OCTA

September 22, 2025

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Approval to Release Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposals for Design-Build of a Hydrogen Fueling Station and Facility Modifications at Garden Grove Bus Base

Overview

As part of the two-step, best value design-build procurement for a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base, the Orange County Transportation Authority has developed a request for qualifications to initiate a competitive procurement process to retain a contractor for design-build services to deliver this project. Staff is requesting Board of Directors' approval to release the request for qualifications as the first step in this procurement. Staff is also requesting Board of Directors' approval for staff to determine the short-list offerors, and to release the request for proposals to the short-listed offerors as part of the second step of this procurement.

Recommendations

A. Approve the proposed evaluation criteria and scoring for Request for Qualifications 5-4319 for the short-listing of design-build teams for the design and construction of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base.

B. Approve the release of Request for Qualifications 5-4319 for design-build services for a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base.

C. Authorize staff to determine a short-list of qualified design-build teams in accordance with the Board of Directors-approved criteria and issue to the short-listed firms the subsequent request for proposals for the design and construction of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base.

D. Approve the evaluation criteria, weightings, and best value selection process for Request for Proposals 5-4320 for design and construction of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base.

E. Approve the release of Request for Proposals 5-4320 for design and construction of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base to the short-listed design-build teams determined under Recommendation C above.

Discussion

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) initiated a pilot program to test zero-emission bus (ZEB) technology in order to obtain operational information to determine which ZEB technology, or mix of technologies, best meets OCTA service requirements. The ZEB pilot program was implemented in early 2020 with the introduction of ten hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEB) and a hydrogen fueling station at the Santa Ana Bus Base. This was expanded in 2023 to include ten battery electric buses operating from the Garden Grove Bus Base. OCTA plans to further expand its ZEB fleet with the addition of 40 new FCEBs along with installation of a hydrogen fueling station at the Garden Grove Bus Base. Hydrogen fueling infrastructure at the Garden Grove Bus Base will provide fueling for OCTA's FCEBs along with operational redundancy similar to the compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling infrastructure. The design and construction of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base (Project) includes installation of a liquid hydrogen fueling station, FCEB de-fueling appurtenances, hydrogen detection in bus maintenance facilities, metered electrical infrastructure, standby power generator, FCEB maintenance platform, hydrogen station fuel supply during the 18-month training and transition period, and related work. Staff has filed and recorded a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption in accordance with Sections 15301, 15303, 15060(c)(2), and 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA guidelines.

As allowed by California Public Contract Code Section 22160 et. (PCC 22164), a project of this size and complexity typically lends itself to being constructed using design-build (DB) delivery methodology. This methodology is used to expedite the completion of the project and minimize cost escalation. A two-step, best value procurement process for selecting a DB team is the overall best method for the procurement and award of the DB contract.

Procurement Approach

On September 23, 2024, OCTA's Board of Directors (Board) approved the release of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) 4-2448 as the first step in a two-step procurement process for the Project. On January 13, 2025, staff returned to the Board for approval of the short list and for approval to issue Request for Proposals (RFP) 4-2683 to the short-listed DB teams. Subsequent to that action, the procurement was cancelled because the outcome lacked best value results due to one responsive proposal received. Staff is returning to the Board for approval to reissue the RFQ/RFP with expectations of more positive results.

As noted in the previous section, the selection of a DB team to complete the Project will be accomplished through a two-step procurement process. The first step will consist of issuance of an RFQ, receipt of statements of qualifications (SOQ) from DB teams, joint ventures or other types of entities, and development of a short list based on defined pass/fail requirements and scored evaluation criteria. The second step will consist of the issuance of the RFP to the short-listed teams and the receipt and evaluation of technical and price proposals submitted in response to the RFP. The best value selection process allows OCTA to select a DB team based on objective criteria, including price, features, functionality, life-cycle costs, technical design and construction experience, construction time, and other factors as deemed applicable by OCTA. This combination of qualifications and price allows for the short-listing and selection to be made based on an overall best value.

Step 1 – RFQ

OCTA's Board-approved procurement policies and procedures require the Board to approve all RFPs over $1,000,000, as well as approve the evaluation criteria and weightings, which will be used to evaluate the SOQs received in response to the RFQ. The recommended evaluation criteria and weightings used to evaluate the SOQs are as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	
Minimum Requirements	***Scoring Method***
• Conflict of Interest Disclosure	Pass/Fail
• Legal Structure	
• Financial Capability	
• Minimum Requirements o Form C - DB Minimum Requirements o Form D – General Contractor Questions o Form E – Principal Engineer Questions	
Minimum Required Score:	***Pass** (all criteria)*

Technical Qualifications	***Scoring Method***
• DB Entity and Team Experience	20 points possible
• Organizational Approach and Key Personnel	20 points possible
• Quality Management Approach	5 points possible
• Safety Management Approach	5 points possible
Minimum Required Score:	***35 Points Total** (50 maximum possible points)*

Scoring of the SOQs will be performed by an evaluation committee comprised of OCTA staff and may include outside personnel. In order to be short listed, DB teams must attain a “Pass” rating for the minimum requirements section and attain the minimum required score of 35 points for the technical qualifications. DB teams that do not obtain a “Pass” rating in all criteria under minimum requirements will not be shortlisted regardless of the scores obtained for the technical qualifications. DB teams who received zero points in any of the technical qualification criteria will not be shortlisted regardless of the overall score obtained under the technical qualifications.

