

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP No. 2026-0824

Regional Governance Facilitation and Development Services

Two Bridges Regional Corrections Authority Governance Initiative

District 6 Collaborative

Issuing Counties: Lincoln County, Sagadahoc County, and Knox County

Issue Date: August 24, 2026

Proposal Deadline: September 11, 2026

Anticipated Contract Award: October 15, 2026

Anticipated Contract Term: Approximately six months

1. RFP OVERVIEW

Lincoln County, Sagadahoc County, and Knox County are jointly seeking proposals from qualified consultants or consulting firms to provide independent facilitation and governance-development services related to the proposed Two Bridges Regional Corrections Authority.

The selected consultant will assist elected officials, sheriffs, county administrators, legal counsel, corrections officials, financial representatives, and other designated stakeholders in evaluating and developing a regional governance framework.

The purpose of this engagement is to facilitate a structured, neutral process through which the participating counties can identify areas of agreement, evaluate governance and financial alternatives, address areas of disagreement, and develop recommendations that may support future legislation and implementation of the regional corrections authority.

The counties are seeking a consultant with demonstrated experience facilitating complex intergovernmental discussions involving elected officials and multiple governmental entities.

2. BACKGROUND

Lincoln County, Sagadahoc County, and Knox County are participating in discussions regarding the potential expansion and governance of the Two Bridges Regional Corrections Authority.

The counties anticipate that development of an effective regional governance structure will require consideration of issues including governance authority, board composition, voting rights, financial participation, capital investment, ownership interests, and admission of additional counties, operational responsibilities, and protections for the founding counties.

The participating counties recognize that these issues may involve differing interests and perspectives among counties and other stakeholders. The counties therefore seek an independent facilitator capable of creating a productive process, identifying areas of consensus and disagreement, and assisting participants in developing practical governance options.

Existing draft legislation and other background materials will be provided to the selected consultant.

3. PURPOSE OF THE RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to select a qualified consultant to:

- Facilitate a collaborative regional governance-development process;
- Identify shared interests, concerns, and areas of disagreement;
- Assist participating counties in evaluating governance, financial, ownership, and operational alternatives;
- Develop a recommended governance framework;
- Document areas of consensus and unresolved policy issues;
- Assist county representatives and legal counsel in identifying recommended legislative revisions;
- Develop a draft Governance Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding;
- Provide a final report and recommendations suitable for consideration by county commissioners and legislative delegations; and
- Support the participating counties in establishing a practical path toward implementation.

The selected consultant will serve as an independent and neutral facilitator. The consultant will not represent any individual county or advocate for a predetermined governance structure.

The issues identified in this RFP are not intended to predetermine the outcome of the process. The selected consultant may identify additional governance, financial, operational, organizational, or intergovernmental issues that should be considered.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Building productive collaborative relationships among participating counties;
- Identifying shared interests and areas of disagreement;
- Developing consensus around regional governance principles;
- Evaluating alternatives for governance, finance, ownership, and operational responsibilities;
- Identifying appropriate protections for founding counties;
- Establishing principles for admission of additional counties;
- Developing recommendations that may be incorporated into proposed legislation;
- Ensuring that participating counties and stakeholders have meaningful opportunities for input;
- Clearly documenting both consensus positions and unresolved issues; and
- Developing a practical governance framework and implementation path.

5. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Task 1 – Project Initiation

Conduct project kickoff meetings with designated county representatives to:

- Establish project goals and desired outcomes;
- Review existing draft legislation and relevant background materials;
- Identify participating stakeholders;
- Establish communication protocols;
- Establish roles and responsibilities;
- Develop a detailed project work plan;
- Establish a meeting schedule; and
- Identify information and materials required from the participating counties.

The consultant shall provide a written project work plan for approval by the participating counties.

Task 2 – Stakeholder Interviews

Conduct confidential or otherwise appropriately structured interviews with designated stakeholders, including:

- County Commissioners;
- Sheriffs;
- County Administrators;
- Jail Leadership;
- Jail Authority Members;
- Legal Counsel;
- Financial Representatives; and
- Other stakeholders identified by the participating counties.

