

RFP TM-22-01
Microtransit System
Questions and Answers #2
July 18, 2022

Q1. Will this service be replacing any of Topeka Metro's 12 fixed-route bus lines, or is this service expected to operate complementary to them?

A1. This service will initially be in addition. If the service is adopted and everything goes well it may ultimately replace a portion of several routes.

Q2. Does Topeka Metro have an idea where the service zone(s) will be, or do you want the service provider to help plan/identify optimal service areas?

A2. Topeka Metro has rough zones it thinks will be most optimal. These zones are within Topeka.

Q3. Similarly, will service area be within Topeka or extend into the 90 miles surrounding Topeka that includes Metro's jurisdiction?

A3. These zones are within Topeka.

Q4. Can Topeka Metro confirm an approximate number of vehicles you expect to utilize for this service; is it just three (3) vehicles? A key component of our pricing is on the number of vehicles using our software, so this information will enable us to accurately fill out your Pricing Sheet.

A4. Topeka Metro has estimated 3 vehicles. It will depend on the vendor to provide any simulations they might have to help optimize the initial vehicle number. Topeka Metro does not anticipate more than 5 vehicles with the initial proposed zones.

Q5. "The software shall be built on an open API for integration into other CAD/AVL and ITS products and services." - Can they be more specific for what "ITS products and services" means?

A5. Other products include open transit related apps to create a more seamless transit experience across modes operating in Topeka, KS. Examples would be products that provide fixed route trip planning and vehicle location information. Other products would be paratransit service-related products. Examples could be the "Transit App" or other multimodal products. Metro wants to be able to have a customer order multiple services via a connected or integrated platform, rather than have customers pull up this app for this service and another app for a different service.

Q6. Customer Interface Specification #16 says "Establishment of services in timely and efficient manner, to begin no later than July 1, 2022." Can Topeka Metro provide an updated timeline for when your ideal service launch date would be? This will enable to prepare an accurate Implementation/Launch Schedule.

A6. Fall to Late 2022.

Q7. Customer Interface Specification #16 reads "This Section of the proposal should establish the ability of the vendor to perform in contracted service provision by demonstrating competency in the performance of work relating to:" - Is there supposed to be anything listed after the colon?

A7. This section should have been formatted as follows:

" 13. This section of the proposal should establish the ability of the vendor to perform in contracted service provision by demonstrating competency in the performance of work relating to:

a. Service provided on the behalf of similarly sized public transit agencies. Include the name, period of contract, annual revenue and non-revenue miles and hours for the most recent fiscal year, and number of passengers transported for the most recent fiscal year. Include a minimum of three reference agencies of similar services.

b. Employee recruitment, training, and retention in a manner consistent with the safety and customer service standards of the Metro. Establishment of services in a timely and efficient manner, to begin no later than July 1, 2022.

c. Furnishing of all necessary equipment and hardware, including vehicle onboard technology, fare collection, and ADA accessibility mechanisms. Proposals should include a minimum of three on demand vehicles to supply the service, with the addition of more vehicles as the on-demand service is expanded.

d. Capacity and ability to maintain stated equipment, including schedule of maintenance describing the specific work activities required to sustain dependable and safe vehicle operation.

14. Furnishing of written personnel policies and procedures, to include the proposer's Drug and Alcohol Policy and general Personnel Rules and Regulations. Offerors that are unable to furnish contracted service operations to the Metro will not be penalized in the proposal evaluation stage of the selection process."

Q8. Is integration and/or tie-in with IVR a requirement?

A8. IVR is not a requirement, but integration of IVR will be accepted.

