

ABM Site Still Being Discussed

North Dakota officials met this week with two leading defense industry corporations who hope to win the contract for the ground-based anti-ballistic missile interceptor scheduled to be built in North Dakota.

If constructed, the project could bring billions of dollars in revenue to the state.

Mick Bohn, state Economic Development and Finance director, and other state leaders met with representatives of Martin Marietta and Lockheed Corp. recently in Grand Forks and Bismarck. The two corporations comprise one of three teams who hope to become prime contractors for the Defense Department's Strategic Defense Initiative project which has a 1993 budget of between \$3 - \$4 billion.

The Department of Defense is expected to release its official "request for proposal" from prime contractors within the next few days, according to Bohn. Once the RFP is released, contractors have 60 days to respond.

The project would be built in northeastern North Dakota near Nekoma. That site, according to Bohn, is the only location allowed under a treaty between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union.

"We have been monitoring the

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progress of the SDI program for the last six months," Bohn said. "It now appears that the ground-based portion of the SDI is moving into active development.

"The Martin Marietta/ Lockheed team is visiting North Dakota as part of their preparation to submit a formal bid proposal.

"Estimates for complete development, deployment and operating costs for the ground-based interceptor system over the next 15 years range from a low of \$15 billion to a high of \$25 billion," Bohn said.

North Dakota businesses could capture a share of that cost through subcontracting opportunities," Bohn said.

But if North Dakota businesses want to win those subcontracts, they must begin preparing capability statements for the prime contractors," he said.

Capability statements describe and define a business's ability to perform specific jobs, but also document a firm's technical expertise, professional experience, quality assurance programs, financial capacity and accounting techniques.

"Extreme care must be taken to respond to every requirement in the exact detail called for within the capability profiles," said Bohn. "It must be written to convey that your firm clearly possesses the necessary resources to perform the contract."

Bohn noted that firms interested in becoming subcontractors and receiving help completing the profiles are encouraged to attend a statewide conference and trade fair sponsored by EDF and High Plains SADBOC - Small and Disadvantaged Business Opportunity Committee.

The SADBOC conference, set for Oct. 6 at the Radisson in Bismarck, will address national missile defense subcontracting and feature Dr. James Carlson, deputy of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, according to Bob Elsas, SBA procurement analyst and SADBOC chairman.

For more information and to register for the conference contact EDF at 221-5300.

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