

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR THE FCRTA Microgrid Phase 2 Study**

DUE Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 4:00 P.M. (PST)



Accessible EV Mobility & Infrastructure For All

**Fresno County Rural Transit Agency
2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201 Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 233-6789**

Additional background information on this proposal can be found on
the FCRTA website

www.ruraltransit.org

Date: January 12, 2026
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FCRTA Microgrid Phase 2 Study

Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) is requesting proposals from qualified consultants to conduct an analysis for the Microgrid Phase 2 Study.

Background: The Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) is the primary provider of public transit services in the rural areas of Fresno County including each of the thirteen (13) incorporated Cities; City of Coalinga; City of Firebaugh; City of Fowler; City of Huron; City of Kerman; City of Kingsburg; City of Mendota; City of Orange Cove; City of Parlier; City of Reedley; City of Sanger; City of San Joaquin; City of Selma. Many unincorporated rural communities are also served by FCRTA, including: Alder Springs; Auberry; Biola; Burrough Valley; Cantua Creek; Caruthers; Del Rey; Easton; El Porvenir; Five Points; Friant; Halfway; Jose Basin; Lanare; Laton; Marshall Station; Meadow Lakes; Mile High; New Auberry; O'Neill's; Prather; Raisin City; Riverdale; Sycamore; West Park; Three Rocks; Tollhouse; Tranquility; and the Native American Indian Rancherias of: Big Sandy; Cold Springs; and Table Mountain.

FCRTA's service area has high concentrations of disadvantaged areas, seniors, affordable housing, and other transit-dependent populations. While FCRTA provides a vital service for the community, ridership has declined despite a significant need for transit. While FCRTA has implemented demonstration pilots and smaller changes, a comprehensive evaluation has not been conducted in years, and a fresh approach is necessary, especially given the investments in electrification and infrastructure that must be leveraged by increasing ridership.

Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) has been a leader in advancing energy-efficient transportation. The agency has purchased numerous zero-emissions buses and installed public charging infrastructure throughout Fresno County. FCRTA understands the intense energy required to charge its EV fleet and is looking for solutions to reduce its impact on the vulnerable electrical grid. To be proactive, FCRTA completed an Electrical Grid Analysis in 2022. This study forecasted that certain rural Fresno County communities would exceed their grid capacity with future electrification. One of the key strategies recommended in this study is "resilience hubs which can be leveraged for transportation, grid, and resilience benefits, particularly in unincorporated communities as well as economic opportunities."

FCRTA completed its Fresno County Microgrid & Multimodal Resiliency Hub Feasibility Study in 2024 (Microgrid Phase 1 Study). This robust study included an existing conditions review, microgrid technology review, peer agency review, community and stakeholder outreach, transit operational analysis and multimodal evaluation, EV bus rollout plan, microgrid site analysis and design, microgrid site criteria and ranking, cost-benefit analysis, and ownership structure recommendations. This study recommended five (5) microgrid sites for Phase 1 implementation. Importantly, these sites were selected in large part due to the ability to partner with these local entities.

FCRTA is now working on implementing the Phase 1 microgrids. It is also conducting a countywide EV charging plan and energy management system plan (also funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Communities grant) to evaluate countywide EV charging needs. To maximize the charging system's efficiency, FCRTA will deploy an energy management system to monitor charging needs and optimize charging rates to lower electricity bills.

Now, with a better understanding of the need for microgrid space to support its zero-emissions fleet, and learnings from the County Charging Master Plan, FCRTA sees the opportunity to conduct Phase 2 of the Microgrid Study, focusing on creating partnerships with local Fresno County public schools, and installing microgrids on school district properties. This study will involve outreach with school districts, establishing partnerships, identifying potential microgrid sites, conducting site evaluations, and creating an implementation plan.

Partnerships with school districts make sense as both transit and schools are required to transition their fleets to zero emissions, students rely on transit to travel to schools, and school districts have land. Both transit agencies and school districts have implemented solar-powered microgrids. Examples include

Santa Barbara Unified School District (CA), Chula Vista Elementary School District (CA), San Marcos Unified School District (CA), Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MD), and Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (MA). FCRTA seeks to take this further by establishing a transit agency/school district partnership to maximize the investment.

As part of the 2021 Inflation Reduction Act, California was awarded \$88 million to purchase electric school buses. School districts will need a sustainable charging solution as they transition their fleets to zero-emission. To maximize the benefits of FCRTA's microgrid investment, FCRTA seeks to partner with school districts in rural Fresno County. The microgrids would be located on school district properties and provide charging infrastructure for FCRTA's fleet and the school district's fleet.

In addition to vehicle charging, microgrids are essential in providing power backup to critical infrastructure. Microgrids can provide backup power for school buildings, making them more resilient to power outages. These buildings can shelter residents during emergency situations. This added resiliency will likely be necessary as increasingly unpredictable weather patterns disrupt the electrical grid.

