

Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Request for Information for Financial Systems Software

RFI ISSUE DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2020

RESPONSE DUE DATE: DECEMBER 4, 2020 BY 3PM

QUESTIONS DUE BY: NOVEMBER 9, 2020

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SECTION I: OVERVIEW

A. Introduction

The Department of Rail & Public Transportation (DRPT) is releasing this Request for Information (RFI) for the newly created Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) to request information from vendors related to the purchase of a financial solution to support its operations. This RFI is an investigational document seeking information from vendors on their capabilities.

This is a pre-solicitation RFI. VPRA intends to select vendors with functionality capabilities similar to VPRA's high level needs and requirements to respond to follow-up questions about their solutions.

B. Background

On July 1, 2020, the General Assembly approved the creation of the VPRA as an independent entity from Department of Rail & Public Transportation (DRPT) to oversee intercity passenger rail activities within the Commonwealth of Virginia through the purchase of right of way and management of large-scale capital projects. The VPRA will report to a newly established Board appointed by the Governor.

C. Disclaimers

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation or a Request for Proposal. Responses to the RFI will not be returned nor is it VPRA's intent at this phase to exchange information or to provide feedback to vendor responses. Responses to this notice are not offers. They cannot and will not be accepted by VPRA to form a binding contract. Responders are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI. This RFI shall not limit any rights of VPRA, and VPRA reserves all its rights including, but not limited to, its right to elect not to procure the goods and/or services that are the subject of this RFI.

SECTION II: HIGH LEVEL NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Description of Entity

VPRA is a governmental entity and is required to follow Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements. VPRA expects to operate as a special-purpose entity engaged in only business-type activities, as defined by GASB, and will present its financial statements on the full accrual basis of accounting. Currently, VPRA is managing up to 1,000 projects. VPRA is funded by a combination of fees, sales tax revenue and federal grants, expects to hire subcontractors for project construction, and expects to employ around 50 employees.

B. In-Scope Modules

VPRA prefers to implement a cloud-based solution with no or very limited customizations. The solution must have project and grants accounting functionality. Encumbrance accounting is desired but not necessary. The response must include the functionality of solution presented with focus on the below modules. Below is a summary of the modules that are desired in the solution:

General Ledger – Ability to summarize and maintain account balances at the U.S. SGL account and attribute level. General Ledger management is the central function of the core financial system.

Accounts Receivable – Ability to record accounts receivable and corresponding revenues, expenditure reductions, or advance/prepayment reclassification; Prefer online invoicing.

Accounts Payable – Ability to recognize and records accounts payable due to another entity in the near term; Prefer online payments and positive pay.

Capital Assets – Ability to track, depreciate and dispose of capital assets including capital asset roll forward schedules.

Leases – Ability to account for leases under GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) Statement No.87.

Project Accounting – Ability to track cost of projects by material, labor and overhead. Ability to set up projects using a variety of billing and earnings methods, including time and materials, fixed price, percent complete, not to exceed, and scheduled billing, to name a few.

Governmental Accounting – Ability to perform GAAP (General Accepted Accounting Principles) accounting for public sector annual financial reporting.

Grants Management – Ability to manage the awarding and administering grants, cooperative agreements, or other related instruments.

Budgeting – Ability to establish the initial agency budget plan. The budgeting process includes updating the budget plan as necessary and reporting on the use of resources against these plans throughout the year; prefer encumbrance accounting.

Reporting – Ability to create accrual based financial statements, custom reports and/or queries. Information maintained by the financial system must be readily accessible and provided in a variety of formats according to user's needs. Methods of providing information include online inquiries, extractable data files, and hard-copy reports.

Human Resources/Payroll – Ability to generate payroll forecasts (i.e., anticipated compensation and benefits) at the object class and individual employee level. Ability to maintain employee data, benefits and process payroll for up to 50 employees.

Treasury Management – Ability to maintain cash investments and debt. Ability to reconcile their Fund Balance with Treasury accounts regularly.

Purchasing – Ability to automate procurement from requisition, PO, receiving to payments. Including ability to send for bid, track P-cards and minimal inventory. Prefer eProcurement capabilities

C. Additional Requirements

Solution Overview – Provide an overview of your recommended options for software components or modules to meet VPRA’s requirements, with emphasis on choices among single vendor ERP, best-of-breed, or a hybrid of both. Highlight any third-party products included in the solution, with an explanation of why these products are the recommended option. Please include the out-of-the-box integrations that are supported by your solution.

In your response, please demonstrate how your solution’s functionality addresses the nuances of governmental accounting and financial reporting. This section is intended to be a high-level overview of your solution and may include any future roadmap functionality.

Technical Platform – Describe the recommended technical delivery platform for your proposed solution. As appropriate, describe the architecture that supports the solution, and critical technical components that are required. In addition, please communicate whether your solution is an on-premise or a cloud based single-tenant or a multi-tenant solution.

Software Maintenance – Referring to any proposed solutions, please describe how the software is to be maintained with respect to routine updates (e.g. patches and fixes) to more significant upgrades (e.g. new functionality and/or technical capabilities) and whether the customer or the vendor will control these changes. Include standard downtimes for updates, any required schedule updates and ability to skip updates.

Security – Describe the security, audit and accountability components of your solution (e.g. internal controls, workflow tracking, checklists, and business rules). Describe any current or past system breaches or threats to your solution.

Training – Describe the availability of training for client’s implementation team and users. Include available training formats and any additional costs.

Implementation Services – Describe your implementation services and methodology including a typical high-level timeline and project team hierarchy.