The counties anticipate approximately three interviews per county. Proposers should identify their recommended interview methodology and anticipated level of effort.

The consultant shall prepare a summary identifying:

- Common interests;
- Concerns;
- Opportunities;
- Areas of disagreement;
- Unresolved issues; and
- Issues requiring additional discussion.

Interviews shall be conducted in a manner intended to encourage candid participation while recognizing that the participating counties are public entities subject to applicable Maine law, including public records and open meeting requirements.

Task 3 – Facilitation of Regional Meetings

Plan and facilitate regional work sessions involving representatives of the participating counties and other designated stakeholders.

Discussion topics may include:

- Governance structure;
- Board composition;
- Voting rights;
- Founding county protections;
- Admission of future counties;
- Financial participation;
- Capital investment;
- Ownership interests;
- Operational responsibilities;
- Inmate housing priorities;
- Inmate transportation commitments;
- Long-term regional planning;
- Withdrawal provisions; and
- Other issues identified during the process.

The facilitator shall establish an environment that encourages productive dialogue, identifies areas of agreement and disagreement, and ensures that differing viewpoints are appropriately considered.

The consultant shall recommend an appropriate number and format of regional meetings based on the project objectives.

Task 4 – Governance Framework Development

Assist participating counties in evaluating governance alternatives and developing a recommended governance framework addressing, as appropriate:

- Board composition;
- Executive Committee structure;
- Membership classifications;
- Admission standards;

- Participation agreements;
- Withdrawal provisions;
- Capital buy-in methodology;
- Financial protections;
- Ownership interests;
- Tax cap limits;
- Expansion authority;
- Long-term governance;
- Decision-making authority;
- Voting requirements; and
- Protections and rights of founding counties.

The consultant shall identify the advantages, disadvantages, implications, and significant considerations associated with major governance alternatives.

The process should result in a recommended governance framework that reflects areas of consensus while clearly identifying issues that remain unresolved.

Task 5 – Legislative Support

Work collaboratively with county legal counsel and designated county representatives to:

- Identify recommended revisions to existing draft legislation;
- Document areas of consensus;
- Identify unresolved policy issues;
- Develop recommendations for legislative consideration; and
- Assist in translating the agreed-upon governance framework into appropriate legislative concepts.

The consultant shall not provide legal advice unless separately authorized and appropriately qualified to do so. Legal interpretation and drafting decisions shall remain the responsibility of participating county counsel.

Task 6 – Meeting Documentation and Decision Tracking

The consultant shall provide appropriate documentation for the project, including:

- Meeting agendas;
- Facilitation materials;
- Meeting summaries;
- Action-item lists;
- Decision logs;
- Issue-tracking documents;
- Governance option matrices; and
- Other documentation necessary to maintain a clear record of the process.

Documentation should clearly distinguish between:

- Decisions or agreements reached;
- Issues under consideration;
- Alternative options;
- Unresolved issues; and

- Matters requiring future action by county commissioners, legislative representatives, legal counsel, or other authorities.

Task 7 – Final Report

Prepare a comprehensive final report summarizing:

- Stakeholder participation;
- Process undertaken;
- Issues discussed;
- Governance alternatives considered;
- Recommendations;
- Areas of consensus;
- Unresolved issues;
- Recommended governance model;
- Recommended legislative revisions;
- Financial and operational considerations;
- Recommended implementation steps; and
- Other significant findings.

The final report shall be suitable for presentation to county commissioners, county officials, legislative delegations, and other appropriate stakeholders.

Task 8 – Regional Governance Workshop

Facilitate a final governance workshop attended by representatives of Lincoln County, Sagadahoc County, Knox County, and other participating stakeholders.

The workshop shall:

- Present the proposed governance model and legislative recommendations;
- Review major policy decisions;
- Confirm areas of consensus;
- Identify remaining unresolved issues;
- Facilitate discussion toward resolution where possible;
- Document agreed-upon revisions;
- Review the proposed path toward implementation; and
- Establish remaining actions required by participating counties.