FCRTA will evaluate potential microgrid sites on school district properties throughout FCRTA's services area, including the 13 rural cities and 39 rural unincorporated communities. Most communities in FCRTA's transit service area are under-resourced. Seventy-two percent of the census tracts in FCRTA's transit service area are considered disadvantaged by SB 535 (at or above 75 percent per CalEnviroScreen 4.0), 56 percent of tracts are below the 25th percentile level of healthy conditions compared to other California tracts, and 64 percent of tracts are considered low-income communities per AB 1550 (at or below 80 percent of the statewide medium income). The communities in FCRTA's service area suffer from high poverty and unemployment rates.

Objectives of the study:

- Expand the scope of FCRTA's microgrid initiative and seek partnerships with school districts in rural Fresno County to install microgrids at school district properties.
- Maximize FCRTA's microgrid investment by providing charging infrastructure for FCRTA and the schools.
- Determine how microgrids can provide backup power for critical infrastructure on school properties.
- Develop an actionable implementation plan for microgrid installation on school properties.
- Identify 10 school properties in Fresno County for microgrid implementation.

I. SCOPE OF WORK

Please refer to Appendix A and B for the proposed scope of work and timeline as submitted to Caltrans in the grant application.

Appendix A and B should be followed in developing project tasks and the timeline for completing the tasks. Minor adjustment to the proposed scope and timeline will be accepted subject to Caltrans' approval.

II. COORDINATION

The consultant will take primary direction from the FCRTA Project Manager. It is intended that all work will be completed within twenty seven months of negotiating a contract in accordance with the schedule component and that the consultant's work will begin immediately upon receiving a notice to proceed.

The selected consultant will best demonstrate the ability to deliver quality work on schedule and in a cost-effective manner, consistent with the tasks and deliverables in this RFP.

File copies of all correspondence, technical memoranda, and reports should be delivered to the FCRTA Project Manager on flash drive or electronically via email in Microsoft Word format. Ten hard copies of the final report should be made available upon completion of the project.

All data, maps and all other materials prepared or collected under this contract will become the property of FCRTA. A monthly progress report should be provided to the project manager along with the invoice. The progress report should provide information on the work that has been completed previous month, and the work expected to be conducted in the coming month. A brief summary should be provided each month reporting the progress of each task (percent completion) and whether the task is on schedule and on budget. A monthly meeting/conference call should be held between the consultant and the project manager to discuss the progress of the project and issues that need to be addressed.

III. PROPOSED TIME AND SCHEDULE

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Date</i>
Request for Proposals released	Monday, January 12, 2026
Deadline for submitting questions	Monday, January 26, 2026, 4:00 P.M.
Deadline for proposal submittal	Wednesday, February 18, 4:00 P.M.
Oral interviews/selection process	Week of February 23 (Tentatively)
Notice to Proceed	Week of March 23 -Subject to FCRTA Board approval and contract/agreement signing
Completion of project	June 2028

IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Clarity and succinctness are essential and will be considered in assessing the consultant's capabilities. Proposals that show creativity and new ideas will be highly considered. All consultant proposals submitted in response to this request will be screened by a review committee. The committee will determine, through the screening process, which consultants will be invited to make formal presentations and be interviewed by the selection committee. The selection committee reserves the right to make a final selection without an interview.

One reproducible (unbound) and five copies of the proposal plus an electronic copy on a CD or flash drive must be received at the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency by Wednesday, February 18, 4:00 P.M. local time. Proposals not received by that date and time *will not be considered.*

In order to simplify the review process and maximize the degree of comparative analysis, the proposal should be organized in the following manner:

A. Transmittal letter

The transmittal letter should be signed by an official authorized to bind the consultant contractually and will contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for 90 days. The letter accompanying the proposal will also provide the following: name, title, address, and telephone number of individuals with the authority to negotiate and contractually bind the company. The transmittal shall contain a statement of understanding of the RFP.

B. Table of Contents

Include identification of the material by section and page number.

C. Overview

This section should clearly convey the consultant's understanding of the nature of the work and the general approach to be taken to its performance. This section should include, but not be limited to, a discussion of the purpose of the project, the organization of the project effort, and a summary of the proposed approach.

D. Detailed Work Plan

The prospective contractor shall provide a schedule for completing the project within the schedule set forth in this RFP. The schedule shall identify the major tasks to be undertaken and the time frame for each task. Appendix A & B should be followed in identifying the tasks and the time frame for each task. Minor adjustments to Appendix A & B will be accepted subject to Caltrans' approval.

This section should include the following components:

1. Task Description

Include a full description of each step to be followed in carrying out the project as detailed in Appendix A. Minor adjustment to the proposed scope of work in Appendix A is allowed subject to Caltrans' approval. The work description should be presented in sufficient detail (tasks, subtasks, etc.) to show a clear understanding of the work and the proposed approach.

2. Deliverables

A description of the format, content, and level of detail that can be expected for each deliverable.

3. Schedule

A schedule showing the expected sequence of tasks, subtasks, etc. should accompany the work description. Important milestones should be identified on the schedule. Minor adjustment to the proposed schedule in Appendix B is allowed subject to Caltrans' approval.

