

Highway Helper Services RFP  
Purchasing Bid Proposal 12359

**Pre-Bid Meeting Vendor Questions from September 15, 2014:**

- 1. How many special events which require Highway Helper services are there per year?**

Response:

There are not a specific number of special events requiring services. While home football games of the University of Iowa and Iowa State University are scheduled and anticipated, there are many other events which do not occur routinely.

Section 3.2.3 of the RFP addresses these requirements

- 2. How many State holidays require Highway Helper services?**

Response:

Section 3.3.2 of the RFP states “Highway Helper service shall be provided Monday through Friday, except Iowa DOT approved holidays.”.

The Iowa DOT approved holidays are: New Year’s, MLK Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas.

Section 3.3.2 also defines that Highway Helper services will be provided on Memorial Day, Independence Day (when falling on a Monday or Friday), and the Friday after Thanksgiving.

An addendum will be issued adding MLK Day and Veterans Day to the holidays which will require Highway Helper services.

- 3. If the Highway Helper services are to be provided on other holidays and/or special events, will the DOT provide advance notice?**

Response:

Yes. As much as possible.

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- 4. Will Highway Helper services be utilized for emergencies, tornadoes, and/or flooding?**

**Response:**

**Yes. Please refer to Section 3.2.3.1 of the RFP.**

- 5. If a Highway Helper vehicle is dispatched to a call and encounters a vehicle in need of help, do you pass that vehicle in need of help or stop?**

**Response:**

**The Highway Helper operator should notify the TOC of the vehicle in need of help. The TOC will instruct the Highway Helper operator on the course of action.**

- 6. Does the Iowa DOT have standard operating procedures (SOPs) for Highway Helper services or do we come up with that?**

**Response:**

**Section 3.6.2 of the RFP requires “The Vendor will work with the Department to develop Standard Operating Procedures for the Highway Helper Services.”. These SOPs will be submitted to the DOT for review and approval.**

- 7. Why not tow vehicle to a drop site as other states do?**

**Response:**

**Presently, the Iowa DOT has not established drop sites for disabled vehicles in any of the service areas.**

**Section 3.1.2 of the RFP requires the Highway Helper services push or tow disabled vehicles out of a lane of travel or to facilitate the flow of traffic.**

- 8. Do you expect our business plan to address routes, controlled routes and on-call routes.**

**Response:**

**The Regular Patrol and On-Call Routes for each Service Area are identified in Appendices B, C and D of the RFP.**

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The DOT anticipates the Vendor's Business Plan will identify the specific routes each Highway Helper vehicle will be assigned to patrol.

- 9. The PowerPoint slide for the Cedar Rapids – Iowa City Service Area had incorrect mileage figures.**

**Response:**

The correct mileage figures for the Cedar Rapids – Iowa City Service Area is: Regular Patrol - 43 miles; On Call - 10 miles. Please refer to Appendix C.1 of the RFP for the detailed listing of the mileages, by route.

- 10. What are the requirements for the Highway Helper vehicle?**

**Response:**

Section 3.4 of the RFP contains the requirements for the Highway Helper vehicle, equipment and technology. Specifically, Sections 3.4.2 has the requirements for the vehicle.

- 11. When transporting motorists off of the highway, should the drop-off locations be identified in our management plan?**

**Response:**

This is not a requirement of the Management Plan.

Section 3.1.6 of the RFP states "...may transport a driver and passengers...to the nearest, safe, public, commercial facility."

The DOT will work with the Vendor to determine the locations which meet this requirement.

- 12. What service do you use for ATMS software in the TOC?**

**Response:**

The TOC ATMS software is TransSuite (developed by TransCore).

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- 13. We are concerned about the short time to submit the RFP if the responses to questions until 10/8.**

**Response:**

The schedule for this project relative to submittal of proposals and having on-road Highway Helper services in operation are firm.

