

Greenville Utilities Commission
RFP 20-33 For Budgeting Software Questions And Answers

1. Please provide the number of users for this solution. A user would be defined as someone providing data input, approvals, administration, and other user activities. 'Read only' of reports does not require a user license.
 - A. We would like to have access for a total of 40 – 50 users. Of this total, 5 users would be administrative users who will need access to configure and administer the system, approximately 35 users will need access to input data, and the remainder will need view only access. Of the 40 data input users, approximately 15 – 20 will need access to the capital planning module, and approximately 5 will need access to the long-term planning module.

2. Please detail the issues/concerns with the current solution. Is there any additional functionality you are wanting with the new solution that you are not currently receiving in your existing solution?
 - A. Our current solution is not very user friendly for the end user and requires quite a lot of administration support. Most of the calculations, including allocations, are done with batch processes which run at night because of the time it takes for them to run. Pulling metadata from our accounting system (EBS), such as payroll information, takes several hours and if there are any errors, the errors have to be corrected and the process has to be started over again. When we first start the budget process it can take several days to get the personnel information updated in our current system. Information is not readily available after it has been entered and trying to meet budget deadlines when information is rapidly changing is really a challenge. Our main goal is to find something that will be easier to use, require less maintenance, and provide accurate information on a more timely basis. At a minimum we need to be able to produce personnel and operating budgets, capital budgets, and long-term financial forecasts.

3. The RFP provides a spreadsheet detailing the requirements for the new system. Are you using your current system for a similar footprint (i.e. operating, capital plan, long-term forecast, debt) or do these requirements expand on how you are using the current system?
 - A. We use our current system for personnel, operating, capital plan, and long-term forecast. It does not have debt funding projection capabilities.

4. Do you prefer Cloud, Hosted or On-Premise?
 - A. We are leaning towards Cloud but are willing to consider any solution presented. We just want to get the best solution for GUC.

5. Please confirm that for the implementation estimate, you'd like a cost estimate to automate the following: Personnel Budgeting/Forecasting, Operating Budget Creation, & Short-Term Projections, Capital Budget Creation, Long-term Forecasting, and Debt Funding.
 - A. Yes, we would like options for all of those.

6. Can you please provide a sample spreadsheet or any documentation that describes the methodology for Long-Term Forecasting?
 - A. We do not have a spreadsheet that demonstrates the methodology but will provide an explanation. Our current system uses growth percentages which are applied to the completed budgeted numbers, but also allows for exceptions. The growth percentages are very granular and differ by fund, revenue type, and expenditure type. Certain expenditures which are already known, such as debt service, are entered manually rather than using a growth percentage.

7. Please expand on current data validation process used by client and list any key requirements for validation. (re: General, row 8)
 - A. Currently we compare imported data to our financial system (EBS) records, i.e. GL trial balance, employee records, etc. We also validate the budget journals pushed to EBS from Hyperion to ensure

they reflect the correct budget numbers. We have to have a way to validate that the information in budget system agrees with EBS.

8. How does the client define city turnover payment and what are the calculations that go into it?
 - A. GUC pays an annual transfer to the City of Greenville (commonly called turnover) which is calculated on a 3-year average of fixed assets less out standing debt. The budgeting system will need to be able to retain the full GAAP trial balance in order to generate this calculation, which is why we have this shown as desirable rather than mandatory.
9. The RFP states that Greenville Utilities Commission is not completely satisfied with the functionality provided by Hyperion. Can you please elaborate on which aspects of Hyperion are not satisfactory?
 - A. Please see question 2.
10. Prior to releasing the RFP, which software vendors provided demos for the GUC budget staff?
 - A. We saw generalized demos for Hyperion Cloud, Questica, Adaptive Insights, and A3 Solutions.
11. Is GUC willing to entertain a bid from an implementation partner, while procuring the software through a reseller or directly from the software vendor?
 - A. Yes
12. Does GUC require a fixed price implementation bid for this RFP?
 - A. No
13. Do you budget at the same level that you report Actuals?
 - A. No. We budget at a more detailed level than we report actuals.
14. At what time period detail is the budget created and managed? (Single Period Annual / Monthly)
 - A. The budget is created at the annual level and then split into a monthly budget based on GUC defined criteria. Management is on a monthly basis.
15. How many reports are expected to be migrated to the new budgeting and forecasting tool? Are any new reports required?
 - A. One of the deficiencies of our current system is reporting. We have a few reports that are generated by the system that we use but we use Smartview (Excel add-in) for a lot of our reporting needs. The number of reports that will need to be migrated or designed will depend on the quality of the query tool provided for ad hoc reporting.
16. Will the data/reporting hierarchies remain the same?
 - A. Yes
17. Are there new calculations required?
 - A. Please refer to the RFP requirements. Any calculation listed as desirable would be a new calculation.
18. Are the current business rules/calculations working as desired? If not, how many business rules/calculations will need to be updated?
 - A. In general, the business rules/calculations have the results we want, but the processes are too time consuming.
19. Are the data interfaces working as expected? Are flat files being used as the interface?
 - A. Yes, the data interfaces are working as expected. We use a combination of flat files and SQL queries.
20. Do you prefer that we provide the end user training or use a train-the-trainer method to provide training to super users and they will train the rest of the users?
 - A. Please quote both options.

21. How many years of historical data are required? Are you looking to perform significant reporting on past data?
- A. At least 3 years of historical data. We are not planning to perform a significant amount of reporting on past data.
22. How many resources from the GUC comprise the core group that will be heavily involved in the implementation?
- A. 6
23. Is budgeting done by employee, by position or both?
- A. Both
24. Are there calculations by Union? If so, how many unions are involved and are the calculations by grade and/or step?
- A. We do not have any labor unions.