

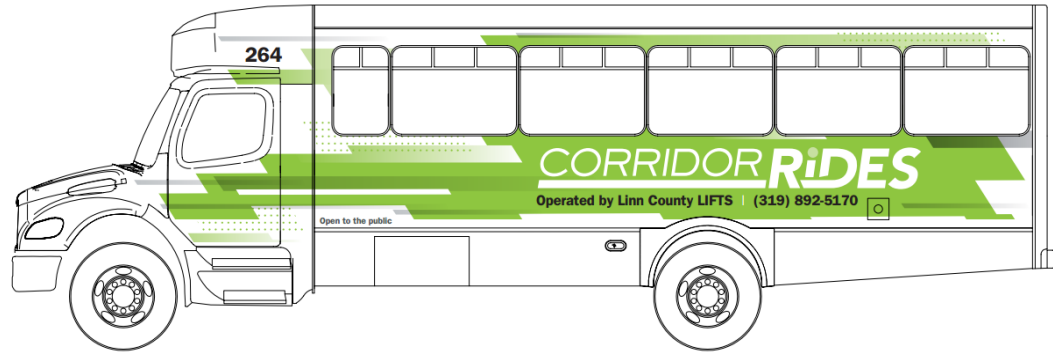


Responses to Vendor Questions Submitted
for
Interregional Express Bus Service
The East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)

May 25, 2018

EAST CENTRAL IOWA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
700 Sixteenth Street, Suite 301
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

- 1) Does the selection committee have a preferred vehicle type?
 - a. No. Committee will likely prefer a vehicle type appropriate for intercity bus service.
- 2) Is there a proposed date that the AVL/CAD system, provider will be chosen?
 - a. No, but procuring AVL/CAD system will commence shortly after the IRXB vendor is selected (July).
- 3) Will the AVL/CAD system provider be encouraged to collaborate and cooperate with the chosen transportation provider?
 - a. Yes; AVL/CAD vendor will be expected to work closely with chosen IRXB vendor.
- 4) Who is responsible for the purchase of the AVL/CAD equipment/system?
 - a. ECICOG can assist in administering the AVL/CAD procurement, and will need to approve AVL/CAD selection in order to utilize ECICOG provided funding for purchase, installation, and licensing. Vendor will be involved in procurement to ensure familiarity with systems and ensure compatibility with vehicle and operations.
- 5) Regardless of the provider for the AVL/CAD system, will the contractor be granted reporting capabilities or open access to the API data?
 - a. Yes.
- 6) What is the intention/expectation of the contractor concerning Marketing/Outreach?
 - a. Vendor will be expected to work with ECICOG and possibly DOT in marketing efforts, but ECICOG will be the lead coordinator in marketing efforts. Ridership is a large goal of and metric used to measure success of this project, and marketing/outreach efforts are expected to increase ridership levels. Vendor will be expected to provide ideas and opportunities to market the service, but is not required to incur major costs related to marketing/outreach.
- 7) Is there currently a list of approved electronic Fare-boxes?
 - a. No. Any fare-box that will meet requirements of Section 7 (page 23) will likely be acceptable (more explanation in question 45).
- 8) Who is responsible for the purchase of the Fare-boxes?
 - a. ECICOG can assist in administering the fare-box procurement, and will need to approve fare-box selection in order to utilize ECICOG provided funding for fare-box purchase and installation.
- 9) Is there a preferred fare-box?
 - a. No. Fare-boxes will need to be competitively procured.
- 10) Is there a desired or prototype of the graphics or branding for the vehicles?
 - a. Yes; Design will be similar to the image below, but customized to fit vehicle type:



(Image of current contracted public transit vehicle leased to Linn County LIFTS)

- 11) How much discretion does the contractor have in the branding and look of the vehicles?
 - a. Branding will be a cooperative effort with ECICOG. "CorridorRides" will be the branding scheme utilized, which is consistent with the Region 10 public transit agency administered by ECICOG, but final design of brand will be created in conjunction with vendor.
- 12) Please define "Commuter Seating"
 - a. Seating having sufficient padding and considered an industry standard for intercity bus service
- 13) Are passenger seat belts required?
 - a. No, but buses may be equipped with seatbelts; however wheelchair/mobility device securement must be accommodated.
- 14) Is there any approved instance that a non-branded vehicle could be used for service?
 - a. Yes; as approved by ECICOG in certain circumstances a non-branded bus could be allowed to temporarily operate i.e. a 2nd spare bus is needed
- 15) In section 2.3.2 on page 18, it suggests that a "On Duty" mobile vehicle be available during the hours of operation. Is this a correct assessment?
 - a. Yes, a spare vehicle is expected to be available and ready to operate during all times of service.
- 16) Is there requires specifications, including number of cameras and positions for the video surveillance system?
 - a. No requirement, but an industry standard would be expected for purposes of safety and security within and immediately around the bus (typical heavy duty public transit buses have at least 6 cameras). No name brand system is required
- 17) Am I correct in the understanding that the future negotiated prices are partially based on the PPI of Bus and Body Manufacturing?
 - a. Yes
- 18) Please clarify the statement, 11.4 "relieving the selected Respondent of a significant risk"?
 - a. "Significant Cost Risk" relates to a spike in fuel costs that could have incurred significant unexpected costs to the vendor if they included fuel costs in their base price proposal

