

RFQ MCDOT-010122

Answers and Clarifications to Offerors Questions

1. Does MCDOT have true intent to select an advertising vendor?
A. Yes.
2. What's the difference between the previous one and this one?
A. The differences between this RFQ and the previous one are two major ones: the DBE requirement in the current RFQ as well as the presence of certain federal clauses.
3. Is the county aware of any advertising tax that applies to advertising revenue on the property or pending legislation that would impose an advertising tax?
A. Not as far as we know but that doesn't necessarily mean there are none.
4. Roughly half of the bike share docks are available for advertising, what precludes the other half from having advertising?
A. If they're on Metro property or some state roads, they're ineligible.
5. Is there an incumbent and are they bidding on the contract as well?
A. There is an incumbent for the bus side and bikeshare station ads, not one for the bus shelters. The County has not had ads on bus shelters for more than 2 years now. This RFQ combines them all.
6. Has there been a shelter audit on the condition of the shelters, do we know what type of condition they're in?
A. We do have a Passenger Facilities Unit that does have a maintenance contract since the previous franchise agreement ended slightly over 2 years ago. We have a contract with a maintenance vendor who goes out and performs any necessary upkeep. Maintenance activities are ongoing. The list of shelters are included in the RFQ for your inspection as to the condition.
7. Are all of the shelters illuminated?
A. No, not all of them
8. Are the bike share kiosks illuminated?
A. To a certain extent.
9. Is there filler copy in the shelters?
A. We have an interim process just for county agencies, for printing and posting with just two organizations in the last 2 years.
10. Is there anyone currently selling shelter ads?
A. No

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11. Are there any non-ad shelters that will be part of the maintenance agreement?
 - A. The only maintenance associated with this agreement is with the advertising media posted by the Offeror as well as the bus shelter internal ad panels.

12. Are there non-ad shelters as part of the solicitation?
 - A. No, just what's on the list of shelters in the RFQ. Also, three municipalities, Rockville, Gaithersburg and Takoma Park, own and operate their own shelters separate from this RFQ.

13. How are suggested mag rates calculated?
 - A. They are based on the 5 year average of our revenue streams

14. Section G; Special Terms: Will MCDOT allow an Annual prepaid Minimum Annual Guarantee in lieu of a Performance Bond?
 - A. No.

15. Section E: Will MCDOT allow a prepaid Annual MAG? Section B states quarterly; Section G states annual.
 - A. No.

16. Will public record requests be expedited as a part of this RFQ?
 - A. Public record requests are handled independently of this RFQ.

17. Can MCDOT clarify 'reduced service' per your website? How many buses are current active?
 - A. The current reduced service is at 83% of pre-pandemic levels. The County's intent, assuming operator availability, is to increase service to 88% in March, 90% in May, 94% in July, 97% in October, and 100% in January 2023.

18. Will MCDOT keep the current maintenance company after award takes place?
 - A. The contract for the overall maintenance of the bus shelters is handled independently of this Licensing Agreement.

19. Is there a way for Proposers to clearly identify shelters on WMATA property vs the MoCo units? Can the County please share a few examples?
 - A. All of the shelters that belong to the County and can currently support advertising are listed in the RFQ along with their location.

20. Can you confirm that buses are currently running at reduced service levels? If so, how long do you anticipate this to continue?

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21. What percentage of the shelters ad boxes are currently backlit?

A. 77%

22. What percentage of the shelters have functional ad box illumination, or illumination capabilities that can be repaired/relit?

A. Currently 8% are not functional due to ongoing electrical repairs, 40% require diffusers to provide proper illumination for adverts in the adbox.

23. Is there a specific reason that downtown Bethesda shelters do not have ad panels? Could this change?

A. These are installed in locations where there is not enough right of way to accommodate a larger footprint shelter. This is unlikely to change.

24. Will Montgomery County consider the concept of contracting with multiple outside vendors to handle different portions of this RFQ? (IE: Can a situation arise where Montgomery County contracts with Vendor 1 for the bus wraps, with Vendor 2 for the transit shelters, etc.?)

A. No.

25. Will Montgomery County list the winning vendor's information on the "Go Montgomery" subscription, thus allowing the winning vendor to promote the sale of the various avenues to advertise with MCDOT?

A. Yes and also on the RideOnBus.com website and in our bi-monthly Ride On Newsletter.

26. Is Montgomery County willing to set-up a direct link from the MCDOT webpage to the winning vendor's webpage?

A. Yes

27. Can the County please clarify its definitions of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) and Commercial Advertising? If PSA's are defined as any paid advertisement by a 501(c)3, this has the potential to heavily restrict a very large category of advertisers that may be hospitals, universities, etc. Further clarity on the types and categories of advertising from non-profit institutions that may be restricted would be very helpful.

A. Government notices that inform the public of a government program or services are defined, for the purposes of this Contract, as "public service advertising." The only

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public services advertising permitted will be that of Montgomery County, State of Maryland, Federal or state public service advertisements that the County approves. The advertising space on MCDOT's buses, bus shelters, bikeshare stations, and other transit related facilities do not constitute a public forum, but instead have been authorized for the limited purpose of providing a source of revenue to the County and a forum for government advertising. Accordingly, advertising space must only be used to display commercial advertising, and the public service advertising. The Contractor is responsible for providing the due diligence on all client prospects for adherence to this policy.

28. Can the County please specify the federal requirements that are required in this RFQ that were not included in the same RFQ that was previously released in 2021?
A. DBE goal p 16, Section H p17-23 and Attachment J p 61-87
29. Are the Bike Share advertising displays backlighted? And are they electrified or Solar Panel powered?
A. The advertising panels are not back light and the stations are solar powered.
30. Since Full Wraps and Large format are not allowed in the RFQ, without approval, have they been allowed in the past with the current contractor?
A. Full wraps and large format advertisement are allowed. The requests and opportunities are handled on a case by case basis.
31. Are Bus shelter Ad boxes illuminated?
A. Yes when functioning properly.
32. If the vendor should decide to add additional ad box Kiosks at the Bike Share locations that "may be added" will ad boxes be included or will the vendor be required to provide them?
A. Some bikeshare stations do not have ad panels and the vendor will not be able to add box kiosks to the stations. If new stations are added in the future they may or may not have ad panels depending on budget constraints. Please note that no new bikeshare stations are planned in the near future.
33. "The successful proposer will provide its own storage and workspace" But later in RFQ it states that MCDOT will allow space for storage. Please Clarify.
A. Storage space is not available as part of this License Agreement.
34. Gateway requests the following revenue history by the current contractor: -Total Revenues reported to MCDOT by Month from current contractor and for the contract years 2019, 2020, 2021 and YTD 2022; -Total Revenues reported for: Buses, Shelters and Bike Ad Panels for Years 2019-2022
A. Copies of the contract and any reports may be obtained by making a Maryland Public Information Act Request MPIA request through County
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/mpia.html>

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35. What is the actual % sharing and total paid by year to MCDOT for years 2019-2022 - Guarantees and % sharing for 2019-2022?
A. Copies of the contract and any reports may be obtained by making a Maryland Public Information Act Request MPIA request through County
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/mpia.html>
36. Please provide a copy of current contract and any amendments with the current contractor.
A. Copies of the contract and any reports may be obtained by making a Maryland Public Information Act Request MPIA request through County
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/mpia.html>
37. Is there currently a DBE for MCDOT under the current contractor? If so, who is that.
A. Copies of the contract and any reports may be obtained by making a Maryland Public Information Act Request MPIA request through County
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/mpia.html>