It is the intent of the DOT to post responses to Vendor questions as we receive them rather than waiting until the deadline.

If delays in achieving the dates listed in the RFP Procurement Timetable, the DOT will consider adjusting related dates.

- 14. We are concerned with the tight schedule from when the contract begins on 12/3/14 and when on-road services are to be operational on 4/1/15. There are a lot of tasks which need to be accomplished in approximately 4 months.**

**Response:**

The schedule is firm.

As background information, the required schedule in an earlier version of this RFP allowed just 3 months from contract execution to on-road services. At that time, the DOT consulted with its own Equipment Services staff and other vendors providing contracted motorists assist services in other states. All had indicated that schedule was very tight, but achievable.

In setting the objective of having these services in place by the beginning of the 2015 construction season, the DOT was able to increase the period to nearly 4 months.

- 15. Will ride along training with the current Highway Helper staff be available?**

**Response:**

Once a Vendor is under contract, the DOT will investigate the possibility of providing ride-alongs with the current Highway Helper staff.

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**16. If execution of contract is not accomplished by 12/3/14, will 4/1/15 deadline for on-road services be extended?**

**Response:**

**Yes**

**17. In the Technology section of the RFP, when you mention four camera inputs, is that in addition to the two you stated?**

**Response:**

**No**

**18. Does the RFP require the Vendor to provide two-way radios for the Highway Helper trucks and the TOC, as well.**

**Response:**

**No. The Vendor is responsible to provide two-way radios for the Highway Helper vehicles and operators, only. The DOT will provide two-way radios for the TOC.**

**19. Will there be separate licensing requirements for communications.**

**Response:**

**No.**

**20. Is the radio system 800 megahertz?**

**Response:**

**Yes. Please refer to Section 3.4.4.1 of the RFP for the specific radio requirements.**

**21. Does this project provide a tax exempt status for the Vendor?**

**Response:**

**No.**

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- 22. Is the Vendor responsible for saving data files, wave and voice files? Are there any privacy issues with recording voice files?**

**Response:**

The Vendor will transfer all video files to the DOT and the DOT will be responsible for storing the content.

- 23. All voice data and video files will be transferred to the DOT and the DOT will provide storage system?**

**Response:**

Yes and yes.

- 24. Second light bar on the truck, one on cab second on utility if we have a second toggle switch, will we still need second light bar, can we use 360 light?**

**Response:**

The DOT is still determining the response to this question.

- 25. Is the DOT considering requiring the Vendor to obtain sponsorships for the Highway Helper service?**

**Response:**

No.

Section 3.4.1.6 provides for the responsibilities and costs of changing the markings on the Highway Helper vehicles should the DOT secure sponsors in the future.

- 26. Regarding the vehicle markings, does the DOT intend utilize the vehicle marking design of the Indiana DOT's Hoosier Helper vehicles?**

**Response:**

No.

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While Section 3.4.2 of the RFP contains many vehicle requirements similar to Indiana DOT's Hoosier Helper vehicles, it is anticipated the markings will be a hybrid design of the DOT's existing Highway Helper vehicle markings and some of the design features of the Indiana Hoosier Helper vehicle markings.

The DOT will work with the Vendor to determine the final vehicle marking design.

**27. The RFP requires a laptop PC with touchscreen capabilities?**

**Response:**

Yes. Section 3.4.4.8 of the RFP contains the requirements for the laptop computer.

**28. Is DOT building a software application for the Highway Helper operators to use?**

**Response:**

The DOT is developing a web-based application as part of the ATMS software suite which the Highway Helper operators will utilize to document their activities. The DOT will provide the Vendor access to the data which is entered into the application.

**29. Will you provide specs for computer you are looking for?**

**Response:**

Please refer to the response to Question Nos. 27 and 28.

