



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

ADDENDUM 1

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – MICROTRANSIT SERVICES FOR GASTONIA TRANSIT

December 20, 2022

Attached please find Addendum 1. Included are questions that were submitted prior to the deadline of December 14, 2022. Each question has been answered and additional information that was requested has been included. As a reminder, submittals are due no later than 5:00 pm on Tuesday, January 17, 2023. Please remember to acknowledge receipt of this addendum on page 27 of the RFP and submit with your proposal.

If you have any questions or if you need additional information please feel free to contact me at cindyf@cityofgastonia.com.

1. In the Technology Capacity section (c), “payment” is a feature requested. Is a micro-transit service that is completely free for passengers an option the city is open to, or are fares required?
A fare will be required for the micro transit service. The amount of fare has not been determined, as it will depend on the cost of service.
2. How far in advance is pre-scheduling recommended or required? (Section d)
Our current ADA Paratransit service allows passengers to pre-schedule up to 14 days in advance. We would like for passengers to have the ability to schedule trips up to 7 days in advance. The maximum requirement for passengers to pre-schedule should be an hour or less.
3. I am able to find a few studies and plans on the Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO site, yet are there any Gastonia-specific community surveys, transportation, multimodal, climate, vision zero, CRA, or action plans we can have access to?
Following are links to transportation plans that include Gastonia Transit. I will also attach the results from a recent survey that was conducted in June/July 2022.

Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO Website: <https://gclmpo.org/>

Metropolitan Transportation Plan Link: https://gclmpo.org/wp-content/uploads/Chapter7_Public-Transportation.pdf

Connect Beyond Plan Link: <https://www.connect-beyond.com/plan/>

4. Is there a policy/measure/action/etc., specific to the demand for micro-transit that can we can reference in any of the above plans?
The Connect Beyond plan references micro transit as a potential improvement for transportation choices within the region. On October 17, 2022, the City of Gastonia Transportation Committee approved staff to move forward with obtaining proposals for micro transit services in Gastonia.
5. In addition to providing connectivity to the existing Gastonia Transit fixed routes, are there any additional points of interest or areas of focus the planning staff and commission are interested in satisfying with this service?
The main areas and points of interest that need to be included in the micro transit area are:
 - Caromont Regional Medical Center, 2525 Court Drive
 - Court Drive Medical Offices
 - Franklin Square Shopping Center, 3000 Block of E. Franklin Boulevard
 - Westfield Shopping Mall, 246 N. New Hope Road
 - Dixie Village Shopping Center, 2587 W. Franklin Boulevard
 - Remount Road Hotels
 - Gaston Health Department, 991 W. Hudson Boulevard
 - Highland Health Center, 609 N. Highland Street
6. Is the RFP requesting service for specific locations within Gastonia or for service throughout the 52.2 square miles?
Depending on how the proposal is structured, we would like to expand service outside of our current fixed route. It would be ideal to expand to a minimum of 1 mile outside our current fixed route. It is understood that the final area will be determined based on the City’s budget.

7. Have hours of operation been discussed by staff, the commission, or within any existing plans, or community surveys?
Currently our plan is to keep the same operating hours/days. If budget will allow we are open to extending hours. Our current operating hours/days are Monday-Friday 5:30 am – 6:30 pm and Saturdays 8:00 am – 6:00 pm.
8. Is the funding coming from a general fund, grant, or special district source? Has a cap in the budget been decided upon?
Currently the City is a recipient of 5307 funding through FTA. The capital budget items are 80% FTA, 20% City and operating is 50% FTA, 50% City. We would like to stay within our current budget, however that decision will be determined after the proposals are reviewed. A copy of our budget is attached for your reference.
9. Does the City want us to propose a service approach in our proposal (turnkey or squire just SaaS and operate in-house) or is that the purpose of the study?
The City is open to both options. We are looking for the most cost efficient way to implement micro transit in Gastonia. We asked for both options, however each vendor can provide a proposal for only one option or both options. We understand that some vendors only provide software and not all vendors provide turnkey services.
10. Can the City provide the number of paratransit trips provided per day?
The ADA Ridership Data is attached. For the last five (5) months the average ridership for ADA is 16 passengers per day.
11. How many paratransit vehicle revenue hours are provided on an average day?
The ADA Ridership Data is attached. Our average vehicle revenue hours per day is ten (10) hours. We provide ADA service the same days/times as fixed route per FTA guidelines.
12. Is it possible for the City to provide a breakdown of fixed route ridership by route and time of day?
A summary of July-November 2022 ridership breakdown per hour is attached. A second addendum will be sent with the breakdown by route/hour.
13. Does the City have access to any collective purchasing arrangements to purchase microtransit (15 passenger vans) vehicles? If so, any details you're able to share would be helpful.
The City currently purchases vehicles off of the NC Sheriffs Association Contract, NC State Contract, Sourcewell, and National Auto Group. Transit is part of the Fleet Services Division which is responsible for rolling stock purchases for the City. The City has relationships with numerous vendors across the state that quotes can also be obtained from.
14. Due to the upcoming holidays, we respectfully request a three-week extension of the submission deadline to February 7, 2023.
Unfortunately, due to the Transportation Committee schedule we will not be able to extend the proposal deadline.

