

Fare Collection System Upgrade Consultant

Scope of Work

1. [Introduction](#)

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) intends to update its current fare collection system, currently based on farebox cash payments, magnetic stripe passes and visual validation mobile ticketing, to a next-generation, account-based system that improves boarding speed and reduces operator interaction. NORTA is issuing this Request for Quote (RFQ) to select a consultant to provide strategic advice and technical assistance in planning, procuring, and implementing a new fare collection system (FCS). NORTA considers its fare collection system to be the holistic system of hardware, software, personnel, and standard operating procedures necessary to collect, count, and report passenger fares.

NORTA is seeking quotes from vendors with experience in transit fare collection systems who can support NORTA in:

- Evaluating and assessing NORTA's current FCS.
- Understanding the current state of practice and industry trends in FCS.
- Refining NORTA's strategic goals and success metrics for the project.
- Designing an upgraded FCS solution.
- Writing technical specifications, a cost estimate, and scope of work (SOW) for an RFQ to upgrade NORTA's FCS.
- Procuring and implementing an upgraded FCS.

2. [Background](#)

[Agency Overview](#)

NORTA is the regional transit authority for the New Orleans metropolitan area with an authorized service in Jefferson Parish. NORTA currently provides fixed-route bus, paratransit, ferry, and streetcar services. NORTA operates thirty-four (34) fixed route service routes, five (5) streetcar routes, two (2) ferry routes and on-demand paratransit services.

Service Type	Fleet	2022 Ridership	2022 Fare Revenue
Fixed-route, bus	176	7,352,274	\$ 5,359,526
Fixed-route, streetcar	66	3,589,947	\$ 3,789,335
Ferry	4	849,429	\$ 1,248,578
Paratransit	50	188,935	\$ 283,937

As the regional transit authority, NORTA leads regional efforts to coordinate services with a Regional Ride Pass that allows customers to transfer between NORTA and Jefferson Parish Transit (JP Transit).

Current Fare Hardware Systems

NORTA's current fleet is equipped with the following farebox and ITS systems:

- Genfare Fast Fare fareboxes (on 21 buses currently, with another 28 in process of delivery) with one open ethernet port (Digi Wr44)
- Genfare Odyssey fareboxes (on 113 buses) with one open ethernet port (Digi wr44)
- Genfare Odyssey fareboxes (on 64 streetcars, 128 devices total) with one open ethernet port each (Digi Wr44)
- 3 Genfare TVM Vendstar 4 for use in hubs/in front of canal
- 6 Genfare TVM Vendstar all dedicated to ferry

Fleet Software and Auxiliary Systems

NORTA's vehicles also utilize the following software and devices on board:

- Clever Devices IVN CAD/AVL (all vehicles)
- 31 of 66 street cars are equipped with Automated Passenger Counters (APCs)
- 20 paratransit vehicles use Greyhawk GH7 units for CAD/AVL manifests (trip manifests are generated in Trapeze).
- 39 paratransit vehicles use Greyhawk GHM tablet (Samsung) for CAD/AVL manifests and turn-by-turn directions
- Paratransit vehicles do not have open router ports; only 21 paratransit vehicles are equipped with an in-use router.

Current Fare Sales Practices

Fare collection for fixed route service significantly involves Genfare farebox systems that accept cash, coins, and paper passes. Although Fast Fare fareboxes also have NFC, tap-to-pay, mag stripe, and QR scanning technology, those functions are not all utilized in current agency practices.

TVMs accept cash and credit cards and print paper, magnetic-stripe tickets that are validated at on-vehicle fareboxes. TVMs are capable of printing and scanning QR codes, but those functions are not utilized in current agency practices.

Mobile ticketing currently relies on visual verification from operators. Currently, the agency uses Token Transit as a back-end payment collection system integrated into a Moovit-developed white-label app owned by NORTA ("Le Pass"), the Transit app, and other mobile platforms.

Magnetic-stripe pass products are also sold via direct sale from the agency and distributed via USPS or delivered by the agency. Retail partners sell some fare products at 11 locations across the city.

Paratransit trips are booked by directly contacting NORTA where staff plan trips and generate manifests using Trapeze software. Payments for paratransit trips are made in cash to vehicle operators. Nearly 100% of paratransit fares are paid in cash.

Coordinated Fare Modernization Initiative

In 2021, NORTA began the Coordinated Fare Modernization Initiative (CFMI), an inter-departmental effort to modernize all fare-related elements of the agency, including marketing, sales, ticketing, collection, validation, and accounting.

