



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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**SYSTEMS SAFETY AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 17, 2011**

SUBJECT: MYSTERY RIDER PROGRAM

ACTION: AWARD CONTRACT TO MOBILITY ADVANCEMENT GROUP

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to award a five-year firm fixed unit rate contract under RFP No. OP30102785, with Mobility Advancement Group, as the highest rated, lowest price Proposer for the Metro Fixed Route Service Quality and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance for an amount not to exceed \$569,184, inclusive of three one-year options.

ISSUE

The use of a quality assurance contractor has been a highly useful tool to monitor Metro Bus service quality and to ensure that Metro Bus service complies with ADA and other laws and regulations.

DISCUSSION

Metro is committed to providing high quality service to all customers, and strives for continuous improvement of its services. In order to meet Metro's operational needs, Metro has implemented an independent "Mystery Rider Program" to observe bus service performance on all Metro fixed route bus lines. The purpose of this program is to monitor and measure the compliance of Metro's bus service with Metro's rules, standard operating procedures, and customer expectations, with an emphasis on ADA compliance. Metro has agreed to continue the Mystery Rider Program through at least June 30, 2016, as part of a recent settlement of a lawsuit by bus riders who use wheelchairs.

Mystery Riders conduct 200 "regular" mystery rides per month. Metro provides the contractor with a specified sample of Metro Bus routes to observe during the following month. The contractor schedules Mystery Riders for identified sample trips to meet the following objectives:

- All required trips are completed within the month.
- Trips are distributed approximately evenly throughout the month.
- The same bus or bus operator is not evaluated more than once per day.
- At least 50% of trips are made by people living with disabilities.
- The length of each trip is at least 20 minutes from the boarding time to the alighting time.

Mystery Riders also conduct up to 20 "special" mystery rides per month. A special ride request is made to evaluate service at a specific time of day or location, or to evaluate the performance of a specific Bus Operator. Special ride requests are typically made the day before the ride, and include information necessary to allow the Mystery Rider to locate the exact vehicle or Bus Operator to be evaluated. These requests may specify a service or performance issue to be evaluated, and may require assignment of a Mystery Rider with particular demographic or disability related characteristics, such as requiring that the special ride request be completed by a Mystery Rider who uses a wheelchair.

Mystery Riders submit an on-line survey about each trip on the date of the ride using a web site provided and maintained by Metro. Reports include "check-off" responses to specific survey items, and provide a brief and objective description of notable service quality defects or exceptional service. The Contractor ensures that Mystery Riders are trained to evaluate if the service they observe complies with Metro's rules and standard operating procedures. The Metro Project Manager assists the Contractor to train all observers regarding Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Bus Operators (particularly SOPs related to ADA requirements and customer relations), as well as the contents and interpretation of the survey form.

The Contractor uses the reporting web site to review, provide quality assurance, make necessary modifications, and approve each report no later than noon the day following the trip. Once a report is approved, it is available to Metro bus division management through the reporting web site. Metro management reviews and follows up on each report. Roughly half of all reports are completely free of any service defects and result in Operator commendations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The funding of \$125,000 for this service is included in the FY12 budget in cost center 3010, Executive Office, Transit Operations, under project 306006, Systemwide Bus Operations Management & Administration.

Since this is a multi-year contract, the cost center manager and Chief Operations Officer will be accountable for budgeting the cost in future years, including any option exercised.

Impact to Bus and Rail Operating and Capital Budget

The source of funds for this contract are Enterprise Funds, comprised of Federal, State and local funds. These funds are eligible for bus and rail operating costs. No other source of funds was considered for this activity because the Mystery Rider Program directly impacts bus service.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could direct staff to add FTEs and operate this program with Metro employees rather than use a contracted service. This alternative is not recommended because it would be more costly.

NEXT STEPS

Following execution of the new contract the vendor will continue to provide uninterrupted service.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Procurement Summary

Prepared by: Don Ott, Executive Officer, Administration

Michelle Lopes Caldwell

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Chief Administrative Services Officer

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Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer

PROCUREMENT SUMMARY

Mystery Rider Program

1.	Contract Number: OP30102785	
2.	Recommended Vendor: Mobility Advancement Group	
3.	Type of Procurement (check one) : <input type="checkbox"/> IFB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RFP <input type="checkbox"/> RFP – A&E <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Modification <input type="checkbox"/> Task Order	
3.	Procurement Dates:	
	A. Issued: August 2, 2011	
	B. Advertised/Publicized: August 1 and 4, 2011	
	C. Pre-proposal/Pre-Bid Conference: August 15, 2011	
	D. Proposals/Bids Due: August 29, 2011	
	E. Pre-Qualification Completed: October 3, 2011	
	F. Conflict of Interest Form Submitted to Ethics: September 26, 2011	
	G. Protest Period End Date: November 22, 2011	
4.	Solicitations Picked up/Downloaded: 27	Bids/Proposals Received: 3
5.	Contract Administrator: Elizabeth Hernandez	Telephone Number: (213) 922-7334
6.	Project Manager: Steve Jaffe	Telephone Number: (213) 922-6284

A. Procurement Background

This Request for Proposal is a competitively negotiated procurement using explicit evaluation factors issued in support of the Mystery Rider Program to observe bus service performance on all Metro fixed route bus lines.

The RFP was issued in accordance with Metro's Acquisition Policy and the contract type is firm fixed unit rate.

The RFP was advertised on August 1, 2011 in the Los Angeles Daily News and Passenger Transport, on August 4, 2011 in the Southwest Wave, and on Metro's procurement web site. A Pre-Proposal Conference was held on August 15, 2011 with six (6) firms in attendance.

