

A Report to the Maryland General Assembly

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

and

House Health and Government Operations Committee

regarding

A Study on the use and cost for placing public announcements of solicitations of interest for transportation architectural and engineering services in the Daily Record and other print media.

(2016 Senate Bill 310, page 8)

MSAR #11245

November 2017

Cost and Use of Print Media in Architectural and Engineering Solicitations (Senate Bill 310)

Introduction

This document was prepared in accordance with the requirements of Senate Bill 310, 2017. Senate Bill 310 required further analysis of the use of print media in the advertising of Architectural and Engineering Solicitations, specifically:

- *SECTION 3, AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That on or before December 1, 2017 the Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Press Association, shall:*
 - (1) *Study the use and cost for placing public announcements of solicitations of interest for transportation Architectural and Engineering services in the Daily Record and other print publications and whether to amend the Code of Maryland Regulation 21.12.02.10A and:*
 - (2) *Report to the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee, in accordance with 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on the findings of the study conducted under item (1) of this section.*

The survey attached provides information related to how individuals interested in transportation Architectural and Engineering (A/E) services currently receive their information and how they would prefer to receive it in the future.

The Governor's Commission to Modernize State Procurement initially proposed eliminating the requirement to advertise opportunities in print media. A Commission work group randomly surveyed A/E vendors during the course of the Commission's work and found that they generally preferred receiving notification via electronic means. The Department of Transportation spent \$113,376 on print media advertisements in FY 15, \$52,601 in FY 16, and \$33,979 in FY 17. Providing notifications exclusively through electronic means was viewed by some as an opportunity to save money for Maryland taxpayers. When the Administration put forward legislation related to the Commission findings, Senate Bill 310 required that a survey be conducted of market desire and costs of continued print media advertisements.

Summary of Work

The Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Press Association (MDDC) developed an online survey to capture relevant data. The survey was active from 11/4/2017 to 11/12/2017. The survey was sent to all A/E vendors registered on eMaryland Marketplace (eMM) and to the American Council of Engineering

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Companies (ACEC) for distribution to their membership and partners. The Daily Record was also given an opportunity to run advertisements pointing Daily Record customers to the survey.

The survey requested that participants answer relevant questions related to how they currently receive notification, how they prefer to receive notification and how easy it is to utilize existing tools. The survey also included text boxes for clarification.

Results

Valuable feedback was received through the survey which MDOT can use to enhance their communication. The results indicate that the vast majority of A/E vendors would prefer to receive their notice electronically.

The first question sought to determine who was interested in how the Department of Transportation solicited responses to A/E contract opportunities. There were sixty-five (65) responses to the survey, of which sixty-one (61) or 93.85% were A/E vendors, and four (4) or 6.15% were other respondents.

Respondents were asked how they currently stay informed about upcoming opportunities. Fifty-five (55) or 85% noted 'e-Maryland Marketplace', thirty-two (32) or 49% indicated and 'MDOT Website', twelve (12) or 18% said 'Other', and eight (8) or 12% said the 'Daily Record'. Respondents were permitted to pick more than one means. The State's e-bidding tool, e-Maryland Market Place was clearly the most used tool.

The respondents were also asked to rate the search capability of The Daily Record, e-Maryland Marketplace, and the MDOT Website. This would only apply to the online version of The Daily Record, not the print version. On a five (5) point scale, with (1) being not very effective and five (5) being very effective, The MDOT Website received the highest score at 3.58, followed closely by e-Maryland Marketplace with a 3.53, and finally by The Daily Record with a 2.72.

The final question requested respondents indicate how they would prefer to receive notification in the future. There were fifty-eight (58) respondents who virtually unanimously indicated that they prefer electronic notification. While no one system was preferred, the State's e-Maryland Marketplace currently provides an electronic view and email notification. Based on these survey results, The Maryland Department of Transportation finds a clear preference for electronic notification and that the requirement for print advertising of A/E procurements is unnecessary.