

**Southbury Board of Selectmen
October 1, 2026**

Subject to Approval

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen, upon the recommendation of the SMMR2 Advisory Committee, hereby approves awarding the bid for SMMR2 Program Partner to Cornerstone Environmental Group to provide consultancy, implementation, and monitoring services for the phases of the SMMR2 grant award the town chooses to pursue.



TOWN OF SOUTHBURY

SMMR2 Advisory Committee
501 Main Street South
Southbury, Connecticut 06488

September 29, 2026

To: The Board of Selectmen

From: SMMR2 Advisory Committee

Re: Program Partner for the SMMR2 Grant Award

The CTDEEP SMMR2 grant is divided into three phases, Groundwork, Implementation, and Monitoring. The award is set up so that the Town can elect to stop or continue at the end of each phase. CT DEEP requires towns receiving the award to engage a program partner with waste reduction expertise to guide and assist the town with the grant.

The SMMR2 Advisory Committee (SMMR2 AC) interviewed and checked references on Cornerstone Environmental Group (CEG), RRS and Waste Zero. The main objective was to choose a program partner that could help the committee determine the viability of a pay-to-throw (PAYT) system for Southbury and identify other approaches that can significantly reduce our trash and improve our recycling.

The SMMR2 AC found that:

- CEG uses a broad, phased, data driven approach covering baseline, alternatives, implementation, outreach, and monitoring. For example, they have demonstrated excellent domain knowledge and capabilities in the engagement with the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG), producing a highly detailed and broad-based analysis of the NVCOG's interest in establishing a Regional Waste Authority.
- RRS demonstrated they are very detailed and implementation-oriented, particularly once a program is selected. While they provided the most specific proposal, their interview was much less specific. Their reference checks revealed execution

problems on a joint project with CEG that RRS was leading. Ultimately, it required a transfer of project leadership to CEG, who then completed the project on time and within budget.

- Waste Zero is strongly focused on practical PAYT implementation, so much so it was felt they would have difficulty assessing other options. Their primary implementations have been bag-based systems, and reference checks showed several problems with bag-based systems and that they were typically very unpopular with residents. It is still unclear if there is a conflict of interest with the vendor both helping to evaluate a bag-based system and then potentially selling the bags during implementation and monitoring.

The SMMR2 AC concluded that:

- CEG provided the strongest overall balance across the entire project. The project calls for first understanding Southbury's existing waste system, identifying and evaluating alternatives, engaging stakeholders, determining what makes sense for the Town, and then moving into implementation and a monitoring phase.
- CEG would provide the most balanced, comprehensive, and data-driven approaches to helping Southbury determine the right waste-reduction strategy, while meeting the grant requirements and fairly analyzing PAYT systems.

Based on these conclusions, the SMMR2 AC recommends the Cornerstone Environmental Group be selected as the program partner, pending a successful contract negotiation.