

Nebraska Information Technology Commission

Project Proposal Form

**New or Additional State Funding Requests
for Information Technology Projects**

FY2007-2009 Biennium

Project Title	New Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS)
Agency/Entity	Nebraska Health and Human Services System

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Notes about this form:

1. **USE.** The Nebraska Information Technology Commission (“NITC”) is required by statute to “make recommendations on technology investments to the Governor and the Legislature, including a prioritized list of projects, reviewed by the technical panel, for which new or additional funding is requested.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §86-516(8) In order to perform this review, the NITC and DAS Budget Division require agencies/entities to complete this form when requesting new or additional funding for technology projects.
2. **WHAT TECHNOLOGY BUDGET REQUESTS REQUIRE A PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM?** See the document entitled “Guidance on Information Technology Related Budget Requests” available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/>.
3. **DOWNLOADABLE FORM.** A Word version of this form is available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/>.
4. **SUBMITTING THE FORM.** Completed project proposal forms should be submitted as an e-mail attachment to rick.becker@nitc.ne.gov.
5. **DEADLINE.** Completed forms must be submitted by September 15, 2006 (the same date budget requests are required to be submitted to the DAS Budget Division).
6. **QUESTIONS.** Contact the Office of the CIO/NITC at (402) 471-7984 or rick.becker@nitc.ne.gov

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Section 1: General Information

Project Title	MMIS Replacement
Agency (or entity)	HHSS

Contact Information for this Project:

Name	
Address	
City, State, Zip	
Telephone	
E-mail Address	

Section 2: Executive Summary

Provide a one or two paragraph summary of the proposed project. This summary will be used in other externally distributed documents and should therefore clearly and succinctly describe the project and the information technology required.

In 1965, Title XIX of the Social Security Act initiated a jointly funded medical assistance program for certain individuals and families with low incomes and resources. The program, called Medicaid, is a cooperative venture between the Federal and State governments to assist States in providing medical care to eligible needy persons.

The Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) is the claims processing system for Nebraska's Medicaid Program. In addition to processing claims, the MMIS also supports coordination of benefits, surveillance and utilization review, federal and management reporting, and case management.

Last fiscal year the Nebraska MMIS was used to process nearly 9.5 million Medicaid claims, and issued over \$1.3 billion in payments to providers. Over the past ten years, the number of Medicaid claims processed has nearly doubled, and the average monthly number of Medicaid eligibles has increased from 135,159 in fiscal year 1994 to 197,152 in 2004.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires a certified and continuously operational MMIS to fully fund administrative functions. CMS funds the MMIS at 75% for operations and 90% for MMIS enhancement and replacement. The federal fiscal year 2005 budget proposal released on February 5, 2005, proposed to cut the federal matching rate for MMIS enhancements from 90% to 75%. Although this proposal was not adopted, the potential elimination of federal funding exists.

Three significant problem areas of the current system are:

- 1) **Outdated Technology:** Nebraska's MMIS was developed 27 years ago and has outlived most other states; Medicaid Management Information Systems. The current MMIS uses outdated technology and an older, inflexible technical design. Staff have worked hard to maintain the functionality of the MMIS, however, it is an extremely tenuous system often requiring "band aid" solutions. Several experts have concluded that the current MMIS is incapable of meeting expectations and future needs.

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- 2) **Needs Outgrew System:** The Medicaid program has become increasingly complex, with service changes (e.g. hospice, behavioral health), eligibility changes, and new regulations (e.g. HIPAA). New program needs are difficult to address with the existing system. Labor-intensive “workarounds” are used to address these changes in the short-term, but do not represent a long-term solution.
- 3) **Costly to Maintain:** Because the MMIS is based on outdated technology and older, inflexible programming, it is costly to maintain, operate and enhance.

A Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) procurement will replace the current MMIS with a state-of-the-art MMIS. It will provide the Department with enhanced claims processing functions to increase claims productivity and accuracy. It will also provide tools to manage and distribute work, track and report all customer contracts and provide a portal for providers and clients to obtain and share needed information within the Department as well as to external agencies.

