costs. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached on scope of work and cost, WestCOG reserves the right to terminate negotiations with that firm, consortium, joint venture or team and commence negotiations with the next most qualified firm, consortium, joint venture or team.

V. RESOURCES

Firms seeking to learn more about WestCOG are encouraged to visit: www.westcog.org.

ATTACHMENT A

Scope of Work

Conceptual Development of Congestion Reduction Projects

Overview

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) region encompasses 18 municipalities with diverse land use patterns, demographics and governance structures. Traffic congestion impedes efficient commerce and frustrates travelers at numerous locations within the region. Local officials are eager to reduce congestion but often lack the information and staff resources to systematically assess traffic conditions and identify the most promising solutions. This study will address that problem through a deliberative, broad-scale evaluation and ranking of existing conditions, screening of remedial interventions and conceptual development of projects, each with a goal of reducing congestion. The design concepts developed through this study will be handed off to WestCOG municipalities to jump start design and implementation.

Project locations will be identified by screening the region's entire surface road/street network (i.e., all public roads except freeways) for congestion, the systematic selection of project locations considering expected benefits, cost, impacts and host municipality preference. Project concepts will be defined in sufficient detail to support grant applications (e.g., CMAQ, LOTCIP, etc.) and municipal plans and budgeting.

Work Program Outline

The study is expected to be conducted as described by the following task descriptions. However, the results of a particular task may affect subsequent work, necessitating change. The consultant will be expected to adapt to changing circumstances. WestCOG invites innovative methods leading to the desired outcomes.

1. Project Management

The study will be managed by the WestCOG project manager and the study consultant's counterpart. The consultant project manager will serve as the study spokesperson at the direction of the WestCOG project manager and will facilitate meetings. The WestCOG project manager will be copied on any communication between the consultant and a municipality.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of WestCOG staff and municipal representatives, will provide input and help guide the overall study process. Municipal representation on the TAC may change over the course of the study as the locations under study evolve. The consultant will meet with the TAC at least four (4) times over the study period at key project milestones to report findings and to seek input. Meetings are anticipated to be held at the following junctures:

- TAC Meeting #1: Project initiation meeting: strategy for conducting study, project schedule;
- TAC Meeting #2: End of Task 2: Prepare Data Collection Plan;
- TAC Meeting #3: End of Task 4: Identify, Evaluate and Rate Congestion Countermeasures;
- TAC Meeting #4: End of Task 6: Conduct Workshops.

WestCOG may invite additional municipal representatives to attend TAC meetings. WestCOG will work with the consultant to schedule project meetings. The consultant will notify attendees, develop presentation and handout materials for each meeting, as appropriate, attend and participate in these meetings and develop and distribute meeting summaries. TAC meetings are expected to be conducted in-person, rather than virtual. The consultant will be responsible for developing digital meeting summaries. Feedback from TAC members and other participating municipalities will be collected by the WestCOG project manager and provided to the consultant.

Additionally, the consultant will provide presentations (i.e., briefing on findings) at up to three WestCOG's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and/or Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) meetings.

The consultant will develop, and deliver at TAC meeting #1, a recommended schedule for completing the study within the specified duration, including task completion dates and approximate dates of TAC meetings.

Deliverable: Agenda, handouts and presentation materials for TAC meetings and summary documentation. Recommended project schedule for TAC meeting #1.

2. Prepare Data Collection Plan

Develop a plan recommending the data to be used for identifying and ranking congested locations across the region. Quantitative measures (e.g., Peak Hour Excessive Delay, PHED) are essential. However, the consultant will also be expected to explore and recommend how qualitative congestion-related indicators ('public pain') can be collected and considered. Mainline freeways are excluded from the scope but ramp-street intersections are included. Prepare a plan on the specific data recommended to be collected, means of collection and method to be used to evaluate congestion and identify the region's "most congested" locations.

Deliverable: Five hard copies and a digital version (searchable pdf) of the recommended Data Collection Plan.

3. Collect Data and Identify Congestion Hot Spots

Following TAC meeting #2 and possible revisions to the draft data collection plan, WestCOG will direct the consultant to execute the approved data collection plan. Compile information on traffic congestion across the WestCOG region. Identify the 75 (approximately) most congested locations (e.g., intersections, corridor segments) on the surface network. Provide data and rankings for the two most-congested locations in each WestCOG municipality, even if there are no locations within the municipality among the region's worst. Present results in various formats including graphics (e.g., heat maps).

