

BOARD ACTION ITEM

ITEM NUMBER

BA2024-12

MEETING DATE

February 20, 2024

ITEM TITLE

Service Provider for ACCESS and ZIPZONE - Tidewater Transit, LLC (VIA)

BACKGROUND

On December 17, 2018, the Trinity Metro Board of Directors approved BA2019-26 for the Pilot on-Demand Ride Share Services Program to address the first-mile/last-mile challenges for connecting our customers to rail stations and bus routes. River North Transit, LLC (VIA) and Circuit (formally TFR Transit, Inc.) was selected as the contractors to provide the on-demand rideshare service with a combined not-to-exceed amount of \$10,000,000 for up to five one-year term agreements. The final one-year term agreement with VIA expires May 31, 2024.

In July 2019, Trinity Metro launched its first Mobility On-Demand (MOD) Pilot service to address the first-mile/last-mile service needs identified in the Trinity Metro Master Plan. The program is branded as ZIPZONE and is currently provided in five on-demand zones throughout the City of Fort Worth and surrounding communities. The service is designed as a ride sharing service, which means multiple customers may be picked up and dropped off during the course of particular trip. The service augments the reach of the transit system by allowing customers to connect with bus and rail services for longer distance travel in the region. ZIPZONE provides over 1,000 daily rides and is the fastest-growing Trinity Metro service. See attached.

In addition to ZIPZONE, Trinity Metro's paratransit program, ACCESS, offers door-to-door transportation within the service areas of the City of Fort Worth, the City of Blue Mound, and the City of River Oaks. ACCESS is a transportation service for persons with a verified disability that prevents an individual from riding fixed route bus service. The ACCESS service is operated in-house (35%) and contracted through a vendor (65%) to meet daily demand. On average, Trinity Metro's ACCESS serves 1,000 daily customers.

ZIPZONE is consistently highly rated by riders (average 2023 ride rating is 4.9 out of 5.0). As communities across Tarrant County continue to express interest in on-demand services, Trinity Metro has found an innovative solution to integrate the paratransit program with ZIPZONE, offering greater flexibility for our customers. The Authority wants to simplify the service, providing the same service for all on-demand customers, making it easier to use while providing excellent customer service to our on-demand and paratransit customers using the same convenient platform.

Selecting a new service integrator and/or service provider will allow Trinity Metro to commingle services under a single reservation and dispatching system and share a fleet for both third party-operated ZIPZONE and Trinity Metro-operated ACCESS trips. This new business model will be integrated with all transit services via the GoPass app and allow greater efficiencies by improving fleet utilization and reducing the cost per on-demand trip. Customers who want to continue to call in for reservations will be provided a customer service number to schedule their trips.

Following Trinity Metro's Procurement Policy, on November 7, 2023, a Request for Proposal (RFP-24-T004) for Microtransit and Paratransit Solutions was issued and advertised on Trinity Metro's website and Bonfire Portal. Four (4) firms responded to the RFP and complied with the requirements. This Request for Proposal (RFP) solicited responses from qualified firms (Proposers) and technology providers to provide a package for Microtransit/Paratransit Services for designated areas within Tarrant County.

Trinity Metro will advance its operation by integrating both services to reduce operating costs, increase efficiency, and improve quality of service. We aim to enhance the service that replaces single occupancy vehicle trips and provide shared vehicle options for riders traveling within Trinity Metro's Microtransit/Paratransit service area.

The responding firms included:

Tidewater Transit, LLC (VIA)
Mobico Group (WeDriveU) / Circuit / Spare Labs
Irving Holdings, Inc. / RIDECO
QRyde by HBSS

The evaluation committee reviewed and scored the proposed documents against a requirements matrix. The evaluation was based on the Company's Qualifications/Experience/Knowledge and Capabilities, Specification Compliance, Financial Capability, References, and Cost. Tidewater Transit, LLC (VIA) proposal provided the best response, scored the highest, satisfied all requirements, and was found reasonable and satisfactory.

Beginning on June 1, 2024, VIA will continue to operate and manage on-demand ZIPZONE services for Mercantile, Southside, and South Tarrant zones. The Southeast zone will transition under VIA management beginning during our new upcoming fiscal year. Starting on October 1, 2024, VIA will be the new contract provider for Trinity Metro's ACCESS service, replacing Irving Holdings (Yellow Cab). The Alliance ZIPZONE, contracted through DCTA under LYFT services, will also be operated by VIA, providing our customers with a more consistent rider experience throughout the Trinity Metro system network.

PROCUREMENT

Trinity Metro's Procurement Department has followed procurement policy with the Request for Proposal and is in compliance with all applicable Federal, State and Trinity Metro procurement requirements.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE UTILIZATION

No Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) was established due to the nature of this solicitation.

FINANCING

Funds are available in Trinity Metro's FY2024 Operating Funds and future contract years will be considered in the respective annual budgets.

RECOMMENDATION

The Trinity Metro Board of Directors authorizes the President & Chief Executive Officer to enter into a contract with Tidewater Transit, LLC (VIA) for a contract term of five (5) years. The proposed agreement cost is \$75,600,000 with a 5% contingency of \$3,780,000 for a total not to exceed amount of \$79,380,000.

STAFF DISPOSITION

EXECUTIVE LEAD*
Wayne Gensler

DATE
02/05/24

DISPOSITION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS



SECRETARY APPROVAL