

AGENDA: October 5, 2006

TO: Regional Transportation Commission/Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

FROM: Grace Blakeslee, Transportation Planner

RE: Release of Request for Proposals for Freeway Service Patrol Towing Service on Highway 17

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Accept information regarding the release of a request for proposals (RFP) for Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) towing service on Highway 17; and
 2. Encourage potential towing contractors to submit a proposal.
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BACKGROUND

As the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE), the RTC operates the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) program in Santa Cruz County. This program consists of tow trucks patrolling Highway 1 from Highway 9 to State Park Drive and Highway 17 from Mount Hermon Road to the Santa Clara County Line. Both highway segments are patrolled during weekday commute periods. The Highway 17 segment is also patrolled on Sundays from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm all year round and Saturdays from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm during the spring and summer tourist periods.

Disabled vehicles increase non recurrent congestion on urban freeways and increase auto emissions related to congestion during peak commute periods. The FSP program is designed to reduce congestion, improve safety, and reduce fuel consumption and auto emissions by minimizing the congestion associated with collisions and other incidents. FSP tow truck drivers are trained and supervised by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and assist stranded motorists, clear collisions and remove debris from the roadway to keep traffic moving. The services offered by the FSP are free to the motorists.

In partnership with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) SAFE, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Caltrans, the SCCRTC SAFE has administered, implemented and funded the FSP Program on Highway 17 since 1994. The FSP Program is funded by a combination of State FSP, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and SAFE funds.

DISCUSSION

The current tow service contract for the FSP program on Highway 17, Santa Cruz Beat 1, will expire in July 2007. On September 29, 2006 RTC staff released a request for proposals (RFP) for FSP service on Highway 17 for the period of July 2007 to July 2011. The Santa Cruz County FSP

RFP was released in coordination with the MTC SAFE RFP for FSP Beats up for renewal in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Contractor Selection Timetable

Event	Date and Location
Release of RFP	September 29, 2006
MTC Pre-Proposal Conference	1:00 pm, October 10, 2006 at MTC Offices in Oakland
RTC Pre-Proposal Conference	1:00 pm October 17, 2006 at RTC Offices in Santa Cruz
MTC Price Proposal Workshop	1:00 pm, October 24, 2006 at MTC Offices in Oakland
Proposals Due Date	4:00 pm, November 9, 2006 at RTC Offices
Site Visits	January 2007
Contractor Selected	March 2007

FSP Program stakeholders including the CHP and Caltrans are expected to participate in the Pre-Proposal conference. Interested contractors are also invited to participate in the Price Proposal Workshop hosted by MTC SAFE, which is intended to assist new contractors in completing the required Price Proposal Worksheet.

Proposals submitted by the due date of November 9, 2006 will be reviewed and evaluated by a committee comprised of RTC, CHP and Caltrans staff. There will be site visits of the finalists' facilities prior to February 2006. Staff expects to return to the RTC with a contract award recommendation and draft contract in March 2007.

Commissioners are invited to participate in any of the proposal activities. If you would like more information, please inform staff.

Changes from Previous RFP

A few changes were made to the RFP released on September 29, 2006 from the previous RFPs issued by the MTC SAFE on behalf of SCCRTC SAFE. These include:

- The Highway 17 Beat is now called Santa Cruz Beat 1. Previously it was called Beat 17.
- The contract term is extended from a three year period to a four year period.
- Medical Certificates are now required for all FSP Drivers.
- Santa Cruz County FSP contractors are now required to provide an internal back-up truck. Back- up trucks were previously arranged through an MTC SAFE contracted FSP tow company.
- Minor changes to adopted Base Fuel Rates, required Vehicle Inspections, Price Proposals and Insurance Requirements.

The changes reflect current practices for the Bay Area FSP Program and SCCRTC SAFE administration of the Santa Cruz County FSP program.

A four year contract period is expected to be cost effective because it will result in staff time cost savings associated with the procurement process and will not decrease the quality of FSP service provided by tow contractors. Also, fixed costs associated with a new FSP towing contract will be distributed over a longer period of time. Language to allow for mid-term negotiations half-way through the four year contract period will be included in the contract to address costs that may fluctuate significantly such as liability and workers compensation insurance. Compensation for fuel cost fluctuations is addressed in the proposed contract by allowing for adjustments to the contract hourly rate. An increase or decrease in fuel costs of greater than 30% from the fuel cost adopted at the time of the contract initiation will trigger a fuel rate adjustment.

Staff recommends that the RTC accept information regarding the release of an RFP for FSP towing service on Highway 17; and encourage potential towing contractors to submit a proposal.

SUMMARY

As the regional SAFE, the RTC operates the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) program in Santa Cruz County. The FSP program has one of the highest cost-benefit ratios for reducing congestion. The FSP program on Highway 17, Santa Cruz Beat 1, contract is up for renewal. A Request for Proposals was released on September 29, 2006 in conjunction with the Bay Area Freeway Service Patrol Program's Request for Proposals for Beats up for renewal in the San Francisco Bay Area.