

Request for Proposals – Telephone System

Introduction

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority of St. Cloud, Minnesota (St. Cloud HRA) is requesting proposals to replace its current, outdated system with a new and improved one. The St. Cloud HRA seeks proposals on the type of system that best suits its needs. Systems under consideration include a hosted VoIP system, an on premise VoIP system or other similar product. The St. Cloud HRA seeks a system that is functional in terms of our current needs, but that can easily and inexpensively be updated/upgraded to address future needs.

The St. Cloud HRA is a Fair Housing Agency, and any contractor entering HRA property must comply with Fair Housing Laws. The St. Cloud HRA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Respondents agree that there will not be discrimination as to race, sex, religion, color, age, creed, or national origin in regard to obligations, work and service performed under those terms of any contract ensuing from this RFP.

The selected vendor will be our primary source for the following:

- Business telephone system hardware, software and voice mail equipment
- Installation and configuration services for the equipment
- Training of users and administrators
- Maintenance of purchased and installed equipment and software
- Upgrades to the installed systems as necessary
- Upgrade to current conference call equipment located in Board Room
- Coordination between system and services
- Ensuring there are no other ancillary costs other than those specified in the proposal

Current Telephone System

Mitel Office 250

30 desk phones at the central office
2 console phones at the central office
6 IP phones at 6 different locations
5 resident phones at 5 different locations
1 emergency phone line (no physical phone at this time)
1 conference call console at the central office
1 TDY Device at the central office

Network:

- T1 line to the central office location
- Spectrum internet at 100/10 or 200/10 at the off-site locations
- Meraki Firewall and Meraki switches at all locations

We would like the option of adding 11 caretaker virtual phones.

Instructions on Proposal Submission

All requests for information should be directed to:

Jason Neuerburg
St. Cloud HRA
1225 W St. Germain Street
Saint Cloud, MN 56301

jneuerburg@stcloudhra.com
320-202-3141

Closing Submission Date

Proposals must be received no later than 1:00 pm on November 1, 2020.

Condition of Proposal

All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the vendor. During the evaluation process, the St. Cloud HRA reserves the right to request information or clarification from the vendor to allow for correction of errors and omissions. All proposal pricing should be valid for installation time period starting on February 1, 2021.

Proposal Instructions

Submit one original and 2 copies of the response. Each prepared response shall be submitted in a sealed envelope. The envelope must be addressed to the following and include the label as indicated below:

St. Cloud HRA
Attention: Jason Neuerburg
1225 W St. Germain Street
Saint Cloud, MN 56301

Mark in lower left-hand corner RFP – telephone system

It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that the proposal is received by the date and time specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

A copy may also be sent electronically to jneuerburg@stcloudhra.com with the subject line of "Proposal – telephone system".

All materials submitted by the vendor in response to this RFP become the sole property of the St. Cloud HRA upon receipt of the proposal.

Contract Overview

The proposal should include a contract for all proposed equipment and services including coordination between the system and the available services. The contract must include all costs for the proposal, and there shall not be any additional ancillary costs. If the vendor does not wish to submit an actual contract with the proposal, due to different alternatives proposed and pending choices from those alternatives, a sample contract should be submitted with the proposal. The contract shall include all insurance

provided, surety bonds and costs, etc. The contract must state that the vendor provides its own worker's compensation insurance or is not required to provide same.

Contract Term and Cost of Ownership

All equipment, software, licensing and maintenance pricing and negotiations for variations must be clearly stated. All pricing and negotiations must include both a five (5) and seven (7) year analysis of the Total Cost of Ownership. It shall include the costs of any necessary upgrades at the St. Cloud HRA to make the system operational. There shall be no additional costs associated with the purchase, installation and/or operation of the proposal. The selected vendor should be prepared to implement set up at least 60 days before the current contract ends on March 31, 2021.

Right to Reject

The St. Cloud HRA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to the RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP.