The goals of the CFMI are aligned with those of the Agency's Fare Policy, developed as one component of the CFMI. The Fare Policy was drafted to be technology- and solution-agnostic but confined to the policy options available with current FCS.

NORTA recognizes that some possible strategies may achieve one objective at the expense of another. The consultant selected through this RFQ will assist NORTA in developing an FCS solution that aligns with the overall objectives of the CFMI.

NORTA's CFMI goals include:

- **Improve Service**—Enhance service reliability and increase overall speed of service through reducing dwell time associated with fare payment and collection.
- **Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**—Ensure fare collection modernization is a net benefit for riders regardless of their access to banking, use of technology or ability; prioritize regular, local riders and leverage m and reduce barriers to faster payment system.
- **Minimize Operator Involvement in Fare Collection**—Minimize the role of operators in fare collection and fare disputes to allow them to focus on providing safe, reliable, and welcoming service.
- **Support Open Standards**—Design an FCS that will allow future adaptability and system resilience by using open standards.
- **Increase Efficiency and Simplicity**—Ensure FCS technology, payments, and processes from end user to back office are not overly complex or processes are Increase speed and efficiency of rider boarding and simplicity of Fare Elements for customers.
- **Expand and Connect Participation**—Permit the growth of fare sales through third-party providers, employers, and stakeholders; be scalable to integrate other regional transit agencies and transportation modes.
- **Optimize Return on Investment**—Optimize the value of capital and operating expenditures on Fare Elements.
- **Support Regional Integration**—Design a system that can serve as a regional solution for NORTA and neighboring agencies for a seamless rider experience across transit systems.

3. Program Requirements

NORTA is planning for a next-generation FCS that improves on existing practices at the agency and in our riding public, utilizes next generation technologies, is flexible in providing for new services, is scalable in expansion of existing services and system upgrades, and provides security for the agencies and public while improving the customer experience.

NORTA is seeking a Consultant to provide on-call planning, technical assistance and owner's representative services for the implementation of the CFMI resulting in a system that will align with the following principles:

- Utilizes open architecture.
- Supports account-based ticketing and a system for fare capping.
- Allows future flexibility in FCS development.
- Simplifies boarding experience for riders and operators.
- Supports operational efficiencies for applicable transit modes.
- Reduces the share of purchases made at vehicle farebox in cash.
- Improves back-end reporting and integration with agency data systems.

NORTA seeks to accomplish this while minimizing disruption to its service delivery and customer experience. Any plan for the transition from NORTA's status quo FCS through to the implementation of a new FCS should take account of these needs. Plans for a new FCS should also consider the necessary staff time and overall cost of ownership, especially in comparison to the status quo system.

The Consultant will provide the full breadth of their firm's technical expertise, procurement strategy advisory experience, and management lessons to support the CFMI. The Consultant resources made available to NORTA should include both management and practical lessons gained from similar project situations.

The Consultant must demonstrate the ability to apply expertise in our local context and will provide white papers, case study examples, direct strategic advice, and/or provide written analysis as needed to support the work requirements. The Consultant will provide the full breadth of their firm's technical expertise, procurement strategy advisory experience, and management lessons to support the project.

The Consultant resources made available to NORTA should include both leadership and practical lessons gained from similar project situations. The Consultant must demonstrate the ability to apply expertise in our local context and will provide white papers, case study examples, direct strategic advice, and/or provide written analysis as needed to support the work requirements.

The selected consultant services will be available to support NORTA through the complete implementation of its next-generation FCS.

4. Task Order Services

The Consultant shall provide Task Order (TO) professional consulting services in connection with the CFMI and implementation of the next-generation FCS. NORTA shall notify the Consultant in writing of the Task Order services. Consultant will submit a detailed proposal with elements detailed below for review by NORTA. After Consultant and NORTA agree on the scope of work and fee proposal, NORTA will issue a formal written notice-to-proceed (NTP) and the Consultant will commence services for the specified task. All task orders are subject to the terms and conditions contained in this solicitation.

Documentation shall include:

- Detailed scope of work
- Schedules with milestones for deliverables and other key stages of the task
- Fee, based on the rates submitted in the Consultants successful proposal, including approved other direct costs

NORTA anticipates the following Task Orders:

Task #	Task Name	Timeframe	Comments
Task 1	CFMI Initialization Project Planning & Management	Month 1-3 Month 4-6	Draft scope included in Exhibit 1; Initial response and pricing to be included in this proposal
Task 2	Procurement Support Project Implementation Support	Month 6-12 Month 13-26	Draft scope included in Attachment 1; Proposal will be requested from/negotiated with contractor should task be required

5. Program Schedule

The selected Consultant will work with NORTA staff to develop a specific program plan, including identifying key stakeholders; developing a task list and work breakdown structure; identifying key checkpoints; and determining an overall schedule for the project phases described above.

