RFP TM-24-01
Technology for Buses
Questions and Answers #1
November 17, 2023

Q1.   Please confirm make/model of existing destination sign controllers?

A1.   See Photos on Pages 13 & 14.

Q2.   Can you explain what functions the existing destination sign integration provides?

A2.   The destination sign changes based on the geographic location of the bus.

Q3.   Can you provide the part numbers for the Infodev sensors?

A3.   The Info Dev sensors were replaced in 2019. We no longer have any buses equipped with Info Dev sensors.

Q4.   Can you provide the part numbers for the Hella APCs?

A4.   See Photo on Page 15.

Q5.   You show Hella APC and Infodev sensors on the older vehicles, can you clarify which APC components are present and currently in use?

A5.   Hella are the APC components currently in use on all but the 2023 Gillig buses. The Info Dev sensors were replaced in 2019. We no longer have any buses equipped with Info Dev sensors.

Q6.   Do any of the vehicles currently have cellular routers? If so, can you provide which vehicles, and the router make/model?

A6.   All of our fixed route buses have cellular routers. The model is Pepwave MAX Transit Mini.

Q7.   Will the 2 12 line signs requested be located inside or outside? Will Ethernet be available?

A7.   Outside at our Quincy Steet Station location, ethernet will not be available.

Q8.   When are the other 2011 Gillig Low-Floor buses scheduled to be de-commissioned? At what rate will newer buses be replacing the de-commissioned buses?

A8.   There is no time line for de-commissioning the 2011 Gillig Low-Floor buses. Six 2023 Gillig buses are scheduled to arrive by the end of 2023.

Q9.   For 2023 Gillig buses, there is a reference to 'door sensors by Info Dev', but 'Automated Passenger Counter – Not Present' is also referenced. Info Dev is an APC sensor supplier. Do the 2023 Gillig low-floor buses have Info Dev APC systems?

A9.	No APC systems are on the 2023 buses.

Q10.	How often does Topeka METRO change schedules? Are GTFS exports available in addition to schedule exports from Reveal.

A10.	Schedules are changed once a year, GTFS exports are available.

Q11.	Has Topeka METRO applied APC data to NTD reporting?

A11.	No.

Q12.	Please describe any applications of APC data at Topeka METRO. Is Topeka METRO Ridership based on data generated by the farebox system?

A12.	Ridership data currently comes from our GFI farebox system.

Q13.	Has Topeka METRO ever compared APC data with Manual data to establish accuracy of the current APC system? If so, what level of Manual/APC concurrence was established?

A13.	No.

Q14.	If the APC system does not require operator login, does Topeka METRO require the operator login to be a feature of the APC system?

A14.	No.

Q15.	The requirement, 'Informs vehicle operators of changes to service/detours' appears to be more applicable to the CAD/AVL section of the RFP. Please confirm that this requirement does not apply to an APC system.

A15.	This requirement does not apply to an APC system.

Q16.	The need for a 'tablet device' to serve as a backup for the APC system is unnecessary. Current APC systems do not fail in such frequency to necessitate a backup tablet device. Topeka METRO should consider adding an APC Reliability specification to the RFB to require APC performance at such a level to make the tablet device unnecessary.

A16.	We will consider.

Q17.	Many transit agencies are separating the APC system from the CAD/AVL system. Has Topeka METRO considered a Stand-Alone APC system?

A17.	Yes.

Q18.	Do Topeka METRO buses have Bicycle Racks installed? If so, please provide the manufacturer of the Bicycle Racks. Would Topeka METRO be interested in monitoring Bicycle Rack Usage?

A18.	Yes, Sportworks. No to monitoring bike rack usage.

Q19.   Looking at the timeline for the RFP, including Topeka's date to respond to questions, and the upcoming holiday, we would like to request an extension to the due date to allow for time to adjust our responses as necessary.

A19.   Yes, we will extend the deadline two weeks to December 14, 2023.

Q20.   Will you allow for electronic (email) submission of the proposal?

A20.   One electronic copy of your proposal should be submitted on CD, stick drive, or via email to rappelhanz@topekametro.org and four (4) additional printed copies of the proposal should be submitted in a sealed box or envelope with the name and address of the proposer clearly visible.

Q21.   Would Topeka would like to have a pilot/Mini-fleet on a subset of the fleet before full installation, as part of the project process?

A21.   No.

Q22.   Does Topeka have a project timeline or anticipated completion date for the Technology upgrade?