Evaluation Criteria

All responses to this RFP will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the following factors:

- Cost
- Functionality of standard equipment and features to meet our specific needs
- Availability of additional capabilities to add as needed
- System growth and expansion
- Ability to save communications costs by using Internet Technologies
- Ease of use
- Product quality, reliability and warranty plan
- Vendor qualifications
- Overall reputation in the industry
- Experience and expertise with the product being offered
- Service and support resources including training by vendor for the installation and maintenance
- Certified vendor relationship with product manufacturer
- References where similar systems have been installed

Proposal Content

Proposals should include the following information:

- Vendor overview
- Vendor qualifications
- Vendor partners for solution proposed
- Vendor experience in implementing similar proposed systems
- Vendor reference (include a minimum of 3)
- Overview of vendor IT staff, qualifications and certifications
- Software and hardware: clearly specify each piece of hardware (server, switches, proprietary hardware) with model numbers and software with version numbers. List must be complete and include all costs
- Include telecommunication device for the deaf (TDY) and/or separate line or service as part of the proposed system
- Planned/warranted lifespan (based on the manufacturer or creator's intention to support) of hardware
- All quantities of equipment (hardware, software, licenses)
- Licenses with costs

- Implementation plan and costs
- Risk assessment
- Failover option or plan
- Support services provided during installation, testing, training, and ongoing technical support
- Maintenance or support contracts, etc.
- Maintenance requirements and size of windows to perform maintenance
- Migration path of upgrades or updates and their respective impact to operations
- Skill sets recommended to support proposed hardware and software
- Readiness statement as to the state of data network
- Assumed infrastructure needed based on the manufacturer's or creator's recommendations

Permits

The vendor shall obtain and pay for any permits and licenses required for the performance of the work, post all notices required by law, and comply with all laws, ordinances and regulations bearing on the conduct of the work, as specified herein. On any work that requires an inspection certificate issued by local authorities, or any other governing body, such inspection certificate(s) shall be obtained by and paid for by the vendor.

Damage Liability and Insurance

The successful vendor is liable and responsible for any damage to the premises and existing equipment (e.g. floors, walls, network devices, etc.) caused by vendor personnel or equipment during installation and is responsible for the removal of all project-related debris.

The vendor shall, at vendor expense, procure and maintain satisfactory public liability and casualty insurance to adequately protect the vendor's personnel and the St. Cloud HRA against damages for bodily injury, including death, that may arise from operations under this contract, whether such operations are by the vendor or by the vendor's subcontractor, or anyone directly or indirectly employed by the vendor.

The St. Cloud HRA will require the vendor with which a contract is established, prior to commencement of work, to provide evidence of appropriate professional liability insurance, errors and omissions insurance, and workers' compensation insurance coverage as needed.

System Requirements and Implementation

The St. Cloud HRA staff and the vendor will work toward implementing a VoIP solution system under the following:

- The St. Cloud HRA will consider all vendor hardware proposals, but purchase of equipment for future replacement of phones must not be limited to a single vendor resource
- All equipment will include all necessary power cords and cables that may be needed
- Proposal shall include all costs associated with the purchase, installation, connection and/or maintenance of the proposal. No additional equipment, infrastructure or costs may be added at a later date. The proposal must be complete.
- Any company submitting a proposal is responsible for doing its due diligence to anticipate all costs associated with the proposal.
- The St. Cloud HRA, at its own discretion, has the right to accept or reject any proposal that does not meet the requirements of this RFP.

Scope of Future Telephone System

The purpose of the RFP is to obtain the installation and maintenance of a unified communications system. The St. Cloud HRA is looking to purchase/lease a new VoIP system to replace our existing system. The St. Cloud HRA wants a system that is current and functional for a business of our size and type, but further a system that can quickly and inexpensively be updated to accommodate changes in technology and needs. The St. Cloud HRA seeks a system that can be used in the office, on softphones, potentially from one's home and in other locations.