The new MMIS will be more closely aligned to the Medicaid Information Technology Architecture (MITA), which was developed and supported by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS is using MITA as a tool for communicating a common vision for the Medicaid program and for providing guidance on achieving that vision. CMS will use an updated advance planning document (APD) review process and criteria to ensure that state IT planning meets MITA goals and objectives.

Some of the key technical architecture features include:

- Service-oriented architecture (SOA)
- Common interoperability and access services
- Adaptability and extensibility
- Hub architecture
- Performance measurement

The State of Nebraska released a RFP for a MMIS on December 15, 2005. Four bids were received. The bids were opened and reviewed by State Purchasing on April 26, 2006. After evaluation, all four bids were rejected on June 20, 2006. The bids were rejected for price, failing to meet the requirement that the bidder transfer ownership of some key portions to the State, and qualifications of the bidder. It is the State’s intent to continue with procurement of a new MMIS.

The Department is submitting an Advance Planning Document (APDP) to notify the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) of plans to procure a new MMIS and to request Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for the activities required for planning, procurement, design, development, implementation and certification.

Section 3: Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes (15 Points)

1. Describe the project, including:
 - Specific goals and objectives;
 - Expected beneficiaries of the project; and
 - Expected outcomes.

The goal of the MMIS Procurement project is to replace the current MMIS with a state-of-the-art MMIS. It will provide HHSS with enhanced claims processing functions to increase claims productivity and accuracy. It will provide tools to manage and distribute work, track and report all customer contacts and provide a portal for providers and clients to obtain and share needed information within HHS as well as to external agencies.

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The new MMIS will provide immediate and ongoing benefits to the administration of the Medicaid program. The benefits and outcomes of the project include:

Medicaid Program and Administrative benefits. The new MMIS can improve customer service through increasing provider access to up-to-date information and through centralized call tracking. The new MMIS will provide enhanced reporting capabilities, allowing users to access more information within a shorter period of time. The new MMIS will increase initial claims throughput resulting in a larger number of claims processed to payment without manual claims examiner intervention. The State will be able to adjust their staff to focus on activities such as: Quality Assurance, Utilization Review and Customer Service. The new MMIS system will:

Receive more electronic claims

- Reduce staff time required to manage the paper claims and reduce staff time required
- Eliminate the need to store the submitted paper claims

Improve claims processing adjudication

- Sophisticated edits and audits to:
 - support medical policy, fraud detection and benefit administration
 - shift from backend or post adjudication error detection and recovery to upfront cost avoidance.

Increase work management capability

- Determine staff productivity and accuracy rates
- Identify need for staff training

Improved customer service

- Expand the provider's ability to verify client eligibility and claim status
- Provide a call tracking system

Cost Savings. The new MMIS will provide sophisticated edits and audits that support the changing needs of medical policy. The MMIS will support automated administration of medical policy. This allows for faster and more efficient claims processing. These edits and audits will also improve fraud detection and benefit administration resulting in a shift from backend or post adjudication error detection and recovery to upfront cost avoidance. Improved claims data and access to information will also support more efficient and timely recoveries. Medicaid program staff, rather than system programmers can manage these edits and audits, resulting in a reduction in IT staffing needs. The new MMIS will have the ability to support consolidated claims processing for Medicaid and other non-Medicaid populations.

Positioned for the Future. The new MMIS, with a more adaptable design, will support the demands of the Medicaid agency by quickly responding to Medicaid program changes. It will be poised to manage the anticipated growth in the Medicaid program. The new MMIS will take full advantage of new technologies such as those identified in MITA, (e.g., SOA, web portal, enhanced security protocols, work flow management, etc.)

2. Describe the measurement and assessment methods that will verify that the project outcomes have been achieved.

HHSS will use comprehensive project management process and procedures. This will ensure that the project remains within budget and resource allocations, adheres to the development schedule, and maintains the quality of the products and deliverables. Some specific areas include developing and maintaining a Project Plan, management and execution of the project, implementation of management processes, Risk Management, Issue Management, and Quality Assurance.

