Strategic Coordination of a Governance Structures Assessment RFP – Addendum 1

Issued Date: November 9, 2026

Addition(s)/Change(s)/Clarification(s):

- ☐ Change in Solicitation Response Due Date
- ☐ Change in Terms and Conditions
- ☒ Other – Answers to Questions

Question 1: Please provide a budget for this 12-month project.

The budget for this project is not to exceed a total cost of $250,000.

Proposers should note that project cost is a percentage of the proposal evaluation score that determines vendor selection, per RFP Section 5.2. Proposers are encouraged to provide a detailed breakdown of their project proposal, phases and budgetary expectations. Proposer's budget proposal may include "a la carte" options so that a final project budget/scope can be negotiated.

Question 2: Schedule - Please confirm the timeline for project completion is 1 year. As laid out in Section 2.2, County Board involvement and engagement with staff and partners is critical and will take time. Is completion within 1 year critical to project success or can additional time be included to ensure all party involvement?

The goal is for this project to be completed by the end of 2027; however, if unforeseen delays arise or it is deemed not to be technically feasible within this timeframe, a longer or contingent timeline can be proposed and included in proposals or may be established during the project with agreement of all parties (contractor and Partners).

Question 3: Related to the legal analysis in Section 2.5.: The RFP calls for legal risk analysis and assessment of applicable laws governing solid waste management. Do the Partners anticipate that the selected Contractor will provide independent legal expertise as part of the project team, or will legal analysis and interpretation be supported by the Partners' existing legal counsel? What level of legal analysis is anticipated?

RFP Sections 2.5 and 2.6 discuss the legal analysis component of this project. First, the selected contractor will need to oversee and coordinate tasks related to developing criteria for legal issues and considerations, including legal risk analysis and assessment of laws governing the handling of solid waste, as described in RFP Section 2.5.

Next, the selected Contractor will need to evaluate each governance structure against the assessment criteria, including legal issue criteria, as described in RFP Section 2.6 (see second paragraph). As such, the selected Contractor will need to provide expertise necessary to identify the impacts and depth of the tradeoffs associated with each governance structure being evaluated. Partners may subsequently utilize their existing legal counsel to review contractor analysis.

As discussed in the response to Question 12, if needed, proposers may use subcontractors and/or partner with other contractors to complete the work outlined in this RFP, as long as one contractor is designated as the project lead. See RFP Attachment A, Section V and Question 12 of this addendum for additional details.

Please note that some legal analysis was performed as part of the 2025 preliminary analysis, available here on the R&E website (governance workshop packet starts on page 27; legal analysis starts on page 50). Proposers may use that information as background to build their project proposals but should not include any inferred interpretations or conclusions from prior legal analyses/assessments.

Question 4: Related to the fiscal analysis in Section 2.5.: What level of financial analysis is expected for each governance alternative? For example, should proposers anticipate developing quantitative estimates of administrative, operational, and transition costs, or is a comparative assessment of financial governance requirements, potential costs, and trade-offs sufficient?

Per RFP Section 2.5, the selected contractor will need to oversee and coordinate tasks related to developing criteria for assessing financial issues and considerations, including criteria to compare financial governance requirements and potential costs and trade-offs for each governance structure. Per RFP Section 2.6 (second paragraph), the selected contractor will then need to conduct the evaluation of each governance structure against the assessment criteria, including financial issue criteria.

The level of financial assessment the selected contractor is expected to conduct is a comparative assessment of financial governance requirements, potential costs and trade-offs, consistent with the agreed-upon assessment criteria.

Question 5: Related to the interest holder engagement in Section 2.2.: To support consistent assumptions regarding level of effort, can the Partners provide an anticipated number of meetings, workshops, or presentations involving the three governing boards, project leadership, staff, and external interest holders? Do the Partners anticipate joint board workshops, separate meetings with each board, or a combination?

Per RFP Section 2.2, engagement planning is a part of the project scope, so exact activities will be determined at that phase of the project. At this time, proposers may use the following information as a baseline for proposal's level of effort, or may propose their own engagement strategy.

