

- 1. Will you post a recording of the pre-bid call?**
 - a. Yes, the pre-bid presentation and the recording is available on our RFP website at <https://www.gdsassociates.com/requests-for-proposals/>
- 2. To clarify the pricing structure, is NCEMPA requesting a turn-key solution that will be owned, operated, and dispatched by NCEMPA, with an O&M and warranty contract? Or are you looking for a long-term contract whereby the bidder will maintain ownership and provide BESS dispatching services to NCEMPA?**
 - a. The RFP is seeking turn-key solution. Energy Storage Service Agreements (“ESSA”) will be considered, however, NCEMPA will perform the BESS dispatching function regardless of ownership model.
- 3. Is the ultimate buyer expected to be a municipality or NCEMPA? Who ultimately purchases the battery?**
 - a. For purposes of this RFP, NCEMPA would own (or lease through an ESSA) this battery storage facility.
- 4. If NCEMPA is ultimate purchaser, will equipment be tax exempt?**
 - a. Please include itemized taxes in bid so we can separate for tax planning purposes.
- 5. What is the likelihood that member utilities will follow this same model for BESS?**
 - a. Each member city utility may independently choose to follow the same model at its discretion.
- 6. Will you accept offers with 3rd party ownership of BESS?**
 - a. Yes, 3rd party ownership of BESS will be considered through an ESSA.
 - b. ESSA pricing should be given in \$/kw-month based on a 15-year term.
 - c. Pricing of the Energy Capacity Guaranty should also be offered as an adder to the ESSA.
- 7. Will you accept offers with 3rd party forecast and dispatch?**
 - a. No, we are not accepting 3rd party forecast and dispatch offers as part of this RFP.
- 8. Are the required sizing options to guarantee MW/MWh at Point of Interconnection at LV or HV?**
 - a. Guarantee will be assessed at the high voltage side (23kV) at the Point of Interconnect (POI) meter.
- 9. The RFP includes 6 BESS options with one configuration being selected and only one project going forward. Is that correct?**
 - a. Correct, a single configuration for one project will be awarded based on the approved site for purposes of this RFP.
- 10. Could you confirm that the 150 cycles/year requirement?**
 - a. We currently anticipate less than 100 cycles/year BUT the RFP requirement is to base proposed pricing on 150 cycles/year.
- 11. Will you also accept offers with solutions that exclude augmentation (e.g. MWh to degrade reducing the discharge duration of BESS)?**
 - a. We are interested in guaranteeing the duration at nominal power listed in Table 1-1 of the RFP. Over sizing the project to achieve that end is a viable option. Please indicate the incremental cost difference of oversizing the BESS if the solution excludes an Energy Capacity Guaranty.
- 12. Are there any requirements for guaranty for battery capacity at year 15 End of life?**
 - a. Provide pricing to guarantee energy capacity for a 15-year term at the Expected Duration at Nominal Power from Table 1-1 of the RFP. The capacity Guaranty is effective through end of year 15.
- 13. Will you accept turnkey solutions without Energy Capacity Guaranty?**
 - a. NCEMPA is still evaluating the cost benefit of an Energy Capacity Guaranty. Non-conforming bids without an Energy Capacity Guaranty will be accepted but might be eliminated should NCEMPA determine the Energy Capacity Guaranty is beneficial.

- 14. Shall we include in our pricing medium voltage transformer to 23 kV?**
- Yes, turn-key pricing should include the medium voltage transformer(s) to 23 kV and also be included in the LTSA pricing. Please indicate the proposed number and size (in kVA) of the MV transformer(s) in the bid.
- 15. Can the system be used for aux power demands, or will it need to draw from the grid? Does it need a separate connection to draw from the grid?**
- The system will need a separate connection to draw from the grid. Designing station service and supplying an auxiliary transformer is part of the scope of this project.
- 16. What is the power factor at the POI?**
- The system should provide power factor range of 0.95-0.99.
- 17. Whose scope is the step-up transformer?**
- The step-up transformer is the Seller's scope.
- 18. Who supplies auxiliary transformer?**
- The auxiliary transformer is the Seller's scope.
- 19. Can you elaborate on the function and purpose of the auxiliary power transformer described for use during power outages?**
- The auxiliary power transformer is used to provide auxiliary loads to BESS equipment (HVAC, inverters, control system, etc).
 - The RFP does not describe a function and purpose to use the auxiliary power transformer during power outages. During a power outage, the aux power transformer would have no function or purpose.
- 20. Is the UL1741 requirement strictly UL1741 or does it require UL1741SA?**
- We are not requiring that the inverters be certified to UL1741SA. This is strictly UL1741 which is typically part of achieving an IEEE1547 compliant system.
- 21. Are the communications with the NCEMPA controls center direct or can it be managed on the cloud using Seller's cloud services?**
- The BESS shall utilize DNP3 and MODBUS Protocols for network integration and communication with NCEMPA controls.
- 22. Does NCEMPA require vendor specific EMS software application and control dashboard installed locally on a NCEMPA server?**
- The EMS software should be installed locally on the Server provided by the Seller.
 - A local Human Machine Interface (HMI) shall also be available locally.
- 23. Can the storage of site data be implemented in the Seller's cloud?**
- EMS shall provide a minimum of 30-day on-site memory storage capacity.
 - The historical data will be maintained by NCEMPA once it is fully integrated into NCEMPA's network.
- 24. Please elaborate site service entrance switchgear and other power distribution that may or may not be provided by others or by devices outside of the BESS.**
- The system will be integrated into the distribution system location assuming provision by NCEMPA/City of a 23kV breaker. The breaker model and available controls will be further described when the Technical Addendum is issued in April.

