Report to the Governor and Legislature

Recommendations on Technology Investments for the 2015-2017 Biennium

November 15, 2014

NEBRASKA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION

State of Nebraska
Nebraska Information Technology Commission
http://www.nitc.nebraska.gov
501 S. 14th Street
P.O. Box 95045
Lincoln, NE 68509-5045
(402) 471-3560

Contents

Introduction

This document contains the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's ("NITC") recommendations on technology investments for the 2015-2017 biennium. It is submitted pursuant to the NITC's statutory responsibility to "make recommendations on technology investments to the Governor and the Legislature, including a prioritized list of projects, reviewed by the technical panel …" NEB. REV. STAT. § 86-516(8).

This biennium, the NITC received 6 project proposals from agencies to be reviewed as part of the budget review process. [Note: an additional project was submitted by Agency No. 40, but it is not included in this report because the agency did not submit an associated funding request for the project.] Each project was reviewed and scored by three individual reviewers assigned by the Technical Panel. The submitting agencies were then given the opportunity to submit a response to the reviewer comments or other clarifying information.

Next, the projects were reviewed by one or more of the NITC's advisory councils and the Technical Panel. These groups provided additional comments and recommendations on the projects.

Finally, the NITC met on October 28, 2014 to review these projects and make the final recommendations included in this report.

This report contains the following two sections:

- **Section 1** includes a table with the list of projects divided into categories as recommended by the NITC.
- **Section 2** includes the summary sheets for all of the projects, including comments and recommendations from the councils and Technical Panel, as well as any agency response to reviewer comments.

A copy of this report and the full text of the project proposals are posted on the NITC website at: http://www.nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/reports/reports.html

SECTION 1: NITC Recommendations - Project Prioritization

Category	Description
Mandate	Required by law, regulation, or other authority.
Tier 1	Highly Recommended. Mission critical project for the agency and/or the state.
Tier 2	Recommended. High strategic importance to the agency and/or the state.
Tier 3	Other. Significant strategic importance to the agency and/or the state; but, in general, has an overall lower priority than the Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects.
Tier 4	Insufficient information to proceed with a recommendation for funding.

Project #	Agency	Project Title	FY2016	FY2017	Total Project Costs*
Mandate					
		NONE			
Tier 1					
09-01	Secretary of State	Business Services Filing System	$40,000	$840,000	$2,630,000
24-01**	Dept. of Motor Vehicles	Nebraska Systems Update and Modification (NSUM)	$583,775	$583,775	$2,606,228
Tier 2					
09-02	Secretary of State	Collection Agency Online Renewal Application	$65,955		$65,955
18-01	Dept. of Agriculture	Paperless Inspection Project	$30,000	$30,000	$260,000
41-01	Real Estate Commission	Licensee Database	$635,774	$85,774	$796,075
81-01	Comm. for Blind & Visually Impaired	AWARE Client Data Tracking System Procurement			$371,500
Tier 3					
		NONE			
Tier 4					
		NONE			

*Total may include prior year or future planned costs in addition to biennial budget request amounts.
**Project 24-01 is mandated and funded by LB905 through the development of an RFP (Request for Proposal).

SECTION 2: Project Summary Sheets

Each summary sheet contains the following information:
- Summary of the Request
- Funding Summary
- Project Score
- Reviewer Comments
- Technical Panel Comments
- Advisory Council Comments (if any)
- NITC Comments (if any)
- Appendix: Agency Response to Reviewer Comments (if any)

Project #	Agency	Project Title
09-01	SECRETARY OF STATE	Business Services Filing System

SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)

[Full text of all proposals are posted at: http://nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/project_proposals/2015-2017.html]

The purpose of this project is to replace the existing custom software utilized by the Business Services Division of the Secretary of State's Office.

The existing business services software is used to file and generate a variety of documents within the Secretary of State's Office. These documents include all corporate filings and filings made pursuant to the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC), revised article 9. The software is also utilized to file federal and state tax liens, farm product security filings, trade names and trademarks, and a variety of other statutory filings. The software also interacts with an image library, online filing services, and an accounts receivable system.

The existing business services software is 15 years old and is extremely difficult to modify and support. It was written in Visual Basic (VB6) which was released in mid-1998 and has been unsupported by Microsoft since April 2008. The company that initially developed our filing system stopped providing ongoing support, maintenance and enhancements in 2011. Programming and technical support is nearly extinct. The OCIO's office does not have programmers to support this system. We are at the mercy of a part-time contracted programmer who assists us outside of regular business hours 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM due to having other full time employment. This makes communications, updates, enhancements and support very difficult and costly. Having minimal support often makes it difficult to meet statutory changes for business processes. Replacement software is needed at this time in order to prevent system failure and to continue to provide the level of service currently expected by the business community.

FUNDING SUMMARY

IT Project Costs

Contractual Services	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Design	$0					
Programming	$180,000			40,000	140,000	
Project Management	$0					
Data Conversion	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$180,000	$0	$0	$40,000	$140,000	$0
Capital Expenditures						
Hardware	$0					
Software	$2,000,000				700,000	1,300,000
Network	$130,000					130,000
Other	$320,000					320,000
Total	$2,450,000	$0	$0	$0	$700,000	$1,750,000
Total Request	$2,630,000	$0	$0	$40,000	$840,000	$1,750,000

▼ Funding

	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
General Fund	$0					
Cash Fund	$2,630,000			40,000	840,000	1,750,000
Federal Fund	$0					
Revolving Fund	$0					
Other Fund	$0					
Total Funding	$2,630,000	$0	$0	$40,000	$840,000	$1,750,000

PROJECT SCORE

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	15	12	15	14	15
Project Justification / Business Case	25	19	25	23	25
Technical Impact	5	16	20	14	20
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	5	7	10	7	10
Risk Assessment	2	7	10	6	10
Financial Analysis and Budget	5	20	20	15	20
			TOTAL	79	100

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	- Goals appear to be logical, realistic and straight forward - Good project, desire to integrate all aspects of the process. - Well written and easy to understand. This project has a significant profile and has the potential to impact the public and the State in a very positive manner. It is far reaching in the customer base it serves. The information is critical to both the public and the State.	- The project appears to be headed in the same direction as the existing. If a solution is picked using similar software that could become outdated like the existing process. With 3 years to develop, existing items within the office may no longer be useable.
Project Justification / Business Case	- Potential revenue, from filings is estimated to be 10 Million per year per the report - Well written and the metrics provided are valuable in determining the size and scope of this project.	- Unsure what benefits are new to the proposed system versus what may already exist. The document sounds like all of these benefits are new and will be achieved with the project, yet filings were completed and fees collected. (configured by non-IT staff, yet changes to the application would quite likely require programming/application changes, confusing statements)
Technical Impact		- I did not get the sense that the Agency knows if a solution is actually available. While they know what they want - is there an off the shelf solution or are we looking at creating something? - Numerous vendors and applications available, yet only one mentioned in the prior section for justification.
Preliminary Plan for Implementation		- Based on what I read, I think the Agency needs to do a lot more research. Is there a solution or do they need to build one.
Risk Assessment		- While the project is well intended there are just not enough facts to assign a level of risk to the project. When they have a vendor in mind or a more definitive solution they should re-submit.
Financial Analysis and Budget		- From what I read these budget numbers cannot be justified.

TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS

Technical Panel Checklist	Yes	No	Unknown	Comments
1. Is the project technically feasible?	✓			
2. Is the proposed technology appropriate for the project?			✓	- Unknown until the RFP process is completed.
3. Can the technical elements be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget?			✓	

STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL COMMENTS

- The State Government Council recommends this project be categorized as Tier 1.

NITC COMMENTS

- Tier 1 (Highly Recommended. Mission critical project for the agency and/or the state.)

APPENDIX: AGENCY RESPONSE TO REVIEWER COMMENTS

Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes

Weaknesses Identified:

The project appears to be headed in the same direction as the existing. If a solution is picked using similar software that could become outdated like the existing process. With 3 years to develop, existing items within the office may no longer be useable.

Response:

The solution is not headed in the same direction as the existing system. It is our intent to require any vendor bidding on the project to provide long term maintenance and support for the system or conversely to select a system which can be supported on a long term basis by the OCIO. In addition, through the RFP process, the vendor will be required to demonstrate that the technology utilized for the project is modern and sustainable into the future.

We understand that existing items within the office may no longer be useable and therefore are taking action at this time to secure funding to enable our office to purchase a new system.
As a cash funded agency, we plan to spread the funding of this project over several years; however, we don't anticipate having 3 years of initial development. We anticipate that the RFP process may take up to a year. Once the contract has been awarded, we believe the new system can be implemented in a year and a half.

Project Justification/ Business Case

Weaknesses Identified:

Unsure what benefits are new to the proposed system versus what may already exist. The document sounds like all of these benefits are new and will be achieved with the project, yet filings were completed and fees collected. (configured by non-IT staff, yet changes to the application would quite likely require programming/application changes, confusing statements)

Response:

We have met with 5 vendors who have developed similar systems in other states. There are additional functionalities offered by each vendor that would be considered enhancements from our current system. However, the most important issue we are addressing with the purchase of a new system is the ability to have ongoing maintenance and support. We look forward to being able to utilize the "bells and whistles" that a new system has to offer, but primarily our request for funding is related to our need to purchase a system which is stable and can be adequately supported.

With regard to the configurations mentioned in our proposal. Some of the systems that we have reviewed provide the option for an administrator in the system to make certain system modifications. These modifications don't affect the programming of the system. These configurations include things like changing a fee or adding another filing action for a particular type of entity.

Technical Impact:

Weakness Identified:

I did not get the sense that the Agency knows if a solution is actually available. While they know what they want - is there an off the shelf solution or are we looking at creating something? Numerous vendors and applications available, yet only one mentioned in the prior section for justification.

Response:

There is not a complete off the shelf solution to replace our current system; however, there are vendors who have developed similar filing systems for other states. We have met with these vendors and have viewed demonstrations regarding their systems. These vendors include CC Intelligent Solutions, FileOne, Foster Moore, PCC Technology Group and Tecuity. Through the RFP process we plan to select a vendor to develop a system which is customized to meet our needs and requirements. Vendors with demonstrated experience developing similar systems in other states will be viewed favorably.

The specific system mentioned in the project proposal referred to a system used by the State of Massachusetts. The State of Massachusetts is willing to sell their base code to other states for their use and modification at a reduced cost. This option would require locating and selecting a vendor to enhance and modify the code to meet our needs in Nebraska. Overall, this option would be using a newer programming language than our current system, but otherwise would not be an enhancement over our current system (in some cases the system has less functionality than our current system) and would not ensure long term maintenance and support of the system which is critical to the system's long term viability.

Preliminary Plan for Implementation

Weakness Identified:

Based on what I read, I think the Agency needs to do a lot more research. Is there a solution or do they need to build one.

Response:

As mentioned previously, there is not a complete off the shelf solution to replace our current system; however, there are vendors who have developed similar filing systems for other states. We have met with these vendors and have viewed demonstrations regarding their systems. These vendors include CC Intelligent Solutions, FileOne, Foster Moore, PCC Technology Group and Tecuity. Through the RFP process we plan to select a vendor to develop a system which is customized to meet our needs and requirements. Vendors with demonstrated experience developing similar systems in other states will be viewed favorably.

Risk Assessment

Weakness Identified:

While the project is well intended there are just not enough facts to assign a level of risk to the project. When they have a vendor in mind or a more definitive solution they should re-submit.

Response:

Due to the size and scope of this project, we cannot select a vendor without going through the RFP process. We cannot start the RFP process until we have funding established. Once funding is established, and a vendor is selected through the RFP process, we will update the NITC regarding our selection of the vendor and the specific technologies that will be employed by the vendor. If we limit our project request to a specific solution/vendor, we would be essentially negating the RFP process.

Financial Analysis and Budget

Weakness Identified:

From what I read these budget numbers cannot be justified.

Response:

The total amount requested, approximately $2.6 million (over two bienniums), is within the range of estimates we received from vendors who have developed these types of systems for other states. The estimates from the vendors we identified range from $1,000,000 - $5,660,000 for the base cost of the system, licensing, interfaces, support and maintenance.   As a predominately cash funded agency, our budget request reflects cash funds we believe will be available to use for this project over the next two bienniums. We believe our budget request is reasonable and justified based upon the estimates we have received.

Project #	Agency	Project Title
09-02	SECRETARY OF STATE	Collection Agency Online Renewal Application

SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)
[Full text of all proposals are posted at: http://nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/project_proposals/2015-2017.html]

The Secretary of State's Office is requesting funding to develop an online renewal application for collection agency licenses. The online renewal application will allow collection agencies to renew their license online, update relevant contact information with the State and submit the required renewal documentation. Most licensed collection agencies are not physically located in Nebraska and desire the ability to communicate with the State licensing office electronically.

FUNDING SUMMARY

IT Project Costs

Contractual Services	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Design	$0					
Programming	$40,275			40,275		
Project Management	$25,680			25,680		
Data Conversion	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$65,955	$0	$0	$65,955	$0	$0
Total Request	$65,955	$0	$0	$65,955	$0	$0

▼ Funding

	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
General Fund	$0					
Cash Fund	$65,955			65,955		
Federal Fund	$0					
Revolving Fund	$0					
Other Fund	$0					
Total Funding	$65,955	$0	$0	$65,955	$0	$0

PROJECT SCORE

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	15	15	13	14	15
Project Justification / Business Case	25	23	23	24	25
Technical Impact	20	16	20	19	20
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	10	8	10	9	10
Risk Assessment	10	7	8	8	10
Financial Analysis and Budget	20	20	20	20	20
			TOTAL	**94**	100

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	- The goals are well expressed and make sense. - Well written, easy to understand and all points addressed.	
Project Justification / Business Case	- The project justification is sound and reasonable. - Well written, easy to understand and all points addressed.	
Technical Impact	- Use of Nebraska.Gov makes very good sense from a technical perspective. - A good approach to the development of this	

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
	project.	
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	- Implementation plan looks to be solid.	
Risk Assessment	- Plan to minimize risks looks appropriate.	
Financial Analysis and Budget	- Financial proposal appears appropriate.	

TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS

Technical Panel Checklist	Yes	No	Unknown	Comments
1. Is the project technically feasible?	✓			
2. Is the proposed technology appropriate for the project?	✓			
3. Can the technical elements be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget?	✓			

STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL COMMENTS

- The State Government Council recommends this project be categorized as Tier 2.

NITC COMMENTS

- Tier 2 (Recommended. High strategic importance to the agency and/or the state.)

Project #	Agency	Project Title
18-01	DEPT OF AGRICULTURE	Paperless Inspection Project

SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)
[Full text of all proposals are posted at: http://nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/project_proposals/2015-2017.html]

Phase II of the paperless inspection project.

FUNDING SUMMARY

IT Project Costs

Contractual Services	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Design	$0					
Programming	$260,000	0	200,000	30,000	30,000	
Project Management	$0					
Data Conversion	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$260,000	$0	$200,000	$30,000	$30,000	$0
Total Request	$260,000	$0	$200,000	$30,000	$30,000	$0

▼Funding

	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
General Fund	$260,000		200,000	30,000	30,000	
Cash Fund	$0					
Federal Fund	$0					
Revolving Fund	$0					
Other Fund	$0					
Total Funding	$260,000	$0	$200,000	$30,000	$30,000	$0

PROJECT SCORE

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	12	13	9	11	15
Project Justification / Business Case	19	23	20	21	25
Technical Impact	16	19	15	17	20
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	6	9	5	7	10
Risk Assessment	7	8	4	6	10
Financial Analysis and Budget	19	18	12	16	20
			TOTAL	**78**	100

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	- Phase I must have gone well enough that Dept. of Ag is ready to make enhancements. - Had to look at the phase I document to understand the phase II work. When reviewed together, the project was easier to evaluate and understand. Without the phase I information, the scores would have been much lower. - A very worthy project but I felt the narrative for this project shown on the 2015-2017 request to be lacking in detail and substance. A link to the 2013-2015 request would be essential to understand the scope of this project. As a result	- Could have been a bit more description on what these enhancements are to be as well as new ones being developed that were not a priority during Phase I.

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
	my scoring is based on a review of both request documents. In the Executive Summary for 2013-2015 it was cited as a 'one time biennium cost' which would appear to raise a question of why the 2015-2017 request is made. I also think it would be appropriate to provide the status on the development of this project. My understanding is that the Department would be the recipient of most of the efficiencies as opposed to the public.	
Project Justification / Business Case	- If the project justification provided in the FY 14/15 budget submission is still valid, this continues to be a good use of technology for Agriculture.	- It would have been beneficial for the Dept of Ag to provide more information about what has been accomplished on this project through the funding provided in FY 14/15. No indication if this is a result of a state or federal mandate although in the last submission there is a statement that alludes to good cooperation between state and federal.
Technical Impact	- If the technical impact provided in the FY 14/15 budget submission is still valid, this continues to be a good use of technology for Agriculture. They are using the solution required by the NITC.	- It would have been beneficial for the Dept of Ag to provide more information about what has been accomplished on this project through the funding provided in FY 14/15.
Preliminary Plan for Implementation		- It is hard to determine if the preliminary plan is adequate as no detail has been provided on what has been accomplished to date. - Current status of the project would be very helpful in determination. I found that the various phases were not very well defined nor was the expected completion date, as 2013-2015 request indicated full implementation by January 2015.
Risk Assessment	- If the risk justification provided in the FY 14/15 budget submission is still valid, this continues to be a good use of technology for Agriculture.	- It would appear that the risks are minimal but due to lack of detail regarding the status of Phase I, it is difficult to determine. - I did not find that risks were enumerated in either request.
Financial Analysis and Budget	- It would appear that projects were not completed in Phase I, causing the $200,000 re-appropriation. That in addition to the $60,000 they are requesting, appears to be reasonable.	- It would appear that the funding is adequate, but due to lack of detail regarding the status of Phase I, it is difficult to determine. - The narrative is confusing.

TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS

Technical Panel Checklist	Yes	No	Unknown	Comments
1. Is the project technically feasible?	✓			
2. Is the proposed technology appropriate for the project?	✓			
3. Can the technical elements be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget?	✓			

STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL COMMENTS

- The State Government Council recommends this project be categorized as Tier 2.

NITC COMMENTS

- Tier 2 (Recommended. High strategic importance to the agency and/or the state.)

APPENDIX: AGENCY RESPONSE TO REVIEWER COMMENTS

Responses to the NITC 2015-2017 Biennial Budget – IT Project Reviews

Overview of the Paperless Project

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture's Paperless Project was chosen to reduce the amount of paper consumed by the agency, reduce the amount of time necessary to perform agency functions, and reduce the cost of carrying out inspections under the various regulatory areas of the agency. The project has eleven subprojects relating to different teams of inspectors in a diverse range of regulatory focus areas. Two subprojects have been completed; one was a complicated project while the other was less complicated. Eight of the remaining subprojects are in progress with level of completion ranging from over 70% to 1% and one subproject will not begin until December 2014. The goal is to have all subprojects and thus the whole project for the first phase completed by June 30, 2015. The initial intent was to have the project completed by January 2015. The completion date has been extended due to the length of time the first completed project required and the decision to upgrade OnBase from version 12 to version 14. This upgrade was not part of the original project, resulting in resources not available to meet the original completion date and do the upgrade in parallel. The Gantt chart (see Figure 1) outlines completion dates and current progress on each of the subprojects.

There are benefits, other than reduction in paper consumption, to be realized by this project. These benefits include more information being readily available to the inspectors when on location, a shorter timeline from inspection to completion, less re-entering of information, fewer errors, better transparency to the customer/citizen via a website similar to the LB429 website, more efficient inspections and cataloging of the information, and better availability of the information within the agency. These benefits will not all be realized in the current project (Phase 1), but will be realized in future phases which are outside the scope of the current project. Several other benefits may be even less obvious, but may turn out to be just as big of a benefit as the paper consumption. All inspectors will have a computer, which is not the current situation. This will provide inspectors access to information related to their inspections located on their tablets for easy access and resulting in not having to carry paper copies with them. Having a computer provides them with almost instantaneous information from NDA main office via email accounts, which not all inspectors have. This permits the inspectors to email their timesheets in to Lincoln instead of printing the timesheet out and mailing it. This saves paper, postage, and gets their information submitted in hours instead of days.

When June 30, 2015 arrives, does this mean that the entire Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) project is complete? The answer is no. This date indicates NDA has completed the first phase of multiple phases in moving forward to increase efficiency and reduce paper consumption by the agency. The anticipation is for an ongoing, iterative improvement process for these projects. It was difficult for NDA to comprehend what the capabilities of OnBase are when NDA had no experience with this type of system. Staff using the two completed subprojects are seeing, and now wanting, some of the additional capabilities OnBase can provide for their areas.