- Q9. Would submitting a digital copy (and not providing a hard copy) affect our scoring?
- A9. Yes. Failure to submit one hard copy marked “Original” and four additional copies of your proposal will result in a 1-point deduction to the Required Elements of your scoring.
- Q10. If we do not address the DBE goal would that affect scoring?
- A10. Yes. Failure to provide a list of possible subcontractors, including their function and DBE status, and describing how you will make efforts to invite DBE participation will result in a 1-point deduction to the Required Elements of your scoring.
- Q11. In order to compile a comprehensive response for Topeka Metro we respectfully ask for a 3-week extension?
- A11. Your request for a 3-week extension is granted. Topeka Metro has received numerous questions regarding this RFP and in order to give potential proposers adequate time to review all of the questions and answers, we are extending the proposal due date by 3 weeks from Wednesday, July 27, 2022 to Wednesday, August 17, 2022.
- Q12. What is the total service area of the Metro?
- A12. You can see the service area at <https://topekametro.doublemap.com/map/>. The paratransit service area is within ¾ miles of the fixed routes. Paratransit service will be provided ¾ miles beyond the previous description at a premium fare
- Q13. Who is the Current software provider for the Metro?
- A13. CAD/ AVL provider is Doublemap/Transloc. The paratransit scheduling software is Reveal.
- Q14. What is the fleet size and capacity of vehicles to be used for this project?
- A14. Cutaways or vans most likely. Three to five vehicles.
- Q15. What type of vehicles are needed for this project?
- A15. Topeka Metro is providing the vehicles.
- Q16. Does the proposer have to provide vehicles for the demand-response service?
- A16. No.

Q17. If the proposer has to provide vehicles, can it use TNC vehicles for microtransit?

A17. Not applicable.

Q18. What is the format of the existing database that will be migrated to the new software?

A18. Topeka Metro is not currently seeking to migrate databases within this RFP.

Q19. Are there preferred languages? If yes, what are the preferred languages?

A19. Yes. English and Spanish.

Q20. Is the proposer responsible for driver recruitment or will Metro be responsible?

A20. Topeka Metro is responsible for driver recruitment.

Q21. What is the budget for the project?

A21. Topeka Metro will not disclose the budget for this project.

Q22. Can you provide us the ridership data for the last 3 financial years?

A22. Topeka Metro has not offered Microtransit prior to this. FY2020 had fixed route ridership of 1,090,411. FY 2021 had fixed route ridership of 767,435. FY 2022 had fixed route ridership of 675,983.

Q23. How many units of on-board/MDT devices are required?

A23. Three to 5 units of on-board/MDT devices are required. Topeka Metro assumes there will be 3 vehicles involved initially. It makes sense to have extra units available to swap or if there is growth in the service and more vehicles needed added.

Q24. Will the vendor need to install the on-board technology or will Metro do it?

A24. The vendor would need to install the on-board technology.

Q25. To prepare a customized and extensive response to this RFP, would Metro consider extending the submission deadline by two weeks?

A25. Yes, the submission deadline has been extended by 3 weeks to Wednesday, August 17, 2022. See Question 11.

- Q26. Will the Metro consider an extension for this RFP TM-22-01 to August 1st 2022?
- A26. Yes, the submission deadline has been extended by 3 weeks to Wednesday, August 17, 2022. See Question 11.
- Q27. Can the Metro clarify what item #20 on page 12 of the RFP means: “Offerors that are unable to furnish contracted service operations to the Metro will not be penalized in the proposal evaluation stage of the selection process”
- A27. Offerors are not required to furnish contracted services operations to the Metro so this Customer Interface specification is not applicable.
- Q28. Will you accept an email submission instead of a printed submission?
- A28. Yes. Failure to submit one hard copy marked “Original” and four additional copies of your proposal will result in a 1-point deduction to the Required Elements of your scoring.
- Q29. How many days should the bid be valid for?
- A29. Metro will need a minimum of 30 - 60 days to evaluate proposals and to receive Metro Board approval to award a contract.
- Q30. Does the price proposal need to be in a separate sealed envelope from the technical proposal?
- A30. No. Proposers should follow the Required Proposal Content and Format in Section 8 beginning on page 17 of the RFP.
- Q31. Can Proposers include a copy of the specific vendor pricing sheet as explanation along with the required pricing form?
- A31. Yes.
- Q32. What are some of the biggest concerns seen with the current software solution that you would change immediately if you could?
- A32. Topeka Metro does not currently have a Microtransit software solution. Topeka Metro does have a paratransit scheduling software. We want the ability for the algorithm to integrate new reservations within 15 minutes. In addition the algorithm will be constantly optimizing the trips and stops etc.
- Q33. What is your current software?
- A33. Again, Topeka Metro does not have a microtransit solution currently. Topeka Metro does have a paratransit software solution called Reveal.

