NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Operation of the Intercounty Bus Rapid Transit System
Contract #C037626

June 30, 2017

ANNOUNCEMENT #2

- The Department anticipates releasing a modification to the RFP in the near future to include the Q&A and any changes to the RFP language.
- Schedule changes:
  - Deadline to submit questions changed to Friday July 14, 2017 at 12 Noon.
  - Proposal due date changed to Friday August 11, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.
- Attachment Changes:
  - Attachment 14 – LHTL Service Level Bonus Points has been updated to account for calculation errors.
  - Attachment 30 – Vendor Assurance of No Conflict of Interest or Detrimental Effect will be added to the RFP and must be complete/submitted with Part II Cost and Administrative Submittal
  - Attachment 31 – Q&A will be added to the RFP, Q&A already received and answered is included with this announcement
  - Attachment 32 – Pre-Proposal Webinar Presentation Slides will be added to the RFP. A PDF of the slides can be found on the DOT website.

Note: Proposal due date has been extended 2 weeks however, the operational date for the BRT service remains on or before October 29, 2018.

Please address any questions regarding this release to Ms. Patty Kappeller. Thank you.

patricia.kappeller@dot.ny.gov
This Q&A will be incorporated into the RFP via a future modification

Q1. Page 49 – 5.4.9.8 – To what does the sentence “All amounts specified above will be billed as an off-set against future Contractor invoices.”
ANS: Any fees assessed due to change in key personnel will be deducted from invoices submitted by the Contractor.

Q2. Page 51 – 5.5.1.1 – Do initial time and materials reimbursements include that for a buildup of the initial marketing and branding of the service?
ANS: Yes

Q3. Page 22 – 4.4.4.1 – Fare Coordination – Will procurement of future fare equipment to comply with new MTA fare media be reimbursed under a separate contract addendum?
ANS: Yes, a supplemental agreement will be processed to include the scope and costs for the procurement, installation and maintenance of the new MTA fare payment system.

Q4. Page 45 – 5.4.7.5 – Operating Performance – Define STICC
ANS: Statewide Transportation Information and Coordination Center.

Q5. Page 59 – 6.1 – We request a four week extension for the proposal due date, as the RFP was released a week beyond the date initially advertised, with no guidance during the development process as to what changes could be expected, and more important, as the proposal is due but two weeks after question responses.
ANS: The proposal due date has been extended 2 weeks to August 11, 2017 at 2:00 PM, the deadline to submit questions has been extended to July 14, 2017 at 12:00 PM.

Q6. Page 96 – Article 18 – Should this read “Contractor” instead of “Consultant”?
ANS: As stated in Section 3.3, Definitions and Acronyms: Consultant, Contractor, and Operator – shall assume the same meaning, and are utilized interchangeably.

Q7. Attachments Page 84 – 3.5 – the term “without any cost” should read “without any cost beyond bid cost”
ANS: This will be addressed in the modification to read “without any additional cost to NYSDOT beyond the contractor’s operational service period per mile rate.”

Q8. Attachments Page 86 – 8. – May the term “providing a vehicle storage and maintenance facility” be interpreted to read “providing one or more vehicle storage and maintenance facilities”
ANS: This will be addressed in the modification to read: “8. Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility (ies) – The Contractor is responsible for providing vehicle storage and maintenance facility (ies) with capacity for the required LHTL vehicles.” “8.1 In addition to the requirements outlined in Section 4.4.4, this/these maintenance facility (ies) must be required to have associated with it/them the following key factors:”

Q9. Page 11 – 3.5 – Contract Term and Payment Method – Please indicate what relief the Contractor has if the CPI substantially exceeds the cap limit of 3% (four of the last ten years have seen this index exceed 3%, once by 150%).
ANS: Any adjustments cannot exceed the 3% cap, regarding less of how high the CPI is running.

Q10. Page 22 – 4.4.4.1 – Schedule Coordination – Does this apply to ALL Metro-North stations (Spring Valley, Tarrytown, White Plains)? It is impossible to comply with this and still have a regular interval schedule as MNR schedules vary by time of day.
ANS: The operator should make every effort to coordinate with Metro North schedules at Tarrytown and White Plains stations (especially at Tarrytown, where trains are less frequent). Coordinating with schedules at Spring Valley station is of less importance, as there does not seem to be significant bus-to-train transfers here (and vice-versa).

