



Maryland
Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of Marketing, Animal Industries, Consumer Services & Maryland Horse Industry Board



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December 16, 2013

Dear *[name of econ. dev. officer]*

The Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) are seeking government-owned properties with existing equine facilities to incorporate into a multi-site Maryland Horse Park System.

Given economic conditions and existing equine-related venues in Maryland, MHIB and MDA, working in conjunction with the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) as consultants, have proposed a multi-site horse park system to accommodate a variety of programmatic elements and to attract various types of equestrian activity.

By developing, packaging and marketing these multi-site facilities into a statewide network, MHIB hopes to maximize awareness, growth and the economic value of the Maryland Horse Experience.

Pursuing a multi-site system of venues, similar to the Maryland park system, will serve to make the facilities accessible throughout Maryland, broaden the associated economic impact, allow for the maximization of existing assets, and expedite the development process.

Please read the attached REQUEST FOR INTEREST (RFI) carefully and respond no later than 5:00 PM local time on FEBRUARY 14, 2014 if you think a facility in your area meets the site criteria listed in this proposal and would like to participate in this project. Please feel free to forward this information to appropriate personnel who you feel might be interested and would like to respond.

MHIB, MDA and MSA will be evaluating each location and will select up to five sites to include in the initial development of the Maryland Horse Park System.

This RFI is intended to identify sites to serve as the larger event/educational venues to augment a variety of smaller riding/educational centers that will ultimately also be part of a broader network.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact Ross Peddicord, MHIB Executive Director and project manager for the Maryland Horse Park System, at ross.peddicord@maryland.gov or phone 410-841-5798.

Yours sincerely,

James B. Steele
Chairman, Maryland Horse Industry Board
www.mda.maryland.gov/horseboard



Maryland Horse Park System 2014

Request For Interest

CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY

Project Background

In May 2005, the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA), in conjunction with the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) and the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB), which is a division of the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), conducted a comprehensive feasibility study for a proposed new Maryland Horse Park and Agricultural Education Center (horse park) in Maryland. The study effort included a statewide site selection process, a market analysis, master planning, development cost estimating and an economic analysis. Input was obtained from diverse stakeholders throughout the entire study process.

At that time, the primary goals of the proposed horse park were to provide facilities that serve area residents; enhance the State's tourism appeal by attracting visitors with a unique product; promote business activities related to the equine/agriculture industry; encourage maintenance of open space; create a model for environmental sensitivity and land conservation; foster educational opportunities on multiple levels; and generate incremental new economic activity to the local and State economies.

Initial plans envisioned development of one horse park to attract national and international non-racing competitions, including show jumping, eventing, driving, dressage, western riding and steeplechase. The horse park was also expected to host other equestrian events such as auctions, professional horseman demonstrations, breed demonstrations, trail riding, jousting, rodeo and 4-H activities for all levels of skill and interest.

Given the anticipated level and diversity of event activity, the building program included an indoor arena, an outdoor stadium, show rings, horse auction pavilion, horse/livestock barns, various competition and leisure courses (e.g., steeplechase, carriage, cross-country, and trail system), recreational vehicle (RV)/trailer parking with full-service hook-ups as well as both support elements (e.g., service/maintenance buildings, feed/hay/bedding storage) and visitor elements (e.g. retail shop, banquet facilities, visitors center/museum).

A selection committee, consisting of seven members who represented the three agencies, solicited property nominations from all the counties and municipalities in the State of Maryland. Initially six jurisdictions submitted proposals. A comprehensive site selection process was completed which evaluated potential sites on a variety of objective factors including, but not limited to, their ability to adequately accommodate the programmatic needs of the facility and to generate economic and fiscal impacts for the local and State economies.

The US Naval Academy Dairy Farm (USNA Dairy Farm) site in Gambrills was unanimously selected by the committee for the study. The 875-acre site was a strong choice given its ability to adequately accommodate the program elements and future expansion, excellent vehicular and air accessibility, strategic geographic location within the State and the region, and proximity to hotels, restaurants, major tourist attractions and other visitor support services that would allow it to generate significant economic and fiscal impacts to local and State economies. Subsequent to completion of the feasibility study, local opposition to the proposed development site and the ensuing economic downturn caused the project to stall.

Purpose of the Current Study

Based on input from more than 300 horse industry leaders and professionals at the Maryland Horse Summit in August 2009 and as part of their on-going efforts to develop and promote the State's horse industry, the MDA and the MHIB approached the MSA about re-visiting the horse park initiative.