Q34. What are the goals of TMTA surrounding this software upgrade?

A34. Expanding service options and providing better service to customers currently served by certain underused fixed route buses.

Q35. What is the funding source for this project?

A35. Topeka Metro will not disclose the funding source for this project.

Q36. What are the funding deadlines/timelines for this project, i.e., when does the money need to be spent?

A36. Topeka Metro will not disclose any information regarding the funding for this project.

Q37. Does TMTA have a preferred cellular network? If so, please provide contact information for our account manager.

A37. T-Mobile. Additional information will be released to the recipient of the contract award.

Q38. Does TMTA provide any other types of service that may be used by the awarded solution?

A38. Topeka Metro may consider shifting paratransit service to this solution but does not plan to as a part of this RFP or project.

Q39. Does TMTA have an IVR system currently?

A39. Topeka Metro has an IVR system in coordination with Doublemap to allow passengers to call in for bus arrival times.

Q39a. If so, who is the current IVR system with?

A39a. Doublemap/Transloc

Q39b. What type of functionality does it provide (i.e., night before reminder calls with cancel option, arrival notification calls, floodgate messaging, English, Spanish)?

A39b. Not same task but related to the product Doublemap/ Transloc provides.

Q39c. Is it an onsite server or hosted solution?

A39c. Hosted.

Q40. Does TMTA have any Commuter Routes that would be considered part of this project? If so, how many?

A40. No.

Q41. Is there a consultant involved with this RFP? If yes, what is the name of the firm or individual?

A41. No.

Q42. How many in office users will you have?

A42. A minimum of eighteen user accounts per Page 8 of the RFP.

Q43. Do you want the chosen vendor to do all the driver training or are we training the trainers?

A43. The chosen vendor would train the trainers.

Q43a. If training the trainers, how many of those are there?

A43a. Five.

Q44. How many depots do you operate if more than 1?

A44. One.

Q45. Do you have any subcontractors?

A45. No subcontractors will be involved.

Q46. Are any private contractors/subcontractors used to provide trips for TMTA? If yes, how are these contractors paid, by the trip or by the hour?

A46. Not applicable.

Q47. Will TMTA allow proposers to provide a demo of the software before awarding the contract?

A47. Yes.

Q48. What are your agency expectations related to data conversion from the Route Match system?

A48. There will be no data to convert with the implementation of this project because it's a new service.

Q49. Are there any interfaces required to external sources such as Medicare? If so, what other external source.

A49. No.

Q50. Please provide 3 years of monthly reporting summaries for your demand response system.

A50. Topeka Metro offers no other comparable demand response system at this time.

Q51. What is the total number of Drivers to be trained?

A51. Fifty.

Q52. How many dispatchers does your agency have?

A52. Three.

Q53. How many reservation agents does your agency have?

A53. Zero. At this time we have no agents because we currently do not operate microtransit service. We anticipate using existing personnel to accommodate call-ins. That number will be determined as call volumes increase.

Q54. How many hybrid positions (i.e., reservations/dispatch scheduling) in one position does your agency have?

A54. Six.

Q55. Are the Drivers and/or Dispatchers represented by a Union? If so, which Union?

A55. Drivers and Maintenance employees are represented by the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU).

Q56. Does the service area encompass more than one county? If so, which counties (other states as well)?

A56. No. Metro has the state statutory authority to operate in the City of Topeka, Kansas and within ninety miles of the City limits.

Q57. Does your agency provide group trips? If yes, what percentage of trips are group trips?

A57. Topeka Metro doesn't currently offer this service, so we cannot estimate what amount will be group trips.