A22.   Yes, the new system is to be implemented by July 30, 2023.

Q23.   On page 6 of the Appendix 2, it is mentioned hardware must be warrantied 3 years from date of installation, while on page 7 is ask for 5 years warranty from date of installation. Could you please clarify the lengths of warranty to be quoted ?

A23.   A minimum 3 year warranty but a 5 year warrant is preferred.

Q24.   Is Topeka Metro using Remix for fixed route Planning and Scheduling ?

A24.   Yes.

Q25.   Do you prefer integration with the existing interior sign, or shall vendors provide and install a new interior LED sign?

A25.   We prefer integration with the existing interior sign.

Q26.   Is there a covert emergency alarm to either be provided by vendors, or integrated with?

A26.   We currently do not have a covert emergency alarm but we would consider one.

Q27.   Is Topeka Metro interested in an option for onboard Infotainment displays ?

A27.   No.

Q28.   Is Topeka Metro interested in an option for Yard Management?

A28.   No.

Q29.   Does Topeka Metro need pre and post trip inspection software on the MDT ?

A29.   No.

Q30.   What is Metro's annual ridership ?

A30.   Around 1,000,000 annually.

Q31.   How many spares would you like vendors to quote ? Shall they be included in the base AVL pricing, or as an option?

A31.   Six spares included in the base AVL pricing.

Q32.   Can you confirm integration with the stop request signal is requested.

A32.   Yes.

Q33.   Will vehicle installation be held at a single location?

A33.   Yes.

Q34.   How many vehicles could be tentatively available per day for installation?

A34.   10 per day.

Q35.   Will Metro be providing the cellular data plan (Verizon or equivalent) ? Or, is it within the vendors' scope ?

A35.   Yes, Metro will provide the cellular data plan.

Q36.   Will Metro be providing the routers, or is it within the vendors' scope ?

A36.   Yes, Metro will provide the routers.

Q37.   Can you please clarify how many existing DMS needs to be integrated?

A37.   There are 5 DMS that need to be integrated.

Q38.   Can you please provide details, makes, model of the existing DMS to be integrated with ? Are they able to receive a GTFS RT feed for integration ?

A38.   See Photos on Pages 16-23. Yes, they are able to receive a GTFS RT feed.

Q39.   Can you confirm vendors are to provide and install 17 DMS, in addition to integration with existing DMS?

A39.   No, that was listed as an optional item, and we are not planning to install the additional 17 DMS. Metro is withdrawing the Optional section of Appendix 2.

Q40.   Is Topeka Metro considering adding mobile fare payment in the near future?

A40.   Yes.

Q41.   Is Topeka Metro interested in an option for the vendor to provide the certification process for NTD? Or shall vendors only provide the data and reports required?

A41.   Yes, Metro is interested in an option for the vendor to provide the certification for NTD.

Q42.   How many dispatcher/operator workstations does Topeka have?

A42.   Four.

Q43.   The Topeka Price Quote sheet is quite general, how should vendors provide details or a breakdown of their equipment and software (ie: Hardware/Software/Professional Services/Yearly Maintenance and subscriptions)?

A43.   Vendors can provide their own price quote form and include more detail as long as totals are provided for AVL/CAD, APC, DMS, and Annual Maintenance, Support and Updates over a 5-year period.

Q44.   Can vendors also provide their own version of a price breakdown?

A44.   Yes, as long as totals are provided for AVL/CAD, APC, DMS and Annual Maintenance, Support and Updates over a 5-year period.

Q45.   Will the DMS be solar powered, A/C powered, or both?

A45.   They can be solar powered or A/C powered.

Q46.   What size and type of DMS units are you looking for? ePaper, LEDs, others?

A46.   Size should be large enough to meet ADA requirements and type should be LED.

Q47.   Will the DMS units be installed in transit centers, shelters, bus stop poles, all?

A47.   Transit center only.

Q48.   What is the estimated DMS count?

A48.   Five.

Q49.   The RFP is silent on the desired implementation timeframe. Does Topeka Metro have a target project completion date, and if so, can it be shared with interested bidders?

A49.   Yes, the new system is to be implemented by July 30, 2023.

Q50. Is it possible to provide photographs and information from the serial number/asset tag of the Unknown brand Next-Stop signs identified in RFP Appendix 1? This information will aid interested bidders to assess the feasibility of integrating the existing sign or if they will need to be replaced.

A50. See Photos on Pages 13 and 14.

