



GO*Trenton!*

Request for Proposals

Operations for an Electric Vehicle Multi-Service Program

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*Responses Due: ***Deadline has been extended to Wednesday, July 27, 2022***

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Introduction

Isles, Inc. is inviting vendors to submit proposals for overseeing the implementation and ongoing operations of an electric vehicle multi-service program that will focus on serving as an affordable and reliable transportation option for the residents of Trenton, New Jersey. Now referred to as **GOTrenton!**, the program is an electric vehicle solution that will work to improve low-income residents' mobility and increase access to jobs, healthcare, and new opportunities. In addition to expanding low-cost transportation options for low-income communities, the program will also be available to the general public and will work to address public health challenges by reducing greenhouse gases and air pollution.

Isles will serve as the community-facing entity and will partner with a vendor to oversee the vehicles, operations, and program management of the project. The program is planned to be implemented in phases. When fully operational, it will offer three transportation services, each addressing a specific need.

1. An EV carshare service for residents looking to use a car for designated period of time and flexible usage
2. An EV rideshare service for residents looking for an affordable mode of travel within the city or nearby
3. An EV shuttle service that will connect major points of interest and essential services (including areas with high concentrations of jobs) that will run on a consistent schedule with flexible routing, higher capacity vehicles.

All three services will offer subsidized rates for low and/or no cost rides for low- to moderate-income (LMI) residents and/or vulnerable populations.

Isles is working in coordination with the City of Trenton to install the electric vehicle infrastructure to support the project services. Fourteen (14) dual-port Level 2 charging stations will be installed at 10 identified site locations through the city's competitive contracting process: <https://nj-trenton.civicplus.com/bids.aspx?bidID=519>

In addition to these charging stations, Isles is in the process of installing two dual-port Level 2 and 1-2 DCFC charging stations at a Trenton-based headquarters location and two dual-port Level 2 charging stations at our social profit center at Mill One.

Earlier this year the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection awarded Isles funding to spearhead this project. Funds from this award will be granted to the selected Vendor to subsidize part of the startup costs for preparing the program. This includes funding for vehicle procurement, shuttle procurement, and costs for the development of a customized software application and the installment of customer interface hardware. Additional funding has been provided to Isles to work in collaboration with the Vendor to guide the development of the program, market the services, assist with workforce development, and recruit organizations and businesses to use the program for their clientele and customers.

Vendors are encouraged to respond with an overview of their services whether it addresses all aspects of the program or parts of it. Vendors are also welcomed to work in collaboration with others to fully respond to all components of this RFP.

Background

The City of Trenton is burdened with a 27% poverty rate and approximately 30% of households are reported to be car-free according to the US Census. Additionally, 21% of residents have reported carpooling as their main mode of travel to work. According to the DVRPC Natural Resources Inventory 2014, the city experiences an average of 100 days per year of moderate or unhealthy air quality, which is likely linked to increased respiratory disease among residents (Climate Action Plan for the City of Trenton, 2010). With this program, Isles, Inc. sees an opportunity to promote economic revitalization and transportation equity while reducing air pollution in the city.

Isles, Inc. has worked in collaboration with Charge EVC-NJ, Environment New Jersey, NJ Clean Cities Coalition, and the City of Trenton for several years on this project. Additionally, the project team was selected to spend a week with Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) as part of its e-Mobility lab in August 2019 workshopping the project. The project team had the benefit of RMI staff and technical faculty that are still working with us on bringing the project to fruition. The work done to date has been thoughtful, collaborative and draws from a wide range of experience from across the county.

Project Goals

The overall purpose of this program is to contribute to the development of financial, health, and social equity in the city. Our project goals are as follows:

1. Promote economic revitalization by improving mobility for residents who lack affordable and reliable transportation options.
2. Increase access to jobs, healthcare, nutritious food, and essential resources through clean, reliable transportation.
3. Address the disproportionate asthma rates that Trenton residents experience by reducing air pollution in the city.
4. Support greater access to essential services and resources for residents in need provided by Trenton's community organizations and local businesses.
5. Increase workforce opportunities through project hiring and by connecting Trenton residents to other job opportunities.
6. Reduce dependency on private vehicles.