Q58. What is the maximum number of paratransit vehicles at peak service on any given day?

A58. Topeka Metro isn't requesting paratransit service in this RFP.

Q59. Confirm the number of paratransit vehicles, (RFP States 3).

A59. Three to five vehicles for Microtransit, not paratransit.

Q60. Confirm the number of one-way trips per day.

A60. Unknown, as this is a new service.

Q61. Please indicate if there are any holidays for no service or reduced service.

A61. <https://www.topekametro.org/about-metro/2022-metro-calendar>

Q62. On what days of the week are trips provided?

A62. Monday through Saturday.

Q63. What are your hours of service?

A63. 5:45 am to 6:30 pm.

Q64. What are your current Rides per Hour (RPH)?

A64. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q65. What is your average trips per day?

A65. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q66. What is the average trip length?

A66. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q67. What is the number of will calls weekly?

A67. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q68. What is the weekly average number of declined trips?

A68. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q69. What is average number of one-way trips provided weekly?

A69. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q70. Does your agency provide subscription trips (standing orders)? If so, what percentage of trips are subscription trips?

A70. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q71. What is the number of Flex Routes (Deviated Fixed Route) per day and per week?

A71. Twenty-Thirty rides per week.

Q72. What is the current size of your client population?

A72. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q72a. What is the growth rate?

A72a. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q73. On average, how many taxi trips are used per day?

A73. Metro does not currently offer this service.

Q74. On average, how many calls will your call center handle?

A74. 3,200 calls per month.

Q74a. What is the peak number of calls handled per hour?

A74a. 25 calls per hour.

Q75. Is it mandatory to be able to turn driver messaging capabilities on or off?

A75. Yes.

Q76. How is your ticketing and validation currently handled?

A76. Currently Topeka Metro doesn't have Microtransit. Fixed route uses paper fares. Paratransit does as well. At the current time we do not have an electronic fare option.

Q76a. Is your intention to continue in that manner?

A76a. Ok with continuing in that fashion. Not averse to electronic fare options but need ability to still pay in cash.

Q77. How do you currently handle unbanked/underbanked passengers?

A77. We accept cash at station and on bus.

Q78. Which CAD/AVL systems are currently being used?

A78. Doublemap/ Transloc

Q79. Are there specific unique to Topeka Metro reports that will be required outside of NTD Data?

A79. No.

Q80. Page 11; Customer Interface #12 - What languages are preferred?

A80. English and Spanish.

Q81. Page 11; Customer Interface #13 - are the items beginning with #13 still relevant? They seem to refer to operational details.

A81. Items 14 through 19 should be underneath 13 as a bullet list.

Q82. Metro mentioned starting with just microtransit SaaS and the desire of adding ADA paratransit and fixed route onto the same platform. Is there an approximate timeline for when Metro desires to add paratransit and fixed route?

A82. In excess of 6-9 months. It's dependent on the outcome of the microtransit implementation.

Q82a. Do you foresee them being added in phases (ie. para then fixed route)?

A82a. Would mainly be adding paratransit, but it would most likely be a phased implementation with paratransit first, and then perhaps comingling of paratransit and microtransit later.

Q83. What software tools does Metro currently use to manage the paratransit and fixed route service?

A83. Revel is used for paratransit. Doublemap/Transloc is used with fixed route.

Q84. For the microtransit service, what is Metro considering for days and hours of service?

A84. Same as current fixed route and paratransit service. Roughly 545 to 630 M-F and 830-630 Sat.

Q85. Section 3.0 #2 states "The software shall be built on an open API for integration into other CAD/AVL and ITS products and services." -->

Q85a. What are Metro's desired outcomes for an integration with other CAD/AVL and ITS products and services?

A85a. Metro wants to ultimately be able to have customers integrate services. Similarly we will need the ability to align microtransit trips with fixed route trips to minimize passengers wait time at fixed route stops.

Q85b. Can Metro clarify what is meant by "other" CAD/AVL and ITS products and services?

