

File Memorandum: University of Kansas Park and Ride Express Bus Procurement
Date: March 15, 2006

A decision was made to pursue the procurement of buses through the assignment of options for two reasons:

1. **Timing.** When the Task Force concluded its work in September 2005 a decision was made to establish a new bus route connecting a new 1,500 space park and ride lot on West Campus with the core of KU's campus. The Task Force also advocated the use of ADA compliant accessible buses for the new transit service. With only ten months remaining until the opening of the new park and ride lot, there was insufficient time to purchase new buses by alternative means. The procurement time for the acquisition of new buses without the use of such options is typically about two years.
2. **Proven Specifications.** The purchase of new buses requires the development of detailed specifications and evaluation of responses from manufacturers. The use of options from an existing bus purchase contract provides the advantage of allowing the acquisition of buses using a proven specification and evaluation process.

The University conducted a search for available options through contacts within the transit industry. Several opportunities were identified. The options available from the CRPTA-Waccamaw Regional Transit Authority for buses manufactured by Optima were attractive for several reasons:

- The type and size of the buses covered by the CRPTA-Waccamaw Regional Transit Authority contract with Optima were consistent with the type/size needed to serve the park and ride lot.
- Optima's production schedule allowed the delivery of buses before August 2006.
- Five options were available from CRPTA; others had fewer options, insufficient for operation of the park and ride transit route.
- Discussions with other transit providers indicated that the Optima bus has performed well and has been very reliable. The bus is used successfully on a number of college campuses.
- The low floor feature of the Optima buses is particularly well suited to the park and ride operation because it facilitates access and egress as well as allowing easy access for disabled persons.
- Other options under this contract had been successfully transferred.

The assignment of options for bus acquisition has become common in the transit industry and is an allowable method of procurement under Federal Transit Administration guidelines.

The use of options to acquire five buses was recommended by KU staff, reviewed by University procurement staff and approved by KU's Provost in February 2006.