

MetroPool/NYS DOT Rideshare Matching System RFP Inquiries and Clarifications Responses

Proposal Format:

Question 1: Is the 25 page limit hard and fast? Do appendices, resumes, etc count towards the 25 page limit?

Proposals must adhere to the 25 page (13 page double sided), single spaced page limit. Cover letter, table of contents, executive summary, dividers, etc do not count towards the 25 page limit. Additionally resumes, screenshots, marketing samples, graphs, tables, charts, etc should be contained in the appendices and clearly identified in the main document. Appendices are not included in the 25 page limit.

Question 2: Can the electronic copy be submitted as a PDF instead of Microsoft Word 2003?

Proposals are required to be submitted in Word doc format for ease of review and commenting by the review team. Proposers can submit a PDF version of the proposal as well if they have concerns regarding readability or formatting.

Question 3: Are Cost Proposals to be submitted as a separate document.

Cost proposals shall be submitted as a separate document. Please see the first bullet in Section VII on Page 23.

Technical Specifications:

Question 4: What counties comprise the 14-county region?

The Project's operating area includes the following counties: NYC – Kings (Brooklyn), Queens, Richmond (Staten Island), New York (Manhattan), and the Bronx; Long Island – Nassau and Suffolk; the mid and lower Hudson Valley – Westchester, Orange, Rockland, Ulster, Putnam, Dutchess, and Columbia.

Question 5: Is Spanish language a requirement? If so does it need to be available upon launch or can it be added later during the course of the contract at an agreed upon schedule?

Spanish language is a requirement. The feature must be added during the first three months after testing and deployment.

Question 6: Will an up-to-date data feed for HOV lane hours and other traveler information be provided? How will the vendor be notified if this information changes?

Up-to-date information on HOV lane hours and other relevant information as stated in VII.b.2.5 will be available. The Partnership will be responsible for updating this data as needed through the system.

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Question 7: Who will pay for the incentives? Can the vendor provide incentives as part of their proposal?

At least in part, the Partnership and NYSDOT will fund the incentive program. The Partnership and NYSDOT are eager to hear about additional options and solutions for funding the incentive program.

Question 8: What type of information needs to be analyzed for “spatial data analysis” and can you give examples?

Spatial Analysis as described in VII.b.10.7 refers to the ability for Partnership staff to look at the database in a user configurable subset on a street map. This could be used to assist in the formation of vanpools or carpools, analyze registration densities and trends, overlay transit services on registration data, etc.

Question 9: 1) The third bullet states “Vendors shall make an online demo version available”. Is this necessary for existing vendors (e.g. NuRide and RidePro) since evaluators can simply use the systems that are currently in place? 2) Page 22 mentions demo version along with user names and passwords should be provided. Should the demo environment be provided initially with the proposal OR upon subsequent request from MetroPool? Does the evaluation committee intend to review during the evaluation? Will the vendor be provided an opportunity to explain the demo environment configuration?

All proposing vendors should make their system available for review by the selection committee. This can be accomplished either through a full demonstration site or through an actual, in-use deployment of the system. In the case of the latter we suggest that several dummy logins be created by the vendor for distribution to the selection committee; screenshots are not a substitute.

Question 10: Page 4 mentions "Matching may occur either along a corridor between origin, destination, or midpoint or within a set distance from each end of the trip". Are alternative approaches that to midpoint or fixed distance from origin/destination considered if those approaches produce better results?

Throughout Section VII of the RFP many functions or services are presented for inclusion in the final system. We would like to draw your attention to the last sentence in Section VII.b which states, “the Partnership realizes that different solutions may be available to address many of the functions listed below and will favorably consider innovative implementations.”

Question 11: Is the Quick Match feature described on Page 10 intended as a " Quick Preview" that allows the user to see if system has matches without having to register? If yes - why are the username and password inputs that are registration related required?

The Quick Match feature found in VII.b.1 requires a username and password so users, after inputting the minimum data required for quick match purposes, can login to the system again without having to re-enter required data. This allows users to quickly re-run their match at a later time or complete a full service registration.

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Question 12: In the NYC region for the Emergency Ride Program - what is the dollar limit per person? Is it reset each year or similar to the other programs?

The Guaranteed Ride Program in the NYC region of the project does have a \$40 per trip and an annual limit of \$200 per year which is reset on the anniversary of the registration.

Question 13: How many vanpools are operational today under management of the Partnership? Do the vanpools belong to one agency or multiple agencies? If multiple, can we get a breakup? Are the vans owned by the agency or leased - if leased can we get breakup by vendor or leased vans?

There are approximately 75 vanpools operating under the Partnership. The vans are leased through two separate third party leasing agencies

Question 14: How many users are present in the 3 systems operational today? Could you provide the total and the breakup?

Currently the RidePro system has approximately 13500 records in the database, NuRide has 6500; and eCommute has 1600.

