



Redwood Coast Transit Authority  
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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for  
Transit Development Plan/Short Range Transit Plan for  
Redwood Coast Transit Authority

Prepared for: Redwood Coast Transit Authority

Prepared by: Joseph Rye, General Manager  
1275 4<sup>th</sup> Street #733  
Santa Rosa, California 95404

April 22, 2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Joseph Rye'.

Joseph Rye  
General Manager  
Redwood Coast Transit Authority

## 1. BACKGROUND

**THE REGION:** The region served by the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission transportation planning activities exists totally within the boundaries of Del Norte County. Del Norte County is California's northernmost coastal county, with a land area of approximately 1,070 square miles. The County is bounded by Curry County, Oregon, to the north, mountainous Siskiyou County to the east, Humboldt County to the south, and by the Pacific Ocean to the west. Crescent City, the county seat, is located roughly halfway between Portland, Oregon (330 miles north) and San Francisco, California, (350 miles south). Regionally, Crescent City is located approximately 85 miles north of Eureka, Humboldt County, about 26 miles south of Brookings, Oregon and 83 miles west of Grants Pass, Oregon and Interstate 5.

The principal north-south route through Del Norte County is US Highway 101 (or Highway 101), which provides access to coastal towns and cities to the north and south. Crescent City is located on US Highway 101. Del Norte County has two main routes providing access to inland communities: State Route, or SR 197/US Highway 199 to Hiouchi and Gasquet, and Route 169 to Klamath Glen. SR 197/US Highway 199 connects US Highway 101 to the Interstate 5 in Oregon.

The county's diverse geography includes inland mountain ranges of coniferous forests, low coastal mountain ranges with temperate forests and the Redwood State and National Parks, and rugged coastlines with gray sand beaches on the Pacific coast. The climate of Del Norte County is consistently mild along the coast, becoming more variable inland. In Crescent City and along the coastal fringe, there is minimal temperature fluctuation. Coastal daytime temperatures average 45-55 degrees during winter months. Temperatures increase to 55-65 degrees during mid summer and early fall months, with higher temperatures when coastal fog disperses. Inland, temperatures differences are more marked. Del Norte County/Crescent City area's annual rainfall generally ranges between 70 - 80 inches, with the heaviest rainfall occurring from November through March. Weather plays a factor in transit operations in winter.

**POPULATION:** The California Department of Finance estimated the Del Norte County population at 27,124 as of 2017. This includes a population of 20,735 within the unincorporated area of the County and 6,389 within the City of Crescent City. This shows a significant population migration from within the City into the unincorporated areas in recent years. This issue should be evaluated further in the SRTP/TDP.

**ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT:** Redwood Coast Transit Authority (RCTA) is governed by a five-member Board of Directors, comprised of two members of the County Board of Supervisors and two City of Crescent City Councilmembers, plus one at large appointed position. The RCTA is managed by a part-time contract with two veteran transit staff persons (Joe Rye and Dan Herron) and all operations and maintenance are contracted out (First Transit is the current contractor, and has held the contract for many years). The Del Norte Local Transportation Commission (DNLTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for the Del Norte County region

and the funding agency providing funding for this SRTP/TDP Update. Since 2016 Herron Consultants & TMTP Consulting (Dan Herron and Joe Rye) have partnered to manage RCTA under a contract with the Board of Directors. The SRTP was last updated in 2013.

The Herron/TMTP General Manager contract is a part-time position, and neither party resides in Crescent City. This remote, part-time managerial model is fiscally effective but features challenges implementing projects and managing daily operations. First Transit is the operations and maintenance contractor for Redwood Coast Transit Authority and provides almost all the system's personnel and features a full-time local General Manager (Chuck Clarkson) who is a key manager on-site in Crescent City.

### **HISTORY OF REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND TRANSIT**

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** Redwood Coast Transit Authority (RCTA) was formed in June 2004 to provide public transit services in Del Norte County. The City of Crescent City and the County of Del Norte each appoint two members of their governing boards to the RCTA Board of Directors. These members appoint one additional at-large member. The Board of Directors makes all policy decisions regarding the transit system. RCTA has hired a private contractor, First Transit, Inc., to manage and conduct day-to-day operations and maintenance.

