REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

for

Enterprise Business Systems Assessment & Advisory Consulting Services

Issued by

Port of South Louisiana

PORT SL
PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA

DOCUMENT PURPOSE

This Request for Information is designed to identify the advisory capabilities, methodologies, and perspectives available in the market before the Port determines the structure of a future competitive solicitation. It is not a request for proposals and does not seek software, implementation services, or binding commercial terms.

1. Executive Overview

The Port of South Louisiana is preparing to make a consequential enterprise business systems decision. The decision is not simply which technology to purchase. It is how the Port should align business capabilities, operating requirements, information needs, governance expectations, and long-term investment priorities before entering the marketplace. The Port therefore seeks to understand the availability of independent advisory firms capable of helping executive leadership frame that decision with discipline, objectivity, and strategic clarity.

This Request for Information (RFI) is intentionally different from a traditional government procurement document. It is not designed to collect generic qualifications, product catalogs, or implementation credentials. It is designed to identify firms that can serve as trusted executive advisors: firms that begin with the business, test assumptions, translate operational complexity into decision-ready insight, and help leadership determine what the Port needs before the Port determines what it should buy.

The contemplated engagement is advisory only. The future advisor would assess the Port's enterprise business systems environment, identify and validate business and functional requirements, evaluate commercially available solution categories, and compare the relative merits of an integrated enterprise platform and multiple complementary systems to develop independent, vendor-neutral recommendations, culminating in an executive decision framework and Enterprise Business Systems Roadmap that position the Port to determine the most appropriate acquisition approach and sequence of future activities.

The Port's objective is not to accelerate prematurely toward a product decision. It is to improve the quality of the investment decision itself. A sound recommendation must be grounded in an understanding of how the Port operates today, what leadership needs the organization to accomplish in the future, where current processes or systems create friction, and which capabilities are most important to strengthen. It must also make clear where technology is the appropriate answer, where business process or governance changes may be required, and where the Port should preserve flexibility rather than force standardization.

The successful advisory partner will be expected to bring more than technology market knowledge. It must bring structured problem-solving, executive facilitation, business process insight, and the ability to communicate complex choices in clear, decision-oriented terms. It must be able to work across functions without allowing any single department, vendor perspective, or technology assumption to define the outcome. Above all, it must preserve independence throughout the engagement and demonstrate that its recommendations are driven by the Port's interests alone.

The resulting work should equip executive leadership and, as appropriate, the Port Commission to answer a clear set of questions: What business capabilities must the Port strengthen? Which requirements are essential, and which are preferences? What future-state options are viable? What are the implications of choosing an integrated platform versus complementary systems? What should the Port procure, in what sequence, and under what governance structure? What information must be included in a future solicitation to attract the right market response and protect the Port's long-term interests?

The Port seeks to understand how leading advisory firms would approach the work, structure the analysis, preserve vendor neutrality, facilitate executive alignment, and convert findings into a practical Enterprise Business Systems Roadmap.

KEY PREMISE

Technology decisions should follow business decisions. The Port is seeking an advisor to help leadership determine the right investment strategy before initiating procurement.

2. Organization Context

The Port of South Louisiana is a political subdivision of the state of Louisiana created, operating, and existing under the provisions of Chapter 30, Title 34 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes. The Port of South Louisiana's district spans 54 miles of the Mississippi River, from mile marker 114.9 to mile marker 168.5, in the parishes of St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James. It is an industrial region known for its petroleum refining, grain and petrochemical transfer and storage facilities.

The Port of South Louisiana is a nationally significant public entity at the center of one of the most important freight, energy, agricultural, and industrial corridors in the United States. The Port's role extends beyond the administration of maritime assets. It serves as an economic development engine, a public steward, an infrastructure partner, and a strategic connector among industry, communities, government, and global commerce.

The scale and diversity of the Port's responsibilities create a business environment that is both operationally complex and highly visible. The organization must support sound financial stewardship, workforce administration, procurement, project and asset oversight, commercial activity, regulatory obligations, executive reporting, and public accountability. These responsibilities do not operate in isolation. They depend on timely information, consistent processes, clearly defined ownership, appropriate internal controls, and systems that enable leaders to see across the enterprise rather than manage through disconnected transactions.

The Port's business systems environment has evolved over time. Individual solutions may have been introduced to meet specific needs, address immediate requirements, or support particular functions. Over time, this can create fragmentation, manual workarounds, duplicative data entry, inconsistent reporting, and varying levels of system ownership or user adoption. These conditions do not necessarily mean that every existing system should be replaced. They do mean that leadership needs a fact-based understanding of how well the overall environment supports the Port's current operating model and future direction. A future enterprise business systems advisory engagement should help the Port determine where systems can appropriately enable improved operations, where governance must be clarified, and where future investments can reduce friction while strengthening organizational capacity.

