



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Northwest Hills Council of Governments
Transit Analysis Study
RFP # 24358

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOC) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to retain a consultant or consulting team to conduct a transit analysis study for the 21 town region utilizing Transit Planning Section 5311 Federal Transit Administration Funds.

Transit Analysis Study focus is to aid in the development of a coordinated transportation service network serving the residents of NHCOC region and provide a thorough analysis to help address the the current and future transit demands.

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments is seeking a qualified team that includes a Transportation Planner/Specialist, GIS Specialist, and has the capability and capacity to meet the COG's objectives outlined in Section IV of this document.

The Respondent's shall be delivered to the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, 355 Goshen Road, Litchfield, CT, 06759 during normal office hours by no later than **3:00PM, August 29, 2024**. Submittals received after this date and time will not be accepted. Sealed envelope(s) should be clearly marked: **"RFP 24358, NORTHWEST HILLS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – Transit Analysis Study" (with the fee proposal submitted in a separate sealed envelope, clearly marked)**.

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals; to waive any informalities; to negotiate and award a contract that it determines best meets their needs and best serve the interests of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments.

There will not be a public opening of this bid

**MBE's, WBE's and SBE's ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY
AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**



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Northwest Hills Council of Governments
Transit Analysis Study
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July 30, 2024

This request for Qualifications and Proposals includes the following:

- Section I - General Conditions and Submittal Requirements
- Section II - Selection Process & Criteria
- Section III - Project Background & Goals
- Section IV – Scope of Work – Work Plan
- Section V - Appendix

Section I : General Conditions and Submittal Requirements

General Conditions:

The Respondent's submittal shall include an original, **eight (8) exact copies (in addition to the hard copy)** and shall be delivered or mailed to the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, 355 Goshen Road, PO Box 832, Litchfield, CT 06759 during normal office hours by no later than **3:00 PM, August 29, 2024**. Submittals received after this date and time will not be accepted. Sealed envelope(s) should be clearly marked: **"RFP #24358, Northwest Hills Council of Governments – Transit Analysis Study"**. Firms mailing proposals should allow for normal delivery time to ensure timely receipt of their proposals. In the case where the NHCOG office is closed for weather related or some other emergency related circumstance, then submittals shall be due the next day when NHCOG office reopens for business, no later than 11:00 AM on that day. **No fax or e-mail Bids will be accepted.**

All questions must be submitted by **August 14, 2024 by 3:00 PM**. Questions must be submitted by email to the Transportation Planning Director at kfaraci@northwesthillscog.org. All questions determined to be of interest to all prospective firms will be answered in writing by an addendum which will be posted on the COG web sites within a week of the question deadline. It is the responsibility of potential bidders to check these websites for addendum(s). Interested firms should check the website 48 hours before the closing date.

This RFP does not commit the Northwest Hills Council of Governments to select any Respondent or enter into any contract agreement. The Northwest Hills Council of Governments reserves the right to accept or reject any or all RFP's; to waive any informalities, and if it is deemed to be in the public's best interest, to enter directly into negotiations with one or more Respondents based on responses to the RFP, to request additional information from some or all Respondents. The Northwest Hills Council of Governments reserves the right to deny or to accept any bid deemed in the best interests of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments.

The COG will not be liable for any costs incurred by a firm in the preparation or submission of a proposal. The information provided herein is not intended to and shall not bind the Northwest Hills Council of Governments to any of the statements or assumptions set forth herein.

Responses must set forth accurate and complete information for each of the items listed below. At the COG's discretion, failure to do so could result in disqualification.

The successful respondent will be expected to be able to commence services as soon as possible upon award, as determined by the COG. Any contract entered into by the COG and the successful bidder shall provide that the COG may terminate the contract upon thirty-(30) days' notice to the bidder. The information provided herein is not intended to and shall not bind the Northwest Hills Council of Governments to any of the statements or assumptions set forth herein.

