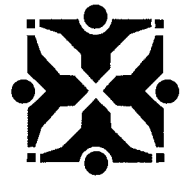


City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201



Agenda Item Number: R 49-15

Department Source: Public Works

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: 3/16/2015

Re: Authorizing a Request for Proposal to Perform a Complete Analysis of the Transit System

Documents Included With This Agenda Item

Council memo, Resolution/Ordinance, Draft Scope of Services

Supporting documentation includes: None

Executive Summary

Public Works staff has been tasked with preparing a Scope of Services (draft attached) to perform a complete analysis of the current Transit system. With the adoption of this resolution, staff will begin the Request for Proposal process to hire a qualified consultant with the requisite qualifications and experience needed to perform an evaluation and complete analysis of the current transit system, as well as prepare several deliverables, including short-term and medium-term plans for bus service, a long-term master plan, and a funding sustainability report.

Discussion

Council directed staff to prepare a Scope of Services prior to developing a Request for Proposal for a complete analysis of the current Transit system, including development of a short-term and medium-term plans for bus service, as well as a long-term master plan and funding sustainability report. The review of the system, termed Complete Operational Analysis (COA), will consist of a complete operations review and market analysis of the COMO Connect system, looking at effectiveness and areas of improvement. The consultant would then be tasked with providing various planning reports to include:

- Service Design Guidelines
- Short-Term Service plan to include budget-neutral improvements over 1-2 years.
- Medium Term Service Plan to include moderate expansion plans over a 3-5 year period.
- Long-Term Master Plan which would provide directions for the system over a 10-20 year period.
- Funding Sustainability Report

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Staff anticipates that a consultant would complete work on the COA, Short-Term Service Plan and Medium-Term Service Plan within a 12-15 month timeframe from the date of contract award. The Long Range Master Plan is expected to be complete within 6 months of completion of the COA, Short-Term Service Plan and Medium-Term Service Plan.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Preliminary discussions with consultants suggest the cost for all deliverables could range from \$100,000 to \$250,000, and the project would be funded by Transportation Sales Tax.

Long-Term Impact: N/A

Vision, Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Vision Impact: Economic Development, Environment, Health, Social Services and Affordable Housing, Transportation

Strategic Plan Impact: Customer Focused Government, Economic Development, Financial Health, Growth Management, Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Infrastructure, Workforce

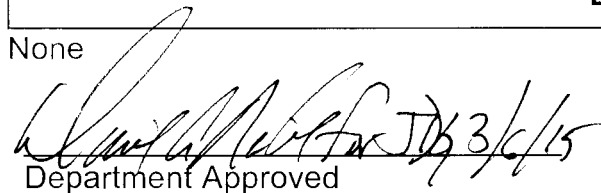
Comprehensive Plan Impact: Land Use & Growth Management, Environmental Management, Infrastructure, Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility, Economic Development, Inter-Governmental Cooperation, Livable & Sustainable Communities

Suggested Council Action

Adopt the resolution authorizing a Request for Proposal to perform a complete analysis of the current Transit system, including short-term and medium-term plans for bus service, a long-term master plan, and a funding sustainability report.

Legislative History

None


Department Approved


City Manager Approved

Introduced by _____ Council Bill No. R 49-15

A RESOLUTION

authorizing the Purchasing Agent to request proposals for consulting services for a complete operations review and market analysis of the COMO Connect system.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Purchasing Agent is authorized to issue a Request for Proposal for consulting services for a complete operations review and market analysis of the COMO Connect system. The scope of services for the Request for Proposal shall be substantially as set forth in "Exhibit A" attached hereto and made a part hereof.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2015.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor and Presiding Officer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Counselor

SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. Introduction

The City of Columbia seeks transit service evaluation and planning assistance from a consultant with significant fixed-route service evaluation, route design, and scheduling/operations planning experience to support development of a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) and short-, medium-, and long-range service plans for the COMO Connect fixed-route bus system and related public transit services. This COA/service plan effort will evaluate how well COMO Connect is positioned to serve the transit markets of today and of the future, and identify both revenue-neutral and growth strategies for increasing the effectiveness of the transit system. The COA and service plan will identify short-term, revenue-neutral actions to improve current operations and the effectiveness of the COMO Connect system, as well as a longer-range roadmap for system development and priorities for improvements, should additional resources for transit operations and related capital investment become available.

