November 8, 2022

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

RFI # OPR22116

Modernization of the Environmental Notice and Document System (MENDS)

Deadline to respond: December 16, 2022, 5:00 PM PST

The Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is releasing this Request for Information (RFI) to solicit input from interested parties regarding the replacement and modernization of the existing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) application.

THIS IS NOT A SOLICITATION FOR PROPOSALS but a Request for Information (RFI) to elicit information for consideration regarding the future direction of the State Clearinghouse (SCH) Unit.

This RFI is non-binding and does not commit OPR to contract for any services or make a contract award. Please note, OPR will not provide direct responses to any interested parties on the input that is received. Respondents are advised that OPR will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the respondents' expense.

In responding to this RFI, DO NOT include any information that might be considered proprietary, trade secrets and/or confidential. OPR will disregard any language purporting to render all or portions of any RFI response as proprietary, trade secrets or confidential, and may return an RFI submission if any portions of it are marked as such. All materials submitted in response to this RFI will become the property of OPR and, as such, are subject to the California Public Records Act (PRA) (GC Section 6250, et seq.).

Not responding to this RFI does not preclude an organization from participation in any potential future solicitation. Organizations are also not bound to participate in any future solicitation based on responding to the RFI.

OPR looks forward to receiving and considering your input, some of which may or may not be included in the development of any future solicitation. Use of the information provided is at the sole discretion of OPR.

Although not part of this RFI process, OPR may invite interested vendors to participate in demonstrations at the conclusion of this RFI.

Thank you for your interest in this RFI.

OPR Administration, Contracts Unit
Contracts@opr.ca.gov

A. BACKGROUND

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is an office of the Executive Branch which serves as the State's comprehensive planning agency, with statutory responsibilities for formulating long-range goals for land-use, environmental impact, climate change, policies, plans, and guidelines.

The State Clearinghouse (SCH) Unit within OPR requires State and local agencies to comply with administrative regulations governing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As of November 3, 2020, all agencies are required to electronically submit CEQA documents through CEQA Submit, a backend application for editing, submitting, and publishing CEQA documents (Notices of Preparation (NOP), Notices of Determination (NOD), Notices of Completion (NOC) (which summarize Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs), Negative Declarations, Environmental Impact Statements, and other types of environmental documents), National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) documents, and Notices of Exemption (NOE)). Upon submission, SCH staff review and then publish those documents to CEQAnet, a publicly assessable and searchable website. which includes summaries of Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs), Negative Declarations, Environmental Impact Statements, and other types of CEQA and National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) documents. Constituents may use the CEQAnet Portal for requesting and accessing CEQA documents. OPR makes available information about Notices of Exemption, Notices of Preparation, Notices of Determination, and Notices of Completion to the public through the CEQAnet Portal.

B. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this RFI is to solicit information from the vendor community with the goal to replace the current CEQA Submit and CEQAnet application with a modern user interface (UI) to enhance the end user experience by streamlining workflows, reducing workload, making the application more intuitive to use, and increasing performance/responsiveness. Additional objectives for the future revamped user interface include GIS mapping features, electronic payments, and interfacing with external systems. OPR may use the RFI responses to develop a scope of work for a potential future solicitation of replacing the current CEQA application.

Specifically, this RFI will help OPR to:

Identify potential service vendors who may provide a solution which meets SCH's business needs, which could be either:

- Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) or modified-off-the-shelf (MOTS) software
  OR
- A custom solution

Questions that are submitted for clarification under Section F of this RFI will be considered and, if needed, a Question and Answer (Q&A) document or addendum to the RFI will be released by OPR.

C. RFI DISCLAIMER

This RFI is issued for information and planning purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation. A response to this RFI is not an offer and cannot be accepted by the State to form a binding contract. Responding vendors are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI.

Responding vendors must be aware that responses to this RFI are the property of the State and are subject to the California Public Records Act (Government Code Section 6250 et seq.) and responses may be subject to disclosure. As such, do not include any proprietary, trade secret or confidential information in your response to this RFI.

Submitting a response to this RFI will not enhance the review of that respondent's proposal(s) to any future solicitations. Not submitting a response to this RFI will not prohibit a response to any future solicitations, nor disadvantage the evaluation of a response to any future solicitation. By submitting a response to this RFI, a responding vendor is implicitly agreeing with these conditions.

