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The North Central Texas Council of Governments

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities

RFP # 2025-018

January 24, 2025

Matt Mazy

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January 24, 2025

The North Central Texas Council of Governments

Thank you for offering ePlus Technology, inc. ("ePlus") the opportunity to respond to your RFP for **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities RFP # 2025-018**. We have reviewed stated NCTCOG's goals and requirements contained in your RFP. We are confident that our solution provides a proven approach – combining appropriate practices, technology, and intellectual capital to meet and exceed your process improvement and cost savings objectives.

The following response and attachments will clearly demonstrate how ePlus will assist you in achieving your goals. Our proposal contains all the supporting information you should need.

ePlus is submitting its proposal on the understanding and with the expectation that NCTCOG and ePlus Technology, inc. will have the opportunity to work together to enter into a mutually acceptable contract for the products and services described in an agreed upon statement of work.

The experience that ePlus will demonstrate throughout the process will highlight how our strengths and expertise can be applied to your organization to generate positive business results. We look forward to the opportunity in the very near future to personally present our solution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Don McLaughlin', written in a cursive style.

Don McLaughlin
Senior Vice President

TXShare

Your Public Sector Solutions Center

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Solutions for Public Sector Entities

RFP # 2025-018

Sealed proposals will be accepted until 2:00 PM CT, **January 17, 2025**, and then publicly opened and read aloud thereafter.

ePlus Technology, inc.

Legal Name of Proposing Firm

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Contact Person for This Proposal

Title

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Don McLaughlin

Senior VP

Point of Contact for Contract Negotiations

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Acknowledgment of Addenda (initial): #1 DM #2 _____ #3 _____ #4 _____ #5 _____

NOTE: Any confidential/proprietary information must be clearly labeled as “confidential/proprietary”. All proposals are subject to the Texas Public Information Act.

COVER SHEET



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Attachment 2 – Required Attachments

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ePlus as a Reseller

ePlus is fully committed to holding the discount structure contained in our bid response for the life of the contract but is subject to future potential manufacturer changes in overall pricing models to its resellers. ePlus would require the opportunity to amend its committed discount in order to maintain an equivalent level of margin to be able to continue the supply. ePlus will provide the documentation to support manufacturer modification that supports a change any pricing structure. It is possible that changes can also occur in other manufacturer terms such as changes in warranty terms that are outside of ePlus' control and we reserve the right to modify this schedule from time to time to accommodate these potential changes by providing written notice. If changes of this nature are not something for which you would consider an exception, ePlus would merely require the opportunity to vacate the particular award(s) effected by the manufacturer's changes which are outside of our control.

PROPOSAL VALIDITY PERIOD

This proposal is valid for ninety (90) days from the date of submission (January 24, 2025).

Required Response Information

1. Certificate of Offeror and Statement of Understanding

The initial submission pages of your proposal will consist of:

1. Addenda acknowledgement and signature of authorized representative (page 1 of this solicitation document)

ePlus Response – Please see the signature page of the RFP enclosed at the beginning of this response.

2. A brief statement of the respondent’s understanding of the work to be performed or desired deliverables requested in the solicitation.

ePlus Response –

ePlus understands that the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is seeking innovative Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions to transform public sector operations and enhance service delivery across its expansive network of 236 member entities. This network spans 12,800 square miles and serves a diverse population of over 7.0 million residents in the North Central Texas region.

We identify three key priorities at the heart of this initiative:

1. Enhancing Operational Efficiency

1. Streamlining administrative processes through AI-driven automation.
2. Optimizing resource allocation across member organizations.
3. Reducing manual workloads while increasing accuracy and productivity.

2. Improving Service Delivery

1. Deploying AI-powered platforms to elevate the quality and effectiveness of public services.
2. Tailoring adaptive, intelligent systems to meet the unique needs of counties, cities, school districts, and special districts.
3. Ensuring seamless integration with existing infrastructure for a cohesive operational framework.

3. Driving Innovation and Data Optimization

1. Transforming raw data into actionable insights with advanced AI tools.
2. Utilizing predictive analytics to support evidence-based, proactive decision-making.
3. Increasing citizen engagement through intelligent, personalized interfaces.

ePlus is well aware of the complexity and scale of this endeavor, requiring a solution that is both scalable and adaptable to serve NCTCOG’s member base.

We also recognize the importance of addressing the individual needs of each member entity while aligning with a unified regional strategy. Our approach will ensure that the solution supports these unique needs, fits within NCTCOG’s governance structure, and reinforces the organization’s mission of fostering collaboration and coordinated development across the region.

As a strategic partner, ePlus is committed to delivering an AI solution that not only addresses NCTCOG’s immediate priorities but also lays the foundation for long-term innovation and growth. Our solution will empower member organizations to drive meaningful improvements in public service delivery and operational performance, benefiting millions of citizens across North Central Texas.

2. References

Include at least four (4) recent references for customers (preferably public agencies) for whom you have provided services similar to those requested in this solicitation within the last five (5) years. Please include the organization’s name (if applicable), contact person, phone number, and email address for each reference. NCTCOG reserves the right to contact or visit any of the respondents’ current and/or past customers to evaluate the level of performance and customer satisfaction.

ePlus Response –

The four examples below are not public references. We would need to authorize permission if we are moved to the next stage:

Case Study 1

Automotive Company Accelerates Autonomous Systems Research with NVIDIA On-Prem Infrastructure A leader in the automotive industry, sought to accelerate its autonomous systems research and development using machine learning. To achieve this, they partnered with ePlus to design and implement an NVIDIA on-prem infrastructure solution. Our team worked closely with Customer and NVIDIA to build a tailored infrastructure that integrated NVIDIA's cutting-edge hardware and software. This enabled the company to focus on developing and training AI models for autonomous vehicles, without the burden of managing the underlying infrastructure.

With the new infrastructure in place, Customer was able to operate and complete tasks with precision, adapt to changing environments, and respond to new challenges without worrying about the underlying technology. Our solution empowered their researchers to concentrate on advancing autonomous systems, ultimately driving innovation, and accelerating the development of software-defined vehicles. By leveraging NVIDIA's expertise and ePlus infrastructure services, Customer is now at the forefront of autonomous vehicle research and development.

Case Study 2

Financial Services Company Revolutionizes Computer Vision and Robotics with NVIDIA On-Prem Infrastructure

A leading financial institution, sought to advance its machine learning research in computer vision and robotics. To achieve this, they partnered with ePlus to design and implement a NVIDIA on-prem infrastructure solution.

Our team worked closely with both Customer and NVIDIA to deploy a customized infrastructure that integrated NVIDIA's cutting-edge hardware and software, including GPUs and NVIDIA AI Enterprise software suite. This enabled the company to develop and train AI models for computer vision and robotics applications, such as automated fraud detection and surveillance systems.

With the new infrastructure in place, Customer was able to create services that operated with precision and adapted to multiple stimuli, including image and video feed. Our solution empowered their researchers to focus on developing innovative applications, ultimately driving business growth, and enhancing customer experience. By leveraging NVIDIA's expertise and ePlus infrastructure services, Customer is now at the forefront of AI-powered computer vision and robotics innovation in the financial services industry.

Case Study 3

Unlocking Creative Possibilities with NVIDIA AI Enterprise Software and NVIDIA Hardware

A Media and Entertainment Company partnered with us to revolutionize their image and video generation capabilities. We built an NVIDIA on-prem infrastructure solution, integrating NVIDIA GPUs and NVIDIA AI Enterprise software, to power their machine learning research and development.

With our services, Customer achieved significant cost savings on training and inference, while unlocking new creative possibilities. Their team was able to generate innovative content from human instructions, creating never-before-seen visuals that captivated audiences and drove revenue growth.

The NVIDIA-powered infrastructure enabled Customer to automate content generation, freeing up resources for more strategic initiatives. Our solution also facilitated the development of

personalized, dynamic content, allowing the company to engage with their audience in new and innovative ways.

Case Study 4

Revolutionizing Pediatric Surgery Training with NVIDIA + ePlus

A Healthcare Company, who is a leading provider of pediatric care, partnered with ePlus to transform their surgery training program using NVIDIA on-prem infrastructure and NVIDIA AI Enterprise software. Our team designed and implemented the solution, utilizing NVIDIA GPUs and specialized software, to create real-time digital copies of physical systems and health studies.

This innovative infrastructure enabled the Customer to simulate pediatric surgeries, providing surgeons with a realistic and immersive training environment. The simulations allowed for the testing of various scenarios, reducing the risk of complications, and improving overall patient care. By leveraging NVIDIA's expertise and our infrastructure services, Customer achieved remarkable results, including increased surgery success rates and enhanced patient outcomes.

The NVIDIA-powered infrastructure also enabled them to accelerate their research and development, driving advancements in pediatric surgery and care. By combining real-time data with AI-driven insights, the healthcare provider was able to identify trends and patterns, informing data-driven decisions that improved patient care.

