

RFP Addendum
Voice, Data, And Electronic Media Content Services
DRAFT 9/28/2009

Baltimore Metropolitan Council
2700 Lighthouse Point East, Suite 310
Baltimore, MD 21224



Introduction

On October 13, 2009, a meeting was held at BMC's offices (2700 Lighthouse Point East, Suite 310, Baltimore, MD 21224) to discuss a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by BMC for Voice, Data, and Electronic Media Services to be used at a location to which BMC plans to move.

Potential bidders were encouraged to come to this meeting, in order to have an opportunity to meet BMC decision-makers and ask questions they may have had about the RFP. Bidders were permitted to submit questions after the meeting by telephone or e-mail until October 24, 2009.

This document provides answers to those questions, as well as other information updates.

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Requirements Clarification/Modification

There is an important possible requirements change, following from a difference between some bidders' assumptions, and BMC's assumptions while the RFP was being developed.

BMC, not wishing to be constrained as to the technology for provision of voice services, allowed vendors to design a traditional (e.g. PRI) system, a VOIP system, or both. BMC had been working under the assumption that voice and data networks would be separate (its current PRI service is delivered via a T1 line).

However, many of the bidders' comments and questions appear to come from the assumption that a VOIP system uses an integrated network for both voice and data.

Because of this, we have clarified and extended the requirements of the Voice Communications System to allow an integrated voice/data network option.

Bidders on this RFP may choose to support this option with a single, more robust IP service than would have been supported for separate voice and data services.

This yields three voice and data service combinations, and bidders may specify any or all of the three:

1. A traditional (PRI) voice service and a separate IP service to support data requirements.
2. Two separate IP services to support separate voice and data networks.
3. A single more robust IP service to support both voice and data (or all three) services. The selected voice communications contractor may have specified an integrated voice/data network, or split this service outside the data network to support separate voice and data networks.

Site and construction information

What is the site address?

1500 Woodall Street – however, the building owner is trying to have the street named "Whetstone Way", so at some point the address may become 1500 Whetstone Way

Schedule update

The building is now scheduled for BMC occupancy during September 2010, meaning that tenant improvements will be underway during the spring and summer months. Builder has letters of intent to lease entire building.

Would it be possible to obtain a property management POC for the new location?

Property management would prefer that any questions come through BMC from the bidders. BMC will provide a POC for the building after award to the successful bidder. Until that time all questions should go through BMC.

McHenry Row Office Building IT Infrastructure

In the interest of full disclosure, property management personnel have informed me that they plan to have Verizon install its FiOS® product in the McHenry Row office building.

Current usage at Lighthouse Point

Current systems

- PRI for voice
 - 1 main line
 - 11 direct lines for specific employees
 - 3 analog lines
- ADSL for data. This is an enhanced ADSL that can pull down up to 4 MB/s
- No TV

Call volumes, types of callers

Most (80%) are local/state government employees, some from private citizens (citizen committees, RIC, Ride Share)

Are there any 800 lines?

Yes, there is a single 800 number for the Ride Share program. 866-645-0032
(We incorrectly said "no" at the pre-bid meeting)

Conferencing

We have a PolyComm conferencing phone, and Currently using an outside service (per call), which meets our needs and costs \$xxx.xxx/mo.

There is an average of two conference calls per month, usually less than 6 users, never more than a dozen users. Conferences can last a couple of hours, but usual participant duration 1 hour.

Current phones have an internal conferencing function that allows 3 users. Too limited for normal use.

International calls?

Infrequent

Does BMC have a disaster recovery plan for communications system?

Not specifically for voice communications. There are agreements with partner organizations (local governments) for operations after a disaster.

Can we get a copy of current local, long distance, and internet bills?

These will be made available to specific bidders who request them.

System Requirements

Must bids provide all three services: voice, data, and TV?

Yes. As stated in the RFP, teaming is allowed.

Normal/Analog line requirements

Bidders should meet the existing requirements of 12 voice lines, 3 analog lines. One analog line is shared between a credit card machine and a fax machine in M6.

Voice Communication System contractor may require a fourth analog line for their own remote monitoring. Services contractors should add this to their bids as an optional line item.

Does contractor provider any servers or other equipment?

Services contractor is responsible for providing and setting up only the decoding equipment / convertor boxes for the Services.

When using a router for TV service, is a rented router appropriate?

Rented routers are appropriate. When specifying this, initial term is 1 year.

Will BMC use its existing firewall?

Yes (Watchguard Firebox Core 550e). However, services bidders must explain if this equipment is appropriate for the more robust requirements of an integrated voice/data network. If phone system contractor recommends an integrated voice/data network for VOIP, and the firewall is not appropriate, phone system contractor must provide an alternative.

