FY-15 Investment Brief

**I. Project Identification**

Election Infrastructure: Improving Speed of Reporting Results

**Project Title:**

**Agency Name Agency Business Unit**

Elections Division

Secretary of the State (SOTS)

**Your Name** (Submitter)  **Phone Email**

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**II. Project Details**

1. **Project Dates**

**Proposed Start Date** (MM/DD/YYYY) **Expected Completion Date** (MM/DD/YYYY) **Project Duration** (in months)

19

05/01/2015

12/31/2016

1. **Project Description -** This information will be used for listings and report to the Governor and  
    General Assembly on capital funded projects.

The project will improve the voting process of collecting and reporting results of elections utilizing new technologies.

1. **Summary.**

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| **Summary - Describe the high level summary of this project in plain English without technical jargon** |
| The proposal harnesses technology to speed up results on election night. New memory cards for tabulator machines will be uploaded into an online portal for election results. The process for uploading memory card data will require hardware and software to be used at the local level.  New non-volatile memory cards will be purchased for the tabulator machines. This is required because the current memory cards contain batteries that have a high failure rate, of up to 29%, resulting in a sudden loss of power and junk data. The new cards operate without a battery. An additional tabulator machine and Global Election Management Software (GEMS) loaded on a dedicated PC or laptop will be required to read the memory card and upload and aggregate the results into an online system which will, in turn, display information to the public.  Because the necessary cost involved, the proposal does not include deploying this system in towns with only 1 or 2 polling locations. There are a total of 81 towns with at least 3 voting locations that will be serviced by the project. |
| **Purpose – Describe the purpose of the project** |
| The purpose of the projects is to modernize and improve speed and accuracy in reporting election results. Memory cardswill be removed from the tabulator machines and the data contained therein will be uploaded into a online system to report results. New memory cards will be required, along with one additional tabulator , the Global Election Management Software (GEMS) and a dedicated PC or laptop for each town. These assets will only be supplied to towns with more than 2 polling places, which is 81 towns. |
| **Importance – Describe why this project is important** |
| With rare exception, results are calculated on election night using the tabulator machines which generate a paper receipt tape showing the totals for each candidate and each party. If there is more than one machine the receipt tape results are added together and the results are recorded by the polling place’s moderator who then submits their report to the head moderator of the town. The head moderator transcribes the information and calculates the total of all the moderators reports and submits the grand totals to the Secretary of the State on the head moderator’s return. The Secretary of the State then transcribes the information into the Statement of Vote, which is the official historic record of the election.  Implementing the changes proposed in this projectwill speed up the availability of public information as well as improve the quality of that information.  The more polling places a town has the longer it takes for the town to calculate the results for each candidate – some of whom may have multiple parties endorsing them – before transmitting the final results to the Secretary of the State. This plan gives the towns with the greatest challenges the additional support they need to improve the speed of reporting those results.  The quality of the data improves because the new process eliminates opportunities for human error that occur when multiple individuals are re-entering data. Second, it also provides for precinct level data. As the lowest unit of measurement in elections this data is helpful for research, or statistical review and state projects such as redistricting. Finally, the new non-volatile cards will improve the quality of data for all towns as the possibility of junk data and failure of the memory cards will be eliminated. |
| **Outcomes – What are the expected outcomes of this project** |
| Towns with multiple polling places will report result of elections more quickly. All towns will be able to conduct pre-election testing with greater confidence knowing that their memory cards will perform as intended on Election Day. |
| |  | | --- | | **Approach and Success Evaluation – Provide details of how the success of the project will be evaluated** |   Success will be evaluated by comparison to the time it currently takes to aggregate and report election results in the 81 towns involved, and by comparison to the number of amendmed returns filed correcting mistakes. Success will also be evaluated through the reports of head moderators and registrars of voters regarding the reduction in paperwork and increase in speed and accuracy. |

1. **Business Goals**. List up to 10 key business goals you have for this project, when (FY) the goal  
   is expected to be achieved, and how you will measure achievement, Must have at least one.  
   Please use action phrases beginning with a verb to state each goal. Example: "Reduce the  
   Permitting process by 50%". In the Expected Result column, please explain what data you will use to  
   demonstrate the goal is being achieved and any current metrics.

