



**New Jersey Department of Transportation  
Bureau of Research  
RESEARCH PROJECT  
Request for Proposal  
CY2019-2020 Program**

**Project Title: Understanding the Needs of Current and Potential Bus Transit Riders**

**Posting No.: 2019-05**

**Date of RFP Announcement: 10/11/2019**

**Closing Date: 11/25/2019**

Proposals must be prepared in accordance with NJDOT's *Supplemental and Proposals guidelines*. Please visit <https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/research/guidelines.shtm> for the most current version.

## **1 - RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The NJ TRANSIT bus network is a great asset to New Jersey's transportation network. Bus ridership in New Jersey, particularly on local buses, has been steadily dropping in recent years, which is consistent with trends seen by other transit agencies in both the region and around the country.

There is a need to conduct research to identify best practices used by other transit agencies to better understand the needs of current, former and potential new bus riders. This research should explore the survey methodologies used which could include telephone surveys, online surveys, face-to-face interviews, onboard surveys, public outreach events, interviews with local stakeholders or other innovative techniques to reach users, non-users, and former users of bus transit services.

Researchers should also investigate the types of questions that have been asked to each group and how the findings have been used by transit agencies to improve service and increase ridership. The findings from this project would be used by NJ Transit's planning staff to adjust bus services to better meet the needs of the dynamic population of New Jersey. Information such as ranking what bus service amenities are most important to customers or identifying the most popular types of destinations, i.e. offices, warehouses, shopping centers, hospitals, etc., will help planners as they're working on improvements to service. This data will also be a useful tool as planners respond to requests for new service from local stakeholders (the public, public officials, etc.).

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

At minimum, the proposed research shall include:

Phase 1: Conducting a review of existing survey methodologies used to reach users, non-users, and former users of bus transit services. Researchers should also investigate the types of questions that have been asked to each group and how the findings have been used by transit agencies to improve service and increase ridership.



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Phase 2: At a minimum, the proposed research team shall develop draft survey instruments in collaboration with NJ Transit's Bus Planning and Market Research based on the research findings from Phase I.

The survey of non-riders should include questions about:

- the perceptions of existing transit services in New Jersey,
- the reasons residents are not currently using transit,
- factors that would encourage residents to begin using transit, and
- other key questions.

Former riders should be asked:

- why they stopped riding buses,
- what aspects of bus travel were appealing and
- what aspects were not appealing when they were a customer, and
- what changes could be made to encourage them to rider buses again.

The survey of existing riders should focus on:

- what attributes of service and amenities are most important to them
- are you taking more, less or the same number of trips by bus during a typical week as you were one year ago? If more or less trips add a follow up question asking why they are taking more or less trips than in the past.
- the types of places they are traveling by bus.

The survey methodology and survey questions shall be submitted to the Customer and the Research Project Manager for approval prior to proceeding to Phase 3.

Phase 3: At a minimum, a comprehensive survey of existing bus riders, non-riders, and former bus rider should be conducted among a representative sample of New Jersey residents.

Phase 4: Based on the research conducted in the prior phases, the final product should include findings from each of the surveys along with recommendations for improvements.

### **1-3. Type of Contract.**

It is proposed that if the Issuing Office enters into a contract because of this Request for Proposal (RFP), it will be a **Cost Reimbursement, Deliverable-Based** contract containing the Standard Contract Terms and Conditions.

### **2 - BUDGET and CONTRACT TIME**

The **TOTAL** project budget shall not exceed **\$250,000 US Dollars**. The PI must provide the anticipated research study duration based on the proposed tasks. Consideration should be given to potential impediments so that adjustments are incorporated into the schedule minimizing the need for time extensions. Contract time shall include sufficient time for the procurement of subcontractors, as well as no less than three months for Final Report review and acceptance. Please be advised that going forward, new task orders having permissible justification will be allowed no more than one time extension with the advent of 2 CFR 200.



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**A 18 - 20 month total project duration is preferred.**

Please provide a Gantt Chart schedule, by month number (e.g. 1-20), showing tasks start/end, and deliverables. List corresponding deliverables below the chart.

**3 - Oral Presentations.** Oral presentations may be requested as part of this RFP. If required, you will be notified by the Bureau of Research to schedule your oral presentation. They will be held at NJDOT headquarters in Trenton, NJ, attended by the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP), and be limited to no more than an hour, including time for questions and answers.

**4 – DEADLINE**

Proposals (10 single-bound copies) are due at the NJDOT Bureau of Research no later than **4:00 p.m. on November 25, 2019.**

**Approximate Start Date: 2/13/2020.** The official start date is the date that the Bureau of Research obtains a signature from the Assistant Commissioner.

**5 – CONTACTS**

Interested parties shall send all questions related to this RFP to the Bureau Manager by sending an e-mail to [Research.Bureau@dot.nj.gov](mailto:Research.Bureau@dot.nj.gov) or by phone (609-963-2224). Questions on this topic **shall not** be directed to any Research Project Manager, Research Customer, or any other NJDOT person. All questions must be received **on or before October 25, 2019 in order to be answered.**

A pre-proposal meeting may be scheduled with interested parties upon the request of **more than one** Institution of Higher Education. **This must be requested on or before October 25, 2019.**

**PROPOSAL DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS:**

**For private, paid messenger services such as Federal Express, DHL, UPS, etc., or for hand-carried deliveries:**

RFP No. **2019-05** PROPOSAL-NJDOT  
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