There will not be a public opening of this bid

**MBE's, WBE's and SBE's ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY
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Submittal Requirements:

In your submittal, the COG is requesting the following:

1. A cover letter signed by the primary firm, binding the firm to all of the commitments made in the proposal. This shall include the prime consultant contact information and all subconsultants. Note: the COG will contract with the primary consultant/firm of the team and all others will be considered subconsultants under the executed agreement.
2. The name(s), business address, phone number, e-mail address of firms and individuals proposed to participate in all tasks identified in the scope of work.
3. A Project Management Plan that identifies the core personnel and their ability to perform the integrated services as described in the work plan in Section IV. Please include the qualifications of each firm and resumes of all the key personell that would be assigned to this project. Resumes shall not be more than two pages in length.
4. Three references for projects/plans of relevant scope giving the name of the project, project period, and project cost. (Include the names of clients, primary contact person, email and phone number.)
5. A narrative that outlines the proposed scope of services along with the approach, methodology and process that was used in developing the scope and will be used during the implementation of the scope.
6. Proposed timeline
7. Proof of Insurance and Liability (See Appendix B)
8. Fee Proposal for Scope of Services. The project budget is \$52,000. The Fee proposal shall include either a lump sum or hour allocation for each task and an hourly rate and expense schedule. Fee Proposal must include a statement that the fees remain valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the date of submission.
9. **Required Forms - Non-Collusion Affidavit, Appendix C & D and any additional forms the COG may require.**
10. **Provide any additional information about your firm that is relevant to the RFP that you believe will assist the COG in making its selection.**

Section II : Selection Process & Criteria

Schedule

Applicants are to respond to this request by **3:00 PM August 29, 2024**

All questions must be sent in by **August 14, 2023 by 3:00 PM**

The COG will develop a short list of candidates based on the stated selection criteria to interview for the project. The short-listed firms will be notified via email and will be provided with sufficient notice of the interview date and time.

Project kick off anticipated mid-October 2024.

Selection Criteria

The selection committee will evaluate the applicants based on the following criteria:

- Thoroughness, creativity and clarity of the proposed work, schedule, and project management plan. Proposals are reasonably expected to meet the objectives of this proposal.
- Qualifications and experience of personnel to be assigned to the project team.
- Demonstrated capacity to meet schedule. Ability to provide the services within proposed project schedule time constraints.
- Teams clear understanding of the goals and outcomes of the opportunities and constraints that exist within the twenty-one town region of Northwest Hills Council of Governments.
- Teams experience on similar projects. Preference will be to those teams that have experience specifically with transit data analysis, GIS route mapping, and identification of the mobility needs of the aging and disabled population.
- Project team's composition and experience on similar projects
- Quality and performance of past services
- Hourly fees and expense schedule
- Fee Schedule
- References

Section III - Project Summary, Goals & Background

Summary:

The NHCOC Transit Analysis Study is funded by Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Transit Planning funds, CT Department of Transportation funds and local NHCOC match. This study will develop a comprehensive understanding of current transit operational deficiencies, route identification of all transit providers, existing operational funding sources, and ridership trends. The analysis will provide recommendations on future improvements that will streamline services and ridership accommodations for elderly and disabled patrons and work-related trips. There are significant gaps in the existing transit system that result in a growing number of denied trips and a growing need to accommodate current and future work-related travel.

The Rural Independent Transportation System (RITS) Map is shown in Appendix A. The map identifies which towns are covered by each of the current three RITS providers. This transportation service originated in 2017 utilizing \$10,000 Federal Transit Administration New Freedom Grant Program and is currently supported by Section 5310 Non-Traditional Federal Transit Administration funds.

Goals:

As noted in the NHCOC Regional Transportation Plan, there is a very high degree of latent transit demand in the region which is increasing as the region's population ages. Improvements are needed to increase services, especially to those without other travel options as well as those who choose to rely on transit as their primary means of travel.

The Transit Analysis Study will address:

- Elderly/disabled/low-income unmet needs for transit services
- School/work trips for those without motorized vehicle options
- Improve coverage including days of service/times/geography
- Coordinated transit system throughout the region.
- Marketing plan, system signage, and publicly available information about transit options
- Coordinated/centralized communications and dispatch system
- Future ridership projection within the next 5 years

This study will provide an overall transit service assessment, identification of gaps, regional dispatch network, ridership data (current and projected), regional traffic generator locations, and proposed service improvements (including existing route evaluations)

The study will also provide a comprehensive understanding of what future development can be supported based upon proposed services and funding availability.