E. Management Approach

This section should describe the firm's management approach. If the proposal is a team effort, the distribution of work among the team members should be indicated. Describe the organization of the management, the structure of the work assignments, and any specific features of the management approach that require special explanation. Designate by name the project manager to be employed who will oversee the project. **No substitutions of the identified project manager will be allowed without prior approval of FCRTA.**

Include the name and qualifications of all professional personnel to be employed, a resume for each professional (included in an appendix), a statement indicating how many hours each professional will be assigned to the contract and what tasks each professional will perform. Staffing assignments should be specific enough to demonstrate understanding of skills required

and commitment of proper resources. **The selected consultant will not substitute members of the project team without prior approval of FCRTA.**

F. Budget and Billing Format

A cost analysis of the proposed budget will be done by FCRTA staff. Under various circumstances the budget could be subject to Preaudit and/or the final cost subject to Post audit by FCRTA or Caltrans division of Audits and Investigations. The allowability of individual items of cost will be determined by 48 CFR, Federal Acquisition Regulations System, Chapter 1, Part 31 et. Seq. The Contractor will also be required to comply with 49 CFR, Part 18, and Uniform Administrative Requirement for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments. The contractor should have an accounting system capable of segregating direct cost from indirect costs per the above cited regulations. The Contractor and Subcontractors will comply with all applicable laws and maintain books, documents, papers, and accounting records for a period of three years from the date of the final payment.

1. Method of Payment

The cost proposal must be prepared consistent with the method of services provided under this agreement and will be reimbursed, by one of, or a combination of the methods below. The proposer must clearly state the method used to prepare the cost proposal.

- Lump Sum payment
- Actual Cost plus Fixed Fee
- Specific Rates of Compensation

Lump Sum proposals will be paid per milestone of completed work or at the end of the contract upon acceptance of the final product. Actual Cost plus Fixed Fee agreements shall be billed at actual payroll costs and include a fixed fee for profit. In agreements reimbursed by Specific Rates of Compensation, billing rates containing a component for profit will be negotiated that will not change during the term of the contract.

2. Project Budget

A maximum of \$698,000 has been budgeted for consultant services for this project.

3. Task Budget

A schedule of estimated costs to complete each task should add down to the total cost of the project (see Table 1 & 2). The task budget should include a subsidiary breakdown by task of hours and billing rate charges. To ensure a full understanding of the resources committed to the project the schedule should clearly indicate the amount of hours key personnel will be used in each task.

4. Budget and Cost Breakdown

The prospective consultant will prepare a detailed cost breakdown for the work to be performed during the project regardless of the method of reimbursement chosen. This will include all tasks required to complete the project including final reports and presentation.

a. Direct Labor Costs – A schedule of billing rates and hours worked by employee or category of employee is required of the prime contractor and all subcontractors. Billing rates shall be based on actual pay rates and should cover all costs associated with the employee (salary, benefits, and anticipated cost of living and/or merit increases during the term of the contract). Depending on the individual cost structure, overhead may be applied as a component of the billing rate or applied separately. The proposer should be prepared to validate billing rates with payroll registers, wage agreements, or other payroll documentation.

b. Overhead Rates – The overhead rate should include all indirect cost not readily assignable to cost objectives specifically benefited. Typically an overhead rate is calculated on a company or division wide basis by segregating expenses into direct cost and indirect cost categories and then dividing the indirect costs by a direct cost base such as direct labor to arrive at an overhead rate. The overhead rate is then applied on a contract by contract basis to recapture the indirect costs that are not chargeable directly to a final objective such as general and administrative, facilities, equipment, supplies, accounting, maintenance, materials, etc. Some cost structures may be broken into various overhead rates that are applied to different bases. The proposer should be prepared to provide supporting documentation such as prior agreements with government agencies or audits of prior year activities to validate overhead rates structures.

c. Direct Cost – Direct costs are those incremental costs that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective. Although in some instances direct cost and indirect cost may include similar categories, incremental direct cost attributable to final objectives must be separated and not included in the overhead calculation. All direct cost specifically attributed to the project and not included in the billing rates must be itemized by budget category to be eligible for reimbursement. Once contractually authorized, direct cost budgets may not be substituted without prior written consent of FCRTA.

d. Sub consultant Fees – Sub consultants must provide the same cost data detail as the prime contractor (see Table I and Table 2).

e. Fixed Fee – A fixed fee is calculated as a basis of total direct and indirect costs. The State of California allows a 10% maximum fee.

The hypothetical cost format example given below is to illustrate required components of the cost proposal only, and may have to be tailored to fit individual cost structures.