**30. Is there internet access at places the Highway Helper vehicles patrol?**

**Response:**

Yes

**31. Will you be able to see the locations of the Highway Helper vehicles?**

**Response:**

Yes. Section 3.4.4.9 of the RFP requires the Vendor to equip each vehicle with GPS transmitters as part of a GPS/AVL capability.

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- 32. What push bumpers are required? Are the push bumpers shown in the photographs of the Indiana DOT's Hoosier Helper vehicles acceptable?**

**Response:**

Section 3.4.2.10 of the RFP contains the requirement for the Highway Helper vehicle front bumpers. The DOT will post the photograph of the vehicle where the front bumper meets the RFP requirements

- 33. Where do we download the data stored in the in-vehicle camera system? Is the vendor responsible to provide a wireless link:**

**Response:**

That specific procedure has not yet been determined. It is anticipated the video will be downloaded daily after the end of the on-road services. The DOT will work with the Vendor to develop the specific solution.

The Vendor's proposed video recording solution must have the ability to be downloaded to a remote medium.

- 34. We are concerned about the potential costs and penalties if you have a couple vehicles go down and only have one spare. If more than one vehicle is involved in a crash, the Vendor may not be able to meet the on-road vehicle requirements.**

**Response:**

It is the prerogative of the DOT to assess penalties for any specific non-compliance. The example mentioned would certainly indicate the non-compliance was outside the Vendor's control and be factored into the DOT decision.

- 35. Regarding back-up vehicles, has the DOT given any thought into giving all three projects to one vendor instead of three separate vendors.**

**Response:**

The RFP requirements would allow for that possibility.

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- 36. Is there a labor union-required wage level for Highway Helper operators.**

**Response:**

**No**

- 37. Regarding the term of contract and the required bonding, is the \$350K is for 3 ½ years or 5 years.**

**Response:**

**It is for the initial contract period (approximately 3 ½ years).**

- 38. Does the RFP provide for Vendor payment during the transitional period from the signing of the contract to the beginning of the on-road Highway Helper services?**

**Response:**

**Please refer to Sections 3.6 and 3.8 of the RFP and the Cost Proposal forms of the RFP.**

**The tasks outlined in Sections 3.6.1 through 3.6.7 describe efforts which are to be accomplished during the “transitional” contract start up period.**

**Sections 3.8.1 through 3.8.7 and Items 1 through 7 of the Cost Proposal forms provide for the payment of these tasks.**

- 39. In the reference to the Department of Energy’s weekly publication of “On-Highway Retail Diesel Prices” fuel charts for the fuel adjustment index, will the DOT use the US fuel cost or Midwest?**

**Response:**

**Midwest**

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- 40. In the Cost Proposal Forms for both the Des Moines and Cedar Rapids-Iowa City Service Areas, the Highway Helper Operations item has a quantity of 17,550 hours. This is for one year or three years?**

**Response:**

**One year. An addendum will be issued modifying this quantity for the 3 year term of the contract.**

- 41. Where should be include the costs of rotating tires, etc.?**

**Response:**

**This would be a vehicle operations cost and should be included in the Highway Helper Operations item.**

- 42. If the 17,550 hours an annual figure, will multiply that times 3?**

**Response:**

**Please refer to the response to Question 40.**

- 43. How will the Vendor be compensated for providing Highway Helper services for special events?**

**Response:**

**The Vendor will be compensated for the in-service vehicle-hours worked for each event.**

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**Proposal overview:**

- **Prior to entering a contract with the Iowa Department of Transportation, must be registered with the Iowa Division of Labor**
- **The DOT encourages the use of targeted small businesses**
- **In bid document is the proposal guarantee, which is submitted separately; One for each area**
- **May use the proposal guaranty form or a certified check**
- **Bid must be submitted on DOT form**
- **Addendums, question and answers will be posted on the DOT Purchasing website. All bidders are responsible to watch website for these postings.**
- **All questions after today must go through Mary Zimmerman.**
- **Section 4.1.2 – Typo: Proposal number should be 12359**