

North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
FOOD DESERT ANALYSIS

Request for Information

Questions and Responses

Question #2: Will the Council consider hybrid models that include both digital grocery access (e.g., benefit cards for fresh food) and direct-to-door delivery for residents with mobility, transportation, or digital access barriers?

Response: Yes, NCTCOG is interested in all models.

Question #3: Does the Council encourage or allow grocery access programs that incorporate Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) screening and direct enrollment in social service benefits such as SNAP, WIC, or LIHEAP?

Response: NCTCOG is interested in grocery access programs that will accept SNAP, WIC, and LIHEAP.

Question #4: Can applicants propose a phased approach, beginning with implementation in one high-need area (e.g., Dallas County) and expanding to other counties upon proof of impact?

Response: Yes, NCTCOG is open to all ideas in terms of implementation methodologies which will result in successful pilot projects throughout the region.

Question #5: Does the Council require a physical retail presence (e.g., storefronts) as part of this RFI, or are alternative grocery distribution models—including digital card systems and direct delivery—eligible?

Response: NCTCOG is open to consider alternative grocery distribution models.

Question #6: Will this RFI lead to direct contracting opportunities or funding for pilot programs, or is it strictly an information-gathering process for future planning?

Response: This RFI is strictly an information-gathering process for future planning. NCTCOG is evaluating whether we have enough information to be able to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek partnership for contracting opportunity. No contracts will be awarded during this RFI process.

Question #7: Will the Council consider “dignity-first” models that are rooted in lived experience, prioritize cultural responsiveness, and use person-reported data to shape service delivery and policy insights?

Response: NCTCOG is open to all ideas in terms of implementation to solve food deserts in the region.

Question #8: What is the format for submissions?

Response: There is no particular format for submissions. All responses should be submitted via email to TransRFPs@nctcog.org.

Question #9: Are firms expected to hand deliver their responses to the RFI?

Response: No, firms do not need to hand deliver responses to the RFI. All responses should be provided to NCTCOG virtually to the TransRFPs@nctcog.org inbox. The future RFP for this project will have a different submission process.

Question #10: When does NCTCOG anticipate releasing an RFP for this effort?

Response: The timeline for the release of the RFP is not known at this time. Our hope is if the RFI is positive and provides details for the RFP process, it is anticipated an RFP will go out in the calendar year 2025.

Question #11: What is the anticipated start date for this effort?

Response: The RFI process will not result in an awarded contract. Please see questions #6, and #10.

Question #12: What period of performance does NCTCOG expect for this effort?

Response: Please see responses to questions #10 and #11.

Question #13: Could NCTCOG provide guidance on the anticipated budget to complete this effort?

Response: The RFI process is intended to inform NCTCOG the future RFP, NCTCOG does not have an anticipated budget at this time.

Question #14: Is question #1 asking the contractor to estimate how many homes currently do not have broadband access, or is it asking what threshold of broadband adoption in a community would make it economically viable to invest in grocery store infrastructure or delivery services?

Response: NCTCOG is seeking information on the threshold of broadband adoption, if required, in a community would make it economically viable to invest in grocery store infrastructure or delivery services and the number of homes that

do not currently have broadband access. "Food desert adoption" may not have a broadband requirement.

Question #15: Are there previous studies or analyses that helped NCTCOG identify the approach highlighted in the RFI? If yes, would NCTCOG share those studies?

Response: NCTCOG did not utilize any previous studies or analyses to compile the RFI.