

Following is the text of the Transportation Planning Cooperative Research Broad Agency Announcement (DTFH61-08-R-00011) formatted to increase readability. The announcement itself is posted on the Federal Business Opportunities web site at <http://www1.fbo.gov/spg/DOT/FHWA/OAM/DTFH61%2D08%2DR%2D00011/listing.html>

TECHNICAL POINT OF CONTACT:

David Kuehn, 202-366-6072 or david.kuehn@dot.gov

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES:

This BAA describes a two-phase process for proposal submission and evaluation. In the first phase, short pre-proposals will be submitted for review. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will ask for full proposals of those pre-proposals that are of interest to FHWA. Further detail on proposed dates follows:

- (1) BAA Pre-Proposals are due electronically by 4:00 pm Eastern on February 15, 2008;
- (2) BAA Invitations for Full Proposals will be sent out on or about March 15, 2008, and proposals will be due electronically six weeks from the date of the Invitations for Full Proposals;
- (3) BAA final awards are anticipated to take place August/Sept 2008.

OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION:

The FHWA is soliciting for proposals for research and development projects that could lead to transformational changes and revolutionary advances for transportation planning in the United States. The objective of this BAA is to advance the practice and application of transportation planning among state, regional and local transportation planning agencies in response to significant changes in the planning process and to identify new tools, techniques and approaches that respond to national transportation planning priorities.

PROGRAM SCOPE:

The program scope is intentionally ambitious and broad to address the wide spectrum of topics and objectives that the funded investigations can support. This program is intended to spur innovation and focus on high risk and high pay-off research and development projects. Incremental advances, demonstrations of existing technologies or applications of state and metropolitan transportation planning activities are not within the scope of this program.

FOCUS AREAS:

Six focus areas within transportation planning are of particular strategic interest and relevance to the FHWA. Proposals in these areas are highly encouraged. This guidance is provided to help offerors in the development of proposals of particular interest to FHWA. These areas are consistent with emphasis areas identified for the Surface Transportation Environment and

Planning Cooperative Research Program developed under Section 5207 of Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU); see <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/step/index.htm> for more information.

The six focus areas include:

(1) CONGESTION MANAGEMENT:

In this area, the objective will be to support the national strategy to reduce congestion on America's transportation network as well as support other initiatives to link operations and transportation planning. Research could focus on innovations in congestion pricing and private sector involvement in transportation investment. Research could support work to advance analysis tools for use in the measurement and evaluation of operational improvements and strategies in transportation planning and advance the Congestion Management Process (CMP). Research also could result in the development of new planning tools and programs for understanding, analyzing and responding to congestion problems. Note: How to improve consideration of non-recurring congestion and goods movement in the transportation planning process are topics that received attention from stakeholders in response to the announcement of the STEP program for FY 2008.

(2) GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE:

The goals of this emphasis area are to (1) better understand the contribution of transportation facilities and services to air pollution and greenhouse gases and their potential implications, including environmental and human health impacts; (2) develop and assess analytical methods to adequately identify and reduce transportation emissions that contribute to global climate change; (3) identify cost-effective mitigation strategies to reduce transportation emissions that contribute to global climate change; (4) improve understanding of climate change impacts on transportation facilities and systems and the ability to consider adaptations. Potential research activities could include evaluating greenhouse gas mitigation efforts; identifying new and innovative methods of communicating scientific and regulatory information on transportation-air quality to partners at State and local agencies and to stakeholders; assessing the potential impacts of climate change on transportation; and determining how to avoid and minimize potential climate change impacts during transportation system planning. Note: Impacts of climate change on the transportation system, methods for assessing transportation contribution to global climate change, development of decision tools for changing transportation-related impacts to global climate change and new methods for communicating long-term impacts and risk related to transportation planning and global climate change were research areas that received attention from stakeholders in response to the announcement of the STEP program for FY 2008.

(3) FREIGHT PLANNING:

Across most of the country, freight movements are growing as a share of transportation system volumes. The objective of this research will be to develop methods for the integration of freight into the transportation planning and programming processes at the State and metropolitan levels. Freight transportation issues are complex and involve many stakeholders who have different perspectives on the freight transportation system. Research could focus on innovative methods

for effectively engaging the private sector freight community into the State and metropolitan planning processes; how parameters such as price, travel time, permitting, and user fees affect modal shift; what elasticities are inherent in these parameters; and new approaches for applying benefits/cost analyses of freight projects in the transportation planning process. Research also could develop new planning tools and programs such as freight analytical techniques, freight modeling improvements, methods of innovative freight data collection and data sharing. Note: Areas that Stakeholders identified in response to an announcement for the FY 2008 STEP program include improved methods for generation of freight trips and for considering multi-modal freight investment trade-offs.

