

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 2/24/2021

Staff Report No. 21-086

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Solicitation for Customer Call Center Services

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider authorizing the issuance of a solicitation for Customer Call Center services.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

Soliciting these services will ensure effective, efficient and cost-effective customer relationship management.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

The issuance of solicitation has no immediate budgetary or fiscal impact. However, if it results in a contract award, the District has budgeted in the Customer Services Department's operating budget for three years of on-going service.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The District currently administers a contract that supports the public through a call center to address travel and trip planning services as well as customer feedback or concerns. The current services were competitively awarded through a multi-year contract (Staff Report 17-222a). The base contract expires in September of this year. District staff desires to resolicit these services in order to achieve the best value for the District.

Call Center services have been provided by American Customer Care, under two successive contracts since 2010. Call Center services are essential to providing a means for individualized and personal customer service for travel, trip planning and to provide essential feedback to the District. In 2019, Call Center services assisted more than 54,000 customer calls, and took more than 9,000 feedback reports for processing.

The current call volume represents a 50% reduction due to COVID-19, as well as customers who increasingly rely on digital technology to find transit information and provide feedback to the District. Call volume varies considerably by day of the week and time of day, and significant spikes occur when there are service changes, detours, and special events. The current Call Center provides client support to a number of clients, which allows call center staff to be easily re-allocated to handle varying daily call volumes. When call volumes peak,

assistance from other call center representatives not assigned to the District may be reassigned to assist with District's calls to ensure Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are met. This allows the District's customers to expect the same excellent response times during commute hours and on busy days.

The District plans to solicit firms qualified in responding to a wide variety of customers. The resulting contract will be an annual payment contract. The contractor will be responsible for continuous and accessible responses to the public on behalf of the District. The District will seek the most qualified firm to perform these services and provide the best value to the District.

Below is a timeline of the procurement schedule:

Approval by the Board to Solicit Anticipated	2/24/2021
Issue Public Notice/Post Solicitation	3/2/2021
Bid Deadline / Virtual Bid Opening	3/26/2021
Conduct Due Diligence, Evaluation	4/7/2021
Staff Report Due to District Secretary	4/8/2021
Board Approval for Award	4/24/2021
Issue Notice to Proceed	5/1/2021

Staff is interested in soliciting companies who can offer new services and value to the District.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

By contracting these services, the District will save time and resources. Specifically, the cost savings required to hire full time staff, establish the infrastructure for a full-time call center, and the resources required to ensure this center is fully functional at all times.

A potential disadvantage is ensuring the appropriate response and quality of responses from a selected contractor.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

Staff considered whether to exercise the first of two one-year options on the current contract; however, the current level of support provided by the vendor exceeds the District's needs. Resoliciting these services will allow the District to negotiate a reduced cost for these services.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Staff Report 17-222a

Board Policy 465 - Procurement Policy

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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