Responses to the Reviewer Comments

Goals, Objectives, & Projected Outcomes:

- Phase 1 is the phase where all regulatory areas receive the foundation application. Then as additional needs and functionalities are defined, these additions can be added to the existing foundation. The concept is to build a solid foundation in phase 1 with developing additional functionality through a release concept. Release 2 of an application would correlate to phase 2 and will be an enhancement to the phase 1 version.
- The Department of Agriculture is looking at the long-term benefits of this project. Initially the inspectors don't know what they want until they have used the system for awhile. We have already experienced this with the two completed portions of the project. Staff using these two portions are already asking for modifications and additions. These teams are collecting their wants and needs, and the requests will be evaluated and encapsulated into release/phase 2 for these two areas. You have to be able to walk before you can run.
- An example of enhancements is the request for additional reports to provide information for federal reporting. Currently this information is provided from Microsoft Access databases. In phase 1 the users of this application could not see how this information could be pulled out of OnBase, but after using the application, they are now seeing how they can get this information directly from OnBase, thus eliminating the need for the Microsoft Access databases.

Project Justification / Business Case:

- The FY14/15 funding has resulted in building the foundation. This includes Release 1 of the applications used by the inspectors, hardware and software, training on Microsoft Products (Windows and Office Suite), training on OnBase, and changing how inspections will be done going forward. These items may not seem like much, but this is a large paradigm shift for inspectors and how inspections are done.
- This shift in how inspections are done is resulting in a shorter lapse of time between the inspection and the results being available for the NDA Management to utilize in their regulatory duty. There has been a reduction in paper, both in doing the inspection and the archival of the information. Staff is spending less time transcribing and rekeying data from the electronic inspections.
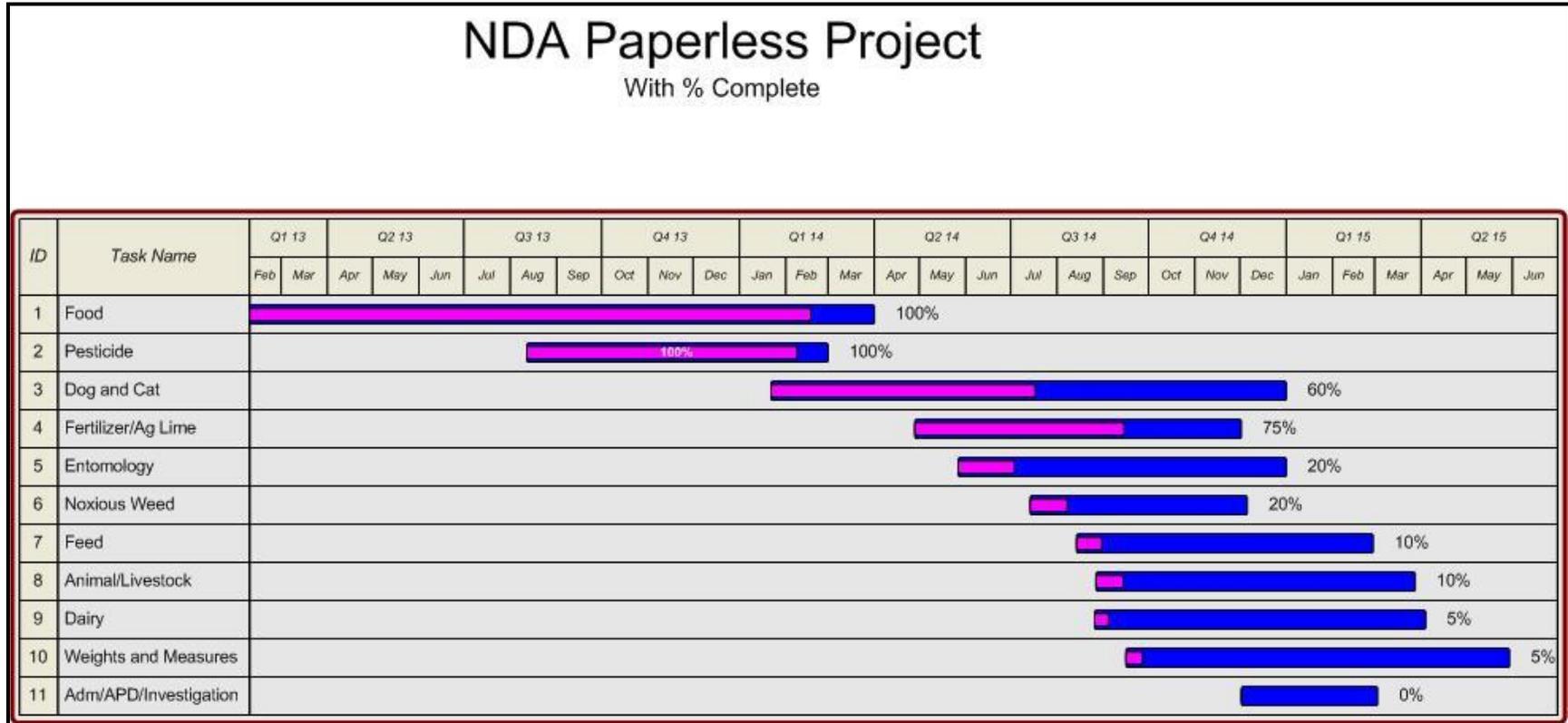
Technical Impact:

- There has been a substantial amount of work accomplished. Unfortunately some of this work isn't directly measured or documented by the project plan. Putting a computer in every NDA Inspector's hands is not directly measured, but it is a huge benefit. The inspectors and the agency are moving at a very quick pace away from everything done on paper to most things done electronically. This is a paradigm shift for the agency. This project has facilitated this paradigm shift. A second unmeasured benefit is the reduction in the amount of floor space necessary for storing information, which was in paper format and is now stored electronically in OnBase. A third benefit is fewer errors and rework due to less rekeying in data and a reduction in transcription errors.

Preliminary Plan for Implementation:

- See Gantt Chart (Figure 1)
- Two of the eleven subprojects have been completed. The first subproject was a complicated project and provided ECM and Department of Agriculture teams with plenty of challenges. The first two took approximately 9 months to complete with the anticipation for a much shorter timeline to complete each of the remaining nine subprojects.
- The ECM and Department of Agriculture teams went through a substantial learning curve on the first two, and the teams are making more efficient progress on the remaining subprojects.
- Several of the current subprojects are using some of the synergy from the first two subprojects. Some of the forms and workflow needed for the current subprojects are very similar to what was created for the first two subprojects.

