

July 26, 2013

To: Executive Board

Subject: **Contract Award – Data Center and Phone Replacement**

Recommendation

Authorize the Executive Director to:

1. Negotiate final contract terms and conditions and execute a contract in the amount of \$615,469.71 with Trace3 for new network equipment and software to replace the HP Data Center network at the Foothill Transit administrative office; and
2. Negotiate final contract terms and conditions and execute a contract in the amount of \$147,545.93 with Trace3 to replace the telephone system at the Foothill Transit administrative office and Transit Stores.

Analysis:

Data Center Replacement

The current data center at the Foothill Transit administrative offices is over six years old and starting to fail, with approximately five hard disk drives failing each month. This results in slow connections to server resources and storage. The cost of maintenance has doubled due to the fact that the existing equipment has reached the end of its useful life. The current data center also lacks redundancy, so that if a host does fail, access to services will be disrupted until the host can be replaced and reconfigured. The recommended new Cisco Unified Communication (UC) server and NetApp Storage will update the aging HP servers with more efficient and higher capacity technologies.

The Foothill Transit data center is a specialized enclosure designed to hold up to 16 server motherboards. Each motherboard is capable of hosting up to 40 virtual servers. The enclosure can hold up to 16 server blades that may work independently or in a group. The second component of the data center is the storage area network (SAN). The SAN is comprised of many hard disk drives connected together in an array to provide short and long term storage for users and servers. The enclosure provides the network connections to users through multiple one-gigabyte (Gb) Ethernet ports.

The proposed data center replacement will have fewer hosts but will be capable of supporting more servers and will provide 10 Gb network access or 10 times more speed to provide faster access to files and improve server performance. The new system will have more internal memory to improve server performance and newer storage technologies, providing redundancy that is unavailable with the current configuration. Automated central management will allow updates to the system and servers with minimal to no downtime for less communications interruption. With fewer hosts, the Cisco UC system will consume less energy overall. The newer storage system uses newer technologies such as clustering to minimize the downtime for maintenance by

allowing storage areas to move to different hosts without shutting down the system, thus offering Foothill Transit 99.9 percent uptime.

The proposed data center is made up of a Cisco UC server core along with NetApp storage that would be purchased utilizing two separate Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) contracts. WSCA allows states to “achieve cost-effective and efficient acquisition of quality products and services through multi-state contracting” and is allowed under Subchapter M – Intergovernmental and Joint Procurement Agreements, in Foothill Transit’s Procurement Policies and Procedure Manual.

The Cisco UC system and NetApps Storage will be purchased through Trace3, who is the vendor that installed the original data center. The cost for the Cisco UCS system is \$214,016.71. The cost for the NetApp Storage system is \$401,453.00. As required by Foothill Transit’s Procurement Procedures, a Price Analysis was performed and the WSCA pricing was found to be comparable to similar systems recently implemented at Oaktree Capital. In fact, of the three WSCA vendors contacted, Trace3 had the lowest quoted price on the equipment and software to be purchased.

Since Cisco and NetApp do not sell directly to end users, the Cisco and NetApp equipment must be procured through a WSCA Cisco-authorized vendor – in this case Trace3.

Phone System Replacement

The Mitel phone system currently used at the Foothill Transit administrative building and in the Transit Stores has been in place since the West Covina Administrative offices first opened in 2007. Over the past year, system failures have been prevalent due to internal component failures that cannot be repaired or replaced because some parts for the system are no longer available. Numerous attempts to repair the system by upgrading components have not satisfactorily eliminated the system errors and repeated dropped calls. In addition to hampering day to day telephone communication with the administrative office, this is currently impacting the effectiveness of the 1-800 RIDE-INFO line that customers utilize to obtain schedule and routing information.

The poor performance of the system over the past year is a result of the obsolescence of several critical components. Despite replacing components of the El Monte Transit Store controller in an effort to correct the problems, errors such as dropped calls and phones rebooting persist.

An opportunity exists for Foothill Transit to replace the phone system with Cisco telephones by taking advantage of a Data Center replacement with the Cisco Unified Communication (UC) Server system and integrating it with Foothill Transit’s current Cisco Telepresence server. The recommended Cisco telephone server is designed to integrate completely with the Cisco UC system for a central point of management.

Foothill Transit's existing Cisco Telepresence server will allow group messaging or paging to remote sites or zones – functionality that is unavailable at this time. With the newer phone routing capabilities Foothill Transit will experience improved phone services because of built-in redundancy in the system. The redundancy will allow phone calls to be re-routed to remote sites via analog lines if the primary network connection were to fail. Another benefit will be a reduction in operating cost by having unlimited free local calls; a bundle of 25,000 minutes of free 1-800 calls with a reduction of overage rate to two cents instead of five cents per call.

The recommended procurement approach for the new equipment is also through the Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA). Since Cisco does not sell directly to end users, if approved by the Executive Board, the Cisco equipment must be procured through a WSCA Cisco authorized vendor – in this case, Trace3.

The proposed contracts with Trace3 do not include installation and configuration of the Data Center upgrade and Cisco Phone Replacement projects. These services will need to be separately procured.

Budget Impact

Required funding is included in the approved FY 2014 Business Plan.

Sincerely,



Donald Luey
Director of Information Technology



Doran J. Barnes
Executive Director