

the grant could be used to support the implementation of systems that will support the dissemination of Amber Alert messages via CMS or other traveler information systems.

Funding

The instrument to provide funding, on a cost reimbursable basis, will be a Federal-aid project agreement. Federal funding authority is derived from § 5001(a)(5) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), Pub. L. 105-178, 112 Stat. 107, 419 (1998). Actual award of funds will be subject to funding availability. Federal ITS funding for Amber Plan support assistance may be used as necessary for:

1. Developing general policies and procedures that would guide the use of CMS or other motorist information systems to issue Amber Alerts.
2. Developing guidance or policies on the content and format of alert messages being conveyed on CMS or other traveler information systems.
3. Coordinating State, regional, and local plans for use of CMS or other transportation related issues.
4. Planning secure and reliable communications systems and protocols between public safety and transportation agencies or modify existing communications systems to support Amber Alerts.
5. Planning and designing improved systems for communicating with motorists including the capability for issuing wide area alerts to motorists.
6. Planning systems and protocols to facilitate the efficient issuance of Amber Alerts and other key information to motorists during off-hours.
7. Providing training and guidance to transportation authorities to facilitate appropriate use of CMS and other traveler information systems for Amber Alerts.

Once these eligible activities are complete, any remaining funding allocated under agreements resulting from this request may be used to implement the systems that will support the dissemination of Amber Alert messages via CMS or other traveler information systems. This includes systems necessary to establish the necessary communications between appropriate public safety and transportation agencies to post Amber Alerts on CMS; systems necessary to provide for wide area alerts to motorists; and systems necessary for 24-hour operation of such systems. **Note:** The actual purchase of CMS or other on-street or in-vehicle hardware is not eligible for funding under this program.

Matching Share/Cost Sharing

There is a statutorily required minimum twenty percent matching share that must be from non-federally derived funding sources, and must consist of either cash, substantial equipment contributions that are wholly utilized as an integral part of the project, or personnel services dedicated full-time to the project for a substantial period, as long as such personnel are not otherwise supported with Federal funds.¹ The non-federally derived funding may come from State, local government, or private sector partners. However, funding identified to support continued operations, maintenance, and management of the system will not be considered as part of the partnership's cost-share contribution.

Offerors are encouraged to consider additional matching share above the required minimum match described above. Those offerors willing to propose additional match may include the value of federally supported projects directly associated with the proposed project.

Grantees shall maintain financial records that detail the activities provided by Federal funding, indicating appropriate total matching requirements, as described under the heading, Matching Share/Cost Sharing. The U.S. DOT and the Comptroller General of the United States have the right to access all documents pertaining to the use of Federal ITS funds and non-Federal contributions. Grantees and sub-grantees are responsible for obtaining audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501-7507) and revised Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations, dated June 24, 1997, that is available at the following url: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133/a133.html>. The audits shall be conducted by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards covering financial audits found at 49 CFR 18.26.

Instructions to Applicants

An application for Amber Plan program assistance shall consist of two parts: (1) A proposed technical approach; and (2) a financial plan. Together these two elements must describe the proposed activities to be conducted with this funding. The complete application shall not exceed 15 pages in length, including the Amber Plan Approach, the Financial Plan, the

title page, index, and tables. A page is defined as one side of an 8½ by 11-inch paper, with a type font no smaller than 12 point.

Applications shall be submitted in an electronic format compatible with Microsoft Office 2000. The cover sheet or title page of the application shall include the name, address, and phone number of an individual to whom correspondence and questions about the application may be directed. Any portion of the application or its contents that may contain proprietary information shall be clearly indicated; otherwise, the application and its contents shall be non-proprietary.

Application Content

Applicants must submit an acceptable Technical Approach and Financial Plan that together provide sound evidence that the objectives of this program can successfully be completed in a timely fashion.

Applications should be organized into the following two sections:

1. Technical Approach

The application should describe the proposed approach for establishing the systems, protocols and message sets necessary for posting of Amber Alert messages on CMS and other traveler information systems. The following paragraphs illustrate the general information that applicants should include in this section of the application.

(A) The application should identify candidate agencies or organizations that will be engaged in the proposed activities. These organizations may include, but not be limited to: highway agencies, public safety agencies, sources of traveler information, and commercial radio and television stations. It is expected that the slate of organizations, agencies, and firms involved in developing an Amber Plan Program will be adjusted as deployment plans are developed.

(B) The application should discuss institutional or organizational issues that will affect the Amber Plan Program and the involvement of the transportation community in that program, and what candidate techniques or activities will be used to address these issues. Prior activities that identified or addressed Amber Plan Program issues may be described in this section to provide a complete portrayal of the breadth of effort by the applicant to develop a plan for regional deployment.

(C) The application should describe the expected product(s) of the activities described in paragraph (B) of this

¹ See § 5001(b) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, Pub. L. 105-178; 112 Stat. 107, June 1998.