

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: July 14, 2010

SUBJECT: CELLULAR TELEPHONES IN THE SUBWAY STATIONS

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission authorize staff to initiate a Structured Multi-Phase Bid Process (SMPBP) (including formal request for proposals) with the three pre-qualified proponents:

- Bell Mobility Incorporated
- Extenet Systems, and
- Broadcast Australia Limited

for the implementation of a cellular network in the Toronto Transit Commission's (TTC's) subway stations at the platforms (including Spadina & Transit City expansion projects) with the option of expanding the cellular network into the TTC's subway tunnels.

FUNDING

No funding is available in either the operating or the capital budgets to implement a cellular network in the subway stations, tunnels or in any public areas. It is intended that TTC's costs be recovered from the prime contractor.

BACKGROUND

Staff issued a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) in February 2008 to determine interest of cellular carriers in providing coverage for subway station platforms only. The cellular carriers indicated that they were not interested in providing coverage to subway station platforms only as it was not financially viable. As a result, no further action was taken at that time.

DISCUSSION

In December 2009, a Request for Pre-Qualification (RFPO) for the design, supply, installation, hosting and maintenance of a cellular network in the TTC's subway system (including tunnels and station platforms) was publicly advertised on the TTC's website. In addition, staff notified the four (4) main cellular carriers in the City of Toronto as well as the five (5) neutral host providers that responded to the RFEI issued in February 2008.

The RFPO specified that the TTC was soliciting from interested parties, a prime contractor that would be the single point of contact for the TTC and who would be responsible for the design, supply, installation, hosting and maintenance of a cellular network in the TTC's subway system (including tunnels, station platforms, and future green field expansions such as Spadina Subway and Transit City Rapid Transit lines). A description of each of the three subway lines: Yonge-University-Spadina, Bloor-Danforth and Sheppard subway lines was provided in the RFPO including their approximate lengths and the number of stations on each line.

The RFPO also stated that the prime contractor would be responsible for all costs including work performed by TTC staff/labour in support of the installation of a cellular network.

In addition, the RFPO stated that the cellular system proposed could not interfere with the TTC's existing safety critical systems, i.e. Communications Information System (CIS), Subway Radio and Communication System (SRC), Automatic Train Control System (ATC) and that the prime contractor would ensure that their proposed work would not interfere with TTC operations.

The purpose of this RFPO was to establish a number of qualified potential proponents for this project. The RFPO stated that subsequent to the selection of the qualified potential proponent(s), the TTC might participate in a SMPBP with the qualified proponent(s). The SMPBP allowed for discussions with the qualified proponents to establish conditions acceptable to all qualified proponents and the TTC, including but not limited to: compensation for the use of its space; not to unduly restrict other carriers from having access to the cellular network in the TTC's subway system; and to present a fair and reasonable opportunity to participate subsequent to an agreement being reached with a prime contractor. Any subsequent agreement would allow all licensed Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) holders an opportunity to have their necessary equipment installed by the prime contractor in order to connect to the TTC's subway system cellular network and to have this service available to TTC customers.

As a result of the RFPQ, the following three proponents were determined to be qualified:

1. Bell Mobility Incorporated;
2. Extenet Systems (Telus); and
3. Broadcast Australia Limited (Rogers)

Extenet Systems and Broadcast Australia teamed up with Telus and Rogers respectively as one of the requirements for the RFPQ was to have a commitment to joint venture with at least one of the licensed CRTC holders.

Due to other safety critical priority projects, space constraints at the stations and lack of TTC resources available to fully implement this project (i.e. station platforms and tunnels), staff again contacted the qualified proponents to determine if any interest existed in providing cellular service at the subway station platforms only. As a result of positive feedback from the qualified proponents, staff is recommending to proceed with the installation of the cellular network at the subway station platforms only with the option to expand this network in the tunnels at a later date, at the sole discretion of the TTC.

Upon finalizing the commercial and technical requirements of this project through the SMPBP, a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued to the pre-qualified firms based on pre-established evaluation criteria to determine a prime contractor to award the contract.

JUSTIFICATION

As the use of cellular technology grows and as the TTC utilizes tools to communicate with customers via email and text messaging, it is recommended that the Commission authorize staff to proceed with this program.

July 14, 2010
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