



April 27, 2020

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Approval to Release Request for Quotes for the Procurement of Ten 40-Foot Plug-In Battery-Electric Buses

Overview

The California Air Resources Board passed the Innovative Clean Transit Rule in 2018 requiring transit agencies to transition their bus fleets to 100 percent zero-emission buses by year 2040. The Orange County Transportation Authority intends to pilot ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses in addition to the existing pilot of 10 hydrogen fuel-cell electric buses to help guide further procurements that comply with the new rule. A request for quotes has been developed to purchase buses through the California Statewide Contract for Zero-Emission Transit Buses issued by the California Department of General Services. Staff is seeking Board of Directors' approval to release the request for quotes.

Recommendation

Approve the release of Request for Quotes 0-2165 to purchase up to ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses from qualified vendors under the California Statewide Contract for Zero-Emission Transit Buses issued by the California Department of General Services.

Discussion

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) passed the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) Rule in 2018 requiring all public transit agencies to transition their bus fleets to zero-emission technologies by year 2040. The ICT rule requires a percentage of new bus purchases to be zero-emission buses (ZEBs) beginning with 25 percent in 2023 and increasing to 50 percent in 2026. Starting in 2029, bus purchases must be 100 percent ZEBs with the goal of a complete transition to ZEBs by 2040. The CARB defines a ZEB as a bus with zero tailpipe emissions and is either a battery-electric bus or a fuel-cell electric bus.

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) has initiated a pilot program to start testing ZEBs with the introduction of ten hydrogen fuel-cell electric buses which were placed into service in early 2020. Adding ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses to the pilot program will enable OCTA to gain necessary operational and technological experience for each ZEB type available in order to shape and define the fleet mix required to meet the service demands of Orange County, when utilizing ZEBs.

Today's ZEBs are experiencing challenges associated with vehicle operating range, charging times, cost, and infrastructure demands. Plug-in battery-electric buses require charging stations that are expected to exceed the current available electric capacity at OCTA bus facilities. In addition, battery charging times will need to be coordinated to meet bus service demands in order to maximize the operating range and cost effectiveness. Working through these operational and infrastructure challenges during a pilot of ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses will allow staff to compare and evaluate the operational effectiveness and limitations of this technology for large scale deployment.

Five of the ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses will be grant funded through the California Transportation Commission Solutions for Congested Corridors Program under SB1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017) and the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) administered by the California Department of Transportation. These buses will mark the introduction of the OCTA's newest Bravo! route, Bravo! Main Street, providing rapid bus service between the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center and South Coast Metro via Main Street. The remaining five buses will operate throughout Orange County and will be funded through LCTOP, SB1 State of Good Repair, and potentially the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust for California, Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project, and federal funds, if available.

Procurement Approach

The OCTA Board of Directors (Board)-approved procurement policies and procedures allow for two options to purchase new vehicles. OCTA can either issue a request for proposals (RFP) or partner with another public agency and use its existing bus agreement.

Using the first option, OCTA issues an RFP containing detailed vehicle specifications. The advantage of this procurement method is that OCTA can specify exactly the type of bus desired. The challenge of this procurement option is the timeline, which may take up to 18 months from when an RFP is issued to

the time when the first article is received, and then an additional 12 months to receive the remaining vehicles.

Using the second option, OCTA identifies an existing contract with another agency for the type of buses desired, containing an assignability clause, and issues a request for quotes (RFQ) to the participating firms. The advantage of this procurement method is a shortened timeline and OCTA can begin receiving buses in a much shorter time period. In some cases, this could reduce the vehicle delivery for the entire bus order by as much as six months. In addition to the base configuration of the vehicles under the existing contract, OCTA can include standard fire detection and suppression systems, and radio hardware consistent with OCTA's existing fleet. The trade off with utilizing the second option, is that OCTA will be limited in the customization or detailed specifications than with a full RFP.

Based on the established service need to improve the heavily-congested Main Street corridor and to better align with grant funding, staff recommends that the cooperative contract procurement option is the most advantageous to OCTA due to the shortened procurement and vehicle delivery time. It was determined that the California Department of General Services completed a cooperative procurement that specified vehicles with similar specifications to OCTA's requirements. The procurement allows for any city, county, district, or other governmental body to utilize this cooperative agreement.

Fiscal Impact

Funds for the procurement of ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses is included in the proposed OCTA Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget, pending Board approval on June 8, 2020.

Summary

Board approval is requested for the release of RFQ 0-2165 to purchase up to ten 40-foot plug-in battery-electric buses from qualified vendors under the California Statewide Contract for ZEBs issued by the California Department of General Services.

Attachment

- A. Draft Request for Quotes (RFQ) 0-2165, Ten 40-Foot Plug-In Battery-Electric Buses

Prepared by:

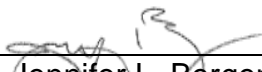


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