The consultant shall prepare a final Governance Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding reflecting the shared understanding of the participating counties regarding governance principles, operational expectations, financial responsibilities, and the path toward implementation, to the extent the participating counties reach agreement.

The consultant shall also prepare a summary identifying any remaining policy issues requiring action by county commissioners, legislative delegations, legal counsel, or other authorities.

6. REQUIRED DELIVERABLES

1. Project work plan;
2. Stakeholder interview summary;
3. Facilitation plan;

4. Meeting agendas and materials;
5. Meeting summaries;
6. Decision and issue-tracking matrix;
7. Governance options and analysis;
8. Legislative recommendations;
9. Draft Governance Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding;
10. Final project report;
11. Final Governance Agreement and/or Consensus Memorandum, as appropriate; and
12. Executive summary for county commissioners and legislative delegations.

All final deliverables shall be provided electronically in commonly used formats and shall be suitable for public presentation and future implementation planning.

7. ESTIMATED LEVEL OF EFFORT

- Nine stakeholder interviews (three each county);
- Four regional work sessions (two each jail);
- Six meetings with county representatives and/or legal counsel;
- One final regional governance workshop; and
- Approximately six months of project activity.

Proposers should independently evaluate the estimated level of effort. If the proposer believes the estimate is too high or too low, the proposal should recommend an appropriate level of effort and provide the rationale for the recommendation.

8. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

- Public-sector facilitation;
- Intergovernmental relations;
- County or municipal government;
- Regional service delivery;
- Organizational governance;
- Intergovernmental agreements;
- Consensus building among elected officials;
- Legislative or policy development;
- Conflict resolution; and
- Strategic planning.

Experience with corrections, public safety administration, regional corrections systems, or similar governmental authorities are highly desirable.

Preference may be given to consultants with demonstrated experience facilitating regional governmental collaborations involving multiple counties or municipalities.

9. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Cover Letter

Provide a brief statement identifying the proposer, confirming its interest in the project, and identifying the individual authorized to negotiate and execute a contract.

B. Understanding of the Project

Describe the proposer's understanding of the project, its challenges, and the desired outcomes.

C. Proposed Approach and Methodology

Describe the proposed approach to stakeholder interviews; regional facilitation; consensus building; governance option development; addressing disagreement; legislative support; decision tracking; and final recommendations. Proposers should identify any recommended modifications or additions to the Scope of Services.

D. Project Work Plan and Schedule

Provide a proposed timeline identifying major activities, meetings, milestones, and deliverables.

E. Firm/Consultant Qualifications

Describe relevant organizational experience and qualifications.

F. Key Personnel

Identify all individuals who will work on the project and describe their respective roles, qualifications, and anticipated level of involvement. The counties expect the individuals identified in the proposal to perform the work unless otherwise approved.

G. Relevant Experience

Provide examples of comparable projects, particularly projects involving multiple governmental entities; elected officials; regional governance; intergovernmental agreements; complex stakeholder relationships; and consensus building.

H. References

Provide at least three references for comparable work, including contact information and a brief description of the services provided.

I. Conflicts of Interest

Identify any actual or potential conflict of interest involving the participating counties, the proposed regional corrections authority, participating stakeholders, or related legislative matters. The selected consultant shall have an ongoing obligation to disclose potential conflicts that arise during the engagement.

J. Availability

Describe the firm's availability to begin work and its ability to complete the project within the anticipated six-month timeframe.

K. Exceptions

Identify any exceptions to the requirements, terms, or conditions contained in this RFP.

L. Cost Proposal

Provide a detailed cost proposal in accordance with Section 10.

10. COST PROPOSAL

Proposers shall provide a detailed cost proposal that identifies the anticipated cost of completing the required Scope of Services.

Service	Proposed Cost
Project initiation/work plan	\$
Stakeholder interviews	\$
Regional facilitation	\$
Governance framework development	\$
Legislative support	\$
Meeting documentation	\$
Final governance workshop	\$
Final report and deliverables	\$
Travel and reimbursable expenses	\$
Total Proposed Project Cost	\$

Proposers shall also provide:

- Hourly rates for key personnel;
- Rates for additional meetings or services;
- Travel and mileage rates;
- Any anticipated reimbursable expenses; and
- Any assumptions affecting the proposed cost.

