2022 - 2024 IT Strategic Plan

Agency: 411 Department of Forestry

Date: 9/24/2022

Current IT State

In this section, describe the high-level strategy the agency will use to manage existing operational IT investments over the next year to 5 years. This section should align with identified Business Requirements for Existing Technology (BReTs). At minimum, please address the following questions in your description of your agencys strategy for managing existing operational IT investments:

Are there existing IT investments that will require additional funding over the next year to 5 years, such as license renewals, re-competition of current IT contracts, or system enhancements required by the Agency Strategic Plan?

If there are systems that will no longer support the agencys business needs, either through poor performance or excessive cost, how does IT leadership in the agency plan to address the issues?

If the agency does not have the staff or funding to meet increasing demand for IT services, how will IT leadership fulfill the requests?

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) is under the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, VDOF has been a state agency in Virginia for more than 100 years. The agency's mission is to ensure a healthy and robust forest environment in Virginia. Forestry impacts both the environment and economy in Virginia. Clean water and healthy forests are a priority, as is supporting Virginia's 3rd largest industry, forestry. VDOF uses an agency specific business application, the Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS), as a data collection tool to support almost all agency programs and services. IFRIS is also the agency's staff time-keeping and leave system of record. The IFRIS application is approximately 16 years old, and has had modules added and modified over the years. It is a custom-build application built, hosted and supported by the Timmons Group. The time and leave tracking portions of the application will be retired when the agency goes live on Cardinal payroll in October 2022. In addition to data collection for agency programs and services IFRIS is the data collection point for the federal grants and non-profit organization grants awarded to the agency, as well as those grants the agency awards to our forestry partners and constituents. These grants include federal Forest Legacy and Stewardship grants as well as those from conservation organizations. IFRIS is also the data collection point for landowner forest management plans, documenting landowner meetings and data, conservation easements and stewardship, cost share programs and landowner incentive payments, timber harvest water guality inspections, and tracking of agency equipment and assets. Funding has been included in the Governor's FY22-24 introduced budget to perform an analysis of IFRIS, to determine how an automated system can best support the agency and VDOF's programs into the future. This includes looking at agency business to determine how technology can support and enhance our business practices.

The analysis is already in progress and we anticipate this analysis will lead to a new IT project to either replace or substantially overhaul IFRIS.

Factors Impacting the Current IT

In this section, the agency will describe the changes in their business environment that will require or mandate changes to the agencys current IT investments. These are requirements and mandates from external sources, such as other agencies or business partners, the agencys customer base, product and service providers, or new federal or state legislation or regulations. The agency must identify the business value of the change, any important deadlines that must be met, and the consequences if the deadlines are not met. In your discussion, be sure to note whether the proposed enhancements are funded or not. If the agencys existing current IT investments will not need enhancement due to requirements or mandates from external sources in the foreseeable future, the agency should enter the following text rather than leave the Factors Impacting the Current IT section blank

For each mandated change, summarize your agencys response from your Agency Strategic Plan, and is it the opinion of agency IT leadership that the IT portion of the response is adequately funded?

Do the mandated changes effect IT in other Commonwealth agencies, or in other states? If so, how?

There are no known external or internal factors that will require changes to VDOF IT investments. If budget proposals in the Governor's introduced budget are approved, we may be adding a module to IFRIS and/or its successor to assist in carrying out a new Hardwood tree incentive program to support growing hardwood trees in Virginia. This new incentive program would be similar to a current incentive program for growing pine trees. Because of that we anticipate the cost of a new module to be minimal. In any event our goal is to analyze IFRIS taking into account the age of the application, moving time keeping to Cardinal payroll, and it's maintenance and support and determine the best path going forward for the agency. Because of timing there may be overlap of the analysis of IFRIS and development of a new module to assist in the collection and reporting of data related to a Hardwood Incentive Program. We will need to make sure that we continue to support existing and any new agency programs while we determine next steps for IFRIS or a successor. This means continuing to work with Timmons, for IFRIS maintenance/support, during this period. In looking at a new or revised IFRIS we will be looking at all possibilities including customizable solutions.

IT staffing continues to be a challenge for VDOF. In large part, this is driven by the size and limited resources at the agencies disposal. A significant challenge is meeting the demands of a centralized computing environment. The ongoing needs to meet data security requirements assigned to an ISO, as well as strategic plan updates and changes, IT project requirements and other ongoing and ad hoc requirements are significant for any agency, but are more problematic for small agencies with limited staff. The requirements for security, inventory, various system upgrades and changes, and other mandatory requirements are the same for all agencies and are especially difficult for agencies with limited staffing. The assistance provided by both funding and contract personnel to assist with meeting agency IT security compliance is helpful, but there are still significant tasks that fall to the agency to complete. The challenge continues to be trying to meet agency computing needs and keeping up with central agency requirements. We will continue to work with agency management, VITA customer management and DPB staff to address these issues from multiple perspectives.

