

MassRIDES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – RIDEMATCHING SYSTEM

Question Responses

- 1. Which existing ridesharing systems apart from the statewide system are in operation today? Could you provide a list of the major ridesharing systems in operation along with the vendor of the ridesharing system?**

A few TMAs have been using commercially available systems (i.e. RideShark and VivaCommute), but will no longer do so when they migrate to the statewide system. MassRIDES is not aware of any other publicly-sponsored systems currently operating in Massachusetts. Any system on the internet is available to anyone in the state.

- 2. Which product is MassRIDES using currently?**

EZRIDE through the Marketing Institute of Florida State University

- 3. How many registered users are currently in the MassRIDES database? How many are active users who have used their account in the past 3 or 6 months?**

Currently, 17,000+ travelers are listed in the database with about 15,000 active for ridematching. In the last six months, 2,700 users either enrolled in the database or updated their records.

- 4. Does the current database have vanpool information?**

The current ridematching database tracks registrants' mode as "vanpool" and associates the traveler with his/her vanpool by number. In addition, MassRIDES collects information on vanpool routes, van providers, vanpool coordinators, vacant seats, and other data.

- 5. How many vanpools are in operation?**

57

- 6. Does MassRIDES do NTD related reporting?**

Massachusetts transit agencies report miles of transit service through NTD. Massachusetts does not currently report vanpool miles through NTD, but is interested in doing so in the future.

- 7. Does the Safe Routes program also have SchoolPool matching?**

Since federal Safe Routes to School funding is targeted exclusively to bicycling and walking initiatives, the Massachusetts Safe to School program shares that focus. That said, MassRIDES can provide ridematching for schools with its current ridematching system and expects to continue providing ridematching for schools with any new system.

- 8. How many registrants used an Emergency Ride Home in the current term? Since each participant can use the program up to four times a year - when does the annual cycle restart (January each year or some other month)?**

Emergency Ride Home participants renew annually in January. MassRIDES financed about 30 emergency trips home January – October 2009.

- 9. Do you have a budget in mind? I understand if you do not want to reveal an exact figure but could a range or cap be provided as a guide? (e.g. is this \$10,000, \$50,000, \$100,000, \$200,000?)**

The preferred proposal will be cost-effective and offer the best value to achieve the ridematching system's goals and support required system features. The projected budget for this project, over a three-year period, is \$200,000 - \$300,000.

- 10. Is there a defined budget for this project and if so please can you disclose what it is?**

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- 11. The RFP states "innovation in financing." Does this mean pay-for-performance pricing and other non-traditional forms of pricing will be considered?**

Massachusetts is interested in a wide range of approaches to ridematching, including financing innovation. Non-traditional pricing proposals will be considered, although MassRIDES reserves the right to request more traditional pricing options from prospective vendors.

- 12. Could you please describe in greater detail what is meant by funding options in the following statement: "Cost/best value -Financial model/budget should represent fair and accurate costs and funding options that provide maximum value for the proposed service."**

If a proposal includes revenue sources, that should be reflected in the budget.

- 13. Also, in regards to references on p.2 to submitting a budget and financial plan above the bullets. In the actual bullets, only a Budget is requested. Could you please clarify what is required?**

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- 14. What is the project completion date that you're aiming for, i.e. when the new website should go live?**

Target launch date is April 1, 2010.

- 15. Please clarify desired implementation schedule go-live date.**

Target launch date is April 1, 2010.

- 16. Event ridematching is specified – please can you provide examples of events which you think would be suited to the MassRIDES program. Who would have responsibility for defining an event?**

MassRIDES will accept suggestions for proposed special events from users, setting up for ridematching those that meet established criteria for size and frequency. Examples include sporting events, concerts, and conferences.

- 17. Must ridematching be constrained to Massachusetts? Or can rides from, say, Nashua NH to Boston or Springfield to Hartford CT be permitted/ desirable? required?**

MassRIDES provides ridematching for trips with either an origin or destination within the Commonwealth.

