

TransLink introduces contactless bank card transit payments

Source: Digital Transaction News

TransLink is the public transportation authority that serves 22 municipalities in the Vancouver area through light rail, buses, a ferry and a toll bridge.

According to the January 27th story in *Digital Transaction News*, TransLink “selected a \$220 million fare-payment system from Cubic Transportation Systems Inc. that includes a transit-only reloadable contactless card but also the ability to accept general-purpose contactless cards.

... Holders of major-brand contactless cards such as Visa payWave or MasterCard PayPass will be able to tap those cards at Vancouver train stations once fare gates based on Cubic’s Nextfare technology are operational, and will be charged cash fares. That capability takes Vancouver a step beyond the proprietary contactless fare cards used in some big North American cities, including Chicago and Washington, DC, but stops short of discarding a closed-loop card, as would a completely open-fare system.

San Diego-based Cubic and partner IBM Canada won a bidding process among three finalists that submitted requests for proposals in a process that started with eight consortiums, [a TransLink] spokesperson says. The \$84 million base contract includes the design, construction, and installation of the system, including the card-reading fare gates, to be delivered by 2013, according to a Cubic release. After delivery, a 10-year services contract valued at about \$13 million per year, plus a one-time \$6 million

transition cost, takes effect. The contract includes an option for five additional years of services. Seed money for the project was announced three years ago in the form of C\$40 million from the province of British Columbia and \$C30 million from Canada’s federal government, according to the TransLink spokesperson.”

Halifax Regional Municipality issues RFP for downtown development

According to a news release issued January 27, 2011, “the first of the three HRM-owned lots available for sale in the Spring Garden Rd. area is on the market. ...Releasing this property for development is a critical component of Regional Council’s approved funding plan for the Central Library. The sale of the sites is also a pilot for HRM’s innovative new Opportunity Sites Task Force. A part of Council’s “Capital Ideas,” the initiative’s purpose is to develop vacant publicly-owned downtown lands in order to create a more attractive, vibrant city and increased economic activity downtown.

The three Spring Garden area development opportunities (www.halifax.ca/SisterSites) have been branded the “Sister Sites” in reference to three daughters of the Schmidt family who lived in the adjacent Schmidville neighborhood 140 years ago. The site referred to as “Mary Ann” at Queen and Clyde streets is the first of the properties to be offered for development. Release of “Margaretta” at Clyde Street and Dresden Row, and “Rosina” on the Queen Street site of the old Infirmary hospital will follow over the next few years.

The municipality is seeking, through a bid process, proponents that are prepared to

purchase and undertake the timely development of the property in accordance with the design-focused policies and vision of the HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax plan.”

Gemalto provides electronic passport solution to Korea’s national printer

Source: Gemalto, <http://www.gemalto.com>

According to a news release in late January, “Gemalto announced that it has started to deliver its electronic passport solution to Korea’s national printer, Korea Minting and Security Printing Corporation, through its local partner LG CNS. Electronic passports greatly enhance security while providing citizens with a convenient way to travel. Gemalto’s ...highly-secure, high-performance ePassport Operating System speeds up border control. Its Sealys ePassport solution also increases personalization performance, significantly reducing issuing cost. ...Gemalto’s ePassport technologies are used in over 20 national ePassport programs worldwide including Estonia, Denmark, France, India (diplomatic), Malta, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, Singapore, Sweden, Turkey and the United States of America.”

Winnipeg’s 311 system proves its value

According to a late January 2011 news release, the City of Winnipeg’s 311 inquiry service (www.winnipeg.ca/interhom/contact/311.stm), which has celebrated its second anniversary, has “received more than 3.6 million citizen inquiries” dominated by information calls, bus schedule information and requests for city services. “...The technology behind the 311 service makes it possible to track the progress of inquiries, gather information regarding call volumes and pinpoint what citizens are inquiring about around the clock, 365 days a year.”