Conferencing requirements?

BMC plans to continue using the current outside service for conferencing,

However, bidders on the Services RFP may recommend a different service as an option, meeting needs for existing usage.

Bidder may specify this as an option, as a substitute to our existing outside service.

IP address requirements?

BMC requires 4 usable IP addresses. If vendor requires a subnet this means we require 8 addresses aligned on a subnet boundary. If not Bidders should include the cost of a fifth IP address as a separate

Business continuity requirements

No need for redundant connections or 24/7 uptime requirements. It is understood that a single IP service supporting an integrated voice/data network would have a single point of failure.

Is there a requirement to track calls or provide voice documentation?

No

Do voice lines and other functions require encryption?

No

Is there a requirement for video conferencing?

No

Initial setup and training requirements

Is BMC porting existing numbers?

Bidders will determine this based on the address (see first item).

Is there a storage location?

BMC will provide a storage location; whether this is at the existing site or the new site will be determined when the time comes to order equipment.

Is there a phased approach to setup?

Most likely, Contractor will make two visits:

1. Install server equipment before BMC occupancy
2. System testing before BMC occupancy

Will the walls have fire-rated 3/4" plywood installed on them by the GC to mount telecommunications equipment to/on?

Yes, the back wall of the server room U7.

Will the GC install a Telecommunications Grounding Busbar for us to bond equipment to?

TBD

Is the contractor responsible for providing and setting up any A/V equipment in conference rooms?

No.

There will be a separate procurement in 2010 for a ceiling mounted projector in the large conference room M1. Cabling contractor will install a video connection cable from a floor-level location to the ceiling location.

For whom does Contractor provide training?

Contractor trains 5-6 designated employees in the operation of TV service equipment.

Contractor trains 1-2 designated administrators in the operation of any equipment supplied to support voice and data services.

What are the ideal locations for service demarcation points?

Bidders suggested that voice and data demarcations are ideally in the server room (U7).

Will cabling contractor install coaxial cabling for TV service?

Bidder should specify if TV demarcation should be in server room or if their responsibility goes all the way to the conference rooms.

Is the contractor responsible for providing and setting up the data network?

Not the services contractor. If the phone system contract is awarded to a bidder that specifies an integrated voice/data network, the phone system contractor is responsible for providing switching equipment for the integrated network.

Support

Term of support and warranties

All support contracts, warranties, and rental agreements must have an initial 1-year term. Bidders should provide and commit to pricing for the 2nd and 3rd years.

Remote monitoring?

Alert BMC if system goes down.

8x5 coverage or 24x7 coverage?

8x5

Bidding process

What metrics will you use to decide on the winning bid? What makes one bid more attractive than another?

BMC does not use a "points" system. Cost proposal should include a cost for minimum system, and show separate costs for optional features.

BMC will compare costs of basic system bid and balance costs of optional features with perceived benefit.

However, experience, site support, service beyond initial warranty period will count towards

How much of decision is based on cost?

At least 50%. Cost is not an absolute criterion; contract will be awarded based upon perceived value. BMC needs to build a total package from this RFP and the services RFP, and make a decision on the total cost. Additional costs for BMC purchased hardware and software will be figured into the total cost.

Since BMC may be able to directly purchase some hardware and software at a lower cost than the bidder, the bidder may offer a credit for equipment and software required by the contract but purchased by BMC:

- Exchange Server (if using Exchange for voice mail)
- Server hardware.
- Switches (if required)
- Firewall (if required)

BMC will decide to purchase the equipment and take advantage of the credit only after the contract is awarded. Bidders should count on providing the equipment.

Selection process will stay in place regardless of construction schedule?

Yes.

We will be including 1 proposal, but 2 quotes- Digital & VOIP. Will this be ok?

This is appropriate. However, the proposal should specify Digital and VOIP as mutually exclusive options.

Should costs versus benefits of various technologies be written or physically demonstrated?

Written.

Is there a website associated or information updates bulletin?

Information updates and RFP addenda will be posted with the RFP announcement at <http://www.baltometro.org/whats-new/requests-for-proposals>

BMC requires only one affidavit for bundled bids, but has specified that this should be the affidavit in the Site Cabling RFP if the bundle includes a bid on that RFP. However, bids for the cabling RFP are due after bids for the phone system are due. When is the affidavit due?

Bidders should submit a Proposal Affidavit with the first proposal they submit. If bidders cannot supply the additional responses in the Site Cabling RFP affidavit by the time they submit bids on other RFPs, they should feel free to submit a second affidavit with their bid on the Site Cabling RFP.