Given this backdrop, the MSA retained Crossroads Consulting Services LLC and Populous in 2013 to prepare an industry status memorandum that commented on the overall viability of the proposed horse park concept based on research and analysis conducted in the previous study and recent industry trends. That updated research and analysis suggests that the proposed horse park remains a viable development project for the State to further evaluate. The proposed horse park has the potential to:

- Provide a unique year-round attraction that appeals to residents of and visitors to the State
- Accommodate a diverse set of equine and non-equine demand generators at all levels and skill sets (e.g., competitive, recreational, instructional, educational, etc.)
- Preserve open space as well as create a model for environmental sensitivity and land conservation
- Support the broader equine, agriculture, and agri-tourism industries by providing opportunities for increased commerce related activities
- Augment and further cultivate existing research and educational initiatives at all levels
- Serve as a tourism and economic generator that positively impacts local and State economies through incremental new visitor and business spending
- Attract private sector investment

Given economic conditions and existing equine-related venues in Maryland, the MSA and MHIB have proposed a multi-site horse park system to accommodate the variety of programmatic elements and

attract various types of equestrian activity. Pursuing a multi-site system of venues will serve to make the facilities accessible throughout Maryland, broaden the associated economic impact, allow for the maximization of existing assets, and hasten the development process.

Maryland Horse Park System Mission Statement

The MHIB has established the following mission statement for the Maryland Horse Park System:

Develop Maryland's equine infrastructure to maximize awareness, growth and economic value of the State's horse industry.

This mission is envisioned to be accomplished by the following objectives:

- Improving and maximizing utilization of public venues with existing equine facilities.
- Generating additional events, visitors and associated economic and fiscal benefits.
- Programming the public facilities to complement the broad educational and commercial interests of the State's horse industry.
- Co-branding and marketing of public and interested private facilities to provide a uniform image and experience.

As part of the on-going development planning process, MHIB and MDA are seeking nominations from existing public equine facilities interested in accommodating one of the three primary venue types planned for the Maryland Horse Park System:

- Equestrian Show/Expo Venue
- Equestrian Field Event Venue
- Equestrian Education and Culture Venue

Aside from these primary venues it is anticipated that a variety of interested smaller riding/educational centers will ultimately be part of the broader Maryland Horse Park System as "Certified Equine Experience Centers". The objective of this network of grassroots level facilities is to introduce new and develop existing equestrians to foster the continued growth of the equine industry throughout Maryland.

The purpose of this RFI is to identify potential sites to serve as the larger event/educational venues to augment the grassroots effort.

Site Criteria for Each Primary Venue Type Planned for the Maryland Horse Park System

This section outlines the minimum site criteria for each of the three primary venue types.

Equestrian Show/Expo Venue Minimum Site Criteria

- Existing equestrian venue with established State, regional and/or national event activity
- Minimum of 75 buildable acres or potential to expand to adjacent property(s) sufficient to accommodate a critical mass of program elements including show/event/educational facilities, parking, and support buildings
- Existing program elements including at least one indoor show arena, covered/outdoor arenas, permanent horse stalls and supporting site infrastructure.
- Accessibility

- Proximity to patron amenities and services (i.e., hotels, restaurants, retail establishments, etc.)

Equestrian Field Event Venue Minimum Site Criteria

- Existing equestrian venue with established State, regional and/or national event activity
- Minimum of 400 acres or potential to expand to adjacent property(s) sufficient to accommodate a critical mass of program elements including outdoor arenas, event stabling, trailer parking, cross-country courses, combined driving courses, steeplechase, and endurance courses
- Existing program elements including parking and field event venues
- Accessibility
- Proximity to patron amenities and services (i.e., hotels, restaurants, retail establishments, etc.)

Equestrian Education and Culture Venue Minimum Site Criteria

- Existing rural education/experience venue with established programs and visitation
- Minimum of 10 acres or potential to expand to adjacent property(s) sufficient to accommodate an equestrian education and culture center which may include stabling, outdoor arenas, horse pastures/paddocks, visitor's center, museum and other elements
- Existing program elements including visitor's center, education facilities, offices, visitor services and site infrastructure
- Accessibility
- Proximity to patron amenities and services (i.e., hotels, restaurants, retail establishments, etc.)