Figure 1

NDA Paperless Project
With % Complete

ID	Task Name	Q1 13		Q2 13			Q3 13			Q4 13			Q1 14			Q2 14			Q3 14			Q4 14			Q1 15			Q2 15		
		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
1	Food	100%
2	Pesticide	100%
3	Dog and Cat	60%
4	Fertilizer/Ag Lime	75%
5	Entomology	20%
6	Noxious Weed	20%
7	Feed	10%
8	Animal/Livestock	10%
9	Dairy	5%
10	Weights and Measures	5%
11	Adm/APD/Investigation	0%

Project #	Agency	Project Title
24-01	DEPT OF MOTOR VEHICLES	Nebraska Systems Update and Modification (NSUM)

SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)
[Full text of all proposals are posted at: http://nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/project_proposals/2015-2017.html]

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is beginning the process of developing a single DMV system that will, over time, host all DMV services. The system will be 'customer centric' and be designed to provide a single, fully integrated access point for all customers to conduct business with the DMV.

This project will be approached from the view point of the customer's needs and expectations. Applications and technologies will be built to support redefined and modernized business processes. Although the entire project will span several budget periods, this project phase will focus on the preliminary events required for the recreation of the DMV Vehicle, Title and Registration (VTR) business processes, applications and technologies.

In 2014 LB 905 was passed by the Nebraska Legislature and states; "There is included in the appropriation to this program for FY2014-15 $271,128 Cash Funds to identify a replacement vehicle title and registration system, associated costs, and financing options."

"The VTR system, now over 20 years old, no longer meets the evolving business requirements of stakeholders and expectations of Nebraska residents. Implementation of a new VTR system should be considered. Revenues to support a new VTR system may be derived from a variety of sources. … The DMV should move immediately to collaboratively develop a funding model that is supported by key stakeholders. Upon approval, the DMV should create a project structure, conduct a business process analysis, and further refine the analysis with a concept of operations and system requirements. With that information, the DMV and its stakeholders will be positioned to evaluate how it will approach VTR system replacement. …. Upon determination of a direction, a project plan will be further developed and the contracting/tasking of VTR system development and implementation will be undertaken. Based on the experience of other states, VTR system implementation projects typically have taken between 4 to 10 years from initial planning through implementation of the production system." (1)

(1) Excerpts from: "2013 DMV VTR Business Case" - Prepared for the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles by Nancy Shank, PhD, MBA, Associate Director, University of Nebraska Public Policy Center.

FUNDING SUMMARY

IT Project Costs

Contractual Services	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Design	$0					
Programming	$0					
Project Management	$1,677,806	127,500		383,000	385,848	781,458
Data Conversion	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$1,677,806	$127,500	$0	$383,000	$385,848	$781,458

Other Operating Costs	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Personnnel Cost	$875,032	132,418		180,530	184,592	377,492
Supplies & Materials	$8,500	2,500		3,500	2,500	
Travel	$44,890	8,710		16,745	10,835	8,600
Other	$0					
Total	$928,422	$143,628	$0	$200,775	$197,927	$386,092
Total Request	$2,606,228	$271,128	$0	$583,775	$583,775	$1,167,550

▼Funding

	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
General Fund	$0					
Cash Fund	$2,606,228	271,128		583,775	583,775	1,167,550
Federal Fund	$0					
Revolving Fund	$0					
Other Fund	$0					
Total Funding	$2,606,228	$271,128	$0	$583,775	$583,775	$1,167,550

PROJECT SCORE

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	12	10	14	12	15
Project Justification / Business Case	25	15	25	22	25
Technical Impact	15	13	15	14	20
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	10	5	10	8	10
Risk Assessment	8	5	8	7	10
Financial Analysis and Budget	15	5	15	12	20
			TOTAL	75	100

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	- Planning approach appears sound. - The Business Case document was a comprehensive look at the issues with the current system. It articulates all users of the information and a nice review of what other state are doing as well as emerging trends. - The DMV VTR business case is well written.	- Measurable efficiencies and ROI could use more definition. - Neither the Project Proposal Report nor the Business Case document clearly articulated the goals and problems to be resolved. IT Project Proposal did not list beneficiaries, outcomes or assessments. It was focused on the tasks needed to get to the project plan stage, not why the project is needed. It is implied through the faults of the current system. While this project is in the early planning stage, and "how" it is to be accomplished is not yet determined, the project will have better success if it the organization clearly articulates what they want to accomplish and what problems they intend to solve. That will also give them a better assessment tool to measure success. - A broader "green field" approach with more collaboration of stakeholders should be considered.
Project Justification / Business Case	- Preparation of the business case document demonstrates a thoughtful and thorough approach to the project. - Identifies that older technology is expensive to maintain and is not adaptable to our changing business needs. - Clearly, although there is no mandate, an alternative to the existing DMV VTR system is required.	- While this is in the initial phase of the project and there are still many questions, the proposal does not articulate the customer centric reasons to justify the project. - (As the project evolves provision should be made to consider new alternatives approaches.)
Technical Impact	- Compliance with state systems, standards and management practices is a notable strength. - The project will conform to NITC standards and utilize OCIO facilities and resources. - Good approach by designing with guidance from the OCIO - and looking at what some other states are doing in this area.	- Technical impact difficult to assess in this stage of the process. - Vague in approach; however, that will be determined as part of the initial phase of the project. - More research should be done to determine current "state of the art" alternative approaches being considered in other similar collaborative efforts.
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	- Inclusive of stakeholders. Governance model seems very reasonable. - Input from user/stakeholder team that includes private industry is a positive element. Additional staff approved prior to the project, more resources. - Good overall implementation timeframe and related objectives - need to ensure commitment of stakeholders as project evolves.	- No description of project team roles. Who is the project champion? Executive sponsor? - More detail needed - (as an example) - footnote comment #26 from the 2013 AAMVA conference.

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Risk Assessment	- Scoring for this stage only: funding solution is project's largest risk. - They have studied other projects and know some of the pitfalls. They plan to utilize outside resources. - This area is a significant revenue generator for the state, and the current system is outdated and unsustainable.	- No solution for their largest and most immediate obstacle - funding. - Conversion to a new system will be complex and must be done with minimum impact to the state revenue streams.
Financial Analysis and Budget	- No request for general funds. Seeks authorization for cash funds. - Year 1 is exploration. It is good that they are taking the time to explore and plan before jumping in to the project. They have funding for the exploration. - Some budget estimates from the experience of other states for "similar projects" were considered.	- Cash fund model is one of the deliverables, in form of future legislation. Lack of detail regarding our project management estimates. - The Business Case document suggests the project will cost $13-50 Million and take from 4 to 10 years to complete; however, the budget is less than $3 million over a 4 year period. Based on the Business Case document and research, this seems inadequate and not sustainable. Consider allowing more time and more money to complete the project. - More detailed budget planning needs to be done to identify project financing options - with active participation of all project stakeholders.

TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS

Technical Panel Checklist	Yes	No	Unknown	Comments
1. Is the project technically feasible?	✓			
2. Is the proposed technology appropriate for the project?			✓	- Unknown until the RFP process is completed.
3. Can the technical elements be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget?			✓	

STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL COMMENTS

- The State Government Council recommends this project be categorized as Tier 1. [Project 24-01 is mandated and funded by LB905 through the development of an RFP (Request for Proposal).]

