

Capital Area Transportation Authority



AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO SOLICITATION SQL UPGRADE & VIRTUALIZATION

1. AMENDMENT NO: 1	2. SOLICITATION NO: RFP 2017-121	3. SOLICITATION NAME: SQL Upgrade & Virtualization	4. AMENDMENT DATE: July 24, 2017
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5. ISSUED BY

Capital Area Transportation Authority
Purchasing and Contracts Department
4615 Tranter Street
Lansing, MI 48910

PLEASE NOTE: Contractor is required to sign this document and return it with the bid/proposal/quote.

6. DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT:

- a. Responses to Vendor Questions, is attached.
- b. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

NAME / TITLE OF OFFEROR (Type or Print)	COMPANY NAME
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(Signature of person authorized to sign)	(Date Signed)
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Date: July 24, 2017

Re: CATA Responses to Vendor Questions
CATA RFP 2017-121, SQL Upgrade & Virtualization

I. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Is CATA's preference to have the project work completed remotely or onsite?

A: Either onsite or remote is fine.

Q: Security – Will background check be required for engineers?

A: No.

Q: What are the CATA's maintenance windows?

A: They vary but planned outages are possible for extended periods particularly after normal business hours and especially after midnight and before 4am.

Q: Has CATA validated all applications requiring HA AOAG support this level of HA?

A: No, CATA is asking the vendor to ensure this during the project and to work through upgrading the databases individually. We are confident in material support of all mission critical applications.

Q: Assuming AOAG is at two sites – Will the location File Share Witness server be a neutral site?

A: We have multiple sites available and can accommodate this if necessary.

Q: Will CATA be upgrading away from vSphere 6.0 to vSphere 6.5 VCSA which supports AOAG?



A: CATA is willing to upgrade its environment if necessary (assuming this refers to the vCenter DB).

Q: Will company have 2+ vSphere nodes for HA?

A: Yes.

Q: Has CATA scoped out required space needed for SQL upgrades and AOAG requirements?

a. If so, will company have adequate storage capacity for side by side installs and upgrades?

A: Yes.

Q: Has CATA scoped out required memory and vCPU requirements for SQL upgrades and AOAG requirements?

A: Yes.

Q: Is storage on a single storage array or a scale out VSA? Please outline backend storage to validate if storage supports failover requirements.

A: Storage is virtualized and will be stored on a 3 node cluster.

Q: Will CATA provide network details? Determining the scope of networking to support advanced networking configurations: L2 / L3 configurations? Is environment configured on a stretched L2?

A: Yes, full network details will be provided to the awarded contractor.

Q: Network details don't disclose L2/L3 configuration. To wit: are we looking at stretched L2, using the same L3 subnet in both the primary & DR site? What's the latency between sites (because that will definitely impact sync vs async)?

A: Not using the same subnet. Latency is less than 30ms between all sites.

Q: Please define the interpretation of “HA”. While you’ve called out the need (correctly) for 3 nodes in order to provide AOAG for a synchronous pair and an offsite, would like to confirm if you’re thinking that only some of the databases need to be AOAG-protected while vSphere HA would be sufficient for others.

A: CATA is looking for vendor input into the overall design of “HA” and making use of AOAG where possible. Not every database in CATA’s network needs HA or AOAG.

Q: Will Contractor or CATA be responsible for the following: reprogramming Agent jobs for primary-node-awareness, maintaining system databases (requires information as AoAG is different than traditional failover clusters)?

A: Contractor would be responsible.

Q: Please validate license level to be used.

a. RFP identifies the need for Microsoft SQL Enterprise to support the “future state” for high availability, yet calls out two (2) as the number of licenses. Both SQL 2014 and 2016—identified at the target version based on compatibility requirements.

b. Are licensed on a per-core basis with each license being a “2-core pack.” This implies that the VMs for the SQL instances will be provisioned with no more than two (2) vCPU for active/active/passive or four (4) vCPU for active/passive/passive configuration. In either case, it is likely that performance requirements will not be met for any of the SQL estate, much less the smallest databases. Will CATA be supplying additional 2-core packs as suggested by the successful respondent in order to meet both availability & performance requirements?

A: CATA will provide any additional licensing based on vendor recommendations.

Q: Database compatibility mode(s) for existing databases that must be migrated to the new cluster have not been disclosed; the II-E.Migration/Upgrade.1.a. requirement cannot be properly fulfilled without knowing that prior to response.

A: Currently all databases listed are operating at SQL 2008 compatibility mode.

- Q: Combining backup technologies as requested in II-E.Backup is not recommended. Both DPM and VBR are viable as options; please indicate a single preference to avoid VSS (Volume Shadowcopy Services) interference. If neither is preferred, please indicate that the choice is up to the respondent.
- A: Current software is DPM and we are in the process of migrating Virtual Machine Backups to VEEAM.
- Q: II-E.Permissions is challenging. Without knowing the way an application is utilizing a given database—and that application’s handling of permissions—it may be difficult or impossible to provide the granularity of security required. In short: if an application uses built-in security for user-level permissions while utilizing a single app-level connection for the database, it is functionally impossible to attempt to use per-user logins to protect the database. In many ways, this is an “application specialist” function rather than a DBA’s.
- A: We agree that permissions is challenging. If we had the knowledge in house we likely wouldn’t be asking for this within the scope of the RFP. Our ultimate goal here is to clean up existing permissions to the extent that is possible and to establish a framework for granting permissions in the future.
- Q: “Every user” requires documentation of said list of users and respective permissions; this is not disclosed in the RFP, nor is a generic number of users for scoping purposes.
- A: A list of users can be provided (there are approximately 12 currently).
- Q: Databases do not provide permission type (Trusted, SQL or “mixed”); the instance itself is configured to Trusted-only or Mixed (which allows both Trusted and SQL). Application requirements are typically used to determine whether or not mixed-mode on the instance is required or not. Establishing a process (II-E.Permissions.1.c) is possible, but it won’t be complicated nor will it be based on individual databases but the “OR” function applied to **all** databases on the instance.
- A: Understood.

Q: Please provide more specific compliance requirements in regards to MDOT, FMCSA, and FTA in relation to this project.

A: Responding bidder may include agreement to abide by required regulations in narrative attached to proposal.

Q: Is Microsoft Gold Partnership required to respond to RFP?

A: Not a mandatory requirement. Certifications will be taken into account as a part of evaluation effort.

Q: Could Contractor start work in December?

A: That would be acceptable.

Q: The PDF mentions that the cata.org web site is hosted in the DMZ. Generally, any SQL Server that's connected to a DMZ shouldn't also host private data like your accounting data. Are you sure about consolidating that, and have you had any kind of security review?

A: We're not asking to consolidate that server at this time. We would like for the SQL version to be upgraded and for a plan for redundancy for that server.

Q: Does this include any support after the Migration/Upgrade step finishes on go-live day? What specific kind of support?

A: Any ongoing support for the database environment would likely be procured after the project is completed. CATA would expect there to be a finite time period after go-live for acceptance of the completed project to ensure all deliverables are working as expected.

Q: Is a 50% invoice due on project start acceptable?

A: Yes.