- **County Board workshop:** Minimum of two (one for each county). Possibility of additional as determined by engagement plan and board direction.
- **R&E Board workshop:** Likely minimum of one, dependent on direction from county boards to bring governance topic to R&E Board as a forum for joint discussion. Possibility of additional as determined by engagement plan and board direction.
- **Joint county board workshop**: While a joint, dual-county board meeting, consisting of both counties' full board of commissions, has been conducted in the past (e.g., in the leadup to purchasing the R&E Center), this forum for joint discussion among governing boards has not been substantially contemplated for the solid waste governance topic. Inclusion of this engagement activity will be determined by engagement plan and board direction.

- **Project leadership**: Regular progress reports, check-ins and working meetings, possibly averaging around once every two weeks, dependent on work phase and need for collaboration and direction from Partners.
- **Staff and external interest holders**: unknown until interest holder engagement approach is designed. Proposers should use their best judgement based on the scope of the project to determine level of effort. Per response to Addendum Question 1, proposals may also include "a la carte" options so that a final project budget/scope can be negotiated.

Question 6: Related to prior governance studies in Sections 1.5 and 2.3.: To what extent do the Partners anticipate that the selected Contractor will build upon the 2025 Preliminary Analysis of Solid Waste Management Governance and supporting research, rather than independently revisiting the analysis? Will the underlying studies, interview findings, and supporting materials be made available to the selected Contractor?

Per RFP Section 2.3, the contractor will need to read and compile existing documents related to solid waste governance in Ramsey and Washington counties, including (but not limited to) the 2025 preliminary analysis. The selected contractor should include this and other supporting research as contextual resources to build understanding of the topic. The 2025 analysis should not be treated as a definitive source of findings, nor should Contractor conduct a formal audit or validation of that work. Rather, the Contractor should use the preliminary analysis as one input among many to build the Partner needs report (RFP Section 2.3, deliverable 2).

The 2025 preliminary analysis documents were published publicly when this topic was presented to the R&E Board on January 29, 2026. The board packet can be found online here on the R&E website, with the governance agenda item starting on page 27. Partners will strive to provide any additional relevant and available studies, interviews, reports and supporting materials to the selected contractor.

Question 7: Related to the governance alternatives in Section 2.6.: The RFP identifies the status quo, an enhanced joint powers agreement, and a solid waste management district or similarly autonomous structure as potential alternatives. Do the Partners anticipate evaluating these three principal alternatives, with variations as appropriate, or developing a broader range of governance scenarios?

Direction from Ramsey County Board and Washington County Board during board workshops in spring 2026 was for evaluation to include the three governance structures listed in RFP Section 2.6, but not to limit the assessment to those three options if additional governance models or variations are identified during the assessment that warrant consideration and align with the Partners' goals and needs.

The phrase “develop possible governance scenarios” in the second paragraph of RFP Section 2.6 refers to the contractor’s role to define the details of each governance structure in the specific context of Ramsey County, Washington County and R&E, for the purpose of comparison and assessment against the criteria described in RFP Section 2.5.

For example, there may be more than one way a solid waste management district could be structured to meet the needs of the Partners. This process should help Partners review the three principal alternatives, with variations as appropriate, as identified and defined during this project.

Question 8: Related to the assessment outcomes in Section 2.6.: Is the intended outcome of the assessment a comparative evaluation of governance alternatives to inform decisions by the three Partners, or is the Contractor also expected to develop a recommended preferred governance structure and an associated implementation roadmap?

As described in RFP Section 2.6, the contractor will provide findings in a comparative format and prepare a final report documenting the assessment results.

The assessment goals and desired outcomes will be refined with the Partners through the initial phases of the project, referenced in RFP Sections 2.1 and 2.4. The final report should provide an assessment based on fitness to defined criteria using a consistent methodology and describe considerations (for example, inclusion of "pros and cons"). The contractor is not expected to independently identify or recommend a singular, preferred governance structure, and shall not advocate for any specific structure during the project.