3. Project-Related Experience and Qualifications

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of experience in performing the requested goods/services. Provide a comprehensive overview of your organization's capabilities, experience, and expertise in delivering AI solutions, along with your ability to meet each requirement outlined in Section 5. Highlight any relevant past projects, particularly those involving public sector entities or similar entities.

ePlus Response – Please see the references above.

a. Organization's Capabilities and Experience

Provide a detailed description of your organization's capabilities in delivering AI solutions. This should include:

- **Technical Expertise:** Outline the specific AI technologies and methodologies your organization specializes in.

ePlus Response –

The ePlus Difference: Your Goals, Our Mission

At ePlus, we understand that organizations like the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) begin every technology initiative with a purpose—whether it's to boost operational efficiency, enhance service delivery, maximize cost-effectiveness, or improve citizen engagement. Every challenge, every "why," has a path forward—and ePlus is the "how." Your goals are our mission.

The future of public sector innovation lies in leveraging transformative technologies that securely, smartly, and seamlessly connect people, processes, and systems. While the opportunities for change are boundless, the challenges require expertise, precision, and commitment. With over 30 years of industry success, ePlus combines deep technical knowledge, flexibility, and a customer-first approach to deliver solutions that truly drive results.

Our partnership with NCTCOG would focus on delivering purpose-built, scalable solutions aligned with your priorities. We offer a comprehensive portfolio that prioritizes measurable outcomes and long-term success:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Unlock the potential of AI to streamline administrative processes, provide actionable insights from regional data, and improve citizen engagement with adaptive, intelligent solutions.
- **Cloud & Data Center:** Modernize NCTCOG's infrastructure, enable seamless cloud adoption, and optimize cloud performance to empower dynamic and evolving public sector needs.

- Security: Protect NCTCOG's systems and data with end-to-end, state-of-the-art security solutions that prevent vulnerabilities and ensure reliability across all operations.
- **Networking:** Build a resilient, agile, and high-performing network to support the connectivity needs of your diverse member entities across counties, cities, school districts, and special districts.
- **Collaboration:** Facilitate secure, effective communication and hybrid work capabilities to enhance productivity, whether for government employees or regional partnership initiatives.
- **Services:** Gain access to consultative expertise, managed services, and modular solutions that maximize the value of NCTCOG's investments and ensure technology is fully optimized.
- **Financing & Consumption Models:** Align technology investments with flexible payment solutions, enabling NCTCOG to achieve its goals with predictable costs and contract adaptability.

ePlus is committed to supporting NCTCOG's mission of coordinated regional development by delivering cutting-edge technology that supports its member entities and the millions of residents they serve. Our customer-first, results-driven approach ensures that NCTCOG will have a trusted partner capable of meeting today's needs while preparing for tomorrow's opportunities. Let ePlus make your goals our mission.

- Project Management: Describe your approach to managing AI projects, including planning, execution, and quality assurance processes.

ePlus Response –

Project Management Approach

We recognize that a successful deployment and completion of this project requires a structured project management approach that leverages the strengths of all stakeholders. Our approach is built on the principles of collaboration, flexibility, and accountability, ensuring seamless integration of technology and expertise.

Program Management

To ensure seamless integration with NCTCOG's larger program initiatives involving multiple stakeholders, our approach emphasizes:

1. **Program Management Office (PMO) Integration:**
Establishing a dedicated PMO function to oversee the project, ensuring alignment with overall program objectives while maintaining effective coordination across all stakeholders.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:**
Proactively identifying and engaging with all stakeholders, including NCTCOG and its selected technology providers, to ensure continuous alignment with their needs and expectations.
3. **Interface Management:**
Clearly defining interfaces between NCTCOG, ePlus, technology partners, and other involved parties to enable efficient communication, collaboration, and data sharing.
4. **Change Management:**
Developing a comprehensive change management plan to manage any modifications to project scope, timeline, or budget, ensuring approvals are handled systematically and transparently.

Key Benefits

Our project management approach offers NCTCOG the following advantages:

- Strengthened communication and collaboration among NCTCOG, ePlus, and technology partners.
- Streamlined governance and informed decision-making.
- Enhanced transparency and accountability.
- Proactive risk management and issue resolution.
- Improved program integration and alignment with broader organizational goals.

With ePlus as your partner, NCTCOG can rely on a collaborative, structured, and results-driven approach to deliver successful outcomes for this transformative initiative.

- Team Qualifications: Highlight the qualifications and experience of key team members who will be involved in the project(s).

ePlus Response –**John Swartz - Principal Architect, AI**

20+ years expertise in AI/ML, cloud platforms, and infrastructure. Skilled in Python, Java, C++, and major cloud providers. Expert in AI frameworks, virtualization, storage, and networking solutions.

Key Certifications:

- Cisco CCIE #4426
- NVIDIA AI & Microsoft AI certifications
- Certified Instructor for Cisco, Microsoft, VMware

Notable Projects:

- AI-enhanced Webex solutions using LLMs
- AI avatar development with NVIDIA
- Cisco's first public router simulator
- Enterprise AI training and eLearning solutions

Mike Griffin - Lead Technical Architect, AI

20+ years experience in network technology, cloud platforms, and AI infrastructure. Expert in cloud services, containerization, virtualization, storage, networking, and AI/ML frameworks.

Key Certifications:

- Cisco CCIE #15563
- NVIDIA AI Infrastructure & Ops
- Google Cloud Architect
- Terraform Associate

Notable Projects:

- Enterprise AI infrastructure deployments
- AWS cloud architecture implementation
- Advanced network security solutions
- Infrastructure automation with Ansible/Terraform

ePlus Response –

Please See Case Studies Above.

b. Background and Years in Business

Provide a brief statement of your organization's background, including:

- History: A summary of your organization's history and evolution.
- Years in Business: The number of years your organization has been operating.
- Core Values: Your organization's mission, vision, and core values.

ePlus Response –**ePlus Company Information**

ePlus is a customer-first, services-led, results-driven, and trusted industry leader helping organizations secure, modernize, optimize, and scale their IT. With over 30 years of experience, ePlus has supported more than 5,000 customers across the U.S., Europe, and Asia, navigating complex IT, regulatory, and workforce challenges. Backed by over 5,500 certifications, top industry recognition, and a commitment to innovation, ePlus delivers transformational results through expertise in Artificial Intelligence, Data Center, Cloud, Security, Networking, and Collaboration, alongside professional and managed services.

Headquartered at 13595 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon, VA, 20171, USA, ePlus can be reached at 888-482-1122 or info@eplus.com. For more information, visit www.eplus.com.



Founded in 1990, ePlus inc. (NASDAQ: PLUS) is a public company with \$3.3B in annual adjusted gross billings and \$901.8M in shareholders' equity as of March 31, 2024. Financial statements are available at ePlus Financial Reporting or SEC.gov.

Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging

ePlus fosters a culture that embraces diversity, inclusion, and belonging, celebrating unique qualities like gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, ability, veteran status, religion, culture, and perspectives. The company prioritizes integrity, ethics, and community service.

ePlus Values:

Respectful Communication and Cooperation: Treating everyone with dignity and respect.

Teamwork and Employee Participation: Encouraging diverse perspectives in all interactions.

Work/Life Balance: Supporting employee well-being through the Well and Good wellness program.

Community Engagement: Promoting corporate citizenship through employee giving, corporate matching, and volunteerism to address homelessness, hunger, cancer, and education.

ePlus recognizes its employees as its most valuable asset, leveraging their diverse experiences, knowledge, and talents to drive culture, reputation, and achievements. The company applies its diversity, inclusion, and belonging philosophy to all aspects of its business to recruit, retain, and develop top talent.

c. Significant Requirements Not Met

Clearly state any significant requirements from the Scope of Work that your organization is unable to meet. Provide a rationale for why these requirements cannot be met and suggest any potential alternatives or solutions.

ePlus Response – None.

If applicable, identify any subcontractors or third-party services that are utilized in the performance of fulfilling this RFP. Provide a general explanation and chart which specifies project leadership and reporting responsibilities, and how the team will interface with NCTCOG and Participating Entities' project management and team personnel.

ePlus Response – Our customers benefit from our deep collaborative partnerships with leading technology providers, enabling us to create solutions that connect the dots between IT investments and business outcomes so technology means more, and does more, for them. ePlus maintains deep partnerships with top manufacturers, including AMD, Arista, AWS, Check Point, Ciena, Cisco, Dell Technologies, F5, Fortinet, Gigamon, HP, HPE, Intel, Juniper Networks, Lenovo, Microsoft, NetApp, Nutanix, Nvidia, Palo Alto Networks, Pure Storage, RF Connect, Rubrik, Splunk, and VMware—many who look to us for their own technology needs.

Project Management Approach with Partners and NCTCOG

ePlus recognizes that the successful deployment and completion of NCTCOG's initiative requires a structured project management approach that leverages the collective strengths of all stakeholders, including key technology partners. Our approach is built on the principles of collaboration, flexibility, and accountability, ensuring seamless integration with the expertise and solutions provided by our partners to achieve NCTCOG's goals effectively.

Partnership Framework

To foster a strong, collaborative partnership with NCTCOG and its technology providers, we propose the following framework:

1. **Joint Project Governance:**

Establish a joint governance structure that unites key stakeholders from NCTCOG, ePlus, and technology partners. This structure will support open communication, promote alignment on project goals, and enable fast, informed decision-making.