OPR asks willing responding vendors to share non-binding budgetary pricing information. Pricing is only for planning purposes. Any pricing provided in a response to this RFI will not be considered a proposal/bid on the part of the responding vendor

D. RFI KEY ACTION DATES AND TIMES

Below is the time schedule for this solicitation. The State reserves the right to modify or cancel this solicitation and/or change dates and times at its sole discretion, prior to the date fixed for the receipt deadline of proposals, by the issuance of an addendum that will be posted in the California eProcure system of the State of California at: Cal eProcure.

Table 1, RFI Key Action Dates and Times

KEY ACTION	DATE
Release RFI	November 8, 2022
RFI Web Conference	December 1, 2022 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM PST
Last day to submit questions for clarification purposes	December 13, 2022 5:00 PM PST
Questions that are submitted for clarification will be considered and if needed, a Q&A document or addendum to the RFI will be released by the OPR	
RFI Response Due Date	**December 16, 2022** **5:00 PM PST**

E. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

The System Requirements are provided to assist the vendor in learning about OPR's requirements for a replacement application. Please review the requirements before preparing a response to the RFI questions.

CEQA Submit

a) Infrastructure

1. Deploy in a FedRAMP moderate cloud environment

b) Communication

API

1. Use RESTful APIs
2. Filter, sort, and paginate data based upon parameters
3. Throttle calls
4. Set quotas for number of calls

c) User Interface

1. Utilize a single page application (SPA) architecture
2. Comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
3. Comply with Section 508
4. Utilize a responsive design

d) Rendering

1. Paginate data
2. Render elements using rules-based access

e) Security

1. Resolve security flaws stated in the OWASP Top 10
2. Allow users to self-register
3. Use OAUTH to communicate with secured APIs
4. Use Secure Socket Layer (SSL) certificate when communicating with APIs
5. Use Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS)) when communicating with APIs
6. Automatically sign off user if no activity detected within specified amount of time
7. Comply with SIMM 5300.5, 5305, 5305.1-3, 6-7

f) Authentication

1. Authenticate users using two-factor authentication

g) Authorization

1. Restrict user to one role per organization
2. Allow a user to be member of multiple organizations
3. Allow the viewing/editing of NOC, NOE, and NOD electronic documents based on owner, role, and status
4. Restrict creation of NOC, NOE, and NOD electronic documents for agenc(ies) for which the submitter is an approved submitter.

h) Logging

1. Log all events including by whom and timestamp
2. Search events based upon criteria set by the administrator

i) Roles

Types

1. Organization Submitter – Create and submits document for the submitting organization

2. State Agency Reviewer – Review and submit/upload comment letter(s) for the submitting organization
3. Organization Administrator – Grants/denies/revokes organization reviewers, submitters, and organization administrators
4. OPR Reviewer – Receives, reviews, and publishes projects (and NOE, NOE, and NOD documents) for all organizations
5. System Administrator – Complete control over the system

Access

1. Render fields based on role and state
2. Enable editing of data based on role and state
3. Enable/disable actions based on role and state
4. Display webpages/webpages elements based on role and state

j) Financial

1. Accept credit card payments for required payments for certain CEQA documents

k) Data

1. Search by ID (SCH Number)
2. Search by Project Number
3. Search by Project Name
4. Search by Project Description
5. Search by Document Name
6. Search by Document Description
7. Paginate data based on parameters
8. Optimize the database
9. Utilize Google Analytics
10. Utilize Google Search

Electronic Documents

1. Associate the following data with NOE, NOC, and NOD electronic documents
   a. Project Details
   b. Document Details
   c. Binary Attachments
   d. Contacts
   e. Regions
   f. Counties
   g. Cities
   h. Location Details
   i. Notice of Determination (NOD only)
   j. Notice of Exemption (NOE only)
   k. Location Action Types (NOC only)
   l. Development Types (NOC only)
   m. Project Issues (NOC only)
   n. State Review Agencies (NOC only)
   o. State Review Responsible/Trustee Agencies
   p. State Review Period (NOC only)
   q. Local Review Period (NOC only)
   r. County Clerks

2. Associate binary attachments

GIS

1. Plot, display, and manipulate data points on map
2. Identify jurisdiction(s) where data point is placed
3. Identify if data point is within specified distance of point of interest

