

DRAFT Milwaukee Transport Services, Inc.’s Request for Information for Same Day, On-Demand, FTA-Compliant Paratransit Transportation Services



I. Purpose

Milwaukee Transport Services, Inc. (MTS) operator of The Milwaukee County Transit System (“MCTS”) issues this RFI to ascertain the availability of potential providers (“Provider”) to provide same-day, on-demand, FTA-compliant transportation services for MCTS-approved paratransit certified customers.

The general framework for the desired services is set forth in this RFI.

MCTS will use this information to determine the feasibility and process to implement a pilot program to begin on August 1, 2024, for up to 12 months or upon exhaustion of pilot funds using the approved \$1.3 million budget set by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors in its 2024 Adopted Budget. The budget covers all aspect of both Ride provision and program administration.

II. Background

MCTS provides fixed route public transit throughout Milwaukee County. In addition, MCTS administers paratransit services which are contracted through Transdev. Previously, same-day, on-demand paratransit taxi services were also offered, but were discontinued due to noncompliance with Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”) requirements specific to ADA-accessible vehicles and drug and alcohol testing. Those services were limited to ambulatory Riders. The Milwaukee County’s Paratransit Taxi Task Force (“Task Force”) was formed in part to explore alternative service models that would effectively and equitably meet the on-going transportation needs for same day paratransit rides.

MCTS cannot predict the number of Riders or the breakdown of ambulatory or non-ambulatory Riders who would access this service. In the period of January through September 2023, there were 19,825 Taxi rides taken. Exhibit A contains a spreadsheet with all available information for those rides. It is important to note that those rides were not limited by purpose; the pilot program will limit the rides to employment-, health- and medical-related rides. Additionally, all riders in the provided data were either ambulatory riders or riders using collapsible wheelchairs (i.e. exclusive of power mobility devices). The breakdown for current paratransit service is approximately 70% ambulatory and 30% non-ambulatory riders.

III. Requirements / Service Structure

The desired services to be provided must be compliant with all applicable FTA rules and regulations, in addition to meeting the following requirements:

1. To ensure the availability of pilot funds, service must be fully implemented no later than 9 weeks after contract award. Service commencement date is anticipated to be August 1, 2024.
2. The transportation services (“Rides”) will be for the limited purposes of employment, health, and medical related rides that cannot be scheduled ahead of time. Provider will be required to collect the purpose of the Ride at the time of booking and report that information to MCTS in an agreed-upon form and format. Provider will not be called upon to authenticate the purpose. More detailed guidance on allowable Rides will be provided to Riders, who will be required to sign an agreement to abide by the program requirements.
3. The Rides are limited to MCTS-approved paratransit certified customers. The Provider will not be called upon to make eligibility determinations. The Provider must verify eligibility status of each Rider on each ride prior to transport by (1) checking the name of the Rider against a list of eligible

- Riders provided by MCTS and updated daily; and (2) checking for a valid Transit Plus identification card at the time of pickup.
4. Riders would be limited to 8 one-way Rides per month during the Pilot program. The Provider would be required to track Rides to enforce that limit. Due to the nature of the Pilot program, the number of allowable Rides may be adjusted to address capacity or needs.
 5. The service area is limited to Milwaukee County.
 6. The Provider must provide all equipment, software programs and personnel necessary to perform the dispatching function. Although accessible apps or online portals are acceptable, there must be an option to access the dispatching service telephonically to accommodate Riders without access to a computer or smart phone. Any user facing app must be compatible with screen reader software and both iOS and Android platforms. The dispatching service must also accommodate individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speakers.
 7. Rides may be private or shared, so long as they meet the service standards. However, service must be able to accommodate rider's need to arrive at their destination at a designated appointment time in the same measure as a private ride.
 8. Provider must administer a local drug and alcohol testing program which complies with 49 CFR Parts 40 and 655. Provider must be able to produce documentation to establish such compliance. Provider will be required to provide to MCTS with records relating to pre-employment testing, employee hiring, and termination actions related to drug and alcohol testing, random and reasonable suspicion testing documentation, post-accident documentation and testing decisions, employee training, and other documents as requested for the time periods specified in the retention schedules in 49 CFR part 40 and 655. Provider must allow MCTS, Milwaukee County or other state or federal regulatory agencies to inspect facilities and records associated with drug testing compliance.
 9. Service Level Requirements ("Key Performance Indicators" or "KPIs") for these services are as follows:
 - Service must be operational 7:00 am – 7:00 pm, 7 days a week ("Operational hours"). All services, including reservations, dispatching, driver and vehicle availability, and lost and found must be available during this time frame.
 - Rides are requested on a demand-response basis. The vehicle must arrive within 1 hour of booking. Response times for ambulatory and non-ambulatory riders must be equivalent.
 - Provider must respond back with customer feedback to MCTS within 72 hours of notification.
 10. Provider will be held to the following KPI Measures. Liquidated damages for failure to meet any of the KPIs would be contractually required.
 - Phones must be answered within 2 minutes at least 95% of the time.
 - Requests for bookings must be accepted if received within the Operational hours 100% of the time.
 - Vehicle arrival time must be within 1 hour of booking at least 93% of the time.
 - Complaints must be responded to within 72 hours at least 95% of the time.
 11. Provider will be required to provide Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles ("WAVs"). The number of WAVs needed to provide the service would be incumbent upon the Provider to determine, but MCTS would contractually reserve the right for the Provider to procure additional WAVs if they were not meeting a defined standard for Riders needing WAVs. Response time for both ambulatory riders and those requiring WAVs must be equivalent.

