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Maryland State Highway Administration

**Sponsorship of the Coordinated Highways Action Response Team's (CHART)
Emergency Traffic Patrol (ETP) Program**

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

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**Maryland State Highway Administration
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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)**

I) General Information

A) Background

The Maryland State Highway Administration's (MD SHA) Office of CHART (Coordinated Highways Action Response Team) and ITS Development is soliciting information concerning the possibility and/or feasibility of engaging a firm, or team of firms, to sponsor and supplement the CHART Emergency Traffic Patrol (ETP) program.

Under this program, the State envisions that a firm or firms would be compensated through rights to partner with the State to promote and market their company in association with elements of the highway safety program. Sponsorship opportunities for the program include placement of advertising on vehicles of the ETP program, development and distribution of joint promotional materials, promotion and sponsorship of safety training and conferences, and other opportunities as identified by the selected Contractor and the State. The MD SHA's CHART program currently uses a fleet of 52 vehicles patrolling over 550 miles of primary and interstate routes throughout Maryland. Branding/sponsorship of the program will raise the profile of customer service available on Maryland's roads, promote safety to travelers, and will provide the title sponsor with a strong public image and related sponsorship opportunities.

CHART is Maryland's highway operations element for the State's ITS program. The program is a cooperative effort, which involves the MD SHA, Maryland State Police (MSP), and the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA). It began in the mid-1980s as the "Reach the Beach" initiative, focused on improving travel to and from Maryland's Eastern Shore. As a result of its success, it has developed into a multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary program, focusing on coverage of, not only the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas, but, the entire State of Maryland. The daily activities of the CHART program are driven by its five (5) functional elements, which are as follows:

- Traffic and Roadway Monitoring
- Traveler Information
- Incident Management
- Traffic Management
- Emergency and Weather Operations

In an effort to address the incident response and traffic management portion of its services to the state, the CHART program conducts safety patrols on Maryland's roadways. These patrols include:

- **Emergency Traffic Patrols (ETPs):** ETPs are small tow trucks which are equipped to perform minor repairs as well as provide gasoline to motorists with vehicles that become disabled along the freeway system. These patrols are also part of the surveillance network, which can detect incidents as they occur. ETPs can also “relocate” disabled or damaged vehicles from the travel portion of the roadway to a safer location so that the traffic flow is not impeded. This activity also reduces the possibility of secondary incidents as a result of a vehicle blocking a lane.
- **Emergency Response Units (ERUs):** ERUs are vans which are responsible for establishing proper traffic control upon arrival at an incident, and relaying information to the SOC/TOC regarding lane closures. They are equipped with MSP Radios, CB Radios, and cellular phones so that the operator can receive up-to-date information and coordinate activities with several agencies for a quick response and prompt reopening of travel lanes. Like ETPs, they carry equipment to perform minor repairs.
- **Customer Response Vehicles (CRVs):** CRVs are box trucks which are responsible for establishing proper traffic control upon arrival at an incident. They relay information to the SOC/TOC regarding lane closures and carry more response equipment than ETPs or ERUs.

In total, CHART has a fleet of 52 vehicles (30 tow trucks, 11 box trucks, 6 vans, and 5 pickup trucks), which are staffed by 37 operators/drivers to patrol over 550 miles of Maryland roadways daily.

Considering the information provided above, the MD SHA would be interested in any information that would present and describe the private sector’s interest, ideas and general approach towards the development of an ETP sponsorship program that would address the highway operations and incident response needs of the state, while being beneficial to all parties involved.

B) Conceptual Approach

Through this partnership, MD SHA envisions granting a selected contractor exclusive rights to place advertisements and sponsor various elements of the program, including, but not limited to:

- Placement of advertising on active ETP vehicles;
- Placement of advertising on uniforms;
- Development of co-branded promotional materials;
- Placement of recognition on the CHART website;
- Sponsorship of safety awareness and training events;

- Other sponsorship opportunities, as identified.

In exchange for rights to partner with MD SHA CHART to advertise and market goods or services through the sponsorship of the program, the selected Contractor would provide compensation through the following in-kind services:

- Supplement the current patrol program with privately operated patrol vehicles;
- Appearance upgrades to current vehicles within the ETP fleet;
- Sponsorship of training events/conferences;
- Other types of in-kind compensation as identified.

It is MD SHA's preference to receive compensation in the form of in-kind services, to assure that any resources generated by this partnership are used to support and enhance the CHART ETP program.

C) Purpose

This solicitation seeks to obtain information on:

- (1) The level of private sector interest in developing a highway ETP sponsorship program;
- (2) The approach being used by other jurisdictions to implement similar public-private sponsorship programs;
- (3) The recommended approach to be used by the MD SHA for an ETP sponsorship program;
- (4) How the implementation of a private sector sponsorship program will affect existing MD SHA business processes;
- (5) The most suitable and mutually beneficial financial approach;
- (6) The anticipated impact on the day-to-day management and standard operating procedures of the CHART program, including vehicles and highway operations staff;
- (7) Possible obstacles that both the private sector and the State would have to overcome to make the ETP sponsorship program feasible; and
- (8) Any other comments or suggestions.

The responses to this RFI will be used to assist the MD SHA in making decisions regarding the development of an ETP sponsorship program for CHART Operations.

