



REQUEST FOR INTEREST

FOR

THE PROVISION OF MICROTRANSIT SERVICES

September 3, 2019

Tahoe Transportation District

P.O. Box 499

Zephyr Cove, NV 89448

1.0 General Overview

The Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) is issuing this Request for Interest (RFI) to both understand the interest microtransit providers may have in operating various transit services and the requirements necessary for their participation.

1.1 Notice to Bidders

Respondents to this Request for Information (“RFI”) are requested to respond to all of the questions in this document. Responses to this RFI will assist TTD in understanding the current state of the marketplace with regards to the solicited information. This RFI does not obligate TTD to issue a solicitation or to include any of the RFI provisions or responses in any future solicitation. An RFI response is entirely voluntary, and will not affect TTD’s consideration of any proposal submitted the event that it issues a subsequent procurement; nor will it serve as an advantage or disadvantage to the respondent in the course of any Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or Request for Proposals (RFP) that may be subsequently issued.

1.2 Calendar

Activity	Date
Release date	September 3, 2019
Deadline for submitting questions/clarifications	September 25, 2019 (3 p.m. PDT)
TTD shall respond to questions/clarification	October 1, 2019
Deadline for submitting RFIs	October 18, 2019 (3 p.m. PDT)
Presentations to Community Stakeholders	November 6, 2019

2.0 District Overview

TTD is a bi-state, special purpose district with jurisdiction to implement safe, environmentally positive, multi-modal transportation plans, programs, and projects for the Lake Tahoe Basin, including transit operations in and around the Lake Tahoe basin. TTD is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors made up of local jurisdictions and private transportation management associations, an at-large member, and two state agencies.

TTD provides both intra- and interregional connectivity that is vital to the region. TTD operates a coordinated transit system for the South Shore of Lake Tahoe and connects to other areas in the region.

TTD helps to identify, develop and implement road, shared-use trail and transit solutions.

2.1 TTD Mission and Vision

TTD operates under the following agency cultural Mission and Vision statements:

Mission

The Tahoe Transportation District aims to deliver outstanding transit service and transportation project improvements for the greater Lake Tahoe Region.

Vision

The Tahoe Transportation District is a key part of Tahoe's success where our environment is protected, our communities are connected, and the quality of life is sublime.

Transit Vision

Our transit vision is to develop an interregional transit system that provides safe, reliable, and attractive transit service for Tahoe residents, visitors, and commuters.

2.2 Current Services

TTD directly operates fixed route services within the City of South Lake Tahoe and linking the Nevada communities of Minden, Gardnerville and Carson City with the south shore of Lake Tahoe over State Route 207.

Complementing the fixed route service is TTD's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) required paratransit and ADA Plus (beyond the requirement) demand response services.

TTD also operates the East Shore Express (ESE) service providing a seasonal link between parking areas in Incline Village, NV with Nevada's popular Sand Harbor State Park.

SECTION III Purpose and Need

3.0 Purpose

TTD is issuing this RFI to solicit submittals from interested parties to evaluate various microtransit strategies that can best improve access to jobs, labor, healthcare, social services, and social activities. More information about TTD and the region we serve can be found at www.tahoetransportation.org.

TTD seeks to acquire an understanding of microtransit operators that are willing and able to help public and private transit providers, government, and businesses improve connectivity with microtransit. Additional transportation needs within the community do not cleanly fit a public transit model and other solutions are needed to meet these needs. Relevant microtransit products should help transit providers and others improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing transit services.

Several opportunities within TTD's service area are in need of flexible, dynamic, and innovative ways to provide transportation services, particularly in areas not served by current TTD routes, and during early morning and evening hours, when transit services are unavailable.

TTD would like information on how microtransit can improve connectivity in the region. It is anticipated that the information learned from this RFI will inform all parties about future project opportunities. TTD hopes that the information gathered in this RFI can help develop a test case and secure funding to implement one or more microtransit pilot projects in TTD's service area.

Release of this RFI presents an invitation for interested parties to offer TTD information regarding microtransit tools and strategies for a range of applications. The primary goal of this RFI is to gather information from qualified parties to support and inform future initiatives. This RFI does not constitute a solicitation for bids or proposals and will not result in a contract award for the identified services. This document contains TTD business and technical considerations for respondents to review and respond to with information regarding strategies, software, services, and operations that can improve access and mobility for the greater Lake Tahoe region. Respondents are by no means constrained in providing information to this request and are encouraged to provide further information in support of the stated purpose that may be responsive, relevant, and considered noteworthy.

3.1 Definition of Terms

Microtransit: Information technology-enabled, private multi-passenger transportation services that serve passengers using dynamically generated routes. It may expect passengers to make their way to and from common pick-up or drop-off points. Vehicles can range from large SUVs to vans to shuttle buses, because they provide transit-like service but on a smaller, more flexible scale. Microtransit does not require advance scheduling.

Ride-hailing: Use of online platforms to connect passengers with drivers and automate reservations, payments, and customer feedback. Riders can choose from a variety of service classes, including platforms matching riders to drivers who use personal, non-commercial, vehicles (such as Uber or Lyft); traditional taxicabs dispatched via the providers' apps, and premium services with professional livery drivers and vehicles. (Transit Cooperative Research Program Research Report 188).