No reimbursable expense shall be incurred without authorization from the participating counties.

11. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation Criterion	Weight
Understanding of project and objectives	15%
Relevant experience and qualifications	20%
Proposed methodology and facilitation approach	25%
Qualifications and experience of assigned personnel	15%
Work plan and ability to meet project schedule	10%
Cost	15%
Total	100%

The counties may request clarification of proposals, conduct interviews with proposers, request presentations, or request additional information as part of the evaluation process.

The counties reserve the right to invite one or more finalists to participate in an interview or presentation before making a selection.

12. SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

Activity	Date
RFP issued	August 24, 2026
Deadline for questions	September 4, 2026
Responses to questions issued	September 9, 2026
Proposal deadline	September 11, 2026
Evaluation of proposals	September 14–15, 2026
Finalist interviews	September 16, 2026
County Commissioner review	September 18–October 14, 2026
Anticipated contract award	October 15, 2026
Project commencement	November 1, 2026
Anticipated project completion	Approximately May 1, 2027

The counties reserve the right to modify this schedule.

13. CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The selected proposer will be required to enter into a professional services agreement with the participating counties.

The agreement will include, as applicable:

- Scope of services;
- Compensation;
- Term;
- Insurance requirements;
- Independent contractor status;
- Ownership of work product;
- Confidentiality requirements consistent with applicable law;
- Public records requirements;
- Conflict-of-interest provisions;
- Compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws;
- Termination provisions;
- Indemnification provisions; and
- Other standard contractual provisions required by the participating counties.

The selected consultant shall comply with all applicable Maine laws governing public entities, including applicable public records and open meeting requirements.

14. OWNERSHIP OF WORK PRODUCT

All final work products developed specifically for the participating counties under the resulting agreement shall become the property of the participating counties, subject to any pre-existing intellectual property rights of the consultant.

Work products shall be provided in editable electronic formats where appropriate.

The consultant shall provide all materials reasonably necessary for the counties to use the work product for:

- Public presentations;
- Commissioner briefings;
- Legislative testimony;
- Legislative development;
- Intergovernmental agreements; and
- Future implementation planning.

15. COUNTY RIGHTS

The participating counties reserve the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals;
- Cancel or modify this RFP;
- Request clarification or additional information;
- Waive minor irregularities;

- Negotiate with the selected proposer;
- Select a proposal that is determined to be in the best interests of the participating counties; and
- Discontinue negotiations if an acceptable agreement cannot be reached.

Issuance of this RFP does not obligate the participating counties to award a contract or reimburse any proposer for costs incurred in preparing or submitting a proposal.

16. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals shall be submitted electronically to:

RFP Contact: Carrie Kipfer, Lincoln County Administrator

Email: ckipfer@lincolncountymaine.gov

Subject: RFP No. 2026-0824 – Two Bridges Regional Corrections Authority Governance Facilitation

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00pm on September 11, 2026.

Late proposals may be rejected.

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to the RFP contact no later than September 4, 2026. Responses will be made public to all proposers by September 9, 2026 on Lincoln County's website: www.lincolncountymaine.gov

17. JOINT PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING

This RFP is jointly issued by Lincoln County, Maine, Sagadahoc County, Maine and Knox County, Maine..

The participating counties intend to work collaboratively throughout the selection process and project.

The counties will determine prior to contract execution the appropriate contracting and payment structure, including whether one participating county will serve as the contracting entity on behalf of the participating counties or whether the selected consultant will enter into agreements with each participating county.

The selected proposer shall identify any concerns or proposed alternatives regarding the anticipated contracting structure in its proposal.

18. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

By submitting a proposal, the proposer acknowledges that it has reviewed this RFP and understands the requirements of the proposed engagement.

The proposer shall identify any material assumptions, limitations, exclusions, or exceptions upon which its proposal is based.

The counties encourage proposers to identify approaches that they believe will improve the effectiveness of the project while remaining consistent with the overall objectives of the RFP.