I) Workflow

1. Create/Update/Delete workflows
2. Create custom workflows
3. Allow the creation, submission, reviewal, receive, rejection and publication of NOC, NOE, and NOD documents
4. Create new project based on NOC, NOE, and NOD document types
5. Create more than one document (record) per project
6. Allow uploading of NOC, NOE, and NOD electronic documents by submitter

Workflow States

Create

1. Allow submitter to create NOC, NOE, and NOD electronic documents
2. Allow submitter to upload binary attachments and associate with document.
3. Detect if binary attachments contain only image(s)

Submit

1. Allow submitters to submit a NOC, NOE, and NOD electronic documents
2. Prevent submission of electronic document if missing required data
3. Visually indicate missing data which is preventing submission
4. Allow submitters to recall a document before it has been marked received by an organization reviewer

Review

1. Allow organization administrators and OPR reviewer to review a submitted NOE, NOC, and NOD document
2. Allow organization reviewers and OPR reviewer to recall a submitted NOE, NOC, and NOD document
3. Prevent approval of document if missing required data
4. Check attachments for ADA compliance
5. Check to ensure document has been OCR
6. Check documents in archived file

Receive

1. Assign a received NOE, NOC, and NOD document to a OPR reviewer
2. Display which OPR reviewer is reviewing the document
3. Allow OPR reviewer to view/modify a reviewed NOE, NOC, and NOD document
4. Allow OPR reviewer to reject a reviewed NOE, NOC, and NOD document
5. Reassign a received NOE, NOC, and NOD document to another OPR reviewer

Publish

1. Prevent publishing of NOE, NOC, and NOD document if missing required data
2. Indicate missing data which is preventing publication
3. Allow OPR reviewer to publish a NOE, NOE, and NOD document

m) Notifications

1. Notify organization administrator(s) when user has requested a role within the organization
2. Notify requestor when the role request has been approved/revoked
3. Notify user when role has been granted/assigned/modified/revoked
4. Notify administrators when user has requested role and no organizational administrators exist
5. Notify submitter when submitted document has been recalled
6. Display alerts/notifications after successfully logging into system
7. Schedule when alerts/notifications appear
8. Notify submitter when document has been created, but not submitted (within specified timeframe)
9. Notify submitter when document has been recalled, but not resubmitted (within specified timeframe)
10. Notify submitter when document has been submitted
11. Notify submitter when document has been received
12. Notify submitter when a document is recalled
13. Notify submitter when document has been published
    a. Notify submitter where to view published document via CEQAnet
14. Subscribed submitters and organizational administrators will be notified when the state of an organizational document changes

n) User Accounts

1. Allow user to request access to organizations by roles
2. Allow user to request change organization roles
3. Allow user to change profile information

o) Administration (System)

Role System Administration

1. Allow administrator to grant/assign/modify/revoke user role(s)
2. Allow organization administrator to grant/assign/modify/revoke user role(s) for the organization.

User Administration

1. Allow administrators to edit user profile
2. Allow administrators to create/deactivate users
3. Allow administrators to list and filter users

Lookup Data

1. Allow administrator to create/update/delete data
    a. Counties (update)

b. Cities (create/update)
c. Organizations (create/update)
d. Blackout data (create/update)
e. Alerts /Notifications (create/update)
f. Attachment Category
g. Library Category
h. Broadcasts (create/update)

CEQAnet

a) Infrastructure

1. Deploy in a FedRAMP moderate cloud environment

b) Communication

API

1. Use RESTful APIs
2. Filter, sort, and paginate data based upon parameters
3. Throttle calls
4. Set quotas for number of calls

c) Data

1. Allow public to view any published document
2. Cache data to improve performance
3. Search published project
    a. ID (SCH Number)
    b. Start Date
    c. End Date
    d. Document Type
    e. Lead/Public Agency
    f. County
    g. City
    h. Region
    i. Local Action
    j. Project Issue
    k. Development Type
    l. State Review Period End
    m. Local Review Period End
4. Allow public to view recent postings within the last 14 days
5. Allow public to search recent postings by:
    a. SCH Number
    b. Type
    c. Lead/Public Agency
    d. Received Date
    e. Title
6. Browse documents by
    a. Year
    b. Month
    c. Day
7. Use Google Search to search CEQAnet by keyword(s)

8. Utilize Google Analytics
9. Utilize Google Search

F. VENDOR QUESTIONS

Vendors must submit questions regarding this RFI via e-mail by the specified date and time in Section D. RFI KEY ACTION DATES AND TIMES. Questions are to be submitted via email as described in Section VII, Contact Information.

