



Microsoft Dynamics Project

Request for Information

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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

Shelby County, Alabama is embarking on an initiative to replace its non-fund accounting needs with Microsoft Dynamics GP 10. Presently the County's non-fund accounting needs are being filled by individual Peachtree and/or Quickbooks accounting solutions. These applications are used by Water & Environmental Services, Landfill services, the Property Tax Commissioner's Office, the License Office, the Shelby County Airport and Work Release. The primary objective of the project is to provide Shelby County with an enterprise accounting system that will allow Shelby County to meet the growing needs of these offices and consolidate non-fund accounting functions into a single platform.

This Request for Information ("**RFI**") is the first step in an initiative to increase efficiencies and improve the work flow of these accounting systems. The focus will be on providing a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enable us to meet the current and future demands of Shelby County. The initiative is aimed at providing the enterprise with the latest financial technology providing the highest level of financial controls adding efficiency and extensive tracking and audit reporting functionality. Accordingly, Shelby County is soliciting information for installation and implementation of the new system and migration from the existing systems.

1.2. Background

Shelby County is the fastest growing county in the State of Alabama, encompassing approximately 808 square miles in Central Alabama. Shelby County presently has an estimated 171,465 residents and projections are that by 2015 there will be 216,308 people living in Shelby County. Shelby County currently employs almost 600 employees.

The Shelby County Dynamics Implementation Project ("**DIP**") was formulated to deliver a consolidated information technology solution initially for the County's Environmental Services and Property Tax Commissioner accounting needs. Presently, these areas utilize Peachtree Premium Accounting 2005.

1.3. General Goals and Objectives

The initial goal of the DIP project is designed to improve the overall effectiveness of the County's Environmental Accounting and Property Tax Commissioner departments and position the County for future growth. The primary reason for this project and making the change is that the current system does not support the enterprise business requirements. One of our greatest needs is to upgrade our billing process for our Landfill customers. Due to the volume of monthly transactions we have outgrown Peachtree's capabilities. This project will enable re-engineering of that business process and provide for additional tools and enhanced performance of the other accounting functions. Thus, Shelby County has developed the following objectives:

Integrate people, processes, and technology to provide a balanced service level.

- Create a collaborative environment where access to data and information is based on flexibility, intuition, data definition, data stewardship, enhanced reporting & monitoring and increasing security.

Leverage resources, institutional knowledge, developing skill sets, and technology to continuously improve service and productivity throughout Shelby County.

- Increase the ability to be more responsive to business demands and promote the creation of a faster, more accurate, and more proactive technological environment.

Mitigate risk to Shelby County by focusing on compliance requirements and understanding the impact these requirements have on productivity and customer service.

- Develop an integrated structure that will promote the consistent enforcement of policies, procedures, local, state and Federal laws and regulations throughout Shelby County.
- Design an environment that encourages solutions that maximize the goals and objectives of Shelby County. This may be accomplished through the use of creative design, timely issue resolution, thoughtful decision making, and consistent project management.

1.4. Partnering Principles

Shelby County believes the general partnering principles below are essential to successful technology relationships. These principles are incorporated into all contractual relationships regarding strategic applications.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #1 COMMITMENT TO STATE-OF-THE-ART PRODUCTS

Shelby County will be making a significant intellectual capital and resource investment in Vendor's products. Vendor historically has made and, within reasonable fiscal constraints is expected to continue to make, investments in the ongoing development of its products, including the Software.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #2 PREDICTABILITY OF ON-GOING COSTS AND EXPENSES

Costs and expenses must be clearly articulated and understood by the Parties prior to executing contractual agreements or change orders.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #3 DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

Each Party will commit knowledgeable and empowered managers and other key decision-makers to cultivate and support the relationship created through the Agreement.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #4 TIME-TO-MARKET SOLUTIONS AND REGULATORY UPDATES

In a long-term technology relationship, time-to-market for products is critical to Shelby County. Vendor will work with Shelby County to facilitate timely deployment of Vendor's products.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #5 REALIZING EXPECTED AND FUTURE BENEFITS

Vendor will work with Shelby County to identify and set forth in contractual agreements quantifiable, measurable benefits associated with deploying and using Vendor's products.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #6 PROTECTION OF INVESTMENT

Vendor will work with Shelby County to ensure investments in Vendor's products are protected economically against shifts in platforms and product migrations.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #7 MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATION

Vendor will make appropriate opportunities available to Shelby County to become involved in Vendor's technology strategic planning process. On-going representation and/or observation on appropriate customer councils and committees related to Vendor products also will be made available to Shelby County.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #8 QUALITY RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE RELATIONSHIP

Vendor will commit quality and support resources and systems to support their relationship. You manage what you measure.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #9 GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Vendor must be flexible in addressing Shelby County's future growth.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #10 COMMITMENT TO OPEN ARCHITECTURE ENVIRONMENT

Vendor has adopted and intends to continue to promote open architecture solutions. Vendor will make available to Shelby County all application programming interfaces and other Interfaces and related documentation to promote interoperability among Vendor's system and Shelby County's other systems to the same extent that like items are made available by Vendor to its other customers.