Deliverable: Ranked list and characterization of the region's most congested locations and the ranking and congestion characteristics of the two worst-congested locations in each municipality.

4. Identify, Evaluate and Rate Congestion Countermeasures

For each location, identify one or more infrastructure or operational interventions likely to provide significant congestion reduction. Evaluate the probable efficacy, cost and impacts of each intervention within its specific context. If multiple, separable (i.e., independent) interventions are considered at the same location, analyze each separately. Recommend the most promising location interventions (approximately 20 locations) for cost-effective congestion reduction capital projects. Prepare a report summarizing the evaluation and recommendations.

Deliverable: Report assessing each location and recommended locations for further consideration.

5. Develop Cost-Effective and Feasible Congestion-Mitigation Projects

Following TAC meeting #3, WestCOG will designate up to 20 locations and direct the consultant to prepare schematic design concepts, consisting of one or more interventions per location. Develop design concepts for each location to include a description, graphic representation(s), congestion reduction effects (quantitative estimates), construction cost estimate and impacts likely to affect feasibility and public support/opposition. Establish and apply a system of cost-effectiveness metrics. Prepare a report consisting of an introductory section with information pertinent to the overall study (e.g., methods, assumptions, location selection) and individual sections summarizing information (e.g., design concept, congestion reduction, cost, feasibility) for each location. Include a summary table (preferably one page, maximum of two) of key information for all locations.

Deliverable: Eight hard copies and eight digital media (e.g., flash drive, DVD) with a searchable pdf version of the report.

6. Conduct Workshops

Coordinate with WestCOG to conduct up to four workshops, with each featuring a subset of the potential project locations. WestCOG will work with the consultant to identify the venue, schedule and participants. For each workshop, develop an agenda, present information (e.g., background, findings, recommendations) and facilitate the meeting to elicit feedback and address concerns of meeting participants, which are expected to be WestCOG and municipal staffs and other interested parties; discern the municipality's interest in pursuing the project concept. Prepare a summary of the discussion and feedback.

Deliverable: Prepare, conduct and document workshops, including materials (agenda, handouts, exhibits).

7. Develop Design Concepts

Following TAC meeting #4, WestCOG in consultation with municipalities, will designate five to eight projects for further development. Refine the analysis and recommended design concepts. Design concepts should reflect actual location context, including existing infrastructure, right of way, improvements on abutting properties, sensitive features and utilities. Prepare plans, design concept description, summary of congestion reduction effects, construction cost estimate and summary of other impacts likely to affect feasibility and public support/opposition for each location. The congestion reduction information should compare/contrast existing and proposed conditions for current and future (+20 years) traffic scenarios, expressed in both conventional traffic engineering measures and in a manner more readily understood by the public. Use the Connecticut DOT Cost Estimating Guidelines to prepare the cost estimate.

Deliverable: For each design concept, submit two hard copy plans (1" = 20' or 1" = 40') and a location concept report (i.e., narrative, tabulated information, cost estimate, etc.). Also provide two digital media (e.g., flash drive, DVD) with the same information (i.e., plans, location concept report) for each location design concept.

8. Prepare Draft Final Report

Prepare a draft final report summarizing the entire study, including each task. Also, provide summary information (i.e., plan, description, congestion reduction effects, estimated cost) for each location design concept and key decisions leading to the recommended concept.

Deliverable: Eight hard copies of draft final report and eight digital media (e.g., flash drive, DVD) with the draft final report in its native format (e.g., MS Word) and as a searchable pdf.

9. Complete and Deliver Final Products

Complete final report considering review comments. Also, prepare and deliver information and products for subsequent use by municipalities. Develop an archive for each design concept location to include a project description, key issues that shaped recommendations and/or should be considered in further development (e.g., rights-of-way, comments from municipality), plans, traffic analysis and summary results and cost estimate. Contact each municipality with a project to determine any specific needs. Fulfill all such requests within the scope of this agreement; advise WestCOG and the municipality of any request that is not accommodated.

Deliverables: Five hard copies of final report and eight digital media (e.g., flash drive, DVD), each with the report in its native format (e.g., MS Word) and as a searchable pdf. Two hard copy plans (1" = 20' or 1" = 40') of each location design concept location. Two digital media for each location design concept with information not in the final report but of likely use by the municipalities for future project development (e.g., CAD files, traffic analysis/simulation files).

Schedule

This project is expected to take twenty four months to complete.