

**Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Development of a Regional Incident
Management Strategic Plan and Performance Assessment
RFP #: TRN 11-009**

CLOSING DATE: Monday, July 25, 2011; Promptly at 12:00 pm CDT

FORMAT: Type Written – Bound / Stapled And Signed – No more than ten (10) pages plus resumes and associated forms

NUMBER OF COPIES: Six (6)

SUBMIT TO: Alan Clark
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**PRE-PROPOSAL
SUBMISSION**

MEETING: Thursday, July 14, 2011 @ 1:30pm at the Houston-Galveston Area Council, 3555 Timmons, Houston, TX 77027, 2nd Floor Conference Room B

BACKGROUND

The Houston-Galveston area has been experiencing significant growth over the past decade. According to the 2010 Census, the eight-county Transportation Management Area (TMA), consisting of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller Counties, grew by 1.2 million residents to nearly 5.9 million people over the last decade. An additional three million people are anticipated to reside in the region within the next 25 years. This additional growth has and will continue to result in millions of additional vehicle miles traveled in the region daily.

Due to this growth, the region has already seen its major highways stressed in terms of capacity and performance. The construction of new facilities is not necessarily feasible nor the most immediate answer to addressing the congestion problem. Funds for building new facilities continue to decrease, placing more pressure on regions to operate their existing facilities more efficiently. In addition, a traffic incident on a newly-constructed freeway can render the facility unusable unless a system is operational to clear the incident. Finally, freeway traffic incidents, be they stalls or crashes, can also result in causing secondary incidents to occur as unsuspecting travelers happen upon stopped traffic on a freeway while traveling at 60 miles per hour. Reducing the amount of time such incidents affect a freeway reduces the opportunity of these secondary incidents from happening.

Currently, the Houston-Galveston area has two significant-sized freeway incident management programs in operation – SAFEClear, operated by the City of Houston within its city limits, and the Motorist Assistance Program (MAP), which is co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), the Harris County Sheriff’s Department, and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and operates primarily within Beltway 8 in Harris County. Another MAP program operates out of Montgomery County on IH-45, but is significantly smaller than the afore-mentioned operations. All three of these operations strictly run off of local funding. An Incident Management Workgroup, consisting of law enforcement, engineers, the towing industry, and the medical community, meet on a monthly basis out of Houston TranStar to discuss best practices, specific incidents, and other issues that impact incident management.

In January 2011, H-GAC and METRO sponsored a 1.5-day traffic incident management (TIM) workshop/charrette, which was attended by 27 local and regional stakeholders and six invited experts from across the country. This gathering allowed practitioners and experts to discuss incident management practices, goals, and challenges in order to develop a path for strengthening and growing the region’s incident management practices. One of the major action items to come out of this workshop was the development of a strategic plan that would assess the costs and benefits of current and proposed incident management practices, propose operational efficiencies, identify funding mechanisms, and market the program for public and political acceptance. To this end, H-GAC was tasked by this workgroup to develop a strategic plan, which is being addressed through this RFP.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this RFP is to compile a list of qualified firms to conduct an assessment of the Houston-Galveston region’s incident management efforts, identify the benefits of these efforts in reducing congestion and crashes, and develop a strategic plan for increasing the coverage of incident management efforts on critical facilities throughout the region. Respondents are requested to discuss their expertise in the areas listed below. The consultant will be required to have knowledge and expertise in many areas. Therefore, recommended criteria for the consultants on this project have been outlined.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT STUDY AREA

The study area for this study will be the eight county TMA. The primary focus of the study involves freeway incident management within these counties, which include IH-10, IH-45, IH-610, US 59, US 290, SH 225, SH 249 and SH 288, as well as the Hardy, Westpark, Sam Houston, and Fort Bend Toll Roads.

RFP SUBMITTAL

Each respondent of this RFP is requested to present a proposal discussing the scope of work as described in Section III. H-GAC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions of proposals, if it is deemed to be in the best interest of H-GAC. This RFP document is organized as follows:

I. Proposal Contents and Specifications

This section contains the specific and general description of the information to be provided within the proposal. Federal requirements and specifications are noted. Due to the nature of this contract, all the contents and specifications may not apply to this contract.