- 19) Are contractors allowed to present multiple bids based on different vehicle options?
- a. Yes
- 20) Is the contractor responsible for the purchase of the fare box?
- a. ECICOG can assist in administering the fare box procurement, and will need to approve fare box vendor selection in order to utilize ECICOG provided funding for the fare box purchase and installation. Vendor will be involved in procurement to ensure familiarity with systems and ensure compatibility with vehicle and operations
- 21) Is the contractor responsible for the purchase of the AVL/CAD hardware?
- a. Please see question #4
- 22) Can you define a mechanical failure and give an example?
- a. A problem with any component of the bus that causes it to be inoperable for passenger service. Examples would include engine overheating, failure of braking system(s), inoperable door(s).
- 23) How many companies will be chosen for the interview phase?
- a. Exact number will be at the discretion of the review committee, but similar RFP's have invited three vendors to the interview phase.
- 24) Please clarify the term(length) of the contract?
- a. The initial term of the contract will be Five years, with the option for two one-year extensions.
- 25) Are there any weekdays in the year that the service will not be offered?
- a. Currently no; however major holidays may be negotiated for final contract and associated costs for revenue hours/miles not utilized by vendor will not be reimbursed.
- 26) What considerations for extra loading time of handicapped passengers are given when investigating reliability?
- a. The conceptual service scheduled provided in RFP does take into consideration loading time for non-ambulatory riders. Minor modifications to schedule may be considered in contract negotiations
- 27) How would you expect suggestions to route be communicated?
- a. Exact route alignment and stop locations will be determined in contract negotiations, but adherence to the recommended route alignment in RFP with regard to general stop locations and major roads utilized will be required. i.e. local roads to access/depart stops are negotiable when finalizing route during contract negotiations.
- 28) Can you clarify item 2.7 on page 48?
- a. Missed trips are those that are missed completely – not just late – for any reason. Missed trips caused by accidents or road closure unrelated to the IRXB service will not be considered fault of the contractor but will still be documented.
- 29) Can you define the anticipated type of work intended in the "Extra hourly work rate"?

- a. An example would be extra service beyond what is called for in the RFP – i.e. another bus route during peak times, or a bus operating on weekends.
- 30) Will the provider of the AVL system be required to provide API data to link location data to a website?
- a. Yes. The expectation is for a website to show real-time information using AVL/CAD data.
- 31) Can the existing website for the contractor, with a link to this service meet the web site requirement?
- a. Yes, however a dedicated page(s) for this service would be expected (that could be hosted/maintained via the contractors existing website).
- 32) Is there a bandwidth requirement for the WiFi?
- a. No, however is it expected that an industry standard to accommodate reasonable bandwidth needs will be provided.
- 33) Is there a preferred provider for WiFi?
- a. No
- 34) Do you anticipate continuing to use the following AVL and Farebox systems: Syncromatics AVL system; SPX Odyssey fare boxes?
- a. Procurement of AVL system and Fare boxes will occur after vendor selection for IRXB service; procurement of such systems may work in conjunction with area transit agencies (Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Coralville, CAMBUS) if they have a procurement system that allows piggy-backing purchasing.
- 35) Is the radio system used by the contractor expected to work with Cedar Rapids, Coralville, Iowa City and CAMBUS radio systems?
- a. Not expected or required, but an accommodating system would be preferred.
- 36) Can you supply the company used for radio communications for, Cedar Rapids, Coralville, Iowa City and CAMBUS?
- a. Transit agencies in Johnson County use RACOM; Cedar Rapids Transit uses CEC.
- 37) Could you define the latest date a level 2 change would occur?
- a. A level 2 change could occur as late as the last year (year 7) based on demand for service.
- 38) Item # 2.4.4 on page 21 states that as part of the overall management plan, the Contractor shall seek to use a GPS-Based AVL/CAD system that is compatible with other regional transit system operators, including Cedar Rapids Transit, Coralville Transit, Cambus, and Iowa City Transit: Do all of these systems currently use the same GPS-Based AVL/CAD system?
- a. The three systems in Johnson County use Syncromatics, and Cedar Rapids Transit uses Ride Systems.
- 39) If the Company has a GPS System that is viewable on the internet from any computer, will this system suffice, or must it be the specific type that is already in use?
- a. The GPS system will ideally be compatible with other regional systems and be able to integrate GTFS data (to display on google transit) but vendors may propose a different

system and explain how it would be beneficial.