3.2 Needs and Possible Use Cases

TTD understands that the vendors who provide microtransit services are engaged in rapidly evolving ventures. TTD's focus is on the microtransit and on-demand transit marketplace that includes the following general types of vendors:

- Vendors offering software, dispatching, and "turn-key" services with drivers and vehicles.
- Ride-hailing software companies who match trip needs with third-party drivers/independent contractors, and who invoice the cost of the trips to the contracting transit authority, nonprofit or other agency. While these services are not typically called "microtransit", they do share several of the same operating characteristics of providing on-demand, point-to-point trips with dynamic routing.

The above list is not comprehensive, and some providers are merging, expanding, and forming partnerships to provide a greater menu of on-demand transportation services. Because of the varied and evolving marketplace, TTD would like to have a transparent process to better understand the microtransit market and how these services can improve access and mobility in the greater Tahoe region.

TTD has provided the following use cases to help interested parties in preparing responses to this request for information. All scenarios include microtransit vendors providing vehicles and drivers/operators.

Use Case 1: Supplemental Transit. TTD seeks to understand how microtransit could be used in a decentralized, rural setting with limited transit and ride-hailing services. Under this case, the microtransit service would not replace existing fixed-route transit services, but would help fill the transit service coverage gaps, either by geography and/or time of day. While a single agency may hold the contract with the microtransit vendor, multiple agencies may be part of a service agreement to provide transportation. The microtransit service may need to operate among different transportation service providers, as well as help collect clear data including who booked the trip, who provided transportation, trip origins and destinations, time of day, and trip costs to allow for multiple parties to track trips to determine which agencies will pay for the costs of the trip.

Use Case 2: Round Hill Pines Resort. TTD seeks to understand how microtransit could help with efficient and effective operations to serve Round Hill Pines Resort. Under this scenario, microtransit could be used to develop a single dispatching system with shared trips across multiple visitor properties, transit centers, and residences. The hope is that microtransit can operate smaller vehicles with high passenger loads and scale up and down according to demand, thus lowering the cost per trip. Microtransit is also anticipated to provide greater geographic coverage, as well as better data collection to determine trip costs.

Use Case 3: Emerald Bay. TTD seeks to understand how microtransit could be used to connect the Stateline Casino Corridor to Emerald Bay. Due to the car-centric infrastructure at Emerald Bay, large transit buses are challenged to operate in the area until capital improvements are made to specifically and safely accommodate large public transit services. In the interim, microtransit services could replace scheduled bus service. A key component of this scenario is the possibility of microtransit having definitive arrival and departure times to ensure passengers can depend on the service intervals even through cellular data access may be limited or non-existent.

Use Case 4: Casino Core Circulator. TTD seeks to understand how microtransit could be used to move visitors to the Stateline Casino Corridor around the various buildings, businesses, and features of the area. This service is envisioned as a circulator where vehicles would operate as a deviated fixed route to include nearby properties, but largely meet a loose schedule and route. The service should be scalable to add or subtract vehicles as necessary to meet demand (e.g. concerts, events, ski resort downloads, etc.).

Use Case 5: Ski Shuttles. TTD seeks to understand how microtransit could be used by Heavenly Valley Limited Partnership, The Ridge Resorts, lodging property partners, and other public-private partnership transportation services. Using a microtransit model, participants could influence routing based on demand and environmental conditions where the client is the business need rather than the passenger. Microtransit could help with operating optimized flexible fixed-route services from designated points to move visitors, guests, and employees and connect to resorts, lodging, and employers.

SECTION IV Proposal Requirements

4.0 Respondent Submissions

Interested parties should describe potentially applicable tools, methods, and services for any or all of the use cases referenced above, with an explanation of how their business can provide the services sustainably. In addition, interested parties are requested to provide contact information of current customers (as relevant) for references. TTD is also requesting information from interested parties that provide brief and concise expository responses to the following questions as they relate to the use cases referenced above.

1. How do you define microtransit? In your experiences, where can microtransit best assist in improving inclusive and equitable transit and where is it least effective?
2. Describe the software used for your microtransit services, as well as what hardware and other tools are needed to connect vehicles/operators and transit dispatch.
3. If your firm has previously formed partnerships with government entities or private businesses to provide microtransit, please describe these. Similarly, if you have worked in areas with more than one microtransit provider was under contract, describe the arrangement.
4. Where have you formed partnerships with other private vendors, such as ride-hailing (Uber, Lyft, taxis or livery companies) and/or with public agencies (transit, Council on Aging, municipalities)?
5. Describe any contractual relationships where services are paid for with federal funds?
6. Describe the data sharing components of your microtransit projects. Typically, a publicly funded contract would require origin and destination, number of passengers, number of senior, disabled, Medicare cardholder, and veterans with a service connected disability passengers, fares collected, service hours, non-service hours, service miles, and non-service miles, number of road calls (in-service breakdowns), number of vehicles in use, and number of vehicles assigned to the service.
7. Describe the data needed to help design and implement inclusive, equitable, and effective microtransit services.
8. What are key performance indicators for microtransit? How do you define the success of a pilot project?
9. What public infrastructure do you think would assist in making a successful microtransit system?
10. How would you ensure a public transportation service includes wheelchair accessible vehicles and other services to ensure the contracting agency meets all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