The context for this effort includes evolving development patterns within Columbia over the years, changes in the location of transit trip generators, and other changes such as the steady increase in University of Missouri enrollment and related student housing developments. In addition, newly-available stop-level automated passenger counts (APC) and other data generated by COMO Connect's Automated Vehicle Location/APC system, provide a level of planning data that has not been available to COMO Connect planners and managers in the past.

The COA and service plan effort is intended to meet the following objectives:

- Complete a comprehensive review and analysis of the fixed-route transit system and related public transit services, and its efficiency and effectiveness in meeting local and regional travel needs;
- Examine existing and future markets for transit services and opportunities to better align transit services with the needs of these markets;
- Identify short, medium, and long-term plans for transit system design and service delivery, including revenue-neutral and "growth" strategies;
- Examine existing and future funding sources and identify options for improving transit funding sustainability;
- Provide a framework for transitioning from current service to new or revised service; and
- Position COMO Connect to compete effectively for federal, state, and local funding.

It is the City's intention that the COA/service plan will be used to guide and inform development of future Long Range Transportation Plans and to prioritize transit system changes and investments.

B. Background

1. Agency Description

Columbia is a city of approximately 115,000 situated nearly equidistance from Kansas City and St. Louis in central Missouri. It is the county seat of Boone County and the fourth largest city in the state. Columbia is the home of the University of Missouri, Columbia College and Stephens College. COMO Connect is a municipal bus transit system operated by the City of Columbia's Transit Division, which is a division of the Public Works Department. All aspects of COMO Connect's management, planning, and operations are conducted by City of Columbia employees.

COMO Connect provides service on 10 fixed-routes and one commuter route, with a peak pull-out of 28 vehicles. The networked system consists of two core connector routes, seven neighborhood routes, one downtown orbiter and a one commuter route. The two connector routes span the City East/West and North/South, connecting in the heart of the City on the University of Missouri campus, and are bidirectional loops. The seven neighborhood routes radiate from the two connector routes and have multiple transfer locations with these and other neighborhood routes.

Information on COMO Connect routes and schedules, as well as fare information and the COMO Connect system map, can be accessed at: <http://comoconnect.org>

ADA complementary paratransit service within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of COMO Connect fixed routes is provided by COMO Connect Paratransit, with a peak vehicle pull-out of 10 vehicles.

The City's Transit Division, via an Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement, operates the University of Missouri's Tiger Line shuttle system, with a peak pull-out of 10 vehicles. Information about this system can be accessed at: <http://tigerline.missouri.edu/>

The Public Transit Advisory Commission (PTAC) is the citizen advisory board for the Transit Division and reports to the Columbia City Council. The Columbia City Council serves as the policy board for Columbia COMO Connect, and the COA/service plan will be presented for review by PTAC and adoption by the City Council.

2. Available Data Sources

Data sources available for use in the COA/service plan include, but are not limited to:

- COMO Connect monthly performance reports (systemwide and route-level data).
- GFI farebox ridership reports.
- Automated Passenger Counter (APC) data.

- Data generated by the Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) system, including stop-to-stop running times, schedule adherence data, etc.
- 2012 Community Conversations about Transit Report.
http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/community_development/planning/boards_and_commissions/catso/documents/120515CommunityConversationsReport.pdf
- Survey results from the 2014 Public Transit survey.
- 2012 Campus Mass Transit Study Plan and System Evaluation Report from the University of Missouri
http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/community_development/planning/boards_and_commissions/catso/documents/UniversityofMissouriCampusMassTransitStudyReportFINAL.pdf
- 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan of the Columbia Area Transportation Study Organization (CATSO), the area MPO.
http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/community_development/planning/boards_and_commissions/catso/2040%20LRTP/
- Existing GIS layers for COMO Connect bus stops, routes, transfer centers, and major destinations, population density and landmarks within Columbia.
- Existing traffic count data and relevant traffic studies conducted by the City or consultants over the last 5 years
- The Columbia Imagined Comprehensive Plan
https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/community_development/comprehensive_plan/
- Health Impact Assessments (HIA) related to Transit, conducted by the Columbia Boone County Health Department.
<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Health/Documents/ColumbiaMOTransitFullHIAReport-FINAL.pdf>
<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=10511>