List Pricing for Licensing, Support, and Deployment – Include a separate estimation of fee for licenses and implementation. Include information on integrations, custom reports, workflows or other costs included or excluded in the base fee.

SECTION III: INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMAT OF RFI RESPONSE

This section sets out the general requirements associated with this RFI. Additional detailed requirements are set forth in the remainder of the instructions and attachments within this RFI.

A. Protocol

All such information is provided for indicative purposes only to provide the vendor with an indication of the scope of VPRA's requirements. The information obtained from this pre-solicitation RFI may or may not lead to a Request for Proposal (RFP) at a later date. VPRA may extend an invitation to all vendors, some vendors, or no vendors for a solicitation at its discretion. VPRA does not make any representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the RFI, the information it contains, or any other information delivered pursuant to the RFI.

Both VPRA and the vendor will prohibit unethical behavior, and if either party witnesses' practices that are counterproductive to the fair operation of the RFI, it shall notify the other. If a vendor becomes aware of such practices, it should notify VPRA's nominated representatives.

Any assumptions made by the vendor (including all technical solution, commercial and pricing assumptions) in preparing its response must be clearly stated.

B. Notices and Communications

VPRA has authorized the following individual to serve as VPRA's contact (the "Contact Person") with regard to all notices, *notifications, inquiries, submissions and responses*:

Name: Melissa Myers
E-mail Address: Melissa.myers@drpt.virginia.gov

Participants should be aware that contact with any other personnel within VPRA or an organization with which VPRA is associated regarding this RFI may disqualify your company from further consideration. This includes employee, senior management, the Board of Directors, and any firm doing business with VPRA without prior permission from the VPRA contact person. Any violation may lead to disqualification of the vendor from this and future selection processes.

Time used for deadlines and submissions is U.S. Eastern Time UTC/GMT -5 hours.

C. Format for Submissions

- Responses to this RFI should be per below instructions with proposal and/or attachments in Adobe® PDF
- In order to be considered for selection, the RFI may be submitted via a complete sealed electronic response electronically using eVA. <https://eva.virginia.gov/index>.

Or the RFI can be submitted by sending it to the contact person noted above via email. The subject line must read RFI for Financial System.

- The RFI should be prepared simply and economically, providing straightforward concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.
- If the RFI is to be submitted via eVA, each tab must be submitted separately as an attachment in eVA. Each attachment can be no more than 60MB. You can submit up to five attachments at a time and as many as necessary.
- Elaborate brochures and other representations beyond that sufficient to present a complete and effective RFI are neither required nor desired. Proposals should use a font size of 12 (or larger) and have no less than ¾” margins. No proposal, in its entirety, should exceed 25 pages one- sided.

D. Submitting Questions to VPRA

It is the vendor’s responsibility to seek clarification of any inconsistencies, ambiguities, errors, or other issues regarding this RFI. If you have questions submit them in writing via email to the Contact Person. In the interest of fairness to all participants in the RFI process, any response VPRA provides to inquiries will be issued without identifying the source of each question. VPRA reserves the right to answer questions or not at their discretion.

E. RFI Time Summary

VPRA has established the following schedule for soliciting and evaluating vendor responses:

Activity	Completion Date (5:00PM Eastern)
RFI Release	10/27/20
Vendor RFI Clarification Questions Due	11/09/20
VPRA Answers RFI Clarification Questions	11/13/20
RFI Response Due	12/4/20 by 3pm
Notification to Vendor of Request for follow-up	TBD
Vendor follow-ups	TBD

Please note that VPRA reserves the right to amend this schedule at its sole discretion and convenience, without liability.

F. RFI Terms and Conditions

Confidentiality of VPRA Information and RFI

VPRA will maintain the confidentiality of the information provided by vendors. Information may be disclosed to employees, board members and/or 3rd party vendors assisting VPRA with the RFI process. As VPRA is a public entity, it is also possible that a request for information may be submitted to VPRA requesting release of confidential data.

Gifts, Entertainment and Other Gratuity

The vendor must not offer any gifts, entertainment, meeting take-aways (pens, cups, etc.) or other gratuities to any employees, agents or contractors of VPRA at any time. At no point in the process shall VPRA be influenced based on any gifts, entertainment or other gratuities provided by the vendor. VPRA shall make its decisions solely based on which vendor(s) offer VPRA the best value for goods and services required.

RFI Modifications

VPRA reserves the right, at any time, to amend, supplement or terminate the RFI either before or after submission of proposals. In the event it becomes necessary to modify the RFI, an addendum will be issued in eVA. All addenda issued by VPRA will become part of the specifications for this RFI.

Additional RFI Information

VPRA may request additional written information from vendors at any time after the response due date to further explain or clarify areas of their proposals; however, unsolicited information may not be accepted from vendors after the RFI response deadline. VPRA will assume that all responses are complete once received. Any modifications or corrections to submitted proposals will be accepted at VPRA's discretion and may not be recognized or considered.

RFI Not an Offer by VPRA

The issuance of this RFI does not imply that VPRA is making an offer to do business with any RFI recipient or respondent or place obligation upon VPRA to purchase goods or services from the vendor, or to enter any binding legal relationship with any one or more of the vendors. The information obtained from this pre-solicitation RFI may or may not lead to a Request for Proposal (RFP) at a later date. VPRA may extend an invitation to all vendors, some vendors, or no vendors for a solicitation at its discretion.

Publicity and Media Releases

The vendor will not make (or cause to be made) any media releases, public announcements or public disclosures relating to this RFI or VPRA's evaluation process, and shall not otherwise publicize this RFI in any manner.