NITC COMMENTS

- Tier 1 (Highly Recommended. Mission critical project for the agency and/or the state.) [Project 24-01 is mandated and funded by LB905 through the development of an RFP (Request for Proposal).]

Project #	Agency	Project Title
41-01	REAL ESTATE COMMISSION	Licensee Database

SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)
[Full text of all proposals are posted at: http://nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/project_proposals/2015-2017.html]

The Nebraska Real Estate Commission is seeking funding for the replacement of the current real estate license database, which was acquired in 1998. The licensee database keeps general contact information on licensees, tracks the relationship between designated brokers (licensees with authority to operate independently) and affiliated licensees (licensees with authority to act as a licensee only under the supervision of the designated broker. In addition, the database tracks and records payments for license applications, renewals and transfers. The database also generates reports and licensee lists, as well as recording and tracking disciplinary matters and generating form letters with the appropriate licensee information inserted (late renewal notices, etc.).

FUNDING SUMMARY

IT Project Costs

Contractual Services	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Design	$0					
Programming	$43,000		13,000	15,000	15,000	
Project Management	$0					
Data Conversion	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$43,000	$0	$13,000	$15,000	$15,000	$0
Telecommunications						
Data	$31,500		10,500	10,500	10,500	
Video	$0					
Voice	$0					
Wireless	$0					
Total	$31,500	$0	$10,500	$10,500	$10,500	$0
Other Operating Costs						
Personnnel Cost	$157,055		43,527	56,764	56,764	
Supplies & Materials	$0					
Travel	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$157,055	$0	$43,527	$56,764	$56,764	$0
Capital Expenditures						
Hardware	$14,020		7,000	3,510	3,510	
Software	$550,500		500	550,000		
Network	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$564,520	$0	$7,500	$553,510	$3,510	$0
Total Request	$796,075	$0	$74,527	$635,774	$85,774	$0

▼Funding

	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
General Fund	$0					
Cash Fund	$796,075		74,527	635,774	85,774	
Federal Fund	$0					
Revolving Fund	$0					
Other Fund	$0					
Total Funding	$796,075	$0	$74,527	$635,774	$85,774	$0

PROJECT SCORE

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	13	12	14	13	15
Project Justification / Business Case	19	20	22	20	25
Technical Impact	15	15	16	15	20
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	7	5	7	6	10
Risk Assessment	6	5	7	6	10
Financial Analysis and Budget	16	18	16	17	20
			TOTAL	78	100

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	- The agency has clearly defined the overall goals of the project and the types of issues they are attempting to overcome. They also address the need to interface with other items such as payment systems and web based filing. - Well described goals and need for a replacement of their 1998 licensing system. Replacement is required due to discontinued support of Sybase. - Rationale for project pretty straight forward - need to upgrade old system (1998) to enable greater access, self-service direction, overall flexibility & functionality and ongoing support. Goals cover the key points even though selection not yet known. Need to replace existing system (16 years old?) should carry higher priority when fully vetted.	- The agency could have made a stronger case about what success looks like. For example, is the intent to have the system take an online application and move it through an automated workflow that steps the agency through each of the steps it takes to obtain a license? If given the opportunity to dream - what would the system be? - Several interfaces desired.
Project Justification / Business Case	- Agency has issued an RFI to at least find out what the potential replacement options are. - An RFI for a potential replacement licensing system was issued in 2013. Three responses were received. - Rationale for upgrade clear in ability to eliminate the need for specialized support by OCIO, simplify ongoing support, enhanced reporting capabilities and reducing costs longer term.	- It is an old system that needs to be replaced - but what is the business case? Is it costing you too much money to support it? When is the payback of a new system? What does the agency do if it is not replaced? What happens to the agency if this system dies? - Two of the three responses indicated a replacement cost of a system to be approximately $550,000. - Should make a stronger case upfront in narrative of the fact the Sybase/SAP support has/will go away and support critical moving forward?
Technical Impact	- The technical impact of no longer having support for the system is large and well described. The point of the audit finding is strong support. - A new system would provide the opportunity to acquire a system that would meet state standards - including an audit finding deficiency of only one level of login/security. Potentially could provide better reporting capability to the public. - Good points made toward identifying impact/risks to the business operation and to conform to. Score assigned recognizing unknowns.	- Does the system meet any NITC standards? Not understanding the business of the agency, what is so important about disciplinary information? This would make the technical impact of a non-supported system stronger. - Did not address hardware or networking requirements. - Would some verbiage on selection options to include consideration for an SaaS model?
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	- The agency understands the need for an RFP - but may need to include more than the internal agency IT staff and the Director in the process. - If funding is approved, would draft an RFP per State Purchasing guidelines for the replacement product.	- Your plan for how quickly the plan may be implemented is a bit aggressive. Additionally, since this will be an Enterprise project as defined by the NITC, the agency needs to also add the NITC process to their plan. - No other details given as relates to this section.

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
	- Rated 7 only because intent to RFP/select and information not available. As noted earlier might help to identify what options for delivery would be considered from vendors in an RFP?	
Risk Assessment	- They pledge to do a thorough assessment of any proposed replacement system and to follow policies and guidelines of the Office of the CIO. - High level risks well defined but since solution not fully known at submission made a 7. Definitive risks would likely change or new risks ID'd once defined/assessed at selection?	- Not sure the agency understands the risks of this project. What if the requirements are not clearly defined and the product does not address the main issues the agency is attempting to resolve? With a small IT staff, there is a risk that the provider chosen does not have the skills to pull the project off - and that is not known until the end of the project. Is the agency willing to change their business process to meet the needs of the solution chosen? - Acknowledgement of risk but no actual description of that risk.
Financial Analysis and Budget	- Agency seems to have a plan on how they can fund this project, assuming that they don't lose licensees in the process. Also it is unclear whether this is a one-time hike or a forever hike and paying this bill over time. - Have included dollar amounts for the IT expenditures. - Understand acquisition costs not fully known yet. Inclusion of commentary on fees to support overall funding reflect "foresight" for any subsequent Appropriations discussions. Again score reflects know aspects of project at submission.	- Fee increase required in order to fund this purchase.

TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS

Technical Panel Checklist	Yes	No	Unknown	Comments
1. Is the project technically feasible?	✓			
2. Is the proposed technology appropriate for the project?			✓	- Unknown until the RFP process is completed.
3. Can the technical elements be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget?			✓	

STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL COMMENTS

- The State Government Council recommends this project be categorized as Tier 2.

NITC COMMENTS

- Tier 2 (Recommended. High strategic importance to the agency and/or the state.)

Project #	Agency	Project Title
81-01	COMM FOR BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED	AWARE Client Data Tracking System Procurement

SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)

[Full text of all proposals are posted at: http://nitc.nebraska.gov/commission/project_proposals/2015-2017.html]

AWARE (Accessible Web Activity Reporting Environment), produced by Alliance Enterprises, is used by over 31 State Rehab Agencies to manage grants from U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Strengths:
Financial component can be linked to the Edge system to track obligations and payments for case services
Required changes to federal reporting requirements are added through semiannual software upgrades
Continuity of Operations can be assured as developments and modifications are developed by the vendor
Nonvisual accessibility is maintained through close partnerships between vendor and software manufacturers
Current case management system is heavily customized and updates are costly and time-consuming; it is not feasible to add financial component.