Partnership Overview

GoTrenton! is a collaborative effort that will be developed and executed by public, private, and nonprofit partnerships. Isles offers on-the-ground knowledge about the Trenton community, its needs, and best practices for engagement to recruit program users.

While we serve as the community-facing entity for this project, we are looking for vendors that can provide the management, maintenance, technology and start-up solutions for this program. Please describe how your services will fulfill the following needs in detail:

Carshare, rideshare, and shuttle services operations (see corresponding sections below for more information).

Customer service support that oversees operations and includes in-person customer assistant, real-time phone support, and communications through text/in-app messaging system. Isles will develop a Headquarters location that will house an office manager provided by the Vendor and the project's fleet, as well as serve as a customer-facing entity for people to schedule rides, become a member of the program, and address any service issues.

Regular consulting services that include data-driven feasibility studies and planning to expand access to the project's services, improve service efficiency, and scale the program as a comprehensive transportation solution designed to build wealth and improve health in the city. We are also interested in emerging best practices and insight on the electric vehicle industry that will help operate and scale the program.

Vehicle management, including procurement, oversight, dispatchment, fleet maintenance, ongoing sanitation, and passengers' safety, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding awarded by the DEP will provide up to \$104,000 to subsidize the cost of vehicles for the first year for the rideshare program and up to \$313,000 for the shuttles.

Comprehensive software application tailored specifically to the community's needs and project goals. We are looking for a software application that includes the following features:

- a routing algorithm that can analyze trips and group passengers to nearby carshare vehicles or efficient ride shares while anticipating and providing for high-demand peak times such as commuter hours or other major events
- a map of all charging stations in the city with abilities to indicate which ones are available for use; additional data from chargers
- a navigation system that guides drivers, updates routes to real-time demand, and allows them to communicate with the Isles headquarters and system administrators and customers
- a rider reservation system where users can book pre-scheduled and on-demand rides, easily pay for trips, and apply for membership specifications

- driver and vehicle verification for riders including vehicle info, license plate, driver's name
- schedule, map, and arrival alerts for the shuttle service
- geofencing capabilities

Isles will provide \$25,000 to offset the costs for developing a customized software application.

Web based interface system that will allow the program manager to monitor live service operations, manage user accounts, and provide customer support.

Customer interface hardware, either as a kiosk or other form, that can be installed at community centers for users without smart phones. The opportunity to provide this has also been given to Vendors applying to Isles' previous RFP for the installment of electric vehicle infrastructure. Isles will provide up to \$30,000 to install this hardware.

Data and analytics that can be collected and evaluated over time, including overall service utilization, number of pickups and drop-offs in low-income neighborhoods or major employment centers, vehicle-miles and carbon emissions reduced, average daily ridership, trip length, and wait time. Consulting on continuous evaluation on the collected data will be necessary to best adapt the program to the community's needs.

Customer service support that oversees operations and includes in-person customer assistant, real-time phone support, and communications through text/in-app messaging system.

Workforce development plan in collaboration with Isles to determine demand for high-peak times, and plan for driver shifts and ensure demand matches capacity. This plan will also provide recruitment of local workers, training for drivers, and background checks.

Insurance plan that covers liabilities associated with charging infrastructure, vehicles, operations, and passengers. *Release and Indemnity. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Vendor shall release, indemnify, defend and hold harmless Isles Inc. and its directors, officers, trustees, employees, representatives and agents from and against any and all claims, demands, suits, damages, liabilities, injuries (personal or bodily), property damage, causes of action, losses, judgments, costs, expenses and penalties, including, without limitation, court costs and attorney's fees, arising out of (directly or indirectly) or related in any way to the negligent or wrongful acts or omissions of Vendor or any Vendor director, officer, employee or agent in connection with this Grant or the Project, except to the extent resulting from the negligent or wrongful acts or omissions of Isles Inc.*

Car Sharing

The Vendor will be responsible for engaging and managing a car sharing operator for a minimum of five (5) years. The Vendor will propose the structure of its car sharing operations, which must provide for one-way model (A2B) and/or round-trip model (A2A). The one-way model allows a member to pick up a vehicle at predetermined, designated location A and drop

it off at a designated location B. The round-trip model allows a member to pick up a vehicle at a predetermined dedicated spot and return it to that same port location.