A85b. Transloc/Doublemap backend fixed route products as well as trip planner and "where's my bus" fixed route products.

Q85c. What vendor providers Metro's current CAD/AVL and ITS solutions?

A85c. Doublemap/Transloc

Q85d. Can Metro provide other examples of how an API integration would be used?

A85d. Could see the potential for apps being able to provide general availability of vehicles to potential riders etc.

Q85e. Does Metro have specific projects in mind that make use of an API for its microtransit service or other services?

A85e. Integration into 3rd party trip planning apps that mesh microtransit and fixed route.

Q86. Can Metro share its total and annual budget for this procurement? Providing Offerors with a clear estimate of the budget will benefit the public by allowing for the most competitive procurement process, as Offerors will compete to provide the greatest value for Metro's money.

A86. Topeka Metro will not disclose the budget for this project.

Q87. We respectfully request a three-week extension of the submission deadline to August 17, 2022.

A87. **Granted. See question 11.**

Q88. Would Metro permit bidders to submit their proposals digitally, either by email or through a portal upload?

A88. **Yes. Failure to submit one hard copy marked “Original” and four additional copies of your proposal will result in a 1-point deduction to the Required Elements of your scoring.**

Q89. In addition to the RFP Price Quote form, may bidders also include a supplementary pricing proposal with more context and detail on their pricing?

A89. **Yes.**

Q90. We understand that Metro has expressed interest in an October service launch. Are there any deadlines (ex. use of funding, new contract, or other) that are forcing the October timeframe. Also please confirm this would be just for the microtransit project?

A90. **Nothing is forcing an October service launch. The October service launch only applies to microtransit.**

Q91. Many of the requirements/features within the customer management, trip booking and scheduling appear to be paratransit specific. It’s our understanding that the focus of this RFP is microtransit with paratransit coming in a potential later phase. If our understanding is correct, could Metro please clarify if the paratransit requirements are expected to be delivered as part of the microtransit deployment? We are able to deliver both, and want to clarify for the purposes of determining our deployment schedule.

A91. **The main paratransit associated items that Metro wants (for now) are NTD reporting reports/metrics and the ability to take down similar rider profile information in a database.**

Q92. For any required specification/feature/integration/etc., will Metro accept alternative options so long as bidders provide context/detail around their alternative so that it satisfactorily addresses Metro’s goals and functional needs?

A92. **Yes.**

Q93. The RFP requires that the winner will need to migrate data from all systems. Can Metro provide all of the different systems and data types/fields from those systems for which it requires migration.

A93. There won't be any data migration now, would be if/when paratransit might also transition.

Q94. Several of the “Additional Contractor Requirements” are seemingly outside the scope of a SaaS solution. Can Metro confirm:

Q94a. If bidders are required to include any hardware as part of this procurement, such as tablets/onboard technology?

A94a. Perhaps hardware isn't required, but if vendor isn't providing it, please provide preferred devices that meet the needs of the deployment.

Q94b. That all vehicle- and operations-related requirements in this section (such as #5 related to schedule of maintenance and safe vehicle operation) do not apply to this procurement?

A94b. Not applicable.

Q94c. That personnel policies and procedures do not apply to this procurement, given the nature of a SaaS solution and contract?

A94c. Not applicable as it relates to the deployment of the microtransit system since it's being staffed in house to Metro.

Q94d. Please confirm if Metro or the vendor is responsible for the data plan associated with the in-vehicle devices?

A94d. Topeka Metro will procure necessary items for the data plan.

Q95. Is Topeka Metro's desired outcome truly an on-demand service (microtransit) that can incrementally (through conversation of what works and doesn't work) turn into accommodation for paratransit, or is this simply an effort to replace your existing paratransit software?

A95. Topeka Metro's desired outcome is to offer on-demand microtransit service. If microtransit service proves to be successful, later phases of the project could replace our existing on-demand paratransit software, but the purpose for this RFP is for the purchase of a technology solution to support an on-demand microtransit service.