

# REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

## Wisconsin 511 Traveler Information

Issued January 8, 2007

Due February 2, 2007



The Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has issued this Request for Information (RFI) on 511 traveler information services.

The information gained will aid in the development of a subsequent solicitation for services to develop and deploy the Wisconsin statewide 511 system. Selection for those services is not contingent on responding to this RFI.

Background information on efforts to date in Wisconsin is provided on the TOPS website [http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/511\\_project.htm](http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/511_project.htm). Of particular relevance to this RFI are the Deployment Final Report and the Summary items under the Documents section of that web page.

The information requested includes the items listed below. Recognizing that this is a broad topic, responders are encouraged to provide as much or as little comment or information on any of these items as well as other aspects of 511 services that may be relevant to Wisconsin as we prepare to deploy 511.

### 1. Functional Requirements

The initial Wisconsin 511 system will provide floodgate capability; information on construction, major incidents, congestion, and road weather; access to neighboring 511 systems and public transportation operators; and special event information.

- 1.1 What has been your experience providing floodgate capability (e.g., AMBER, emergency/evacuation operations) on a regional or corridor basis versus a statewide only message?
- 1.2 Construction information is to be a key component of Wisconsin 511 – how have 511 systems coordinated or interfaced with major projects to ensure timely and accurate closure or detour information?
- 1.3 How have 511 systems integrated with existing CAD / incident reporting systems to provide relevant traffic incident information? What thresholds are used to determine whether an incident should be reported to 511?
- 1.4 What has been the experience with different user interfaces to input information into the system? Who performs the interface development and what level of effort is this?
- 1.5 What level or type of general weather, road weather, or pavement condition detail has the traveling public asked for? What are accurate and cost effective ways to provide that information, e.g., using RWIS, NWS gridded data, etc.?
- 1.6 Regarding interoperability with neighboring systems, is an attended call transfer (then drop, to open the line) the preferred approach? Alternatively, what options are there for application sharing or physically integrating systems across state borders?

## **2. Performance Requirements**

Other than the recommended guidelines put forth by the 511 Deployment Coalition (<http://www.deploy511.org>), are there performance requirements that are recommended? For example, the number of telephony ports necessary on average or during peaks for a Wisconsin population of 5.4 million? Other requirements with which there have been either particular success or challenges?

## **3. Standards, Software, and ITS Architecture**

- 3.1 What standards are commonly relied upon?
- 3.2 Are any 511 systems relying in whole or in part on open source solutions?
- 3.3 Will system vendors provide an API to Transportation Departments?
- 3.4 Describe or comment on the logical or physical architecture for your 511 system.

## **4. System Costs**

- 4.1 “511 Deployment Costs: A Case Study” was released in November 2006. Nine of the current 31 systems were reviewed, and their five-year total costs to build, deploy, and operate 511 ranged from \$1.4 to \$13.3 million. Aside from these nine systems, at least one 511 system has exceeded \$40 million (five-year cost). Furthermore, there is doubt about whether the lower cost systems have captured all costs, especially in-house labor. Wisconsin is planning for an initial system on the lower end of that cost spectrum and would appreciate any comments on the feasibility of achieving success at that level, subject to initial system requirements.
- 4.2 Apart from the telephone service, what level of investment has been put into the co-branded websites? In terms of return on this investment, how has 511 web usage compared to the telephone usage?

## **5. Telecom Translation Fees**

- 5.1 Landline translation fees have varied widely around the country. What should Wisconsin expect to pay for statewide switching? Aside from toll-free charges, need there be recurring charges from telecoms?
- 5.2 There is no provision in the federal ruling for cellular translation fees, yet there are costs sometimes associated with other things, such as programming individual towers along borders. What has been the experience with cellular providers in this aspect?

## **6. Operating Models**

The dominant operating model is to join in part or in whole a multi-state coalition. Without sufficient internal resources, Wisconsin will likely follow this route. Please comment on any successes or challenges with these coalitions.

## 7. Public-Private Partnerships

What role has the private sector played in government-provided 511 services? Are there successful models for cost-, risk-, and revenue-sharing that Wisconsin should consider for initial deployment?

## 8. Marketing

What are the most cost effective tools given limited marketing dollars?

## 9. Other Emerging Issues or Technologies

Please comment on any other aspects of 511 not already mentioned here or in other background information, e.g., VoIP, 3G, innovative financing, internet services, etc.

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A request for proposals (RFP), developed in collaboration with UW-Madison, will likely be issued by WisDOT by mid-2007 in an effort to have a fully functional 511 traveler information system sometime in 2008.

Please send any material (reports, design documentation, costs, etc.) by **Friday, February 2, 2007**. Any written material that summarizes the submittal should be no more than 5 pages.

Send via either regular mail to:

Or via email to:

Peter Rafferty  
2205 Engineering Hall  
1415 Engineering Drive  
Madison, WI 53706

Peter Rafferty  
[prafferty@wisc.edu](mailto:prafferty@wisc.edu)

Responses to written questions received prior to February 2, 2007 will be posted at [http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/511\\_project.htm](http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/511_project.htm).

For additional information or questions, contact Peter Rafferty at the Wisconsin TOPS Lab at 608.890.1218 or [prafferty@wisc.edu](mailto:prafferty@wisc.edu). Thank you for your interest and assistance with the Wisconsin 511 Traveler Information Program.

**This Request for Information is independent of any future possible service provider solicitations or selections.**