

Questions RFP #044-25: Distributed Energy Resource Management System

1. **Question:** *Please provide the expected timelines for priority use cases for each entity.*
 - a. WEC: Would like to see a go-live date of January 2026, or sooner, for EV charging and BYO batteries.
 - b. VPPSA: Would like to see go-live date of January 2026 for utility-scale batteries and ability to pass pricing through to customers.
 - c. BED: Priority use cases are home EV charging rate (current program in place) and smart thermostats/residential heat pump flexible load management (rollout beginning summer 2025; targeting 3,000 endpoints by end of 2027).
2. **Question:** *I know that providers are allowed to bid for any or just select functions of the DERMs programs for any of the entities, but will the entities prioritize proposals from bidders that do provide all functions over providers that may be better suited to handle only select functions versus all?*
 - a. WEC: Would hope and expect that a single proposal, which may include multiple bidders, could handle all functions required of a single entity (utility) and would be looking to prioritize proposals that are able to meet all functional requirements.
 - b. BED/VPPSA: Would expect to prioritize proposals that are able to meet all functional requirements.
3. **Question:** *What would be the process and or expectations of integrating all current users from an existing Managed EV Charging program, such as BED's?*
 - a. WEC: Expectation is that WEC would want all current customers moved over and would expect that customers would be able to keep their current hardware. Also, WEC is interested in learning what ideas / solutions / processes vendors have for minimizing attrition as members are moved from the existing program.
 - b. BED/VPPSA: Expectation is that we would want all current customers moved over and that customers would be able to keep their current hardware.
4. **Question:** *According to the dates within the pricing proposal of Attachment B, the only functionality or programs that would be started immediately upon contract award would be; Residential Managed EV Charging programs for both BED and WEC. I wanted to confirm this is the case and that all other functions / programs would be expected to start 12/26 or later?*

- a. WEC: Would like to see a go-live date of January 1, 2026 or sooner for EV charging and BYO batteries.
 - b. VPPSA: Would like to see go-live date of January 1, 2026 or sooner for EV charging, but for utility scale batteries, summer 2026.
 - c. BED: Smart thermostat/residential heat pump flexible load management program has a planned started date of summer 2025, with 3,000 endpoints targeted by end of 2027. Batteries (utility, residential, and municipal) are targeted for deployment in summer 2026.
- 5. **Question:** *May multiple providers partner together to submit one proposal to carry out and deploy DER programs separately from one another? Would there be penalties for this if there were different customer interfaces or onboarding protocols for differing programs? There would still be one point of contact / contract awardee for one, or all three of the entities.*
 - a. WEC: Multiple providers submitting together is not disallowed; however, WEC is looking to streamline existing, clunky software solutions. If the member/customers sees slightly different interfaces for different technologies, that would be workable, but WEC is not interested in having its program managers work with GUIs from multiple vendors to manage all behind-the-meter assets.
 - b. BED/VPPSA: It would not be ideal, but not precluded.
- 6. **Question:** *Can partnering entities also have different portals for the three entities to review reported data, statistics from differing programs? Or would all of the data have to be in one central location? An example would be having different data portals for a residential EV charging program and battery programs.*
 - a. BED/VPPSA/WEC: While this solution does not inherently disqualify a vendor, this solution seems like a less-than-ideal solution. See note above re: streamlining.
- 7. **Question:** *I understand that BED is looking for a DERMS partner to be able to “handle a variety of current EV charging devices from multiple original equipment manufacturers (OEMs)”. Would direct integrations with either the vehicle or the EVSE OEM be necessary? Or could a provider use 3rd-party integrations? And is there more preference for direct integrations with more popular brands such as Tesla or ChargePoint, (since BED had founded EV program with CP) if so?*
 - a. BED: Our priority is to streamline integrations and minimize API fees if possible, however that can occur. Vendors should propose the

methodology that they feel meets these goals and be prepared to demonstrate it.

8. **Question:** *How important is the ability to support BED's innovative goals of bringing Managed EV Charging offerings to multi-family residential, and workplace properties? Is this something that could rule out a potential provider? And is there an expected timeline for the deployment of these?*
 - a. **BED:** Providing this or not providing would not rule out a vendor. In terms of timeline, BED has multi-family residential and workplace chargers in its service territory now but does not currently manage them.
9. **Question:** *Should vendors structure their response for all three use cases to be packaged into one proposal? Or separate for each utility?*
 - a. **BED/VPPSA/WEC:** If there are not major differences between the proposals (proposed solution is the same), a single package would be preferred. Vendors may separate their responses, however, if necessary for clarity.
10. **Question:** For the forms or attachments toward the end of the RPF, do these all need to be authorized/notarized?
 - a. **BED:** Any vendor that is selected and contracts with BED specifically will need to sign and notarize those forms. For the proposal, it would be sufficient to indicate that you have read, understand and are willing to agree to follow these terms/ordinances. These are relevant only to BED, not WEC or VPPSA.
11. **Question:** Can the group explain a bit more on why all three entities have chosen to come together? Is it for administrative function, other synergies, pricing reduction, funding initiatives?
 - a. **BED/WEC:** The entities have support for this effort from a State of Vermont grant, the merits of which were based on providing most of the Vermont public power utilities with common capabilities, even though we each may not deploy all capabilities, or do so on the same timeline.
 - b. **VPPSA:** The three entities are not fully aligned on capabilities but want to deploy same type of technology when possible.
12. **Question:** Our question is about the **cost** component of the evaluation criteria. Could you please clarify whether this refers to total cost, ongoing operations and maintenance, or both? Any additional context you can share about how this criterion will be evaluated would be greatly appreciated.

- a. BED/WEC/VPPSA: Will be evaluating based on 5-/10-year total cost of ownership.