The Port is seeking a rigorous assessment that reflects the realities of a public-sector operating environment while remaining informed by leading practices across complex enterprises. Recommendations must account for the Port's mission, governance structure, accountability obligations, internal capacity, budget stewardship, and the practical requirements of sustaining any future solution over time.

The Port also recognizes that enterprise systems decisions have consequences beyond technology. They shape how work is performed, how information moves, how leaders monitor performance, how controls are applied, and how employees experience routine business processes. Accordingly, the advisor must be capable of engaging both executive leaders and functional stakeholders while maintaining an enterprise perspective. Departmental needs matter, but the ultimate recommendation must reflect what best serves the Port as a whole.

PORT CONTEXT AT A GLANCE

Dimension	Implication for the Advisory Engagement
Public-sector governance	Recommendations must be practical, transparent, defensible, and suitable for future competitive procurement.
Multi-functional operating environment	The assessment must evaluate enterprise needs across business functions rather than optimize one department in isolation.
Long-term investment horizon	The decision framework must consider sustainability, scalability, administrative burden, and total organizational value.
Executive decision support	Findings must be translated into clear choices, tradeoffs, risks, and recommendations for executive leadership.
Evolving business processes	The advisor must distinguish technology needs from process, governance, role clarity, and operating discipline.

3. The Strategic Opportunity

The Port has an opportunity to establish a disciplined enterprise business systems strategy before initiating a technology procurement. This sequencing will allow the Port to define its business and functional requirements before evaluating available solutions and to assess potential options against its operational needs, priorities, and long-term objectives. The Port's approach is to understand the business, define the decision, evaluate the options, and only then move toward procurement.

At the center of the opportunity is a strategic choice that cannot be answered through a generic systems inventory. The Port must determine whether its future needs are best served by a more integrated enterprise platform, by a set of complementary systems selected for functional fit, or by a phased combination of the two. Each model can be viable and also creates different implications for governance, data, integration, user experience, reporting, vendor management, cost, implementation complexity, and long-term support. The appropriate answer must emerge from the Port's business context rather than from market convention or advisor preference.

The opportunity is therefore not merely to document current systems or produce a list of software requirements. It is to create a shared enterprise view of the capabilities the Port needs, the problems it is trying to solve, the outcomes it expects, and the constraints that should shape the investment. That work should distinguish challenges best addressed through technology from those arising from or compounded by inefficient manual work, unclear ownership or decision authority, inconsistent processes, or policy and procedural gaps. These findings should inform both future system requirements and the organizational changes needed to support a successful implementation.

The Port expects the advisor to help leadership distinguish among these conditions and determine the appropriate response. In some cases, a technology investment may be the primary answer. In others, the more valuable recommendation may be to simplify a process, clarify governance, establish standards, improve data ownership, or strengthen internal operating discipline before introducing new systems. The Port is seeking a firm with the judgment to make those distinctions candidly, even when doing so reduces the scope of technology ultimately recommended.

The advisory process should also support executive alignment. Enterprise systems decisions routinely cross functional boundaries and expose competing priorities. Finance may emphasize control, reporting, and auditability. Human Resources may emphasize usability, workflow, and employee experience. Operations may prioritize speed, continuity, and field accessibility. Executive leadership must consider all of these perspectives while maintaining an enterprise view. The advisor should create a structured process that helps leaders understand where priorities converge, where tradeoffs are unavoidable, and which principles should guide the final decision.

A well-executed engagement will provide executive leadership with a clear enterprise business systems strategy, an objective evaluation of viable commercially available solutions, and a well-supported recommendation identifying the systems, platforms, or combination of solutions best positioned to advance the Port's business objectives. It will equip leadership with a coherent decision framework that clearly explains the business challenges to be addressed, why they matter, the range of viable market alternatives, how those alternatives compare, the risks and tradeoffs associated with each, and the recommended sequence of future decisions. The resulting recommendations should provide sufficient

detail to inform a future procurement while remaining flexible enough to encourage meaningful market competition and objective evaluation of future proposals.

The Port should be able to move into a future solicitation with confidence that its requirements are business-driven, its evaluation criteria reflect enterprise priorities, its governance is prepared for the next phase, and its procurement strategy is structured to attract qualified market participants while protecting independence and competition.