Three amendments were issued during the solicitation phase of this RFP; Amendment No. 1 issued on August 16, 2011 provided answers to questions regarding the RFP and to clarify requirements; Amendment No. 2 issued on August 23, 2011 answered a question about the Pre-Proposal Conference; and Amendment No. 3 issued on August 25, 2011 provided further answer to a question.

A total of three proposals were received on August 29, 2011.

B. Evaluation of Proposals/Bids

A Selection Committee consisting of staff from General Services – Administration, Office of Civil Rights and the Office of the Executive Officer were convened and conducted a comprehensive technical evaluation of the proposals received.

The proposals were evaluated based on minimum qualifications with pass/fail criteria. All the Proposers met the minimum qualifications and were considered for further evaluations using weighted evaluation criteria consisting of:

- Experience/Past Performance 40 percent
- Understanding of the Work 30 percent
- Cost Proposal 30 percent

The evaluation criteria are consistent with criteria developed for similar services procurements. Several factors were considered in developing the relative importance of the evaluation criteria. The highest weight was given to the degree of corporate skills and experience in performing similar or related projects. This experience had to relate to hiring observers with disabilities, and record of satisfactory performance for other clients; the proposer's related on-board quality assurance assessment experience; resume(s), roles and individual accomplishments of proposed key personnel to be assigned to Metro for this project; and ability of the firm to adequately hire, train and manage staff who will perform the services to Metro for this project.

The next area of importance was assigned to the proposer's understanding of the work. The proposer's strategy for hiring, training and staffing of riders, both with and without disabilities, management plan, and approach to the project were assessed. This assessment is critical to the proposer's understanding of Metro's standards for providing quality transportation services and compliance with ADA and other laws and regulations. Price is used as an evaluation criterion to obtain competitive pricing from qualified service providers, and was equal in importance to understanding of the work.

The three qualified firms are listed below in alphabetical order:

1. A Customer's Point of View, Inc.
2. Mobility Advancement Group
3. Mobility Management Partners, Inc.

Qualifications of the Firms

A Customer's Point of View, Inc. was formed in 1997 to provide anonymous shopping service evaluations, monitoring compliance, customer satisfaction surveys and training to businesses nationwide and has its headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

ACPView provided similar experience with public transportation agencies in Atlanta and Marietta, Georgia and Rochester, New York. It provided a list of clients on similar projects all of whom are in other states except for a client, Crews of California, a concessionaire at Los Angeles International Airport, to provide monthly evaluations of customer services skills, location appearance and employee integrity.

Mobility Advancement Group was founded in 1997 and first provided on-board quality assurance services for Foothill Transit in 2007. MAG is the current provider of the operator performance assessments services under the Mystery Rider Program for Metro and has performed these services since 2009. To date, MAG's performance under this contract has been satisfactory.

MAG's proposal demonstrated the firm's experience with on-board quality assurance services for public transportation agencies and performance monitoring for major transit operators in Southern California including Santa Monica Big Blue Bus, Culver City Bus, Norwalk Transit, Long Beach Transit, Foothill Transit, Gardena Bus Lines, LADOT Dash contractors, and LADOT Commuter Express contractors

Mobility Management Partners, Inc. ("MMP") is a non-profit affiliate of R & D Transportation Services for the purpose of promoting full inclusion of persons with disabilities in every aspect of society. MMG proposes to perform recruitment, training and supervision of its mystery riders in-house and not work with a sub-contractor. MMP's training staff will develop a standard training curriculum for both classroom and on-site training for the Mystery Riders.

MMP demonstrated extensive experience in ADA eligibility certification and travel training services for Access Services, Inc., Ventura County and throughout California. It is currently working with MTA on a grant for the Job Access Reverse Commute, a mobility management pilot project in the San Fernando Valley.

The Source Selection Committee rated Mobility Advancement Group highest, based on the established criteria of Experience/Past Performance, Understanding of the Work, and Cost Proposal.

C. Cost/Price Analysis Explanation of Variances

The recommended total Contract Not-To-Exceed amount is made up of a firm fixed unit rate for each regular and special assessments performed by the Mystery Rider. The recommended contract awardee's proposed offer is \$42.35 for each unit of regular and special assessment.

The recommended price has been determined to be fair and reasonable based upon adequate competition and comparison to the Independent Cost Estimate ("ICE"). The proposed total NTE for recommended awardee compares favorably to the ICE of \$157,826.54 for the initial year of the contract, and \$837,922.54 for the entire five year term.

D. Background on Recommended Contractor

Mobility Advancement Group ("MAG") was founded in 1997 and is based in Altadena, California. MAG is the current provider of the operator performance assessments services under the Mystery Rider Program for Metro and has performed these services since 2009. To date, MAG's performance under this contract has been satisfactory.

MAG first provided on-board quality assurance services for Foothill Transit in 2007. MAG's proposal demonstrated the firm's experience with on-board quality assurance services for public transportation agencies and performance monitoring for major transit operators in Southern California including Santa Monica Big Blue Bus, Culver City Bus, Norwalk Transit, Long Beach Transit, Foothill Transit, Gardena Bus Lines, LADOT Dash contractors, and LADOT Commuter Express contractors

MAG cited in its proposal the ten-year relationship with its sub-contractor TEMPS, Inc. on major transit data collection projects. TEMPS, Inc. is a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.

E. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Participation

The Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD) recommended a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Anticipated level of Participation (DALP) of 30% for this procurement. Mobility Advancement Group, Inc (MAG) made a 41.12% DALP commitment, listing one DBE firm.

SMALL BUSINESS GOAL	30%	SMALL BUSINESS COMMITMENT	41.12%
	DBE Subcontractor	% Committed	
1.	TEMPS, Inc.	41.12%	
	Total Commitment	41.12%	