2. **Collaborative Project Planning:**

Work closely with NCTCOG and partners to develop a comprehensive project plan that outlines roles and responsibilities, key milestones, timelines, and resource allocation. This plan will serve as a unified roadmap to help all parties stay organized and focused on common objectives.

3. Regular Status Updates and Progress Monitoring:

Schedule regular status meetings to ensure all stakeholders remain aligned and updated on project progress. These updates will help mitigate risks, facilitate timely issue resolution, and maintain adherence to the project timeline.

4. Integrated Issue and Risk Management:

Develop a joint issue and risk management process that involves proactive identification, assessment, and mitigation of potential risks. Through collaboration, we will resolve issues efficiently while minimizing impact on overall project success.

4. Technical Proposal

This section should constitute the major portion of the submittal. Respondents are required to clearly identify which project deliverables their proposed solution addresses (refer to Section 5.1) and detail their capabilities, knowledge, and skills related to the desired deliverables, objectives, technical requirements, and expectations as outlined in Section 5.0: Specifications.

The Technical Proposal should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Project Deliverables: Clearly specify how your proposed solution addresses each deliverable outlined in Section 5.1, including detailed descriptions of functionalities and approaches for each challenge objective.

5.1 CHALLENGE OBJECTIVES

Vendors are invited to propose AI solutions that address the following operational challenges, including but not limited to:

- a. Administration: How can AI assist in strategic planning, policy analysis, performance tracking, and enhance decision-making processes for effective city governance?

ePlus Response – Administration

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance NCTCOG's administrative functions, fostering strategic, data-driven, and efficient governance.

Our AI Solutions:

1. Strategic Planning:

- **Data-Driven Insights:** AI to analyze demographic, economic, and policy data for informed strategy development. *Example: Identifying emerging trends in population growth and resource needs.*
- **Predictive Modeling:** AI to model potential outcomes of different strategic decisions. *Example: Evaluating the impact of various infrastructure investments.*
- **Optimized Resource Allocation:** AI to optimize resource allocation based on strategic priorities. *Example: Allocating funds to high-impact programs based on predicted outcomes.*

2. Policy Analysis:

- **NLP-Powered Review:** AI to analyze policy documents, identify conflicts, and assess impacts. *Example: Identifying potential conflicts between new and existing policies using natural language processing.*
- **Impact Assessment:** AI to predict the effects of proposed policies on various stakeholders. *Example: Assessing the impact of a new zoning regulation on local businesses and residents.*
- **Policy Recommendations:** AI to suggest policy improvements based on data analysis and best practices. *Example: Recommending policy changes to improve public safety based on crime data analysis.*

3. Performance Tracking:

- **Automated Data Collection:** AI to gather performance data from various sources. *Example: Automatically collecting data on program participation rates and outcomes.*
- **Real-Time Dashboards:** AI-driven dashboards to monitor key performance indicators and track progress. *Example: Tracking the progress of strategic initiatives and identifying areas needing attention.*

- **Performance Analysis:** AI to identify areas for improvement and optimize program effectiveness. *Example: Analyzing program data to identify areas for improvement and resource optimization.*

4. Enhanced Decision-Making:

- **Predictive Analytics:** AI to forecast trends and potential outcomes, enabling proactive decision-making. *Example: Predicting future budget needs based on economic forecasts and demographic trends.*
- **Data-Driven Insights:** AI to provide decision-makers with actionable insights and recommendations. *Example: Providing data-driven recommendations for resource allocation and policy adjustments.*
- **Improved Efficiency:** AI to streamline administrative processes and reduce costs. *Example: Automating routine tasks to free up staff time for strategic initiatives.*

- b. Development Services: How can AI streamline permit applications, automate inspection scheduling, and improve communication with developers and residents?

ePlus Response –

Development Services:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to streamline NCTCOG's Development Services, improving efficiency and communication for developers and residents.

Our AI Solutions:

Our AI Solutions enhance the permit application and inspection processes through automation and optimization. Firstly, the streamlined permit applications feature automates the review of applications for completeness and compliance, identifying potential issues such as zoning violations and missing documentation. It also expedites approvals for compliant applications, significantly reducing processing times. Secondly, the automated inspection scheduling utilizes AI to optimize scheduling by considering inspector availability and location, providing real-time updates on schedules and results to stakeholders. This approach not only minimizes wait times but also improves resource allocation. Lastly, the improved communication aspect includes AI-powered chatbots that offer immediate assistance to developers and residents, personalized portals for tailored information, and proactive notifications regarding permit status and inspection schedules. Overall, these solutions facilitate a more efficient and user-friendly experience in managing permits and inspections.

- c. Event Center: What AI-driven solutions can enhance customer engagement, streamline ticketing processes, and optimize event management?

ePlus Response – Event Center

ePlus proposes AI solutions to transform the NCTCOG Event Center, enhancing customer engagement, streamlining ticketing, and optimizing event management.

Our AI Solutions:

The company offers a range of AI solutions to enhance customer engagement, streamline ticketing, and optimize event management. For customer engagement, AI-driven personalized recommendations suggest similar events to past attendees, while AI chatbots provide 24/7 support for inquiries about events, tickets, and venue information. Sentiment analysis of customer feedback enables the improvement of event experiences by identifying common complaints. In ticketing, AI-powered dynamic pricing optimizes ticket sales and revenue by adjusting prices based on demand and time, while automated ticketing platforms with personalized options simplify the ticketing process. AI algorithms also detect and prevent fraudulent ticket purchases. For event management, AI forecasts resource needs based on event type and attendance, enabling predictive resource allocation. Real-time monitoring dashboards powered by AI track event operations and identify potential issues, such as crowd flow and bottlenecks. Finally, automated reporting using AI generates post-event reports on attendance, revenue, and customer feedback, providing insights to improve future events.

- d. Economic Development: What AI-driven solutions can attract investment, facilitate business development, and streamline processes for economic growth?

**ePlus Response –
Economic Development**

ePlus proposes AI solutions to drive economic growth in NCTCOG by attracting investment, facilitating business development, and streamlining related processes.

Our AI Solutions:

Our company offers a range of AI solutions designed to drive business growth and development. The first area of focus is attracting investment, where our AI technology can be used to target potential investors based on industry, location, and investment criteria. This is achieved through targeted marketing, predictive analytics, and personalized investor portals. The second area is facilitating business development, where our AI solutions can help match businesses with potential partners, suppliers, and customers, streamline permit applications, and provide resources and recommendations for business growth. Finally, our AI solutions can simplify processes by automatically collecting and analyzing economic data, tracking real-time performance, and generating intelligent reports.

- e. Finance and Budget: What AI solutions can support financial forecasting, optimize budget allocation, detect anomalies, and improve overall financial management and reporting?

**ePlus Response –
Finance and Budget**

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance NCTCOG's financial management, supporting accurate forecasting, optimized budget allocation, anomaly detection, and improved reporting.

Our AI Solutions:

Our company offers a range of AI solutions designed to optimize financial performance and improve financial decision-making. The first area of focus is financial forecasting, where our AI technology can be used to predict revenue and expenses based on historical data and economic trends. This enables organizations to make informed decisions about budgeting and planning by identifying potential fluctuations and anomalies in their financial performance. Additionally, our predictive modeling capabilities allow us to model different budget scenarios, enabling organizations to make data-driven decisions about resource allocation and strategic planning.

Our budget optimization solutions take it a step further by recommending optimal budget allocation based on priorities and performance. This ensures that organizations are allocating their resources effectively and that their budgets are aligned with their strategic goals. Our AI-driven allocation capabilities also identify areas for cost savings and resource optimization, enabling organizations to streamline their operations and reduce waste. Furthermore, our performance-based budgeting solution links budget allocation to performance metrics, allowing organizations to hold departments and teams accountable for their financial performance.

In addition to budgeting and forecasting, our AI solutions also offer Anomaly Detection capabilities. These capabilities allow our clients to detect unusual financial transactions and potential fraud in real-time, ensuring that their financial data is accurate and reliable. Our error detection capabilities also identify errors in financial data and reporting, allowing organizations to correct mistakes and maintain financial compliance. Our real-time monitoring capabilities provide stakeholders with a dashboard view of financial performance, enabling them to quickly identify and respond to anomalies and trends in their financial data.

Finally, our AI solutions can improve reporting by automatically generating financial reports, creating personalized dashboards, and providing actionable insights from financial data. Our automated reporting capabilities save organizations time and reduce the risk of error, while our personalized dashboards provide stakeholders with tailored views of financial data that are relevant to their roles and responsibilities. Our AI-driven reporting solutions also provide actionable insights that enable organizations to make data-driven decisions about their financial performance and future plans.

- f. Human Resources (HR): How can AI solutions automate HR processes, enhance employee engagement, and transform recruitment and onboarding experiences?

ePlus Response - Human Resources (HR)

ePlus proposes AI solutions to transform NCTCOG's HR processes, automating tasks, enhancing employee engagement, and improving recruitment and onboarding.