Note: The State does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information solicited. Although the terms “proposal” and “Offeror” are used, responses to this RFI will not be treated as a proposal to provide services. All responses submitted will be used for informational purposes only, and will in no way affect eligibility to respond to future solicitations issued by the State.

II) Information Requested

Responses to this RFI shall be submitted in the form of a narrative, responding separately to each of the following questions. The narrative responses to the following questions should not total more than twenty (20) pages.

Questions

- (1) What is the level of private sector interest as it relates to an ETP sponsorship program for transportation operations and management?
- (2) What is the general approach being used by other jurisdictions, if any, to implement and maintain a sponsorship agreement of this nature?
- (3) Based on the information provided in *Section 1* and industry experience, what is the recommended and preferred approach to be used?
- (4) What services should the State seek from the private sector industry to implement an ETP sponsorship program?
- (5) How would an ETP sponsorship program such as this be used to compensate the State? Would compensation through in-kind services (the sharing of resources, rather than money) be attractive to the private sector industry?
- (6) What services/activities would you consider to be in-kind?
 - Advertisements on or co-branding of active ETP vehicles (coordination of graphics, agency logo, emblem, badge, etc.)
 - Marketing materials (posters, fliers, website, etc.)
 - Training program (purpose, type, scale, etc.)
 - Other resource sharing opportunities.
- (7) What is the private sector’s position as it relates to standard operating procedures, business processes, and liability issues?

- (8) What other issues or challenges will the State and private sector firm have to overcome to make the sponsorship program feasible?

III) Responses to this RFI

A) Response Format

Submissions shall be prepared simply and economically and shall provide a clear description of the Offeror's response to the information request. Oral or facsimile submissions will **not** be accepted. The information response shall be submitted in the original, accompanied by two (2) paper copies and one electronic copy.

The information response should also include:

i) **Contact Information**

All submissions must include the Offeror's contact information including the name, title, mailing address, phone number, and electronic mail address of the person(s) to contact for additional information.

ii) **Project Experience**

Experience or qualifications that your firm has had (directly or indirectly) with agreements of this nature.

iii) **Response to Information Questions**

The narrative response to all questions in this section should not total more than twenty (20) pages.

B) Administrative Information

i) **Issuing Office/Procurement Officer**

The sole point of contact for this RFI is the Procurement Officer at the following issuing office:

Procurement Officer: Mr. Glenn McLaughlin
Deputy Director for Systems, Development and Administration
Office of CHART and ITS Development
Maryland State Highway Administration
7491 Connelley Drive
Hanover, MD 21076

Phone: (410) 787-5884

Email: GMcLaughlin@sha.state.md.us

ii) Questions and Inquiries

The Procurement Officer will accept written questions from prospective Offerors. The submission deadline for written inquiries is **April 2, 2010** by 4:00 pm. Questions may also be submitted by mail, facsimile or e-mail to the Procurement Officer.

All questions should be promptly submitted to the Procurement Officer. Regarding questions not received in a timely manner, the Procurement Officer will decide, based on the amount of research needed to answer the question, whether an answer can be given before the proposal due date. Answers to all substantive questions will be distributed to all potential Offerors that received a copy of the RFI.

iii) Submission Deadline

To be considered, submissions must be received by the Procurement Officer at the address in *Item i* (above) no later than 4:00 p.m. on **April 16, 2010**. Oral or facsimile submissions will **not** be accepted. Also, Information Responses, as mentioned earlier, shall be submitted in the original, accompanied by two (2) paper copies and one electronic copy.

iv) Addenda and Revisions to the RFI

In the event that Offerors must make an adequate interpretation of the provisions of this RFI, or if any substantive issues require change or clarification, an addendum to the RFI will be sent to each known Offeror. Offerors should acknowledge receipt of all addenda in the transmittal letter of the Information Response.

v) Confidential and Proprietary Information

The Offeror should identify those portions of its Information Response that it deems to be confidential, proprietary information, or trade secrets, and should provide any justification as to why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by the State under the Maryland Public Information Act, Section 10-611 et seq., of the State Government Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. A blanket statement that the entire proposal is confidential is not acceptable.

vi) Incurred Expenses

The State will not be responsible for any costs incurred by Offerors related to preparing and submitting a response to this RFI, attending meetings, providing demonstrations, or for any other associated costs.

C) Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Participation

The State of Maryland encourages Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) to participate in all contracts. MDOT hereby notifies all Offerors that in regard to any contract entered into pursuant to this RFI, MBEs will not be subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin in consideration for an award.

MBEs are also encouraged to respond directly to this RFI.

D) Glossary of Abbreviations

CHART	Coordinated highways Action Response team
CRV	Custom Response Vehicle
ERU	Emergency Response Unit
ETP	Emergency Traffic Patrol
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
MBE	Minority Business Enterprise
MDOT	Maryland Department of Transportation
MD SHA	Maryland State Highway Administration
MDTA	Maryland Transportation Authority
MSP	Maryland State Police
RFI	Request for Information

E) Anticipated Schedule of Activities

ACTIVITY	DATE:
RFI Notice Published/Posted on E-Maryland Market Place	March 24, 2010
Deadline for Questions and Inquiries	April 02, 2010 by 4:00PM
Deadline for RFI Submittals	April 16, 2010 by 4:00PM
MD SHA Review of Responses	May 07, 2010