PARTNERING PRINCIPLE #11 ALIGNMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY

Accountability and responsibility will be aligned to facilitate decision making, accountability and a results-focused orientation.

2. Project Scope

2.1. Approach

The project scope encompasses the information systems and associated workflows with the following business lines:

1. **Utility & Landfill Services**
 - a. Billing
 - b. Collections
 - c. Landfill scale operations
 - d. Reporting
2. **Property Tax Commission**
 - a. Receipts
 - b. Disbursements
 - c. Reconciliations
 - d. Reporting

2.2. Technology Scope

The hardware and technical infrastructure requirements to support enterprise systems include hardware, software, technical and networking infrastructure, and desktop requirements. Proposed solutions will be evaluated for their support and use of the following technology components:

- User Access/Security Infrastructure
- Integration with Microsoft Office and Sharepoint MOSS technologies
- Interface w/ Bank Reconciliation Applications
- Extensive embedded reporting engine
- User Interfaces
- Data Conversions
- Web, application, and database server architecture
- Technology Standards
- Hardware Architecture

2.3. Current Technical Environment

There are a wide variety of information technology systems, architectures, and infrastructures currently in use at Shelby County. This is the result of several influences including the available technology at the time the applications were developed, the varied needs resulting from Shelby County's broad mission and focus. The systems range from monolithic

mainframe systems to MOSS SharePoint server applications. This section briefly describes the architecture associated with the current accounting system.

Application Usage

Presently the County uses Peachtree Premium Accounting 2005 in a multi user environment. The server is Windows 2003 Standard Edition. Our Landfill uses electronic scales and software provided by Toledo Scale. The scale software has its own database of customers which are marked as cash or charge. Daily the scale operators produce an export of the landfill tickets which are imported into Peachtree as invoices. Customer information in Peachtree is maintained to match customer information in the landfill system. All billing and payments from charge customers are processed in Peachtree. All other companies existing within Peachtree such as Water Services are performing standard accounting functions.

2.4. Key Specifications

Although the existing environment may continue to exist for some time, Shelby County's goal will be replacement of that environment. We are looking for a vendor with a proven history of successful accounting implementations at governmental entities. As a result it is essential that any solution set adhere to the following key specifications:

- Microsoft Dynamics GP version 10 accounting platform.
- Comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as applied to Governmental entities.
- Allow Customized reporting and support a chart of accounts of at least 10 segments of at least 4 characters each with a total of at least 25 characters.
- Support multiple fund or company reporting
- At least one user with capability to design financial statements and generate financial statements with drill down capability (full administrative user or equivalent) and at least 5 users with capability to drill down from summary level data to detail balances and to generate financial reports (drill down and report launch users or equivalent)
- Contain internal controls which allow restrictions as to users and levels of access for those users.
- Allow export of data to Microsoft Office Products (Version 2003 or later)
- Allows real-time or batch posting or user option
- Allows multiple periods to be open at the same time
- Full audit trail integration throughout from invoice to GL, payment, reconciliation
- Data will be stored using Microsoft SQL Server (Version 2005 or later) format.
- Tailor the system to meet our needs such as customized field names and user dashboards

3. Vendor Qualifications

3.1. General Information

Each vendor shall give a brief background and history of its company, including the following:

- Corporate vision
- Software vision and applicability to County government
- Services and support vision
- Customer base specifically in government

3.2. Financial Data

Each vendor shall provide the following financial data:

- A copy of a credit rating report from any of the major credit rating agencies, Dun & Bradstreet, Moody's, Standard & Poor's, etc.
- Last 3 years of audited Key Financial Reports (Income Statements, Balance Sheet, etc.)

3.3. Market Experience

Each vendor shall provide information that demonstrates its commitment to the government market, including the following:

- List the dollar value and the percentage of total sales in the government market for each of the past three (3) years.
- List all government based entities that have implemented your software within the last three (3) years, the versions used by each, and the associated modules they implemented.