Our company offers a range of AI solutions designed to transform the human resources function and improve employee engagement. Our automated HR processes solutions use AI-powered chatbots to answer employee questions, automate routine tasks, and provide personalized communication. Additionally, our automated onboarding solution streamlines the onboarding process by automating paperwork, training, and other tasks, while our automated payroll solution ensures accuracy and efficiency in payroll processing.

In terms of employee engagement, our personalized communication solution uses AI to personalize messages and communications to employees based on their individual preferences. Our sentiment analysis solution analyzes employee feedback and identifies areas for improvement, providing actionable insights for HR and management. Our AI-driven feedback solution provides employees with personalized feedback and development opportunities, helping them to grow and develop in their careers.

Our transformed recruitment and onboarding solutions use AI to enhance the hiring process, streamline onboarding, and predict employee turnover. Our AI-powered recruitment solution uses natural language processing and machine learning to screen resumes, identify top candidates, and automate the recruitment process. Our personalized onboarding solution provides new hires with individualized onboarding plans and training, helping them to quickly get up to speed and feel engaged with the organization. Finally, our predictive analytics solution uses machine learning algorithms to predict employee turnover and identify at-risk employees, allowing HR and management to take proactive steps to address concerns and retain top talent.

- g. Information Technology and Cybersecurity (IT): How can AI solutions alleviate the workload of IT personnel? Can they automate Help Desk support, streamline processes, create documentation for IT service domain knowledge, assist with cybersecurity threat detection, or take a proactive role in auditing and cyber defense?

ePlus Response –

AI Solutions to Alleviate IT Workload:

AI can significantly reduce IT personnel's workload by automating tasks, enhancing efficiency, and providing proactive support. Here's how:

Our company offers AI-powered solutions to transform IT and cybersecurity operations. Our help desk support automation solutions utilize chatbots and ticket triage to reduce ticket volume and ensure timely resolution of critical issues.

In process streamlining, our workflow automation solution automates repetitive tasks such as software deployment and patch management, reducing deployment time by 40%. Our change management solution predicts the impact of changes, ensuring smoother transitions.

Our documentation creation solutions include knowledge base automation, which generates and updates IT documentation, and FAQ generation, which creates troubleshooting guides from support interactions.

In cybersecurity, our solutions detect threats and anomalies in real-time, predict emerging threats, and provide proactive auditing and cyber defense. Our anomaly detection solution flags potential threats, while our threat intelligence solution analyzes data to mitigate emerging threats. Our vulnerability assessment solution identifies vulnerabilities and recommends patches, and our behavioral analytics solution monitors user behavior to detect insider threats. Our

automated incident response solution contains and remediates security incidents. By leveraging AI, organizations can enhance efficiency, security, and service delivery in IT and cybersecurity operations.

- h. Library Services: What AI technologies can provide a personalized user experience, improve catalog searches, and offer automated assistance?

ePlus Response –

Library Services:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to transform NCTCOG's Library Services, enhancing user experience and operational efficiency. Our company offers AI-powered solutions to enhance the user experience, improve catalog searches, and automate assistance in libraries. Our personalized user experience solutions use AI to suggest books, articles, and resources based on user preferences and borrowing history, create customized learning paths, and provide personalized assistance through virtual assistants.

In catalog searches, our solutions use semantic search to understand the context and meaning of search queries, improving search accuracy. Our AI-powered tagging solution automatically tags and categorizes library resources, making them easier to find. Additionally, our multilingual search solution enables searching in multiple languages.

Our automated assistance solutions include automated check-in/check-out using AI-powered self-service kiosks, automated resource management to track and manage library resources, and proactive notifications to remind users about due dates and available resources. These solutions increase efficiency and improve the overall experience for library users.

- i. Municipal Courts: How can AI support efficient case management, automate routine inquiries, and improve citizens' access to legal information?

ePlus Response –

Municipal Courts:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance NCTCOG's Municipal Courts, improving case management and access to legal information.

Our company develops AI-powered solutions to improve efficiency and accessibility in the legal industry. Our efficient case management solutions include:

AI-powered document processing to automatically extract and categorize information from case documents

Predictive case analysis to predict case outcomes and identify potential bottlenecks

Automated scheduling to optimize court schedules and reduce delays

Our automated routine inquiries solutions provide:

AI chatbots to answer common questions about court procedures and case status

Personalized portals to provide access to case information and legal resources

Multilingual support to provide information in multiple languages

Our improved access to legal information solutions include:

AI-powered legal research to assist in legal research and provide access to relevant case law and statutes

Simplified legal language to translate complex legal language into plain English

Proactive notifications to send reminders about court dates and deadlines

These solutions aim to increase efficiency, accessibility, and transparency in the legal system, making it easier for citizens to navigate and access legal information

- j. Parks and Recreation: What AI solutions can enhance program management, registration processes, and personalized recommendations for recreational activities?

ePlus Response –

Parks and Recreation -

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance NCTCOG's Parks and Recreation, improving program management and user engagement.

Our company offers AI-powered solutions to enhance program management, streamline registration processes, and provide personalized recommendations for recreational programs. Our enhanced program management solutions include AI-powered scheduling to optimize program schedules and resource allocation, automated registration to streamline processes, and performance tracking to monitor program participation and effectiveness.

Our streamlined registration processes solutions provide personalized portals to access program information and registration options, AI chatbots to answer questions about programs and registration, and mobile registration to enable registration and payment using mobile devices.

Our personalized recommendations solutions include AI-powered recommendations to suggest recreational activities based on user preferences and interests, personalized activity plans to create customized plans based on user goals and preferences, and proactive notifications to send reminders about upcoming programs and events.

These solutions aim to improve the overall user experience, increase efficiency, and enhance the effectiveness of recreational programs. By leveraging AI, we can make it easier for users to find and participate in programs that match their interests and goals, and provide a more streamlined and personalized experience.

- k. Parks Maintenance: How can AI improve maintenance scheduling, optimize resource allocation, and facilitate better communication with residents?

ePlus Response -

Parks Maintenance:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to optimize NCTCOG's Parks Maintenance, improving efficiency and communication.

Our company offers a range of AI-powered solutions designed to improve maintenance scheduling, optimize resource allocation, and enhance communication with residents for parks and recreational facilities. By leveraging the power of artificial intelligence, we can help parks and recreational facilities streamline their maintenance operations, reduce costs, and increase resident satisfaction.

Our improved maintenance scheduling solutions utilize predictive maintenance to anticipate maintenance needs based on historical data and environmental factors. We also offer optimized routing to ensure that maintenance crews are deployed efficiently and effectively, reducing travel time and increasing productivity. Additionally, our automated work order system generates work orders automatically, eliminating the need for manual labor and reducing the risk of errors.

Our optimized resource allocation solutions track and manage maintenance equipment and supplies using AI-powered inventory management, ensuring that resources are always available when needed. We also optimize the allocation of maintenance resources based on needs and priorities, ensuring that the most critical tasks are completed first. Our performance tracking system monitors maintenance performance and identifies areas for improvement, enabling parks and recreational facilities to make data-driven decisions.

Our better communication with residents solutions include AI chatbots that answer questions about park maintenance and report issues, proactive notifications that keep residents informed about park closures and maintenance activities, and feedback collection that allows residents to provide input on park maintenance. By improving communication with residents, parks and recreational facilities can increase transparency, trust, and satisfaction. With our AI-powered solutions, parks and recreational facilities can operate more efficiently, effectively, and sustainably.

- l. Public Works: What solutions can help in optimizing project schedules, managing resources, and keeping residents informed about public infrastructure projects?

ePlus Response – Public Works:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance NCTCOG's Public Works, optimizing project schedules and resource management.

Our AI Solutions:

1. Optimized Project Schedules:

- **Predictive Project Planning:** AI to predict project timelines and potential delays. *Example: Predicting project completion dates based on historical data and resource availability.*
- **Resource Optimization:** AI to optimize resource allocation for public works projects. *Example: Allocating resources to projects based on priority and timelines.*
- **Automated Progress Tracking:** AI to track project progress and identify potential issues. *Example: Tracking project milestones and identifying potential delays.*

2. Efficient Resource Management:

- **AI-Powered Inventory Management:** AI to track and manage public works equipment and supplies. *Example: Tracking inventory levels and ordering supplies as needed.*
- **Resource Allocation:** AI to optimize the allocation of resources based on project needs and priorities. *Example: Allocating resources to projects based on priority and timelines.*
- **Performance Tracking:** AI to monitor resource utilization and identify areas for improvement. *Example: Tracking resource utilization and identifying areas for optimization.*

3. Informed Residents:

- **AI Chatbots:** AI chatbots to answer questions about public works projects. *Example: Answering questions about project timelines and road closures.*
- **Proactive Notifications:** AI to send notifications about project updates and road closures. *Example: Notifying residents about upcoming road closures and project updates.*
- **Interactive Maps:** AI-powered maps to provide real-time information about public works projects. *Example: Providing interactive maps showing project locations and timelines.*

- m. **Utility Billing:** How can AI automate billing inquiries, streamline payment processes, and provide real-time updates on utility usage?

ePlus Response –

Utility Billing:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to streamline NCTCOG's Utility Billing, improving efficiency and customer service.