AWARE is a product of Alliance Enterprises of Lacey, WA. It is designed to specifically meet the reporting needs of Vocational Rehabilitation agencies that report to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), which is part of the Department of Education. The system is used by 31 states and other agencies to manage grants awarded to them by the RSA. The AWARE system has a financial component that creates obligations for products and services procured for clients as a part of their case services. It is our goal to utilize this component in conjunction with data exchange with the Edge system to track obligations and payments for case services. To meet our current case management needs, we are utilizing a system that was given to us by the state of Iowa, which we have heavily customized. Although the system currently performs effectively, a change to the AWARE (Accessible Web Activity Reporting Environment) would benefit us in the future from a continuity of operations standpoint, as well as ensuring that modifications to the system necessitated by changes in federal reporting requirements are not as costly or time-consuming to implement. In addition, upgrades to the system can be insured to be accessible to our blind staff as Alliance Enterprises works closely with manufacturers of screen access technology, operating systems, and backend database and related software.

FUNDING SUMMARY

(Images from the Budget Request and Reporting System.)

IT Project Costs

Contractual Services	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
Design	$0					
Programming	$100,000		100,000			
Project Management	$103,000		103,000			
Data Conversion	$50,000		50,000			
Other	$0					
Total	$253,000	$0	$253,000	$0	$0	$0
Training						
Technical Staff	$6,871		6,871			
End-user Staff	$11,353		11,353			
Total	$18,224	$0	$18,224	$0	$0	$0
Capital Expenditures						
Hardware	$0					
Software	$100,276		100,276			
Network	$0					
Other	$0					
Total	$100,276	$0	$100,276	$0	$0	$0
Total Request	$371,500	$0	$371,500	$0	$0	$0

▼ Funding

	Total	Prior Exp	FY15 Appr/Reappr	FY16 Request	FY17 Request	Future Add Request
General Fund	$0					
Cash Fund	$0					
Federal Fund	$371,500		371,500			
Revolving Fund	$0					
Other Fund	$0					
Total Funding	$371,500	$0	$371,500	$0	$0	$0

PROJECT SCORE

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	15	10	9	11	15
Project Justification / Business Case	25	18	22	22	25
Technical Impact	18	15	15	16	20
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	10	8	8	9	10
Risk Assessment	10	8	4	7	10
Financial Analysis and Budget	13	15	15	14	20
			TOTAL	79	100

REVIEWER COMMENTS

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	- The goals are to update software that will allow the agency to fulfill federal guidelines. - Want to utilize a system that is easy to maintain and not be heavily customized; want to produce more accurate data. - Goals are clear.	- Start date listed at 09-01-2014 although many decisions have not been made; indication of being a sole source acquisition. - Very Brief. Didn't see how they would measure the effectiveness of the solution. Outcomes are vague.
Project Justification / Business Case	- CFVI has significant issues in terms of accessibility. They did a good job of assessing what software could fit their requirements that is accessible. It is a part of fulfilling federal reporting requirements and has been used by other VR agencies. - Indicate they need to stay current with federal reporting requirements. (Do not specifically state it is a federal mandate.) Would provide capability of several staff knowing how to utilize the system in lieu of one or two analysts. - I thought this was very clear on the benefits and review of other solutions.	- Only one other case management system was explored. - They mentioned linking this to the Payroll and Financial Center, but nothing about working with DAS. Is the assumption that they will be able to interface with no problems?
Technical Impact	- The proposal clearly discusses how the project enhances the current technology and the software, hardware, and communication requirements. - Indicate they are working with the Office of the CIO and the vendor to determine the best hosting solution. The system is used by 31 other states. - They are aware of the options available to them for implementing the system. They know the standards that must be followed.	- There could have been a clearer description of reliability, security and scalability. - Current system will need to go through a data conversion process. An interface may be required to the State's mainframe. - Too many questions as to how this should be implemented. Based on my experience, there will be a cost difference between hosting it internally and externally. Is the cost based on the most expensive option? I would have liked to see a breakdown of the development that is required.
Preliminary Plan for Implementation	- The implementation plan is clear. The project team is outlined and the strategies to minimize risk seem appropriate. - Milestones, deliverables, dates and Project Team are stated. Have acknowledged considerable training will be required. - Good description of training and on-going	- Timeline seems aggressive since the system has yet to be purchased. - Since and interface with the Payroll and Financial Center will be required, I expected to see someone from DAS as part of the team. This isn't part of the timeline either.

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
	support.	
Risk Assessment	- A good description of possible barriers and of strategies to address problems. - They have identified possible barriers and risks and did identify strategies to help minimize risks. A part of that is to leave the old system in place for a number of years. - Identified a number of strategies that could be used to minimize risks.	- They indicate the system will be supported by NCBVI staff, the vendor and the OCIO. The type and amount of that support is not fully defined. - I don't see how the strategies are related to the risks defined. Identified risks should have strategies that explain how to minimize the risk and what will be done if the risk occurs.
Financial Analysis and Budget	- Funding is appears to be 100 per cent federally funded.	- Budget doesn't really explain where the numbers are coming from although the project is still in the initial planning stages. - There were no hardware or networking costs identified. Since the hosting solution has not yet been determined was not sure if the need for hardware and networking had yet been decided as well. - It's reasonable but since there are two options and they haven't decided which way to go, I'm concerned that it may cost more or they may sacrifice something in order to stay within budget.

TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS

Technical Panel Checklist	Yes	No	Unknown	Comments
1. Is the project technically feasible?	✓			
2. Is the proposed technology appropriate for the project?			✓	- Unknown technical elements, specifically related to connections to other agencies.
3. Can the technical elements be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget?			✓	

STATE GOVERNMENT COUNCIL COMMENTS

- The State Government Council recommends this project be categorized as Tier 2.

NITC COMMENTS

- Tier 2 (Recommended. High strategic importance to the agency and/or the state.)

APPENDIX: AGENCY RESPONSE TO REVIEWER COMMENTS

Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Response to scoring for Agency Project 81-01

Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

We are working closely with a number of stakeholders in a project like this, including the OCIO, representatives from the vendor, and State Accounting. We may have given the wrong impression with a start date of September 1, 2014. In our mind we started this process 15 months ago, with exploring options; we have not obligated the agency to date. We would like to be ready to "go live" by October 1, 2015. We want to make it clear that our plan is to be deliberate and methodical in the implementation of the system, as we have been in the process so far. We will not sacrifice the accuracy of data conversion or system implementation steps simply to meet a deadline. We have been told by Alliance that the system can be in place in 4 to 5 months; issues with conversion, decision making, and Payroll and Financial Center could impact the timeline.

This system would be a success if it can provide to us the accurate data needed by our Federal partners, and assist us in keeping track of our financial obligations and payments. In regards to the latter goal, we have had two meetings with State Accounting to discuss how an interface with the Payroll and Financial Center would be achieved. We were provided with two types of interfaces that could be utilized. We need to discuss them with our system vendor as we move forward with this process.

