



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR THE
UPDATE OF THE LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY
REGION NATURAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN**

The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) is seeking a consultant to update our Multijurisdictional Lower Connecticut River Valley Region Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The product will be a multijurisdictional state and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved, and RiverCOG and individual municipally adopted plan. The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments is the result of a merger of 2 Connecticut regional planning organizations (RPO), the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA) and the Midstate Regional Planning Agency. Past natural hazard mitigation plans were initiated under these former RPOs as well as through RiverCOG. It will be the third update for seven municipalities which include Clinton, Old Lyme, Lyme, Haddam, Chester, Deep River and Essex, and the second update for eight municipalities that include East Haddam, East Hampton, Portland, Cromwell, Middletown, Middlefield, and Durham. The towns of Old Saybrook and Westbrook are updating their NHMP on their own via a separate process.

The consultant will ensure a timely and approved review by the State of Connecticut State Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEHMS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and ensure, shepherd and finalize the adoption of the plan by each of the 15 participating municipalities and RiverCOG.

The existing plan can be found at <https://www.rivercog.org/plans/natural-hazard-mitigation-plan/>

The Region

The 15 Lower Connecticut River Valley Region municipalities are in south central coastal Connecticut. The Lower Connecticut River Valley region is 443 sq. miles and surrounds the last 36 miles of the Connecticut River before it flows into Long Island Sound. The region includes approximately 20 miles of coastal shoreline (this includes Old Saybrook and Westbrook at the west side of the mouth of the Connecticut River who are separately updating their existing plans). The population of the region as a whole in 2022 was 175,244. The population of the participating communities in 2022 was 157,936. Eleven of the participating municipalities lie on the banks of the Connecticut River, three are coastal and one, Old Lyme, sits on the east side of the mouth of the Connecticut River, is both riverine and coastal. The region's largest municipality is the City of Middletown, located in the north of the region along the banks of the Connecticut River with a population close to 48,000 in 2022. The regional population has stayed relatively steady, with small increases primarily in Middletown.

Proximity to the water has been a critical factor in the development of the Region.

Waterpower for industry derived from streams led to their early population growth and industrial villages. These industrial villages became town centers and are especially vulnerable to flooding due to storms of increasing intensity since they are located close to watercourses. The areas of highest residential densities and commercial activity lie along the Connecticut River and adjacent to Long Island Sound, and as a result are most prone to the adverse impacts of hurricanes and other wind and rain events. The region is heavily forested at 59% of surface area, posing a significant safety threat during storms. Significant transportation infrastructure runs along the coast in the form of Amtrak rail and the I-95 Interstate Highway which connects New York to Boston. Interstate I-91 runs through the northwest corner of the Region in the towns of Cromwell and Middletown, and the Connecticut Rte. 9 expressway connects the region from I-95 in Old Saybrook through Cromwell to Hartford via Interstates 84 and 91.

Scope of Work

An experienced natural hazard mitigation planning consultant, with assistance from RiverCOG staff will

- *Review the current 2021 regional plan with 15 municipal annexes and relevant hazard mitigation planning initiatives that have taken place since the 2021 plan adoption, review needed improvement to GIS mapping of regional and municipal mitigation actions and strategies and critical facilities, and review current information to update natural hazards identification and risk information including climate change factors.*
- *Guide a regional committee of at least one stakeholder from each municipality, currently the CEO (but they may select a participant of their choosing) through 3 meetings. The committee will be utilized to guide and oversee the evaluation of the existing plans to create the multijurisdictional multi hazard plan with 15 municipal annexes.*
- *Meet 2x with each of the 15 communities' municipal planning, public works, and emergency management staff for a total of 30 municipal meetings to evaluate the 2021 natural hazard mitigation plan annexes with respect to their strengths, weaknesses, and utility. Evaluation will include existing plans, mitigation project lists, mitigation accomplishments, existing mitigation needs, natural hazards that have been experienced since the last update, and any significant changes that have occurred in the communities since the plan's adoptions along with the five year natural hazard projections for the Region.*
- *The consultant will review the goals and mitigation projects of the existing plan with the above listed entities to determine their relevance to changing circumstances in each municipality as well as changes in State and Federal policies and insure the update is addressing current and expected future conditions; will evaluate the risk assessment portion of the plans to determine if the information is in need of updating; will review critical facility information for each municipality to assess if changes and updates are required; and will provide a status report for each municipal plan update that will inform the regional committee in its guidance and review of the presented multijurisdictional multi hazard regional update and its 15 municipal annexes.*
- *Complete relevant data review and complete draft update of the existing 2021 regional plan and its annexes including necessary mapping of identified potential mitigation projects and critical facilities.*