Q11. Page 44 – 5.4.6 – Service Plan – Although this indicates that proposals may not alter the route or stops on any of the routes proposed, is it permissible to propose certain adjustments beyond the core, such as extension to Suffern Railroad Station?
ANS: The selected operator may serve any additional locations they can accommodate within the schedule and with the allocated number of buses, as long as they serve all of the stops outlined in the Service Plan, meeting at least the minimum frequencies.

Q12. Page 45 – 5.4.7.3 – Customer Service – Will there be any credit offered to the concept of hospitality as a customer service benefit as well as simply responding to customer concerns, etc.?
ANS: Section 5.4.7.3 asks proposers to “describe how the customer service program will meet the RFP’s minimum requirements of RFP Section 4.4.13 and Attachment 18: Customer Satisfaction.” The contents of the customer service program will be evaluates for these minimum requirements and any other customer service aspects they propose. The evaluation committee will not be sampling any current services operated by proposers. All details about how the proposer intends to conduct customer service must be included in the proposal.

Q13. Page 55 – 5.5.1.8 – May we presume that extraordinary emergency work (not caused by the contractor) will be covered separately for reimbursement?
ANS: Please refer to Section 3.6, Service Expansion, page 12; Article 10, Extra Work, page 5 of Attachment 1, Draft Contract; Attachment 16, Operating Performance Standards, 2nd paragraph (force majeure language).

Q14. Page 63 – 6.3.1 – Additional points are issued for reducing running time. Since ALL competitors will be subject to the same traffic problems (and other delay-inducing difficulties), and since real running time adjustments can only be made after experience, there is no legal or safe means of reducing running time competitively.
ANS: Running time consists of street/highway operations, as well as dwell time enroute. Bidders have the opportunity through their operations to decrease and manage dwell time at bus stops, especially when boarding and alighting passengers and affirmatively communicating the functioning of the transit priority signaling systems. In addition, layover is included in the running time (synonymous with the NTD definition of revenue vehicle time) and the effective management of layover will be encouraged. The objective of this incentive is to encourage high quality, efficient and actively managed operations, and encourage a LHTL “team-approach” to highway and transit operations.

Q15. Page 64 – 6.3.1 – Will peak/off peak fares be acceptable?
ANS: As outlined in the RFP, the proposer may include other existing fare types and are encouraged to consider new or different fares that serve potential transit markets; however, new or different fare types will not be included in the bonus point calculation.

Q16. Page 64 – 6.3.1 – Will UniTicket fares over Spring Valley be accepted?
ANS: A Uniticket to Spring Valley is not a feature of the current TZx service and is seen to have little value for the future LHTL service. NYSDOT will not be negotiating with MTA for this fare type for Spring Valley.

Q17. Page 67 – 6.3.2 – Reference Checks – Will the evaluation members visit existing facilities of proposers or ride existing operations thereof? If not, we recommend incorporating this into the evaluation process.
ANS: Please refer to Section 6.3.2, Technical Proposal Evaluation. The Department reserves the right to perform reference checks to verify experience. The proposer should provide their approach how they will meet the minimum facility requirements in the technical submittal. Since it is not a requirement to have a facility/facilities at the time of proposal submission it would be unfair to all potential proposals to require facility site visits.

Q18. Attachments Page 21 – Article 33 Title VI Assurance (1) – We do not believe compliance with Title VI regulations is possible since this RFP mandates severe diminution of service on a potential Title VI area on the Suffern Route?
ANS: The routes required under the RFP, have been structured based upon an analysis of current and projected use of bus services, ridership levels, travel times and patterns. NYSDOT analysis indicate that the passengers from Suffern are already making transfers to an express service at Lot J rather than staying on the same bus for what can be over an hour. Therefore the structure of the Dark Blue route offers passengers a wider range of destinations, shorter travel times and more frequent options than prior bus services.
C037626 Operation of the Intercounty Bus Rapid Transit Service for NYSDOT

Questions & Answers

Q19. Attachment Page 70 – 8.16-5, Skipped Stops – As skipped stops (with coverage by following buses) is a standard dispatching technique to improve service, why are these forbidden?
ANS: Skipped stops only work well when frequencies are at 5-10 minutes, as a following bus is not far behind the first. The LHTL service is not intended to run at these frequencies, and so there is a customer expectation that all stops will be served on every run of the route.