Network Assessment

The St. Cloud HRA understands and expects that the respondent to conduct a full network assessment to determine the viability of integrating and installing the new voice system into the existing data network. Respondent will provide all results of the assessment including necessary solution maps, specification thresholds, specific problem areas and the recommended solution and cost for each. The vendor is responsible for scheduling a mutually agreed upon date for the assessment and any walk-throughs that the vendor may deem necessary.

Vendor Background

Company Information

- List your company's legal name, address, and telephone number
- How long has your company been in business?
- How long has your company or division been providing business telephone systems and related equipment?
- Indicate whether your company is the manufacturer or the distributor of the proposed equipment. If you are a distributor, describe the terms of your agreement with the manufacturer, the manufacturer's level of support, and what contingencies they have in place should your company fail to continue to support the product or service for any reason.
- Do you install the product or use business partners?
- Do you maintain the product or use business partners?
- How many employees do you have?
- How many technicians are certified on the proposed equipment?
- If this is a hosted off-premise system, describe your sites and alternate site locations used for redundancy.
- Provide a financial statement for your organization
- Describe your plans for future product development and support
- Explain why your solution is a best fit for our agency

Cabling

Vendor will provide cable from the wall to the phone. The respondent will also be responsible for cable connections from the hosted VoIP system to any communications equipment utilizing the VoIP system at The St. Cloud HRA offices. Respondent is responsible for re-termination of services from existing system to the new VoIP system.

Any additional cabling/wiring needed by the Respondent to complete the installation should be included as part of the RFP response.

Vendor References

Provide a minimum of three (3) references for customers with operations similar to ours that use the equipment being proposed. Include contact names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses.

Business Telephone System Product Requirements

General Requirements

Please provide product descriptions and brochures for the proposed business telephone system, voice mail system, telephone sets, attendant consoles, and other related equipment. The equipment shall be new models and in current production, Reconditioned, remanufactured, or demo models will not be accepted.

System Capacities – the VoIP – IP telephone system must be scalable via different versions that are applicable to different business needs. Describe the scalable capacities available on the proposed hybrid-IP telephone system.

Station Configuration Flexibility – Confirm the proposed VoIP-IP telephone system’s support for all of the following types of telephones: IP, digital, analog, wireless, and SIP endpoints.

Trunk Flexibility – the proposed VoIP telephone system must provide support for SIP trunking

Hearing Aid Compatible – all proposed station equipment must comply with rules adopted by the Federal Communications Commissions that specify all telephones in workplaces of 20 employees or more must be hearing aid compatible. Describe the attributes of the proposed system and telephone sets as it relates to this.

System Architecture

Infrastructure Review – It will be the responsibility of the vendor to assure that they have performed adequate network performance reviews, assessments, or a site visit, in order to make assurances that proposed VoIP telephone system will function at optimal performance under the current network structure.

It is expected that the vendor “shall provide” a readiness statement as to the capabilities of the current data network readiness to provide the support necessary for the proposed system. It is encouraged that all vendors perform an onsite visit to inspect the current network system for readiness. The date of the on-site visit will be by appointment.

Describe the proposed VoIP telephone system design and space required.

What is the maximum user capacity of the proposed IP communications system?

Redundancy/Failover – It is the intent of this proposal to have a hosted system that has failover capabilities in case of system failure and to have an acceptable level of redundancy in case of power failure or other incident. Please provide your solution to assure that the hosted system is operational 24/7.

System Administration

Administration – provide a detailed description of the configuration and management tools available on the proposed VoIP telephone system

Remote Monitoring – the proposed VoIP telephone system must be capable of remote monitoring.

Centralized Licensing – the proposed VoIP telephone system should include the ability to assign certain user solutions to certain users within the network.

Long Distance Tracing and Reporting – the proposed VoIP telephone system must allow assigning authorization codes to individuals, projects, and customers in order to charge expenses directly to the appropriate departments and to control access to long-distance facilities beyond normal class of service restrictions. Can the proposed telephone system track long distance calls and provide reporting for individual extensions?