11. FTA requires recipients who contract services using federal funds to pass through all the federal requirements to third parties. These requirements include ADA, drug and alcohol testing, procurement, maintenance, and reporting requirements. How would your firm meet these requirements?
12. What has been the range of implementation and operating costs for your projects?
13. What are the typical levels of insurance your firm carries?
14. Describe any cases where the capacity, needs, and financial support of businesses, organizations, and philanthropists have been used to help implement microtransit.
15. Is there a use case, question or other factor we should consider when looking at microtransit? What have we missed? Please provide any other information you think might be relevant.

4.1 Posting

Please note this RFI is issued solely for the purpose of obtaining information. Nothing in this RFI shall be interpreted as a commitment on the part of TTD to procure or enter into a contract with any Respondent.

Respondents are responsible for entering content suitable for public viewing, as all of the responses and questions are available to the public. Respondents must not include any information that could be considered personal, security sensitive, inflammatory, incorrect, collusive, or otherwise objectionable, including information about the Respondent's company or other companies.

4.2 Form of Respondent Submission

Respondents should submit one (1) electronic PDF response by the date and time set forth in section 1.2.

All responses must include a cover page on formal letterhead with the official name, address, and contact information of the firm or entity submitting the response with both contact information and signature provided. Respondents are requested to respond to each use case and questions cited herein, as well as provide additional relevant information. A final conclusion page may be provided summarizing the overall response to the RFI. Please consecutively number all pages of the response.

4.3 Informational Sessions

In addition to written RFI responses, TTD will invite any or none of the Respondents to make focused, in-person presentations of experience, offerings, methodologies and expertise applicable to this RFI. Any such demonstrations must relate directly to the TTD needs outlined in this RFI and Respondents must not use this time for standard marketing sales presentations. TTD retains the right to conduct informational session(s) associated with this RFI and retains the right to request additional information from Respondents, including further explanation or clarification from any and all Respondents during the review process. TTD may request onsite vendor visits. This informational session is scheduled for November 6, 2019, at El Dorado County Library – South Lake Tahoe Branch, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150 (date and place subject to change). More details on the informational sessions will be released after the RFI submission date.

4.4 Review Right, Public Records, and Cost

Responses to this RFI may be reviewed and evaluated by any person(s) at the discretion of TTD, including independent consultants retained by TTD now or in the future.

All responses to this RFI will be a public record to the extent allowed under California and Nevada Public Records Law, regardless of confidentiality notices set forth on such writings to the contrary.

All responses, and other documents, submitted in response to the RFI become the property of TTD. TTD is under no obligation to return any documents submitted by a Respondent. Further, TTD retains the right to use any information obtained through this RFI in any future solicitation.

By submitting a response, Respondents agree that any cost incurred in responding to this RFI, or in support of activities associated with this RFI, shall be the sole responsibility of the Respondent. TTD shall not be held responsible for any costs incurred by Respondents in preparing their respective responses to this RFI.

4.5 Delivery of Proposals

Proposals must be submitted to TTD no later than 3:00 p.m. (PDT) on October 18, 2019. Proposers must deliver an electronic version of its proposal on a USB flash drive to the Tahoe Transportation District, Attn: Judi Allen, in person or overnight mail to 128 Market Street, Suite 3F, Stateline, NV 89449 or via regular mail to PO Box 499, Zephyr Cove, Nevada 89448. Please mark the envelope as "REQUEST FOR INTEREST FOR THE PROVISION OF MICROTRANSIT SERVICES."

4.6 Proposal Preparation Costs

By submitting a response, Respondents agree that any cost incurred in responding to this RFI, or in support of activities associated with this RFI, shall be the sole responsibility of the Respondent. TTD shall not be held responsible for any costs incurred by Respondents in preparing their respective responses to this RFI.

4.7 Changes, Additions or Clarifications

Any changes, additions or clarifications to the RFI will be made by amendments (addenda). Any additional supporting materials and addenda will be posted on the TTD website, <http://tahoetransportation.org/doing-business/rfp-info>.

Requests for clarifications about this RFI may be submitted at any time before 3:00 p.m. PDT on September 25, 2019. Questions and/or requests for clarifications may be submitted in writing via email to:

George Fink, Transit System Program Manager, at info@tahoetransportation.org

4.8 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Requirements

TTD hereby notifies that DBE's are afforded equal opportunities to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, sex, disability, or national origin.

A DBE is defined as a small business concern which is at least 51% owned and controlled by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, or in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. Socially and economically disadvantaged include Women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, and Asian-Indian Americans.

4.9 Equal Employment Opportunity

Each proposer must agree that it will not discriminate in hiring, promotion, treatment, or other terms and conditions of employment based on race, sex, national origin, age, disability, or in any way violate Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and amendments, except as permitted by said laws.