**HYPOTHETICAL
COST ESTIMATE**

Table 1.- Direct cost by Task

Cost Items	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Total
1. Direct Labor	3,700	17,053	5,502	26,255
2. Overhead (___ % of Line 1)	1,480	6,821	2,201	10,502
Total Salary Burden	5,180	23,874	7,703	36,757
3. Direct Expenses				
Telephone/FAX	35	28	15	78
Postage/Shipping	12	8	35	55
Graphics/Printing	11	11	75	97
Travel	350		500	850
Misc.	45	45	45	135
Total Direct Expenses	453	92	670	1,215
4. Subconsultant Fees *	4,244	22,276	2,726	29,246
5. Fixed Fee (___ % of Lines 1,2,3)	764	1,524	1,132	3,420
Total	10,640	47,766	12,231	70,638
				70,638

Table 2 - Project Task Costs by Key Personnel

Task No. and Description	Key Staff #1	Key Staff #2	Staff Support	Total Hours
Task 1. Establish Parameters	25	75		100
Task 3. Data Collection and Analysis		400	250	650
Task 4. Final Report and Presentation	15	50	175	240
Total Hours	40	525	425	990
Billing Rate	\$75.00	\$44.06	\$25.00	
Memo Total	3,000	23,132	10,625	36,757

* Subconsultants must provide required cost components found in Tables 1 & 2

G. Insurance requirements

Without limiting FCRTA's right to obtain indemnification from the consultant or any third parties, the consultant, at its sole expense, shall maintain in full force and effect the following insurance policies throughout the term of the contract:

1. Comprehensive general liability insurance with coverage of not less than \$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage. Comprehensive general liability insurance policies shall name FCRTA, its officers, agents, and employees, individually and collectively, as additional insured, but only insofar as the operations under the terms of the contract are concerned. Such coverage for additional insured shall apply as primary insurance or self-insurance and any other insurance, maintained by FCRTA, its officers, agents, and employees, shall be given excess only and not contributing with insurance provided under the consultant's policies herein.
2. Comprehensive automobile liability insurance with limits for bodily injury of not less than \$25,000 per person, \$250,000 per accident, and for property damages of not less than \$50,000, or such coverage with a combined single limit of \$250,000.
3. Professional liability insurance of at least \$1,000,000.
4. Worker's compensation insurance as required by law.

This insurance shall not be canceled or changed without a minimum of thirty (30) days advance written notice given to FCRTA. The consultant shall provide certification of said insurance to FCRTA within twenty-one (21) days of the date of the execution of the contract. Such certification shall show, to FCRTA's satisfaction, that such insurance coverages have been obtained and are in full force; that FCRTA, its officers, agents, and employees will not be responsible for any premiums on the policies; that as and if required such insurance names FCRTA, its officers agents, and employees individually and collectively as additional insured (comprehensive and general liability only), but only insofar as the operations under the contract are concerned; that such coverage for additional insured shall apply as primary insurance and any other insurance, or self insurance, maintained by FCRTA, its officers, agents, and employees, shall be excess only and not contributing with insurance provided under the consultant's policies herein; and that this insurance shall not be canceled or changed without a minimum of thirty (days) advance, written notice given to FCRTA.

In the event the consultant fails to keep in effect at all times insurance coverage as herein provided, FCRTA may, in addition to other remedies it may have, suspend or terminate the contract upon the occurrence of such event.

H. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification

DBE Bidders Listing (Attachment B) must be completed for all contractors and subcontractors regardless of DBE affiliation.

The FCRTA fully anticipates that it will consistently meet and exceed its adopted DBE overall goal under 49 CFR Part 26 using Race-neutral measures exclusively.

Only DBE firms currently certified per 49 CFR Part 26 will participate as DBEs in our program. Such certification must be issued by Caltrans, FHWA, FTA, DOT, MPO, City, County, or State in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26.

FCRTA will not deny award to contractors on the basis of DBE participation, who demonstrate that they have used good faith efforts to achieve DBE participation.

Contractors selected on the basis of DBE participation must provide the following information with the initial proposal or before entering into a contractual agreement with FCRTA:

1. The names and addresses of the DBE firms.
2. A description of the work each DBE will provide.
3. The dollar amount of participation by each DBE.
4. Proof of DBE certification.
5. Written confirmation that the DBE will participate.
6. If DBE participation is not achieved, evidence of good faith efforts must be provided.

Prime contractors are required to maintain records and document payments to all subcontractors for three years following the performance of the contract. These records will be made available for inspection upon request by any authorized representative on FCRTA, Caltrans, FHWA, or DOT. This reporting requirement also extends to any certified DBE subcontractor. The contractor shall maintain records showing the name and address of each subcontractor, the date of payment, and total dollar figure paid to each subcontractor.

FCRTA will safeguard from disclosure to third parties information that may reasonably be regarded as confidential business information, consistent with federal, state, or local laws.

I. Conflicts of Interest

The prospective contractor shall disclose any financial, business, or other relationship with FCRTA that may have an outcome on the selection.

J. Summary of Qualifications

Proposals shall include a summary of the firm's qualifications, including resumes of assigned staff.

K. Signing of Proposal/Authorization to Negotiate

The proposal shall be signed by an official authorized to bind the proposer and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for a 90-day period. The proposal shall also provide the following: name, title, address, and telephone number of individuals with authority to negotiate and contractually bind the company.

