

**OFFICE OF FINANCE**  
**Division of Procurement**  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 3100**  
**Rockville, Maryland 20850**

**NOTICE TO OFFERORS**

**The following are questions and responses regarding  
RFI No. 4916.2, Continued Implementation of an Electric School Bus Fleet**

Question 1: Are the mirrors requested supposed to be heated?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 2: How many ICS seats per bench are being requested or how many small children are expected to be carried per bus?

**Answer: 2 ICS per seat or total of 10 ICS seats**

Question 3: Please clarify if the 26-passenger bus is a Type A bus.

**Answer: The 26-passenger bus is a Type C; the Type A is 18 passengers.**

- Central roof mounted CoolTek C7 HVAC system with heating and cooling. BTU will be a minimum of 41,000 BTU. Bus interior is fully vented to optimize HVAC system for fast and efficient cabin temperature control. **Yes**
- Electric service door meeting the auto reversing requirement. **Yes**
- LED strips evenly illuminating the passenger area. **Yes, on the ceiling**
- What location must the 12-volt battery be installed in a Type A bus: **Please see specifications on bus type requested in RFI**
- All-aluminum unibody construction. **Please see bus specifications**
- Safer and more rigid than ladder frame. All high voltage cables, connections and components are protected inside the multi-dimensional truss design. This protects pedestrians and passengers in any event. FMVSS test results showing the aluminum construction meets or exceeds steel can be provided upon request. **Please see bus specifications**
- Please clarify if this applies to the 26-passenger bus hood requirement: **26- passenger has a fiberglass hood**

Question 4: What is the available schedule for site visits?

**Answer: Please refer to addendum #1 that was issued on January 3, 2024 that indicates site visits date ranges. Those dates will be requested by the interested party and confirmed through with the Acting Director of DOT.**

Question 5: What are the route lengths and dwell times?

**Answer: MCPS has 4 tier bell times, however buses must be ready for use on an emergency need basis. The first bell time is 7:45 am and the last bell time 3:50 pm**

Question 6: How many buses will be purchased at each location and what is the schedule for each year?

**Answer: Forecasting and Procurement of buses will be determined at a later date.**

Question 7: What is the expected timeline for a RFP and the response deadline?

**Answer: An issuance of an RFP has yet to be determined at this time. MCPS leadership staff will work collaboratively with the Division of Procurement and Department of Transportation to determine if and when an RFP will be issued based on the feedback received from the RFI.**

Question 8: When will the first buses from the RFP be put into service?

**Answer: When buses are ordered, there is an expectation that the buses will be available and placed into service for the upcoming school year by July 1st (representing the first day of the new fiscal year).**

Question 9: Are seat plans available for the lift bus?

**Answer: MCPS has traditionally ordered lift buses with the lift and the door in the rear of the buses, however, we are open to reviewing other specifications.**

Question 10: Could you please consider granting an extension beyond the January 17th deadline for our RFI response? The COMAR review, specifically for an exemption request related to our bus, is underway and anticipated to conclude January 20th. The outcome of this review significantly influences the data we can include in our RFI response. Granting an extension would enable us to provide a more comprehensive and meaningful response for MCPS's RFI review, facilitating a more informed evaluation for future consideration.

**Answer: This RFI close date has been extended two weeks, to January 31, 2024.**

Question 11: Will Montgomery County consider information related to a 71-passenger capacity, 40 ft all-electric school bus?

**Answer: MCPS is open to reviewing submissions.**

Question 12: Regarding the integration of 30 vehicles in 2024, could MCPS specify the distribution of these vehicles among the 5 bus depots and anticipated # ordered per configuration type outlined in the RFI?

**Answer: Bus allocations to depots changes on a continual basis.**

Question 13: Is a site visit required to submit a response to the RFI?

**Answer: This is to the discretion of the vendor.**

Question 14: Will MCPS answer questions following the questions deadline that are related to the site visit?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 15: Can Montgomery County confirm that you would like a mailed physical copy and electronic copy via USB drive?

**Answer: Confirmed as stated above.**

Question 16: Can MCPS disclose where the submitted response's contents can be accessed to understand what the vendor may designate as confidential in our redacted copy?

**Answer: The submitted responses with reside with the Division of Procurement and the review committee. Any information that you would deem proprietary or confidential should be marked as such.**

Question 17: Our annual fiscal report, spanning 253 pages, is publicly accessible on our website. Would MCPS accept a link to the digital copy within our response to minimize paper usage?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 18: Could MCPS provide clarification on the evidence of legal status for a vendor that you are seeking?

**Answer: The evidence of legal status for a vendor is to provide a W-9 with the submission, and the entities legal name can be identified in the Maryland Business Entity Search engine <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch> as an active business in "Good Standing.**

Question 20: Can MCPS offer additional insights into the current capacity for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) and outline any modifications required for introducing new EVSE to support 30 additional buses across your 5 bus depot locations?