- 40) If required as a new purchase, can the company work off one of the existing contracts to purchase the system at a government-based purchase price that has already been negotiated with the supplier?
- a. Yes; if supplier agrees to honor purchasing off of an existing contract.
- 41) If there is an existing program being used, what is the cost per system license?
- a. See question 38 for existing systems in use, TBD on pricing options.
- 42) On Item Number 6, it states that ECICOG reserves the right to audit financial records at any time. For clarification, would the financial records to be audited be those directly related to this contract, the same way it stated in paragraph 2 of Item Number 9.2 on page 24?
- a. Financial records that could be audited include any expenses and revenue of the vendor attributed to this service which would be used to create the monthly reports referenced in 9.2 (page 24)
- 43) Does ECICOG maintain a list of approved Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) available in the area?
- a. A DOT maintained list of DBE businesses in Iowa can be found here:
<https://secure.iowadot.gov/DBE/Home/Index/>
- 44) In Item 8, on page 13, entitled "Marketing/Outreach, it states that the Contractor is expected to cooperate with ECICOG in marketing and promoting the service. In this statement, is it expected that the Contractor will be using its own funds for marketing this program. In addition, in the same paragraph, it states that the Contractor will create and maintain an IRXB Website. Can this be additional pages that are attached to the current Contractor's website, or must it be a "stand-alone" website? If it must be a "stand-alone" website created by the Contractor, will the Contractor be allowed to link back to the current Contractor's website for other additional information?
- a. Either are acceptable, see question 31. Yes the contractor may link back to its own website for additional information.
- 45) Item number 9, on page 13 entitled "Fares and Revenue" states that the Contractor will have electronic fare boxes approved by ECICOG installed on the buses. Does ECICOG maintain a list of approved companies that the Contractor could review? What type of criteria is being used in the purchase of electronic fare boxes?
- a. ECICOG does not have a list of approved fare boxes, but will expect to approve a system that is well suited to public transit purposes, can utilize pre-paid passes/tickets, and will support mobile ticketing systems. Selected vendor will be expected to provide input and recommendation on fare box system in order to be compatible with buses. ECICOG will provide funding for the procurement of approved fare boxes.
- 46) Since this service is Monday through Friday, 5 days per week service, and since the Contractor will be providing the buses for this service during those times, does ECICOG expect to have any controls over the use of those buses on Saturday and Sunday? Will the Contractor have the ability to use these buses in any way the Contractor deems necessary on those off days?
- a. ECICOG does not expect to have control of buses at times when the IRXB service is not

in operation, and the contractor is free to use buses at their own discretion during “off-days”.

- 47) In regards to IRXB Parking, will the Contractor be able to collaborate with local employers to implement parking programs for the park-n-ride lots. This would include such items as corporate carpooling to cut down on the parking lot space used at the park-n-ride lots?
- a. Yes. ECICOG has recently initiated an online carpool matching service: www.corridorrides.com and a public vanpool service www.vanpool380.com to alleviate congestion and any efforts to enhance and promote ridesharing would be encouraged. Alleviation of parking spots at the park and ride spots is also highly encouraged.
- 48) Page 4 – section 4.6: The standard Uninsured and Underinsured motorist limits on commercial policies are \$50,000 of primary coverage with an insured’s bus liability and physical damage policies acting as the secondary coverage. Please confirm that a separate Uninsured/Underinsured motorist coverage of \$1,000,000 is not required as it may not be possible to find such coverage.
- a. Iowa DOT requires public transit providers and subcontractors to have minimum insurance coverages listed in 4.6 (page 4) for all public transit services, which would include the service proposed in this RFP.
- 49) Page 5 – section 6.1: Is the proposal required to include full financial audited reports or simply the auditor’s opinion letter?
- a. An opinion letter from a certified auditor will suffice
- 50) Page 7 – section 7.5: Is it possible to see the material terms and conditions that are in (or would be) in the “purchase of Transit Service Contract”?
- a. Yes: language within a model contract can be found here: [http://www.iowadot.gov/transit/handbook/docs/ch8 Exhibit 1 purchase of service.docx](http://www.iowadot.gov/transit/handbook/docs/ch8%20Exhibit%201%20purchase%20of%20service.docx)
- 51) Pages 9-13 - Is ECICOG willing to adjust the routes and service schedules based upon actual operating results and construction updates?
- a. Yes. The proposed recommended routes, stops and schedules in the RFP are meant to be the basis for the service but modifications will be considered after the service has operated and has adequate data with which to make decision to modify route.
- 52) Page 13 – Ridership: What is the remedy if ridership falls below projections and the commuter service is terminated? What is the basis or study used to determine the projection of 500 passenger trips per day? What is the maximum ridership expected for a particular schedule and what is expected of the Contractor should a schedule exceed capacity?
- a. Terms for termination of contract are outlined in section 15 (page 27) of RFP. Ridership would not be the sole factor in determining to terminate this service as project is budgeted based on an estimated number of hours/miles to be provided by vendor. Ridership projections were developed by HNTB consultants who specialize in transit and used methodology and comparisons with other regions in the country. The methodology estimates an average of 24 riders per trip during peak periods with up to 44 passengers per trip. In the event bus capacity is continuously reached or exceeded there will be procedures for adjusting service levels and will be based on Level 1 or Level 2 changes