L. Attachments

Attachments to be included at the end of the proposal are as follows (as attached herein):

- Attachment A: Title VI Assurance
- Attachment B: DBE Participation
- Attachment C: Budget and Cost Breakdown

V. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

A. Preparation of Proposal

The proposal shall be formatted in accordance with the requirements specified in *Section III: Proposal Requirements* of this RFP. Proposal forms shall be executed by an authorized signatory as described in *Section III-K: Signing of Proposal/Authorization to Negotiate*. All proposals shall be prepared by and at the expense of the proposer.

B. Examination of RFP Document

The proposer shall be solely responsible for examining, with appropriate care, the RFP, including any addenda issued during the proposal period. The proposer shall also be responsible for informing itself with respect to any and all conditions which may in any way affect the amount or nature of the proposal, or the performance of the work in the event the proposer is selected. Failure of the proposer to examine and inform itself in this manner shall be at the proposer's own risk and no relief for error or omission shall be given.

C. Submission of Proposal/Period of Acceptance

One reproducible master, an electronic file on CD/flash drive and five copies of all proposals must be delivered to FCRTA no later than **Wednesday, February 18, 4:00 P.M.** Proposals will not be accepted after 4:00 P.M. PDT. Postmarks will not be accepted. Proposals should be delivered to:

Jennifer Rodriguez, Project Manager
Fresno County Rural Transit Agency
2035 Tulare St., Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721
Jrodriguez@fresnocog.org

All proposals will remain firm for a period of ninety (90) days following the final date for submission. All proposals will become the sole property of FCRTA and a part of its official records without obligation on the part of FCRTA.

This RFP is not to be construed as a contract of commitment on the part of FCRTA. FCRTA reserves the right to reject all proposals, to seek additional information from each proposer, or to issue another RFP, if deemed appropriate.

D. Modification or Withdrawal of Proposals

Any proposal received before the date and time specified above for receipt of proposals may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the proposer. To be considered, however, the modified proposal must be received by the proposal due date and time specified previously.

All verbal modifications to these conditions or provisions are ineffective for proposal evaluation purposes. Only written changes issued by proposers to FCRTA are authorized and binding.

E. Rejection of Proposals

Failure to meet the requirements for the request for proposals will be cause for rejection of the proposal. FCRTA may reject any proposal if it is conditional, incomplete, or contains irregularities or inordinately high cost rates. FCRTA may waive an immaterial deviation in a proposal. Waiver of an immaterial deviation shall in no way modify the Request for Proposals document or excuse the proposer from full compliance with the contract requirements if the proposer is awarded the contract.

VI. CONSULTANT SELECTION

All consultant proposals submitted in response to this request will be screened by a selection committee. The committee will determine, through the screening process, which consultants will be invited to make formal presentations and be interviewed by the committee. **The selection committee reserves the right to make a final selection without an interview.**

The actual award of the contract will be by the FCRTA Board. Proposal opening does not constitute the awarding of a contract. The contract/agreement is not in force until it is awarded by FCRTA and executed by the FCRTA designees.

VII. PROPOSER OBJECTIONS

A proposer may object to any of the terms or provisions set forth in the RFP's Scope of Work or to the selection of a particular proposer on the grounds that FCRTA's procedures, the provisions of this RFP, or applicable provisions of federal, state, or local law have been violated or inaccurately or inappropriately applied by submitting FCRTA a written explanation of the basis for the objection. Deadlines for submittal of objections are:

- No later than two weeks prior to the date proposals are due, for objections to RFP provisions; or
- Within three working days after the date on which contract award is authorized or the date the proposer is notified that it was not selected, whichever is later, for objections to proposer selection.

If the proposer does not state any objections, FCRTA will assume that the RFP scope of services are acceptable to the proposer and have been fully factored into its response. If the proposer intends to negotiate with FCRTA concerning any part of the scope of services that the proposer finds objectionable, the proposer must provide specific language in its response that will address or cure its objections.

VIII. FCRTA Rights

FCRTA may investigate the qualifications of any proposer under consideration, require confirmation of information furnished by a proposer, and require additional evidence of qualifications to perform the work described in this RFP.

FCRTA reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all of the proposals if it deems such action is in the public interest;
2. Issue subsequent Requests for Proposals;
3. Cancel the entire Request for Proposal;
4. Remedy technical errors in the Request for Proposals process;
5. Appoint an evaluation committee to review the proposals;
6. Seek the assistance of outside technical experts in proposal evaluation;
7. Approve or disapprove the use of particular subcontractors;
8. Establish a short list of proposers eligible for interviews after review of written proposals;
9. Negotiate with some, all, or none of the respondents to the RFP;
10. Solicit best and final offers from all or some of the proposers;
11. Award a contract to one or more proposers;

12. Accept an offer other than the lowest price offer; and
13. Waive informalities and irregularities in proposals and the bid process.

This RFP does not commit FCRTA to enter into a contract, nor does it obligate FCRTA to pay for any costs incurred in preparation and submission of proposals or in anticipation of a contract. All proposals will be subject to public disclosure as required by the California Public Records Act.

FCRTA reserves the right to investigate the qualifications of all firms under consideration to confirm any part of the information furnished by a proposer, or to require other evidence of managerial, financial, or other capabilities which are considered necessary for the successful performance of the contract.

