

Metro
Information Services Department
Solid Waste Information System (SWIS) Project

Response to vendor questions regarding RFP10-1525

Responses are provided in-line in **bold italic** type.

1. On RFP Page 5, section “Parallel effort – Improvements to SWIS related processes” it indicates that beginning Sep 9, Metro staff will undertake an analysis of business processes “external” to SWIS resulting in cross functional flowcharts illustrating various elements. “One of the goals of this work is to provide a basis from which the data requirements of these processes can be identified for possible inclusion in SWIS.”

a. Should we assume that participation in that “external” effort is not included in the Metro SWIS RFP and the intent is that only the outputs from that effort will become part of the inputs for the Metro SWIS Phase 1 Requirements development?

This is a correct assumption. The phase I consultant is not expected to participate in the analysis of the external business processes. However, the consultant will incorporate the outputs of the external systems analysis (data model and end-user requirements) in the SWIS data model and end-user requirements document.

b. Is a planned completion schedule available for that external effort and what might it be, since those inputs will be a dependency for the SWIS Phase 1?

“As-is” process diagrams and data analysis of the external systems will be complete by October 23. Since this is the date scheduled for execution of the phase I consultant contract, the consultant should assume these inputs will be immediately available. Business processes for the ideal external systems will be developed after that time.

c. Will the inputs from that external effort be for the “as-is” or the “improved” external processes? If for the “as-is” processes, what allowances are expected or acceptable if “improvements” are made during the SWIS Requirements development?

Business process diagrams and data analysis will be for the “as-is” external processes with the expectation that they will be combined with the same for the “as-is” SWIS to create the data model for the ideal system.

Every effort has been made to identify all aspects of SWIS that will be subject to analysis. This is within the framework of the SWIS project team charter which establishes the vision for the system and the SWIS project plan which establishes the scope of the project. Any element not found in those documents was excluded with careful consideration and for good reason. Discovery of an unanticipated “improvement” or pressure to include a previously excluded element will not be taken lightly and will engender an analysis of the impact on the project’s schedule and cost. Consideration and approval by the project’s executive steering committee is required to include the unanticipated element in scope.

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2. What role does Metro anticipate taking in the review, clarification and approval cycles during this Requirements analysis phase? Ideally, Metro would identify and engage a core team to represent the various stakeholders to review, clarify and resolve any stakeholder conflicts during the ongoing analysis. This is necessary to facilitate a common understanding and agreement for the timely sign-off on the various outputs and approval of the final Requirements document. The RFP identifies the various stakeholder groups and the end users in them, but does not indicate that a core team with review and sign-off authority is identified.

The three members for the core SWIS project team are responsible for the review, clarification and approval cycles. They will represent the requirements of the stakeholders identified in the RFP.

3. Are all of the current SWIS Administrator operations, i.e. receiving and editing transaction files, entering into the databases, creating kiosk workbooks, etc., done manually or are they partially automated? An indication of what portion and ideally which of those operations might be automated would be useful in estimating the structured analysis of the as-is SWIS system.

Much of the receiving and editing of reporting entity data files is done manually. Data is received, typically in MS Excel form, and is processed, transformed and mapped manually to SWIS. MS Excel "staging databases" are used for each reporting entity in order to accomplish this. Then, an import routine is triggered from the respective reporting entity's transaction database, which pulls data from the respective MS Excel staging database. On the output side, however, automatic transfer and load routines move data directly into many of the workbooks submitted to the kiosk. Most of the reports have at least some automation in this regard, but others still have a great deal of manual intervention involved in updating and distributing.

4. Is maintaining the historical data from the as-is system into the new proposed system a requirement that is to be analyzed during this phase as well?

The monthly tonnage database contains about 17,000 records extending back to 1988. It will be maintained in the new system. The records contain few fields and the material type, origin and destination code sets are consistent through time. Records in the transaction databases from January 2007 forward will be maintained in the new system. Before that time the transaction records do not roll up to those in the monthly tonnage database. There are on the order of millions of records in the transaction databases.

5. At this point, are there any known open-ended requirements whose elaboration may significantly impact the analysis as Phase 1 progresses? For example, the Threats section on RFP Page 25 identifies "Recent change in organizational structure and aggregations of responsibility may impact SWIS business processes" and the earlier mentioned "external" improvements effort may create dependencies and impacts outside the control of the SWIS project.

Both of these are being managed through the project's organization structure. The Deputy Chief Operating Officer who led the changes in the organizational structure is also the sponsor

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of the SWIS project and is uniquely positioned to resolve any impacts on SWIS business processes caused by the reorganization. The three members of the SWIS project core team are all directly involved in the analysis and improvements of the external systems so it is unlikely that any uncontrolled dependencies or impacts will be created.

