

Questions and Answers

Asset & Work Management Trusted Advisor RFP Specification No. IT25-0311F

All interested parties had the opportunity to submit questions in writing by email to Brittany Riolo, Senior Buyer by date questions were due. The answers to the questions received are provided below and posted to the City's website at www.TacomaPurchasing.org. Navigate to [Current Contracting Opportunities / Services Solicitations](#), and then click *Questions and Answers* for this Specification. This information IS NOT considered an addendum. Respondents should consider this information when submitting their proposals.

- 1. Question: Will the selected vendor be restricted from participating in any future work identified in the roadmap deliverable, or will such restrictions apply only to future opportunities in which the vendor provides TPU with as-needed RFP Development Support?**

Answer: No, the selected vendor will not be restricted from participating in related future work.

- 2. Question: The RFP states, "Summary report should leverage pain points identified in previous exercises and include high level acknowledgement of potential recommendations for the identified goals/pain points/challenges." Can you advise what exercises have been completed earlier?**

Answer: Power, Water, Public Work, and Environmental Services departments met together in 2025 and identified the high-level business drivers and pain points with preliminary analysis. Power and Water departments did W&AM related strategic planning and maturity assessment with IAM Methodology (Institute of Asset Management) in the past 10 years.

- 3. Question: Has a formal leadership coalition already been established to oversee this work, and does its membership represent the specific cross-section of users and departments we are tasked to collaborate with?**

Answer: Yes

- 4. Question: To what extent has a centralized governance structure been empowered to enforce the "standardization vs. differentiation" decisions that will inform roadmaps?**

Answer: The sponsors of the project are division leaders and empowered to make decisions and direct their staff on the expected approach regarding standardization vs. differentiation. A centralized governance structure is in place but does not strictly enforce the "standardization vs. differentiation" decisions yet.

- 5. Question: Does the City have a pre-existing definition of "Critical" vs. "Non-Critical" assets that is consistent across all business units, or is part of our alignment work to reconcile different risk-tolerance levels between TPU and General Government?**

Answer: This is department specific. For example, Power considers their meters as 'run to failure' and then replaces the asset, whereas Water inspects their meters on a scheduled inspection routine. Aligning work to reconcile different risk-tolerance levels is outside the scope of the Trusted Advisor RFP and the assessment work.

Questions and Answers

- 6. Question: Regarding the integration between SAP and ESRI – are there any known integration issues, scoped fixes or new integrations on the horizon for 2026/27?**

Answer: Yes. Power, Water, and Public Works are all using, or intend to use, the same GIS tool and are working towards shared visibility of asset maps. Environmental Services uses a custom-built app but all departments are using ODATA services, and all are continuing to improve their map's functionality.

- 7. Question: To what degree is the City open to "process-led" changes versus "technology-led" changes—specifically if SAP is found to be underutilized due to internal process hurdles rather than technical gaps?**

Answer: This is a driver for the assessment. The City wants to better understand how our current technologies may or may not be utilized properly. There are areas where our processes/practices hinder our ability to effectively utilize available technologies. While departments seem to be open to the idea of 'process-led' changes, it is typical for departments to purchase software and try to make it fit the existing process.

- 8. Question: Does the City's IT team have a documented history of custom SAP enhancements or will the analysis require a ground-up technical discovery to map these customizations and integrations? The same question can be applied to 2026/27?**

Answer: Yes. The IT team has documented ABAP and configuration updates/changes that have been made to SAP.

- 9. Question: To surface field-level innovations and shadow systems, what level of collaboration can leadership guarantee to staff so they feel comfortable sharing workflows that may exist outside of official IT governance?**

Answer: IT doesn't "govern" the department's business processes; therefore, field staff are likely to be very open to discuss the way they perform various business processes.

- 10. Question: Will our team be granted "unfiltered" access to field crews (e.g., ride-alongs or site shadowing), and are there specific safety certifications required that could inform our key-personnel decisions?**

Answer: Yes, if necessary, there will be access to field crews and possibly safety documents required.

- 11. Question: How does the City currently measure or track "change fatigue" among staff, and are there specific legacy projects that have left staff particularly skeptical?**

Answer: The City did many assessments for "Pain Points" in the past years and did feel fatigue for this. As a result, conducting additional pain point identification/assessment is out of scope in this RFP.