Q51. RFP Appendix 1 indicates existing door sensors by Info Dev, and automatic passenger counters (APC) by Hella Aglia. Can you provide specifications (i.e., make, model, year of mfcr.) for which Info Dev sensors are installed on each bus type, and confirm/clarify that you are currently using Hella's APC software with the Info Dev hardware for the purposes of passenger counting? Does the authority have a preference to retain either the existing APC hardware, APC software, or both?

A51. See Photo on Page 15. We would like to retain both.

Q52. We would like to request a two week time extension on the deadline for submission of proposals and a one week extension to submit additional questions for clarification. Having additional time will permit our team time to address the responses to clarifications posted after Nov 10 and will provide additional time after the Thanksgiving holidays to submit our bid.

A52. Yes, we will extend the deadline two weeks to December 14, 2023.

Q53. We aware that Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority released an RFP in 2019 soliciting the replacement of and / or integration with many of these same existent systems and hardware components. The following questions seek clarification about what is currently onboard your fleet:
   a. 2011 Gillig Low-Floor Transit Bus, 35' long, 102" wide (no model number)
      i. Are these buses still outfitted with Info Dev door sensors, No or have they been replaced by Hella Automated Passenger Counters? Yes If Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority is still utilizing Info Dev sensors, can you please provide the make and model information? N/A If you are instead now utilizing Hella APCs, can you please provide the make and model of the devices?See Photo on Page 15
      ii. In 2019, your Next-Stop Signs were detailed as Sunrise Systems NXTPS7X96A485C. In the 2023 RFP, they are listed as an "Unknown brand." Can you confirm whether or not the Sunrise System NXTPS7X96A485C signs are still installed on these buses? Yes If they are, do you require integration with existing interior LED signs, or would you prefer they be replaced? Prefer replaced
      iii. Can you confirm whether the Genfare Odyssey fareboxes on these vehicles are integrated for single sign on currently? No If not, do you hold J1708 integration licenses from Genfare? No
      iv. We understand that Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority implemented DoubleMap in 2020 and, according to the information provided on topekametro.org, DoubleMap is being utilized to track bus location and communicate real time information to passengers. Can you confirm whether you are currently using Clever Devices BR600 devices as your MDT? No If not, what is the device being used currently? DoubleMap tablet.
   b. 2014 Gillig Low-Floor Transit Bus, Model G27B102N4, 35' long, 102" wide

   i. Are these buses still outfitted with Info Dev door sensors, No or have they been replaced by Hella Automated Passenger Counters? Yes If Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority is still utilizing Info Dev sensors, can you please provide the make and model information? N/A If you are instead now utilizing Hella APCs, can you please provide the make and model of the devices? See photo on Page 15.

   ii. In 2019, your Next-Stop Signs were detailed as Sunrise Systems NXTPS7X96A485C. In the 2023 RPF, they are listed as an "Unknown brand." Can you confirm whether or not the Sunrise System NXTPS7X96A485C signs are still installed on these buses? Yes If they are, do you require integration with existing interior LED signs, or would you prefer they be replaced? Prefer replaced.

   iii. Can you confirm whether the Genfare Odyssey fareboxes on these vehicles are integrated for single sign on currently? No If not, do you hold J1708 integration licenses from Genfare? No

   iv. Can you confirm whether you are currently using Clever Devices BR700 devices as your MDT? No

  c. 2023 Gillig Low-Floor Transit Bus, 35' long, 102" wide

   i. Within RFP TM-24-01, Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority shared that you have 3 remaining sets of APC from recently retired buses. Can you please provide the make and model of these devices? We did not remove the APCs from the recently retired buses. Currently there are no APCs on the 3 new buses.

   ii. For further clarification, in TM-24-01 Appendix 1, these buses are stated to be outfitted with Info Dev door sensors but also note that Automated Passenger Counters are not present. Can you please confirm whether or not these vehicles are equipped with APCs? And if they are equipped with APCs, can you please provide the make and model information? The three new buses do not have Info Dev sensors and do not have APCs.

   iii. Can you please provide the make and model of the Next-Stop Signs aboard these buses? See Photos on Pages 13 and 14.

   iv. Can you please provide the model of Luminator headsign installed on these buses? See Photos on pages 24 and 25.

   v. Can you confirm whether the Genfare Odyssey fareboxes on these vehicles are integrated for single sign on currently? No If not, do you hold J1708 integration licenses from Genfare? No

Q54. In TM-24-01 Appendix 1, Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority shared that you use Reveal for your scheduling software. Can you confirm that you still utilize Reveal? If so, can you confirm that Reveal can successfully export GTFS with the run_id field or a runcut.txt file?