Security – how is security provided to prevent unauthorized access to the administration application? Can some administrators be defined with “view-only” permissions? HRA staff will administer the system. Installation of the new VoIP system will include training for staff in system administration. Remote administration of the system must be available to technical and operations staff.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Features

Voice Communication Features – provide an overview list of voice communication features available on the proposed VoIP telephone system. The list should include at a minimum PBX functionality, number of extensions supported, types of telephones supported, conferencing capacities, call routing, support for H.323 and SIP, trunk interfaces, and networking.

Data Communication Features – provide an overview list of data communication features available on the proposed VoIP telephone system. This list should include at a minimum firewall capabilities, routing and addressing protocols, remote access, Ethernet ports, and LDAP support.

Virtual Private Network (VPN) – is a VPN required to support remote IP telephone communication via the private IP network or the internet? What is gained/lost by using a VPN?

IP Protocols Supported – which IP protocols does the proposed system use with its IP telephones (MEGACO, MGCP, H.323, SIP, SCCP, etc.)? What are the advantages/disadvantages?

Softphone Capabilities – the proposed VoIP telephone system should have the ability to provide softphone extensions that reside on our employees’ personal computers. These extensions should provide an equal or better level of functionality as the proposed hardware station equipment.

Smartphone & Tablet Capabilities – the proposed VoIP telephone system should have the ability to be used/accessed from a smartphone and/or a tablet device.

VoIP Network Readiness Assessment – describe any network readiness assessment required or recommended to make sure our network will handle the addition of voice traffic over the IP data network. Do you provide this service?

Session Initiated Protocol

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system support SIP?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system require SIP gateways?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system support standard SIP-enabled hardware?

Call Handling

The proposed VoIP telephone system must permit station users to forward incoming calls to another phone of their choice based on busy, no answer, and all calls conditions.

Any station in the proposed VoIP telephone system must be able to park a call for retrieval at another station.

The proposed VoIP telephone system must allow station users to answer calls intended for other stations within a common call pickup group.

Station users of the proposed VoIP telephone system must be able to transfer a call in progress to an internal extension or external number without attendant intervention.

Can queues be configured on demand while calls are in queue?

Can the proposed VoIP telephone system announce the estimated wait time?

Can the proposed VoIP telephone system announce the user's position in the queue?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system allow the users to leave a message rather than wait in the queue?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system support real-time monitoring?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system offer real-time graphs and statistics?

Integration and Customization

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system support integration with email?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system support integration of the phone system with other business applications?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system offer database options for IVR applications?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system provide integration to emergency communication software?

The proposed VoIP telephone system must support voice paging via paging equipment. If management permits, station users may dial an access code for a connection to the paging equipment.

Messaging and Voice Mail Systems

Does your solution provide a single-user interface for email, voicemail and fax messages? Describe the solution or unified communication capabilities of the system.

Describe the architecture of the proposed voicemail solution, including how voicemail is accessed by users from their extension remotely, from their mobile devices, and from their desktop computer.

Can users have their phone calls forwarded to other numbers when they are not available?

How are users notified of new voicemail messages or faxes?

Does your solution offer a mobile access?

How many users are supported by the proposed voice mail system?

Reporting

Does your solution provide basic call reporting for billing and accounting purposes?

Does your solution provide a more robust call reporting system?

Station Hardware

Describe the supported station IP/digital phones for your system.

Specify the power requirements for each station IP phone and analog/digital phone.

Are headsets available?

Does the proposed VoIP telephone system support the use of phones other than IP (i.e., digital and/or analog)?

Functionality

Conference – the proposed VoIP telephone system must provide the ability to initiate a conference call with a minimum of five (5) additional parties. Please indicate the maximum number of simultaneous parties that may be included in a conference call with a minimum loss of audio call quality.

Stored Numbers – the proposed VoIP telephone system must have the ability to store a list of frequently called numbers and make those available on a system wide basis to station users.