3. Stakeholder Steering Committee

The Transit Division anticipates convening a Stakeholder Steering Committee (SSC) to provide feedback on COA and service plan work products at key junctures in the process. It is expected that the consultant will attend a total of four SSC meetings and assist with development of materials for those meetings. Transit Division staff will identify the SSC members and coordinate scheduling of meetings. The SSC is likely to include internal technical experts such as representatives from the City's Transportation

and Public Works, Community Development, and Economic Development and Housing Departments, as well as representatives from the following:

- Public Transit Advisory Commission
- University of Missouri Administration
- Missouri Student Association (MSA)
- Columbia Chamber of Commerce
- Regional Economic Development, Inc. (REDI)
- Downtown Community Improvement District
- Downtown Columbia Leadership Council (DCLC)
- Boone County Administration
- Central Missouri Community Action
- Columbia Housing Authority
- Columbia Public Schools
- PedNet / CoMET

4. Public Involvement

The City of Columbia is committed to implementing a robust Public Involvement Program as part of the COA/service plan effort. In keeping with standard COMO Connect practice and federal Limited English Proficiency requirements, this program must include meaningful outreach to, and involvement of, speakers with limited English proficiency.

The consultant will be asked to assist with design of the Public Involvement Program. Bidders are asked to detail their public involvement recommendations as part of their discussion of the tasks in the Scope of Work. The Transit Division welcomes suggestions for innovative approaches for more effectively engaging the public, and transit riders in particular, in this effort (i.e., beyond traditional public meetings, though such meetings may be implemented as one component of the Public Involvement Program). Implementation of the Public Involvement Program will be overseen by the Public Works Department Marketing, CATSO and Transit Division staff. The consultant will conduct outreach and produce, translate, and print outreach materials, except where explicitly noted in the Scope of Work.

C. Scope of Work

This Scope of Work is provided as a guide to bidders. Bidders are invited to suggest altered or expanded tasks; however, any deviations from the Scope of Work set forth in this RFP should be explicitly identified and discussed in bidders' proposals. Bidders may also set forth optional tasks, with cost proposals clearly identifying the costs for each item.

The Transit Division expects the consultant to provide the following services and deliverables:

1. Market Analysis

The market analysis will provide a comprehensive profile of the COMO Connect service area and assess how well the system reflects and responds to current and anticipated future travel needs. The deliverable shall be a technical memorandum or working paper that emphasizes visual representations of data (e.g., maps). The Transit Division can provide market analysis materials developed in-house during 2013 for use by the consultant, with the caveat that any materials or data from the previous analysis should be reviewed for accuracy and to ensure that the most recent and highest quality data are used. The Transit Division expects that the market analysis will encompass the following:

A. Analysis of demographics, land use, and travel patterns

- **Demographic analysis:** This component of the market analysis shall include, at a minimum, mapping the distribution of transit-inclined populations, including older adults, college-aged students, youth, low-income individuals, and households without vehicles. Distribution of the minority population (per FTA's definition) should also be included for use in Title VI evaluation of recommended service alternatives. Consultant shall use the most recent 2013 ACS data block group level.
- **Land use/trip generators/transit-supportive densities:** The consultant will be expected to review Columbia's land use designations (current and future), relevant City plans, and understand other plans or designations with potential influence on future development patterns, such as Priority Development Areas. The consultant will also discuss growth potential/development patterns with City of Columbia Community Development staff. Maps should be prepared to visually identify areas of Columbia with current and projected transit-supportive housing and employment densities as well as major trip generators. Consideration should be made to the City's current ongoing process to update land-use and development codes.
- **Travel Patterns:** The consultant shall evaluate current and potential future major travel flows and origin/destination pairs using data

from the COMO Connect system (e.g., farebox transfer matrix) as well as data for Columbia and the region.

