



Date: July 08, 2021
Current Meeting: July 15, 2021
Board Meeting: July 26, 2021

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation Board of Directors
THROUGH: President/CEO Inez P. Evans
FROM: Director of Strategic Planning Brooke Thomas
SUBJECT: Consideration and Approval of RFP 21-05-405 Purchased Transportation to Perform a Microtransit Pilot

ACTION ITEM A – 2

RECOMMENDATION:

In a manner consistent with IPTC contract award standards, it is requested that the Board authorize the President/CEO to enter into contract negotiations with Via, to acquire Purchased Transportation services for a not to exceed amount of \$1,545,000 for the purpose of performing a “proof of concept” microtransit pilot to inform the comprehensive operational analysis that is currently underway.

BACKGROUND:

IPTC staff continue to explore the benefits and advantages of diversifying how transportation services are delivered throughout the Indianapolis-Marion County. On May 24, 2021 IPTC, released RFP 21-05-405, Microtransit Pilot, requesting proposals from qualified service providers to design and operate a “proof of concept” microtransit service pilot serving an area southeast of Downtown Indianapolis. This opportunity was advertised publicly, posted to our website (www.indygo.net), and an email was sent to all registered vendors.

The overarching goal of this pilot is to identify if and how microtransit could be integrated into IPTC’s suite of mobility services to improve the mobility of Marion County residents, specifically as an alternative to fixed-route bus services in areas with lower demand for mass transit. On June 14, 2021, IPTC rec’d four (4) proposals, one of which was found to be non-responsive, leaving three (3) proposals ruled responsive and responsible by Procurement and sent to the evaluation committee for technical scoring.

IPTC convened an evaluation team comprised of members of the following departments: Procurement, Infrastructure, Strategy, and Innovation and Operations; both Service Planning and Mobility Services. The team reviewed each of the written proposals and based their evaluations on the following categories: Experience and Qualifications of Firm (includes knowledge of and/or experience with ADA rules and regulations); Service Design and Implementation; Bid Offer Cost Form for total cost of proposed service(s); Experience and Qualifications of Professional Staff; and References. On June 23, 2021, through IPTC’s competitive scoring process, Via was selected as providing the best value for this service.

Also, on June 23, 2021, IPTC requested that Via prepare and submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) for the purposes of determining and understanding the lack of economies of scale between options that were initially proposed. The BAFO was also requested as IPTC continues to be good stewards of public funds as a municipal corporation.

DISCUSSION:

A well-known microtransit service provider, Via helps "transit agencies plan, operate, and optimize their transportation networks." They serve as a broker and integrator of vehicle suppliers, fleet managers, background check vendors,

maintenance services, and more. Via “combines the technological innovation of a software developer, the operational expertise of an experienced transportation service provider, and the service design capabilities of a world-class transit planning consultancy.”

Via has proposed a Transportation-as-a-Service (TaaS) solution that comes complete with: a software team, a data science team, dispatchers, IPTC branded mobile app, IPTC branded web booking platform, phone booking and live customer support, custom-branded fleet of vehicles (5-7 Avis Minivans, a minimum of 2 WAVs), independent contracted drivers, supervision and management, analytic tools, regular service reports, on-going marketing, rider growth and service design support. In addition, they offer on-going service monitoring, technical support, product updates, cloud-based servers, vehicle storage, fueling, cleaning and maintenance, and their own insurance.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose to not move forward with a Microtransit Pilot as part of our efforts to understand how we might take incremental steps towards the implementation of the Marion County Transit Plan; however, we would likely be limited in our ability to right-size our shared transportation solutions in the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

If approved this pilot will be funded from the underspending of the Purchased Transportation budget, which is \$1,630,447 underbudget as of June 1, 2021.

DBE/XBE DECLARATION:

If approved, these services would be funded with local dollars. An XBE goal of 27% is automatically applied to all locally funded project. Via has committed to utilizing Herd Strategies, a women-owned and minority-owned “group of dynamic, powerful and influential communicators.” For their part, Herd Strategies will lead Marketing and Community Outreach activities needed for this project.

STANDING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION:

This action will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and Service Committee on July 15, 2021.