6. Is the consultant selected for phase I of the project precluded from proposing in phase II?

No. Metro realizes that those likely to propose in phase II undoubtedly have the skill set and experience required for phase I. It is not to Metro's advantage to create a situation where qualified vendors would withhold participation until phase II. To remove any appearance of impropriety or favoritism in the phase II selection Metro will:

- Be diligent of all phase I work products to assure that they are in no way vendor specific. This is the responsibility of the project manager.***
- Consider and evaluate alternative solution architectures in phase I rather than specific products.***
- Select the phase II vendor(s) using an evaluation team that is substantially different from that which selected the phase I vendor. The project manager who led the phase I vendor selection will not be a member of the phase II selection team.***
- Require phase II proposers to point out any element of the phase II solicitation that they feel is specific to a particular vendor.***

7. Approximately how many records exist in the Access databases?

The monthly tonnage summary database contains about 17,000 records. Each of the transaction databases contains hundreds of thousands to millions of records.

8. What date range do the records span?

The monthly tonnage summary database contains records back to 1988. In the transaction database, only records since January 2007 are considered valid. Prior to that time the records do not sum up to those in the monthly tonnage summary.

9. Is there anything my company needs to do to as a WOB and EBE?

Contact Darin Matthews (503-797-1626), Metro's procurement manager. He can provide information on your status as a women-owned and/or emerging small business.

10. What requirements gathering tool do they {Metro} have or want to use? Rational, Requist Pro, Doors. If not are they planning to have one?

Currently, Metro does not have or use a formal requirements management tool. Use of such a tool by the consultant may be desirable as a model of best practice for Metro but is not required. The main concern is that all requirements are traceable to their source.

11. What does Market survey means? Is it for technology or process or what else?

The purpose of the marketplace survey is to identify classes of products that may applicable to the requirements of SWIS. Examples are off-the-shelf systems that would directly implement

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all SWIS requirements and components such as extract-transform-load (ETL) tools, report writers, data cube and business analytics that could be integrated to form a solution.

12. Do they [Metro] need the Requirements document earlier than Dec 18? If so when and how early?

Please note in the Phase I project schedule (p 7 of the RFP) that only the assessment of alternatives and selection of preferred alternative have firm due dates. This assures that the cost of the preferred alternative (to be determined from data gathered to support the feasibility analysis) is available for inclusion in Metro's FY 2010-11 budget process. The proposer should include a work plan to address the timing of the other tasks.

13. I noticed there is an import macro in the .mdb databases (disabled) how is this used? There are no GUI screens in these DBs – how is data entered?

Transaction data is imported via Excel spreadsheets.

14. Only the MonthlyTonnage.mdb has a GUI developed (What's the password?) looks like it does have the ability to import; is this connected to the other DBs? MonthlyTonnage_be.mdb is the backend DB tables?

A password is unnecessary. The design view of the data in which all tables, queries, reports, macros, etc. are revealed can be accessed by opening the database in this manner:

- ***Use "My Computer" to navigate to the folder where the unzipped database resides. This is most likely C:/SWIS.***
- ***Click once on the database to select it and, most importantly, assure that only the database is selected.***
- ***Hold down the SHIFT key and then double click on the database. Continue to hold the SHIFT until the database opens. This circumvents the GUI and opens the database design view.***

At this point all objects of the database are revealed and you should be able to answer your questions. For example, by using the Access "Linked Table Manager" you can verify that tables in MonthlyTonnage.mdb are links to tables in the backend MonthlyTonnage_be.mdb.

15. UNIV_MAT_ACCT.mdb not same as others.

Using the Access "Linked table manager" you can see that many of the tables in the transaction databases are links to tables in UNIV_MAT_ACCT.mdb.

16. The project time frame is aggressive for the amount of BA work required for all deliverables, this may required a team of experts, is this what you expect.

There is really no expectation of the resources provided by the vendor other than that they are sufficient to complete the work per the schedule presented. If proposers feel the schedule is not reasonable they are encouraged to explain this in "Exceptions and comments" section of their proposal.

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17. Are you expecting us to work onsite the duration, we will be more effective doing only what is required onsite and completing our analysis from our own offices.

The consultant is not expected to work exclusively on-site. However, certain tasks such as information gathering and interviews would seem to be most effectively conducted at Metro.

18. Where are interviews to be conducted?

All but the external interviews (p. 29 of the request for proposals) should be conducted face-to-face at Metro. The external interviews can be conducted by telephone. Please note that the group end-user interviews listed on page 29 of the RFP are primarily the current users of SWIS reports and do not include the SWIS administrator or manager who owns SWIS. It is assumed that as part of the analysis of the as-is SWIS and construction of the ideal system, the consultant will have in-depth, on-site interviews with the SWIS administrator and his manager.