Per RFP Section 2.5, the assessment is expected to address the logistics of transition associated with each governance structure evaluated. This includes describing implementation considerations for all governance structures under review, but not a detailed "implementation roadmap." See response to Addendum Question 9 for further direction.

Question 9: Related to the scope of transition analysis in Sections 2.5 and 2.6.: The RFP identifies administrative and operational transition considerations, including finance, human resources, procurement, and information technology. Do the Partners envision a high-level assessment of transition requirements and potential impacts, or a more detailed transition plan identifying specific implementation actions, responsibilities, costs, and schedules?

Partners envision a high-level assessment of transition requirements, potential impacts and trade-offs. The resulting report (RFP Section 2.6, Deliverable 2) should allow Partners to compare each governance option based on assessment using the criteria developed in RFP Section 2.5.

Question 10: Related to Decision-Making and Project Direction in Section 1.6.: Given the participation of three equal Partners, how will project direction, review of deliverables, and resolution of potentially differing priorities be coordinated? Will a designated project manager or steering committee serve as the primary point of contact and consolidate comments on deliverables?

The three individuals listed in RFP Section 1.6 will be the joint project leadership team that functions similarly to a steering committee for project oversight and direction. Direction and review will occur through this established leadership structure representing all three Partners. The contractor should be prepared to facilitate discussion, document input and work with the Partner representatives to develop consensus when needed.

All Partners have also allocated staff resources to support this project, including planners and solid waste subject matter experts. The contractor is expected to work with Partners to establish project management and coordination norms and workflows as described in RFP Section 2.1.

Regarding document/deliverable review workflow, each Partner will send their own set of comments

unless otherwise agreed upon by all Partners. Each Partner will consolidate comments within their organization, meaning the total number of comment sets provided to the contractor will be no more than three. The contractor will be expected to aggregate feedback across the three sets and facilitate discussion to attempt to reconcile conflicting comments. Dependent on the circumstances, it may also be acceptable for the contractor findings to articulate a range of views or even Partner disagreement on a particular topic.

Question 11: Related to proposal evaluation in Section 5.2: The RFP identifies four evaluation criteria but does not provide numerical weights or point allocations. Can the Partners clarify the relative weighting of contractor qualifications, proposed approach, cost, and references?

R&E uses a color-coded evaluation format to evaluate proposals: Green indicating significant proposer understanding of an evaluation area, Yellow indicating concerns or questions from evaluators, and Red indicating major concerns about the proposer's capacity to fulfill the specific criteria in question. Note that the evaluation criteria found in Section 3 of the RFP is further clarified as outlined below, with relative weighting as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Percentage
Demonstrated understanding of the services and requirements of the project, including work tasks and Partners' goals and needs.	20
Completeness, quality and clarity of response and proposed approach, demonstrating technical competence to complete full scope of services.	20
Proposer team qualifications, including experience, availability and demonstration of prior work providing similar services	20
Demonstrated project management qualifications and capabilities, including planning, tracking, facilitation, engagement, organization and adherence to schedule.	20
Cost	10
References	10
Total	***100***

Question 12: Related to Subconsultant Participation: Attachment A, Section V. Will the Partners consider proposals that include specialized subconsultants for legal, financial, or organizational governance analysis? If so, may approval of proposed subconsultants be obtained as part of contract negotiations and award?

Yes. It is acceptable for proposers to use subcontractors and/or partner with other contractors to complete the work outlined in this RFP, as long as one contractor is identified as the project lead. Proposals should include the name of any subcontractors or partners they will be working with as part of their proposal, or, at minimum, identify tasks that will require proposer to subcontract and indicate the cost for that area of work.

Approval of proposer's subcontractors may be obtained as part of contract negotiations and award.

All Addenda are to be acknowledged on the Cover Page to be included with your submission. FAILURE TO DO SO

MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF THE SOLICITATION RESPONSE. Unless otherwise specified above, the Solicitation Response due date and time and all other Terms and Conditions remain the same.