



**June 26, 2023**

**To:** Members of the Board of Directors

**From:** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** Approval to Release Request for Proposals for the Purchase of Replacement OC ACCESS and OC Flex Vehicles

**Overview**

The Orange County Transportation Authority operates a fleet of 247, 22-foot cutaway buses and one, 20-foot van to provide OC ACCESS paratransit service, of which 121 of them are nearing the end of their useful life. Additionally, six, 20-foot vans are used for OC Flex on-demand service, four of which have met their useful life. Two requests for proposals have been developed to purchase replacement vehicles through the California Association for Coordinated Transportation/Morongo Basin Transit Authority Purchasing Cooperative. Staff is seeking Board of Directors' approval to release the requests for proposals.

**Recommendations**

- A. Approve the proposed evaluation criteria and weightings for Request for Proposals 3-2511 for the procurement of up to 13, 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses for OC ACCESS service, with an option for ten additional 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses.
- B. Approve the release of Request for Proposals 3-2511 for the procurement of up to 13, 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses for OC ACCESS service, with an option for ten additional 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses from qualified vendors under the California Association for Coordinated Transportation/Morongo Basin Transit Authority Purchasing Cooperative.
- C. Approve the proposed evaluation criteria and weightings for Request for Proposals 3-2510 for the procurement of up to 112, 22-foot gasoline-powered vans for OC ACCESS and OC Flex services, with an option for 15 additional 22-foot gasoline-powered vans.

- D. Approve the release of Request for Proposals 3-2510 for the procurement of up to 112, 22-foot gasoline-powered vans for OC ACCESS and OC Flex services, with an option for 15 additional 22-foot gasoline-powered vans from qualified vendors under the California Association for Coordinated Transportation/Morongo Basin Transit Authority Purchasing Cooperative.

***Discussion***

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is currently operating 247, 22-foot gasoline-powered buses, and one 20-foot gasoline-powered van under the contracted services operation for OC ACCESS paratransit service, and six vans for the OC Flex service. Of the 247 cutaway buses, 130 were deployed in revenue service in 2016 and one paratransit van was deployed in 2020 as a pilot. This procurement is intended to replace 120 cutaway buses, one 20-foot van, and four OC Flex vans, for a total of 125 units. Additionally, ten 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses will be replaced with battery-electric cutaway buses in a separate procurement pending Board of Directors' approval.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) defines the minimum useful life of cutaway buses as seven years/200,000 miles based on the gross vehicle weight rating of the 22-foot cutaway buses, and four years/100,000 miles for the vans currently in service. Consistent with FTA guidelines and the OCTA Fleet Plan, the 120, 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses will be replaced at a minimum of seven years/200,000 miles. The one OC ACCESS van and four OC Flex vans will be replaced at a minimum of four years/100,000 miles. Four of the six vans deployed in OC Flex service in 2018 have exceeded their useful life and one will require replacement within two years. Due to the reduction in services during the coronavirus pandemic, the life of these vehicles was extended by one to two years.

The recommended option to purchase 15 additional 22-foot gasoline-powered vans and ten additional 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses is intended to accommodate a potential shortage of paratransit vehicles and to accommodate potential planned service expansion based on projected ridership demand. Based on an analysis conducted by staff on fuel types and infrastructure availability, the cutaway buses will be procured in the same gasoline configuration as the current vehicles.

On June 13, 2022, the Board of Directors (Board) approved the OCTA Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget, which includes funding to replace 131, 22-foot cutaway buses for OC ACCESS paratransit service. Based on a Fleet Mix Study completed in February 2021 and an internal pilot, 108 cutaway buses can be

replaced with vans. The study revealed that although the capacity provided by cutaway buses is warranted during peak hours of service to transport passengers traveling to high-trip-generating locations, most trips throughout the day can be supported by a van. The trip data, analyzed in the Fleet Mix Study and confirmed by staff's internal pilot, found that an average of three passengers were on board a cutaway bus 80 percent of the time.

The new vans will include equipment needed to carry up to two passengers using mobility devices such as wheelchairs. The replacement cutaway buses will carry up to five passengers using mobility devices. All vehicles will be equipped with a fire suppression system, on-board video surveillance, radio communication systems, and will be covered by factory and manufacturers' warranties that will contribute to lowering the overall operating cost.

The California Association for Coordinated Transportation/Morongo Basin Transit Authority (CalACT/MBTA) Purchasing Cooperative includes this class of vehicle offered by two vendors. Public transit agencies, such as OCTA, may elect to participate in the cooperative and are then allowed to purchase vehicles under this competitively procured purchasing cooperative.