18. Please could you provide an example of the data currently maintained for the 15,000+ existing users?

Data includes:

- Name, home mailing address, home phone, email
- Mailing address (if different from home mailing address)
- Employer, work address, work phone
- Language preference (English, Spanish)
- Time arriving at/departing from work
- Arrival/departure time flexibility (15 minute increments)
- Current mode
- ERH registration
- In which mode traveler is most interested

19. Will vanpool management services be required or only vanpooling matching through the rideshare program to existing vans?

MassRIDES considers both vanpool matching and management services essential.

20. What format will legacy data be provided in? (e.g. relational database, excel, etc.)

Excel or Access.

21. How many attendees from the MassRIDES and TMAs are expected to be present at the two on-site workshops?

While it is difficult to predict, we estimate up to ten attendees at each session.

22. Are hardcopy or electronic admin manuals required as part of the training?

MassRIDES prefers electronic manuals.

23. Please elaborate on the current and planned incentive program.

No incentive program is currently in place. Specific mode incentives or “cash for commuter” multi-modal incentives are possible in the future.

24. To display data from existing sites inside the statewide solution - both the existing site and the new system developed for MassRIDES need to support integration. While the solution developed for MassRIDES could be built to integrate - most ridesharing systems do not support integration. Does any existing system in operation locally in the Massachusetts area support integration?

Massachusetts is interested in moving in this direction. Current systems in operation locally do not yet support integration.

25. Can a list be furnished of approved Ridesharing Organizations that are deemed credible for integration into the open platform? And are there any prior understandings with these organizations to allow MassRIDES & subcontractors to display the data?

Massachusetts will make decisions on approved/credible ridesharing organizations in the future. No understandings are currently in place with any of these organizations.

26. The System features section refers to “search and display results from the data of existing online commercial ridematching databases:” Please can you confirm which vendors/systems are currently used. Please also confirm whether

MassRIDES will be responsible for arranging access (business & legal, not technical) to such databases. Will such arrangements require reciprocal sharing of data with these other services?

A few TMAs have been using commercially available systems (i.e. RideShark and VivaCommute), but will no longer do so when they migrate to the statewide system. MassRIDES is not aware of any other publicly-sponsored systems currently operating in the Commonwealth. Any system on the internet is available to anyone in the state. Massachusetts will take the lead in arranging access to databases. Specific data sharing arrangements will be determined through negotiation with external ridematching systems. However, it is our desire to protect the data of the state-sponsored MassRIDES ridematching participant to the highest degree possible. The ridematching system should be flexible enough to allow different data-sharing approaches with external systems, including ideally an “opt-in” arrangement where data-sharing with external systems is done on a single-user basis, upon receiving that user’s permission to share the data.

27. Does MassRIDES have agreements in place with other commercial rideshare vendors which will allow us access to their systems?

No agreements are currently in place.

28. And if so, does MassRIDES currently have APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) to these commercial rideshare databases?

MassRIDES does not have APIs to these databases.

29. Does your current system allow access into alternative regional and employer-based rideshare systems in Massachusetts and find matches for those enrolled in the MassRIDES system? If so, please describe how this matching occurs with proprietary systems?

The current systems does not allow access into alternative rideshare systems; Massachusetts is interested in moving in that direction.

30. Is it acceptable to only offer a clearinghouse system for matches to systems outside of MassRIDES if approval is granted from other vendors? If no approval is granted, this option would be unavailable or is a public option through an existing search engine acceptable?

Massachusetts is interested in respondents’ proposals on how to search and display results from the data of existing online, commercial ridematching databases. Alternative approaches are welcome and will be considered, but the bidder must be able to explain how data would be shared and accessed.

31. Please elaborate on the integration aspect of the ridesharing program within the existing MassRIDES website. Is this primarily to make the look of the rideshare system match that of the MassRIDES website or will there also be data exchange required between multiple applications?

MassRIDES envisions its website serving as a portal to the ridematching system without the need for data exchange with the MassRIDES website.