****A detailed timeline of activities should be included as part of the submission from each respondent.**

A proposed timeline for tasks and deliverables as part of the CFMI program included below:

Task	Description	Project Month																							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1.1	Baseline Assessment																								
1.2	State of the Practice Memo																								
1.3	Project Goals & Roadmap																								
2.1	Concept of Operations																								
2.2	Procurement Project Plan																								
3.1	FCS RFP Scope of Work																								
3.2	RFP Evaluation Criteria																								
3.3	FSC Procurement																								
3.4	FCS Evaluation Report																								
4.1	Implementation																								

6. Selection Criteria

6.1. Experience / Qualifications (30%)

Evaluation will be based on demonstrated success, ability to meet deadlines, case studies showing successful planning, management and support for similar projects, and familiarity with current technology and best practices in relevant fields.

6.2. Knowledge and Experience of Key Individuals (25%)

Evaluation will be based on the demonstrated qualifications and experience of proposed project staff.

6.3. Project Approach and Resource Management (30%)

Evaluation will be based on demonstrable understanding of the nature of the work and the general approach to be taken, including identifiable, specific considerations in order to meet the needs of the New Orleans market and NORTA ridership.

6.4. Partnership Strength (15%)

Evaluation will be based on the composition and structure of the team and any exceptional or value-added features or capabilities included in the proposed price for the work and may include ideas that are not specifically addressed in the scope of work.

Evaluation will also be based on proposing party's plan to meet goals for DBE participation as identified in [xx].

7. Contract Structure

The contract will be an on-call task-order basis, with each Task Order to be negotiated for a not-to-exceed amount using the rates submitted in the successful Proposal.

A Consultant's selection does not guarantee that the Consultant will receive Task Order assignments. NORTA reserves the right to separately procure consulting services for a task in lieu of assigning a Task Order to the Consultant. A Consultant's selection for this contract does not preclude the Consultant from submitting its qualifications for other NORTA projects.

8. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should be no longer than 15 pages (double-sided), not included required NORTA Forms. Proposals should use single spaced, 12-point font. Proposals should include:

8.1. **Cover letter**

8.2. **Project Approach:** Proposed project approach to the project tasks and deliverables including any potential clarifications, enhancements, or improvements for phase activities and deliverables

8.3. **Project Schedule:** Proposed project schedule to accomplish the described tasks and proposed project approach, described above, including a preliminary overall FCS deployment schedule

8.4. **Project Team:** all firms, team size, structure including project roles, and relevant experience of proposed project team members

8.5. **Team Profile:** Company profile and experience completing similar projects

8.6. **NORTA Forms:** as indicated in Submission Checklist section xx

8.7. **Pricing:**

List hourly rates for all proposed team members for services required. Rates should provide a complete breakdown showing unburdened labor rate, G&A, overhead and profit, as well as a

separate estimate for anticipated travel costs based on the estimated schedule provided in this RFQ.

8.8. Initial Proposal for Task Order 1:

Provide an initial proposal for Task Order 1, listed in Exhibit 1, based on the required elements identified in Section 4 of this Scope of Work.

Exhibit 1: Draft Task Order 1

1. Phase 1: CFMI Initialization

In the Initialization phase, the Consultant will work with NORTA project staff and key internal stakeholders to establish a baseline understanding of the agency's current FCS, identify emerging best practices in transit fare collection, and define performance goals the agency should use for its FCS upgrade.

1.1. Phase 1 Activities

- 1.1.1. Review agency's existing Fare Policy, draft Fare Study, and Coordinated Fare Modernization Initiative plan.
- 1.1.2. Assess existing NORTA fare collection system, including a concept of operations for the existing FCS that maps money and data flows.
- 1.1.3. Assess total cost of ownership for NORTA's existing FCS.
- 1.1.4. Summarize current state of transit fare collection practices, policy, and technology, including sections on the following:
 - 1.1.4.1. Pre-Paid Boarding
 - 1.1.4.2. Mobile Technology
 - 1.1.4.3. Account-Based Ticketing
 - 1.1.4.4. Cashless Cares
 - 1.1.4.5. Open Loop versus Closed Loop Systems
 - 1.1.4.6. Technology Standards
 - 1.1.4.7. Rider equity in collection methods, including Title VI considerations involved in a FCS upgrade
- 1.1.5. Develop agency goals from Fare Policy into a set of measurable "end state" strategic goals for an FCS upgrade.
- 1.1.6. Create a strategic framework for operation of FCS in partnership with NORTA project staff and internal stakeholders.
- 1.1.7. Recommend changes to the agency's Fare Policy to support the implementation of a next-generation fare collection system.