A54. Metro uses Reveal for paratransit scheduling only, and Reveal is not involved in this RFP.

Q55. If Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority would like the successful contractor to integrate with existing hardware and equipment, do you require a 3-year warranty for existing equipment?

A55. No warranty is required on the existing equipment.

Q56. Should the required hardware warranty be quoted on the "Annual Maintenance, Support and Updates" line?

A56. Yes.

Q57. Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority has requested that the successful contractor will "provide passenger customer service support." As this is an atypical requirement, can you please clarify what exactly you are seeking in terms of passenger customer service support?

A57. Passenger Customer Service Report is detailed on Page 5 of Appendix 2.

Q58. In the "Optional" section of TM-24-01 Appendix 2, Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority shared that there are "existing signs that need a GTFS-RT arrival time estimate." It is later stated that "vendor will install signs and assure connectivity and functionality."
    a. Can you please confirm whether the selected vendor will provide new signage, install existing signage, or integrate with existing signage already installed at bus stations, transfer centers, and selected shelters? Metro prefers integration with existing signage. Metro is withdrawing the Optional section of Appendix 2.
    b. If the signs have already been purchased, can you please provide the make and model of the following 17 signs: N/A
        i. Two (2) with a minimum of 12 lines displayed, AC powered
        ii. Three (3) with a minimum of 4 lines displayed, solar powered
        iii. Two (2) with a minimum of 3 lines displayed, solar powered
        iv. Three (3) with a minimum of 2 lines display, solar powered
        v. Seven (7) with a minimum of 1 line displayed, solar powered
    c. If the 17 signs have already been purchased, does Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority require a 3-year warranty for these items? N/A
    d. Can you please describe narratively where each of the 17 signs are / will be installed, and what information would like each sign to convey to riders? N/A
    e. Can you please provide real-time dynamic message signs location details. Preferably this includes photos, street address or latitude/longitude, permitting requirements, and mounting structure type or schematics. At minimum, the location and mounting structure type (shelter, pole, building) are critical to accurately price the option. N/A
    f. Does Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority currently have a software to manage real-time dynamic message signs? If not, would Metro prefer proposals with API integration capability, or in-built tools for sign management? N/A

Q59. Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority has required the "app will currently offer the ability to pay with electronic fare payment." Who is your current electronic fare payment provider?

A59. We currently do no have electronic fare payment but we are interested in adding it.

Q60. Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority has required "router(s) will be 5G forward-compatible." Can you please clarify the specification for 5G hardware? Do you intend to provide passenger Wi-Fi in this procurement?

A60. Router and Wi-Fi connectivity is already in place with cellular internet. The model is Pepwave MAX Transit Mini.

Q61. We would like to request an extension of the proposal due date by 7 calendar days to allow for the thoughtful incorporation of Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority's responses to questions from all proposers. We anticipate potential shipping delays resulting from the Thanksgiving

holiday, as well as all proposers having significant portions of their teams out of the office with time off for the holiday leading up to the current deadline.

A61. Yes, we will extend the deadline two weeks to December 14, 2023.

Q62. For "external" headsigns. In our experience, headsign OCUs are programmed by headsign manufacturers with codes that relate to specific content to display on the headsign e.g. destination. We provide an interface that allows users to configure different code values to send to a headsign as a bus traverses a route. Please confirm that this meets your external headsign integration requirement, and if not, please provide an example of what you are looking to achieve.

A62. Yes, this meets our integration requirement.

Q63. Can Topeka please disclose your evaluation scoring? Will scoring be split by price and non-price? Or best value method?

A63. Information regarding our evaluations procedures can be found in the RFP on page 14 under Part III Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process.

Q64. Can you tell us whether your Camera Systems were installed at the factory or if they were an aftermarket project? If they were aftermarket, can you tell us when they were installed?

A64. They are a mixture of both factory and aftermarket. The 2023 bus cameras were installed at the factory, all other bus cameras are aftermarket and were last installed in 2020.

Q65. Can you tell us whether your APCs were installed at the factory or if they were an aftermarket project? If they were aftermarket, can you tell us when they were installed?

A65. Aftermarket in 2019.