- 12. Question: Are there "blackout periods" or major looming initiatives (e.g., a major SAP version upgrade or large-scale capital projects) that must be treated as immovable constraints in the 3-, 5-, and 10-year roadmap? OR could impact our ability to access specific groups in 2026/27?**

Answer: The City completed their migration from SAP ECC to S/4HANA in November 2025. This was primarily a technical migration and now that we are live, we are tackling

Questions and Answers

transformative initiatives in phases. The Work & Asset Management initiative is the next phase in our overall SAP Roadmap.

- 13. Question: How does the City define its industry peers? Are we looking at utilities of similar size and geography, or those that have specifically mastered the SAP/ESRI integration we are evaluating? Are they named? Does the city have existing contacts?**

Answer: The City considers other utilities and government entities as peers, such as Snohomish County PUD (SnoPud), Puget Sound Energy (PSE), and Seattle City Light. City of Tacoma is a member of America's SAP User Group (ASUG) and often finds peers through that membership.

- 14. Question: Which SAP modules are explicitly in scope for this effort (e.g., PM, MM, FI/CO, PS), and which are explicitly out of scope?**

Answer: We currently utilize SAP core modules, PM, WH, MM, SD, FI/CO, PS, HR, IS-PS, and IS-U. We utilize work orders, maintenance notification, and service notifications which are being phased out by SAP. Additionally, The City understands that Stockroom Mgmt will become unsupported in 2040 and will need to possibly utilize Extended Warehouse Mgmt (Basic EWM) or something else.

- 15. Question: Has the City identified a prioritized list of SAP enhancements, or is the selected consultant expected to assist with identifying and prioritizing enhancement opportunities?**

Answer: Both. The City has a list of current pain points and challenges that are not prioritized. We are expecting the selected vendor to review the pain points, evaluate our current solutions, and assist with identifying the most effective and cost-efficient approach to address the issues.

- 16. Question: Does the City expect enhancements to be primarily SAP standard configuration, or should bidders assume custom development will be required?**

Answer: Ideally, the City would expect standard configuration to be considered unless custom development is required due to specific restraints/requirements of the to-be business process.

- 17. Question: What existing integrations with SAP must be supported or enhanced (e.g., GIS, SCADA, mobile workforce), and who owns the middleware and integration support?**

Answer: The City has approximately 12 integration (middleware) tools being used and 150+ interfaces with SAP across all of the modules. IT is the owner of the middleware and ownership of the interfaces vary between the various departments and IT.

- 18. Question: What is the current state of SAP master data quality (assets, work orders, inventory), and will data cleanup and governance activities be included in scope?**

Answer: The current master data quality varies amongst the different departments and in some areas data cleanup might be necessary. The assessment scope does not include data cleanup efforts, but these should be identified and included on the roadmap for future planning.

Questions and Answers

19. Question: Are new operational or management dashboards expected as deliverables, and what reporting tools are currently in use (standard SAP, Fiori, BW, third-party BI)?

Answer: Implementation of tools is not a deliverable. However, the identification of tools necessary for a comprehensive solution and the best approach for implementation of these should be included in the recommendation and roadmap. SAP T-code, Fiori Tile, and Snowflake Tableau reporting tools are currently in use.

20. Question: Are SAP mobile solutions currently deployed, and are offline capabilities required for field users as part of this engagement?

Answer: A third-party SAP mobile solution is currently used that does have offline capabilities deployed. This solution will be reaching end of standard support soon. Part of the assessment will be to evaluate existing pain points and issues related to our mobile solution, understand the requirements, and recommend a future approach/solution. This is required for field users as part of this engagement.

21. Question: What level of testing support is expected from the consultant, if any, and will City business users be available for user acceptance testing and formal sign-off?

Answer: The City business users will be available for user acceptance testing and formal sign-off if needed. The City doesn't believe user acceptance testing would be necessary for the delivery of an assessment.

22. Question: Who will serve as the City's project sponsor and day-to-day decision authority for scope, priorities, and acceptance?

Answer: The City has five Sponsors from Power, Water, Environmental Services, Public Work, and ITD Departments. A 9-member Steering Committee with support from a RFP core team will manage day-to-day decision authority for scope, priorities, and acceptance.

23. Question: What contract structure is anticipated (T&M, not-to-exceed, task order), and how will scope changes and additional enhancement requests be approved and priced?

Answer: We are anticipating a fixed price bid for this assessment. As this engagement is for an assessment, no enhancement requests are anticipated. Scope changes will go through the project governance structure.