proposed by the vendor in the Price Proposal Form. Vehicles at or above capacity pose a safety concern and will be mitigated promptly and fairly between the vendor and ECICOG.

- 53) Page 13 – Section 7: Can the Contractor use their existing AVL/CAD or are we required to use a specific system? If required to use a specific system, what is the pre-negotiated cost of the Telematics system for the Contractor
- a. See questions 39 & 40
- 54) Page 13 – Section 8: Who is responsible for creating marketing materials and graphics? If Contractor, what is the expected marketing required other than website and real time information via the website?
- a. ECICOG will lead the efforts for marketing but will solicit input and recommendations from Vendor as well as DOT efforts for the larger I-80/I380 construction project. At a minimum, vendor is expected to market via website.
- 55) Page 13 – Section 9: What is the estimated percentage of passengers that will utilize pre-paid mechanisms and what percentage will use reduced fare mechanisms?
- a. There is no accurate estimate for how many passengers will utilize pre-paid mechanisms but use of such technology will be promoted so as to decrease loading time and have less cash handling by vendor. It is estimated that 5% of trips will utilize reduced fares, and up to 70% will utilize prepaid/multiple-ride passes.
- 56) Page 15 – section 1.3: For clarity, what is the FTA requirement for useful life that is referenced in this section?
- a. FTA defines useful life for heavy-duty transit buses as 12 years/500,000 miles
- 57) Page 15 – section 1.4: Are other branding opportunities available on the buses? How are revenues associated with 3rd party branding opportunities accounted for?
- a. Bus design/graphics must be approved by ECICOG and be consistent with established brand which does not include advertising space on bus exterior. Vendor may propose limited advertising on bus exterior and how revenue may offset operating costs, but specifics must be approved by ECICOG and would be finalized in contract negotiations.
- 58) Page 15 - section 1.7: Are all amenities listed in the section required? What is meant by commuter seating? Are 110v Outlets AND USB outlets required or can Contractor provide one or the other? What amount of bandwidth and connectivity per passenger or per bus is required for Wi-Fi? Are restrooms required?
- a. For commuter seating and bandwidth see questions 12 and 32. Vendor may propose providing either 110v outlets or USB outlets in proposal, but all other amenities listed are expected to be provided on buses. Restrooms are not a requirement.
- 59) Page 15 – section 1.8: There are several options for electronic fare box systems - Is there a listing of fare box systems that ECICOG approves of, or conversely, those that ECICOG would not allow?
- a. See questions 7,9,20,45.

- 60) Page 20 – section 2.4: What is the required timeline for having a website and email system operational?
- a. No timeline has been established yet, and will be decided in final contract negotiations. Ideally, website for service would be operational several weeks prior to start of service.
- 61) Page 26 – section 11.3.2: Can you confirm that graphics will be full-vehicle wraps?
- a. Graphics will likely be a full-vehicle wrap, unless a graphics vendor could use printed vinyl to apply the graphics design (no graphics will be applied on top of vehicle).
- 62) Page 31 – section 6.1: Are drivers subject to this section or are they provided as exemption as allowed under the FLSA Motor Carrier Overtime Exemption?
- a. Drivers are subject to this section as FTA funds are utilized for this service. Vendor may seek an outside legal opinion for clarity on any exemptions.
- 63) Page 47 – Section 2: How are outside circumstances beyond the Operator’s control accounted for (i.e. weather, accidents, detours, etc.) in reporting on time performance?
- a. See question 28. Vendor will not be penalized for events causing missed trips/delays beyond the vendors control.
- 64) Page 48 – Customer Service: Is Contractor required to have a separate staffed phone line for customer service/support? If yes, what are the required hours of staffing?
- a. Vendor is expected to have a phone line for customer service inquiries at all times the service is in operation, however it may an existing line used solely by the vendor for existing service.
- 65) Page 49 – Incentives: Is there an incentive for total monthly passenger trips in excess of expected performance?
- a. No incentive for total monthly trips per se, but the incentive for monthly fare revenue is intended to incentivize the vendor in regards to ridership.
- 66) Please confirm understanding of incentives/disincentives: If on-time performance is 99% for the month, would the incentive be \$200 ($\100×2)?
- a. Yes