



North Central Texas Council of Governments

**NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AIRSPACE AWARENESS PILOT PROGRAM**

March 17, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is requesting written proposals from qualified firms(s) to provide a tool that will enable residents and businesses to fly safe and also inform the public of local drone operations by providing live data on areas of potential risk, advisories for local events or emergencies, and other flight planning features at no cost to NCTCOG. Enabling residents and businesses to fly safe, by providing live data on areas of potential risk, advisories for local events or emergencies, and other flight planning features.

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The North Central Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is a voluntary association of, by, and for local governments, and was established to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit, and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is seeking an individual or firm to safely integrate Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and autonomous beyond visual flight small drone deliveries for which the region will require the use of PSUs and/or UTM Services. These services will be integral to not only increase safety, execute flight plans, balance airspace capacity, provide aircraft conflict resolutions, enhance adherence to federal, state, and local regulations, and provide additional emergency services.

There is also a need for competing providers to integrate cooperatively into a large metropolitan area to provide the highest degree of safety possible. Having these platforms operating independently of each other leaves immeasurable gaps in regional safety and that needs to be mitigated.

Because of that need NCTCOG wants to work with up to four of the aforementioned service providers over a two-year piloting period to develop a collaborative process to not only share essential data but to also get regional municipalities imputing flight information automatically.

BACKGROUND

Since 1974, NCTCOG has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metropolitan Area. NCTCOG's Transportation Department is responsible for regional transportation planning for all modes of transportation. The Department provides technical support and staff assistance to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and its technical committees, which compose the MPO policy-making structure. In addition, the Department provides technical assistance to the local transit providers of North Central Texas in planning, programming, coordinating, and implementing transportation decisions.

PROJECT SUPPORT

The project will be conducted under the guidance and supervision of a Project Review Committee. The responsibilities of the Project Review Committee will be to serve as the principal technical review committee for this project. NCTCOG shall serve as project manager to implement a mutually agreed upon scope of work, monitor the progress of consultant activities; and serve as a liaison between the consultant and other partners. The selected consultant will enter into a contract with NCTCOG for the agreed upon scope and budget. NCTCOG shall also serve as the contract manager and procurement administrator for the project.

NCTCOG will provide the venue for the training workshops for regional municipalities and other potential users including NCTCOG 911. The training will be conducted in coordination with NCTCOG and platform providers. Marketing materials and marketing for the workshops themselves will also be provided by NCTCOG staff with coordination from the trainers.

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work is summarized by the tasks outlined below. Proposers are encouraged to exercise creativity in responding to the project needs. Modifications to the tasks and task sequencing which will improve the effectiveness of the project effort, while containing costs, are encouraged.

NCTCOG is looking to work with existing technology partners on a two-year pilot project in which partners develop a means to integrate each other's data and advisories at no cost to NCTCOG. NCTCOG also want to work directly with regional municipalities to develop a process to get their data added onto each platform as well.

In **year one** of the Pilot, NCTCOG staff will work with each platform provider to get training on platform use for NCTCOG and local government staff. Staff will work with each platform provider and interested municipalities to develop a workflow process that automates the flight data inputs.

In **year two** of the Pilot, NCTCOG will continue the activities of year one but also work on a process to share the data across all platforms. This will ensure that all airspace management platforms in the region will have as much flight and safety data as possible to be a viable solution.

PARTNER CRITERIA

NCTCOG is looking for multiple technology providers that can do the following:

1. A browser-based visualization and monitoring of airspace above jurisdictional territory.
2. Provides a cooperative aerial traffic feed including crewed ADS-B and registered UAS flights.
3. Ability to create and publish localized advisories for governmental, commercial, and recreational operators.
4. Provide expedited manual authorization approval or rejection workflow for UAS operator flight plans.
5. Provide a platform for communication between connected UAS operators.
6. Ability to merge information into platform from competing technology solutions and other regional sensor data (i.e., CASA and other weather data).
7. Complement NCTCOG's or our region's existing UAS safety messaging.
8. Assist in keeping the community updated on rules, regulations, and potential hazards.
9. Allow NCTCOG and regional municipalities to publish public advisories, local rules, regulations directly to the pilot community.
10. Provide a solution that will help us communicate and connect with the community by embedding a live operation map into our northtexasuas.com webpage.
11. Provide training (workshops) for municipalities and NCTCOG staff.

Please expound on any of these areas as needed in your response to this RFP.

PROJECT BUDGET

NCTCOG will not provide direct funding for phase one of the pilot. NCTCOG is seeking vendors to provide software and/or services at no charge for the purpose of evaluating to inform a future procurement that NCTCOG may initiate (Phase Two). For Phase Two, NCTCOG will look for federal or other funding mechanisms.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Proposers shall develop a schedule of tasks with completion deadlines and methodologies for the project. NCTCOG will select all the identified tasks or a subset of the tasks to be completed. NCTCOG and the selected firm will jointly determine a schedule for progress meetings in accordance with the final schedule for the scope of work. The timetable for completion of this project is 2 years from the date the consultant firm is authorized to proceed. NCTCOG anticipates the contract will begin July 2023.

CONSULTANT SELECTION CRITERIA

The Consultant Selection Committee (CSC) will review all proposals and select a consultant it considers qualified to undertake the project. The following criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals:

1. Project Understanding	30 percent
2. Scope of Services	25 percent
3. Project Managers/Staff Qualifications	20 percent
4. Knowledge of the Dallas-Fort Worth Area	10 percent
5. Firm Qualifications/Consultant References	10 percent
6. Schedule	5 percent

If the CSC determines that interviews will be required before a final decision can be made, the interviews will take place via Microsoft TEAMS **the week of April 24, 2023**. Proposers should be willing and able to attend these interviews in person or via web conference, if necessary. Consultants who are invited to an interview will be notified by the close of business on **Friday April 21, 2023**, that an interview has been scheduled. Costs for developing the proposal and costs attributed to interviews (and subsequent negotiations) are at the proposer's own expense and will not be reimbursed by NCTCOG.