The data collected as part of this study will inform and support the development of a coordinated and centralized transportation network.

Background:

The NHCOC region covers approximately 786 square miles and is predominately rural located in the northwest corner of Connecticut with Massachusetts boarder to the north and New York to the west [Appendix A]. It is composed of 21 municipalities with the topography of rolling hills and higher peaks to the north and west. Torrington and Winchester are the two major cities within the region. As noted in the NHCOC Comprehensive

Economic Development Strategy (https://northwesthillscog.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/NHCOG-CEDS-Report_FINAL.pdf) 57% of all residents and 60% of all jobs are located in 4 communities: Torrington, Burlington, Winsted and Litchfield which further supports the need for improved work-related transportation services in the 21 town region. The median age within the region is 51. The median household income is \$87,815. The region has an aging population and, “it is expected that by 2040 the number of individuals over 65 will increase by 62%”, which emphasizes the need for greater elderly and disabled transportation services.

The major elderly and disabled transportation providers are:

- Northwestern CT Transit District
- Winsted Senior Center
- GEER Village Dial-a-Ride
- Sullivan Senior Center

Section IV - Scope of Work

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments will establish both a Technical Advisory Committee that will work closely with the Consultant to ensure all interests are considered, proper stakeholders are being engaged and outreach is sufficient. Meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee should be included in the scope of work, along with public outreach/engagement.

- Technical Advisory Committee will include the Transportation Planning Director (Project Manager), Representatives from CT Department of Transportation Bureau of Public Transportation, area transit providers, transit district board members and the Region 1 Federal Transit Administration.
- Additional representatives may also be added to the Technical Advisory Board when appropriate.

The Scope of Work must be a multi-disciplinary approach that will rely on technical assistance from (at a minimum) a Planner/Specialist, GIS Specialist, and possible Market Analyst.

Below is a proposed work plan that has been developed to outline the COG’s objectives. The respondent is being asked to develop a formalized scope of services that meets these objectives and is within the allowed project budget of \$52,000.

The emphasis of this project should be focused on Tasks 1-3 and Community Outreach on Tasks 4 listed below. This study is intended to set the stage for more in-depth planning and analysis of transit service improvements to accommodate the growing elderly population as well as the current and future work force travel demands.

The Scope of Services shall describe its approach, methodology, process, and allocated funding for each task.

Task	Proposed Activity / Task	Desired Outcome
1.	"Desktop" analysis of current transportation services in the NHCOC region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing NHCOC regional transportation providers • Ridership data (current and projected) • Inventory of existing service areas and underserved communities • Evaluation of existing routes
2.	Market analysis of need and proposed transit options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify elderly/disabled/low income needs for transit services • Development of a coordinated transit system within the region. • Identification of gaps in service • Determine future implementation costs • Identify regional traffic generator locations
3.	Identify an efficient routing/dispatch management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify possible route expansion • Estimate costs based on route expansion and services. • Establish a coordinated/centralized communication system and regional dispatch network • Identify associated capital costs
4.	Community visioning & public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing throughout the Study • Gain community support for public improvements (including proposed routes and bus stops) • Ensure Community needs are being met • Ensure development is in-line with market analysis
5.	Final Reports: Summarize process and public participation throughout the study and a compilation of all reports, maps and plans, market analysis prepared through this study. Prepare to submit 2 hard copies and a digital copy of all reports, plans & deliverables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan that provides a unified vision for future transit improvements • Identify future funding sources • Establishment of a coordinated dispatch network • Provide low, mid, high cost implementation strategy

Section V - Appendix

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Appendix A – Rural Independent Transportation System (RITS) Map and NHCOC Planning Region

Appendix B – Insurance Requirements - Indemnification

Appendix C – Acceptance of Terms of the Agreement

Appendix D – Non-Collusion Affidavit

APPENDIX A

Northwest Hills Council of Governments Transit Analysis Study - RFP #24358 Rural Independent Transportation System Providers (Section 5310 Non-Traditional Funded) Service Map

Which Provider Do I Call?