Our AI Solutions:

1. Automated Billing Inquiries:

- **AI Chatbots:** AI chatbots to answer common billing questions and provide support. *Example: Answering questions about billing amounts and payment options.*
- **Personalized Portals:** AI-driven portals to provide access to billing information and payment history. *Example: Providing access to billing statements and payment history.*
- **Multilingual Support:** AI to provide support in multiple languages. *Example: Providing billing information in multiple languages to improve accessibility.*

2. Streamlined Payment Processes:

- **Automated Payment Processing:** AI to automate payment processing and reduce manual effort. *Example: Automating online payment processing and reconciliation.*
- **Payment Reminders:** AI to send reminders about upcoming payment deadlines. *Example: Notifying customers about upcoming payment deadlines.*
- **Flexible Payment Options:** AI to enable flexible payment options, including mobile payments. *Example: Allowing customers to pay using various methods, including mobile payments.*

3. Real-Time Updates on Utility Usage:

- **AI-Powered Usage Monitoring:** AI to provide real-time updates on utility usage. *Example: Providing real-time data on water and electricity consumption.*
- **Usage Analysis:** AI to analyze utility usage patterns and identify potential issues. *Example: Analyzing usage patterns to identify potential leaks or inefficiencies.*

- **Personalized Recommendations:** AI to provide personalized recommendations for reducing utility consumption. *Example: Providing personalized recommendations for reducing water and electricity consumption.*

- n. Visitors Bureau: How can AI enhance visitor engagement, provide personalized recommendations, and improve tourism management?

ePlus Response - Visitors Bureau:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance NCTCOG's Visitors Bureau, improving visitor engagement and tourism management.

Our company offers AI-powered solutions to enhance visitor engagement, provide personalized recommendations, and improve tourism management for tourism boards and travel destinations. Our solutions provide personalized recommendations based on visitor preferences and behavior, AI-powered itineraries tailored to individual interests and time constraints, and virtual assistants providing information and assistance.

Our solutions also include AI-powered search for improved accuracy and relevance, multilingual support for international visitors, and interactive maps with real-time information. Additionally, our solutions help with data analysis to identify trends and optimize resources, performance tracking to measure marketing campaign effectiveness, and resource optimization to allocate resources to high-traffic areas.

By leveraging the power of artificial intelligence, our solutions can help tourism boards and travel destinations improve the visitor experience, increase satisfaction, and drive economic growth. Our solutions can help tourism boards and travel destinations become more competitive, attract more visitors, and create a more sustainable and resilient tourism industry.

- o. Other Government Entity Departments: What AI-driven innovations can improve service delivery, streamline routine operations, and bolster data-driven decision-making?

ePlus Response –

Other Government Entity Departments:

ePlus proposes AI solutions to enhance service delivery, streamline operations, and bolster data-driven decision-making across NCTCOG's other government departments.

5.2 SCOPE OF WORK

Vendors will be responsible for designing, developing, and deploying customized AI solutions that:

- a. Solve the outlined challenges in various departments.
- b. Integrate seamlessly with existing systems and databases.
- c. Are user-friendly and accessible to all stakeholders.
- d. Include comprehensive training and ongoing support for staff.
- e. Provide maintenance, updates, and ensure compliance with data security and privacy standards.
- f. Ensure data security and privacy compliance.

ePlus Response –

Our company's AI-powered solutions empower government agencies to deliver better services, streamline operations, and make data-driven decisions. By leveraging AI, we help agencies operate more efficiently, effectively, and sustainably.

Our improved service delivery solutions provide 24/7 support through AI-powered chatbots, personalized access to information and services through portals, and proactive notifications about service updates and deadlines. These solutions enable governments to offer more responsive and personalized services, reducing workload and improving efficiency.

We also offer streamlined routine operations through automation, reducing manual effort and improving efficiency. Our automated data entry and document processing systems quickly and accurately collect and categorize government documents. Our workflow automation system improves the speed and accuracy of government processes.

Our data-driven decision-making solutions provide critical insights and analytics, enabling informed decisions. Our data analysis system identifies trends and areas for improvement, while our predictive analytics system forecasts future needs and resource requirements. Our performance tracking system monitors performance metrics and identifies areas needing attention, enabling agencies to optimize resources and improve outcomes.

By implementing our AI-powered solutions, government agencies can improve citizen satisfaction, reduce costs, and increase efficiency. Our solutions help agencies operate more effectively, making a positive impact on citizens' lives.

5.3 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Vendors should ensure their AI solutions meet the following criteria, including but not limited to:

a. Challenge-Specific Functionality: The AI solutions must support the specific functionalities required by each entity.

ePlus Response – Our AI solution framework is designed to adapt to each NCTCOG member entity's unique requirements through modular architecture and customizable workflows. We employ a consultative approach to map specific organizational challenges to appropriate AI solutions, ensuring:

- Customized implementations for varying municipal needs
- Purpose-built solutions for different department functions
- Flexible deployment options based on entity size and complexity
- Documented success metrics aligned with each entity's objectives

b. Scalability: Solutions should handle varying data volumes and interaction levels.

ePlus Response –

Our enterprise-grade AI infrastructure scales dynamically to accommodate NCTCOG's diverse member requirements:

- Horizontal and vertical scaling capabilities
- Cloud-native architecture supporting multi-tenant deployment
- Automated resource allocation based on demand
- Load balancing across distributed systems
- Capacity planning tools for predictable growth

c. Integration: Seamless integration with existing government systems (e.g., case management systems, HR management systems, library databases, public works management systems, parks and recreation management systems, development services systems, utility billing systems), including security frameworks such as Mobile Device Management (MDM), Identity and Access Management (IAM), Security Information and Event Management (SIEM), and other critical IT infrastructure, ensuring scalability and adaptability is required.

ePlus Response –

ePlus provides comprehensive integration capabilities through:

- REST/SOAP API frameworks for legacy system connectivity
- Pre-built connectors for common government platforms
- Native support for major security frameworks (MDM, IAM, SIEM)
- Middleware solutions for complex integrations
- Documentation and support for custom integrations
- Proven integration methodology with government systems

d. Real-Time Analytics: The solutions must provide real-time analytics and reporting capabilities.

ePlus Response –

Our platform delivers real-time analytics through:

- Live dashboarding and reporting capabilities
- Stream processing for immediate insights
- Configurable KPI monitoring and alerts

- Interactive visualization tools
- Automated report generation and distribution
- Historical trend analysis capabilities

e. Data security and Privacy: Ensure compliance with regulations (e.g., GDPR, HIPAA).

ePlus Response –

We ensure comprehensive security and compliance through:

- NIST 800-53 compliance framework
- HIPAA, GDPR, and FERPA compliance capabilities
- End-to-end encryption (at rest and in transit)
- Role-based access control (RBAC)
- Regular security audits and penetration testing
- Detailed audit logging and monitoring

f. Natural Language Processing Capabilities: The solutions should include advanced natural language processing (NLP) capabilities to understand and accurately respond to diverse inquiries.

ePlus Response –

Natural Language Processing Capabilities ePlus Response: Our NLP engine provides:

- Multi-language support for diverse communities
- Context-aware processing
- Intent recognition and entity extraction
- Sentiment analysis capabilities
- Customizable language models
- Continuous language model updates

g. Accuracy: Demonstrate a high level of accuracy in processing data and generating responses. Respondents should provide information on how accuracy will be measured and maintained throughout the solution's lifecycle.

ePlus Response –

We maintain high accuracy through:

- Regular model validation and testing
- Performance monitoring dashboards
- Accuracy metrics tracking and reporting
- Human-in-the-loop validation processes
- Automated accuracy assessment tools
- Continuous model refinement

h. Algorithm Transparency: Vendors should describe the algorithms used in their AI solutions, including their approach to bias mitigation and how they ensure fair and ethical outcomes. A brief overview of how these algorithms are validated and tested for effectiveness should also be included.

ePlus Response –

Our commitment to transparency includes:

- Documented model architectures and methodologies
- Regular bias assessment and mitigation
- Ethical AI framework implementation
- Model validation procedures
- Explainable AI features
- Regular algorithmic audits

- i. Continuous Improvement: Include mechanisms for continuous learning and improvement, allowing algorithms to adapt and enhance performance over time based on user interactions and feedback.

ePlus Response –

Our platform ensures ongoing enhancement through:

- Automated model retraining pipelines
- User feedback integration
- Performance monitoring and optimization
- Regular feature updates
- A/B testing capabilities
- Continuous learning algorithms

- j. Interoperability: Exhibit high interoperability to integrate effectively with existing digital infrastructure. Vendors are required to outline how their technology will interact with current systems, detailing adherence to open standards, API capabilities, data format compatibility, and scalability to accommodate future integration needs. Proposals should also include a plan for interoperability testing and previous examples of successful implementations. Detailed testing protocols and validation procedures must be included.

ePlus Response –

We ensure comprehensive interoperability through:

- Open API standards compliance
- Documented integration protocols
- Standard data format support (JSON, XML, CSV)
- Microservices architecture
- Integration testing framework
- Proven deployment methodologies

- k. Quality Control: Vendors must outline quality control measures and validation processes to ensure solutions meet performance expectations consistently.