The Vendor must commit to providing approximately three (3) to five (5) EVs dedicated to public car sharing and will be responsible for the vehicles at all times, including:

- Insurance of EVs
 - o The Vendor and/or its partners will have liability insurance agreements for EVs that provide at least the minimum aspects as required by law.
- Electricity
 - o The Vendor will be responsible for managing the payment to the utility provider at any and all locations in the project.
- All communication with car sharing operator
 - o The Vendor maintains open communication lines with all of its operators
- Ensuring car sharing operator is properly maintaining car sharing vehicles
 - o The Vendor carries the responsibility that the EV car share program is maintained to the standards set in this RFP, and continuing throughout the term of the project
- Cleaning of vehicles
 - o The Vendor carries the responsibility that the EV car share program is maintained to the standards set in this RFP, and continuing throughout the term of the project, including cleaning the interior and exterior of the vehicles
- Networked electric vehicles available 24/7 accessible via mobile app/website
 - o The EV car share program will be accessible 24/7 via website and mobile app, and all EVs will be networked to provide the maximum amount of transparency possible.
- Movement of EVs to ensure accessibility
 - o The Vendor will create or provide a plan to ensure that vehicles are readily available to residents who would benefit most from this service
- Customer service

The chosen Vendor will work in collaboration with Isles to establish fare structures for each service. A subsidized rate will be provided to low-income residents by Isles. Please outline how your business model will implement this service and include your timeline for development and execution. Also include the following information for the vehicles you will be providing:

- Make and model
- Maintenance overview and costs
- Operations overview
- Battery charging plans

Ridesharing

The Vendor will manage a ridesharing program in collaboration with Isles. The program will hire, train and manage an adequate number of local drivers to operate the program.

Isles seeks a Vendor that will provide the following:

- Five (5) electric vehicles to operate the program. Additional vehicles will be requested as the program grows. We are open to considering various proposals regarding potential ownership models. Up to \$104,000 will be provided to offset costs for procuring vehicles.
- Software application that provides a flexible rider reservation system, navigation and support for drivers, customer service for riders, live monitoring, on-demand bookings, and accounts management. Please provide information about data your software application is able to report. At a minimum, we seek data that captures vehicle-miles saved through ridesharing as well as carbon emissions reductions.
- Recruitment and robust training support for drivers.

Please outline how your business model will implement this service and include your timeline for development and execution.

Shuttle Service

The Vendor will provide two (2) to four (4) electric vans/buses that will be used to implement and operate a shuttle service for residents. These shuttles will travel specific routes that will connect residents to jobs and social, financial, and health services. Isles' goal is to connect with specific businesses and organizations to create a network that will provide better access to essential resources and services.

Isles is currently connecting with community organizations to expand the program's reach.

The Vendor will be responsible for working with Isles to create efficient routing systems, locate accessible pickup locations, and organize schedules. Isles will assist in connecting the Vendor to a local workforce by training drivers for the program and assist with all other operations of this service.

Up to \$313,000 will be provided to the selected Vendor to offset the cost of procuring shuttle vehicles.

Addressing Barriers for Low-Income Residents

The primary goal of this program is to provide mobility services for residents that lack affordable and reliable transportation options. Vendor will provide solutions to challenges to accessing the program's services. Please provide information on how your company will address the following issues:

Some residents will not have access to a smart phone. Project partners' plan must provide a means to connect residents to carsharing, ridesharing and shuttle services. Potential solutions to ensuring these residents can use the app include public kiosks, pre-loaded RFID cards, or user interface software integrated within the charging port infrastructure.

Some residents will not have access to bank accounts and won't be able to make automatic payments through an app. One solution that may be most accessible to some community members includes creating vouchers or a similar system that pre-approves rides to certain members.