The request for proposals (RFP) will include all equipment and branding required by OCTA to be installed following delivery and acceptance of the cutaway buses and the vans. The estimated value is \$2,340,000 for 13, 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses and \$14,000,000 for 112, 22-foot gasoline-powered vans. The combined total value of these purchases is approximately \$16,340,000, excluding the option for the ten additional 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses and 15 additional 22-foot gasoline-powered vans.

### ***Procurement Approach***

According to the FTA, public transit agencies are encouraged to use cooperative agreements for the procurement of common goods and services in order to foster greater economy and efficiency. As such, OCTA has identified an existing contract with another agency for the type of buses desired containing exercisable options and issues an RFP to a list of pre-qualified firms. The advantage of this procurement method is a shortened timeline, and OCTA can begin receiving buses in a much shorter period of time; in some cases, this could reduce 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 is able to include standard fire detection and suppression systems, as well as radio hardware consistent with OCTA's existing fleet.

Based on the immediate need and established service demand, 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 CalACT/MBTA completed a cooperative procurement that specified a vehicle with similar specifications to OCTA's requirements. The procurement included a contract participant list, which includes OCTA as a participant, and therefore OCTA is able to utilize this cooperative procurement.

OCTA's policies and procedures require that the Board approve all RFPs over \$1,000,000, as well as approve the evaluation criteria and weightings. Staff is submitting for Board approval the draft RFPs and evaluation criteria and weightings, which will be used to evaluate proposals received in response to the RFPs. The proposed evaluation criteria and weightings are as follows for both RFPs:

- Technical Specifications 45 percent
- Qualifications of the Firm 15 percent
- Cost and Price 40 percent

Technical specifications is assigned a high level of importance because proposals should address each section of the technical specifications in sufficient detail to demonstrate a clear understanding of the scope of work. The firm's ability to comply with the vehicle specifications and requirements is a critical element to the successful manufacturing of the vehicles. The proposals should provide evidence of sufficient planning to show that work will be accomplished as required and include suggestions intended to improve the technical and operational aspects of the vehicles. Compliance with performance requirements, proposed vehicle design, proposed construction, forecasted reliability, warranties, past performance and experience with the proposed bus platform, type and number of requested deviations, ability to provide all requested and optional items, and survey of other transit operators will be evaluated under this criterion. Proposals should provide information regarding engineering, manufacturing, program and quality controls, plans for the coordination of major suppliers and subcontractors, and schedule for the production of the vehicles.

Qualifications of the firm is assigned a 15 percent weighting and will include the history of the firm and information regarding the firm's manufacturing capabilities in producing the same or similar vehicles, with an emphasis on experience in producing similar vehicles. Under this criterion, proposals should provide federal and non-federal certifications, warranty and service center locations,

maintenance information, financial documentation, past performance of vehicles, and references. The overall reputation of the firm will also be assessed through the review of any judgements, liens, fleet defect history, and/or warranty claims, and the steps the firm took to resolve these matters.

Cost and price is assigned a 40 percent weighting to ensure OCTA receives competitive cost proposals with supporting data.

#### Fiscal Impact

Funding is included in OCTA's Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget, Operations Division, Account No. 2114-9024-D2116-BHM and OC Flex Service Account 2149-9024-D2116-BHM.

#### **Summary**

Board approval is requested for the proposed evaluation criteria and weightings and release of RFP 3-2511 for the procurement of up to 13, 22-foot gasoline-powered cutaway buses for OC ACCESS service, with an option for ten additional cutaway buses, and RFP 3-2510 for the procurement of up to 112, 22-foot gasoline-powered vans for OC ACCESS and OC Flex services, with an option for 15 additional vans, from qualified vendors under the California Association for Coordinated Transportation/Morongo Basin Transit Authority Purchasing Cooperative.

***Attachments***

- A. Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) 3-2511, 13, 22-Foot Cutaways for OC ACCESS
- B. Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) 3-2510, 112, 22-Foot OC ACCESS and OC Flex Vans

**Prepared by:**



---

Bill Habibe  
Sr. Section Manager, Maintenance  
Transit Technical Services  
(714) 668-4574

**Approved by:**



---

Cliff Thorne  
Director, Maintenance Administration  
(714) 560-5964



---

Pia Veasapen  
Director, Contracts Administration and  
Materials Management  
(714) 560-5619



---

Johnny Dunning, Jr.  
Chief Operating Officer  
(714) 560-5964