- Regional transit network: The market analysis should also include information illuminating COMO Connect' role within the regional transit network and key connectivity opportunities, subject to data availability.

B. Analysis of Service Congruency/Adequacy: Map-based analysis showing demographic, land use, trip generation, and travel flow data relative to the existing transit system to identify how well the current transit system matches current needs, as well as anticipated needs based projected changes in land use and travel patterns.

C. Stakeholder Input: The market analysis should be informed by interviews with 15-20 key individuals representing major employers, educational institutions, social and human services providers, and medical facilities regarding the role of transit in Columbia and opportunities to improve COMO Connect service.

D. Comparative Analysis: Include comparative data analysis with college towns of similar demographic makeup.

Deliverables:

- Draft Market Analysis
- Final Market Analysis
- Presentation materials including, maps, tables, and charts

2. Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA)

The consultant shall complete a line-by-line analysis and overall evaluation of the COMO Connect network, presenting findings in a technical memorandum or working paper.

A. Line-by-line analysis: The consultant shall evaluate each route's performance in detail, with attention to ridership patterns (on/off analysis, segment and temporal analysis, transfer patterns), key trip generators, key transfer points, ridership and productivity by time of day and day of the week, schedule adherence, bus stop spacing, and service levels (including days/hours of operations, frequencies, and cycle times/layover).

- B. Network evaluation: The consultant shall evaluate the role of each route within the overall transit network, and the effectiveness of the network as a whole. This task should include evaluation of route alignments and logical construction, identification of service duplication or redundancy, evaluation of current interlining practices, and an assessment of the match of service to the needs of the transit market, based on the findings of the market analysis. Connectivity with local/regional transit operators, should be assessed as part of this task.

The deliverable for this task should include recommendations for revenue-neutral, short-term service changes that can be made to improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the COMO Connect system in the next 1-2 years. Recommendations may be grouped into two or three revenue-neutral scenarios, each with a different focus or point of view. These, and any recommendations that relate to major network restructuring or significant changes in the allocation of resources within the COMO Connect system may be identified as part of this task, but should be carried forward into the Visioning, Service Design Guidelines, and Alternatives tasks for further evaluation and public feedback. Transit Division staff will assist in making this determination. It is expected that this task will be completed within the first four to six months of the project.

Deliverables:

- Draft COA
- Final COA
- Presentation materials including maps, tables, and charts

3. Visioning

Data and findings from the market analysis and COA shall be used as the underpinnings for visioning exercises to be conducted with Transit Division staff, key stakeholders, and the public. The purpose of this task is to engage COMO Connect staff, PTAC, the City Council, City, University, external stakeholders, and the public in a discussion of alternative approaches to the design of the transit network in Columbia. Visioning should focus on community goals and needs/outcomes, rather than specific service and route design proposals.

The visioning process shall be informed by data about current and future transit markets, current system performance, and industry best practices, yet allow for a values-based discussion of the role and mission of COMO Connect within the city's transportation network. The trade-offs involved in implementation of various transit service and network design alternatives should be clearly delineated for participants. Bidders' proposals should identify the techniques that are proposed for ensuring that visioning sessions are productive and have outcomes that can be used to inform development of alternatives or recommendations (e.g. planning games, charrettes). It is

expected that the consultant will take the lead in designing the visioning process and will implement visioning sessions in partnership with Transit Division staff. Groups that should be engaged during this task include the following:

- COMO Connect riders and the public at large
- City Council (likely via a pre Council work session)
- PTAC
- Transit Division and other City staff
- University of Missouri staff and student organizations
- A selection of stakeholders consulted during preparation of the Market Analysis

In order to contain costs for this task and to promote cross-pollination of ideas, the Transit Division proposes that visioning sessions not be limited to single groups (with the exception of the City Council, which will likely be engaged through a work session). Transit Division staff will schedule and invite participants as well as arrange for meetings rooms and materials. Participation by COMO Connect riders will be solicited through COMO Connect's community and agency partners.

