

State of Connecticut looks to Next Generation 911 Project Refresh

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In July 2010, the Connecticut Department of Information Technology [released a request for proposals](#) (RFP) for a statewide Next Generation 911 (NG911) system. At that time, GovWin estimated the state would award a contract to a vendor in late 2010 or early 2011. As it turns out, the state opted to cancel the RFP and proposals, and with that, seemingly waste a significant amount of time and money from its own internal processes and the vendors who submitted bids.

State officials understood that moving to NG911 was a necessity, and therefore reignited the project on January 24, 2011. The Connecticut Department of Public Safety [issued a request for information](#) (RFI) in order to gain better insight on the vendor community's NG911 solutions and develop a more pointed RFP.

Before covering the resurrection of the state's NG911 project, it is important to understand the significance of moving through a solicitation process, only to cancel all that time and effort. GovWin [recently blogged](#) about a metro payment system for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, in which the agency will be utilizing a multistep process. Multiphase approaches to large-scale communications systems are somewhat common, but what is becoming even more noticeable is the movement toward several RFPs, or an RFI and RFP, that move the agency in the same direction. It is understandable that state and local agencies, strapped for cash, want to ensure they develop a system that will be cost effective and function properly, but spending an additional six months or a year in the RFI review process may turn out to be more costly. For more details on this project and other state's phased approaches, [visit GovWin's Analyst Perspectives](#). (Subscription to GovWin [State & Local Industry Analysis](#) required.)

Recently, GovWin's health care and social services team [learned of a large-scale project](#) out of Arkansas that will result in the release of more than 20 RFPs, all of which will be issued simultaneously (current estimate is January 2011). While the cost of such projects may be greater, the use of this type of procurement could in fact save the agency money in the long term. It remains to be seen the level of strain these nearly two dozen RFPs will place on the agency.

GovWin's Take

To reiterate, GovWin does not suggest all agencies use consultants or RFIs as the first step in their IT initiatives, but early planners should at least consider these options. In a time when budgets are in the red all over the country, each and every dollar should be spent efficiently. While many agencies, including Connecticut's IT and Public Safety Departments, may have the best intentions in mind, a more calculated approach can save money and save lives.