Q20. Attachments page 77 – 8.16.-3, Please confirm if the embedded allowances for routine service delays take into account seasonal/cyclical traffic fluctuations (Fridays before summer weekends, three day holiday weekends, heavy travel holidays such as Thanksgiving Wednesday and Sunday, etc.)?
ANS: The embedded allowances do allow for routine service delays. Proposer has the responsibility to maintain all schedules. The department may take into consideration extreme traffic conditions such as holidays when assessing liquidated damages.

Q21. Attachments Page 79 – 4, Other Requirements – (1) – If route capacity is strained by passenger growth, endemic problems not of the Contractor’s cause, or for any other reason, may the Contractor supply his own buses in equivalent utility and condition?
ANS: As noted on the pre-proposal call, operators would be able to supply their own buses if they feel the need to do so, as long as these follow the specifications of the transit vehicles NYSDOT is providing for the service and have all the technology elements and other amenities on the rest of the vehicle fleet. These vehicles would be procured at the expense of the operator. 3.6 Service expansion and cost language regarding additional buses. All buses must follow the specifications and branding.

Q22. Attachments Page 85 – 53, Add after the last word “appearance” the words “with exceptions granted for exceptional and severe weather.”
ANS: No change will be made to the RFP.

Q23. Attachments Page 86 – 7, Damages for miles between road calls should except endemic problems with the fleet not caused by the Contractor.
ANS: The department may take these into consideration when assessing liquidated damages.

Q24. Attachments Page 89 -4, What are the base and stretch targets?
ANS: The base and stretch targets are at the discretion of NYSDOT and will be set before the launch of the service.

Q25. Attachments Page 101 – 8.21.1 4, Is a table showing use of fare types by time period (even as rough as peak versus off peak) available?
ANS: This information is not available.

Q26. Attachments Page 101 – 8.21.2, The key customer service concepts of Service Awareness and Ease of Information Availability are omitted. For a market largely dependent on case fares, internet or smart phone access to information of less value. Published schedules and maps are of greater use, and we respectfully suggest that all stops, shelters, and public facilities have hard copy maps and timetables for all routes clearly posted and current, and that such information by widely circulated.
ANS: Providing information about the service is a key responsibility of the transit operator and is addressed in Sections 4.4.13 and 4.4.14 of the RFP. It is up to the proposers to propose how they will meet these responsibilities in their proposals.

Q27. Attachments Page 103 – 8.21.2.5, As operator controlled speed or travel time is insignificant compared to external impediments such as traffic, fires, police actions, construction, etc., this should not be part of the RFP.
ANS: This is not a question. The language will remain as written in the RFP.

Q28. Attachments Page 103 – 8.21.2.3, Access includes ease of finding out about the existence of the service, its routes, timetables, connection and fare innovation, etc. Why is this not included as an access criterion?
ANS: Providing information about the service is a key responsibility of the transit operator and is addressed in Sections 4.4.13 and 4.4.14 of the RFP.

Q29. Attachments Page 108 – 8.21.5.2, Have the slower boardings and alightings of “cruiser” type (over- the-road) coaches been taken into account (as opposed to wide and double doors of double deck buses) in schedule forecasts?
ANS: Yes, a slower boarding time for coaches has been incorporated into the schedule estimates for the LHTL routes.

Q30. Attachments Page 151 – 8.28.1, The estimated cost of fare vending machines is shown as $10,000-$13,000, but Table 2 in this section uses an estimate of $23,000. Which one is correct?
ANS: This is an error and should be $10-13,000 in the table as well. The table will be revised in the modification.

Q31. Attachments Page 151 – 8.28.3, We are concerned that passengers directed to other locations in the absence of a fare vending machine will be in danger of missing their bus, and further, in physical danger if they cross busy streets to access the machines, and then return to the bus stop. Further, we are concerned about machine reliability, given the record of these devices. Taken all together, this is a significant disincentive to use public transportation.
ANS: NYSDOT has conducted an analysis to determine how many fare collection machines are needed and in which locations along the route. Passengers will also have the option to pay on-board with cash or through the mobile app, should the ticket machine be out of order. The Contractor is responsible for pricing out a suitable maintenance regime. Marketing and access to information should be included in the proposers planned approach. The Proposer has the ability to propose additional fare payment machines as part of their technical proposal. The cost for the procurement, installation and maintenance of additional machines must be correspondingly reflected in the cost proposal.