**A. Cover Sheet**

Case Study Title: Regional Contractor Business License

Category: Partnerships

Jurisdiction: City of Las Vegas

Manager: Elizabeth Fretwell, City Manager

Award: Yes

Rapid Fire Session: No

Project Leader: Karen E. Duddlesten

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**B. Synopsis**

**Intent of the Project**

The Las Vegas metropolitan area has three major cities (Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and Henderson), as well as a large portion of urban area contained within unincorporated towns which are administered by Clark County. For example, the famous Las Vegas Strip is located in the unincorporated towns of Paradise and Winchester and all business licenses are issued by the County within those areas. As a result a local contractor must carry a State Contractor’s License and up to four individual local business licenses to do normal business within the metropolitan area.

Local entities and the State Legislature struggled for many years to develop a solution to address multiple licenses, billings and requirements for a contractor operating in the Las Vegas area. As a result of the efforts of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition of local governments and legislation passed in 2011, local governments were tasked with creating a regional business license for contractors.

This effort involved four separate local licensing entities, four separate licensing and financial computer systems and four separate codified sets of regulations. In addition, the legislature set a one year deadline for completion of an integrated licensing system.

In order to address this short timeframe and process consolidation involving over 13,000 contractor licenses, the local Information Technology and Business Licensing Officials set the following goals:

* Common license descriptions, categories and renewal cycles
* Creation of a centralized data store for records (13,000)
* Consolidation and Agreement on all data in records
* Common data shared between jurisdictions and available on all four websites
* Electronic exchange of information between various licensing technology systems within established hourly timeframes
* Implementation prior to June 17, 2012

**Technology Component**

Each jurisdiction was accountable for writing its own code to interface with the centralized data store. Each jurisdiction was also accountable for identifying the specific changes required to their existing business license systems. The City of Las Vegas is currently on a legacy mainframe with plans to transition the business licensing operations to an updated architecture ERP system. The interface that was written initially needed to be easily modified as the new system is eventually implemented. In addition, the project was managed using a SCRUM project management methodology. Six Sprints were identified to facilitate an expedient rollout of the project.

As part of the project, two interlocal agreements were developed: Cost Sharing for the Design, Creation, and Development of the system; and Implementation and Operation of the System. The Cost Sharing agreement outlined the scope of the project, the distribution of technology development costs by jurisdiction, and the fee collection, settlement, and reconciliation. The Implementation and Operation agreement established the ongoing support and maintenance for the centralized data store and governs each jurisdictions ongoing responsibility.

**Results**

The resulting system was in place by the required deadline and included the development of a system which allows contractors to manage their regional license in their “home” jurisdiction without direct interaction with any secondary local governments. All fees, information and changes are managed at one location and passed through the central database and financial systems to secondary entities. The benefits to our customers have included:

* License is managed by the jurisdiction in which the contracting office is located.
* One consolidated business licenses, one license number and one consolidated billing.
* Uniform set of rules in all jurisdictions in which they operate.

**Costs**

Total costs in staff and technology among all entities for the completed project was $1.4 million and was completed totally with existing staff. Details of costs are as follows:

**Central Data Store**

* Hardware $33,470
* Software $780
* Labor $114,406

**Local Licensing System Interface**

* 4 entities $400,000

**Staff Labor Licensing/IT for Project Implementation**

* 60 staff members $850,00

**Innovation, Obstacles and Outcomes**

This project brought together professionals from two disciplines (Licensing and Technology) to develop a practical solution to address customer needs and reduce the bureaucratic burden on our customers. The central data store has the potential to allow local licensing entities to collaborate and share financial and data information between four distinct systems providing a working model for application to a vast number of license categories whose business operations cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Annual savings will be realized through reduced billing, inspection and duplication of services. The City of Las Vegas will now only manage 29% of the billing and licenses previously administered on an annual basis in the category of contractors, while receiving the same fees. For this category the costs of administering contractor’s licenses will be reduced by 60%. Applying this kind of cost savings to future collaborative efforts can provide a cost recovering plan for the Central Data Store System.

The largest obstacles encountered were three-fold. First, the inconsistency of data among local governments and between local systems and state systems could only be overcome through individual staff allocations in each entity to scrub data and agree and reconcile records within each system to create one central record that was acceptable to each entity and the business. Second, the antiquated individual computer systems in each entity provided limitations that dictated the outcomes of the project and limited flexibility for customers. In essence, the whole system was limited by the capabilities of the oldest system to process information and billing data in certain ways. The third obstacle was communication with business holders. Communication was expensive and not always responsive to our timelines. This project required the individual business to respond and provide information when required. It also required contractors to change the way in which they interact with local governments now and in the future. Communicating that strategy and ensuring responses became a manual process in order to meet the one year deadline.

Moving forward this project provides a template for regional cooperation on additional license categories where businesses have one central location and provide delivered services within other jurisdictions. The potential exists for janitorial services, landscapers, florists, etc. who regularly cross jurisdictional boundaries in the provision of their services to simplify their licensing interactions and save local governments administrative costs.

**C. Presentation Style**

* PowerPoint
* Examples of setbacks and obstacles