24. Question: Are there any fixed deadlines, system freeze windows, or operational constraints that could impact delivery timing?

Answer: There are no anticipated impacts to the Assessment timeline.

25. Question: Does participating in this project preclude the successful bidder from participating on projects that will be derived from this endeavor?

Answer: No, the selected vendor will not be restricted from participating in related future work.

26. Question: Please confirm that the cover, table of contents, and cover letter are excluded from the 20-page page count.

Answer: Cover, cover letter, and ToC are excluded from the 20-page limit.

Questions and Answers

The “20-page limit” is a guideline to prevent excessively long submissions, but it is not a graded criterion. Use your discretion.

- 27. Question: The evaluation criteria table on page 12 states that sections 10.8 sustainability and 10.9 equity in contracting are worth 5 points. However, the description of those sections on pages 14 and 15 say they are pass/fail. Please clarify which is accurate.**

Answer: Pass/Fail in this context means that either five or zero points will be awarded instead of a range. Five points will be awarded for each of the requirements fulfilled or zero points will be awarded for none of the requirements fulfilled.

- 28. Question: Please confirm graphics, tables, and exhibits can be reduced font size (less than 11 pt) as long as legible.**

Answer: Yes - graphics, tables, and exhibits can be reduced font size as long as the content is still legible. The “20-page limit” is a guideline to prevent excessively long submissions, but it is not a graded criterion. Use your discretion.

- 29. Question: Please confirm that a total of three (PDF) submittal pieces are required: 1) Complete Package (PDF – including both Section 10 and Appendix A); 2) Only Appendix A (PDF); and, 3) Only Section 10 (PDF).**

Answer: The submittal needs to have both Section 10 and a completed Appendix A, and it needs to have at least one electronic copy submitted. While it is preferred, there is no requirement to have everything in PDF form.

- 30. Question: Please clarify how the 15 points will be determined based on the labor rates. So the City can sufficiently compare rates among respondents, would the city provide a standard list of labor categories/descriptions for the hourly rates?**

Answer: Our preference is a fixed bid based on deliverables, not time and material.

- 31. Question: For the required deliverables (Current State, Gap Analysis, Roadmap), does the City expect a high-level, strategic view or a more detailed set of recommendations, recognizing that detailed process design and documentation are out of scope?**

Answer: The expectation is that the 5- and 10-year roadmaps will be high-level but the 3-year roadmap needs to provide sufficient details that will allow the City to build business cases for near-term improvements.

- 32. Question: For the SAP utilization analysis, does the City anticipate a broad evaluation across major functional areas or a deeper evaluation of select SAP modules?**

Answer: The main focus on this effort is the work & asset management functions along with areas that are impacted such as Finance, HR, etc. Therefore, deeper evaluation in the work & asset management areas and broader in the other impacted areas.

- 33. Question: What prior assessments, analyses, or related work (if any) have already been completed, and will those materials be made available to the Trusted Advisor?**

Questions and Answers

Answer: Power, Water, Public Works, and Environmental Services departments met together in 2025 to identify the high-level business drivers and pain points with preliminary analysis. A Phase 0 Assessment was performed in 2023 for our S/4 migration and EAM/Work & Asset Management was included in this effort, e.g. the pain points and a recommendation for a deeper assessment. The artifacts from these efforts will be made available.

34. Question: Will existing system architecture diagrams, integration inventories, or other relevant technical documentation be provided to support the SAP utilization assessment?

Answer: Yes, they can be provided to the selected trusted advisor.

35. Question: Does the City maintain any existing metrics, maturity models, benchmarks, or performance data that reflect variation or standardization across the six departments/divisions?

Answer: No

36. Question: Can the City identify the specific teams, departments, or roles the Trusted Advisor will partner with during this effort?

Answer: Yes

37. Question: Will the City be able to provide context on any known collaboration challenges, decision-right constraints, or governance issues related to asset and work management across departments?

Answer: Yes, context will be provided as needed.

38. Question: Is there a documented record of pain points, risks, or observations related to asset and workforce management that the Trusted Advisor may access and leverage?

Answer: Yes

39. Question: The RFP references a phased approach, does the City envision any specific milestones or sequencing considerations within the first year?

Answer: The City would prefer 5-7 month duration for RFP assessment work. The overall RFP for publishing to closeout is anticipated to have a duration of 12 months.