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| **Business Goal (Action Phase)** | **Target FY for Goal** | **Current Condition** | **Expected Result** |
| Improve the speed by which election results are available to the public | 2016 | Weak. Many results arrive in early morning hours or next day. | All results before midnight on Election Day. |
| Improve the accuracy of the election results by eliminating the need for multiple points of data entry and automatic calculations of summary totals | 2016 | Weak. Scores of amended returns filed each cycle. | Reduce or even eliminate amended returns. |
| Improve the quality of the election results by generating precinct level data rather than townwide totals | 2016 | Weak. Precinct level data not available in any usuable format. | Such data readily available to press, public, campaigns, researchers and government. |
| Improve the performance of optical scan tabulators with the purchase of new non-volatile memory cards. | 2016 | Moderate. Some failures in each cycle. | Reduction in number of memory card failures on Election Day. |
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1. **Technology Goals**. From a technical perspective, following the above example, list up to 10 key technology goals you have for this project and in which Fiscal Year (FY) the goal is expected to be achieved. Please use action phrases beginning with a verb to state each goal. Example: “Improve transaction response time by 10%".

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| **Technology Goal** | **Target FY for Goal** | **Current Condition** | **Expected Result** |
| Reduce reporting time | 2016 | See above | See above |
| Reduce paperwork | 2016 | See above | See above |
| Increase accuracy | 2016 | See above | See above |

1. **Priority Alignment.** The criteria in this table, in concert with other factors, will be used to determine project  
    priorities in the capital funding approval process. Briefly describe how the proposed projects will align with each criterion.

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| **Priority Criterion** | **Y/N** | **Explanation** |
| Is this project aligned with the Governor’s Key Priorities? | Y | The Governor has repeatedly demonstrated his commitments to improving voting in Connecticut. |
| Is this project aligned with business and IT goals of your agency? | Y | The project improves the availability of public information |
| Does this project reduce or prevent future increases to the agency’s operating budget? | Y | Staff will no longer spend significant time performing data entry tasks and proofing for errors. |
| Will this project result in shared capabilities? | N | N/A |
| Is this project being Co-developed through participation of multiple agencies? | N | SOTS has sole responsibility for receiving and reporting results. |
| Has the agency demonstrated readiness to manage project of this size and scope? | Y | Historically the office has managed large IT projects like online voter registration. |
| Is the agency ready to deliver the business value proposed? | Y | Project will increase value of information published by office. |

1. **Organizational Preparedness**. Is your agency prepared to undertake this project? Is senior management committed, willing to participate, and willing to allocate the necessary time, energy and staffing resources? How will the project be managed and/or governed and who will make the key project decisions?

Peggy Reeves, Director of the Elections Division,, will be the manager overseeing the project. Vendors will be required to provide training and support to local election officials. Agency leadership is deeply committee to success of this project.

1. **Project Ramp Up**. If capital funds are awarded for this project, how long will it take to ramp up? What are the key ramp-up requirements and have any off these already been started? For example, has a project manager been identified? Has an RFI been issued? Is a major procurement required such as an RFP?

Vendors will be required to provide training and hands on assistance with towns if necessary. SOTS will also plan to have “refresher training” in another 2 election cycles to reinforce the previous training, and to accommodate any newly elected registrars. There is only one single provider of the product this is able to sell in Conneticut. This was subject of national DOJ action and settlement and this is the resolution.

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1. **Organizational Skills**. Do you have the experienced staff with the proper training to sustain this initiative once it’s a production system? Do you anticipate having to hire additional staff to sustain this? What training efforts are expected to be needed to maintain this system?

Training to use the system will be required in advance of implementation and the vendor selected will be responsible for delivering that training. Thereafter, training will be needed for any new Registrars of Voters. The initial purchase of machines will include service agreements. The future maintenance of those agreements will be the responsibility of the municipality.

1. **Financial Estimates.** From IT Capital Investment Fund Financial Spreadsheet

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| **Estimated Total Development Cost** | **Estimated total Capital Funding Request** | **Estimated Annual Operating Cost** | **One Time Financial Benefit** | **Recurring Annual Financial Benefit** |
| $2.1M | $2.1M | 0 | 33,160 | 33,160 |
| **Explanation of Estimates** | | | | |
| The supply of batteryless memory cards to all towns will be $1.3M. The cost of the Global Election Management Software (GEMS) will cost $750,000. The GEMS software will only be provided to the towns with 3 or more polling places, which is 81 towns. The cost per town varies by the number of polling places it uses. The software is provided by a single source. | | | | |
| **Assumptions: Please list key assumptions you are using to estimate project development and implementation costs** | | | | |
| The vendor will be required perform all installation and training to Registrars of the 81 towns who are provided the GEMS software. The agency will also require a “refresher” training to be done for the two elections following the initial use of the system. This is critical because, as elected officials, Registrars will hae a certain percentage of attrition every 2 years. The memory cards will be seamless. | | | | |

III. **Expanded Business Case**

1. **Project Impact.** Beyond the top business goals identified in Section II, 1) What impacts will this project  
    have, if any, in the targeted areas below, 2) What would be the impact of not doing this project, 3) How will the project demonstrate benefits are achieved.

