

**REPORT FROM EVALUATION COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR REQUIREMENTS CONTRACT TO PROVIDE
ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE
RFP No. 9524**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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FACILITATOR:

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BACKGROUND

The City of Fresno Department of Transportation – Fresno Area Express (FAX) is soliciting proposals to provide ADA paratransit services within the Fresno Metropolitan Area. Services to be provided by the proposers include, but are not limited to: the day-to-day operation of service; executive and administrative management; employment, supervision, training of all personnel; maintenance and repair of equipment; customer relations; preparation of reports of financial and other matters pertaining to the operation of service and such other work as may be necessary to comply with the requirements contained in the original solicitation. This request is for a three (3) year contract with the possibility of four (4) one (1) year extensions. At the conclusion of the bid opening, four vendors bid on the FAX RFP and are as follows:

1. Keolis Transit Services, LLC (Keolis)
2. National Express Transit (NEXT)
3. Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission (FEOC)
4. A-Para Transit Corporation (A-Para)

The selection committee determined that negotiations would be necessary in order to make a sound business judgement and obtain the best value contract. However, certain proposals, upon initial evaluation, were inferior to others and a competitive range needs to be established in order to identify those proposals that have a reasonable chance of being selected for award given their relative technical strengths and weaknesses.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Bid Release – November 20, 2019
Bid Opening – January 3, 2020
Committee Meeting – January 28, 2020
Committee Meeting – January 30, 2020
Committee Meeting – February 28, 2020
Competitive Range Determination – March 10, 2020
Bidder Interviews – March 16, 2020
Final Committee Evaluation – March 16, 2020

EVALUATION FOR DETERMINATION OF COMPETITIVE RANGE

In order to establish a competitive range, the following factors as identified in the solicitation were evaluated. For reference, the criteria are listed in order of importance, below:

1. Cost – The reasonableness and competitiveness of the total price for services rendered to FAX, the adequacy of source data and information provided to support cost quotes and figures, and the use of industry and government recognized measurements when compiling estimates.
2. Ability to Meet the Stated Service Requirements – The Offeror's ability to demonstrate ability to meet requirements as described in the Statement of Work's on page 17 and 79, which details the goal of providing excellent curb to curb paratransit service while minimizing the cost to the City of Fresno.
3. Past Performance and Experience – Based on the City's past dealings with the bidder and reference responses.
4. Conformance to the terms and conditions of the RFP (Completeness of Response) – Completeness of response in accordance with RFP instructions; exceptions to or deviations from the RFP requirements that the Agency cannot or will not accommodate; and any other relevant factors not considered elsewhere.
5. Financial Stability – Including balance sheet and income statement. Additional financial review will be provided by qualified accounting staff to support the proposer's claims of stability and financial readiness.
6. Other related information (Qualifications, Related Experience, and References) – Technical experience in performing work of a closely similar nature; experience working with public agencies; experience in providing specifically this type of service, strength and stability of the firm; strength, stability; assessment by client references; references with demonstrated success in providing similar services.

COMPETITIVE RANGE DETERMINATION

In accordance with FTA Circular 4220.1F Chapter VI, Section 3(e), the committee determined to use a two-step procurement and evaluation procedure provided the opportunity for full and open competition was retained.

COMMITTEE NOTES

Keolis – As the incumbent, this bidder has knowledge of the service area, clients, fleet, equipment, building, software, bus drivers' union, and current City processes. However, after having held the paratransit contract for the last seven years, they have made little to no effort to implement technological advances or improved recruitment, training, or testing procedures. Additionally, the bid documents provided by Keolis were lacking some requested detail. The cost proposed was found to be fair and reasonable based upon the independent cost estimate (ICE).

NEXT – This company currently provides contracted transit service to many nearby areas, including Manteca, Modesto, Kern County, and Los Angeles County, as well as several areas of similar size and complexity to Fresno, such as Chicago, Boston, and Washington, D.C. They are familiar with the City's required software and the bus drivers' union. Their safety, recruitment, and training programs are well-developed and robust, and they have pledged to retain much of the local staff. The bid documents provided were appropriately detailed and complete. The cost proposed was found to be fair and reasonable based upon the ICE.

FEOC – This company is the current provider of several small transit contracts in Fresno and Madera Counties, and they are very familiar with local priority populations due to the other services they provide (Meals on Wheels, Veterans' Shuttle, etc.). However, their proposal suggested allocating the time and pay of several key staff members among multiple service, which the committee felt would open the door for issues. Additionally, FEOC is not a dedicated transit company – rather, they are a non-profit organization which provides diverse social services throughout the Fresno Metropolitan Area. This indicates a potential for financial instability, split focus, and lack of dedication to the project. The bid documents provided were appropriately detailed and complete. The cost proposed was found to be fair and reasonable based upon the ICE.

A-Para – This company is well-established, and has long history of providing transit service in the Bay Area, and is very familiar with California. They are also well-versed in the City-required software, and have a relationship with the bus drivers' union. Their safety, recruitment, and training programs are well-developed and robust. However, while their proposed contract cost was the highest of all bidders, their proposed driver wage was among the lowest. This has potential to cause high driver turnover. The bid documents provided were appropriately detailed and complete. The cost proposed (while being the highest of all bidders) was found to be fair and reasonable based upon the ICE.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the bid documents, bidder interviews, and reference checks, the committee recommends the requirements contract for paratransit service be awarded to NEXT. The committee feels NEXT has included appropriate detail, decent employee wages and fringe, appropriate safety and training expense, and proposed innovations in their bid documents to justify the price of the service, and that NEXT will provide the best value to the Department and the City.