II. Evaluation of Proposals

This section describes the methodology by which the proposals will be evaluated and firms/individuals selected for proposal interviews.

III. Contract Objectives and Scope of Work

This section describes the work to be performed in the study and tasks to be executed.

RFP PROCESS INFORMATION

This RFP will be sent on Wednesday, June 22, 2011 to all consultants in H-GAC's consultant database, which satisfies the search criteria of: Houston area firms with experience in transportation and traffic planning studies. All requests for this RFP packet will be welcomed. This RFP will be available on H-GAC's website at <http://www.h-gac.com/purchasing/> on Thursday, June 23, 2011. It will be advertised in the Houston Chronicle on Sunday, June 26, 2011. A Pre-Proposal Submission meeting will be held on Thursday, July 14, 2011 at 1:30pm to discuss any questions regarding the RFP. Questions submitted regarding the RFP will be answered and posted on the H-GAC website on Monday, July 18, 2011.

Proposals are due on Monday, July 25, 2011; Promptly at 12:00pm CDT.

After the proposals are received, H-GAC's evaluation committee will score the submissions then select the top three (if more than three submittals are received). Following approval by the H-GAC Board of Directors in August 2011, H-GAC staff will begin negotiations with the first ranked provider.

Any or all submissions may be rejected, if they do not meet the Evaluation Committee's criteria or fail to comply with RFP specifications. H-GAC also retains the right to withdraw this RFP at any time.

H-GAC is responsible for this contracted project. Further inquiries should be directed to Jeff Kaufman at 832-681-2533 or jeff.kaufman@h-gac.com.

SECTION I

SUBMISSION CONTENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Submissions should include the following:

A. Cover Letter

The cover letter should include a brief summary of important points/sections of the proposal, project objectives, brief description of each section of attached proposal, and any special considerations. The letter must include the primary contact name, telephone number, and email address for the responding agency.

B. Project Work Program and Schedule

The consultant should detail their approach to undertaking the tasks listed in this RFP. A recommended methodology for performance of each task identified in the RFP should be included, along with a timeline for completion. This timeline should also illustrate key milestones and anticipate necessary meetings with H-GAC staff and others if necessary. This contract should be completed within six months of contract execution, although respondents may suggest extenuating circumstances for more time.

C. Responsibility and Qualifications

The project manager and other key staff members must be specified and a clear indication given as to their involvement in the project, the amount of time they will be on-site and the percent of their time dedicated to this project. Brief resumes of staff members should be included. The successful respondent to this RFP must understand they are expected to provide qualified personnel to accomplish each portion of the work in this planning study. Substitutions for essential personnel involved in the study will not be allowed without H-GAC's prior approval and resulting delays will be the responsibility of the consultant. H-GAC retains the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in H-GAC's opinion, to be unqualified to perform the work.

D. References

The consultant should provide three references from Governmental agencies that have solicited similar assistance in assessing and planning traffic incident management programs. References should include contact information including phone number, e-mail and regular mailing address.

E. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal

In connection with receiving grants from the U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT), H-GAC has established an agency-wide goal of 22% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation in its total annual third party consulting opportunities. Each respondent is encouraged to take affirmative action and make every effort possible to use DBE firms in the performance of work under this contract. Nothing in this provision shall be construed to require the utilization of any DBE firm, which is either unqualified or unavailable.

F. Title VI Requirements

Successful consultants will be required to comply with all requirements imposed by Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 (49 U.S.C. Section 2000d), the Regulations of DOT issued there-under (49 C.F.R. part 21), and the assurances by H-GAC thereto.

G. Conflict of Interests/Debarment

Proposals should state whether there is a potential conflict of interest and be cognizant of the requirement for executing a debarment certification stating that they have not been barred from doing work involving federal funds. A signed Debarment Certification will be required of successful respondent for each of the consultant team members.

While the above items provide a general description of what sections and information are expected in the proposal, they are not meant to limit or exclude other information from being included. For example, Sections 2 and 3 in this RFP contain requirements for information that may not be specifically mentioned in this section. Responders should include such information in their proposal.