Topics to be discussed may include the allocation of resources towards services that are oriented toward maximizing ridership versus maximizing coverage, the differentiation of services into typologies with different roles or markets, the role of transfers, and priorities for investment of any new operating revenues for transit. Outcomes from visioning sessions should be documented for use in the remainder of the planning process.

Deliverables:

- Visioning workshop/public outreach plan
- Summary of Visioning Outcomes

4. Service Design Guidelines

The consultant shall assist the Transit Division in developing service design guidelines that can be used to guide development of alternatives for future design of individual routes and the transit network as a whole. Service design guidelines should be informed by the results of the visioning process (in terms of priorities for development of the transit system, allocation of resources between coverage-oriented and ridership-oriented services, etc.) and should reflect industry standards, practices in similar successful transit systems, and budget realities. Guidelines should address such topics as principles for route design, levels of service that are appropriate for different service

types (e.g., frequency, span), bus stop spacing and allocation of resources among services meeting different needs and serving different areas.

Development of service design guidelines should reflect close collaboration with Transit Division staff. Transit Division staff will present service design guidelines to the City Council for adoption.

Deliverables:

- Draft Service Design Guidelines
- Final Service Design Guidelines

5. Alternatives

The consultant will use materials developed in previous tasks to work in partnership with the Transit Division to develop service options, evaluate them individually and as a unified plan, and identify a set of alternatives or proposals for public feedback.

A. Development of Alternatives

Working in partnership with the Transit Division, the consultant will develop detailed alternatives or recommendations for service improvements. The basis for recommending alternatives or scenarios will also be clearly identified (e.g., reducing inefficiencies, improving the effectiveness of current operations, expanding the system to new markets or new hours/days, etc.). Alternatives or scenarios will be placed within a preliminary timeline of short-, medium-, or long-term recommendations. High-level budgetary implications (capital for equipment and facilities and operating), ADA paratransit requirements, and staffing/labor implications for bus operators, maintenance personnel, and management shall be identified to assist with evaluation of options. Costing will be based on a cost allocation model provided by the Transit Division and reviewed by the consultant.

B. Customer and Stakeholder Input

Significant customer and stakeholder input will be a key part of this task. COMO Connect riders should be provided with the opportunity to review and comment on detailed short- and medium-term proposals for individual routes and the network as a whole, as well as review and comment on proposed longer-range changes. The consultant shall assist with development of the outreach plan for this task and provide graphical presentation materials as appropriate to facilitate public review and comment. Transit Division staff will take the lead on implementing outreach activities, and will produce, translate, and print outreach materials. The Transit

Division anticipates using an online survey format as well as direct outreach onboard buses and at key transit stops to gain feedback from riders and stakeholders. Transit Division staff will also seek input from colleagues within the Transportation and Public Works Department (including bus operators, and operations and customer service staff) as well as provide other City staff with the opportunity to comment. One of the four SSC meetings will occur at this juncture in order to provide SSC members with an opportunity to comment on alternatives.

C. Evaluation and Selection of Alternatives

The consultant shall work in partnership with the Transit Division to evaluate alternatives in light of public and stakeholder input. Emerging recommendations for route-specific and network-level improvements shall also be evaluated on the basis of cost, phasing, consistency with service policies or guidelines, labor implications, and ADA paratransit implications. At this time the Transit Division shall conduct a review of the Title VI implications of proposed changes. COMO Connect, as a small operator, is not subject to the FTA requirement to conduct a full Service Equity Analysis. However, the Transit Division seeks to ensure that the alternatives selected for inclusion in the final service plan reflect attention to an equitable distribution of transit service resources within the service area. The consultant should budget a small number of hours to provide technical assistance in support of this review.