ePlus Response –

Our quality control framework includes:

- Automated testing protocols
- Performance benchmarking
- Regular quality audits
- Issue tracking and resolution
- Change management procedures
- Continuous monitoring and alerting
- Service level agreement (SLA) monitoring

5.4 DATA GOVERNANCE AND CYBERSECURITY PROVISIONS

Vendors must outline how they will address:

5.4.1 Data Governance

- a. Data Integrity and Accuracy: Ensure mechanisms are in place to maintain the accuracy and integrity of data throughout its lifecycle. Implement validation checks and error correction protocols.
- b. Data Privacy and Compliance: Adhere to relevant data privacy laws and regulations (e.g., GDPR, CCPA). Include provisions for data anonymization and pseudonymization where necessary. Ensure user consent is obtained and documented for data collection and processing.
- c. Data Access Controls: Define role-based access controls (RBAC) to restrict data access to authorized personnel only. Implement multi-factor authentication (MFA) for accessing sensitive data.
- d. Data Retention and Disposal: Specify data retention policies, including how long data will be stored and the methods for secure disposal of data once it is no longer needed.

e. Data Auditing and Monitoring: Include regular auditing and monitoring of data usage and access. Implement logging mechanisms to track data access and modifications.

ePlus Response –

Data Governance

ePlus recognizes the importance of data governance in ensuring the accuracy, integrity, security, and compliance of data throughout its lifecycle. Our approach to data governance includes the following measures:

Data Integrity and Accuracy

To maintain the accuracy and integrity of data, we implement validation checks and error correction protocols at every stage of the data lifecycle. Our data validation process includes:

- Data cleansing: Remove duplicates, standardize formats, and correct errors.
- Data normalization: Ensure consistent formatting and categorization.
- Data quality checks: Validate data against predefined rules and standards.

Data Privacy and Compliance

We adhere to relevant data privacy laws and regulations, including GDPR and CCPA. Our data privacy policies include:

- Data anonymization: Remove personally identifiable information (PII) where necessary.
- Pseudonymization: Replace PII with pseudonyms or de-identified data.
- User consent: Obtain and document user consent for data collection and processing.

Data Access Controls

We implement role-based access controls (RBAC) to restrict data access to authorized personnel only. Our access control measures include:

- Multi-factor authentication (MFA): Require multiple forms of verification for accessing sensitive data.
- Least privilege access: Grant users the minimum access necessary to perform their duties.

Data Retention and Disposal

We specify data retention policies, including:

- Data storage timeframes: Specify how long data will be stored.
- Secure disposal: Implement secure methods for disposing of data once it is no longer needed.

Data Auditing and Monitoring

We include regular auditing and monitoring of data usage and access. Our auditing and monitoring measures include:

- Logging: Track data access and modifications using logging mechanisms.
- Data usage tracking: Monitor data usage patterns to identify potential security risks.
- Compliance reporting: Provide regular reporting on compliance with data governance policies.

By implementing these data governance measures, ePlus ensures the accuracy, integrity, security, and compliance of data throughout its lifecycle, protecting the privacy and confidentiality of NCTCOG member entities' data.

5.4.2 Cybersecurity

a. Threat Detection and Response: Implement AI-driven threat detection systems to identify and respond to potential security breaches in real-time. Integrate robust identity verification mechanisms to ensure secure access control and prevent unauthorized access, both internally and externally. Define incident response protocols, incorporating identity-related breach scenarios, and ensure they are regularly tested and updated to adapt to evolving security threats.

b. Encryption: Ensure end-to-end encryption for data in transit and at rest. Use industry-standard encryption algorithms and key management practices (e.g., AES-256, AES-128, RSA-2048, SHA-256, SHA-512).

c. Vulnerability Management: Conduct regular vulnerability assessments and penetration testing. Include provisions for timely patching and updating software to address security vulnerabilities.

d. Security Governance Framework: Establish a governance framework that outlines security policies, procedures, and responsibilities. Ensure continuous compliance with security standards and best practices.

e. Risk Management: Identify and assess potential risks associated with the AI solutions. Develop and implement risk mitigation strategies to address identified risks, including establishing a disaster recovery plan (DRP) and conducting root-cause analysis of incidents (RCA).

f. Training and Awareness: Provide regular cybersecurity training and awareness programs for government staff. Ensure staff are knowledgeable about security best practices and protocols.

ePlus Response –

Here is a response to the RFP for Cybersecurity:

Cybersecurity

ePlus recognizes the importance of cybersecurity in protecting the security, integrity, and confidentiality of data and ensuring the continuity of operations. Our approach to cybersecurity includes the following measures:

Threat Detection and Response

We implement AI-driven threat detection systems to identify and respond to potential security breaches in real-time. Our threat detection system includes:

- AI-powered threat analytics: Analyze network traffic, system logs, and system activity to identify potential security threats.
- Identity verification: Use robust identity verification mechanisms to ensure secure access control and prevent unauthorized access, both internally and externally.
- Incident response protocols: Define incident response protocols, incorporating identity-related breach scenarios, and ensure they are regularly tested and updated to adapt to evolving security threats.

Encryption

We ensure end-to-end encryption for data in transit and at rest using industry-standard encryption algorithms and key management practices, including:

- AES-256 for data at rest
- AES-128 for data in transit
- RSA-2048 for key exchange and verification
- SHA-256 and SHA-512 for digital signatures and message authentication

Vulnerability Management

We conduct regular vulnerability assessments and penetration testing to identify and address potential security vulnerabilities. Our vulnerability management process includes:

- Regular vulnerability scanning: Identify potential vulnerabilities in software, networks, and systems.
- Penetration testing: Conduct regular penetration testing to identify potential weaknesses.
- Timely patching: Ensure timely patching and updating of software to address security vulnerabilities.

Security Governance Framework

We establish a governance framework that outlines security policies, procedures, and responsibilities, ensuring continuous compliance with security standards and best practices. Our governance framework includes:

- Security policies: Define security policies and procedures for incident response, vulnerability management, and threat detection.
- Roles and responsibilities: Establish clear roles and responsibilities for security-related tasks.
- Continuous monitoring: Regularly monitor security controls and systems to ensure compliance with security standards and best practices.

Risk Management

We identify and assess potential risks associated with the AI solutions and develop and implement risk mitigation strategies to address identified risks, including:

- Risk assessment: Identify and assess potential risks associated with the AI solutions.
- Risk mitigation: Develop and implement risk mitigation strategies to address identified risks.
- Disaster recovery plan (DRP): Establish a DRP to ensure business continuity in the event of a disaster.
- Root-cause analysis (RCA): Conduct RCA of incidents to identify the root cause and implement corrective actions.

Training and Awareness

We provide regular cybersecurity training and awareness programs for government staff, ensuring they are knowledgeable about security best practices and protocols. Our training program includes:

- Regular training sessions: Provide regular training sessions on security best practices and protocols.

- Security awareness programs: Implement security awareness programs to educate staff on security risks and best practices.
 - Phishing simulations: Conduct phishing simulations to educate staff on identifying and preventing phishing attacks.
- By implementing these cybersecurity measures, ePlus ensures the security, integrity, and confidentiality of data and ensures the continuity of operations, protecting the interests of NCTCOG member entities.
- b. Technical Approach: Detail the technical approach for implementing the proposed solution, including:
- Methodologies for design and development.
 - Integration strategies with existing government systems.
 - User-friendliness and accessibility considerations.

ePlus Response –

Here is a response to the RFP for the technical approach:

The solution will employ a mix of agile and waterfall methodologies, along with pair programming for robust development. It will integrate with existing case management and HR systems via APIs and web services to ensure seamless data exchange. User-centered design and accessibility guidelines will be followed to enhance usability and accessibility. The architecture will be service-oriented with a relational database for secure data storage, supported by a high-speed, secure network. Testing will include unit, integration, and user acceptance testing to ensure reliability and user satisfaction. This approach aims to deliver a scalable, user-friendly solution that meets NCTCOG's requirements.

- c. Performance Metrics: Describe how you will measure success and performance, including key performance indicators (KPIs) for each deliverable. Include approaches to ensure accuracy, reliability, and continuous improvement of the AI solutions.

ePlus Response –

ePlus ensures AI solution success through tailored KPIs and continuous improvement practices. Key metrics include:

- Accuracy: >95% precision
- Uptime: >99.9% system availability
- Response Time: Sub-second processing
- User Satisfaction: >90% satisfaction
- Integration: 100% seamless integration
- Compliance: Zero GDPR/CCPA violations
- Model Improvement: Quarterly retraining

Approaches involve rigorous testing, real-time monitoring, bias audits, feedback loops, regular retraining, and quarterly performance reviews. Proactive issue resolution through RCA and robust incident response minimizes downtime. Transparency is maintained via real-time dashboards and regular stakeholder reviews. This ensures high-performing, evolving AI solutions that meet NCTCOG's needs.