According to the news release, “the top 5 most frequent requests for city services between

October 1 – December 31, 2010 include:

1. recreation and leisure registration (6,105)
2. parking authority/ticket payment (3,745)
3. transit – schedules and routes (2,930)
4. City Hall – “Where do I vote?” inquiries (2,252)
5. transit – lost property (2,184)

The top 5 most frequent 311 Self Service requests in the same period include:

1. Traffic Control (31)
2. Transit – Lost Property (25)
3. Snow Removal (20)
4. Pothole Repair (19)
5. 311 Customer Satisfaction Survey (10)

Wal-Mart continues to set sustainability mandates

According to a February 2010 story in *The Journal of Commerce Online*, Wal-Mart “wants suppliers to cut emissions by 20 million metric tons by 2015” and has said that this would include continued efforts to reduce packaging as well as in transportation and sourcing of goods. When Wal-Mart, as the world’s largest retailer, makes the environment one of its requirements in the supply chain the effect can be significant. According to Wal-Mart the measurement of emissions tied to specific goods will be across the entire lifecycle of the product: sourcing raw materials; manufacturing; transportation; customer usage; and disposal including recycling. The result, the company hopes, will be lower prices for the consumer.

New York City wins in its deal with Microsoft

Source: Summary of a story by Jeff Muscarella, published online January 19, 2011

www.cioupdate.com/budgets/article.php/3921351/A-New-Deal-from-Microsoft.htm

In late October 2010, New York City Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, announced a \$100M,

100,000-user deal with Microsoft. While this is a large contract, the savings being offered by the bulk software purchase – \$50 million over five years – and the apparently unusual level of flexibility that Microsoft is exercising in its contract with the city may well catch your attention as purchasers of information technology.

New York has been determined to consolidate its existing IT infrastructure, including the licensing agreements its diverse agencies and departments held with Microsoft. The new agreement – a pay-as-you-use model that works with three different tiers of users – covers 120 agencies and departments within the city. New York will pay only for what it uses. As well, NYC will make use of some cloud computing opportunities (~30 percent) and store some of its data into a Microsoft data centre. By signing up for Microsoft Azure, a PAAS (platform-as-a-service), NYC can develop innovative IT tools for internal and external use.

EU reforming public procurement

Source: www.euractiv.com/en/enterprise-jobs/eu-moves-reform-public-procurement-news-501639

In late January, the European Commission moved towards “significantly overhauling the rules governing public procurement markets in order to improve SMEs’ access to national tenders and boost cross-border activity.”

According to the news release, “public procurement accounts for roughly 17 percent of the EU’s GDP. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in procurement markets...estimated to secure between 31 and 38 percent in terms of total contract value of public procurement.

Public procurement ...activities are governed by a series of national and European rules with a view to making sure that taxpayers’ money is

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well spent, preventing fraud and discrimination and ensuring equal treatment of bidders. Current EU rules on public procurement are governed by two directives adopted in 2004. One of the main targets of the European legislation is to make sure that EU firms can access national public procurement markets regardless of their country of origin.

...Michel Barnier, the commissioner in charge of the internal market, [has launched] a public consultation on reviewing public procurement rules, mainly aimed at guaranteeing ‘access of smaller companies to procurement markets, reducing red tape and promoting European cross-border procurement,’ according to an EU official.

SMEs already have access to roughly a third of all public contracts, but this share is still much lower than their economic and social importance. Simplifying participation procedures for public tenders should facilitate the access of smaller firms, argues the Commission. Experts on the sector will be requested to provide their opinions on possible reforms by mid-April. After that, Brussels is expected to start the actual legislative procedure.

Boost cross-border procurement

Promoting cross-border procurement is also high in the agenda of the Commission. The EU market cannot consider itself completed without a fair access to national public procurement guaranteed to all European enterprises. The situation needs to be improved although some positive trends are already perceivable.



A Commission report on the functioning of EU public procurement markets showed that a clear majority (67 percent) of total bids for public tenders comes from domestic firms, according to a poll made public in 2004.