Deliverables:

- Service alternatives presented in a format facilitating public and stakeholder review and comment
- Draft recommended alternatives
- Final recommended alternatives

6. Short-, Medium- and Long Term Plans

The consultant shall present recommended short, medium, and long-term service plans based on the evaluation in Task 5. The service plans should incorporate relevant materials produced in previous tasks to provide context and justification for final recommendations. Plans should include the following:

- **Short-Term Service Plan**

The consultant shall prepare a detailed operating and capital plan for implementation of short-term recommendations based on information provided by the Transit Division on reasonable expectations for capital and operating revenues during this time (i.e., sources, amounts, and projected growth). The consultant shall clearly identify changes (or combinations of changes) that can

be implemented with no net increase in operating revenues over a 1-2 year period.

- **Medium-Term Service Plan**

The consultant shall prepare a detailed operating and capital plan for implementation of medium-term recommendations based on information provided by the Transit Division on reasonable expectations for capital and operating revenues during this time (i.e., sources, amounts, and projected growth), as well as potential new revenue sources. The consultant shall clearly identify moderate expansion changes (or combinations of changes) that can be implemented over a 3-5 year period. The consultant shall also identify approximate costs to implement recommended medium-term improvements, and related capital requirements (e.g., for facilities or fleet).

- **Long-term Master Plan and Funding Sustainability Plan**

The Consultant will use materials developed in previous tasks to work in conjunction with the Transit Division to develop a long-term master plan. The master plan should include a service expansion plan and a transit funding sustainability plan.

- The service expansion plan should be a road map of where the focus of public transportation should be for the next 10-20 years. The service expansion plan should contain the following elements:
 - Recommendations for advancing multi-service route connectivity and efficiency with a focus on ridership use and functionality ;
 - General financial estimates for recommended service scenarios;
 - Future rolling stock needs assessment;
 - Recommended capital infrastructure projects and service delivery options; and
 - Recommendations for the use of innovative technological advances for the purposes of enhancing any element of transit service identified throughout the planning process. An example includes mobile payment options for fares.
- The overarching purpose of a transit funding sustainability plan is to determine what the broader Columbia community will support as the most desirable long-term, sustainable funding structure for COMO Connect, in conjunction with the above service expansion plan. The funding sustainability plan should contain the following elements:
 - Fare Study grounded in a review of existing fare schedules for the transit system as well as input from surveys and meetings with the SSC, PTAC and City Council. The Fare Study will make recommendations to streamline fare schedules and fare rate changes, and will include an electronic file with a formula or method to determine when and how much fare needs to be adjusted in coordination with cost of operations, administration and

other pertinent economic factors. The Fare Study shall also examine the outcomes and impacts of a “fare-free” model.

- Transit Funding Resources Report identifying existing funding sources and expenditures, proposed service increase revenue needs, projected costs vs. revenues, and potential additional revenue sources. The report will include an analysis of alternative governance models (e.g. independent transit authority with taxing authority). The report shall incorporate findings from the Fare Study and all other prior tasks.
- Transit Sustainability Funding Plan outlining the most desirable long-term, sustainable funding structure for COMO Connect. The final Plan will include a desired future funding structure “road map” for developing local/regional funding, including outreach/information campaigns, current and potential strategic partnerships, target service levels, and an implementation timeline for all activities.

The consultant will be asked to participate in presentations of the draft service plans to the project SSC, PTAC and City Council.

Deliverables:

- Draft Short-Term Service Plan, Medium-Term Service Plan, Long-Term Master Plan and Funding Sustainability Plan.
- Final Short-Term Service Plan, Medium-Term Service Plan, Long-Term Master Plan and Funding Sustainability Plan.

D. Time of Performance

The Transit Division anticipates completing work on the COA, Short-Term Service Plan & Medium-Term Service Plan within a 12-15 month timeframe from the date of contract award. The Long Range Master Plan should be complete within 6 months of completion of the COA, Short-Term Service Plan and Medium-Term Service Plan.