

Request for Responses to Unsolicited Proposal for On-Demand Transit Services

The City of Wilson, North Carolina is in receipt of an unsolicited proposal for on-demand, dynamically routed transit services to replace our current fixed route transit system. The city seeks competing proposals. Deadline for submission is noon on Friday, May 1.

1. Background

The City of Wilson wishes to contract with a qualified firm to provide turn-key on-demand Transit Services in the city. The expectation is that a single firm will be selected to plan, implement, and operate a turnkey dynamic on-demand transit service in the City of Wilson for a not-to-exceed annual price.

The city currently operates fixed route bus service on 5 routes that are performing poorly. The route structure leaves many areas of the city uncovered. Headways for the current system are 1 hour and many rides require transfer at our downtown transit center.

2. Project Objectives

The City of Wilson expects to achieve the following upon awarding a contract:

The city will contract with the selected provider to design, implement, and fully operate a dynamic microtransit on-demand service in the city limits of Wilson, North Carolina. This system will fully replace our current fixed route system which averages 270 weekday and 125 Saturday riders per day. The system will be demand responsive and be accessible to riders through an app and multi-lingual call-in dispatch at a minimum. Fare payment must be accessible to unbanked riders as well as allow fare payment via debit and credit cards. Vehicles will be routed dynamically in real time with the goal of maximizing the potential for shared rides to increase system efficiency. Estimated average wait times should be minimized once a request for service has been received and total trip time should be reasonable to ensure a positive user experience.

The current system operates from 6:30 am to 6 pm Monday through Friday and on Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm. Our goal is to provide services later in the evening if budget allows in order to serve workers and others that would benefit from extended service hours.

3. Service Design

While exact parameters for service will be defined by each responder to this notice, below are the parameters we believe are critical to the success of microtransit in Wilson.

- A. **Operation Time** – While the number of vehicles in service at any one time should be demand responsive, service hours at a minimum should match those of our existing fixed route service. As the selected vendor learns the market, these hours may be adjusted. Our goal is to provide service into the evening where budget allows as our rider survey results show a desire for extended hours.

- B. **System Performance** – To provide an enhanced rider experience, average wait time for a ride should average approximately 15 minutes once a request is made. The average total trip time, from the time a request is made until drop off, should be approximately 35 minutes. However, to maximize system efficiency, the dynamic routing algorithms should ensure that shared rides are preferred.
 - C. **Turn Key Service** – The City of Wilson is looking for a turnkey transit provider that at a minimum includes service design, software, apps, vehicles (including WAV vehicles), vehicle maintenance, payment solutions for banked and unbanked riders, marketing, driver management, rider feedback, FTA/NCDOT reporting, data sharing, customer service, and call in services in multiple languages to serve our citizens.
 - D. **Execution** –Service should be able to commence within 12 weeks of contract approval.
 - E. **Fleet** – The fleet will consist of smaller, efficient vehicles, such as mini-vans, including an appropriate proportion of ADA accessible vehicles. The selected provider will have experience in deploying electric and autonomous vehicles within their operations. Wilson is seen in the region as a leader in technology and innovation and is interested in deploying new technologies as they become viable and cost effective.
 - F. **Fare box recovery** – It is expected that the selected contractor will share in operational risk through discounting the cost to the city through collection of fare box revenue.
4. **Previous Experience** – The selected vendor will have a positive track record with implementing turnkey on-demand, dynamically routed, transit services. A minimum of four distinct references shall be submitted with the response.
5. **Selection** – The City of Wilson expects to select the best contractor based on the parameters outlined above. Please submit no more than a 15 page response outlining your proposal for services. Please include your projected not to exceed annual budget, total vehicle hours available per year, and projected fare box recovery discount to the city.

Responses to this request are to be submitted to:

Rodger Lentz, AICP
City of Wilson
PO Box 10
Wilson, NC 27894-0010
Street Address for UPS/FedEx – 112 Goldsboro Street, E, Wilson, NC 27893

Electronic Submissions may be submitted to rlentz@wilsonnc.org – large files over 9 MB should be sent via shareable link. Please send a separate email without attachment to confirm email has been sent in case your attachment is blocked. It is the sender’s responsibility to ensure files are received on-time.

Questions may be submitted to rlentz@wilsonnc.org.