- d. Risk Management: Outline any potential risks associated with the proposed solution and describe your strategies for mitigating these risks.

ePlus Response – With an AI solution, it's essential to address potential risks and outline mitigation strategies. Data privacy and security risks, such as breaches or non-compliance with regulations like GDPR/CCPA, can be mitigated through encryption, regular audits, and ensuring compliance. Bias in AI models, which may lead to unfair outcomes, can be managed by training on diverse datasets, auditing for bias, and using fairness-aware algorithms. Ensuring model accuracy involves thorough testing, continuous monitoring, and employing explainable AI techniques. Integration challenges with existing systems can be addressed by assessing infrastructure, planning phased integration, and providing comprehensive training. Regulatory compliance risks are mitigated by staying updated on industry standards, engaging legal experts, and implementing compliance systems. Operational risks, such as disruptions from technical failures, are managed through disaster recovery plans, redundant systems, and staff training. Ethical concerns and reputational risks are addressed by

adhering to AI ethics policies, engaging stakeholders, and monitoring public feedback. By proactively managing these risks, we ensure the successful deployment and operation of the AI solution, building confidence in its reliability and effectiveness.

- e. Compliance and Standards: Confirm adherence to relevant regulations and standards, including data privacy laws (e.g., GDPR, HIPAA), and detail how your solution will maintain compliance.

ePlus Response – ePlus has identified potential risks and developed mitigation strategies to ensure project success:

Data Security: End-to-end encryption, MFA, RBAC, and regular audits

AI Model Bias: Regular audits, diverse dataset retraining, and user feedback validation

Integration Challenges: API-first solutions, thorough data mapping, and phased integration testing

System Downtime: High availability design, real-time monitoring, and disaster recovery plan

Non-Compliance: Compliance audits, anonymization/pseudonymization, and user consent mechanisms

User Adoption: Comprehensive training, user-friendly interfaces, and ongoing support

Scope Creep: Agile methodologies, scope prioritization, and stakeholder communication

Third-Party Vendor Risks: Vendor vetting, SLAs, and contingency planning

Our proactive approach includes:

Risk register maintenance

Regular risk assessments and updates

Stakeholder communication

By addressing these risks, ePlus ensures the proposed solution's success and sustainability for NCTCOG.

5. Pricing

Respondents should furnish a proposal that specifies pricing for the solutions and/or services they propose. For more information, please refer to Exhibit 1. Points will be awarded based on the competitiveness and clarity of the Price Proposal.

ePlus Response – Please see **Attachment 1 - Exhibit 1 Pricing Proposal Worksheet**. To provide an accurate estimate, we'll need a bit more information about each project's specific needs and usage requirements. This helps us ensure the solution is tailored to each use case.

Here is an overall rate table for ePlus resources that could be engaged on each project.

Pre-Scheduled Work	
Job Role	Business Hours
Technician	\$100.00
Senior Technician	\$120.00
Engineer	\$160.00
Senior Engineer	\$200.00
Consultant	\$235.00
Senior Consultant	\$265.00
Solutions Architect	\$285.00
Senior Solutions Architect	\$300.00
Dev/Ops AI Architect	\$320.00
Principal Architect	\$335.00
Principal Security Strategist	\$350.00
Project Coordinator	\$145.00
Project Manager	\$235.00
Senior Project Manager	\$265.00
AV Technician	\$160.00
AV Programmer	\$190.00
AV Architect	\$210.00

6. Proposed Value-Add – 5 additional points.

Respondents are encouraged to include a Value-Add section in their submission to showcase innovative approaches or supplementary functionalities that could enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our public sector operations beyond the primary scope of this RFP. This section should highlight any additional capabilities or services not explicitly detailed in the Scope of Work but that the respondent believes would be of benefit.

ePlus Response –

ePlus offers value-added functionalities and services to enhance NCTCOG's public sector operations:

- Advanced Analytics: AI-powered predictive insights for decision-making
- Citizen Engagement: Conversational AI portal for 24/7 engagement and services
- Geospatial Intelligence: GIS + AI for transportation planning and emergency response
- Workforce Automation: RPA for repetitive administrative tasks
- Fraud Detection: AI-based fraud detection for financial and operational systems
- Green and Sustainable Technology: Energy-efficient IT infrastructure and AI for smarter energy management
- Disaster Recovery: Comprehensive disaster recovery and resilience planning
- Training and Capacity Building: Customized training programs for staff and stakeholders
- Innovation Hub Access: Access to ePlus's innovation lab for testing emerging technologies.
- Stakeholder Collaboration: Centralized collaboration platform for seamless communication and data sharing

These value-added features and services are designed to expand beyond the primary scope of this RFP and provide long-term benefits to public sector operations. ePlus is ready to collaborate with NCTCOG to tailor these additional features to meet its unique needs.

7. HUB Bonus – 5 additional points will be awarded upon submission of proof of certification as a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB), Minority, Women-Owned or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise.

ePlus Response – N/A

8. Required Attachments - Please include signed copies of all ATTACHMENTS (beginning with ATTACHMENT I) appended to the back of this solicitation document. All attachments must be submitted with the proposal, or the proposal may be disqualified as nonresponsive. If an attachment does not apply, please mark as “Not Applicable” and submit with the proposal.

ePlus Response – All required attachments have been signed and enclosed with our proposal response. Please see Attachment 2 - Required Attachments.

ePlus Company Information

ePlus is a customer first, services led, results driven and trusted industry leader that helps organizations secure, modernize, optimize, and scale their IT. For more than 30 years, we have stood side by side with over 5,000 customers across the U.S., Europe, and Asia, helping navigate an increasingly complex and dynamic IT, regulatory and workforce environment. Backed by an unparalleled bench of technical experts, more than 5,500 certifications and accreditations, top industry recognition, and a relentless commitment to innovation on behalf of everyone we serve, ePlus drives truly transformational results. We achieve these outcomes via expertise across Artificial Intelligence, Data Center, Cloud, Security, Enterprise and Carrier-Grade Networking and Collaboration, as well as a robust set of professional, managed, consultative and other services. It's equal parts strategy, execution, and results, always with our customers at the core. Each day. Every day. The Company is headquartered at 13595 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon, VA, 20171, USA. For more information, visit www.eplus.com, call 888-482-1122, or email info@eplus.com.

Financial Overview

Founded in 1990, ePlus inc. (NASDAQ NQGS: PLUS) is a public company with annual billings of \$3.3B and shareholders equity of \$901.8M as of its most recent fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. Our full financial statements of quarterly and annual audited financials can be viewed at <http://www.eplus.com/investors/financial-reporting/annual-reports> or

PLUS
Nasdaq Listed

adjusted gross
March 31, 2024.
viewed at
www.sec.gov.

Locations

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www.eplus.com

[List of all ePlus Locations/Offices](#)



Partnerships and Expertise

Our customers benefit from our deep collaborative partnerships with leading technology providers, enabling us to create solutions that connect the dots between IT investments and business outcomes so technology means more, and does more, for them. ePlus maintains deep partnerships with top manufacturers, including AMD, Arista, AWS, Check Point, Ciena, Cisco, Dell Technologies, F5, Fortinet, Gigamon, HP, HPE, Intel, Juniper Networks, Lenovo, Microsoft, NetApp, Nutanix, Nvidia, Palo Alto Networks, Pure Storage, RF Connect, Rubrik, Splunk, and VMware—many who look to us for their own technology needs.

Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging

ePlus is dedicated to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture that embraces diversity, enables inclusion, and makes our employees feel comfortable bringing their full, genuine selves to work. We celebrate the many diverse qualities that make our employees unique—gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, ability, veteran status, religion, culture, background, experience, strengths, perspectives and more. We are dedicated to customer and community service, acting with integrity in all things, and putting our ethics into practice.

ePlus Values:

Respectful communication and cooperation. We treat each other with dignity and respect. Always.

Teamwork and employee participation. We encourage the representation of all groups and perspectives in our daily interactions, both internally and externally.

Work/life balance that supports our employees' varying needs. The health and well-being of our employees is at the core of our success. Our Well and Good wellness program encourages and enables our employees to improve nutrition, fitness, stress, sleep, connection, and fun, and rewards them for their participation and engagement.

Embracing the communities in which our employees, our business partners and our customers live and work. Good corporate citizenship is fundamental to who we are as a company, and our global team is committed to making a positive difference in the communities in which we live and work. Our collective efforts include employee giving, corporate matching, and volunteerism to combat homelessness, hunger, and cancer and to increase access to education. Our employees' dedication to making a positive impact in the world is a source of great pride for our company.

