

<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> July 8, 2021	<b>REQUEST FOR INFORMATION NUMBER:</b> 2000003348	<b>TITLE:</b> School Bus Fleet Conversion to Electric
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b> Facilities and Transportation	<b>DUE DATE/TIME:</b> July 30, 2021	<b>CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR:</b> Patti Carlin 571-423-3590 or <a href="mailto:pacarlin@fcps.edu">pacarlin@fcps.edu</a>

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Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is interested in gathering information about the transition from the current fleet of school buses to a fully electric school bus fleet by the year 2035.

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This RFI is not a procurement venue. No contract award or pre-qualifications will be made based on the responses to this RFI. After written responses to this RFI are received, FCPS may invite offerors to demonstrate proposed solutions to provide a further understanding of and exploration of the product capabilities. Based upon the results of this request, FCPS will either issue a solicitation or explore other alternatives.

Sealed responses to this Request for Information shall be submitted through Bonfire at <http://fcps.bonfirehub.com>

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# REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

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## 1. **SCOPE OF REQUESTED INFORMATION:**

- 1.1. The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to identify suitable solutions and their costs that will facilitate the conversion of the current fleet of school buses to electric and installation of relevant facilities by 2035 for Fairfax County Public Schools department of Facilities and Transportation.

## 2. **BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1. Fairfax County is part of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is 407 square miles in size with a population of over 1.1 million residents.
- 2.2. FCPS is the largest school district in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the 10th largest school district in the nation. During the current SY 2019-20, more than 187,000 students enrolled at the 198 FCPS schools.
- 2.3. FCPS has an active fleet of 1,148 full size (78 passenger) buses and 477 small school buses which transport approximately 120,000 students every day. FCPS currently replaces approximately 100 buses per year. In an effort to replace school buses in a timely manner, FCPS currently finances buses over 5 years.
- 2.4. The average bus trip is approximately 35 miles. More information regarding the mileage per trip of buses can be found in Attachment B.
- 2.5. Currently, FCPS has 130 parking locations for buses, ranging from 1 to 200 buses per location. Fifteen of these locations are on Fairfax County property and the remainder on the FCPS property.

## 3. **REQUESTED INFORMATION:**

### 3.1. Infrastructure

- 3.1.1. Necessary infrastructure that can align with the below conversion plan.
- 3.1.2. Vehicle to Grid charging must function with Dominion Power and/or Northern Virginia Energy Cooperative.
- 3.1.3. Process for managing standby power.
- 3.1.4. Plan for managed charging system.
- 3.1.5. Number of charging stations needed per year for approximately 150 new electric school buses each year.
- 3.1.6. Limitations on the number of buses using vehicle to grid charging.
- 3.1.7. Availability of data on vehicle charging through a single software program.
- 3.1.8. Financing plan for a budget neutral solution.

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## 3.2. School Bus Information

- 3.2.1. School Buses must meet the requirements of the Virginia Public School Bus Specifications.  
([http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/transportation/school\\_buses/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/transportation/school_buses/index.shtml))
- 3.2.2. General school bus specifications.
- 3.2.3. Miles per charge.
- 3.2.4. Type of charge (vehicle to grid, level 2 charging, level 3 charging). Vehicle to Grid Charging must function with Dominion Power and/or Northern Virginia Energy Cooperative.
- 3.2.5. Auxiliary heating units that comply with Virginia Public School Bus Specifications.

## 3.3. Battery

- 3.3.1. Option of battery ownership of batteries.
- 3.3.2. Process and cost to FCPS of the disposal of batteries.
- 3.3.3. Battery replacement cost and process.
- 3.3.4. Battery life cycle, including interval of replacement in terms of mileage, the cost of new batteries, and rate of deterioration of batteries.
- 3.3.5. Miles per charge with passengers and climate controls.

## 3.4. Conversion Plan

- 3.4.1. FCPS does not have a current conversion plan and would be amicable to seeing multiple proposals from individual vendors.
- 3.4.2. Conversion does not mean retrofitting the current bus fleet.
- 3.4.3. Conversion Plans should include:
  - 3.4.3.1. Total cost per year of the new buses.
  - 3.4.3.2. Number of buses per year.
  - 3.4.3.3. Process for incorporating new bus models.
  - 3.4.3.4. Buses to be owned, leased, lease to own, etc.
  - 3.4.3.5. Training program, both mechanic and driver.
- 3.4.4. Attached B is a list of the current buses. School buses are generally replaced based on bus age of 15 years but also depending on operational needs. However, 357 of the existing buses are at or above 15 years.