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| **(1) Impact Area (Vision)** | **Y/N** | **Description of Project Impact** |
| Will this project provide efficient and easily accessible services for all constituents? | Y | Any member of the public seeking information about election results, particularly on Election Night, will see improvments of service |
| Will this project promote open and transparent government with the citizens of the state? | Y | All data related to elections is public information and this project will improve the timeliness of its availability, as well as its accuracy and usability. |
| Will this project establish efficient and modern business processes? | Y | The current process is a rudimentary, manual process. The proposed change is a more seamless use of technology. |
| Will this project increase accuracy and timeliness of data for policy making, service delivery and results evaluation? | Y | This new technology will help to improve the speed of determining winters/losers of any election, and who is subject to recount. Precinct level data is essential for redistricting process and research to identify emerging trends. |

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| 2) What is the expected impact of NOT doing this project? |
| Maintence of the status quo. The public, policymakers and media outlets have frequently voiced their desire for improvements. The current process is done using paper/pen and fax to emails service to transmit results to the Secretary of the State, which then, in turn, posts those results as PDFs on the website. It’s a rudimentary system, outdated for the expectations of the public today. The process requires multiple points of data entry, creating multiple opportunities for mistakes and multiple revisions. In turn, this impacts the agency’s abiity to determine necessary recounts, which towns have only a few days to perform.  Ultimately, it is the process of collecting results that most informs the public opinion of whether the elections system is fair and trustworthy. If a winner or loser is declared and the total votes for each keep changing we erode that confidence. The proposal addresses that core issue by improving accuracy as well as timing. |

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| (3) How will you demonstrate achievement of benefits? |
| Towns with multiple polling places will report their results more quickly. The improved quality of the data will result in fewer amended returns being filed and earlier determination of races requiring recounts. |

1. **Statutory/Regulatory Mandates.**  1) Cite and describe federal and state mandates that this project in intended to address. 2) What would be the impact of non-compliance?

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| 1. Statutory / Regulatory Mandates: |
| The Help America Vote Act of 2002 requires that states upgrade and update their voting equipment.  Connecticut General Statutes Secs. 9-308 and 9-309 require that a canvass of returns be conducted by the election officials immediately upon the close of polls and that the moderator publicly announce the results. Secs. 9-311 and 9-311a require that a discrepancy recanvass or a close vote recanvas be held not later than the fifth business day after such election.Municipal returns must be filed by the town clerk in the office of the Secretary of the State within 10 days after the municipal election (Sec. 9-320). The canvass of votes for state senators and representatives and judges of probate must be held during the month that they are cast (Sec. 9-319). The canvass of votes for presidential electors, US senator and members of Congress must be publicly counted on the last Wednesday of the month in which they were cast(Sec. 9-315). Canvass of votes for state officers must be held within thirty days of the election (Sec. 9-318). |

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| 1. Impact of non-compliance: |
| The administration of elections will be negatively impacted if the voting equipment is not performing as intended, and if the election results cannot be publicly and accurately announced on Election Night as required by state statutes. |

1. **Primary Beneficiaries.**  Who will benefit from this project (citizens businesses, municipalities, other  
   state agencies, staff in your agency, other stakeholders) and in what way?

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| The general public, media and candidates benefit from knowing who is declared winner or loser in any given election. SOTS and local election officials benefit from not having to duplicate data entry, eliminating the opportunity for human error when reporting results. The municipalities benefit because they acquire equipment they otherwise would not be able to purchase. And, those performing research tasks, such as academics or the Redistricting Commission, benefit from the precinct level data that will be acquired. |

**Important:**

* **If you have any questions or need assistance completing the form please contact Jim Hadfield or John Vittner**
* **Once you have completed the form and the** [IT Capital Investment Fund Financial Spreadsheet](http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/finance/itim/investment_brief_financial_spreadsheets_fy13_v4_0.xlsx) **please e-mail them to Jim Hadfield and John Vittner**

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