The program and its project partners must build trust within the community. From background checks on drivers and trusted transactions, to safety of the vehicles and compliance with CDC guidelines, all services must ensure that residents feel safe and secure throughout their experience with the project. Please describe how your company will address the issues.

Outreach and Education

Isles, Inc. is dedicated to executing a robust outreach and education plan to learn more about the needs of the community as well as to spread word and anticipation of the program. We have conducted approximately 100 on-the-ground surveys to begin assessing the viability and acceptance of the program by the community members, received feedback from several community organizations, and hosted two listening sessions where we heard from several organizations interested in using the service. Isles will continue to conduct these listening sessions, open to both residents and other stakeholders, to gather insight on transportation needs, recruit local leaders, and determine the best method for collaboration.

Isles, Inc. will hire several EV Ambassadors, recruiting reputable community members to educate residents about the program. Training for ambassadors will include an introductory lesson on electric vehicles, basic program information, membership recruitment processes, etc. EV Ambassadors will also be supplied with educational and marketing materials to distribute to community members.

In order to establish a baseline of usage, Isles will partner with local organizations that offer social, health, and financial services that are looking for a solution to their members' and clients' transportation challenges. The goal of these partnerships will be to put MOU's/contracts in place that guarantee usage of the program at specific times, ensuring baseline usage.

Please describe any outreach and/or education assistance your company can provide. If your strategies have been implemented within other programs, please indicate where and describe successes as well as lessons learned.

- Rider training events, ev demonstrations;

Timeline

Subject to change.

Date	Event
June 2022	RFP published for <i>Carsharing, Ridesharing, and Shuttle Services</i>
July	Utility upgrades & installation of charging stations begins
August	Level 2 chargers installed at Isles locations and open to public Winner of RFP announced Preparation to launch program begins
September	Level 2 chargers Installed in City of Trenton & open to public; DCFC chargers Installed at Isles locations
September	Program services launched

How to Respond to this RFP

Isles is requesting proposals on how the Respondent(s) would support the following components of the program. **All submissions must be received by email no later than 5 p.m. EST on Wednesday, July 13. Please send your response to this RFP electronically to Katharina Miguel at kmiguel@isles.org.**

Additionally, Vendors are welcome to submit questions to kmiguel@isles.org. All questions must be submitted by Friday, June 24. Answers to submitted questions will be published at Isles' [Request for Proposals page](#) by Wednesday, June 29.

Isles requests that proposals address all components (i.e. car share, ride share and shuttle operations) of the program to the best of the Vendor's ability. As mentioned earlier, Vendors are welcome to work in collaboration with others to fully respond to all components of this RFP in order to provide a comprehensive business, financial and operational plan to address the program's needs.

Responses must include the following information:

- A cover letter that contains a commitment to provide services stated in Vendor's RFP response, an overview of the experience and background of the Vendor (and its team, if applicable), and the business name(s), emails, and telephone number of the principal contact person(s).

- An executive summary that summarizes the response.
- A statement of qualifications that includes at least two (2) references from previous or current projects, their project dates and budget, and describe qualifications and ability to perform the project.
- A statement of commitment to adhere to the provisions of all applicable federal, state, local laws, ordinances and regulations including but not limited to prohibition of discrimination or segregation by reason of race, religion, color, gender, physical or mental handicap or disability, national origin or ancestry, sexual orientation, military status, parental status, or source of income, including, such laws, ordinances, and regulations.
- A project schedule including planning steps, vehicle procurement, workforce recruitment and training, and deployment
- A proposed business model, financial and operational plan for the Trenton E-Mobility Project that supports each and all of the three program components.

All applicants will receive notice of their selection status by August 12. Due to the expected number of applications, we will not be able to respond to individual requests for feedback.

Evaluation Process

Responses to this RFP will be evaluated by a stakeholder advisory committee based on the following criteria:

- Qualifications/Experience with similar services and projects
- Financial capability for project's development, execution, and sustainability
- Technical approach for planning, maintenance, operations, customer service, and ability to collaborate with current and future project partners
- Demonstrated commitment to equitable transportation
- Cost
- Implementation schedule
- Profit to be shared with Isles
- Commercial terms