- Canaan
- Cornwall
- North Canaan
- Salisbury
- Sharon



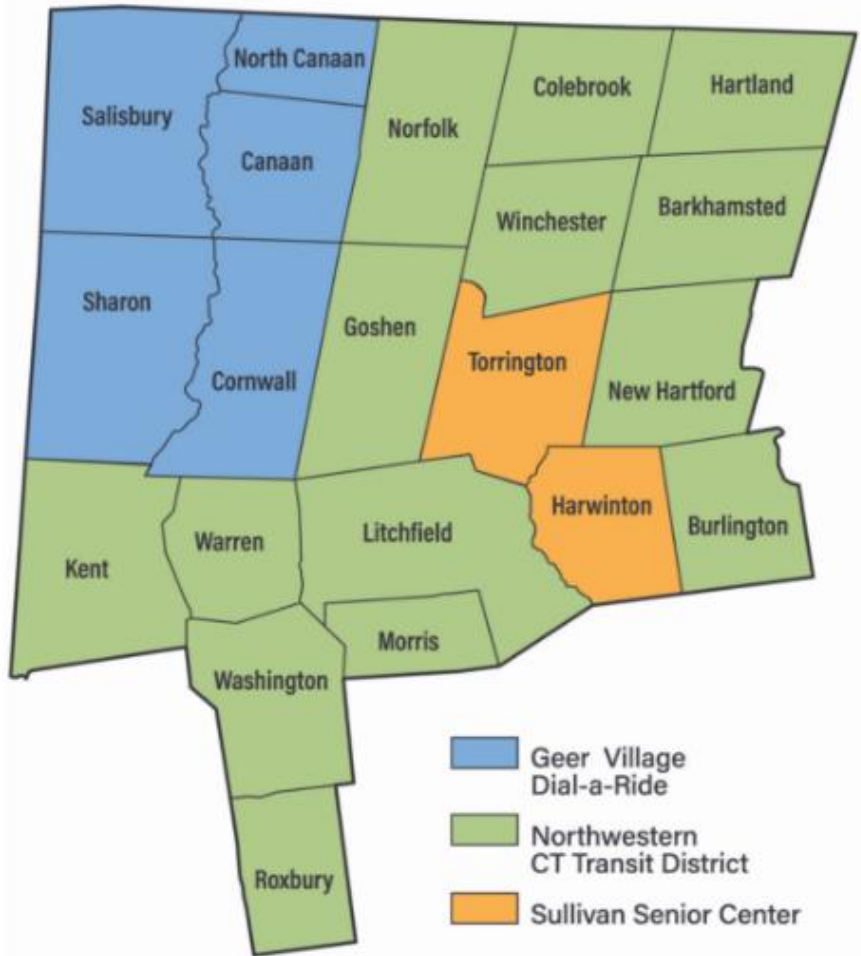
860-489-2535

- Barkhamsted
- Burlington
- Colebrook
- Goshen
- Hartland
- Kent
- Litchfield
- Morris
- New Hartford
- Norfolk
- Roxbury
- Warren
- Washington
- Winchester



860-489-2580

- Harwinton
- Torrington



Northwest Hills Planning Region



APPENDIX B
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS
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RFP #24358

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Certificate of Insurance: All insurance policies must include a Waiver of Subrogation whereby the insured waives its right to subrogate against the COG, its subsidiaries, employees, volunteers, directors and officers. Proof of proper insurance coverage, Workers Compensation Insurance, Liability and Property damage, and Vehicle Insurance shall be filed with the Northwest Hills Council of Governments Purchasing Agent within 10 days after the award of the bid. The Certificate of Insurance must name the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, 355 Goshen Road, CT, its subsidiaries, employees, volunteers, directors & officers as the "Additional Insured" and filed with the Purchasing Agent prior to commencement of work. Renewal Certificates of Insurance must be mailed to the Transportation Planning Director 10 days prior to the expiration of the required coverage.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The respondent agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract pursuant to this solicitation he/she will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sex, race, color, religion, age, marital status, ancestry, national origin, past history of mental disorder, mental retardation or physical disability or other basis in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States, the State of Connecticut or the Northwest Hills Council of Governments.