Q66. Are you scheduled for procurement of new buses in the future? If so, please note the amount and make/model if decided.

A66. Six 2023 Gillig buses are scheduled to arrive by the end of 2023.

Q67. Concerning the DMS Signs Summary – You mentioned requirements. Can you list what equipment you currently have in place? Can you please send photos of your current displays which you wish to continue to use? Can you verify the power sources to these systems – also Year/Make/Model and if under warranty and with whom? Finally – what networking facilities are available? What is the type of data connectivity source? Wireless? Network Cabling?

A67. Metro is withdrawing the Optional section of Appendix 2.

Q68. Can you explain your "Tabular Heatmap Requirement"?

A68. We are withdrawing the heatmap requirement on page 3 of Appendix 2.

Q69. Can you explain your "Feed Uptime and Health" requirement?

A69.   Proposers need to confirm that their system is operational and working properly and provide Metro with the ability to see that the system is operational and working properly. Each vendor can have unique approaches to confirm their systems are working properly.

Q70.   Please describe how you currently do reporting to NTD. Do you require software for NTD Reporting? Or will you plan to continue to report as you currently do?

A70.   We would prefer validated software for NTD Reporting.

Q71.   Under "PREFERRED," you mention - Support for LCDs onboard buses, and on the inventory, you mention "Next-Stop Signs – Unknown brand." - Please clarify: are the "next stop signs" LED, i.e., "tickertape scrolling signs" - OR LCD signs – which would resemble a TV Monitor.

A71.   LED.

Q72.   Tools to automatically monitor data feed uptime and health – Could Topeka please clarify where they would like the data feed uptime from? The server, a bus, or somewhere else?

A72.   Data feed can be determined by the Vendor, but the vendor needs to confirm that their system is operational and working properly.

Q73.   Could the agency specify what they want to achieve with headway?

A73.   On-Time Performance.

Q74.   The vendor will be able to produce data reports from this APC data to provide to Metro or a 3rd party vendor to certify a certification process with the FTA to replace the NTD passenger data validation process. Please clarify this question or provide us with your position on what NTD-required reporting you would see as necessary.

A74.   Metro prefers a system that provides data reports sufficient for NTD reporting. At a minimum the data reports should include ridership and passenger miles.

Q75.   Could the agency please disclose if they have any current displays in the main bus station, transfer centers, and shelters? If so, please note the amount and make/model.

A75.   Metro currently has 5 LED signs at our Quincy Street Station transfer center location. See Photos on Pages 16-23.

Q76.   With regard to DMS signs: We'd like to assess what mounting solutions are required, how much labor is required to install them, whether they are indoors or outdoors, whether they are sheltered from the rain or direct sunlight and whether we need to hire lifts and other equipment in order to install them. Please furnish sufficient information so that we can make these assessments. Please take photos of where you would like them installed to help us make these assessments. Multiple photos from different angles would be helpful. It would also be helpful if you could advise which types of signs you envisage for each type of situation.

A76.   Metro is withdrawing the Optional section of Appendix 2.

Q77.   Please describe in detail your headway problem and how you currently solve it.

A77.   Metro does not have a headway problem.

Q78.   What is the model of the existing Hella APC? Please provide a picture.

A78.   See Photo on Page 15.

Q79.   Are the existing J1708 compatible?

A79.   Need clarification. What are you asking the J1708 are compatible with?

Q80.   What is make and model of the signage at station/ stops?

A80.   See Photos on Pages 16-23.

Q81.   How do you currently handle impact on-time performance?

A81.   Not a relevant question. Topeka Metro only wants to know how we are performing.

Q82.   Please clarify if you want a redundant GTFS or a redundant gps device in vehicle?

A82.   No to both.

Q83.   Do you want to start off with a 5G router?

A83.   Metro currently has 5G Pepwave routers.

Q84.   What is the brand of the Penta Camera?

A84.   Metro does not have Penta cameras.

Q85.   By DMS signs, do you intend for onboard infotainment also?

A85.   No.

Q86.   For the displays to be provided at the main bus station, transfer centers, and selected shelters, does each location have power? Does each location have internet access available?

A86.   Only the 5 displays at our Quincy Street Station transfer center will either need to be integrated or replaced. Each location has power but not internet access. The current system uses cellular network connectivity.

Q87.   What kind of remote DMS management system is required?

A87.   Metro would like real time information.

Q88.   Are you looking for a web based content management system (CMS)?

A88.   Yes.

