

**MEMORANDUM**

**October 30, 2014**

**To: MVTA Board**

**From Michael Abegg, Planner**

**Subject: Award of contract for Bus Driver Training Simulator**

**Requested Action**

None; update only.

**Background**

The acquisition of a Bus Driver Training Simulator is a fully-funded part of MVTA's UPA projects. The simulator is necessary to allow significant driver training to take place in concert with the development of the actual on-bus systems. Given the short timelines of the UPA, the use of a simulator was considered the only way to achieve adequate driver training in the time available.

MVTA worked with its partners at the University of Minnesota's Human FIRST laboratory to create technical specifications and worked with Met Council staff to ensure appropriate contract terms given the Federal section 5309 funding that supports this project. The Request for Bids was issued on September 2. The original response deadline was October 17, which was pushed back to October 22 to allow sufficient time for vendors to digest MVTA responses and clarifications.

Bids were opened this morning from two companies at the following amounts:

Doron Precision Systems: \$201,995

Realtime Technologies: \$519,050

Because of the enormous spread between the two as well as the fact that the Doron bid is less than half what the Independent Cost Estimate suggested, staff does not feel comfortable with recommending even a conditional award to the low bidder. Staff (working with Metropolitan Council and University of Minnesota staff) will need to carefully evaluate both bids to determine whether the bid is "responsive," in particular whether it is responsive to the scope of work defined in the technical specification.

**Impact**

While it is critical to keeping MVTA's UPA projects on schedule and it is important that the bus simulator contract be awarded as soon as possible, staff do not recommend a contingent award be made to the apparent low bidder due to the possibility of significant discrepancies between the

Request for Bid and the low bidder's submittal. Staff prefers to delay award until this issue can be fully investigated.

This means that award will be delayed from the original schedule. However, staff is hopeful that award can be made at the next available Board meeting and not delay the project substantially.

**Recommendation**

No action recommended at this time; recommendation for award will be made at future meeting.

**MA/**