(4) PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, VISUALIZATION IN PLANNING:

There is a continued need for assessing new methods in public involvement and community impact assessment practice. Environmental justice and visualization are emerging areas of research and practice for transportation planning practitioners that can be utilized to help convey and obtain technical information with communities that traditionally were not involved in the planning process. There is increasing awareness among state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations and other government agencies of the importance of ensuring civil rights and environmental justice in the transportation planning process where there is a greater opportunity for making trade-offs to avoid impacts. Visualization applied to transportation planning is an emerging area of both research and practice. Stakeholders from state departments of transportation (DOTs), metropolitan planning organizations (MPO's) and other interested parties are concerned about how to effectively apply visualization. Most agencies and practitioners have little or no awareness of examples. Research in visualization could result in applying new methods of communication between transportation practitioners, decision-makers and the public. Note: Stakeholders identified evaluation of cost effective techniques for public participation, improved methods for considering highway operational strategies and pricing on specific populations, and use of visualization to consider potential system impacts when responding to the FY 2008 STEP announcement.

(5) TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES THAT SUPPORT STATE AND LOCAL PLANNING CAPACITY BUILDING:

In this area, research needs to consider audience needs, agency practices and process requirements in statewide and metropolitan transportation planning. Key emerging planning research issues for State DOTs could include asset management and program cost management. Key emerging research issues for metropolitan transportation planning could include new and innovative forecasting techniques, managing program finances and revenue and coordination with new planning partners through the development of new process or decision-support tools. In small communities and rural areas, transportation planning research could focus on emerging tools and techniques that would assist communities in maintaining their transportation system and more effectively prioritize and limited program resources. Transportation planning research in this area also could focus on effective applications of both technical and non-technical approaches and tools and addressing jurisdictional and institutional issues and could include the development of new planning tools to provide a framework for developing a shared vision for the future by analyzing various forces (e.g., health, transportation, economic, environmental,

land use, etc.) that affect growth. NOTE: Stakeholders identified in response to the STEP FY 2008 announcement improved methods of fiscal constrain and asset management, alignment of public and private sector needs and bridging gaps between traditional four-step modeling, simulation and micro-simulation models including understanding their optimal value and use in helping forecast future traffic and appropriately plan and design for predicted travel trends.

(6) TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES THAT SUPPORT TRIBAL PLANNING CAPACITY BUILDING:

For Tribal transportation planning, the objective of the coordinated research approach will be the development of innovative tools or approaches that will promote the integration of tribal issues into the transportation planning and programming processes at the State and metropolitan levels. Examples of research could include development of "Information Tools" for use by Tribal departments of transportation demonstrating effective consultation practices in the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning process. Tribal transportation planning research also could focus on innovative planning techniques to assist tribes in maintaining their transportation system and could define novel processes that would help Tribal Transportation Agencies more effectively utilize tools and technology even with limited resources.

GENERAL PROPOSAL INFORMATION:

All business and administrative correspondence or questions on this BAA should be directed to the contracting officer identified below. The FHWA has budgeted approximately \$700,000 in fiscal year 2008 to fund this research program. Proposals will be evaluated using a two-part process consisting of pre-proposals and full-proposals. Offerors whose pre-proposals are of interest to FHWA will be invited to submit full proposals. The FHWA may select for award all, none, or a subset of the acceptable proposals to construct a balanced program meeting its needs. The FHWA anticipates making multiple awards, typically of 12-24 months duration with the size of individual awards varying from \$50,000 to over \$100,000 depending on the research area and study requirements. Awards with a total value (including full period of performance and any option periods) of \$100,000 or under will be issued as purchase orders. Awards over \$100,000 will be issued as contracts or cooperative agreements. The FHWA strongly encourages cost sharing under any contract that may result, and can offer cooperative agreements if the proposer can offer a cost share of 50 percent from non-federal sources of funding. For cooperative agreements, the Federal share of the cost of a project or activity carried out under this program is limited by Section 5101(b) of SAFETEA-LU to fifty (50) percent, unless otherwise determined by the Secretary of Transportation. The number of awards, and their dollar value, will vary depending on the merit of proposals received and their potential to lead to transformational changes and advances in transportation planning practice. Offerors should prepare proposals with a baseline period of performance of 12-24 months and, if needed, with one or more options up to an additional 24-month period of performance.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The primary basis for selecting proposals will be technical merit, importance to FHWA programs, and fund availability. Technical merit will be evaluated based on the following criteria, listed in descending order of relative importance:

- (A) Fit of research in meeting recent changes in the transportation planning process and national planning priorities;
- (B) Understanding of current practice, trends and future needs relative to the research;
- (C) Understanding of how research could benefit practitioners involved in statewide, Tribal, metropolitan, local and small community transportation planning;
- (D) Impact of research on meeting current or future transportation planning needs (and reach of research well beyond the needs of a specific state or local agency);
- (E) Cost-effective use of federal funds; and
- (F) Experience and qualifications of the research team for conducting national-level research.

The FHWA strongly encourages proposals that offer a significant non-federal matching funds or in-kind resources. Good proposals will evidence strong internal backing with matching funds, innovative approaches in contracting and leveraging current and past technology development efforts that support this program. Such proposals will receive consideration in addition to and above how they respond to the technical criteria above. Cost reasonableness and realism will also be considered in the overall selection process. Individual proposal evaluations will be based on acceptability or non-acceptability without regard to other proposals submitted under the announcement. Selection will be based primarily on scientific or technical merit, partnership, relevance and importance to agency, and availability of funds. Note that all technically meritorious proposals may not be funded due to budgetary constraints.

GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING PRE-PROPOSAL AND FULL PROPOSAL PROCESS:

Proposals may respond to one or more of the subject areas but must indicate which area is primary and which area or areas are subordinate. Organizations also may submit more than one proposal when the proposed effort includes multiple disparate objectives and tasks, covers multiple or disparate technologies areas, or would have a more supportable budget if provided in parts; however, each proposal will be considered independently. Proposals will be evaluated using a two-part process: pre-proposals and full-proposals. The FHWA will evaluate pre-proposals against the evaluation criteria outlined above. Those offerors whose pre-proposals are of interest may be invited to submit a formal full-proposal, as described below. Offerors whose pre-proposals are determined not to be of interest are not precluded from submitting a proposal and may do so if they desire. Approximately thirty (30) days after the pre-proposal submission deadline, offerors submitting pre-proposals will be contacted by the Technical Point of Contact with a letter informing them either that the FHWA is requesting a formal cost and technical proposal or that the effort proposed is not of interest to the Government.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF PRE-PROPOSALS:

Pre-proposals must be submitted via electronic mail, and must be received by the FHWA on or before 4:00 PM (EST), February 15, 2008, in order to be considered for fiscal year 2008 funding. Facsimile transmissions or hard copy transmissions of the pre-proposal will not be accepted; any so sent will be disregarded. Pre-proposals shall be submitted via email to: david.kuehn@dot.gov with a copy to jodi.condes@dot.gov.

CONTENT OF PRE-PROPOSALS:

Proposals should be submitted in Microsoft Word or Adobe portable document format. The pre-proposals shall be no longer than 7 pages in length and include the following 6 sections:

Page 1 shall include proposal information including (a) the Broad Agency Announcement Number, (b) project title, (c) name of organization, (d) name of principle investigator(s), (e) phone and addresses for both technical and business contacts; and (f) the identification of the primary subject area and subordinate subject area or areas, if any, the proposal addresses.

Pages 2 & 3 shall provide a brief statement of objectives, narrative to demonstrate an understanding of current practices, trends and future needs, and major intended tasks and proposed deliverables.

Page 4 shall describe how the research would provide value to advancing practitioners involved in Statewide, Tribal, metropolitan or small community transportation planning.

Page 5 shall describe how the research could respond to current or future needs.

Page 6 shall introduce the research team, their general qualifications and other resources to accomplish the proposed effort.

Page 7 shall outline a rough order of magnitude budget including the use of non-federal funds and resources that would contribute to the project; the budget shall state the anticipated period of performance and any anticipated option periods, and should address the partnership structure between the entity proposing the work and public and private sector entities funding or otherwise substantially participating in the work.

Offerors should refer to the Evaluation Criteria above to ensure that their pre-proposal addresses the FHWA's requirements.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF FULL PROPOSALS:

After the pre-proposals evaluation stage is complete, offerors who are invited to submit full proposals will be notified of the actual dates for submission and will provided with specific instructions for submission of full proposals. Offerors who choose not to submit a pre-proposal but who wish to submit a full proposal may do so; they are advised to contact the contracting officer to obtain a copy of the full proposals instructions. It is presently anticipated that full

proposals will include a technical proposal no longer than 20 pages in length, as well as a separate cost proposal. Offerors submitting full proposals will be asked to submit technical proposals that provide a refined research problem statement and work scope, a management plan, technology transition plan, staffing qualifications, and information regarding other ongoing research and work. In addition to the technical proposal, offerors will be requested to submit a cost proposal that provides complete and detailed budget information (length as necessary), information on proposed cost sharing, and other general business information. If necessary, the FHWA will request additional cost back-up information, resumes or supplemental information as appropriate. Recipients of cooperative agreements will be asked to complete the applicable SF-424 series of forms.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

Proposals that plan to collect information from more than 9 non-Federal entities may require FHWA to obtain OMB clearance prior to the commencement of any information collection. Awards involving any Privacy Act-covered data will require special clearances and protections.

It is the policy of the FHWA to treat all proposals as competitive information and to disclose the contents only for the purposes of evaluation. Only Government evaluators will make selections under this BAA. This announcement constitutes the public announcement as contemplated by FAR 6.102(d)(2), and no formal Request for Proposals or other solicitation regarding this announcement will be issued. Requests for same will be disregarded.

The Government reserves the right to select for award any, all, part, or none of the proposals received in response to this announcement. In addition, the Government reserves the right to award either contracts, grants, or other instruments determined to be of benefit to the government in achieving the goals of this program. This BAA is an expression of interest only and does not commit the Government to pay any pre-proposal or proposal preparation costs. All responsible sources capable of satisfying the Government's needs may submit proposals, which will be evaluated. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Minority Institutions (MI) are encouraged to submit proposals and join others in submitting proposals. However, no portion of this BAA will be set aside for HBCU and MI participation due to the desire to solicit ideas as broadly as possible.

This Broad Agency Announcement is separate and distinct from other FHWA Broad Agency Announcements such as the Exploratory Advanced Research Program (EARP) and the Accelerate TRANSIMS deployment.