19. What is the likelihood of Metro wanting to use the same platform as RAWIS? Has that been discussed?

Metro uses Salesforce customer relationship management (CRM) to implement its Recycle at Work Information System (RAWIS).

The purpose of phase I of the SWIS project is to understand the underlying data architecture, storage and retention requirements of the system. This will be applied to judge the feasibility of alternative solution architectures. A CRM solution for SWIS can be considered in the identification of alternative solution architectures and feasibility analysis. To date, Metro has discussed the implementation of SWIS in terms of architectures employing classes of products such as report writers, ETL tools, business intelligence and analytics, etc. There has been no discussion of leveraging the existing RAWIS implementation for SWIS.

20. The RFP contains diagrams (e.g. context diagram) that are also stated as deliverables of the project – to what extent can we assume that the as-is modeling is mostly complete?

We believe the SWIS context diagram to be accurate and substantially complete. One of the major efforts in phase I will be to expand the 'SWIS' component of the context diagram in a series of lower level "as-is" data flow diagrams that describe the movement of data and processes which comprise SWIS. The SWIS context diagram is listed as a deliverable since it will likely need to be recast in the notational system proposed by the vendor.

21. Have commitments been set to make business users available for the project?

Yes. Most of the business users are under the direction of members of the project's executive steering committee or project team who will assure their availability.

22. Does the overall project have a steering committee and can the selected vendor attend meetings?

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The project has a core team which, at this time, meets weekly. The vendor selected for this project will be welcome at these meetings. The project's executive steering committee is convened only when the project team requires a decision that falls outside its chartered permission.

23. Will the market research cover both COTS and custom build or are there pre-existing assumptions on potential solutions?

We assume COTS stands for 'commercial off the shelf software'. There are no pre-existing assumptions of the potential solution. We expect to consider the entire range of possible solution architectures which include but are not limited to:

- ***Stay with the existing system***
- ***Custom develop the entire system***
- ***Apply a single off the shelf product***
- ***Custom develop the data base and integrate products for reporting, export/import, etc.***

24. Has Metro seen solutions from software companies or other agencies that would be candidate solutions? If so what are these?

Metro staff is aware of products of all types available in the marketplace and has researched some by visits to vendor websites, research in periodicals, etc.

25. What is the willingness of external organizations to work through this project?

Based on experience, Metro expects voluntary cooperation by external waste disposal businesses. Should there be any issues Metro would be able to require cooperation through its regulatory authority. What Metro will be considering is their technical maturity and ability to participate in data collection and reporting technologies that may be used to implement SWIS. NOTE: as stated in the work breakdown structure on page 30 of the request for proposals, Metro will assess the technical readiness of these external businesses. Therefore, the proposal should exclude any time for this purpose from the statement of cost.

26. How firm is the stated Phase 1 end date of Dec 31st?

The primary concern is to have a cost estimate for the preferred solution architecture available by Dec 31st for use in forming Metro's annual budget.

27. Was a third party vendor engaged by Metro to develop SWIS originally in 1989? If so, would Metro provide the vendor name?

SWIS began its life as a series of paper records and, subsequently, spreadsheets developed in house. A third party was engaged to write Visual Basic (VB) macros to automate the spreadsheets. The consultant was Larry Beckett (503.292.1024).

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28. Has a third party vendor been engaged by Metro to provide modifications or enhancements since 1989? If so, would Metro provide the vendor name?

As stated in the Section II - "Background/history of the project" of the request for proposals, SWIS grew over time in response to changing needs but not according to any established plan or vision. Yes, a third party was involved in the development of the Access databases but their involvement is not recent. Because the system has been put in its current form by the current systems administrator it is unlikely the past consultant would have accurate knowledge of the system as it is now. The consultant was Larry Beckett (503.292.1024).

29. Has a third party vendor been engaged by Metro to provide services related to this RFP? If so, what type of services and would Metro provide the vendor name?

No third party has been engaged by Metro to provide services related to the RFP. The initial system assessment, high level analysis and request for proposals were all developed by Jeff Booth of Metro's IS department with assistance from Doug Anderson and Joel Sherman who are functional representatives of SWIS. These individuals comprise the project's core team.

30. If a vendor provides services for phase 1 as described in the RFP, would that vendor be eligible to provide services for phase 2?

Yes. Please see the response to question #6 above.

31. Is phase 1 of the project funded? If so, would Metro provide the budget allocation?

Yes. Up to \$75,000 has been allocated for phase I.

32. Is phase 2 of the project funded? If so, would Metro provide the budget allocation?

The phase II budget will be determined in phase I as part of the feasibility analysis of alternative solution architectures.