15. What are the intended budgets for Service Option 1 (software-only) and Service Option 2 (turnkey microtransit software and operations)?
Currently the City is a recipient of 5307 funding through FTA. The capital budget items are 80% FTA, 20% City and operating is 50% FTA, 50% City. We would like to stay within our current budget, however that decision will be determined after the proposals are reviewed. A copy of our budget is attached for your reference.
16. What are the intended contract terms for Service Option 1 and Service Option 2?
Contract terms are negotiable upon award of contract. Each vendor can state their preferred contract terms, however the City will have to work with our Finance Department and Legal Department on terms of the contract and receive approval from the Transportation Committee.
17. For Service Option 1, is Gastonia also interested in software to help them manage their ADA paratransit service?
Gastonia would like to include our ADA service scheduling through the software for passenger ease of use. We currently use Trip Maker Software which was provided to the City free from ITRE.
18. For Service Option 2, would Gastonia consider operating one demand-response service for both their general riders and ADA-eligible riders?
The City will consider operating one demand response service, however we want to ensure that our ADA customers are priority and that their service levels will not be interrupted. ADA customers are our most vulnerable and they are a priority to our system. We also want to ensure that sufficient ADA accessible vehicles are in service to serve these customers.
19. Does the City of Gastonia have a preference between Service option 1 (SaaS), and Service Option 2 (Turnkey), or are you equally interested in pursuing either?
The City is open to both options. We are looking for the most cost efficient way to implement micro transit in Gastonia.
20. One of the RFP product specs is the "Ability to schedule trips within a predetermined location during specific service days and span." Can you clarify whether this means setting up virtual stops (e.g. one pick-up location at a shopping mall to congregate riders together) or just setting up a common destination to prepopulate in a user's app (e.g. the local shopping mall automatically comes up in the app)?
We envision having virtual stops so that passengers can be picked up at pre-determined locations. Whether this be corner to corner, or utilizing some of our current bus stops for pickup areas. We want the service to be efficient and accessible. We would prefer that passengers not have to further than ¼ a mile to access the service, however that will depend on the proposed service area.
21. Can the City of Gastonia extend the minimum page length to 30 pages? There is an abundant amount of information, specifically regarding service planning, that the RFP requests. We'd like to provide clear answers with relevant information for the City to make an informed decision.
Yes, the page length can be extended to 30 pages.
22. Similar to the above question, if the City does not allow for a page extension, could team resumes be placed in an appendix that doesn't count toward page limit?
To allow for additional space, the resumes can also be placed in an appendix that does not count toward page limit.

23. We noticed that pricing/cost is not mentioned in this RFP. Should we attach a pricing sheet of our own format or is the City not interested in price at this stage?
No proposals should include pricing. The evaluation criteria is outlined on page 14 of the RFP and pricing is not one of the evaluation criteria.
24. There appears to be a signature line at the top of Page 23 of the RFP for Lobbying Restrictions, even though the identical form seems to appear on Page 28. Should we just sign the one-page version on Page 28?
Please use the form on Page 28 for submission.
25. Are all fixed route and demand response services currently operated by the city?
Yes, the City currently operates both the fixed route and ADA services in-house.
26. Or are any services contracted through a 3rd party operator?
No, the City does not currently contract out any Transit services to a 3rd party operator.
27. Can you provide any ridership numbers for your paratransit service? Additionally, does the city currently use any software to schedule paratransit rides?
The ADA Ridership Data is attached. We currently use Trip Maker Software which was provided to the City free from ITRE ([Institute for Transportation Research and Education \(ncsu.edu\)](https://www.ncsu.edu/itre)).
28. Can the city share the results or any relevant findings from the public rider survey that was conducted July 2022?
We did not have high numbers of participation from the recent rider survey that was conducted in July 2022, however the results have been attached for your reference.