Nomination

In order to nominate a site, please address each of the following in separate enumerated sections:

1. Detailed description of the property to be nominated including:
 - a. Total acreage with documentation defining the property lines
 - b. A survey or a site map drawn to scale that serves as a base plan for further assessment including property lines, setbacks, easements, etc.
 - c. List of existing assets including quantities/sizes (e.g., show rings, stalls, RV sites, courses, trails, concessions/catering facilities, visitors center, meeting/banquet facilities, business offices, parking, etc.)
 - d. A minimum of four exterior photos and four interior photos for each existing building as well as photos of outdoor arenas, round pens, parking and the overall site
 - e. Existing infrastructure
 - f. Potential for expansion
2. Describe the present ownership of the property.
3. Existing master plan or planned improvements/expansions.
4. Describe how the site is envisioned to meet one of the three venue types of the Maryland Horse Park System and how it could contribute to fulfilling its overall mission. Note any established equine-

related market niches and/or recurring event activity. Describe how the nominated venue/property is envisioned to be part of a broader Maryland Horse Park System.

5. List of existing annual event activity delineating local, State, regional/national events and attendance.
 - a. Note any long-term relationships with State, regional or national equine organizations.
 - b. Note any self-promoted event activity.
6. Local public and/or private funding that may be available for the project.
7. Zoning or other title issues that would limit or restrict use of all or some of the property being nominated for the project, as well as nominator's plan for resolving such issues including anticipated timeline.
8. Describe any and all local approvals that are or may be pre-requisite to the use of the nominated property and/or local funding.
9. Plans to garner public support for the project.
10. Accessibility/traffic issues.
11. Environmental or historic considerations relating to the property.
12. Miles from interstate highway and commercial airport.
13. Miles from critical mass of guest services including hotels, restaurants, retail establishments.

General Information

All inquiries or correspondence relative to this RFI should be directed to:

Ross Peddicord
Executive Director – Maryland Horse Industry Board
Project Manager – Maryland Horse Park System
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
Telephone: 410-841-5798
Email: ross.peddicord@maryland.gov

The deadline for clarifications/questions to be submitted is **Friday, January 17, 2014 at 5:00 P.M.** local time.

RFI Submittal and Evaluation Process

The MHIB, MDA and MSA will review the information provided in the RFI submittals including the ability to meet the minimum site criteria outlined in this RFI and select up to five sites for further review and potential inclusion in the initial development of the Maryland Horse Park System. Additional sites that have been cited in a response to this RFI could be subject to further study and inclusion.

To acknowledge your intent to participate in this RFI process, please send an email **no later than 5 PM local time on Friday, January 10, 2014**, to ross.peddicord@maryland.gov that includes your site location along with the name, address, telephone number and email address for the current authorized Primary Contact.

A response to the RFI should be submitted and received by 5:00 PM local time on Friday, February 14, 2014. Responses received after this date will not be accepted and no submittals will be accepted by fax. Entities responding to this RFI must submit either three hard copies and any supporting documents such as maps, graphs or pictures electronically in PDF format or one digitally signed electronic copy by the designated due date to:

Hard Copies

Ross Peddicord
Executive Director – Maryland Horse Industry Board
Project Manager – Maryland Horse Park System
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

Digital Copies

Ross Peddicord
Executive Director – Maryland Horse Industry Board
Project Manager – Maryland Horse Park System
Email: ross.peddicord@maryland.gov

Respondents to this RFI may withdraw or modify their proposal prior to the deadline established for the receipt of the submittals (February 14, 2014) providing the request for withdrawal is made in writing to the same address.

The submittal will become the property of the MHIB, MDA, and MSA which will then review the responses. The MHIB, MDA and MSA reserve the right to require telephone and/or on-site personal interviews with each entity submitting a response.

The MHIB, MDA, and MSA reserve the right to reject any or all submittals in any order or combination, accept or reject portions of the submittal, make modifications to the work after submission of responses, and waive any formalities in submittals if they deem it is in the best interest of the project to do so, without liability on the part of the MHIB, MDA, and MSA.

Key Milestone Dates

December 16, 2013	RFI issued
January 10, 2014	Intent to Respond Response Due
January 17, 2014	Deadline for Submitting Clarifications/Questions
February 14, 2014	RFI Submittals Due
TBD	Potential Interviews/Presentations, If Required
TBD	Selection of Site Locations