

Unsolicited Proposal Program FAQ

What is an unsolicited proposal?

An unsolicited proposal is a written application for a **new or innovative idea** and can be of two types:

- **Type 1:** Unsolicited proposals for a *No Cost Demonstration* – submitted to the agency for the purpose of entering into a product demonstration agreement that would lead to a pilot program to be conducted within a specific time frame with no expectation of commitment or purchase at its conclusion.
- **Type 2:** Unsolicited Proposals for an *Acquisition Requiring a Contract* - submitted to the agency for the purpose of obtaining a contract and not in response to a request for proposals or any other Capital Metro-initiated solicitation.

Who should submit an unsolicited proposal?

Capital Metro welcomes proposals from any vendor with the technical and financial resources to provide the services proposed or the ability to enter into an agreement with the agency and/or serve as a partner in a contract resulting from the proposal's adoption. Capital Metro encourages and welcomes innovative submissions from private-sector businesses (including startups and small businesses), labor unions, municipalities, academic institutions, philanthropic foundations and non-profit organizations.

Capital Metro encourages vendors who operate in a priority area of interest to submit proposals but will also entertain proposals in other areas. (See below for details on our priority areas in "What makes for a successful unsolicited proposal?")

Vendors should consider submitting an unsolicited proposal if they believe they have a unique capability to provide the specific property or services proposed and/or if they have a unique idea that they would like to put forth to Capital Metro.

What is the advantage to submitting an unsolicited proposal?

Unsolicited proposals introduce Capital Metro to unique opportunities not currently under consideration. Thus, the advantage to submitting an unsolicited proposal is to get Capital Metro to consider opportunities that the proposer can provide and to make the agency aware of new ideas or innovative ways to provide a service. However, submission of an unsolicited proposal does not guarantee a relationship with Capital Metro, even if the idea is accepted or of interest to Capital Metro.

How is this different from the traditional procurement process?

An unsolicited proposal may represent a new service or improvement to an existing service or process that is not being actively solicited by Capital Metro. Any proposal relating to an open Capital Metro solicitation should be submitted through existing procurement processes.

How do I submit an unsolicited proposal?

Proposals should be submitted electronically to UnsolicitedProposals@capmetro.org, or sent via carrier or hand carried to:

Procurement Department
Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority
2910 E 5th Street
Austin, TX 78702

Hardcopy proposals should include a full electronic copy of all proposal materials.

I've submitted an unsolicited proposal. What happens next?

The Procurement Department will accept the proposal and forward it to Capital Metro's Innovation Committee, which will conduct an initial evaluation to determine if the **unsolicited proposal**:

- Contains sufficient technical and cost information for evaluation;
- Is innovative and unique; and
- Describes potential benefits to Capital Metro.

As part of the initial review, the Innovation Committee may confer with other Capital Metro departments to determine whether or not the **unsolicited proposal** merits further consideration.

If Capital Metro is interested in the idea, will I be awarded a contract without needing to submit a bid?

No. Unsolicited proposals for a no-cost demonstration are for demonstration or pilot purposes only and would involve executing a demonstration agreement, but no contract will be awarded. Upon completion of the demonstration, if Capital Metro is interested in obtaining a permanent solution, the agency will facilitate a competitive bidding process to ensure a fair playing field for vendors and the best value for the taxpayer.

For unsolicited proposals of an acquisition requiring a contract, Capital Metro maintains its commitment to fair and open competition in all procurements. In order to qualify for sole-source procurement (without a competitive bidding process), the vendor would need to prove that they are the only entity capable of providing a particular good or service. Otherwise, Capital Metro will facilitate a competitive bidding process. However, a successful unsolicited proposal will create an opportunity that would not otherwise exist. Therefore, as the originator of the idea, you will have a fair opportunity to propose.

Why should I put effort into a proposal when it may result in a competitive bidding process?

The unsolicited proposal program offers a chance for you to let Capital Metro know about unique opportunities that would otherwise never be considered through regular business. By submitting an unsolicited proposal, you have the ability to inform the future strategy of Capital Metro and to create opportunities – for yourself and for others - that would not otherwise exist.