12. Drivers would be required to provide at a minimum curb-to-curb service and provide necessary ADA accommodations for riders needing door-to-door service and assistance with mobility aids. Providers must supply driver with a phone or other equipment such that Driver can be contacted at all times while transporting Riders.
13. The Provider would be required to accept credit/debit cards and must offer a solution for accommodating unbanked riders who need to use cash. The Provider should also indicate if they have a solution for accommodating riders who wish to pay using their WisGo cards or the UMO app.
14. Providers must train Drivers with an approved curriculum related to safety and legal requirement such as securing mobility devices, sighted guide, use of service animals, and communication and appropriate etiquette and courtesy, including with respect to individual with disabilities.
15. Provider must comply with MCTS' policy of packages, additional riders, Personal Care Attendants, and service animals, as stated in the Transit Plus Riders Guide, attached as Exhibit B.
16. A representative from the Provider will participate in monthly meetings of a paratransit stakeholders group. During this meeting Provider will be required to provide ridership data and address questions /concerns from group members as well as members of the public. As necessary, and as directed by MCTS, a representative from the Provider will attend additional "town hall" meetings to address public concerns.

IV. Response Format

A. Provider Information.

- Name of Company
- Address and Telephone Number
- Provider Representative, contact number and email address

B. Ability to Provide Specified Services.

MCTS would like Provider to answer the basic question of whether it would be able to provide services according to specification set forth herein. Please limit the answer to Yes or No. (Yes, the Provider would be able to provide the specified services; or No, the Provider would not be able to provide the specified services.)

If the Provider lacks information to answer the posed question with a simple Yes or No, the Provider must request the information that would allow the Provider to be able to respond with the Yes or No in a question(s) as provided herein.

C. Changes in Specifications that Would Allow Provider to Provide Specified Services. If Provider indicated it is unable to provide the services as specified herein, please detail the reasons. MCTS would be interested in learning whether there are any changes to the specifications that would allow Provider to perform the services.

D. Pricing Structure Methodology: MCTS intends to require a pricing model based on service hours. Would Provider be able to provide pricing on a per hour basis? Please set forth the pricing components that would need to be captured to accurately reflect cost to the agency. Is there a minimum number of service hours or rides per day that Provider would require in order to bid on service such as this? If so, please describe.

E. Cost Prohibitive Specifications? If the specifications would cause the per trip rate to be cost prohibitive, please detail what those specifications are and how a specification could be crafted to make the per trip or per hour rate reasonable.

F. On-Time Arrival. MCTS would like to understand whether a requirement for on-time appointment arrival for Riders in both individual and shared rides scenarios is feasible. Please explain your answer and approach to meet any such requirement.

G. Independent Contractors or Employees. Please describe whether Provider's business model would involve private contractors, employees, or a mixture of both and how that structure would allow service demand to be met during operational hours.

H. Vehicle Specifications. MCTS is unable to determine the number or type of vehicles necessary to perform the services. Are potential Providers positioned to respond to a Bid that defers to Provider to assess and procure the appropriate number and types of vehicles to meet service levels, reserving the right to require additional vehicles if service levels have not been met? Are specifications that call for wheelchair accessible or ADA-compliant vehicles specific enough for Providers? How does the Provider ensure the proper maintenance, safety and cleanliness of vehicles? How are vehicles branded?

I. Insurance Requirements. MCTS' standard insurance levels are as follows:

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Minimum Limits</u>
Wisconsin Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability & Disease	Statutory/Waiver of Subrogation \$100,000/\$500,000/\$100,000
General Liability	\$1,000,000 Per Occurrence
Bodily Injury and Property Damage to include: Personal Injury, Fire, Products and Completed Operations	\$2,000,000 Aggregate
Vehicle Liability	\$10,000,000 Per Accident
Bodily Injury and Property Damage	
Umbrella Liability	\$5,000,000 Per Occurrence
Policy will follow form to underlying Employer's, General, and Automobile Liability policies	\$5,000,000 Aggregate

Are these coverage limits reasonable and appropriate to the requested services?

J. Linked Rides: Would Provider have the ability to provide "drive-thru" or "linked rides" with up to one intermediary stop on a one-way trip?

K. Please provide agency contact information and dates of similar services that you provide for other transit agencies. Service should be same day, on demand paratransit service. This should not include paratransit overflow services or micro transit services for the general public. Please provide a sample or samples of the specifications that were used to procure this service.

V. Questions

Providers are expected to raise any questions they have concerning this RFI, including any questions that would prevent it from being able to answer the question of whether the Provider is able to provide this type of service under the specifications set forth herein with a simple Yes or No answer (See section IV.B).

Questions are to be submitted via the "Ask a Question" toggle in Bonfire on or before **XXX date**. MCTS will discuss the questions and answers in an RFI meeting and issue a binding addendum thereafter.

VI. Response Submission

MCTS uses a Bonfire portal for submission. Submissions must be uploaded on Bonfire by **xxxxxx, xx, xxxx**, using the following link: <https://ridemcts.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities>.

Minimum system requirements: Internet Explorer 11, Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, or Mozilla Firefox. Javascript must be enabled. Browser cookies must be enabled. The maximum upload file size is 1,000 MB. You will receive an email confirmation receipt with a unique confirmation number once you finalize your submission. Provider may contact Bonfire at Support@GoBonfire.com for technical questions related to their submission. A help forum may be found at <https://bonfirehub.zendesk.com/hc>.

VII. Disclaimer

This RFI is for informational purposes only and will not result in a binding contract. MCTS shall not be liable for any cost incurred by Provider in preparing and submitting a response.