Q89.   Are you interested in advertising within the DMS system?

A89.   No.

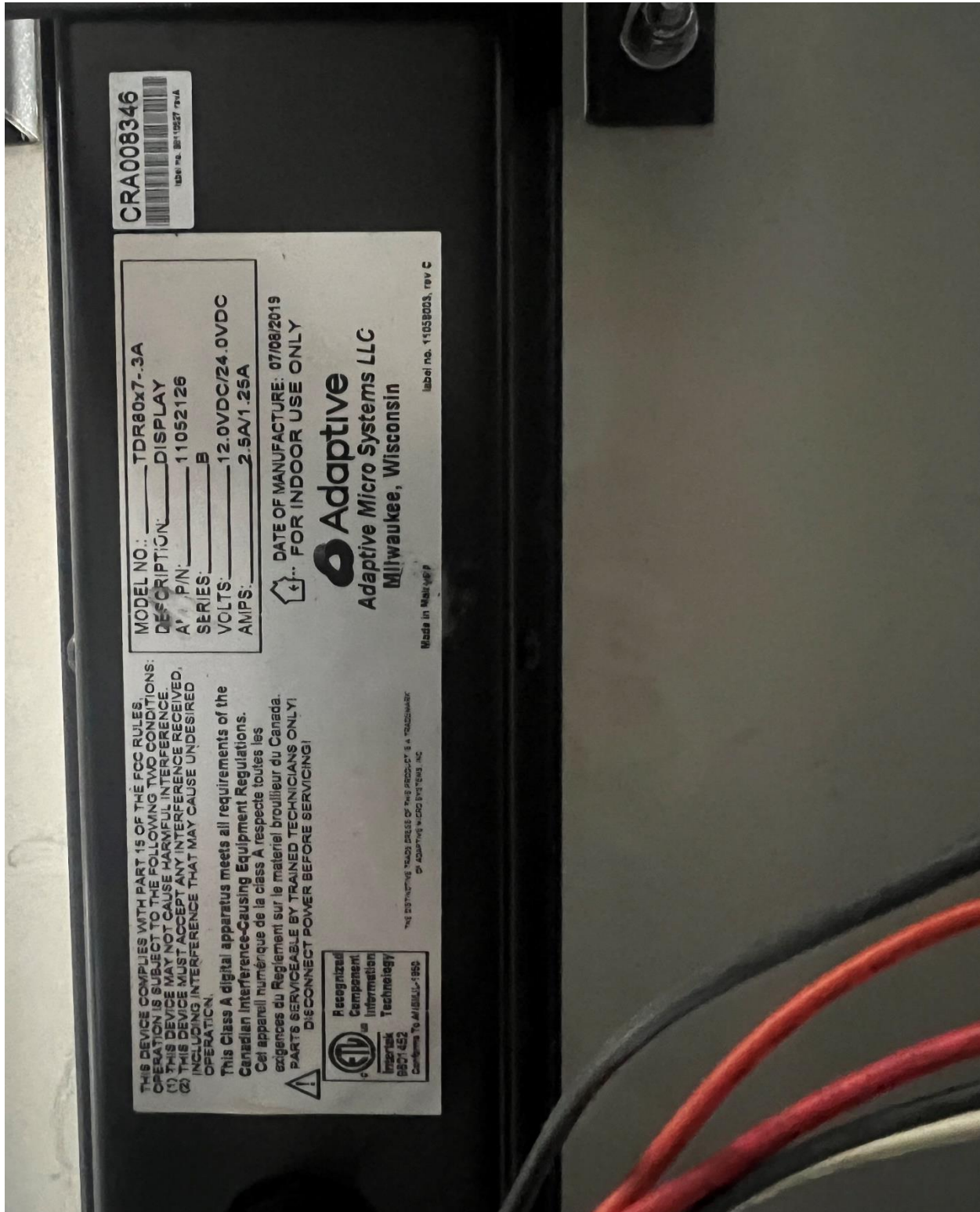Q90.   What telephone system will the IVR need to integrate with?

A90.   Mitel Voice VOIP. Our current vendor does not integrate with our phone system.

Q91.   Does the telephone system support SIP trunks and / or SIP End Points?

A91.   Yes.

Next Stop Sign 2023 Gillig Bus

Next Stop Sign 2011-2014 Gillig Bus

Door Sensor 2011-2014 Gillig Bus

Quincy Street Station Island DMS 1 & 2 of 3. Signs 1 & 2 are identical.