Will the unsolicited proposal be kept confidential from public disclosure?

Any submission to Capital Metro, including an unsolicited proposal, is subject to the Texas Open Records Act. Proposers shall clearly mark each page of the unsolicited proposal that contains trade secrets or any confidential, commercial, financial or other information the proposer believes should not be disclosed outside of Capital Metro.

What should an unsolicited proposal contain?

Unsolicited proposals should contain the following information to permit consideration in an objective and timely manner:

Basic information including:

- Proposer's name and address and type of organization (e.g., for-profit, nonprofit, educational, small business).
- Names and telephone numbers of technical and business personnel to be contacted for evaluation or negotiation purposes.
- Citation of proprietary data to be used only for evaluation purposes and not to be made public.
- Names of other federal, state, local agencies and/or transit authorities receiving the proposal or funding the proposed effort.
- Date of submission.
- Signature of person authorized to represent and contractually obligate the proposer.

Technical information including:

- Concise title and abstract of the proposed effort;
- A reasonably complete discussion stating the objectives of the effort or activity, the method of approach and extent of effort to be employed, the nature and extent of the anticipated results, and how the work would help to accomplish the agency's mission.
- Names and biographical information of the proposer's key personnel involved, including alternates.

- Type of support needed from the agency (e.g., facilities, equipment, materials or personnel resources).

Supporting information including:

Type 1: Unsolicited Proposals for a *No-Cost Demonstration*:

- A three-month period of time for which the proposal is valid.
- Proposed duration of the program or service.
- Brief description of the organization, previous experience in the field and facilities to be used.
- Required statements about organizational conflicts of interest.

Type 2: Unsolicited Proposals for an Acquisition Requiring a Contract:

- A six-month period of time for which the proposal is valid.
- Proposed duration of the program or service.
- Brief description of the organization, previous experience in the field and facilities to be used.
- Required statements about organizational conflicts of interest.
- Proposed price or total estimated cost for the program or service in sufficient detail for meaningful evaluation.

What makes for a successful unsolicited proposal?

Successful proposals will clearly articulate the benefit to Capital Metro in its priority areas. Capital Metro's priorities for unsolicited proposals are to identify the following:

- Cost-saving measures with an impact on the operating budget.
- Acceleration of capital projects.
- Improvement of existing customer service and experience.
- Introduction of new services that improve the customer experience.

An unsolicited proposal is not:

- An offer or alternative to a currently open Capital Metro solicitation or a proposal for property or services that Capital Metro is currently procuring through competitive methods.
- A policy or operating procedure recommendation.
- Advertising material, commercial items offers or routine correspondence on technical issues.

What other requirements will be considered?

No demonstration agreement or award shall be made unless Capital Metro’s contracting officer makes an affirmative determination of a proposer’s responsibility. Organizational conflicts of interest are another factor to be considered.

What are the possible results of submitting an Unsolicited Proposal? What is the timeframe for this process?

Submission of an Unsolicited Proposal for Type 2 stated above does not guarantee a relationship with Capital Metro, even if the idea is accepted or of interest to the Authority. Submitted ideas are subject to public disclosure, and accepted ideas are subject to competitive solicitation.

There are four possible results from submission of a Conceptual Proposal:

RESULT	DESCRIPTION
Rejection	Proposals that would not provide sufficient value for the required resources.
Discussion for a Demonstration Agreement	A meeting would be scheduled to discuss in more detail the demonstration/pilot, which may then lead to executing a demonstration agreement.
Request for Detailed Proposal	Proposals that are not currently part of Capital Metro’s operations or services, are not in consideration for a possible solicitation, are within a new market and are not traditional goods or services for which there is an active market. Scope, outcomes, budget and/or process are unclear, but there is potential value that should be further investigated.
Move to Solicitation	Proposals that may replace, supplement or otherwise change an existing Capital Metro operation or service, or provide a new service that Capital Metro is not actively considering but for which there is an active, competitive market. The scope of the proposal is clear, and the outcomes are evident and align with Capital Metro’s priorities.