33. Is there an allocated budget for this project?

Please see response to questions #31 and 32.

34. Is Metro looking for a fixed priced proposal or a Time and Material proposal?

Fixed price. Please refer to section VII.I of the request for proposals for instructions regarding statement of project cost and hourly rates of personnel assigned to the project.

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35. We see the business process analysis and documentation as part of scope of this work. Is that correct to assume that selected vendor will analyze and document current business processes?

Yes, for SWIS processes. This is called out specifically in RFP sections III.1.a and III.3.a.i. and the requirement for a data dictionary in sections III.1.f and III.3.a.vi.

36. Are there current tools that Metro is using or would Metro like the selected vendor to provide those tools included in the cost of services?

Currently, Metro uses only Visio, Excel and Word to diagram, organize and document the results of structured systems analysis and gathering end-user requirements. Metro does not intend to purchase specific tools in this project and they should not be included in the cost of services. However, Metro does consider this project an opportunity to experience best practices and tools sets for systems analysis and requirements gathering and management.

37. Can vendor propose the tools that Metro could procure in the event Metro would like to maintain and update the produced documentation in-house?

A stated in the response to #36, Metro does not intend to purchase tools as part of this procurement. The proposer is required in section G of the proposal to state the toolset to be applied but not to include it as an option for purchase.

38. What would be the involvement and availability of Metro Staff for Business Process Analysis and requirements gathering activities other than the users available for interview groups? Will the selected [vendor] be reporting to an executive sponsor, preparing and presenting reports to a steering committee?

The SWIS project plan assumes .5 FTE of the project manager /principal systems analyst , .4 FTE of the SWIS systems administrator and .1 FTE of the manager of Solid Waste Policy and Compliance who is the owner of the system.

The consultant will be reporting directly to the project manager. The project manager will be responsible coordinating all communications with the project's executive steering committee.

39. In Section E of proposal contents it is asked for a reference to projects done in past 5 years. We have a large number of projects where we have developed requirements should we limit these projects to a certain number and describe each one or just provide a list of these projects?

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The vendor should list only those projects:

- ***Of a nature similar to the SWIS project***
- ***On which staff members proposed in Section D of the proposal actually worked.***

List only projects that meet these criteria and provide a brief description of each.

40. On Page 6 Proposed Scope Section 4. Conduct a Market Survey. Is the expectation Metro has to conduct a formal RFI or just less formal survey and gathering of information based on our experience and interviewing any potential technology vendors that meet the needs.

There is no intent or requirement to conduct a formal RFI. The survey will be based on both the consultant's and Metro's knowledge and experience and will contact potential vendors as required to obtain estimates of purchase, implementation and maintenance costs.

41. Is Metro's open to some of the work being done offsite where most meetings are held onsite?

Yes. As in any systems analysis project, Metro feels that direct experience of the "as-is" environment is critical. For that reason, on-site observation and information gathering is expected. Limited space will be available for the consultant to work on-site however, Metro anticipates most work will be performed in the consultant's offices.

42. On Page 5 there is a mention of a Parallel effort to improve SWIS processes. How does Metro envision the overlap of this work with the scope of work that the selected Vendor will be performing? Can we recommend a proposal that includes Business Process Improvement, Business Process Analysis and a process framework for realizing process efficiencies from our other similar experiences?

Please refer to the response to question #1 above regarding the parallel effort. The point of this entire exercise is "Business Process Improvement, Business Process Analysis and a process framework" for SWIS. Metro staff will be responsible for the same for the external interactors called out in the 'parallel project'.

43. Can we confirm that Metro will accept a response submitted via email.as specified on Page 2 of the RFP or is it required that we deliver 3 copies of the proposal as specified on Page 8 Section IV –A.?

Please note that section IV-A, referred to in the question, is on page seven and regards qualification and experience.

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In keeping with its mission of encouraging sustainability via “reduce, reuse, recycle” Metro prefers submissions by e-mail. The “three copy” requirement in section VI.A on page eight refers only to proposals made in hard copy.

44. Will the consultant be able to connect their computers to Metro’s network for access to files and databases?

Yes. Metro’s systems staff will verify the computers have anti-virus software and provide a user name and password. The expectation is that that consultant will map a drive to Metro’s file system. Because most SWIS data is protected by confidentiality provisions in the various regulatory instruments, consultants will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement with Metro.

45. Will Metro provide computers for the consultant’s use?

Metro has a very limited number of computers in its “bone yard” that can be applied to the project. For that reason, the consultant should plan on providing computers.

46. Will Metro make on-site work space available for the consultant?

Yes, there is limited space available for the consultant’s on-site work.