THE DECISION THE PORT MUST BE PREPARED TO MAKE

OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
One integrated enterprise platform	**Multiple complementary systems**	**Purposeful hybrid model**
Potentially stronger standardization, common data, unified workflows, and consolidated administration.	Potentially stronger functional fit, flexibility, and phased modernization across business areas.	A deliberate combination of enterprise foundation and specialized applications, governed as one portfolio.

The Port has not selected a preferred model. The purpose of the advisory engagement is to determine which model best advances the Port's business priorities and long-term interests.

4. Scope of the Advisory Engagement

The Port seeks an independent advisory partner to help executive leadership make informed technology investment decisions before initiating a competitive procurement. This engagement is intentionally positioned as a business strategy engagement rather than an information technology initiative. The advisor's responsibility is to bring disciplined analysis, structured facilitation, and objective judgment to a decision that will influence the Port's operations for years to come.

The successful firm will begin by developing a thorough understanding of the Port's business model, governance structure, operating environment, and strategic priorities. Stakeholder engagement should extend beyond documenting existing processes to understanding how work is intended to function, where pain points exist, and which capabilities will be most critical to the Port's future state.

The advisory process should culminate in a clear executive recommendation supported by transparent analysis, documented assumptions, and well-reasoned tradeoffs. In addition to recommending an overall enterprise business systems strategy, the advisor should identify the commercially available solutions that best align with the Port's business requirements and explain the rationale supporting those recommendations. The Port expects the advisor to evaluate whether an integrated enterprise platform or a portfolio of complementary solutions offers the strongest long-term business value. Recommendations should remain independent, evidence-based, and free from software vendor influence.

The scope of this engagement does not include software implementation, systems integration, execution of data migration, project management, organizational change management, contract negotiation, or post-award implementation support. Instead, the engagement concludes with an Executive Decision Package and an Enterprise Business Systems Roadmap that positions the Port to determine the most appropriate enterprise business systems strategy, recommended solution(s), acquisition approach, and sequence of future activities.

Recognizing the Port's governance calendar and desired decision timeline, the selected advisor should be prepared to complete the engagement within approximately forty-five (45) calendar days following project kickoff. Respondents may recommend refinements to the work plan but should demonstrate their ability to successfully perform the engagement within an accelerated schedule.

5. Consulting Philosophy, Methodology & Experience

The Port encourages thoughtful narrative responses that demonstrate your firm's methodology, executive advisory experience, and approach to enterprise business systems strategy. Responses should reflect an advisory approach grounded in business outcomes, analytical rigor, executive communication, and independence.

Theme 1 – Business Discovery & Problem Framing

1. How do you distinguish between business process challenges, governance issues, organizational design considerations, and technology limitations before recommending solutions?
2. What methods do you use to identify the business capabilities that should guide enterprise systems decisions rather than simply documenting current processes?

3. Describe how you build consensus around a shared definition of the problem when stakeholders have differing perspectives on organizational priorities.

Theme 2 – Executive Facilitation & Decision-Making

4. Describe your approach to facilitating executive discussions when leaders hold competing priorities or differing views regarding technology investments.
5. How do you present complex findings in a manner that enables executive leadership and governing bodies to make confident, informed decisions with an appropriate understanding of relevant technical considerations?
6. What decision frameworks do you employ to help executives evaluate tradeoffs among cost, capability, risk, timing, and long-term organizational value?

Theme 3 – Evaluation Methodology

7. Explain the methodology you use to identify and validate business and functional requirements that will remain relevant throughout the Port's future acquisition and implementation efforts.
8. Describe your analytical approach for determining whether a single integrated enterprise platform or multiple complementary systems provide the greatest long-term value.
9. What criteria do you consider most significant when evaluating scalability, interoperability, reporting capabilities, usability, governance, and sustainability across commercially available solutions?

Theme 4 – Vendor Independence & Objectivity

10. How does your firm preserve independence and vendor neutrality throughout market assessments and recommendations?
11. What internal governance practices help ensure that recommendations are driven by the Port's business needs and not influenced by existing vendor relationships or implementation opportunities?

Theme 5 – Executive Recommendations & Procurement Readiness

12. What distinguishes an executive recommendation that is actionable from one that is merely informative?
13. Describe the work products and decision support materials you provide to prepare organizations to successfully acquire and implement enterprise business systems.
14. Provide an example of an engagement in which your advisory recommendations materially influenced executive investment decisions, regardless of whether your firm participated in implementation.

