



Department Priority: R-02 Design & Plan Informix Database Migration

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2026-27

Fund Type	FY 2026-27 Base Request	FY 2026-27 Incremental Request	FY 2027-28 Incremental Request
Total Funds	\$7,518,747	\$100,000	\$0
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$7,518,747	\$100,000	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
FTE	48.5	0.0	0.0

Summary of Request

Problem or Opportunity

The Information Technology (IT) Division of the Colorado Department of State (CDOS or Department) currently operates critical databases using antiquated Informix technology. Most organizations in the US have transitioned to modern and reliable database technologies and it is becoming increasingly challenging, competitive, and costly to hire IT staff with (outdated) Informix skills. Further, the highly competitive marketplace for IT staff is interested in working with the latest technologies so that their skills remain current. Consequently, the Department’s ongoing use of Informix also leads to difficulties in recruiting and retaining critical IT staff.

Proposed Solution

Migrating from Informix to a modern, widely-used, database platform – would align with industry standards, improve maintainability, and broaden the recruitment talent pool. However, it would be reckless to leap into a technology migration of this magnitude for essential technology infrastructure without engaging in a thorough analysis of the project’s scope and all potential product solutions. Therefore, as a first step, the Department proposes hiring a consultant with expertise in database migration to design and plan its transition and anticipated implementation.

Fiscal Impact of Solution

Engaging a consultant for 400 hours at an estimated \$250 per hour in FY 2026-27 is expected to cost \$100,000. These monies will be paid from the IT Division: Personal Services appropriation and the Department of State Cash Fund¹ (CDOS Cash Fund).

Requires Legislation	Revenue Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	No	No	§ 24-21-111.5., C.R.S. § 1-5-301, et seq C.R.S.

Background and Opportunity

CDOS has over 30 custom-built applications supporting Coloradans. All these applications utilize Informix as a database backend. Aging platforms like Informix create significant technical debt, diverting valuable resources away from innovation and exposing the Department—and by extension, Coloradans—to increased risk of cyber attack or failure and operational challenges. Informix Database Administrators (DBAs) are difficult to find and command a high cost due to limited availability and specialized skills, making staffing expensive and retention challenging. Other opportunities with the current Informix stack include expensive support maintenance contracts, reduced compatibility with modern tools, and slower performance than newer technology platforms. The division operates largely independently from the Governor’s Office of Information Technology (OIT) and thus needs to be able to support its own systems. Specifically, CDOS is excluded from the definition of “state agency” in the OIT statutes.²

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

Migrating to a more modern and commonly used SQL platform will save money, increase performance, and attract talent to the State in the long run. Professionals with experience with platforms such as Microsoft SQL Server and PostgreSQL are more readily available in the labor market, and the Department can attract and competitively compensate DBAs with these in-demand skill sets. Modernizing to these robust, widely-supported platforms will reduce technical debt, increase cyber security, lower maintenance overhead, and provide improved scalability, performance, and features to efficiently support over 30 custom-built applications critical to business, professional licensing, elections, and other public services. This investment ensures the

¹ § 24-21-104(3)(b) C.R.S.

² § 24-37.5-102(28) C.R.S.

Department can deliver reliable, secure, and efficient digital services while protecting taxpayer dollars from escalating expenses tied to obsolete technologies.

As a first step, the Department proposes hiring a consultant with expertise in database migration to design and plan its transition. The consultant will provide a clear and detailed plan for future migration, identify potential obstacles and risks in the transition process, and deliver a comprehensive roadmap to guide the Department. Additionally, the consultant will outline the necessary resources—including personnel, technology, and budget considerations—required to plan and execute a successful migration from Informix. These outcomes will enable the Department to proactively mitigate risks and ensure a smooth, efficient shift to a modern, supported database platform.

Assumptions and Calculations

The Database Unit in the IT Division estimates that this initial step will take approximately 10 weeks of review and planning. A typical consultant's rate for this level of effort is about \$250 per hour. We estimate this consulting project to cost will approximately \$100,000. Initially, this would involve reviewing our current environment and architecture, application dependencies, and specific database architecture requirements. After review, the consultant would assist with outlining solutions, technologies, and a roadmap for our DBAs to follow.