Only 3 percent of bids are cross-border...but 30 percent of cross-border bids come from subsidiaries of foreign firms, a practice defined as indirect cross-border bidding. Indeed, local branches or subsidiaries of a foreign firm tend to have more chance of winning a bid than their domestic competitors. The report shows that 35 percent of proposals made by foreign-owned subsidiaries are successful. The average success rate of domestic companies is roughly 30 percent. However, firms submitting their bids directly from abroad have the lowest chance of getting them through, with an average success rate of 25 percent of the proposals, according to the report.

Green and pro-innovation procurement

The Commission will also try to review public procurement rules in an attempt to make public contracts greener and more supportive of innovation. ...A communication presented by the Commission in July 2008 calls on governments to make sure that half of all their tendering procedures comply with a set of common green criteria. However, the proposed target is only indicative.

According to research carried out for the European Commission, only seven EU countries currently manage a large amount of Green Public Procurement (GPP). These are the 'Green 7': namely Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. Other EU countries lag way behind and sometimes do not have any GPP at all.

The EU executive is also seeking to make e-procurement more widespread across the EU, an easy means to increase overall cross-border applications. At the moment, however, it remains a marginal practice. A public consultation was launched last October to address this shortcoming.

Access to foreign procurement markets

The public consultation on the reform of public procurement markets will also address the delicate issue of access to third-country markets. Public procurement markets account for over 10 percent of GDP in large industrialized countries and are taking up a growing share in emerging economies. The US market, for example, is worth over €1,000 billion, or 11 percent of US GDP. This share is even higher in other countries. In Canada it reaches 22 percent, while in Japan it is 18 percent, according to European Commission estimates...

Next steps

31 Jan. 2011: Deadline for consultation on e-procurement.

18 Apr. 2011: Deadline for consultation on public procurement market.

30 June 2011: High level conference in Brussels on public procurement reform.”

Windsor-Essex region gets “smarter” with IBM

Globally, cities are utilizing technology to improve everything from city services to relationships. Among the smart cities can be found the Windsor-Essex region – comprised the City of Windsor and seven lower municipalities of the County of Essex.

According to a news release in early February 2011, “In 2001, the region recognized a need to reduce duplication among the public sector organizations and improve the efficiency for the delivery of services. As part of the broader smart community initiatives, the region sought to create an information utility – [which] much like the electric, water and road infrastructure systems already in place, was seen as essential to providing a competitive environment”

Utilizing IBM software and services, the region created the Windsor-Essex Smart Community Portal (www.windsor-essex.info/wps/portal), which according to the news release, “Windsor-Essex Smart Community Web infrastructure provides the region’s government and related organizations with the tools to help citizens with emergency and community services, transportation, health, utilities and life events ...”

For example, the region’s Asthma Research Group created a technology-based program to quickly connect asthma sufferers with respiratory therapists – also resulting “in sick days at a large local automobile manufacturing plant being reduced by 55 percent. The IBM software was used to develop the asthma program quickly to meet the demand of its citizens and now serves as a model for other areas.

Windsor-Essex region created a program that led to the reuse and recycling of 250 tons of what would typically be viewed as construction waste, for use in new housing projects for those who need it the most. The initiative also created 30 new jobs. ...Using IBM’s social software portfolio, Windsor-Essex is facilitating communication among members of local non-profit organizations, the road demolition and construction teams and government ministers.

The Windsor-Essex Smart Community Portal also helps drive visibility for the region with tourists. The more than 400 local businesses can now publicize and socialize their goods and services in more interactive ways leading to more business and unique diversification opportunities...

Windsor-Essex region uses IBM software to collaborate with key stakeholders including

government leaders and employees, hospital, K-12 school and university boards of directors, as well as the citizens. For more information visit, <http://www.windsor-essex.info/wps/portal> and www.ibm.com/software/lotus.”

Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI)

The Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI) is a leading-edge collaboration between 15 Ontario municipalities that represent 9.65 million citizens or 73 percent of the population of Ontario.