**Answer: Specific inquiries/questions related to this information are needed for a more detailed response.**

Question 21: How granular does MCPS want cost estimates for school buses, charging infrastructure, and installation in the RFI response?

**Answer: MCPS would need a cost breakdown showing an all-inclusive cost to lease each bus, which would include a line by line itemization for charging infrastructure, installation, electricity, and other related costs.**

Question 22: For each item below, please indicate if MCPS or the vendor will be responsible for this task:

- o Ownership
  - § Bus
  - § Charger
  - § Associated infrastructure
- o Operations
  - § Hiring and scheduling drivers
  - § Routing buses
  - § Customer support (incoming phone calls, bus no shows, etc.)
- o Maintenance
  - § Buses
  - § Charger
  - § Associated infrastructure

- Answer:**
- o **Ownership - Contractor**
    - § **Bus - Contractor**
    - § **Charger - Contractor**
    - § **Associated infrastructure - Contractor**
  - o **Operations**
    - § **Hiring and scheduling drivers - MCPS**
    - § **Routing buses - MCPS**
    - § **Customer support (incoming phone calls, bus no shows) - MCPS**
  - o **Maintenance**
    - § **Buses - Repairs/maintenance costs for costs paid by MCPS/ reimbursed by Contractor**
    - § **Charger - Contractor**
    - § **Associated infrastructure - Contractor**

Question 23: Could MCPS elaborate on the software requirements for charge management and fleet management?

**Answer: The software requirements currently on our EV chargers provide data displaying the current state of charge of a bus, when the charge was initiated, any disruptions to the charging, and buses that are currently using a charging station. All of this information is transmitted through a web-based dashboard for staff to view at any time. Telemetry is also available on each bus to display specific information related to the bus (i.e. mileage, location, bus speed, state of charge, current mileage range based on state of charge, etc.)**

Question 24: The replying entity is a private company held by a publicly traded international firm. In place of the annual fiscal report, could we provide the financial statements of the parent company and a signed statement from the USA CFO confirming general financial status?

**Answer: In the case of an RFI the signed statement from the USA CFO will suffice. If an RFP is issued as a result of this RFI, the requirement may change.**

Question 25: Could MCPS provide a dataset, including:

- o Daily travel patterns of the 30 buses included in the scope
- o Depot(s) where the buses are located
- o Class of bus (a/c/d)
- o Longest trip traveled in the past calendar year

**Answer:**

- **Route assignments for future EV's have not been assigned at this time.**
- **Current bus types active in routing are all Type C's**
- **Depot assignments change on a continual basis**

Question 26: Could MCPS confirm the following:

- o Is there enough power provided to the site by the utility at each of the 5 depots for the installation of EVSE to charge each bus?

**Answer: Information not available by MCPS. This data would need to be provided from the power companies.**

- o Do the power boxes/switchgear at each depot have sufficient capacity to add bus chargers, or will they need to be upgraded?

**Answer: Information not available by MCPS. This data would need to be provided from the power companies. Transformers may need to be added based on review from power companies.**

Question 27: Could MCPS provide a breakdown of their energy tariff structure and consumption at the 5 sites?

**Answer: MCPS does not currently pay the electric bill related to energy consumption for EV buses. This information would have to come from the contractor obligated in paying the electric bill.**

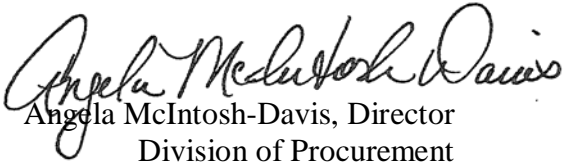
Question 28: What challenges has MCPS faced with their current fleet of electric buses? What are the impacts of these challenges on operations and financial result?

**Answer: MCPS has faced mechanical, electrical and delivery issues with EV buses since transitioning over from diesel to electric vehicles. Below are some of the issues outlined over the past two years:**

- **Charging station malfunctions and capacity**
- **Mechanical breakdowns**
- **Length of time EV buses are out of service**
- **Power supply challenges**
- **Supply Chain**

Question 29: How have you worked through challenges with your current e-bus provider? Have there been any penalties, fines, late fees, etc. levied against the provider for missed service?

**Answer: We have worked through the challenges above with our current e-bus contractor. Daily communication has ensued between MCPS and the current e-bus contractor including daily updates on status of delivery of vehicles, charging issues, training, and buses out of service. These areas have been the main focal points in daily communication.**

  
Angela McIntosh-Davis, Director  
Division of Procurement

AMD

Please indicate your receipt of this notice my signing below and returning with your proposal or under a separate cover.

Accepted By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name & Title)

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_