Redwood Coast Transit Authority services are detailed on the RCTA website at [www.redwoodcoasttransit.org](http://www.redwoodcoasttransit.org). These services include Crescent City area fixed routes and Dial-A-Ride, and regional flex route service which includes an interregional bus route between Smith River and Arcata that connects Del Norte County with Curry County, Oregon (at Smith River) and with Humboldt County (Arcata). The route network is relatively young, but has evolved in recent years. RCTA redesigned its "Crescent City Local" routes in 2007, and modified them again slightly in 2017. In July 2009, a new Route 199 was implemented to provide service between Crescent City and the unincorporated communities of Gasquet and Hiouchi to the east. In February 2011, Night Service was added to Route 20 between Arcata and Crescent City which eventually morphed into RCTA's Greyhound Interline partnership. In recent years, on-time performance problems led to retiming and minor alignment changes to Crescent City Local routes in 2017. Route 10 was eliminated and Route 20 modified to cover some former Route 10 territory in 2017 in response to sudden FTA Section 5311(f) funding reductions. Route 20 has enjoyed FTA 5311(f) funding for many years, but this fund source has deteriorated in the last year or two resulting in lost funding to RCTA and many other 5311(f) recipients statewide. A set of surgical service cuts were enacted in July, 2017, to reduce RCTA's budget and avoid digging into reserves. A half hour of service was cut on the Crescent City Locals in the early AM and late PM, and Route 10 was discontinued to lessen duplication with existing Route 20 trips.

The Transit Development Plan in Del Norte County was last updated in 2013. The 2013 RCTA SRTP/TDP plan presented an overview and an operations analysis of the transit system, goals and objectives, a service plan, a capital plan, a financial plan, an evaluation of the RCTA remote part-time management model, and an implementation

plan. The unique look at the managerial model (using remote part-time transit professional under contract) was among the study highlights. The 2013 plan is available online at <http://www.redwoodcoasttransit.org>. The full scale plan is updated every five-years and this 2018 SRTP/TDP will provide vital guidance as RCTA continues to grow and evolve and adapt to constantly changing funding dynamics.

The DNLTC programs all TDA funding to RCTA for transit operations, thus the annual Unmet Transit Needs Process is conducted for information purposes and findings forwarded to RCTA. This makes evaluation of existing gaps in service an important part of this SRTP/TDP. RCTA features a very modest administrative budget, as well as almost non-existent marketing budget. The SRTP should take a look at comparable rural transit agencies to see how RCTA lean administrative model compares.

## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Redwood Coast Transit Authority is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals and consultants to prepare a Short-Range Transit Development Plan: 2018/2023. The Short-Range Transit Plan/Transit Development Plan will create the framework and direct this agency to better meet the transportation needs of the diverse population in Del Norte County, under both increasing and decreasing revenue source scenarios.

**PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** The overall goal of this project is to develop a current, in-depth SRTP/TDP that will guide RCTA's actions in order to plan for needed future growth while maintaining financial stability.

Redwood Coast Transit Authority expects the plan to lean heavily upon fresh market research data obtained in the last few months through on-board surveys and stakeholder focus groups/interviews. Some public outreach will still be required but it will be modest. Most of this SRTP/TDP consultant hours can be expended on the tasks of updating the service plan, capital plan, assess the ability of the existing system to meet those needs, and to create the framework and direction for RCTA to better meet those needs in the future. RCTA has been approached with the possibility of receiving the designation of CTSA (Consolidated Transportation Services Agency) and the ability to claim a small increase in TDA (Transportation Development Act) funding and the study should acknowledge this opportunity and develop appropriate "CTSA" projects.

The plan should also consider opportunities to coordinate with, and impacts of recent ridership shifts from RCTA to YTTS as the Yurok Tribe has grown its own tribal transit program, called Yurok Tribal Transit System (YTTS). The plan should also take advantage of DNLTC and RCTA market research efforts conducted in 2018 to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the current RCTA system, and evaluate potential transit needs that are either not being met, or not being adequately met with the current services. This includes evaluating options to expand recreational and tourism trip taking to such destinations as Redwood National and State Parks, Prairie Creek State Park, and several parks and beaches along Route 20 and Route 199 to promote use of intercity services and tourism.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** It is the policy and intent of the Redwood Coast Transit Authority to provide consistent and ample opportunities for public participation for all citizens of Del Norte County during the course of this project. That said, the separate and recently completed Market Research Study has illuminated a great deal of fresh rider and community input and this data should be a foundation for the planning work to be undertaken in this TDP/SRTP.

Community forums will be conducted at the ideal times during the development of the plan. These forums should be easily accessible to transit riders throughout the County to ensure significant public and stakeholder involvement. A direct effort will be made to involve the four nationally-recognized Indian Tribes in Del Norte County and to encourage Native American attendance and involvement. Efforts will be made to include the Hispanic and Hmong communities, low income residents, senior citizens, College of the Redwoods and Humboldt State University students, Del Norte High School students and administration, people with disabilities and other transit dependent groups.

**Fluctuations in Funding:** RCTA operates in an area with stable population, thus its allocations of TDA funding have been fairly stable over time. Little population growth has occurred or is expected. Funding increased beginning in FY 2018/19 as increased transit operating and capital funds derived from SB-1 began to flow. This is fortunate, and helps offset recent funding losses on the federal side. The Financial Plan should include at least two fund projections, perhaps three, as SB-1 is facing potential recall efforts which would have a significant negative impact on RCTA if successful.