IX. RFP QUESTIONS

All questions on the RFP should be submitted in writing by Monday, January 26th to:

Jennifer Rodriguez, Project Manager
Fresno County Rural Transit Agency
2035 Tulare St., Suite 201
Fresno, CA 93721
Jrodriguez@fresnocog.org

All questions and answers will be posted on the FCRTA website at:
www.ruraltransit.org by Friday, January 30th.

Attachment A

TITLE VI ASSURANCE

The Fresno County Rural Transit Agency, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. 2000d-4 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21 Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Transportation issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority businesses enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or nation origin in consideration of an award.

Attachment B

DBE/WBE BIDDERS LISTING

Bidders Listing

TOTAL BUDGET \$

1. All contractors/subcontractors bidding on the project must provide the requested information.
 2. Bidders claiming DBE status must attach a copy of a current Certification issued pursuant to 49 CFR Part 26.
 3. Bidders claiming DBE status must attach written affirmation that they will participate in the project.
 4. Each bidder must designate of Gross Annual Receipts are greater than or equal to \$750,000.

Attachment C

DIRECT COSTS

Direct Cost		Amount
Direct Costs Subtotal		

SUBCONSULTANTS

Subconsultants		Total Cost
Subconsultants		
Subtotal		

**PROPOSAL GRAND
TOTAL**

Appendix A

SCOPE OF WORK: FCRTA MICROGRID PHASE 2 STUDY

Introduction

Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) has been a leader in advancing energy-efficient transportation. The agency has purchased numerous zero-emissions buses and installed public charging infrastructure throughout Fresno County. FCRTA understands the intense energy required to charge its EV fleet and is looking for solutions to reduce its impact on the vulnerable electrical grid. To be proactive, FCRTA completed an Electrical Grid Analysis in 2022. This study forecasted that certain rural Fresno County communities would exceed their grid capacity with future electrification. One of the key strategies recommended in this study is “resilience hubs which can be leveraged for transportation, grid, and resilience benefits, particularly in unincorporated communities as well as economic opportunities.”

FCRTA completed its Fresno County Microgrid & Multimodal Resiliency Hub Feasibility Study in 2024 (herein referred to as Microgrid Phase 1 Study). This robust study included an existing conditions review, microgrid technology review, peer agency review, community and stakeholder outreach, transit operational analysis and multimodal evaluation, EV bus rollout plan, microgrid site analysis and design, microgrid site criteria and ranking, cost-benefit analysis, and ownership structure recommendations. This study recommended five (5) microgrid sites for Phase 1 implementation. Importantly, these sites were selected in large part due to the ability to partner with these local entities.

FCRTA is now working on implementing the Phase 1 microgrids. It is also conducting a countywide EV charging plan and energy management system plan (also funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Communities grant) to evaluate countywide EV charging needs. To maximize the charging system's efficiency, FCRTA will deploy an energy management system to monitor charging needs and optimize charging rates to lower electricity bills.

Now, with a better understanding of the need for microgrid space to support its zero-emissions fleet, and learnings from the County Charging Master Plan, FCRTA sees the opportunity to conduct Phase 2 of the Microgrid Study, focusing on creating partnerships with local Fresno County public schools, and installing microgrids on school district properties. FCRTA has been awarded Caltrans Sustainable Communities funding to conduct Phase 2 of its microgrid study, which will involve outreach with school districts, establishing partnerships, identifying potential microgrid sites, conducting site evaluations, and creating an implementation plan.

Partnerships with school districts make sense as both transit and schools are required to transition their fleets to zero emissions, students rely on transit to travel to schools, and school districts have land. Both transit agencies and school districts have implemented solar-powered microgrids. Examples include Santa Barbara Unified School District (CA), Chula Vista Elementary School District (CA), San Marcos Unified School District (CA), Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MD), and Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (MA). FCRTA seeks to take this further by establishing a transit agency/school district partnership to maximize the investment.

As part of the 2021 Inflation Reduction Act, California was awarded \$88 million to purchase electric school buses. School districts will need a sustainable charging solution as they transition their fleets to zero-emission. To maximize the benefits of FCRTA's microgrid investment, FCRTA seeks to partner with school districts in rural Fresno County. The microgrids would be located on school district properties and provide charging infrastructure for FCRTA's fleet and the school district's fleet.

In addition to vehicle charging, microgrids are essential in providing power backup to critical infrastructure. Microgrids can provide backup power for school buildings, making them more resilient to power outages. These buildings can shelter residents during emergency situations. This added resiliency will likely be necessary as increasingly unpredictable weather patterns disrupt the electrical grid.

FCRTA will evaluate potential microgrid sites on school district properties throughout FCRTA's service area, including the 13 rural cities and 39 rural unincorporated communities. Most communities in FCRTA's transit service area are under-resourced. Seventy-two percent of the census tracts in FCRTA's transit service area are considered disadvantaged by SB 535 (at or above 75 percent per CalEnviroScreen 4.0), 56 percent of tracts are below the 25th percentile level of healthy conditions compared to other California tracts, and 64 percent of tracts are considered low-income communities per AB 1550 (at or below 80 percent of the statewide medium income). The communities in FCRTA's service area suffer from high poverty and unemployment rates.

