

Formal Responses to Questions from Potential Respondents

40-Foot Low Floor Heavy Duty Transit Buses

RFP Number: 2014-TRANSIT-001

Q: In Section 2.5. A minimum seating capacity of 35 seats is required. If a bus is available with more than 35 seats would you prefer it be bid with more seats. Is seating capacity or price more important for this opportunity?

A: As stated in Part IV, Scope of Work, Section 2.2, the minimum bus seating capacity is 35 seats. As stated in Part III, Instructions, under Section 9, Review, Best Value Evaluation and Selection Criteria, the Center will consider “best value” as a selection criteria. By definition, the Center is pursuing the optimum combination of economy (cost) and quality. Seating capacity is an important priority because riders are currently standing for at least 30 minutes during the peak of the peak hours of operation in the morning and afternoon. Adding seating capacity, and thereby seating more passengers, improves the quality of the transit service, however the cost of this added capacity/quality must be considered as a part of the selection process. The Center must achieve a balance between the improved quality and the potentially higher cost. Cost/benefit will be considered if a Respondent proposes seating capacity in excess of 35 seats.

Q: Exhibit E states all certifications are required before the Proposal Submission. At what point in the procurement process would you prefer to receive these? Are copies of them required in the proposal as well? Can they be submitted electronically or do you require originals before proposal as they required in Tab 9 of the proposal as well.

A: All documents identified in Exhibit E, Respondent/Contractor Pre-Award Certifications, are required to be submitted with the Respondent’s proposals.

Q: On page 31, Section 3 it state that the bus price will be subject to PPI each year. On the pricing sheet, a bus price is required for each year. Would Galveston prefer fixed pricing for the initial term and optional contract years or would you prefer a base bus price that is adjusted based on PPI? If PPI is preferred, would Galveston accept PPI1413 as the price escalator?

A: The Center will only accept a fixed price for the base year. The optional contract year prices will be calculated based on the PPI. The Center will accept PPI 1413 (Truck and Bus Bodies) as the price escalator for optional contract years.

Q: Are the evaluation criteria as listing in Section 9/9.1 listed in order of importance? Can you elaborate on the weighting of the evaluation criteria?

A: The evaluation criteria, as listed in Part III, Instructions, under Section 9, Review, Best Value Evaluation and Selection Criteria, are shown in the order of importance with the most important criteria listed first. The weighting of the evaluation criteria will be determined by the selection committee.

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Q: The spec includes Exhibit K for Approved equals yet the spec does not indicate that there is a formal Approved Equals process, rather questions then deviations with the bid. Is it the intent of Galveston to have Approved Equals submitted?

A: Yes, it is the Center's intent to have the Change Form/Request for Approved Equals, Exhibit K, submitted under Tab 8, Deviations and Substitutions, of the Respondents' proposals. The Center would prefer to receive any Change Form/Request for Approved Equals as the Respondents determine the need for changes and/or approved equals. The Change Form/Request for Approved Equals, Exhibit K, do not fall under the same deadline as questions.

Q: We typically require two weeks to respond to the Answers to Questions and obtain suppliers quotes and compile the proposal package. The current schedule only has 8 calendar days between the response to questions and proposal submissions. Will an adjustment to the schedule be considered to ensure the bidders have adequate time to respond to the material?

A: The Center has amended the Solicitation Schedule to extend the deadline for proposals until April 9, 2014. Please see RFP No. 2014-Transit-001 Addendum No. 1 at <http://www.gulfcoastcenter.org/connecttransitnews.aspx>.

Q: Due to the extremely short time required to process the QUESTIONS/DEVIATIONS, we request your consideration to extend the date one (1) week to March 26, 2014. We also request your consideration to extend the Proposal due date to April 30, 2014.

A: Reference Part V, paragraph 2.3 – “The federal funds appropriated to reimburse the Center for the buses identified in the base year contract expire December 31, 2014. As a result, the Contractor must deliver the last bus to the Center by November 24, 2014, so the Center can accept the all buses by no later than December 1, 2014, which allows an adequate amount of time for the Center to file for federal reimbursement. It is understood and agreed the Center shall have the right to terminate the Contract if the last bus is not delivered by November 24, 2014. The Center may affect such termination by giving the Contractor a written notice of termination.”

Due to the timeframe for delivery of buses in the base year contract, The Gulf Coast Center **cannot** extend the Deadline for Written Questions or Proposals Due date.

Q: Can you please acknowledge that this bus purchase will be funded by the FTA? Your response will help us to determine the best way to approach the request for proposals.

A: Reference Part I, paragraph 2.3 – “The initial order of three (3) buses is funded by the Center with a portion of the cost to be reimbursed by FHWA under Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program (CMAQ).”

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No, this bus purchase will not be funded (partially reimbursed) by FTA. The purchase will be partially reimbursed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The part not reimbursed by FHWA will be paid by the Center.

TxDOT, as the administrator of FHWA programs in Texas, has directed Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to follow the FTA requirements for Third Party Procurements, as well as meet TxDOT administrative requirements. As a result, the agreement between H-GAC and the Center requires that respondents comply with all FTA and TxDOT requirements, as shown in the RFP.