Question 15: With the capabilities such as Assisted Rides and Event Matching – it seems the RFP contemplates a multi-function rideshare system. Is SchoolPool then of interest to stakeholders of the Partnership?

At this time “SchoolPool” Programs are not a contracted service, and therefore not addressed in the RFP. SchoolPool Programs, or any other service not addressed in the RFP, will be scored as optional services. It is therefore recommended that such services be included within the 25 page document limit of the proposal.

Question 16: Could you elaborate on 9.46? How does the user status code change based on admin activity? Is the intended “user status code change based on user activity”?

The User Status Code as stated in Section VII.b.9.46 is simply an automatic or administrator level way of tagging registrants as active, inactive, for deletion, etc. This feature may have additional uses or implementations. Vendors are welcome to provide differing approaches on this matter

Question 17: Our firm has installed our rideshare solution at more than one location of a secure nature, and we are bound by contract not to reveal these installations. May we omit reference to these installations from the list we provide?

If for contractual reason your firm cannot disclose certain information about system installations you may omit these installations as requested in VII.a. Please provide as much general information about these non-disclosed installations as possible. Include these installations in the total count, however, with a brief explanation as to why full information is not included.

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Question 18: Will vendor be required to perform translation services, or will vendor be required to provide a web application capable of representing content in Spanish, and Partnership would provide Spanish translation. If the former, what dialect of Spanish is desired?

This will be negotiated with the selected vendor.

Question 19: What is the scope of a corporate park, and how would this scope be configured? Would it be a list of work sites? Would it be the worksites that are members of a TMA?

A “corporate park” as mentioned in VII.b.4.20 can be loosely described as a group of businesses operating in a clearly delineated area. This could include a shopping mall, a group of big-box stores, or the traditional corporate park with several office and/or manufacturing buildings. The list of businesses within the corporate park and its geographic footprint would be defined by the administrator.

Question 20: Is it sufficient to allow staff to edit the parameters of the match and rerun the match process, or must they be allowed to directly edit the result after the match is run, prior to delivery?

As stated in VII.b.2.95, multi-modal matchlists must be editable by staff for those instances when the results to the user can be enhanced by the personal touch of experienced Partnership staff. This should not, however, be confused with the required ability to rerun matches after changing search parameters.

Question 21: How is the issue of customer retention addressed in your proposed system? In this question, does the “customer” refer to the Partnership, or to registrants in the database?

In Section VIII-Costs there is an inquiry to how customer retention is addressed. Please note that this is misplaced in the final RFP and will be scored as part of Section VII.c-Innovation. Additionally, customer retention in this case refers to the registered users in the database.

Question 22: Co-locating or hosting the system may present special challenges, will the evaluation committee be factoring in TCO or apparent cost to provide a collocating server in house?

If a vendor feels the need to address the issue of hosting the rideshare matching system in detail, please do so in a separate appendix in the cost and technical proposal documents.

Question 23: How many staff would need to access the provided system?

Up to 10 Partnership staffers must be able to access and work within the system simultaneously.

Question 24: Will all vendors willing to participate be required to follow the same database schema or will we have to develop mapping protocols for each vendor?

The exchange of data and system capabilities in Section VII.b.1.35 will be addressed on an individual basis.

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511NY Integration:

Question 25: Is it envisioned that MetroPool, CommuterLink, ICF and/or other local partners will need their own branding for the solution (apart from employers who need their own branding capability)?

The system when implemented will carry the branding of the Partnership and 511NY; branding of the other partners will not be used. Employer partners must still be able to brand their own portals as stated in Section VII.b.4.

Question 26: When will the 511NY/Partnership web site development occur? Can we have a timeline so we can mesh our plans together?

It is expected that the redevelopment of the 511NY website, the development of the new Partnership website, and the implementation of the new rideshare matching system will occur at about the same time with all parties involved in the process.

Question 27: For matching users to transit does the transit planning need to be fully integrated into the ridematch page or can a link to a transit planner be provided? If a fully integrated transit planner is required will transit data be made available? For example, Google maps has transit planning but this information is not available via their API and cannot be integrated into the page until Google makes this API publicly available.

The transit planner does not need to be fully integrated into the rideshare system. Demonstrated ability to integrate the rideshare system with other vendor or agency systems is a consideration in reviewing the responsiveness and innovativeness of the proposals. In presenting conceptual approaches to integration proposers should assume that underlying 511NY transit schedule data will be available in GTFS format for portrayal in rideshare content.

In addition the 511NY contractor will make available XML specifications for querying the trip planner and using results as well as an existing trip planning widget. Innovative approaches to extend or expand this core set of tools to enhance the level of integration and user friendliness of an integrated platform will be considered if proposed. There is an expectation that the ultimate approach to integrating will be based upon a collaborative design involving the rideshare system and the 511NY vendor.