The following must be included in the e-mail inquiry:

- On the subject line of the e-mail, include
  RFI #OPR22116, OPR (MENDS) – Vendor Questions
- Vendor name, contact person, telephone number, and e-mail address, as part of the sender's contact information
- A description of the subject or issue in question, or discrepancy found in the RFI.
- RFI section, page number and/or other information useful in identifying the specific problem or issue in question; and
- The vendor's question(s).

At its discretion, the State may contact vendors to seek clarification of any inquiry received. The State may respond to questions directly to the vendor or if deemed necessary, release an addendum or updated RFI.

G. RFI FORMAT AND SUBMISSION

Responses to this RFI are due by the date and time stated in Section D., RFI Key Action Dates and Times. Responses must be submitted via e-mail to the **OPR Administration, Contracts Unit:**

Contracts@opr.ca.gov

Submission email must include the following information in the e-mail subject line:
RFI# OPR22116 – [ENTITY NAME].

OPR asks vendors to include the following:

1. **Vendor profile questions** on signed cover letter that include the following elements:
   a. Vendor name, address, telephone number; and
   b. Contact information including the name, title, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the vendor's primary contact person for this RFI.
   c. A narrative describing the following:
      i. The vendor's primary business focus, areas of expertise, certifications and/or credentials relevant to the content of this RFI and experience with similar solutions; and

ii. ii. The vendor’s experience doing business with other governments and the State of California.

d. Specific questions regarding business model, customer base and staff size & references
e. The total response should not exceed **15** pages.

2. **Capability specific qualifications** questions including:
   a. Detailed questions regarding the vendor’s proposed solution (COTS, MOTS, or custom)

3. **Cross capability** questions encompassing**:**
   a. Continuous improvement mechanisms, and
   b. Implementation & timelines

4. **Cost** including: a high-level cost estimate/cost model for the services/solutions described, explaining one-time (design, configuration, testing, data conversion, training(s), and deployment) and recurring (annual subscriptions, licenses, and fees) costs. If a different fee structure or payment model is used, please explain.

5. **Response to RFI Questions:** While not required, vendors are encouraged to answer all questions. If a vendor elects not to respond to a question, please provide feedback on why.

   Attachment A has been provided as reference of a complete list of questions included in the Survey.

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.

H. QUESTIONS

Provide a detailed response to each of the following items if proposing a COTS or MOTS solution.

QUESTION	RESPONSE
What gaps, if any, exist within your proposed product based upon the requirements listed above?	
Describe risks and issues encountered on other implementation projects for this proposed solution and how they were mitigated and or addressed.	
Describe your proposed solution's custom modification development processes, including service fees.	
Describe your proposed solution in creating, implementing, and customizing workflows.	
Explain how your Extract, Transform, Load (ETL) strategy and processes	
If MOTS, describe your proposed system development lifecycle (SDLC)	

Provide a detailed response to each of the following items if proposing a custom solution.

QUESTION	RESPONSE
Describe your proposed technology development stack including 1) programming language(s); 2) architecture; 3) design patterns; 4) best practices	
Describe your proposed system development lifecycle (SDLC)	

Provide a detailed response to each of the following items, irrespective if proposed solution is COTS, MOTS, or custom built.

QUESTION	RESPONSE
Describe any installation requirements necessary for your solution service offering to be functional.	
Describe your solution's proposed solution compliance with California's security requirements (refer to requirements for specific sections)	
Describe your proposed solution's compliance with accessibility for California State Government websites.	
Describe your proposed solution's role-based access.	
Have you implemented a similar solution with other state agencies or private companies? If so, please provide the	

QUESTION	RESPONSE
name and contact information for each agency and/or company.	
Describe any third-party alliances, relationships, or dependencies for the proposed solution.	
What training do you provide to administrators and users?	
Describe the training documentation that you provide for users and administrators.	
Provide any additional information not requested above which you deem important and relevant to this RFI.	
Describe the risks and or issues that you foresee with implementing your solution for California.	
Describe your experience and strategy for interfacing with external systems	
Explain your experience optimizing Google Analytics	
Explain your electronic payment experience and strategy	
Explain your experience and strategy for optimizing and tuning relational databases	
What other alternatives besides single page applications (SPA) exist and what is recommended approach?	