For purposes of project planning, management and assessment, the project will be divided into 12 major tasks:

- Project Management

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- Requirements Validation
- Organizational Change Management
- System Design
- System Development
- Data Conversion
- Acceptance Testing
- Training
- Provider Implementation Support
- Implementation
- Certification
- Maintenance and Support Assistance

HHSS will manage and monitor all tasks in the project.

3. Describe the project's relationship to your agency comprehensive information technology plan.

The new MMIS is the agency's top priority and was submitted in the August Agency Information Technology Plan for FY 2007-2009 Biennial Budget.

Section 4: Project Justification / Business Case (25 Points)

4. Provide the project justification in terms of tangible benefits (i.e. economic return on investment) and/or intangible benefits (e.g. additional services for customers).

The current MMIS was federally certified in 1978. At that time, Nebraska required a system that was primarily a claims processing engine, supporting provider reimbursement on a fee-for-service basis. Today, changes in technology and the Medicaid program have expanded the demands on the MMIS. Paper processes that were once acceptable have now become too complicated and cumbersome.

The MMIS must now support intricate fee-for-service and prospective reimbursement methods, address Medicaid Managed Care programs and provider networks, and additional benefit plans that provide coverage for Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Home and Community Based Waiver programs. Significant changes to the Medicaid program and the administration of that program continue to come from the State, from the CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid) regional office and from the Federal government. These changes continue to challenge the functionality of the current MMIS.

A more efficient and flexible MMIS will:

- support Nebraska's fiscal management of the Medicaid program.
- place the Department in a stronger position to address impending budget challenges by supporting less costly and quicker implementation of Medicaid program alternatives, increased financial reporting functionality and an overall reduction in MMIS maintenance costs.

5. Describe other solutions that were evaluated, including their strengths and weaknesses, and why they were rejected. Explain the implications of doing nothing and why this option is not acceptable.

An independent review was performed on the current MMIS and Medicaid Claims Operations. Four (4) solution options were evaluated for the Design, Development, and Implementation (DDI) of the MMIS. These following four (4) solutions were selected because they represent the most common approaches to replacing an MMIS employed by States:

Solution	Description
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1. MMIS Procurement	A replacement MMIS is transferred or built and installed by a vendor and maintained by either the State of Nebraska staff or the vendor.
2. In House Development of a New MMIS	A replacement MMIS is built and maintained by the State of Nebraska staff.
3. MMIS Replacement with Fiscal Agent Management	A replacement MMIS is built, installed and maintained by the vendor. Although there are varying fiscal agent management models, this alternative will focus on outsourcing the system, system maintenance and all claims processing functions, to include all activities related to managing providers.
4. Enhancement of the Current MMIS	Modification to parts of the current MMIS are performed either by a vendor or by the State of Nebraska staff but maintained by the State of Nebraska staff.

The four solutions were analyzed based on cost, anticipated delivery time frame, risks and other factors such as operational flexibility, specifically, how flexible the state can be in addressing operating their MMIS. The following charts present a summary of the analysis results and an assessment of those results.

Solution	Implement Timeframe	Overall Risk	Operational Flexibility
1. MMIS Procurement	24 months	Low: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced vendors with skilled staff. Transfer knowledge to state staff 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State owns and maintains system Staff can be reassigned to meet priorities
2. In House Development	48 months	High: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff not experienced in required technology 	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State owns and maintains system Staff can be reassigned to meet priorities
3. MMIS Replacement w/Fiscal Agent	24 months	Medium: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced vendors Transition many state positions to contractor. 	Low <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State must negotiate all changes
4. Enhance Current MMIS	48 months	High: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical complexity Staff not experienced in required technology 	Medium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State must negotiate changes for off-the-shelf products

Based on the analysis of the alternatives, the recommendation is to implement Alternative 1 – MMIS Procurement.