FEDERAL PROCUREMENT

Any procurement made pursuant to a federal award or subject to reimbursement, in whole or in part, with federal funds must comply with the Northwest Hills Council of Government's purchasing procedures, state law, and the applicable Federal Procurement Requirements, including 2 CFR § 200.322 ("Procurement of recovered materials"), 2 CFR § 200.323 ("Contract cost and price"), 2 CFR § 200.324 ("Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity review"), 2 CFR § 200.325 ("Bonding requirements"), and 2 CFR § 200.326 ("Contract provisions"). In the event of any conflict between Town, State, or federal requirements, the most stringent requirement must be used. (See 2 CFR § 200.318.) COG employees must comply with funding agency requests for review of technical specifications or procurement documents as provided in 2 CFR § 200.324.

INDEMNIFICATION

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Firm shall indemnify and hold harmless the COG and their respective consultants, agents, and employees from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, direct, indirect or consequential (including but not limited to fees and charges of attorneys and other professionals and court and arbitration costs) arising out of or resulting from the performance of the Firm's work, provided that such claim, damage, loss or expense is caused in whole or in part by any negligent act or omission by the Firm, or breach of its obligations herein or by any person or organization directly or indirectly employed or engaged by the Firm to perform or furnish services, or anyone for whose acts the Firm may be liable, regardless of whether or not it is caused in part by a party indemnified hereunder.

APPENDIX B continued.
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS
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Transit Analysis Study
RFP #24358

As to any and all claims against the COG or any of its consultants, agents or employees by any employee of Firm, by any person or organization directly or indirectly employed by Firm to perform or furnish any of the work, or by anyone for whose acts Firm may be liable, the indemnification obligation under this section shall not be limited in any way by any limitation on the amount of type of damages, compensation or benefits payable by or for Firm under worker's or workman's compensation acts, disability benefit acts or other employee benefit acts.

APPENDIX C
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Name of Proposer: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

COG/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Authorized Signature _____ Title: _____

Name Printed: _____ Date: _____

Federal Tax Identification Number: (FEIN) _____

It is agreed by the above signed proposer that the signature and submission of this proposal represents the proposer's acceptance of all terms, conditions, and requirements of the proposal specifications, and, if awarded, the proposal will represent the agreement between the parties.

The proposer agrees that the cost of any work performed, materials furnished, services provided, or expenses incurred, which are not specifically delineated in the proposal documents, but which are incidental to the scope, intent, and completion of this contract, shall be deemed to have been included in the prices for the various items scheduled.

APPENDIX D
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RFP #24358

NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF _____ COUNTY OF _____

I, _____, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that:

1. I am _____ of _____, the Bidder that has submitted the attached Bid for “_____”;
2. I am fully informed respecting the preparation and contents of the attached Bid and of all pertinent circumstances respecting such Bid;
3. Such Bid is genuine and is not a collusive or sham Bid;
4. Neither the said Bidder nor any of its officers, partners, owners, agents, representatives, employees or parties of interest, including this affiant, has in any way colluded, conspired, connived or agreed directly or indirectly with any other Bidder, firm or person to submit a collusive or sham Bid in connection with such Contract, for which the attached Bid has been submitted nor has it in any manner, directly or indirectly, sought by agreement or collusion or communication or conference with any other Bidder, firm or person to fix the price or prices in the attached Bid or of any other Bidder, or to fix any overhead, profit or cost element of the Bid price or the price of any Bidder, or to secure through any collusion, conspiracy, connivance or unlawful agreement any advantage against the Northwest Hills Council of Governments or any person interested in the proposed Contract; and
5. The price or prices quoted in the attached Bid are fair and proper and are not tainted by any collusion, conspiracy, connivance or unlawful agreement on the part of the Bidder or any of its agents, representatives, owners, employees, or parties in interest, including this affiant.

(Printed) _____

(Signed) _____

(Title) _____

Subscribed and sworn to before this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Notary Public Printed

Notary Public Signature

My Commission Expires _____

(Notary Seal)

NOTE: Documents must be signed before and sealed by a Notary Public. Only documents bearing a notary seal will be accepted.