November 4, 2015

Request for Information (RFI) #2015-04
for
Web Based Transportation Weather Forecasting Services for NYSDOT

Questions and Answers

**Question #1:** Other than the individual 600 user access noted, is the portal planned to be accessed via the general public?
   — Are all 600 users domiciled on the East Coast?
   — What is the % utilization via desktop vs. smartphone

**Answer:** The 600 accounts are for NYSDOT users, and possibly very limited NYS Gov’t users such as from State Emergency Management Office, or municipal snow and ice contractors. User accounts would not exceed 600. Users are domiciled on the east coast (NYS), although some users may require occasional access while in travel status. We don’t know the per cent utilization of desktop vs. smartphone, but users should have unimpeded access using either method.

**Question #2:** Are there any internal requirements to the System Architecture and/or IT Network established to support this product?

**Answer:** System must work entirely outside of the state IT network/system. It must be fully accessible via internet. More detail on the IT browser requirements may be provided in the potential RFP.

**Question #3:** Does NYSDOT have GIS Layers available to awarded vendor detailing the NYSDOT regional boundaries, headquarters, etc.?

**Answer:** Yes. These layers are available and can be provided through a clearinghouse url.

**Question #4:** For agency specific overlays that will be required to display on the map, what format will vendors be required to support?

**Answer:** NYSDOT may provide overlay layers as shapefile, Esri geodatabase, or an Esri or OGC web service.

**Question #5:** A system requirement in section 2.2 is RWIS data hosting. Can you clarify the data acquisition, data warehousing, and external data retrieval characteristics of your RWIS network? Does the retrieval of data from this RWIS require interface to sources inside of the NYSDOT IT system?
Answer: For the purposes of the RFI, the vendor should plan to routinely poll the NYSDOT RWIS site RPUs and bring the data back for forecasting purposes. The sensors are not accessed from within NYSDOT IT system. Sensors are open-protocol and NTCIP compliant.

**Question #6:** Is the vendor being requested to provide "Meteorologist consultation directly on-line and by toll free phone number, available 24 hours/day, seven days/week, including participation in emergency operational planning phone conferences and webinars."

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question #7:** For the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) data hosting and pavement temperature forecasting with or without RWIS sensors requirement; what is the expected number of RWIS and Forecast Points?

**Answer:** Approximately 40 actual RWIS sites and 100 “virtual” pavement temperature forecast sites.

**Question #8:** Would NYSDOT be willing to clarify the requirement for lightning information within this document? Would this lightning data require alerting? What level of accuracy is necessary? What type spatial and temporal latency is acceptable? Web vs. Alerting (if applicable)?

**Answer:** Typical NWS lightning/thunderstorms alerts are required. Additionally, prospective vendors should describe what type of lightning alerts can be provided such that field supervisors can be alerted of lightning threats in their work areas via web, and in vicinity of their physical locations via smart phones.

**Question #9:** Would NYSDOT be willing to describe in further detail the information necessary for the “Wild Land Fire” requirements?

**Answer:** Generally would follow NWS alerting protocols.

**Question #10:** How many operational RWIS sites does NYSDOT currently maintain?

**Answer:** NYSDOT currently has a total of 39 sites, but several of those are not “fully” operational. Repaired existing sites, as well as a few additional sites may come on-line during the contract period. It is expected that data from these sites will be incorporated into the proposed weather service.

**Question #11:** Does NYSDOT expect to expand their RWIS deployment during this contract period?
Answer: A few additional sites may become active on Long Island, NY or other parts of the state during the contract period. Some existing sites may be repaired also. These would not be considered a significant expansion of RWIS service.

**Question #12:** The first paragraph of section 2.1 indicates that contracted services maintain roughly 7,300 miles during the snow and ice season. Is it anticipated that these agencies will have access to the services described in the Scope of Services?

Answer: The contracted snow and ice services are with municipalities (counties, towns, villages). It is possible we may permit access for some, but this will not cause us to exceed the 600 user accounts statewide.

**Question #13:** Is it your expectation that all services provided via the website also be available via mobile devices such as smart phones or do you anticipate that mobile devices have access to a subset of the website capabilities?

Answer: Most of the features should be accessible via website and through mobile devices. We understand that some features may not be available to mobile devices. RFI and potential RFP should identify the limitations.

**Question #14:** What is the current system architecture for the www.511ny.org site and who manages it?

Answer: The 511NY.org website is hosted by a consultant (iBi) on behalf of NYSDOT. The system is comprised of several components that conflate traveler and traffic information which is then presented to the public through the central 511 system, which includes the 511 IVR, the 511NY website, and the 511 mobile App. NYSDOT manages the system and is responsible for ensuring the system’s ongoing operation is in alignment with Department goals and vision. The 511NY vendor, iBi, is the technology company responsible for providing and maintaining the hardware, software, communications, and data storage & management that makes the system work.

**Question #15:** Regarding weather forecasting system requirements including Road Weather Information System (RWIS) data hosting, does “data hosting” imply the vendor is to routinely poll the NYSDOT RWIS site RPU’s and bring the data back for forecasting purposes? Or is the vendor to take a feed from NYSDOT’s existing data hosting solution?

Answer: For the purposes of the RFI, the vendor should plan to routinely poll the NYSDOT RWIS site RPU’s and bring the data back for forecasting purposes.

**Question #16:** NYSDOT is looking for a statewide contract as indicated. Can NYSDOT provide an anticipated number of detailed pavement forecast sites/routes within each region?
Answer: There are approximately 39 actual RWIS sites across the state. We anticipate 10 “virtual” pavement temperature forecast sites per region, or 100 “virtual” sites. A few additional sites may become active on Long Island, NY or other parts of the state during the contract period. Some existing sites may be repaired also.

**Question #17:** The requirements in section 2.2 reference map displays in several of the bullets but do not specifically reference tabular data presentations. Do you desire to have data displays and forecasts (especially site specific information) presented in tabular and graphic formats?

*Answer: Yes.*

**Question #18:** What is the expected duration of archival records?

*Answer: At least 10 years.*

**Question #19:** Would NYSDOT accept all WebEx Training both initial and refresher to reduce costs?

*Answer: NYSDOT would prefer on-site training for initial sessions; webex would be fine for refresher training.*

**Question #20:** Is vendor expected to develop all training programs as well as training materials?

*Answer: Yes.*

**Question #21:** How many locations exist in the state will require on-site training sessions?

*Answer: Ten locations (one for each region).*

**Question #22:** To clarify, the vendor is being requested to provide the IT Network and subsequent infrastructure and on-going maintenance supporting the hosting of the Web based forecasting product. Is this to be an annual separate maintenance contract upon completion of the system?

*Answer: The vendor is required to provide a web based service, totally outside of the NYSDOT IT system.*