40. Question: Should planning for the 3, 5, and 10-year roadmap assume steady funding, constrained funding, or multiple funding scenarios?

Answer: The City budgets on a 2-year cycle. The specific funding constraints can vary from cycle to cycle, so our preference is for the 3, 5, and 10-year roadmaps to focus on the desired outcomes for Work and Asset Management regardless of funding.

41. Question: Will the City be able to provide high-level budget parameters or financial assumptions to inform prioritization within the roadmap?

Answer: Yes, the City is able to provide a proposed high-level budget for the 3-year roadmap.

Questions and Answers

42. Question: Does the City have expectations regarding the frequency or timing of onsite work during the engagement?

Answer: This will be determined once a vendor has been selected. Respondents are encouraged to propose a sample schedule as part of their response.

43. Question: Is there a preferred cadence for formal updates, reports, or interim deliverables, particularly as they relate to progress toward the 3-, 5-, and 10-year horizons?

Answer: There is no preferred cadence. The City expects the selected Trusted Advisor to include this into their assessment methodology/approach.

44. Question: How does the City define success within the first 6–12 months of this engagement, primarily strategic clarity and decision support, or execution-ready planning?

Answer: The City expects the selected Trusted Advisor to include this success criteria in their assessment methodology/approach.

45. Question: Are we able to use font sizes smaller than 11pt for headers, footers, charts, graphics, and other elements apart from the main body text of the proposal as long as the text is legible?

Answer: Yes – Sub-11 sized font is ok for headers, footers, charts, graphics, and other elements as long as the content is still readable. The “20-page limit” is a guideline to prevent excessively long submissions, but it is not a graded criterion. Use your discretion.

46. Question: Can the header and footer be outside the 0.75" margin requirement if needed?

Answer: This is not a graded criterion. Use your discretion.

47. Question: Would the cover, cover letter, and table of contents count toward the 20-page limit?

Answer: The “20-page limit” is a guideline to prevent excessively long submissions, but it is not a graded criterion. Use your discretion.

48. Question: Are the Sustainability (10.8) and Equity in Contracting (10.9) sections considered 'required forms' that are excluded from the page count, or must they fit within the 20-page limit?

Answer: It is ok to exclude these two sections from the 20-page limit. The “20-page limit” is a guideline to prevent excessively long submissions, but it is not a graded criterion. Use your discretion.

49. Question: Will resources be available to work with advisor to help understand current processes?

Answer: Yes. The City resources will help the trusted advisor to understand current processes/practices.

50. Question: Are there any safety requirements when visiting sites?

Questions and Answers

Answer: Yes. Operational staff for those sites will support and provide necessary PPE instruction, etc. as appropriate.

- 51. Question: The RFP states that this engagement is for consulting and advisory services only. It also states that there is a \$250,000 budget and that this consulting engagement is anticipated to have a duration of 12 months. Based on the math, this works out to a bill rate of between \$125 - \$135 per hour for labor, which would support only one (1) consulting resource. This resource would be the “trusted advisor” for the entire engagement. Is this what the city of Tacoma is expecting?**

Answer: The RFP stated that the City anticipates the work associated with this effort to be completed *within* 12 months. The City prefers a 5-7 month duration for assessment work and development of the Roadmap, but will consider proposals that advocate for a slightly longer engagement. The City is interested in a fixed price bid based on deliverables.

- 52. Question: The RFP makes reference to this being a remote engagement. However, it does mention that the engagement will also require on-site work at facilities located in the City of Tacoma and at remote sites operated by the Power and Water Division of TPU. Many of these facilities are located in Pierce County, WA, but also include locations in King, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor, and Lewis Counties. Can we assume that Travel expenses will be reimbursed, and will be considered as additional budget outside of the \$250,000 cost budget allocated to the consultant’s billable time?**

Answer: This is a hybrid engagement. The RFP states that some of the work associated with this effort may be completed remotely, but that other tasks will require on site engagement. The City estimates that less than half of the time involved in this engagement will require onsite work. Further specificity will be developed during contracting. Travel expense is reimbursable based on actuals onsite.

- 53. Question: Are you looking for the selected vendor to provide a “trusted advisor” resource to help Tacoma or are you looking for the vendor to complete the project using their staff at a fixed price?**

Answer: The City is looking for the vendor to act as our trusted advisor complete this assessment project using their staff at a fixed price.