Question 28: Does the Transit Trip Planner have integration capability other than providing a link to it? If yes, we would like to know integration capability in order to propose integration approaches (for example QueryString based integration OR Web API based integration). We would also like to know any prospective plans for the Transit Trip Planner available at this time.

As noted above, proposers should assume access to 511NY's underlying transit schedule data in GTFS format. An XML API and Widget are available as well. 511NY Trip Planner enhancements are expected to be minimal in the near future with a more significant emphasis placed on improving and expanding the quality of the underlying data.

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Question 29: Is the Transit Trip Planner provided by a different vendor - if yes, would required agreements with the vendor be in place to allow integration?

NYSDOT holds a perpetual license to the trip planning algorithm used by the 511NY trip planner. The XML specification to send and receive trip planning requests and results are non-proprietary and will be made available to successful bidder.

Question 30: Could you please provide a complete interface specification for the 511NY Transit Trip Planner?

This will be provided to the successful bidder as a part of the system design/development. For the purposes of responding to the RFP there is no expectation that integration be specified to a level of detail requiring bidders to be familiar with the 511NY Trip Planner interface specification document. With regard to integration, the proposals will be reviewed based upon the proposers' understanding, experience, expertise in integrating their rideshare system to other vendor or agency systems.

Question 31: Does 511NY Transit Trip Planner utilize Google's Transit API? Can it be interacted with programmatically? If so, by what means?

The 511NY Trip planner does not use the Google Transit API. It can be interacted with via XML exchange and via an existing widget application

Question 32: On page 23 the RFP indicates that costs should be separate from the technical proposal. On page 25 the RFP indicates that hours should be included in the technical proposal, but not costs. The number of hours is an indicator of costs. Should hours be included in the technical proposal?

Hours by title and task (with no rates or costs) must be submitted in the technical proposal, for evaluators to gage the proposed level of effort associated with the vendor's approach and scope of services. Hours by title and task, with rates and estimates of direct non-salary costs, must be submitted in the cost proposal, for evaluators to separately assess the full and constituent proposed costs associated with the vendor's approach and scope of services.

Project Timeline:

Question 33: When you identify contract execution in October 2010 are you implying commencement of contract execution? If so do you have a target date for contract completion with respect to deployment and publishing the website? i.e. a "Go Live" target date? Or partner integration milestones?

The Partnership expects that system testing will take place during the 4th quarter 2010, with a go live date early in the 1st quarter 2011.

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Project Budget:

Question 34: What is the annual budget for services? If a specific budget cannot be provided can a “not to exceed” amount be specified or perhaps an order of magnitude (e.g. tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, etc.)?

The annual budget for the Rideshare Matching System has not been finalized. The Partnership expects a significant cost saving in the integration of the current ridematching systems into one all-inclusive system.

Reference Websites:

M/W/DBE:

Please refer to <https://www.nysdot.gov/main/business-center/civil-rights/general-info/dbe-certification> for more information on M/W/DBE status.

ADA:

Please refer to <http://www.ada.gov/> for more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Legal Requirements:

Question 35: Please clarify the Partnership’s intent in the following requirement: Present any concerns or issues with the selected vendor keeping as sole property any copyrights, patentable discoveries or inventions or rights in data should result from work described herein wherein said vendor agrees to and does hereby grant to the United States Government and the State of New York an irrevocable, nonexclusive, nontransferable, paid-up license to reproduce, publish, make, use, and sell each subject invention throughout the world by and on behalf of the Government of the United States and States and domestic municipal governments, all in accordance with the provisions of 48 CFR 1-27, and other applicable Federal laws, rules and regulations.

The State of New York requires that the selected vendor to agree and grant to the State of New York and United States Government an irrevocable, nonexclusive, nontransferable, paid-up license to reproduce, publish, make, use, and sell each subject invention throughout the world by and on behalf of the Government of the United States and States and domestic municipal governments, all in accordance with the provisions of 48 CFR 1-27, and other applicable Federal laws, rules and regulations. This is a standard requirement for NYSDOT contracts of this type. MetroPool (the Partnership) is performing this work as a consultant to a NYSDOT contract.

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System Hosting:

Question 36: What operating systems (including version and service pack) are employed on all servers where vendor software might be installed?

Response to follow at a later date.

Question 37: What database software systems (including version and service pack) are employed that would support vendor databases? Is mirroring or clustering employed?

Response to follow at a later date.

Question 38: Would servers be dedicated in the State's environment to support the vendor's application?

Response to follow at a later date.

Question 39: Would virtual server environments be utilized, and if so, for what server functions? What virtualization software would be utilized?

Response to follow at a later date.

Question 40: Would vendor be granted administrative access to the servers where software is installed so as to be able to perform required software and database maintenance?

Response to follow at a later date.