If a new MMIS is not procured:

- The agency may not be able to expand services during this time, but may be required to find ways to provide services to more people with the same or less funds.
- The ability to quickly evaluate less costly alternatives and to quickly implement these alternatives will be critical to the success of the Medicaid agency. The agency needs a modern MMIS that is

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flexible and adapts to program demands. In addition, the agency needs to focus on increased use of electronic interactions, automating the delivery and support processes of the Medicaid program.

- The current MMIS will:
 - continue to operate in a paper environment,
 - continue to have a labor intensive claims adjudication process,
 - have a significant proportion of the staff focused on claim processing. This focus limits the staff's ability to focus on program development, management and customer service,
 - support a provider phone line for limited eligibility and claim status verification, and
 - not support automated work management.

6. If the project is the result of a state or federal mandate, please specify the mandate being addressed.
- Federal HIPAA mandates, including National Provider Identification (NPI)
 - Nebraska Medicaid Reform
 - Federal Medicaid Reform

Section 5: Technical Impact (20 Points)

7. Describe how the project enhances, changes or replaces present technology systems, or implements a new technology system. Describe the technical elements of the project, including hardware, software, and communications requirements. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed solution.

Construction of Nebraska's existing MMIS began in 1973. Nebraska employed a phased approach to the development of this system and in 1978 the MMIS was certified by the federal government. The MMIS system is now 29 years old and has outlived most MMIS systems operated by States today.

The current MMIS consists of a number of system components with overlapping or duplicated program code and significant data redundancy. As a result, changes to the MMIS to support program maintenance and program modifications are difficult, complex, and costly and can risk the integrity of the entire system. A modification to one component can result in the need to fix impacts to other components. The Nebraska MMIS is not capable of meeting the expectations and future needs of HHSS.

The new MMIS system will be aligned to the Medicaid Information Technology Architecture (MITA) framework which was developed and supported by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The IT industry is moving toward a service-oriented architecture (SOA). MITA directly embraces SOA. The technology of the new MMIS will:

- Be built upon an integrated data model, using a relational database system.
- Employ an n-tier, component-based, application-computing architecture based on web technologies.
- Be highly integrated and interoperable, among internal and external systems, using loosely coupled, standards-based, service-oriented architecture.
- Utilize platforms that will enable workflow, document imaging and management and e-forms.

The new MMIS, along with the MITA principles, will:

- Adopt data and industry standards
- Promote reusable components / modularity
- Promote efficient and effective data sharing to meet HHSS' needs
- Provide a beneficiary centric focus
- Support interoperability / integration / open architecture
- Promote secure data exchange (single entry point)

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- Promote good practices, e.g., CMM, data warehouse
- Support integration of clinical and administrative data
- Break down artificial boundaries between systems, geography, and funding (within the Title XIX program)

8. Address the following issues with respect to the proposed technology:

- Describe the reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation) of the technology.

The new MMIS will result in a better return on IT investment through reusable system components, adherence to common standards, and improved coordination and alignment with state and national health initiatives.

- Address conformity with applicable NITC technical standards and guidelines (available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/>) and generally accepted industry standards.

The new MMIS will comply with the requirements addressed on the NITC website.

- Address the compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.

The Design Development and Implementation (DDI) activities, facilities and equipment of the new MMIS will be located in Lincoln, Nebraska. The State will own the implemented new MMIS, will have the ongoing responsibility for the operation and routine maintenance of the replacement MMIS and will provide application programming support for ongoing changes and enhancements. State staff will be assigned to the new MMIS project. The State will address and support the technical requirements and goals provided in response to question seven (7).

Section 6: Preliminary Plan for Implementation (10 Points)

9. Describe the preliminary plans for implementing the project. Identify project sponsor(s) and examine stakeholder acceptance. Describe the project team, including their roles, responsibilities, and experience.

HHSS intends to work in conjunction with a selected Contractor to perform specific set of activities for the requirements validation, design, development, implementation and certification of a new MMIS system.

The selected Contractor will “transfer and modify” an existing certifiable State system.

