

# Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

**MEMO:** Agenda Item #7

**DATE:** March 1, 2019

**SUBJECT:** LCCMR Online Project Records and Grants Management System

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## Background

LCCMR's current system of processing proposals and work plans is piecemeal and can be time and labor-intensive, reliant on institutional knowledge, and prone to error. Moving to an online, integrated grants management and project records system provides an opportunity to improve consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness of our work and make the LCCMR application and project oversight experience easier for both staff and project managers.

An effort was launched by former LCCMR staff and funds were appropriated in 2014 to hire a contractor to create an online grants management system to meet LCCMR needs. The effort was discontinued after several months due to incompatibility issues. In early 2018, staff began to evaluate and improve LCCMR operational processes in preparation for another effort to move to an online system using the unspent funds from the previous effort.

Staff issued an RFP for the Project Records and Grants Management System in November 2018 with the aim to have a newly developed system ready for use in the 2021 ENRTF RFP cycle. While the earlier effort was budgeted for and only considered Systems as Service (SAS; off the shelf) products, the current RFP allowed proposals for custom-built solutions as well.

We received nine vendor responses. Proposals included SAS products and custom-built systems. There is a diverse mixture of costs and functionality. Implementation costs ranged from \$20K to just under \$500k. The yearly ongoing maintenance costs ranged from \$10k to nearly \$100k. Some proposals do not have required functionality and others do really well with certain aspects of our needs but fell short in key areas. In selecting a vendor, LCCMR will need to make decisions to accept some functionality over others, accept certain risks, and consider increasing the budget available for the project.

Four vendors were selected by LCCMR and LCC staff for further consideration, including through vendor demonstration and interviews and reference checks. From this list, two have emerged as the most suitable. Additional review and reference checks are being conducted now. Once a vendor is selected and a contract is drafted, the LCCMR Executive Committee will be asked to review and approve before it is signed.

## Vendor Selection Options

Staff believe the two options that best fit our needs are an SAS system with customization and a custom-built system. Both solutions will likely require additional funding.

(Vendor A) One proposal is for an SAS and suggests a large range of functionality, built-in flexibility, and is closest to the current expected budget and timeline (provided our M.L. 2019 request to carry over

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unspent funds from FY18-19 is approved), but may require additional funds. Concerns arose during the latter part of our review leading staff to have medium-low confidence in chances of success.

(Vendor B) The other proposal is for a custom- built system, which typically costs more than SAS systems but offers a greater degree of customization. This proposal offers a smaller range of functionality however it has a higher potential to build capability over time. The project would require additional funds (approximately twice what is currently available) and time, but could be phased to address our deadline for the 2021 RFP cycle. Staff has high confidence in the chances of success, quality of product and service.

### Materials

- Request for Proposal for Project Records and Grants Management System
- Summary comparison of vendor proposal evaluations

### Action

If acceptable by the Executive Committee, the following motion/s could be offered:

Move to authorize staff to select Vendor B, determine cost reducing options with vendor, identify additional funds with M.L. 2019 bill authors, and proceed to contract.