3.4. References

Provide three (3) references in the following format:

- Institution name
- Date contract was signed
- Date Implementation was completed
- Background of the project
- Modules Implemented
- Scale (budget and people assigned to project)
- Brief explanation of why this reference is relevant to Shelby County
- Reference Contact Name
- Reference Contact Title and Role in Implementation
- Contact Information, preferably address, telephone and email

3.5. Pricing

Each vendor shall provide a detailed pricing proposal for the proposed software solution. The proposal should also include pricing information for support and maintenance services for at least 3 years following implementation. The vendor should submit proposals with individual unit prices reflected on all software options and/or optional components. Professional services, software and other expense items should be separate from any hardware components. Annual maintenance cost should be included within proposal submission. County reserves the right to purchase none, one or several units based upon the proposal unit prices.

3.6. Software Support Services by Vendor

Each vendor shall provide the following minimum information regarding support services:

- a. The solution is to be configured installed and tested and made operational within **60 (sixty days)** of professional services contract execution.
- b. Awarded company must provide system and services support (technical support desk, remote diagnostics, on-site technical visits).
- c. Awarded company must provide training and written documentation.
- d. Awarded company must have a local support representative (within 50 mile radius) that is available to deal with any issues or emergencies.

4. Instructions, Requirements

This RFI is only available in electronic PDF format. The County will review all responses and supporting documentation to this RFI and, if necessary, gather or solicit additional information that may be required to fulfill the purpose and expected outcomes contained in this document. Responding to this RFI is not mandatory. If a vendor is electing not to respond, please notify us by email of your decision as soon as possible.

4.1. Submission of Responses; Handling of Vendor Inquiries

Vendors must respond to this Request for Information by close of business on June 20, 2008. Responses should be submitted in Microsoft Word format via email to:

Winston Estes
Supervisor, IT Services - Shelby County
102 Depot Street
Columbiana, Alabama 35051-1118
205.670.6963
westes@shelbyal.com

We may request respondents to present oral and/or provide demonstrations of the information contained in their response to this RFI.

4.2. Confidential Information

Shelby County is a public institution, and as such, it is subject to the Alabama Public Records Laws. Vendor responses are not public documents until a contract is awarded. After a contract is awarded, if Shelby County receives a public records request pursuant to this statute for the vendors' proposals or other information relating to this RFI, it is required by law to disclose such information unless such information meets the definition of a "trade secret". A "trade secret" is typically defined as "business or technical information, including but not limited to a formula, pattern, program, device, compilation of information, method, technique, or process that: (a) derives independent actual or potential commercial value from not being generally known or readily ascertainable through independent development or reverse engineering by persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and (b) is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy." The vendor disclosing such trade secret must clearly mark such information "Confidential" in order for Shelby County to assert that it is a protected trade secret and not a public record if it receives a public records request.

4.3. Timeframes for Evaluation Process

The timeframes for the evaluation process will be as follows:

- **Distribute RFI on May 22, 2008**
- **Receive Proposals from Vendors by June 20, 2008**
- **Complete Evaluations from Vendors by June 30, 2008**

4.4. Incorporation of Vendor Proposal

THE PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY THE SUCCESSFUL VENDOR, TOGETHER WITH THE REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY THE SUCCESSFUL VENDOR, SHALL BE INCORPORATED INTO A MASTER TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT BETWEEN SHELBY COUNTY AND THE SUCCESSFUL VENDOR.

In the event of a conflict between the terms of the successful vendor's proposal and this RFI or the terms of another document relating to this RFI, the order of precedence set forth in the Master Technology Agreement shall apply.

5. Legal Requirements

5.1. Overview

Shelby County wants to memorialize its arrangement with the successful vendor with a contract that fully and accurately captures the various commitments being made by vendor. Shelby County reserves the right to negotiate with more than one vendor as it determines which vendor to purchase the system.

5.2. The Master Technology Agreement

Shelby County plans to use a Master Technology Agreement, or "MTA" to establish the contractual relationship with the successful vendor. The MTA will be structured as a master agreement to afford Shelby County the flexibility to acquire additional products and services in the future without the need to renegotiate the base agreement. Shelby County is mindful that the MTA will need to be tailored to take into consideration technical and functional aspects of a vendor's solution; however, the core approach and basic terms and conditions contained in the contract are not expected to change.

5.3. Use of Legal Counsel

Shelby County will use legal counsel to develop the MTA and may be using legal counsel to assist it in reviewing the vendors' responses. Because a legal review of each vendor's response may be undertaken by Shelby County in determining the likelihood of securing a contract with such vendor, Shelby County strongly recommends that each vendor involve its legal counsel as well.