The project will follow Project Management Guidelines. HHSS will monitor and manage all phases of the project. Managing the project includes: Project Work Plan, Resource Staffing Plan, Project Control, Risk Management and Resolution Plan, Issue Management and Resolution, Status Reporting, Configuration Management and Quality Management.

HHSS has established dedicated project management teams:

MMIS Executive Steering Committee – is responsible for overall project and major decision-making about the project. The committee provides guidance, objective, and strategies of the MMIS replacement process, review and approve plans, timetables, and budgets, evaluate risks and barriers, approve contingency plans and make decisions or recommendations regarding Medicaid policy, technical, financial and change management issues.

MMIS Oversight Team – will provide project management, assure system development, maintenance and support activities are performed competently, productively, and producing quality deliverables. The team will:

- advise and prepare major decision items for the MMIS Executive Steering Committee,
- be the central point of contact for policy, IT systems, and operational decisions and issues, and
- monitor and manage work plans, timelines, staffing, communication, and deliverable development and identify issues, risks, contingency plans and implementation strategies.

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IV&V Team – will ensure that the Design, Development, and Implementation Contractor (DDI Contractor) applies best practices in project management and delivers work products that meet HHSS requirements. The IV&V Team will monitor project activities and perform independent reviews. This includes: requirements tracking, deliverable/milestone reviews, code reviews, test evaluation, independent testing, independent risk assessment, and performance measures tracking.

HHSS Project Coordinator – is responsible for coordination of the MMIS Replacement project on behalf of HHSS and reports directly to the MMIS Oversight Team. The HHSS Project Coordinator is also responsible for all project management activities including risk management, in collaboration with contractor project management.

Technical Team – a significant number of technical team members will work full-time on the MMIS Replacement project.

HHSS Business Team – a significant number of Medicaid business team members will work full-time on the MMIS Replacement project.

10. List the major milestones and/or deliverables and provide a timeline for completing each.

The MMIS Replacement project has a 30-month implementation period. This includes the following timeframes:

- Twenty-four (24) months for requirements validation, design, development, training, conversion, acceptance testing, and implementation tasks.
- Six (6) months for certification tasks following the Go Live date.
- Three (3) months of implementation assurance support following Go Live date.
- Nine (9) months of maintenance and support assistance following completion of implementation.

11. Describe the training and staff development requirements.

The DDI Contractor will be responsible to train State staff on the proposed system. The following training needs are anticipated:

- HHSS Business team training on the core system with HHSS business analysts and other HHSS subject matter experts involved on this project. This training, which shall be completed before the requirements validation and gathering sessions, is expected to familiarize business staff with the system to be implemented and train them on Project approach.
- Technical Team training on the core system with technical analysts (developers and DBAs) involved in this project. The training will emphasize the understanding and skills needed to participate in the design and development of the new system (e.g., system functionality, project methodology and approach, system structure, architecture).
- Train the Trainer training for a small number of HHSS staff. This staff will coordinate and deliver initial and ongoing user training to HHSS staff, providers, and others throughout the State.
- In-depth user training for those individuals working with claims payment and processing. This training will include operational training, such as claims processing, claims resolution, data entry, provider enrollment, third party liability, and other topics as specified by HHSS.
- Program administration-level training for HHSS staff. This training will include the ability to perform administration activities such as relationship edits, code additions, table updates, edits, and other topics as specified by HHSS.
- Provider training for the State's Healthcare providers. This training includes awareness/outreach activities and initial new system training.

Formal technical training will occur before the project begins and after the system technical requirements become known. The formal training program preceding the project will include topics such as object-oriented language concepts, web-based system technologies, distributed (n-tier) system architectures and introduction to and object-oriented integrated development environment (IDE) tool such as Microsoft Visual Studio or Rational Application Developer.

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12. Describe the ongoing support requirements.

The DDI Contractor will provide nine (9) months of maintenance and support assistance following completion of implementation. During these nine (9) months, the DDI Contractor will:

- Continue knowledge transfer to business and technical staff on the technical platform of the new MMIS system.
- Assist with maintenance and enhancements.
- Provide business operations support.