Response Guidance

The Port places particular value on structured thinking, balanced evaluation of alternatives, professional candor, and the ability to facilitate executive alignment. Responses should clearly explain the reasoning behind the firm's approach and illustrate the analytical discipline and professional judgment it brings to complex organizational decisions.

6. Expected Executive Deliverables

The following work products represent the anticipated deliverables of a future advisory engagement. Respondents should describe their approach to developing these deliverables but are not expected to submit them as part of the RFI response.

The value of this engagement will be measured by the quality of executive decisions it enables. Accordingly, the Port expects the engagement to culminate in an integrated Executive Decision Package that provides leadership with the information, analysis, and strategic context necessary to make informed technology investment decisions. Each work product should build upon the previous, resulting in a cohesive body of analysis that clearly explains the Port's current environment, future business requirements, available market alternatives, and the rationale supporting the recommended path forward.

The Executive Decision Package should be developed to support executive decision-making, with sufficient technical context to explain the findings, risks, tradeoffs, and recommendations. Deliverables should communicate complex findings in a manner that is concise, evidence-based, and readily understood by decision-makers responsible for balancing organizational priorities, operational needs, financial stewardship, governance expectations, and long-term institutional value.

Executive Summary

A concise summary of the engagement, major observations, strategic themes, key decisions requiring executive consideration, and recommended next steps. This document should provide executive leadership and, as appropriate, the Port Commission with a clear understanding of the assessment's principal conclusions at an executive level, with supporting technical analysis available for review as needed.

Enterprise Business Systems Assessment

An objective assessment of the Port's current enterprise business systems environment, including observations regarding organizational alignment, business capabilities, operational effectiveness, information availability, governance considerations, and areas where existing technology may no longer support evolving organizational needs. The assessment should identify strengths, constraints, operational dependencies, and opportunities for improvement while emphasizing business implications rather than software deficiencies. The assessment should establish the factual foundation for all subsequent recommendations.

Business and Functional Requirements Framework

A comprehensive framework documenting the business capabilities, operational requirements, reporting expectations, governance needs, and functional requirements that should guide future technology investments. This framework should establish the organizational capabilities that future enterprise solutions must support and provide the business foundation for evaluating future solutions and preparing a competitive procurement.

Enterprise Marketplace Assessment

An independent assessment of commercially available enterprise business systems and solution categories that align with the Port's identified business requirements. The assessment should identify the viable solutions, discuss their relative strengths and limitations, and explain why particular solutions warrant executive consideration. The assessment should remain vendor-neutral and focus on helping leadership understand the range of viable market approaches rather than promoting individual software providers.

Strategic Alternatives Analysis

A comparative evaluation of viable technology strategies available to the Port. This analysis should objectively examine the relative merits of implementing a single integrated enterprise platform, deploying multiple complementary applications, or using a purposeful combination of both. The evaluation should consider organizational complexity, operational integration, governance, reporting, scalability, implementation risk, the data migration capabilities of the solutions under consideration, migration feasibility, transition complexity, organizational flexibility, long-term sustainability, and total organizational value.

The analysis should conclude with a clear recommendation supported by documented business rationale and organizational implications.

Executive Investment Decision Framework

A structured decision framework designed to help executive leadership evaluate technology investment alternatives using consistent business criteria. The framework should provide leadership with an objective basis for evaluating competing priorities, assessing organizational readiness, understanding investment implications, and selecting a future direction aligned with the Port's strategic objectives. The framework should present decision criteria in a manner that supports consistent executive evaluation and governance discussions.

Implementation Readiness Assessment

An objective assessment of the Port's readiness to undertake an enterprise business systems implementation, including governance, staffing, executive sponsorship, decision-making capacity, project risks, organizational dependencies, and recommended sequencing of implementation activities. The assessment should identify organizational conditions that should be addressed before implementation begins to improve readiness and reduce execution risk.

Enterprise Business Systems Roadmap

A strategic roadmap outlining the recommended sequence of activities following completion of the advisory engagement. The roadmap should provide executive leadership with a structured path forward, including governance considerations, acquisition approach, major decision points, implementation planning considerations, and recommended sequencing of future activities. It should provide a practical transition from advisory recommendations to future acquisition planning and implementation preparation.

Executive Presentation

A presentation suitable for delivery to executive leadership and the Port Commission summarizing the engagement, major findings, strategic alternatives, recommended direction, and procurement readiness strategy. The presentation should facilitate executive discussion, confirm the recommended direction, and provide leadership with a clear basis for determining the Port's next steps.