Project Stakeholders

FCRTA, with the assistance of a consulting firm, will be responsible for the stakeholder outreach effort. The project stakeholders who will be involved in the project advisory committee and throughout the community engagement process will include, at a minimum, the local school districts in FCRTA's service area, other local transit agencies in Fresno County, Fresno County, Fresno Council of Governments, and Caltrans.

Specific organizations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All School Districts in FCRTA's service area (not listed here due to the significant number of districts in Fresno County) – The Consultant will identify the particular districts that overlap with FCRTA's service area link to a website listing Fresno County school districts: <https://www.fcoe.org/districts>
- Fresno Council of Governments
- Fresno County
- Local Transit Service Providers
 - Clovis Transit
 - Fresno Area Express
- Caltrans

Overall Project Objectives

The key project objectives include:

- Expand the scope of FCRTA's microgrid initiative and seek partnerships with school districts in rural Fresno County to install microgrids at school district properties.
- Maximize FCRTA's microgrid investment by providing charging infrastructure for FCRTA and the schools.
- Determine how microgrids can provide backup power for critical infrastructure on school properties.
- Develop an actionable implementation plan for microgrid installation on school properties.
- Identify 10 school properties in Fresno County for microgrid implementation.

Summary of Project Tasks

Task 01: Project Administration

Project Kick-off Meeting

FCRTA will hold a kickoff meeting with Caltrans staff to discuss grant procedures and project expectations, including invoicing, quarterly reporting, and all other relevant project information. The meeting summary will be documented.

Invoicing

Submit Complete invoice packages to Caltrans district staff based on milestone completion- at least quarterly, but no more frequently than monthly.

Quarterly Reports

Submit quarterly reports to Caltrans district staff summarizing project progress and grant/local match expenditures.

Task Deliverables
Kick-off meeting notes
Invoice packages
Quarterly reports

Task 02: Consultant Procurement

Consultant Services

FCRTA will complete an RFP process for selecting a consultant or consultant team using procedures that comply with the State Contracting Manual, Chapter 5, the Local Assistance Procedures Manual, Chapter 10, and the terms of the agreement with Caltrans.

Staff Coordination

The selected consultant will hold bi-weekly virtual team meetings with FCRTA and Caltrans to ensure good communication on upcoming tasks and to ensure the project remains on time and within budget. Caltrans staff will be invited to the meetings.

Task Deliverables
Copy of procurement procedures and request for proposal
Copy of executed consultant contract
Copies of any amendments to the consultant contract
Meeting notes from bi-weekly team meetings

Task 1: Existing Conditions

The Consultant (in coordination with FCRTA) will complete Task 1. The Existing Conditions task aims to understand FCRTA's microgrid work to date and potential opportunities for partnering with Fresno County schools. The existing conditions analysis will include (but not be limited to):

- Review documents/plans related to FCRTA's existing service, future plans and needs, the existing zero-emissions bus fleet, and related charging needs.
- Review existing plans, policies, and infrastructure related to energy and grid analysis, including the Electrical Grid Analysis and Transit Microgrid and Microgrid Phase 1 Study.

- Review the FCRTA County-wide Electric Vehicle Charging Master Plan and Energy Management System Plan.
- Conduct a review of the schools in FCRTA's service area.
- Map the school properties in FCRTA's service area.
- Review school fleet transition plans.
- Update the existing grid conditions from the Microgrid Phase 1 Study to focus on school properties.

Task Deliverables
Memorandum summarizing the Existing Conditions analysis.
The findings of the existing conditions will be presented at an internal project team meeting.

Task 2: Analysis

Microgrid Technology Review

FCRTA conducted a microgrid technology review for its Microgrid Phase 1 Study. Since solar, energy storage, and charging technology are rapidly evolving, update the technology review as necessary with any changes necessary for school district bus fleets.

Site Selection

Based on the existing conditions review and school/community coordination (discussed in Task 3), a scoring methodology will be developed to determine ten (10) sites for further study. FCRTA's Microgrid Phase 1 Study had two tiers of quantitative and qualitative criteria, including transit system operational goals, energy assessment, partnership potential, geographic equity, site readiness, transit equity, and community input. FCRTA and the Consultant will develop a site selection process tailored to Phase 2 of the study and focused on school properties.

EV Charging Needs

Evaluate the current and future EV fleet charging needs at each of the ten potential microgrid sites. This analysis will inform each site's space, power, and infrastructure needs.

Site Assessment and Design

In coordination with each applicable school partner, conduct a site assessment and microgrid design for the 10 sites recommended in the site selection process. The site assessment and design will be based on the EV charging needs of the school and FCRTA's operations. It will also identify opportunities to provide community resiliency during emergencies, such as heating and cooling centers. The site assessment and design will include, but not be limited to, a civil engineering analysis to identify key constructability issues, existing site infrastructure, infrastructure to be installed, site work needed, cost estimates, power reliability, and on-site critical infrastructure.

