

Project Name: Web-based Performance Management Application

Requesting Agency: Department of Natural Resources

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Goals:

1. Improve the Department's ability to demonstrate results and report agency performance to Iowa's citizens and their elected officials;
2. Enhance stakeholder involvement in agency planning; and
3. Increase our competitiveness for federal grants and special appropriations.

Project Purpose: The purpose of this project is to design and implement a web-based performance management application that supports planning, management and reporting at all organizational levels within the Department.

Background: Both federally, and at the state level, government is faced with increasingly greater demands on stable, and in many cases, declining revenue sources – to do more with less. There are numerous factors contributing to this trend, but the effect is becoming more apparent – stiffer competition for resources, and greater emphasis on funding activities that achieve results important to our society.

As a way to address this trend, public agencies have been given mandates to demonstrate results of the work we do to the public. Federal agencies are required to comply with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Although promulgated during the Clinton Administration, it has recently been revitalized and enhanced with the implementation of Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) – which connects results to federal budgeting decisions. Iowa state agencies have similar requirements with the enactment of Iowa's Accountable Government Act (AGA), which requires the establishment of performance measures and annual reporting against set targets. Both GPRA, as federal grant recipients, and the AGA have necessitated the Department to demonstrate results achieved for the resources given.

However, budget, work plans – commitments, activity codes, and performance measures tend to vary across the Department in accessibility, alignment to products, detail and utilization. The fragmented nature of this information makes it difficult to understand the true costs of products the agency offers, how efficiently we deliver them, or how effective they are; and, in some cases, even to fully understand all we offer as an agency. This situation makes it extremely difficult to report agency performance, link the performance to results, and quantify the cost of those results. It also hinders senior managers' ability in making resource allocation decisions, since the consequences of

resource changes are not always clear. This also limits flexibility in aligning resources with the opportunities to achieve results critical to the citizens of Iowa, and in evaluating program effectiveness. Additionally, since performance data is often lagging it forces the Department to be reactionary, rather than proactive. As such, the information and data collected is underutilized and limited for: day-to-day management, the development of effective plans and realistic performance targets, performance reporting and evaluations, and understanding the effect of changing resources.

Expected Results in this Project: Improved internal and public accountability by:

1. Enabling a comprehensive look at performance, the use of resources, and the true and actual costs of products our agency delivers by integrating and aligning budget (resources and expenses/costs), staffing plans, performance measures and products (activities/work commitments);
2. Facilitating transparency by allowing decision-makers to view all aspects of performance, and enhancing our ability to tailor the communication of performance results to the appropriate audience (public, legislators, grantors, etc.) through the establishment of a one-stop source for performance data and information, and an ability to query, display and present the data and information in multiple ways (i.e. program, bureau, section, grant or revenue source, geographical area, or “offer.”)
3. Aiding in the development of budgets based on forecasted demand volume and mix of services anticipated, and current, as well as, potential fee schedules based on calculated costs of products offered;
4. Helping identify process improvement/operational efficiency opportunities;
5. Allowing managers to focus on their area(s) of responsibility and quickly identify problems through customizable user views, visuals and alerts; and
6. Providing flexibility to address inherent changes that will occur during a fiscal year through improved management of plan development and change requests by documenting/archiving original plan, amendments and management actions/decisions and facilitating cost-benefit evaluations.

Request: Initially, technical assistance in developing business requirements and technical specifications for the proposed application. Estimate of 200 hours is required. Ultimately, financial assistance for all or part of the application costs.

Interested Parties: General public, Department stakeholders

Recipients of this Service: Department managers and Budget and Finance Bureau staff