**Transit Data Technology:** RCTA operated without computer software support until 2017, when it began implementation of CRS paratransit software with mobile data tablets in each Dial-a-Ride vehicle. Contractor staff is becoming fluent in CRS and should be able to provide fresh system reports going back as far as 2017. Historic data will have to be obtained from staff reports and other existing documents. On the fixed route side, RCTA began implementing Geo-Tabs software as an AVL (automatic vehicle location) system to track some basic fixed route performance. Geo-Tabs is not yet fully functional on all buses, and it is expected that the quality of fixed route data will improve over the course of this SRTP/TDP effort. Historic data will be obtained from reports.

Greyhound Interline Project: RCTA has been a Greyhound Interline Partner for several years. This allows RCTA's Route 20, between Arcata and Crescent City, to be ticketed through Greyhound and vice versa, when RCTA can and does sell Greyhound tickets for travel far beyond Arcata. Monthly reconciliation occurs between RCTA and Greyhound, and RCTA gets a modest fee for selling of Greyhound tickets. However, RCTA is not setup ideally for being a Greyhound Interline, as it lacks a physical presence at the Cultural Center (making ticketing tricky) and the only northbound Greyhound bus that "interlines" northbound into RCTA occurs very late at night in Arcata and produces very little ridership. RCTA may re-allocate the late night Arcata trip to a mid-day trip that projects to carry far more ridership. This may occur in 2018.

### 3. SUBMITTAL PROCEDURES

Eight paper copies plus one electronic copy of your proposal should be sent to Joseph Rye, General Manager, Redwood Coast Transit Authority, 1275 4<sup>th</sup> Street #733, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. The electronic copy must be unlocked to facilitate inclusion in agenda packets and emailed by proposal deadline to [tmtpc consulting@gmail.com](mailto:tmtpc consulting@gmail.com). Proposals shall be received (postal and electronically via email) no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2018. Proposals received later than that time will not be considered. Proposals must not exceed 30 pages, brevity is requested.

### 4. PROPOSAL CONTENT

Your proposal shall be evaluated using the four criteria sections described below:

**EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS:** In order to provide RCTA with the best possible expertise, proposals may be submitted by an individual, a consulting firm, or by a team of two or more individuals or firms. If the proposal is made by a team, one member must be designated as the lead member. The contract will be written with that member, who will be the responsible party. Others should subcontract with the lead member. RCTA seeks innovative transit service planners with expertise in both fixed-route and paratransit, and who have experience in rural transit environs. RCTA is only beginning to implement technology, and much operational data still has to be “mined” via sampling and driver daily paperwork research.

Your proposal should contain a detailed resume for each individual who would actually be performing work on this project. The experience of the firm in conducting five-year transit plans is very important, but only to the extent that persons involved in past work will be involved in this project. RCTA is managed by veteran service planners, making firms’ approach and hours dedicated to the project as important as actual experience.

**SCOPE OF WORK:** Section 6 defines the ultimate product of this project, the Short-Range Transit Plan/Transit Development Plan. Your proposal must define, in detail, your method for arriving at that final product, its format, schedule, and the level of detail that will be provided. Your scope of work shall be divided into individual tasks, with descriptions of what will be accomplished, and by whom. Include technical methodology that would be used, and public participation opportunities throughout the County ensuring that adequate input is gathered from the underrepresented. Describe how you will fully integrate findings from the recent market research into the project at all levels.

**SCHEDULE:** Your proposal should define a schedule for each task, including target dates for public workshops/hearings and review by the RCTA Board of Directors. It is our plan to have an approved Short-Range Transit Development Plan by March 31, 2019 to allow for implementation as soon as mid-2019.

**COSTS:** The contractor will be responsible for providing all staff work, printing, postage, telephone, staffing of events/hearings, and making presentations to the RCTA Board. RCTA staff will oversee this project, provide comments on draft material and will provide and clarify existing data. Calculation of costs shall be shown by task including personnel hours or days and cost per hour or per day. The number of hours assigned to each person on the consulting team (and billing rates) must be included in the proposals. Show labor hours and rate, materials, services, overhead and profit separately. The maximum budget for the contractor's responsibilities listed above is \$52,500. Your proposal cost is one of the selection criteria.

## **5. SELECTION**

Proposals will be reviewed by RCTA and DNLTC staff and Transportation Advisory Committee members, and will be ranked according to the following criteria:

- 40% Experience/Qualifications of Proposer(s)
- 40% Understanding of Project, including integration of Market Research data, Approach, Methodology, Innovative Analysis, quality and clarity of the detailed Scope of Work.
- 10% Cost.
- 10% Schedule

RCTA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any irregularities in proposals, and to negotiate scope and price with one or more proposers. RCTA will notify the successful proposer by May 18, 2018, or as soon as possible thereafter. Unsuccessful proposers will be notified as soon as practical after selection.