Together, these deliverables should position the Port to make informed enterprise business systems investment decisions and prepare for a future competitive procurement.

7. Characteristics of a Trusted Advisory Partner

The Port is seeking a trusted advisor capable of helping executive leadership navigate one of the organization's most significant long-term investment decisions. The preferred advisory partner demonstrates intellectual curiosity and begins by understanding the organization, its mission, operating environment, governance structure, strategic priorities, decision-making processes, and business objectives. The advisor should ask insightful questions, constructively test assumptions, and facilitate meaningful dialogue among stakeholders with differing perspectives.

Recommendations should be independent, evidence-based, and aligned with the Port’s best interests. Respondents should describe the safeguards and professional practices they use to maintain objectivity and vendor neutrality throughout the engagement.

The preferred advisor must communicate with executive audiences in clear, accessible language and translate complex analyses into practical business implications. This communication should enable leadership to understand alternatives, evaluate tradeoffs, and make informed decisions with the technical context necessary to assess the recommendations.

8. Information Requested from Respondents

Responses should be concise, thoughtful, and tailored specifically to the Port's stated objectives. Marketing materials, standardized corporate brochures, and generic capability statements should be limited to information that directly supports the response.

Respondents are encouraged to organize their submissions in a manner that demonstrates their consulting philosophy rather than merely listing qualifications. The Port is particularly interested in understanding how each respondent approaches complex advisory engagements, facilitates executive decision-making, develops objective recommendations, and maintains vendor neutrality throughout the assessment process.

Responses should include:

- An executive overview describing the firm's understanding of the Port's objectives and the value the firm believes it can provide.
- A narrative describing the firm's consulting philosophy, advisory methodology, and overall approach to enterprise business systems assessments.

- Responses to the consulting questions presented in Section 5.
- A description of comparable advisory engagements emphasizing executive decision support.
- A description of the proposed engagement team, including each member's role, anticipated level of involvement, and relevant experience supporting similar executive advisory engagements.
- A proposed engagement work plan, including major phases of work, anticipated milestones, estimated duration, key assumptions, and proposed staffing approach.

Interested firms should submit a single electronic response in PDF format. Responses should be organized in a manner that corresponds with the information requested in this RFI and should clearly identify the primary point of contact for the responding firm.

Responses should be transmitted electronically to:

Port of South Louisiana
Attn: Lisa T. French
Email: bids@portsl.com

The subject line should read: **Enterprise Business Systems Advisory Services RFI Response – [Firm Name]**

Questions and Clarifications

Questions regarding this RFI must be submitted electronically to the contact identified above no later than the deadline stated in the Schedule of Events. The subject line should read: **Enterprise Business Systems Advisory Services RFI Question – [Firm Name].**

Each question should identify the specific section, subsection, or requirement of the RFI to which it relates and should be stated with sufficient clarity to permit a complete response. Questions submitted through other methods or received after the established deadline may not be considered.

To promote fairness and consistency, the Port may distribute responses to substantive questions to all known respondents. Any clarification or revision that materially affects the RFI may be issued through a formal addendum.

The Port reserves the right to determine whether a question warrants a response and whether any response requires clarification or modification of the RFI.

9. Schedule of Events

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
RFI Released	November 2, 2026
Inquiry Period	November 2 – November 9, 2026
Deadline for Submission of Questions	November 9, 2026
Release of Inquiry Responses	November 16, 2026
RFI Response Deadline	November 23, 2026

NOTE: (1) The Port anticipates an accelerated advisory engagement of approximately forty-five (45) calendar days following project kickoff. Respondents should demonstrate their ability to perform the engagement within this timeframe while maintaining the quality and rigor necessary to support executive decision-making. (2) The Port of South Louisiana reserves the right to revise this schedule. Revisions, if any, before the RFI Response Deadline will be formalized by the issuance of an addendum to the RFI.

10. RFI Process and Administrative Information

This RFI is issued solely for planning and market research purposes to better understand available advisory services, consulting methodologies, and market perspectives that may inform the Port's future acquisition strategy.

This RFI is not a Request for Proposals and does not constitute an offer to contract. Submission of a response does not obligate the Port to procure services, reimburse respondents for costs incurred, or issue any future solicitation.

Information obtained through this process may be used to refine the scope, objectives, evaluation criteria, and procurement strategy for a future solicitation.

The Port reserves the right to communicate with respondents, request clarifications, conduct interviews or presentations, and use information received through this process to inform future decision-making. The Port also reserves the right to modify, postpone, or discontinue this initiative at any time should organizational priorities or business needs change.