## 3.5. Maintenance

- 3.5.1. Plan for on the ground technical assistance for emergency maintenance.
- 3.5.2. Current local technical assistance available.

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3.5.3. Estimated annual (non-battery) maintenance costs.

3.5.4. Estimated life cycle of bus. Number of years until a bus needs to be fully replaced.

## 4. **TRADE SECRETS/PROPRIETARY INFORMATION:**

- 4.1. Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by an offeror in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; however, offerors must invoke the protections of this section prior to or upon submission of the data or other materials. (Reference Attachment A)
- 4.2. The offeror must identify the data or other materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary.

## 5. **CONTACT FOR CONTRACTUAL MATTERS:**

- 5.1. All communications and requests for information and clarifications shall be directed to the following procurement official:

Patti Carlin, Buyer Supervisor  
Fairfax County Public Schools  
Office of Procurement Services  
8115 Gatehouse Road, Suite 4400  
Falls Church, Virginia 22042-1203  
Telephone: 571-423-3590  
Email: [pacarlin@fcps.edu](mailto:pacarlin@fcps.edu)

## 6. **INSTRUCTION:**

- 6.1. Submit a written document which communicates interest in and capacity to address some, or all, of the needs identified in Paragraph 3 entitled "Requested Information". The vendor community is encouraged to recommend alternative approaches in responding to this RFI for FCPS' consideration. The document should be contained in a file, arranged in the same order and identified with headings as presented herein.
- 6.2. Vendors may submit any or all of the information requested in this section with their responses. Information contents shall be arranged in the same order and identified with headings as presented herein. Do not submit excessive marketing material not covered by RFI.
- 6.3. Vendor Information
- 6.4. Name of firm submitting information; main office address; when organized; if a corporation, when and where incorporated; appropriate Federal, State, and County registration numbers; and annual report or financial statement.
- 6.5. Name and contact information of the contact person from the firm or corporation submitting the requested information.

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### 7. **SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION TO RFI:**

- 7.1. Information to RFI must be received electronically through FCPS' online Procurement portal at: <http://fcps.bonfirehub.com>, on or before the Submittal Deadline. Submissions will only be accepted through the portal. FCPS will not accept information submitted by paper, telephone, facsimile ("Fax) transmission, or electronic mail (i.e., e-mail) in response to this RFI. Information submissions and registration are free of charge. Offerors can register for a free account at : <http://fcps.bonfirehub.com>, which will be required when preparing a submission. Documents may be uploaded at any time during the open period. The official time used for receipt of proposals/modifications is the time stamp within the Bonfire portal. No other clocks, calendars or timepieces are recognized. For technical question related to a submission, contact Bonfire at [Support@GoBonfire.com](mailto:Support@GoBonfire.com).
- 7.2. If, at the time of the scheduled RFI closing FCPS is closed due to inclement weather or another unforeseeable event, the proposal closing will still proceed electronically through the Bonfire System.
- 7.3. Technical Information: Uploading large documents may take time, depending on the size of the file(s) and your Internet connection speed. You will receive an email confirmation receipt with a unique confirmation number once the submission is finalized. Minimum system requirements for the Bonfire portal- Internet Explorer 11, Microsoft Edge, Good Chrome, or Mozilla Firefox. Javascript must be enabled. Browser cookies must be enabled.
- 7.4. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures of other presentations beyond that sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal is not desired.
- 7.5. It is the Offeror's responsibility to clearly identify and to describe the services being offered in response to the Request for Information. Offerors are cautioned that organization of their information response, as well as thoroughness is critical to the County's review. The Information requested must be completed legibly and in their entirety; and all required supplemental information must be furnished and presented in an organized, comprehensive and easy to follow manner.

### 8. **VIRGINIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

- 8.1. This RFI will be open to inspection by any citizen, or interested person, firm or corporation, in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by a firm prior to or as part of its proposal will not be subject to public disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act only under the following circumstances: (1) the appropriate information is clearly identified by some distinct method such as highlighting or underlining; (2) only the specific words, figures, or paragraphs that constitute trade secrets or proprietary information are identified; and (3) a completed summary page is supplied (Attachment A) that includes (a) the information to be protected, (b) the section(s)/page number(s) where this information is found in the information response, and (c) a statement why protection is necessary for each section listed. The firm must also provide a separate electronic copy of the proposal (USB) with the trade secrets and/or proprietary information redacted. If all of these requirements are not met, then the firm's entire response will be available for public inspection.