## **6. REPORT CONTENT**

The final product for this project is a Short-Range Transit Plan/Transit Development Plan 2018/2023. At a minimum, the Plan shall include the following elements:

- A. Transit Needs Element: Based on the fresh findings of the 2018 RCTA Market Research Study (two parts, on-board survey and community stakeholder interviews and focus groups) evaluate unmet transit needs (including review of recent annual DNLTC Unmet Transit Needs) and make recommendations to identify service gaps, and determine RCTA's ability to meet those needs with the challenges of unstable revenue, low-density rural areas, etc. Consider the option for RCTA to become Del Norte County's CTSA, and what would be the most appropriate projects to expend the additional CTSA funding.
- B. Policy Direction Element: Based on the TDP/SRTP findings, construct a series of simple service goals, objectives and performance standards. These performance standards will be used to guide the agency through 2023 and will support good transit management. Consider findings and recommendations from recent TDA Triennial Performance Audits and market research findings. This policy

discussion should include an evaluation of what is the optimal amount of TDA Reserves that RCTA should build towards to buffer future funding shortfalls and/or rising operational costs, such as fuel. RCTA has a modest reserve currently and the topic of how much is needed in reserve is of interest.

- C. Action Element (services, major planning projects etc.): Based on the above tasks a list of service refinements, eliminations and/or additions through 2023 will be indentified. Any future planning projects that will assist RCTA in providing affordable, reliable, and efficient transit service that effectively meet the local mobility needs should be identified.
- D. Capital Element: The Plan will focus on passenger facilities needs and on vehicle replacement needs, including emergent powertrain technologies such as electric buses, hybrid buses and requisite infrastructure investments for each alternative fuel. The development of the RCTA Maintenance & Operations Facility on Williams Drive should be considered as another high priority project. RCTA's limited options for funding capital projects should be identified and projected.
- E. Financial: A financial plan that reflects RCTA's new reality will be drafted.
- F. Marketing Plan Element: The Marketing Plan section should refer heavily to fresh input obtained from the riding and non-riding public in the recently completed 2018 RCTA Market Research Study. The updated Plan should consider and prioritize overall public transportation marketing needs within the context of minimal professional staffing and offer ideas on how to bridge the gap between what is ideal, and what is possible, considering the lack of staff.
- G. Management Model: in a brief re-do of the 2013 SRTP, consultant should take a brief look at how RCTA's managerial model is working, how its ultra-lean staffing level compares to peer rural transit agencies of similar size/scope, and offer recommendations for better aligning the organization for success.

Alternative proposals will be considered based on industry best practice and the unique challenges of providing rural transit services in a remote, economically challenged area. However, rationale for various approaches must be described in detail.

## **7. PLAN REVIEW**

The project work will be guided and technically reviewed by the RCTA General Manager and First Transit contractor staff. Project will include at least one, likely 2 periodic updates to the RCTA Board of Directors. Consultant should plan for progressive deliverables that ultimately morph into the final deliverable product SRTP/TDP.

Due to funding programming, the first deliverable and invoice will require work in the month of June, 2018 in order to generate a draft deliverable and first invoice dated June 30, 2018. This will facilitate expenditure of some funding in FY 2017/18 to match funding. After this, the project pace will slow. It is imperative that proposer is capable of mobilization to accomplish the project's June 30, 2018 invoice goal. Electronic copies of technical memorandums and draft SRTP/TDP will be accepted, although eight copies of the Draft Final SRTP/TDP and Final SRTP/TDP will be required for Board Review and are to be budgeted for accordingly.

## 8. PROPOSED PROJECT SCHEDULE – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| A. | April 22, 2018                                | RFP issued  |
| B. | May 3, 2018                                   | Last day for submission of questions  |
| C. | May 4, 2018                                   | Issuance of addenda, if any   |
| D. | May 10, 2018                                  | Proposal submittal due date and time<br>5:00 p.m. California time – e-mail submittals<br>required by due date and time, electronic submittals accepted but not in lieu of hard copy |
| E. | May 16-17, 2018                               | Proposer phone interviews, if required  |
| F. | May 23, 2018                                  | RCTA Board of Directors awards contract   |
| G. | May 30, 2018                                  | Commence service/Contract Begins  |
| H. | June 30, 2018<br>deliverable and invoice) due | Tech Memo #1 – Existing Conditions (first   |
| I. | December 1, 2018                              | Draft Final SRTP/TDP Due  |
| J. | Jan/Feb 2019                                  | Present Draft Final SRTP/TDP to RCTA Board  |
| K. | March 1, 2019                                 | Final SRTP due  |