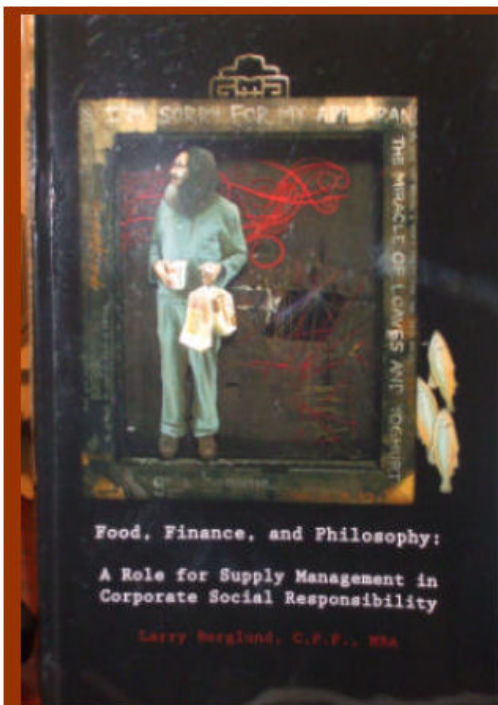
OMBI reports provide “comparative performance measures relating to 27 different city services. The information will give councillors and the public a sense of how city programs and services are performing relative to other Ontario municipalities, and will help provide a context for decisions such as those being contemplated during the budget debate.

In the OMBI performance measurement framework, there are four types of measures: Service Level, Community Service, Efficiency and Community Impact. Using four types of measures provides a more comprehensive understanding of how much of a service is provided, the resources used, how well clients are served, and the outcome for residents.

For more information about OMBI and to read this year’s OMBI joint report, visit ombi.ca.”

SaskTel extends 3G+ wireless coverage to 36 more locations

In January 2011, the Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation (SaskTel) announced that it has expanded its 3G+ wireless network to 36 more locations across the province of Saskatchewan. When the network is complete, 98 percent of the province should be able to access it.



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According to the news release, “the 3G+ network provides increased bandwidth with download speeds approximately four times faster than existing speeds (up to 21 megabits per second). It is also compatible with approximately 80 percent of all networks across the world and international roaming customers will be able to use their SaskTel 3G+ device on 3G+ networks anywhere.

SaskTel plans to support the existing CDMA digital network for the foreseeable future to ensure that all wireless customers continue to enjoy a full selection of wireless services that best suit their needs. Customers can now choose from a wide range of devices for both the existing CDMA network and the new 3G+ network.”

Sechelt, BC gets affordable seniors’ housing

In late January 2011, the governments of Canada and British Columbia, along with community partners, announced that construction is underway at the Jack Nelson Annex, a new 65-unit housing development for seniors in Sechelt. The total capital cost of this project is approximately \$10.1 million. Below is a summary of the news release.

Partners and funding

- The Government of Canada, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) provided approximately \$2.3 million towards 31 SRH apartments, with funds from Canada’s Economic Action Plan. CMHC also provided \$10,000 in Seed Funding toward the development of this project.
- The Province of British Columbia provided approximately \$2.3 million towards 31 Seniors’ Rental Housing (SRH) apartments through a Provincial

Infrastructure Grant for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

- CMHC provided an insured mortgage loan not to exceed \$4.1 million.
- The Sunshine Coast Lions Housing Society (SCLHS) provided the land valued at \$650,000 and will provide \$275,000 in cash equity.
- The District of Sechelt will waive development cost charges valued at \$508,226 and provide tax exemptions on the project for ten years.
- The Sunshine Coast Credit Union will provide \$50,000 in equity toward the development of this project.
- Delta Cable will provide \$10,000 in equity towards the development of this project.

The Sunshine Coast Lions Housing Society has been selected to manage the 31 SRH apartments. SCLHS has been providing quality, affordable housing options on the Sunshine Coast for over 40 years and will also own and operate another 28 units in the building. Construction is anticipated to be complete by fall 2011.