Call on Hold – Describe the proposed VoIP telephone system's ability to provide waiting callers music-on-hold.

Status/Availability Indication (presence) – Describe the proposed VoIP telephone system's status/availability feature.

Direct Dialing – the proposed VoIP telephone system must support direct dialing to extensions from outside callers.

User Mobility – does the proposed VoIP telephone system have the ability to allow users to log in as their designated extension from any telephone?

Single Number Reach – does your solution have the ability to simultaneously ring a user's IP desk phone, mobile phone, and other user-defined devices? Describe the capability.

System Reliability

How does the system provide reliability for voice services? Explain how it avoids any single point of failure (single site as well as multi-site).

For redundancy purposes, where are copies of the firmware and configurations stored on the proposed VoIP telephone system?

E911 Services

Is the proposed system in compliance? Does it provide E911 reporting capabilities?

Installation Service and Maintenance

Explain in detail the installation plan to include the transition plan from the current system to the new system being proposed.

Warranty Service

Maintenance and Warranty – a complete maintenance and warranty agreement, as well as quote, must be included as part of the bidder's proposal. Warranty should also discuss defective parts.

Service Calls – what are your response times for?

- Complete system failure – please define system failure
- Major service malfunction – please define a major failure
- Minor service malfunction – please define a minor malfunction
- Station outages – please define a station outage

Section 3

All proposers should include completed Section 3 forms to show whether or not your business is a qualified Section 3 business. Please see attached forms.

HUD Certification Forms

Depending on the final cost of the contract, the successful vendor may be required to complete certain HUD certification forms prior to being awarded the contract.

ST. CLOUD HRA SECTION 3 – BUSINESS CERTIFICATION 2020

SECTION 3 BUSINESS CERTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Business: _____

Address of Business: _____

Type of Business: Corporation Partnership Sole Proprietorship
 Joint Venture

Please answer the following questions:

1. Is your business owned (51% or more) by individuals whose household incomes are NO GREATER THAN 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)? See chart below.

YES ____ NO ____

2. Are you receiving assistance through the HRA for housing?

YES ____ NO ____

3. Do 30% (or more) of your full time, permanent employees have household incomes that are NO GREATER THAN 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)? YES ____ NO ____

4. Are 30% (or more) of your full-time, permanent employees currently Section 3 residents or Section 3 eligible residents within the past 3 years? YES ____ NO ____

5. Does your business have evidence of firm commitment(s) to provide 25% of the total dollar amount of subcontracts to Section 3 Businesses? YES ____ NO ____

If any of the questions above are marked "yes", the business qualifies as a Section 3 business.

I certify that the above statements are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

This form is informational only for the St. Cloud HRA. You must register online to be officially certified: <https://portalapps.hud.gov/Sec3BusReg/BRegistry/RegisterBusiness>

SECTION 3 INCOME LIMITS FY 2020

All residents of public housing developments of the St. Cloud Housing and Redevelopment Authority qualify as Section 3 residents. Additionally, individuals residing within the jurisdiction of the St. Cloud Housing and Redevelopment Authority and who meet the income limits set forth below can also qualify for Section 3 status.

Number in Household	Low Income
1 individual	\$45,500
2 individuals	\$52,000
3 individuals	\$58,500
4 individuals	\$64,950
5 individuals	\$70,150
6 individuals	\$75,350
7 individuals	\$80,550
8 individuals	\$85,750

Section 3 Business Criteria

Your business is eligible to apply for preference as a Section 3 Business if, in addition to meeting all applicable state and local regulations, it self-certifies that it meets one or more of the following criteria (you must check at least one):

- A. Fifty-one percent or more of the business is owned by Section 3 Residents;
- B. Thirty percent or more of the business' fulltime employees are Section 3 Residents; or
- C. The business can provide evidence of a firm commitment to subcontract a minimum of 25 percent of the total dollar amount of contracts to a business that meets the criteria listed in (a) and/or (b).

Register: www.hud.gov/sec3biz