Also the Texas House Bill 914, codified as Chapter 176 of the Local Government Code, requires vendors and consultants contracting or seeking to do business with H-GAC to file a conflict of interest questionnaire (CIQ). The required questionnaire is located at the Texas Ethics Commission website <http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/> It may also be found, along with a list of H-GAC officers subject to HB 914 disclosure requirements, on H-GAC's website, <http://www.h-gac.com>

The CIQ must be completed and filed with the bid/proposal response. Vendors and consultants that do not include the form with the response, and fail to timely provide it, may be disqualified from consideration by H-GAC.

SECTION II

EVALUATION OF SUBMISSIONS

Procedures have been established for the evaluation and selection of Consultant(s) that provide for a consistent approach to carry out H-GAC projects. In order to accomplish this objective, the H-GAC Consultant Evaluation committee will review each submission based on the following criteria:

- **Previous Experience with Incident Management Planning** - Submissions will be assessed on prior experience of the firm in the subject areas covered in Section III of this RFP. **(30 points);**
- **Understanding of Project Scope** – The responding consultant must present their team’s approach through further clarification and understanding of all tasks involved in this study and the project. Any work on similar type projects may be listed to validate this understanding. **(30 points);**
- **Experience/Availability of Consultant** – This project involves many simultaneous tasks; the consultant must demonstrate its ability to meet the project schedule. The consultant team should indicate other significant projects being worked on by the principals, percent of involvement, and probable completion dates. **(20 points);**
- **Past Performance** – The Consultant must have a demonstrated track record of timely performance, quality, and integrity, as evidenced by a list of client references **(10points);**
- **Additional Services, Ideas, or Products** - Any additional services, innovative ideas, cost-saving measures, safety-measures, products, DBE/WBE/MBE/HUB usage, etc. will be considered for their usefulness to H-GAC or their contribution to the project **(10 points).**

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate all submissions according to the criteria described. It will necessarily not happen, but may be a short-list or all of the respondents may be invited to make an oral presentation to the Evaluation Committee before the final ranked shortlist is proposed. The shortlisted candidates may be requested to make a presentation to the H-GAC Budget and Finance Committee. Following approval by the H-GAC Board of Directors, H-GAC staff will begin negotiations with the first ranked consulting firm. In the event that a contract cannot be negotiated with the first ranked firm, H-GAC may choose to proceed to negotiate with the firm ranked second, and finally third, until a contract has been successfully negotiated.

H-GAC retains the right to select from the firms responding to this RFP. Any or all submissions may be rejected, if they do not meet the Evaluation Committee's criteria or fail to comply with RFP specifications. H-GAC also retains the right to withdraw this RFP at any time.

SECTION III

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Scope of Services to be provided by the Consultant upon selection involves the development of a Strategic Plan and corresponding quantitative evaluation model that would assess the costs and benefits of current and proposed incident management practices, propose operational efficiencies and approaches to expanding incident management efforts in the Houston-Galveston region, identify funding mechanisms to support the operation and expansion of the incident management strategies, and effective communication materials to market the program for public and political acceptance. In order to develop this plan, the Consultant will be expected to work with H-GAC, as well as those involved in incident management efforts, such as law enforcement, emergency service providers, traffic engineers, the towing industry, and the medical community, to determine the best approaches for improving and growing incident management in the Houston-Galveston region.

In developing this Strategic Plan, the Consultant will be expected to address the following issues as identified through the Incident Management Workshop:

- A. Cost-Benefit Assessment of Current Incident Management Efforts (Estimated Time Requirements – 400 hours):** The Consultant will be expected to review current freeway incident management efforts and the costs of providing these services. The Consultant will also be required to review data collected on freeways, including travel times and speeds from Houston TranStar/TTI, incident data from TxDOT's Regional Incident Management System (RIMS), crash data from TxDOT's Crash Record Information Systems (CRIS), and any additional pertinent information to assess how incidents affect travel flow and how incident management programs affect travel flow after incidents occur. The consultant shall compile data and estimate the benefits of various incident management strategies based on regionally adjusted values for vehicle hours of delay, fuel consumption, emissions, and other appropriate criteria to be determined by the Consultant in conjunction with H-GAC and the other stakeholders. *Deliverable(s): Technical Memorandum providing a synopsis of the costs and benefits estimated.*
- B. Combination of SAFEClear and the Motorist Assistance Program (MAP) (Estimated Time Requirements – 150 hours):** The Consultant will be expected to assess the operations of the SAFEClear and MAP programs and propose how the two programs can be combined and their services streamlined to be more efficient and effective. This combined program will serve as the blueprint to freeway incident management for the region. *Deliverable(s): Technical memorandum addressing operational efficiencies for combining SAFEClear and MAP programs*
- C. Expansion of Incident Management Programs into Remainder of the Region (Estimated Time Requirements – 300 hours):** The Consultant will be expected to develop a plan for taking the combined program blueprint and expand services to the rest of the region. Initial efforts will focus on expanding the program to cover the entirety of

Harris County, followed by expansion into adjacent counties in the region. Work will involve meeting with impacted jurisdictions to garner support and participation in the incident management program. The Consultant shall utilize the quantitative method or evaluation model developed under Task A to identify corridors and a service plan that would result in the most benefit to the region based on available resources and funding. *Deliverable(s): Technical memorandum on program expansion*

- D. Identification of Funding Sources for Current and Future Efforts (Estimated Time Requirements – 100 hours):** The Consultant will be expected to identify additional and alternative approaches to funding not just an expansion of the incident management program but its current operations. Currently, incident management programs in the Houston-Galveston area are funded through local budgets. However, other viable funding options exist in other parts of the country. Additional and alternative options to consider should include the preparation of draft legislative concepts or examples of existing legislation in other regions concerning funding for similar programs, as well as the use of eligible state and federal funding sources, considerations for the possible use of toll revenues for services that would operate in the tolled corridors, the leveraging of existing private motorist assistance programs such those funded by State Farm and AAA, among others, and the solicitation of funding from other private sector interests such as auto insurance companies and privately operated toll roads. *Deliverable(s): Technical memorandum on funding alternatives for incident management programs*
- E. Establishment of Performance Goals (Estimated Time Requirements – 200 hours):** The Consultant will be expected to work with TranStar's Incident Management Workgroup to develop a set of performance goals and measures to allow for the evaluation of the region's incident management programs. Measures for consideration may include, but not be limited to, the number of vehicles assisted/debris removed, response times, clearance times, incident duration times, accident avoidance or safety measures (before and after analysis), and cost savings. The Consultant shall also identify practical sources for collecting the operational and performance data that will enable ongoing measurement as well as an analytical framework and technical approach to performance monitoring and reporting. This task may be expanded to include the development of system requirements for an automated data collection and reporting system. *Deliverable(s): Technical memorandum on proposed performance goals and measures and a data collection and reporting plan*
- F. Development of Marketing Strategy (Estimated Time Requirements – 250 hours):** The Consultant will be expected to develop a marketing strategy to promote incident management not just to policymakers, but to the general public and the business community as well to stress the benefits of the program in terms of reducing time stuck in traffic and the traffic safety benefits. Currently, these programs are somewhat viewed as "AAA for those who don't have AAA." The benefits to the entire traveling public go far beyond a free tow for those who stall on the freeway, and those benefits need to be relayed accordingly. *Deliverable(s): The Consultant will be expected to develop a set of materials to (1) inform policymakers of the benefits of incident management strategies*

and programs and possible funding sources and (2) inform the public about the services the proposed successor to MAP/SAFEClear would provide.

Documentation and Reporting

1. Draft Deliverables: Consultant shall provide three copies of the required deliverables for each task on CDs for H-GAC's review and comments. The Consultant's schedule should allow 21 days for review and comments from H-GAC staff regarding the adequacy of the materials received.
2. Final Deliverables: Once the sufficiency and accuracy of all the deliverables have been determined, the Consultant shall submit 20 copies of the complete documentation set that shall consist of the technical memoranda, evaluation and predication model and results, marketing materials, and analysis data on CDs. No printed copies of the deliverables will be needed.