We are working with AS Materiel's State Purchasing Bureau on the acquisition of the product. The initial thrust was to look at RFP and/or Sole Source but this Software product is available through the State's Contracted Third Party Reseller Contract with en Pointe and they have offered a proposal for purchase.

The outcomes of this project will be a much more comprehensive data management system that will create a better environment to coordinate our program and financial planning for clients. It will also provide the assurance and expertise of thousands of users in the technical and maintenance aspects of the program as opposed to our present staff of two people.

Project Justification/Business Case

The system is used for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration by 31 agencies across the country and maintained to report on that agency's two billion dollar federal grant. This program will better mitigate our risks than our present custom built system.

In our research of solutions for this issue, it became very apparent that AWARE is the most widely used system across the country and users that we spoke with were satisfied with their decision. Currently there are 31 Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, including a number of Blind Agencies, who are using this product.

The Office of the CIO has been heavily involved in our discussions. During the preliminary stages of determining how we could purchase the software, we reached out to Steve Schafer as we had worked with him on other software licensing projects. We have also had two high-level meetings with OCIO staff including Chief Information Officer Brenda Decker, State Chief Information Security Officer Chris Hobbs, Aaron Weaver of the Open Systems Team, Jim Ohmberger of the OCIO, Steve Schafer, and Tod Wyrick and Rich Burns of the CIO Web Development Team. Rick Becker of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission also sat in on one of these meetings and was consulted for advice at the outset of this request process. We continue to correspond with Steve Schafer as we have questions and are awaiting a proposal from the OCIO Open Systems Team for possibly hosting AWARE locally. This proposal is based on system architecture documents provided to OCIO staff in our meetings.

We have worked with Deb Schnell and Kay Mencl from State Accounting to discuss preliminary plans for interfacing with the Payroll and Financial Center. Discussions still need to take place with the vendor of AWARE to enable us to fully plan how this will function.

The outcomes of this product will be a more efficient and comprehensive management system for our client information and federal grants.

Technical Impact

Our agency does not have expertise in reliability, security, and scalability, which is why we brought in a team from OCIO to assist us. We have received information that we have passed along to Chris Hobbs with OCIO security to evaluate the State of Nebraska's need for security and we are working with Aaron Weaver and others on reliability and scalability issues.

Data Conversion is one of the main issues in this process and we are approaching it with our eyes open both in terms of who will create the program and how much data will be converted. Rich Burns within OCIO wrote the program for eForce data conversion so he has experience with our business processes and is local. Alliance has experience in converting similar data from other agencies into its format. With these options in mind, we are evaluating our next steps.

The issue of hosting the program is probably the single most important variable that we have yet to decide. We are working both with Alliance and OCIO to make a best solution happen. Two upgrades are made to the program each year and must be incorporated into the system so it becomes a critical issue. The option set out in our budget proposal assumes that Alliance Enterprises hosts our 47 licenses of AWARE. In this configuration, all hardware is on Alliance's end, except for the hardware and software necessary to facilitate the interface with the Payroll and Financial Center. The system's database and web server footprint can be scaled in the event that our agency would change drastically in size or client load. Enhancements and features governing the user interface, system outputs, and other functionality are handled in the semiannual software upgrades that are offered as part of the subscription fee. These can be placed into a test environment for our review and then we decide when they are rolled into our production system. Depending on the service tiers purchased from Alliance, the system's uptime is guaranteed to be 99.6-99.9 percent uptime. This option also provides access to a designated service manager to assist with upgrades and other concerns.

Preliminary Plan for Implementation

As we have stated, we are early in the process, but wanted to take advantage of the State Budget forum to submit our proposal. Conversations with our colleagues in Missouri, South Carolina, New Mexico, and Hawaii have pointed us favorably toward AWARE. They have mentioned that implementation projections can be a little too optimistic from AWARE.

We are aware that we have decisions to make about data conversion; it was our assumption that until we have a go or no go from the NITC on the merits of the project we should proceed conservatively. Also, from the vendor's standpoint we have not pursued a lot of conversion information as it may not be in their best interest to reveal that information. If you tell us standard business practice is not that way, we will have some leverage with Alliance.

A solid timeline at this point will emerge as these issues are finalized.

As stated above, we have asked the OCIO to include members of their team to work with us and guide us through this implementation. We will rely heavily on OCIO expertise and implementation efforts. We have also included members of the Payroll and Financial team to work with us. If there are others that we should include, we invite your feedback.

We are looking and responding to our data conversion issues and will make decisions on that as the plan unfolds.

Risk Assessment

Many of the risks we identified relate to training, support and data conversion. As we considered training for use of the new AWARE system, staff told us that they wanted as much training as possible, and that they preferred it to be done in a small group setting. To this end, we will include in the vendor contract, trainings for various aspects of the system in multiple locations. From the Vendor's Statement of Work, these are the Introduction to AWARE and the Use of AWARE with Access Technology trainings. We want to hold these from 3 to 6 times to cover either offices themselves or the districts. For those staff members who need additional training that goes above and beyond these classes, the Technology Program Manager, Data Quality Analyst/System Administrator, or their immediate District Supervisor can work with them individually to overcome deficiencies. As mentioned previously, we are moving deliberately in regards to the data conversion process. We plan to work closely with Rich Burns, our OCIO contract programmer, who is familiar with our data format to help us proceed with conversion. We may also convert a subset of cases to the new system. To help in these determinations, we will rely heavily on our Data Quality Analyst to determine which cases are crucial to have in the new system going forward. We are also soliciting assistance from peer agencies who have converted to AWARE to determine which questions we need to ask and determine where they encountered gaps in their data conversion process.

The next two risk areas address compliance and compatibility. First, one risk we cited was noncompliance with NITC Standards out of the box requiring heavy customization. The only area where this is relevant is in our decision to host the product. We will work with Alliance and State Security to ensure that the product complies with data security standards regardless of

hosting platform. The next risk surrounding compatibility and compliance is with the Payroll and Financial Center and any interfaces that we create. We are working closely with staff of AS State Accounting. We will work with Alliance Enterprises to ensure that data formats are compatible between the two systems and to determine how to handle any issues that arise in sending data between systems both on a regular or infrequent basis. Mitigation of these risks can be achieved through close communication between all three stakeholders; NCBVI, AS Accounting, and Alliance Enterprises.

Financial Analysis and Budget

This project will be financed primarily by federal grant funds and federal program income funds already captured. Through the carryover process of our grants, which allows for a second year to use grant funds, and reallotment of grant funds from our federal partners, the agency has retained funds to make this purchase. We do have funds available to make this purchase and to implement customization that will best serve our blind customers.

As stated earlier, we are still in the process of identifying our costs which will be heavily influenced by the hosting question. It is our primary thought that we prefer to pay as much of the license and maintenance fees as possible with funds available, however we must be cognizant of the grant and the long term viability of the project. We take those issues very seriously in our evaluation of the options.