Canada’s National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy

On February 7, 2011, the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy Secretariat, on behalf of Public Works and Government Services Canada, released the request for proposal under the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy (NSPS). According to the news release, the RFP was released to “five short-listed shipyards:

- Davie Yards Inc., Lévis, QC
- Irving Shipbuilding Inc., Saint John, NB
- Vancouver Shipyards Co. Ltd., North Vancouver, BC

- Kiewit Offshore Services - a division of Peter Kiewit Infrastructure Co., Milton, ON
- Seaway Marine & Industrial Inc., St. Catharines, ON.”

“...one yard will be selected to build combat vessels while the other yard will build non-combat vessels...”

The news release says the NSPS is “the result of extensive consultations with the Canadian marine and shipbuilding industry and will help to revitalize Canadian shipyards and build ships for the Navy and the Coast Guard here in Canada.

To ensure the fairness, openness and transparency of this procurement process, the NSPS Secretariat met five times with the short-listed shipyards since October 2010 to discuss the procurement strategy. A fairness monitor is participating in the selection process and an internationally recognized third-party expert has benchmarked the capability and performance of the short-listed Canadian shipyards. Finally, a leading consulting firm is providing expert advice on the procurement process. The five short-listed shipyards have until July 7, 2011 to submit their proposals. The selection of the two winning shipyards is expected sometime after the bids are evaluated.

The NSPS Secretariat is comprised of officials from Public Works and Government Services Canada, Department of National Defence, Industry Canada and Canadian Coast Guard and is responsible for implementing the NSPS. More information about the NSPS is available at: www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/sam-mps/snacn-nsps-eng.html.

The website says that under the strategy, “For large ship construction, Canada will establish a strategic relationship with two Canadian shipyards, selected through an open and fair national competition, and designate them as sources of supply – one for combat vessels and the other for non-combat vessels. For smaller ship construction, Canada will set aside these requirements for competitive procurement from other than the shipyards selected to build the large ships and their affiliated companies. For ship repair, refit and maintenance, these requirements will be competed through publicly announced request for proposals.”

The website also provides some details on the type of ships that will be procured under the strategy. Large ship construction projects for DND include:

- Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships to conduct armed sea-borne surveillance in Canada’s waters, including in the Arctic. Their build timeframe is planned for 2012-2019.
- Joint Support Ships (JSS) are a critical component for achieving success in both international and domestic Canadian Forces (CF) missions, as laid out in the Canada First Defence Strategy. The Joint Support Ships will replace the two existing Protecteur Class Auxiliary Oiler Replenishment (AOR) vessels.
- Canadian Surface Combatants: These warships will replace Canada’s destroyers and frigates. While all these vessels will be based on a common hull design, the frigate and destroyer variants will be fitted with different weapons, communications, surveillance and other systems. This project is in the options analysis phase and will proceed to government for approval to enter the definition phase in due course.

Large ship construction for Fisheries and Oceans – Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) includes:

- Offshore Oceanographic Science Vessel (OOSV): The OOSV project will acquire a replacement vessel for the Canadian Coast Guard's largest science vessel — CCGS Hudson. The construction timeframe is planned for 2011-2013.
- Offshore Fisheries Science Vessels (OFSV): Three vessels will replace four (4) ageing Coast Guard ships. The build timeframe is planned for 2011-2014.
- Polar Icebreaker: The Polar Icebreaker – a centerpiece of the Government of

Canada's Northern Strategy – will support the work of several departments and agencies; deliver the full range of Coast Guard programs; and establish a strong federal presence in the Arctic. The construction timeframe is planned for 2013-2017.

Work packages for small vessels (those with less than 1,000 tonnes displacement) include large and small tugs for DND and search and rescue lifeboats; mid-shore science vessels; channel survey and sounding vessels, near-shore fishery research vessels; specialty vessels and special nav-aid vessels for the Canadian Coast Guard.

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