At the end of nine (9) months, the State will have ongoing responsibility for operation and routine maintenance of the new MMIS system. The State will provide application programming support for ongoing changes and enhancements.

Section 7: Risk Assessment (10 Points)

13. Describe possible barriers and risks related to the project and the relative importance of each.

- A “transfer and modify” system represents the lowest risk alternative because a transfer system is operational in another state, and may also be certified in that state. Vendors have more confidence in their cost and time estimates, increasing the likelihood of a timely implementation within budget. They are also likely to accept responsibility for the eventual CMS certification of the MMIS.
- The MMIS is the claims processing and information retrieval system CMS requires to administer each state’s Medicaid program. CMS provides 90 percent federal funding assistance for the design, development, implementation or enhancement of an MMIS. 75 percent federal funding assistance is provided for most MMIS operations costs. President Bush’s fiscal year 2005 budget proposal released on 2/5/2004 proposed significant reductions in federal funding for state Medicaid programs. One proposal was to cut the federal matching rate for Design, Development, and Implementation (DDI) of the MMIS from 90% to 75%. At this time, the proposal has not been adopted, its presence should be a concern and is one reason HHSS needs to move forward now.
- HHSS has experienced challenges with past development efforts with vendors. Significant time and effort must be expended to manage and monitor the DDI Contractor to assure user satisfaction and a successful implementation.
- The current MMIS Information Technology staff may not have the technical skills required to develop and modify a MMIS that utilizes new technology. The current IT and Medicaid program staff do not have experience with new technology and how it has been utilized in the MMIS.

14. Identify strategies which have been developed to minimize risks.

- The project will follow Project Management Guidelines. HHSS will monitor and manage all phases of the project. Managing the project includes: Project Work Plan, Resource Staffing Plan, Project Control, Risk Management and Resolution Plan, Issue Management and Resolution, Status Reporting, Configuration Management and Quality Management.
- The State and HHSS must recognize the potential threat to the changes proposed in Bush’s fiscal year 2005 budget to the enhanced federal matching rate for MMIS DDI.
- HHSS MMIS users will be trained to use more modern work processes and system functions to carry out their work tasks. Some work tasks will be modified, some will be replaced with new

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work tasks and some work tasks will be eliminated. Automated work management will facilitate claims adjudication with distribution and auditing of work.

- Formal technical training will occur before the project begins and after the system technical requirements become known. The formal training program preceding the project will include topics such as object-oriented language concepts, web-based system technologies, distributed (n-tier) system architectures and introduction to and object-oriented integrated development environment (IDE) tool such as Microsoft Visual Studio or Rational Application Developer.

Section 8: Financial Analysis and Budget (20 Points)

15. Financial Information

Financial and budget information can be provided in either of the following ways:

- (1) If the information is available in some other format, either cut and paste the information into this document or transmit the information with this form; or
- (2) Provide the information by completing the spreadsheet provided below.

Instructions: Double click on the Microsoft Excel icon below. An imbedded Excel spreadsheet will be launched. Input the appropriate financial information. Close the spreadsheet. The information you entered will automatically be saved with this document. If you want to review or revise the financial information, repeat the process just described.



Excel Spreadsheet
(Double-click)

The total cost for this project is estimated at \$50 million. Based on previously submitted RFP's the federal match for this project will average 87%. A break out of individual expenses is not available at this time but will be included in the RFP responses.

16. Provide a detailed description of the budget items listed above. Include:

- An itemized list of hardware and software.
- If new FTE positions are included in the request, please provide a breakdown by position, including separate totals for salary and fringe benefits.
- Provide any on-going operation and replacement costs not included above, including funding source if known.
- Provide a breakdown of all non-state funding sources and funds provided per source.

17. Please indicate where the funding requested for this project can be found in the agency budget request, including program numbers.

The funding for this project can be found in the budget for Agency 26, program 341.