- *Create a public involvement strategy that will include 2 regional/municipal public meetings and other strategies as recommended to include a relevant survey and a project website for posting of relevant material, media releases, surveys, etc..*
- *Finalize the plan after public comment and RiverCOG staff review for submittal to the state and FEMA for review.*
- *Submit the plan and complete State and FEMA review process resulting in an approved hazard mitigation plan that complies with the regulatory requirements of 44 CFR Part 201 and 44 CFR Part 206. f*
- *Will attend 15 municipal public meetings for plan adoption and 1 RiverCOG public meeting for regional adoption.*
- *Hazards to be evaluated Include coastal storms, drought, dam/levee break, earthquake, fire, flood, hurricane, severe ice storms, severe snow storms, tornados, tropical cyclones, tsunamis, windstorms, invasive species, and other natural hazards as determined through consultant outreach to the municipalities.*

Work to be Completed – Please provide timeline and detailed work plan.

Task 1: Assemble, Review, and Evaluate Existing NHMPs and other Existing Conditions Data and climate change factors with RiverCOG and municipal support.

Task 2: Conduct municipal interviews with officials, commissioners, and community leaders to determine the status of existing mitigation projects and identify significant changes in hazards since the last plan. This should include National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) maps updates and inclusion of RiverCOG’s recently completed Flood Susceptibility data with RiverCOG and Municipal Support.

Task 3: Create and implement a municipal public involvement strategy (municipal public meetings, website, media releases) with RiverCOG and municipal support.

Task 4: Create Draft Plan – Analysis, mapping and identification of mitigation strategies with RiverCOG, municipal, and state staff.

Task 5: Plan, coordinate, and hold regional public involvement meetings presenting draft plan and receiving comments / posting to websites / media releases / printed copies on view at public libraries and town halls with RiverCOG and municipal staff support.

Task 6: Complete state and FEMA review and RiverCOG and municipal adoptions, including public meetings held by the municipalities and RiverCOG with municipal and regional staff.

News Releases – Written approval by RiverCOG will be required **prior** to any public disclosure regarding this proposal, or any other subsequent awards.

Signature Requirements – Proposals must be signed by a duly authorized official of the firm. Consortiums, joint ventures, or teams. A submitted proposal will not be considered unless it is established that all contractual responsibility rests solely with one contractor or one legal entity, which shall not be a subsidiary or affiliate with limited resources. Each proposal should indicate the entity responsible for execution on behalf of the proposal team.

Addenda and Supplements – In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of these instructions, a supplement will be posted to <https://www.rivercog.org/publicnotices/> and applicants are free to amend or replace an already-submitted proposal up until the RFP submission deadline.

Rejection Rights – RiverCOG retains the right to reject all proposals and to re-solicit if deemed to be in their best interest to do so.

Cost of Proposal Preparation – No reimbursement will be made for any costs incurred for the preparation of a proposal or during the selection process.

Proposals To Be In Effect – Each proposal shall state that it is valid for a period of not less than 120 days from the date of receipt.

Selection is also dependent upon the negotiation of a mutually-acceptable contract with the chosen firm.

Response Requirements

The following information should be submitted with the proposal. Any additional information should be contained in a clearly marked appendix.

1. Qualifications of the firm or individual proposing to conduct the study. Name, team size, and team organizational structure under which the firm(s) and personnel will conduct the study must be included. Relevant experience in public engagement and technical mapping including FEMA's Hazus software should be presented. All proposed sub-consultants must be clearly identified. The location of the primary office to be used in the project should be included.
2. Qualifications (resumes) of key personnel to be assigned to the project and a description of their responsibilities in conducting project tasks must be included.
3. Description of other similar or related experiences.
4. A timeline detailing the order and duration of listed tasks and the project as a whole, as well as which task will be completed under subcontract to others with a description of the subcontractors qualifications and experience.

5. A detailed work plan.

5

6. A detailed schedule.

7. A detailed budget.

8. The firm and its subcontractors must have appropriate insurance (general liability, auto, workers compensation, and/or professional liability coverage).

9. Statement of compliance with all federal and state laws and local ordinances.

10. Submittals: 1 email electronic submittal is required and must be received by 3pm on January 16th, 2025. The electronic copy may be emailed to Margot Burns at mburns@rivercog.org.

NOTE:

RFP responses arriving late or not meeting these minimum requirements may be disqualified.

Funding for this project is contingent on fund award of the Region’s application to the FEMA 2023 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program.

Inquiries

Questions should be in writing and sent to Margot Burns, at mburns@rivercog.org . The questions submitted and the response will be made publicly available at <http://rivercog.org/currentRFQ.html> . The identity of persons submitting questions will not be posted.