Proposed IT Solutions

In this section, describe the high-level strategy the agency will use to initiate new IT investments over the next year to 5 years in support of the agency strategic objectives documented in your Agency Strategic Plan. The agency does not need to consider specific technologies at this time, however, the strategy should identify how the IT implementation will provide business value to the organization. This section should align with identified Business Requirements for New Technology (BRnTs). At minimum, please address the following questions in your description of your agencys strategy for initiating new IT investments:

What are the most important solutions, based on the priority assigned to the requirements by the business sponsors in your agency, and what is the approach to achieving these priority solutions?

If any new IT initiatives will be started in the upcoming budget biennium, is it the opinion of agency IT leadership that it is adequately funded?

Does the agencys current IT staff have the appropriate skill set needed to support future agency technologies? If not, what skill sets need to be acquired?

If the agency will be engaged in multiple new IT initiatives, how will agency IT staff and agency subject matter experts be used across the initiatives?

The most important current initiative is the analysis of the IFRIS application to provide information to determine a path forward for either revision or replacement. Currently IFRIS is critical to the agency and is accessed daily by agency staff to carry-out VDOF's core agency functions, as well as support agency administrative functioning. The program data and information stored in IFRIS is critical to successfully meeting the agency's mission to customers. The administrative aspects of the system are also critical to ensuring accurate and complete staff pay and leave accounting. We will be transitioning from our current time/leave accounting through IFRIS to the new Cardinal payroll system in October 2022.

It was decided to build a prototype of single module of iFRIS to gauge overall project scope after the analysis of the current application was complete. The prototype will be built using using currently allocated funds with outside expertise along with in house IT staff. The prototype is anticipated to be completed by 12/31/2022. The next step would be for VDOF to request funding in FY2024 for this project to implement rest of the iFRIS modules.

Current IT staff have the appropriate skill levels to meet current agency technology needs. The agency is committed to ensuring that technology staff are sufficiently trained to support whatever technologies the agency used in the future. As with other agency staff, IT employees benefit by training to upgrade skills and remain current with emerging technologies and concepts.

As the agency adopts technologies new to the organization we will likely utilize experts in those technologies to ensure agency staff are using them correctly and most effectively. We will determine whether to use outside expertise or in house resources with a case by case analysis of each circumstance.

IT Strategic Plan Budget Tables

Agency: 41	411 Department of Forestry				
Date: 9/2	24/2022				
		Current l	T Services		
		Costs Year 1		Costs Year 2	
Category		GF	NGF	GF	NGF
Projected Service Fe	es	\$982,736.08	\$419,846.86	\$1,012,218.17	\$432,442.27
VITA Infrastructure C	hanges				
Estimated VITA Infras	structure	\$982,736.08	\$419,846.86	\$1,012,218.17	\$432,442.27
Specialized Infrastrue	cture				
Agency IT Staff					
Non-agency IT Staff					
Cloud Computing Se	rvice				
Other Application Co	sts				
Total:		\$982,736.08	\$419,846.86	\$1,012,218.17	\$432,442.27

Proposed IT Investments				
	Costs Year 1		Costs Year 2	
Category	GF	NGF	GF	NGF
Major IT Projects:				
Non-Major IT Projects:				
Agency-Level IT Projects:	\$108,042.00			
Major Stand Alone IT Procurements:				
Non-Major Stand Alone IT Procurements:				
Agency-Level Stand Alone IT Procurements:				
Procurement Adjustment for Staffing:				
Total:	\$108,042.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Projected Total IT Budget				
	Costs Year 1		Costs Year 2	
Category	GF	NGF	GF	NGF
Current IT Services:	\$982,736.08	\$419,846.86	\$1,012,218.17	\$432,442.27
Proposed IT Investments:	\$108,042.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total:	\$1,090,778.08	\$419,846.86	\$1,012,218.17	\$432,442.27

Business Requirements For Technology

Agency:	
Date:	9/24/2022

IT Strategic Plan Projects

Agency:	411 Department of Forestry			
Date:	9/24/2022			
DOF IFRIS Cost Share I	Project			
Category 4	Investment Business Case Approval			
paper and spreadsheets with a centralized locatic landowner data and fore	final distribution of funds to the landowner. to monitor and track applications, complete on for the critical pieces of information. DOI stry activities on land tracts to add this add ocated and final disbursement will be integr	ed activities, insp F will leverage its itional data into	ections and calculation of disbursements investments in IFRIS to use existing	
Project Start Date		Project End Date		
Estimated Costs:				
Estimated Costs:	Total	General Fund	Non-General Fund	
Project Cost	Total \$350,000.00		Non-General Fund	
			Non-General Fund \$0.00	

Project Related Procurements

There are no procurements for this project

IT Strategic Plan Procurements

There are no stand alone procurements for this agency.