Energy Assessment

For each of the 10 sites, project electricity bill cost savings versus up-front financial investment. This analysis should include capital and operating expenses for the solar infrastructure and the battery energy storage.

Implementation Plan

FCRTA and the Consultant, in partnership with the schools, will establish an implementation plan for each of the 10 sites. The plan will address funding, ownership structure, and operation and maintenance

strategy. The plan will also identify opportunities for using an energy management system at each site and for the system as a whole.

Task Deliverables

Memorandum detailing the analysis and implementation plan.
The findings of the analysis will be presented at the internal project team meeting.

Task 3: Public Outreach

Stakeholder Identification

A key part of the Microgrid Phase 2 study is identifying Fresno County school district partners to deploy microgrids in rural areas. Therefore, the stakeholder identification will include an analysis of FCRTA's transit service area (current and planned service) and identification of the school districts that overlap with FCRTA's service area.

Stakeholder Outreach

In coordination with FCRTA, the Consultant team will contact representatives from each school identified to provide additional information about the project and gauge interest in participation. The Consultant team will schedule one-on-one meetings with each district. FCRTA and the consultant team will request feedback from school districts on their EV transition plans (if any) and critical infrastructure they may want power support from a microgrid. There will be a discussion of potential microgrid design and features. The meetings will include a discussion of the potential ownership structure and ongoing operation and maintenance. FCRTA and the consultant team will continue coordinating with the school districts throughout the site selection and evaluation process and the implementation plan formation.

Task Deliverables

Stakeholder outreach summary memo

Task 4: Advisory Committee Meetings

Invite interested stakeholders to join an advisory committee for the Microgrid Phase 2 study, consisting of, at minimum, representatives from the following entities:

- All School Districts in FCRTA's service area (not listed here due to the significant number of districts in Fresno County) – The Consultant will identify the particular districts that overlap with FCRTA's service area link to a website listing Fresno County school districts: <https://www.fcoe.org/districts>
- Fresno Council of Governments
- Fresno County
- Local Transit Service Providers
 - Clovis Transit
 - Fresno Area Express
- Caltrans

It is anticipated that the Consultant and FCRTA will facilitate a minimum of five meetings with the advisory committee to guide the study from initiation to completion. One meeting will occur at project kick-off, three to present interim findings and gather input, and one to review and approve the report.

Caltrans district staff will be included in the planning for the advisory committee meetings and will be invited to serve on the advisory committee. Meetings will be interactive and provide opportunities for input from all attendees. Meetings will be offered in person and digitally.

Task Deliverables
Meetings agendas for each advisory committee meeting
List of attendees and meeting minutes for each advisory committee meeting

Task 5: Draft and Final Plan

Develop Draft Study

Based on the community engagement, advisory committee, and analysis feedback, a draft study report will be prepared to include all project components and aspects to date.

FCRTA Review & Comment on Draft Study

FCRTA staff will review and comment on the draft report and discuss their findings, concerns, and recommendations with the Consultant. The Consultant to revise the report based on FCRTA comments.

Advisory Committee Meeting

Solicit feedback, respond to any questions and resolve any critical issues from the project advisory committee.

Public Comment

Issue the draft report for review and comment by the public.

Complete Final Study

Revise the report based on comments from the advisory committee and project stakeholders. The revised report is a completed Microgrid Phase 2 study report. The study will include an implementation plan for the top-ranked site(s), technology, including cost savings, potential funding sources, and financing options. The plan should be detailed to support capital planning and procurement.

Caltrans' financial contribution will be credited on the report's cover.

Task Deliverables
Draft study report and implementation plan
Written agency and public comments on draft report
Final study report

Task 6: Board Review/Approval

Present the final report at the FCRTA Board meeting. Resolve any critical issues. Prepare the next steps for implementation based on the study. Adopt Final FCRTA Report.

Task Deliverables
FCRTA Board Agenda
FCRTA presentation materials
FCRTA Board meeting minutes indicating board acceptance/approval of the study.

Appendix B

Reimbursements/ Invoicing		Does your agency plan to request reimbursement for indirect costs? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If yes, what is the estimated indirect cost rate? _____															
		Does your agency plan to use the Tapered Match approach for invoicing purposes? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No															
Task #	Task Title	Grant Amount*	Estimated Local Cash Match*	Estimated Local In-Kind Match*	Estimated Total Project Cost*	FY 2025/26			FY 2026/27			FY 2027/28					
						J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
01	Project Administration (no more than 5% of total grant funds)	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$6,000												
02	Consultant Procurement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0												
1	Existing Conditions	\$45,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$52,000												
2	Analysis	\$314,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$364,000												
3	Public Outreach	\$175,000	\$17,000	\$0	\$192,000												
4	Advisory Committee Meetings	\$40,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$45,000												
5	Draft and Final Plan	\$30,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$35,000												
6	Board Review/Approval	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$4,000												
		Totals	\$12,000	\$86,000	\$0	\$698,000											