Only those DB teams that meet the minimum scoring requirements will be short-listed and invited to submit a proposal in response to the subsequent RFP.

Approval to release RFQ 5-4319 and authorization of the evaluation committee’s review, scoring, and determination of the short-listed DB teams will conclude the first step of the two-step best value award process. The SOQ scoring will not be carried over into the technical proposal evaluation process or any future stage of the procurement process.

RFQ 5-4319 will be released upon Board approval of these recommendations.

Step 2 – RFP

After the conclusion of the first step, and to initiate the second step of the DB procurement process, each of the short-listed DB teams will receive a copy of the RFP.

Evaluation of Proposals

The proposals submitted in response to the RFP will be evaluated to determine the proposal that offers the best value to OCTA, considering the technical proposal and price proposal. Through this evaluation process, OCTA intends to create a fair and uniform basis for the evaluation of the proposals.

Each technical proposal will be evaluated to determine that the requirements of the RFP have been met, and scored based on the following recommended criteria and weightings as follows:

- Qualifications of the Firm 35 percent
- Staffing and Project Organization 30 percent
- Technical and Project Delivery Approach 35 percent

Several factors were considered in developing the evaluation criteria weightings. The qualifications of the firm criterion is weighted at 35 percent as the DB teams must demonstrate technical experience with the design and construction of a fueling station of similar scope and scale. The staffing and project organization criterion is weighted at 30 percent as the DB teams must demonstrate the level of expertise, resource availability, and involvement of the roles required for the proposed project team. The technical and project delivery approach criterion is weighted at 35 percent as the DB teams must demonstrate an understanding of OCTA's requirements and present a competitive general and design management approach, proposed facility design plan, and construction approach, including aspects such as mobilization strategy, construction staging, risk mitigation, safety plan, and quality management plan.

The price proposals will be opened after the evaluation of the technical proposals has been completed to obtain the price submitted by each offeror.

Best Value Determination

The best value determination will be based on a 100-point scale. The technical score will represent up to 70 points of the total score and the price score will represent up to 30 points of the total score. The apparent best value proposal will be represented by the highest Total Proposal Score (TPS), to be calculated using the formula identified in the draft RFP, presented as Attachment B to this staff report.

OCTA may, at any time after receipt of proposals, and prior to final award and execution of the contract, determine that it is appropriate to request changes to the proposals. If changes or clarifications to the proposals are required, OCTA may request the teams submit a best and final offer to assist with the final evaluation of the proposals. The DB team with the highest TPS will be recommended to the Board as the apparent best value offeror.

Fiscal Impact

The Project has existing funding of $12 million for construction from the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program and Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program. Funding recommendations for this Project are included in a staff report that will be considered for approval at the same Board meeting as this item. In order to fully fund construction, an additional $8.507 million, in SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statues of 2017) State of Good Repair funds, and interest accrued from SB 125 (Chapter 54, Statues of 2023) Transit Program, will be recommended in that item to support the construction phase of this Project. There is also an additional $8.533 million in local transit funds that was approved as part of the budget that will be used to purchase fuel for the station which is required to complete construction.

Summary

Staff requests Board of Directors' approval to release Request for Qualifications 5-4319 for the design-build of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base and to authorize staff to determine a short list of qualified design-build teams to participate in the subsequent Request for Proposals. Staff also requests Board of Directors' approval of the proposed evaluation criteria, weightings and best value selection process of Request for Proposals 5-4320 for the design and construction of a hydrogen fueling station and facility modifications at the Garden Grove Bus Base and to release said Request for Proposals to the short-listed teams determined under the Request for Qualifications.

Attachments

A. Draft Request for Qualifications (RFQ) 5-4319, Design-Build of Hydrogen Fueling Station and Facility Modifications and Garden Grove Bus Base
B. Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) 5-4320, Design-Build of Hydrogen Fueling Station and Facility Modifications at Garden Grove Bus Base

Prepared by:

George Olivo, P.E.
Program Manager, Capital Programs
(714) 560-5872

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

Approved by:

James G. Beil, P.E.
Executive Director, Capital Programs
(714) 560-5646