Quincy Street Station North Side Solar Powered DMS 3 of 3.

Cellular Router at Quincy Street Station

BrightSign HD Digital Signage Player at Quincy Street Station

Arrival Departure Indoor Signs Model Number at Quincy Street Station

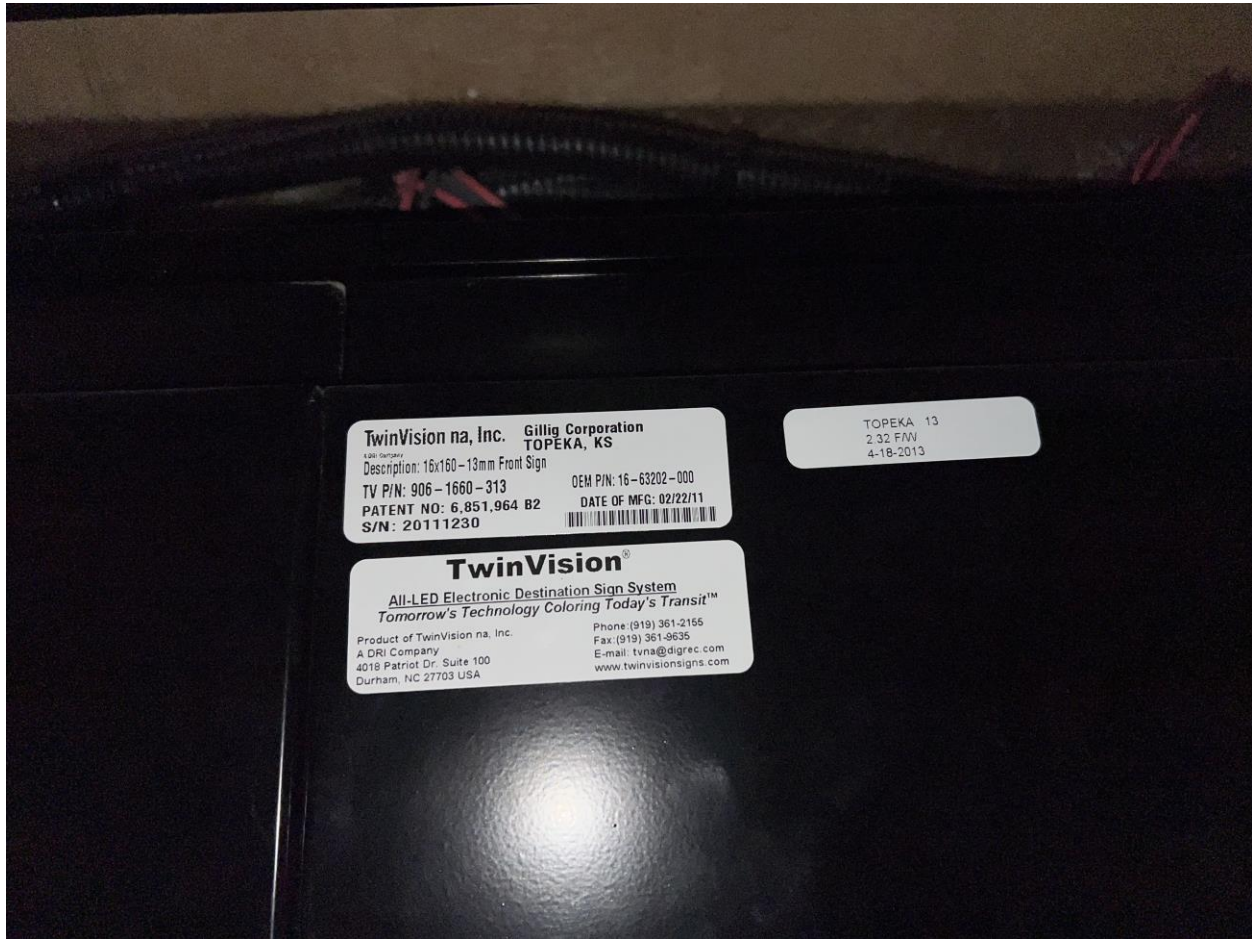Arrival Departure Indoor Signs 1 of 2 at Quincy Street Station

Arrival Departure Indoor Signs 2 of 2 at Quincy Street Station

LCD Display

Luminator Front Destination Sign 2023 Gillig Bus

Luminator Front Destination Sign 2011-2014 Gillig Bus