- 25. How big is the area for the BESS? Or do we just size accordingly, based off what we have done in the past?**
- Please design the system for a high-density footprint where space is at a premium.
 - For bidding purposes, assume that the substations under consideration are all approximately 1.0 to 1.5 acres, and where the BESS will fit into a vacant subsection of that property of approximately 10,000 square feet.
- 26. It would help to know distances for conduit and cable runs.**
- See above area for substation size assumptions to be used in round 1 of the bidding process. The bidder should assume the 23kV breaker to be used is centrally located on the substation land.
- 27. Would a pole top equipment configuration be acceptable, or should we assume MV Switchgear is required?**
- Please assume medium voltage switchgear.
- 28. Can you provide clarification on the typical Interconnection equipment configuration needed for the customer side of the PCC?**
- The Interconnection equipment configuration will be further described when the Technical Addendum is issued in April.
- 29. Is any feedback available for Geotechnical considerations? Is there a stipulated allowance for deficient soils at this stage?**
- Geotechnical considerations are to be part of the Technical Addendum after the site has been approved. There is no assumed allowance for deficient soils in the first round of the bidding process.
- 30. Is a Control house required or appropriately outdoor-rated equipment acceptable?**
- Appropriately rated outdoor equipment is acceptable.
- 31. Are there any specific requirements regarding the design or construction of duct banks or underground cabling?**
- There is no preference regarding the design or construction of duct banks or underground cabling. Seller should design according to codes and standards and should incorporate best practices when appropriate.
- 32. It states that NCEMPA or one of its members will provide a dispatch controller, but also makes multiple references to the EMS as if it were the seller's responsibility (ie: cyber security requirements). Please advise.**
- The EMS shall receive a signal from NCEMPA's telemetry and control system. NCEMPA will not provide a dispatch controller but will provide a dispatch schedule that the EMS shall utilize to schedule charges and discharges.
- 33. Does ESS supplier need to provide a system-level (local) controller or total Energy Management System Controller?**
- It is the intent of these technical requirements that the BESS shall be complete and fully operable. An Energy Management System controller is typical and preferred.
- 34. BESS system is open to any Lithium-ion battery, such as NMC and LFP?**
- The spatial constraints of the project lend itself to a higher density footprint such as NMC.

- 35. Are alternative energy storage technologies acceptable like fuel cell with hydrogen storage?**
- We are seeking proposals for commercially viable battery storage technologies with competitive pricing that meet the technical specifications of the project. Proposals with fuel cell technologies will not be accepted.
- 36. Will NCEMPA provide construction power, water, and internet access for the job site?**
- Power:* The seller may wish to apply for a temporary service. Any site modifications required to accomplish this will be Seller's costs.
 - Water:* The seller may wish to apply for a temporary service with the local utility. The sites under consideration have water service. Available water resources can be utilized; however, any site modifications required to accomplish this will be at Seller's costs.
 - Internet:* The Seller is expected to install all necessary equipment for network integration.
- 37. Is lightning protection required for the site?**
- Yes, lightning protection for the BESS equipment will be required.
- 38. Please elaborate on the word "contemplate" in describing LTSA pricing in regard to damages.**
- This language is intended to ask the Seller to provide pricing based on the commercial terms in the RFP.
- 39. Some Sellers plan to provide the EPC portion of this contract and partner with another party for the LTSA and energy capacity guaranty. With this arrangement, should both parties be noted on the proposal or would you prefer a separate proposal for each party with a note of the overall teaming arrangement?**
- A joint proposal is preferred with a description of the overall teaming arrangement.
- 40. Please confirm the request is for one pre-COD bond and one post-COD bond with each bond covering both performance and payment in amounts at least equal to what is quantified in the RFP. I wanted to ensure it was not a total of four bonds.**
- Correct, this is not a total of four bonds. There is one pre-COD and post-COD bond.
- 41. In Article 5, the proposal contents include Appendix D- Seller Financial Documentation. Is NCEMPA just looking for proof of creditworthiness?**
- NCEMPA is seeking respondents with the financial wherewithal to procure equipment and wrap Performance Guaranties for the term of the Long-Term Service Agreement.
- 42. In Article 5, Section 2, 3. Can you please describe what NCEMPA is looking for with the project references? Is NCEMPA looking for a reference letter from the utilities or battery integrators?**
- NCEMPA is seeking project references including contact organization, name, title and email address from utilities or customers for which you have developed BESS resources. We may wish to speak with your customers regarding their experiences.
- 43. What is the defect liability (warranty) period requirement?**
- 2 years.
- 44. The RFP requires an electronic copy submitted via email. To ensure timely delivery of submissions, please advise of any file size restrictions that might be in place at GDS.**
- The size limit for our email system is less than 20MB per attachment. Please send in several emails if the aggregate file size exceeds this limit. Individual files larger than 20 MB can be sent through <https://filesender.gdsassociates.com/>