1.2. Phase 1 Deliverables

- 1.2.1. A baseline assessment report of the agency's existing FCS, that includes a review of existing policy, technical elements, and cost of ownership (elements described in Activities 1.1.1 – 1.1.3.).
- 1.2.2. State of the Practice Memo, as described in Activity 1.1.4.

- 1.2.3.Suggested updates to the agency’s CFMI plan, including strategic goals, staffing needs, and policy updates that would best support an optimized FCS—as described in Activities 1.1.5 – 1.1.7.

2. Phase 2: Project Planning & Management

In the Project Planning and Management phase, the Consultant will develop an overall timeline and project sequence for planning, procuring, and deploying NORTA’s next-generation FCS.

2.1. Phase 2 Activities

- 2.1.1. Identify and list internal stakeholder requirements in an upgraded FCS.
- 2.1.2. Identify and list external customer requirements.
- 2.1.3. Develop, in partnership with NORTA staff, a Concept of Operations.
- 2.1.4. Develop, in partnership with NORTA staff, key performance indicators for the upgraded FCS derived from the strategic framework for NORTA fare collection.
- 2.1.5. Outline the timeline and necessary steps to procure and deploy the next-generation FCS, that includes at least the following elements:
 - 2.1.5.1. Preliminary cost estimates for proposed FCS solutions (both one-time implementation costs and on-going maintenance costs)
 - 2.1.5.2. Deployment plan that identifies necessary contract actions, task dependencies, and quality measures needed to successfully deploy an upgraded FCS
 - 2.1.5.3. Validation plan, identifying indicators that will confirm the installed FCS meets NORTA and rider needs as defined in the Concept of Operations.

2.2. Phase 2 Deliverables

- 2.2.1. Concept of Operations report that provides a staff-facing description of how the new fare collection system will work.
- 2.2.2. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the new FCS
- 2.2.3. Procurement Project Plan, that includes elements listed in 2.1.5.

Exhibit 2: Draft Task Order 2

1. Phase 3: Procurement Support

In the Procurement phase, the Consultant will assist NORTA project staff in writing a clear Request for Proposals for necessary elements of an upgraded FCS and will supplement the procurement process with technical expertise.

1.1. Phase 3 Activities

- 1.1.1. Draft Scopes of Work (SOW) that will specify the technical requirements of NORTA's next-generation FCS.
- 1.1.2. Support NORTA project team in establishing evaluation criteria for its FCS RFQ based on best practices.
- 1.1.3. Deliver a digest of each submitted proposal to the FCS RFQ, summarizing how each FCS RFQ respondent proposal addresses requirements and evaluation criteria.

1.2. Phase 3 Deliverables

- 1.2.1. RFQ technical documents
- 1.2.2. FCS proposal evaluation criteria
- 1.2.3. Evaluation report of FCS RFQ respondents

2. Phase 4: Implementation Support

In the Implementation Support phase, the selected consultant will support the NORTA project team and relevant technical staff in deploying the chosen FCS.

2.1. Phase 4 Activities

- 2.1.1. In the Implementation Support phase, the selected consultant will support the NORTA project team and relevant technical staff in deploying the chosen FCS.
- 2.1.2. Advise as needed to assist NORTA staff in transitioning to the successor system including identifying the approach for the transition of data from the legacy system to the new database for all data collected during the deployment of the new system, while the legacy system is still in operation.
- 2.1.3. Review any Change Order Requests from the successful FCS vendor and evaluate necessity, provide independent cost estimate and validation of proposed scope adjustment.
- 2.1.4. Review successful FCS vendor invoices and submit written concurrence on work performed and received.
- 2.1.5. Confirm elements of chosen FCS are installed and functioning according to Concept of Operations and Deployment Plan.
- 2.1.6. Verify installation and deployment of full FCS satisfies conditions described in Validation Plan.

2.2. Phase 4 Deliverables

- 2.2.1.Regular, written reports on project progress
- 2.2.2.Completion 'punch list'
- 2.2.3.Document management and training, as needed