CONTRACT AWARD

Following final negotiations of the work plan and costs satisfactory to NCTCOG, the consultant will be asked to execute a contract with NCTCOG. If applicable, a Notice to Proceed will be issued upon execution of the contract. NCTCOG reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to contract for any or all portions of the project with the selected consultant, or to hire multiple firms.

The successful responder(s) to this Request for Proposals is expected to provide qualified personnel to accomplish each portion of the work in this study. NCTCOG will maintain the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in its opinion, during the course of work on this project, to be unqualified to perform the work.

Proposers shall provide their preferred contract mechanism for NCTCOG to review as part of their proposal response.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions regarding the RFP shall be directed in writing by e-mail to TransRFPs@nctcog.org by the close of business on **March 24, 2023**. All questions and responses will be posted on the NCTCOG website at www.nctcog.org/rfp by the close of business on **March 29, 2023**. NCTCOG reserves the right to respond to inquiries as it deems necessary.

OVERALL PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

This RFP shall be used to accept, review, and score proposals based on the following schedule with the intent of awarding a License Agreement contract. The following represents the schedule of procurement activities leading to contract award:

Issue Request for Proposals	March 17, 2023
Last Day to Submit Questions	March 24, 2023
NCTCOG Q&A Posted to Website	March 29, 2023
Proposals Due & Proposal Public Opening	April 14, 2023
Consultant Selection Committee	week of May 1, 2023
Interviews (if needed)	week of May 8, 2023
NCTCOG Board Approval	June 22, 2023
Execute Contracts	July 2023

NCTCOG reserves the right to make changes to the above-mentioned schedule. All such changes shall be made by an amendment to the RFP and shall be posted on NCTCOG's website at www.nctcog.org/rfp. It is the responsibility of the consultant to frequently check this website for information concerning amendments to the RFP.

*Public opening of the proposals will be done via Microsoft Teams on **April 14, 2023 at 5:05**

p.m. A link to the Microsoft Teams meeting is below. Microsoft Teams is integrated with audio so you will only need to use the conference call number (below) if you are unable to access the Microsoft Teams App. The Teams App is available for download [HERE](#).

Microsoft Teams meeting – Public Opening of Proposals

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 275 606 585 342

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSERS

1. Proposers may submit one hard copy or one flash drive of the proposal to Ernest Huffman, Principal Transportation Planner, North Central Texas Council of Governments, 616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington, Texas 76011. Flash drives should contain one file preferably with indexed sections. Flash drives that are unreadable or contain corrupted files will be considered non-responsive. **Proposals must be received in-hand no later than 5:00 p.m., Central Time, on Friday, April 14, 2023 at the NCTCOG offices.** Proposals received after that time will not be considered and will be returned to the proposer unopened. Proposals containing original signatures and notary seals should be labeled "Original." The in-hand submittal will count as the official submittal. In addition to the in-hand submittal, NCTCOG is requesting electronic submission of proposal documents to TransRFPs@nctcog.org. Electronic submissions only will **not** be evaluated.

2. The proposal should address the criteria identified in the Request for Proposals that will be used for consultant selection. Proposals should include, at a minimum, the following information.
 - **Proposal Formatting** – Qualifications should be printed double-sided and include a footer containing individual's name and/or the consultant firm name and page number. Font size should not be less than 10 point.

 - **Cover Letter (1-page limit)** -- A brief summary of the key points of the proposal and approach to accomplishing the work. Name and address of the firm, as well as the contact person's name, phone number, and email address should also be included.

 - **Project Understanding** - A general description of the approach to be used in accomplishing the work, including the project organization and management plan. Senior personnel who will work on the project, including subcontractor personnel, should be identified by name and by role in the project; e.g., project manager, principal in charge, project advisor, etc. The project manager in particular must be specified and a clear indication given as to his/her involvement in the project. If more than one firm will be involved, the proposal should clearly delineate the work to be accomplished by each firm and how the work will be coordinated and managed. Any special requirements or coordination needs should be clearly identified.

 - **Scope of Services and Schedule** - This section should respond to the Request for Proposals task descriptions for the project by describing clearly in detail what and how work in each task will be accomplished, the technical methodology to be used, and the planned work flow and schedule. A description should be included concerning quality control and how this will be maintained and accomplished during the course of this project.

 - **Consultant Qualifications (4-page limit)** - This section should identify the background and experience of the consulting firm(s) and individuals in similar types of work and the results of that experience, along with up-to-date references (name, current affiliation, and phone number), should be included.

3. A consultant selection committee will review the proposals and select a firm it considers qualified to undertake the project. The selection of the proposal will be based on the technical proposal and/or interviews but will be subject to negotiation of conditions of cost satisfactory to NCTCOG. NCTCOG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to contract for any or all portions of the project with the selected consultant.

4. Procurement information shall be a public record to the extent provided by the Texas Open Records Act and the Freedom of Information Act and shall be available to the public as provided therein. If a proposal contains information that the proposer considers proprietary and does not want disclosed to the public or used for any purpose other than the evaluation of the offer, all such information must be indicated with the following suggested language:

The information contained on pages _____ shall not be duplicated used in whole or in part, for any purpose other than to evaluate the proposal; provided that if a contract is awarded to this office as a result of or in connection with the submission of such information, NCTCOG has the right to duplicate, use or disclose this information to the extent provided in the contract.