

Committee Report

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: January 8, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: January 24, 2024

Business Item: 2024-11

Airport Employee Dial-a-Ride Service, 23P201

Proposed Action

That the Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 23P201 with Transportation Plus, Inc. to provide Airport Employee Dial-a-Ride Service in an amount not to exceed \$3,165,000.

Summary of Transportation Committee Discussion/Questions

John Harper, Metropolitan Transportation Services Manager of Contracted Service, presented this item.

Member Toni Carter applauded the service overall and asked how fare collection works, especially in comparison to the cost of the service overall. Mr. Harper stated that program fares are consistent with fares for other demand responsive services such as Transit Link and Metro Mobility and are not intended to cover the entire cost of providing the service. Then Member Toni Carter asked about other opportunities to provide this type of complementary service. In response, Mr. Harper shared a sample of MTS' experiences with other employment districts.

Member Cameron asked about how the Council handles transit requests from employers with workforce demographics and worksite locations like those Mr. Harper described. Mr. Harper explained that Metro Transit Service Development and Rideshare departments spearhead conversations with employers, bringing in MTS as appropriate.

Chair Barber asked whether staff track how employees using this program for one commute complete their other commute. Mr. Harper explained that staff do not track that usage. However, he believes people using transit for one commute likely use transit the other direction, so users of this program are likely on our regular route system for other trips.

Motion by Toni Carter, seconded by Tyrone Carter. Motion carried.

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District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	FM 14-2 - Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods, Services, and Real Estate Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Charles Carlson, Executive Director, MTS, 651-602-1761 Gerri Sutton, Director, Contracted Transit Services, 651-602-1672 John Harper, Manager of Contracted Transit Services, 651-602-1744
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 23P201 with Transportation Plus, Inc. to provide Airport Employee Dial-a-Ride Service in an amount not to exceed \$3,165,000.

Background

The Airport Employee Dial-a-Ride Service is a shared ride public transportation service for employees of airport-related employers located at or adjacent to MSP International Airport. The service provides trips to employees who have no reasonable fixed-route transit option available because their shift either starts or ends late at night or early in the morning.

The service is offered to employees of airport-related employers who agree to pay the employees fare for each trip and play a role in facilitating efficient service delivery. Any airport-related employer can enter into an agreement with the Council, obligating them to pay the employee fare and take responsibility for managing service changes and communications on behalf of their employees, many with limited English proficiency.

The service began in 2016 as a joint effort with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions to connect new immigrants and other targeted residents of the region with entry-level jobs at the airport. Service is delivered primarily in St. Paul, south Minneapolis, and south metro suburbs.

This small-scale program serves an important transportation niche in the region and plays a role in keeping airport jobs filled.

A Request for Proposals was issued on November 2, 2023. A pre-proposal meeting was hosted by Council staff that outlined the solicitation requirements, discussed project specifications, and responded to plan holder inquiries. There were twelve registered plan holders, eight prime proposers, two subcontractors, two plan rooms, and four of the plan holders identified as minority, woman, veteran, small or disadvantaged business enterprises.

On November 27, 2023, the Council received one proposal to be evaluated for the consideration of award. Procurement staff conducted an adequate competition analysis and determined the solicitation was open, fair, and there was no indication that the service specifications were restrictive and there was adequate competition for this project.

An evaluation panel consisting of staff from MTS and Metro Transit Service Development evaluated the proposal using the following criteria: the quality of the proposal, the proposer's qualifications and experience, service delivery plan, key personnel, and the price of the proposal as the criteria for evaluation. The panel reached consensus and recommended Transportation Plus, Inc., as the proposer most advantageous to the Council.

Rationale

The execution of a professional service contract exceeding \$500,000 requires Council approval.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This contract advances several Thrive Outcomes. First, regional Prosperity is enhanced both by providing access to jobs for immigrants and other targeted residents of the region and by improving service delivery at a critical regional facility. Next, Equity is enhanced by connecting underserved residents to employment opportunities. Ultimately, these improvements enhance the overall Livability of and quality of life in the region.

Funding

Funding for this service is included in the annual operating budget.

Small Business Inclusion

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEO) thoroughly reviewed this procurement for Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business (MCUB) opportunities in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations as well as contract specifications. Upon conclusion of OEEO's research and analysis, no MCUB goal was set.