At ePlus, we know that our employees are our most valuable asset. The collective sum of our individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities, and talents drives not only our culture, but also our reputation and shared achievements. That is why we apply our diversity, inclusion, and belonging philosophy to all aspects of our business to help us partner with, recruit, retain, and develop the best talent.

ePlus. Where Technology Means More.®

ePlus Awards and Accreditations

Awards

2024

CRN® 2024 Managed Service Provider (MSP) 500 Elite 150
 CRN® 2024 Tech Elite 250
 CRN® 2024 Solutions Provider 500
 Cybersecurity Excellence Awards: Cyber Portfolio Management
 F5 North America 2023 Strategic Solutions Partner of the Year
 Juniper Partner of the Year for Cloud-Ready Data Center
 Lenovo U.S. Infrastructure Solutions Partner of the Year z
 Northrup Grumman Supplier Excellence Award
 Varonis Growth Partner of the Year



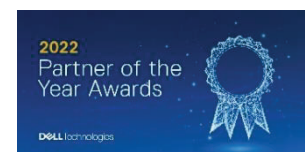
2023

Cisco Global Customer Experience Partner of the Year
 Cisco WebexOne Reimagine Work Partner of the Year, Americas
 BizLibrary: Best Overall Learning & Development Experience
 CRN® 2023 Managed Service Provider (MSP) 500 Elite 150
 CRN® 2023 Tech Elite 250
 CRN Solutions Provider 500
 NetApp North American Flexpod Partner of the Year
 Pure Storage Fastest Growth Partner of the Year
 Rubrik 2023 Public Sector Partner of the Year
 Rubrik North American Partner Sales Champion of the Year
 Top Workplaces USA 2023
 Veeam Growth Partner of the Year



2022

Cisco U.S. Partner of the Year
 Cisco Global Marketing Partner of the Year
 Cisco Americas Marketing Partner of the Year
 Cisco Enterprise Networking Partner of the Year for the U.S. East Region
 Cisco Social Impact Partner of the Year Award for the Americas
 Cisco Mass Scale Infrastructure Partner of the Year for the Americas*
 Cisco Service Provider POY and Capital POY for the U.S. Central Area*
 CRN® Triple Crown Award
 CRN® 2022 Solution Provider 500
 CRN® 2022 Managed Service Provider (MSP) 500 Elite 150
 CRN® 2022 Tech Elite 250
 Dell Technologies North America Channel Services Delivery Excellence POY
 Dell Technologies Server Excellence Partner of the Year
 Gigamon Americas Partner of the Year
 Juniper 2022 Icon Award and Juniper Innovation Award
 Palo Alto Networks 2022 Americas Social Impact Award
 Pure Storage Customer Advocacy Partner of the Year
 Nutanix 2022 Global Reseller of the Year
 Nutanix Americas Reseller of the Year and Nutanix Americas Partner Systems Engineer of the Year
 Washington Business Journal: Elaine Marion, Women Who Mean Business



Accreditations

AICPA SSAE Type 2 SOC 1
 AICPA SSAE Type 2 SOC 1
 AICPA SSAE Type 2 SOC 1
 AICPA SSAE Type 2 SOC 2
 HIPAA and HITECH
 ISO9001 QMS

OneSource Family of Software Products
 Managed Services Center
 Service Desk
 Cloud Hosted Services
 Cloud Hosted Services
 Warehouse Operations



Advanced Authorizations and Staff Certifications

Strategic alliances with the industry's leading manufacturers keep ePlus engineers and sales professionals at the forefront of technology, enabling them to deliver industry-leading solutions to our clients. With an extensive roster of staff certifications, we also hold the following partnership designations:

A10 Networks

+ Elite Partner



Amazon Web Services

+ Advanced Consulting Partner
 + Public Sector Partner
 + Solution Provider Partner
 + Immersion Day Partner
 + AWS Marketplace CPPO Partner
 + Storage Competency
 + Windows on EC2 Delivery Partner



Calix

+ Elite Partner



Check Point

+ 4 Star Partner
 + ASCP(EMS) Certified
 + Harmony Specialization



Ciena

+ Elite Partner



Cisco: Gold Level Partner

Master Specializations

+ Master Data Center and Hybrid Cloud Specialization
 + Master Collaboration Specialization
 + Master Networking Specialization
 + Master Security Specialization
 + Master Service Provider Technology Specialization
 + Master Service Provider

Advanced Specializations

+ Advanced Collaboration Architecture Specialization
 + Advanced Customer Experience Specialization
 + Advanced Data Center Architecture Specialization
 + Advanced Unified Contact Center Enterprise Specialization
 + Advanced SP Architecture Specialization
 + Advanced Security Architecture Specialization



Cisco: Gold Level Partner (continued)

+ Cisco Webex Calling with Calling Plan
 + Cisco Hyperflex Specialization
 + Cisco IoT Specialization
 + Cisco Webex Contact Center Specialization

Dell Technologies: Titanium Solution Provider



Portfolio and Solution Competencies:

+ Core Client
 + Server
 + Storage
 + Networking
 + Data Protection

Fortinet

Expert Partner Level

+ SD-WAN Specialization
 + Cloud Business Model Certified
 + Integration Business Model Certified



Harmonic

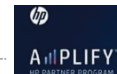
+ Platinum Partner



HP Inc. Amplify Partner Program

Power Partner

Hewlett Packard Enterprise Platinum Level Partner



Hybrid IT (Server/Storage)

+ HPE Partner Ready: Solution Provider – Platinum Partner
 + HPE Partner Ready: Services Partner – Gold

Edge (Aruba/Networking)

+ HPE Partner Ready for Networking: Solution Provider – Platinum Partner
 + Silver Peak Partner Edge Program: Platinum Partner

Intel

+ Intel Partner Alliance Program: Titanium Partner

Juniper Networks

Elite Partner

Microsoft

Gold Level Partner

- + Cloud Solutions Provider
- + Gold Application Integration
- + Gold Data Center
- + Gold Cloud Platform
- + Gold Cloud Productivity
- + Gold Windows and Devices

NetApp

Solution Specializations

- + FlexPod Specialized

Implementation Services Certified

- + E-Series
- + HCI
- + ONTAP

Integration Services Certified

- + E-Series
- + ONTAP
- + ONTAP SAN

NetApp Keystone Sell-with

Professional Services Certified

- + ONTAP SAN

Support Services Certified

Nokia

- + Broadband Access Networks Expert
- + Fixed Wireless Access Expert
- + IP Routing
- + Optics

NUTANIX

Pioneer Level Partner

NVIDIA

Accelerated Partner

Palo Alto

Diamond Innovator Partner Level

SASE Specialization Partner

Pure Storage

Elite Partner

Service Delivery Partner (Managed Service Provider)

Rubrik

Elite Plus Partner Level

VMware

Principal Partner

- + Data Center Master Services Competency
- + Networking Master Services Competency
- + VMware Cloud on AWS Master Services Competency
- + Data Center Virtualization

Transform Networking and Security

- + Empower Digital Workspace

Cloud Management and Automation

- + Cloud Provider
- + Cloud Native

Additional Key Vendors

ARISTA



Gigamon®

Lenovo

netskope

NUTANIX

okta

proofpoint

Qumulo

splunk>

tenable

THALES

VARONIS

veeam

The ePlus Difference: Your Why is Our Way

Every technology investment starts with a “why”. Whether to become more efficient, better manage costs, enable new revenue streams, enhance productivity by automating manual operations or shore up security in the wake of a discovered vulnerability, there are too many “whys” to count. But each one of them has the same answer to “how” these things are achieved: ePlus. Whatever the reason, **your why is our way.**

The future of the modern enterprise will be one driven by rapidly scaling technologies that connect everyone and everything, securely, intelligently, and automatically. The possibilities for transformation are unimaginable, as are the challenges for any IT, business, and finance leader whose tomorrows depend on getting it right today. When we say that “your why is our way,” we mean it, and the proof is our 30+ years of success and experience with thousands of happy customers. Whatever the technology, we have the knowledge, experience, flexibility, creativity and commitment to excellence that will help you achieve more. **Customer first. Services Led. Results driven.**

Our customers are at the core of every decision, every investment and every one of our offerings. Our solutions portfolio is designed, and continues to grow, with our customers’ desired business outcomes in mind. The ePlus portfolio of solutions and services spans the following:

- **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** – Unlock the full potential of AI with guidance at any stage of the journey, from assessing readiness, defining use cases, deciding to build or consume, and ensuing a successful proof of concept to design, implementation, and management.
- **CLOUD & DATA CENTER** – Leverage cloud in transformative ways by modernizing data center infrastructure, extending those capabilities to cloud, accelerating cloud migrations and optimizing cloud platforms (and spend) to meet dynamic and evolving business needs.
- **SECURITY** – Ensure security and reliability by design from end to end with cutting-edge solutions, tools, intelligence and managed services that help diagnose, predict, map, secure and protect every facet of an environment.
- **NETWORKING** – Build a resilient, efficient, agile, defensive and intelligent network capable of supporting modern initiatives. Design and deploy next-generation enterprise and service provider networks to ensure that all domains are supported with high-performing, fault-tolerant, secure, intelligent and application-aware solutions.
- **COLLABORATION** – Empower hybrid work and unleash productivity from anywhere, simply and securely. With full integration into existing business tools and processes, modern collaboration solutions accelerate workplace/workspace transformation, enhance employee and customer experiences and ensure secure interactions with predictable cost models.
- **SERVICES** – Maximize return on IT investments, facilitate implementations and enhance technology performance through our broad portfolio of consultative and managed services. Driven by technical expertise, our award-winning team brings a modular approach to designing, developing, protecting, optimizing and managing the technology that fuels our customers’ business at every stage of their lifecycle.
- **FINANCING AND CONSUMPTION MODELS** – Boost investment power by aligning technology and payment solutions to provide cost predictability, flexible contract terms and fast, easy access to hardware, software and services.