

Offers (*i.e.*, proposal concept papers) being pursued as (or which are subsequently determined by FRA as) Federal financial assistance (*e.g.*, grants or cooperative agreements), must be accompanied by the appropriate application forms. Applicants may include in their submissions for consideration an opinion on the type of award instrument they consider would be the most suitable or appropriate venue for their proposed research projects, technology advancements or demonstrations. This will normally also be reflected in the structure of the cost/price portion of the applicants' proposals. All awards will be subject to the availability of funds. Prospective offerors are cautioned that only the Grants/Contracting Officer can legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds under this BAA.

Areas of Technology Interest

Technologies that are high priority research candidates for evaluation pursuant to this announcement include (a) grade crossing hazard mitigation systems, (b) innovative, low cost technologies to improve track and structures, (c) advanced train control systems, (d) non-electric locomotives and passenger equipment systems, and (f) other scientific study, technology adaptation, or demonstration directed toward advancing the state-of-the-art or increasing the knowledge or understanding of high-speed passenger rail service in the U.S.

Proposal Concept Papers and Preparation Instructions

Proposal concept papers should be twenty (20) pages or less (except as otherwise noted), in letter print no less than 10 point type, on letter-size paper, numbered, and fully legible in all required copies. Each concept should be submitted only once. An offeror's submission of substantially the same concept (under different topical Areas of Interest) will only be evaluated once. FRA will consider each proposal concept paper in the topical Area of Interest identified in the BAA that is most relevant and provides for the greatest opportunity or chance for award. Proposal concept paper submissions should not include promotional brochures, advertisements, taped recordings, or other extraneous material. Proposal concept paper submissions must contain a *Technical Concept Section* and a separate *Cost or Pricing Section*. A separate *Past Performance Information Section* is also required from all offerors other than state or local governments, or

organizations of state or local governments, or universities or institutions of higher education where the total estimated project cost is \$100,000 or greater. A separate *Optional Phased or Follow-on Section* is required for concepts involving phased or follow-on research projects. Offers (*i.e.*, proposal concept papers) being pursued as (or which are subsequently determined by FRA as) Federal financial assistance awards (*e.g.*, grants or cooperative agreements) should be accompanied by the appropriate application forms or related submission materials. Successful offers that are to be awarded as Federal financial assistance must have the appropriate application forms in place prior to award. Submissions that are incomplete or materially lacking, pursuant to the instructions in the BAA 2003-1 Proposal Preparation Package, may be returned unevaluated, or evaluated as is, without further opportunity for revision, at the discretion of the Source Selection Authority. Specific content and format requirements and additional instructions for preparing submissions, as well as further information on the areas of interest themselves and the evaluation/selection process, are provided in the BAA 2003-1 Proposal Preparation Package, available at the following location: <http://www.eps.gov/EPSPData/DOT/Synopses/1042/BAA-2003-1/> (* See Note).

Evaluation Criteria

Proposal concept papers (and other submissions, if and when requested) will be evaluated using the following criteria, which are listed in descending order of relative importance: (1) The relationship of the proposed research project, technology advancement and/or demonstration to the FRA's mission and its potential to advance U.S. high-speed rail technology, and the extent to which its application to railroad operations would improve intercity passenger operations through improved railroad capital equipment or infrastructure, traffic control centers, interfaces among these, or operating methods, and/or its potential for performance improvement in one or more qualities such as, cost effectiveness, reliability, safety, availability, or maintainability. (2) The overall scientific and/or technical merit of the proposal. (3) The technical qualifications and demonstrated experience of key personnel proposed to perform the technical efforts. (4) The administrative qualifications and demonstrated experience of the proposing organization to support the project. (5) The reasonableness and realism of the proposed costs and fee (if

any). (6) The extent of any proposed cost sharing/cost participation under the proposed effort (exclusive of the offeror's prior investment). (7) The extent or level of relevant corporate past performance, or relevant past performance by key personnel or by subcontractors or parties to cooperative arrangements. (**Note:** Assessments of past performance will not be applicable to offers/applications from states or local governments or organizations of state or local governments, or universities or institutions of higher education.) This announcement constitutes the only solicitation. No other request for proposals or announcements will be issued. The complete BAA 2003-1 Proposal Preparation Package can be found at: <http://www.eps.gov/EPSPData/DOT/Synopses/1042/BAA-2003-1/> (* See Note).

*** Note:** In the event that this link fails to lead to the directory for the BAA 2003-1 Proposal Preparation Package, it can be found by performing a search from FedBizOpps Home Page: <http://www.fedbizopps.gov/>. From the homepage, select "Find Business Opportunities", and then perform a search for "BAA 2003-1" under Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration.

Dated: June 9, 2003

Mark Yachmetz,

Associate Administrator for Railroad Development.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

[FTA Docket No. FTA-2003-15488]

Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), this notice announces the Information Collection Request (ICR) abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for extension of the currently approved information collection. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments was published on March 18, 2003.

DATES: Comments must be submitted before July 30, 2003. A comment to OMB is more effective if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication.