

North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Application Information Packet

Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs Call for Projects

Applications due:
November 18, 2011

2011

IMPORTANT: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds require a high degree of dedication to detail and reporting, along with very specific requirements. If you are unfamiliar with FTA regulations and grant management requirements or have not received FTA funds in the past, please review the documents associated with this Call for Projects to determine if your agency is willing, and has the institutional capacity, to comply with the required terms and conditions.

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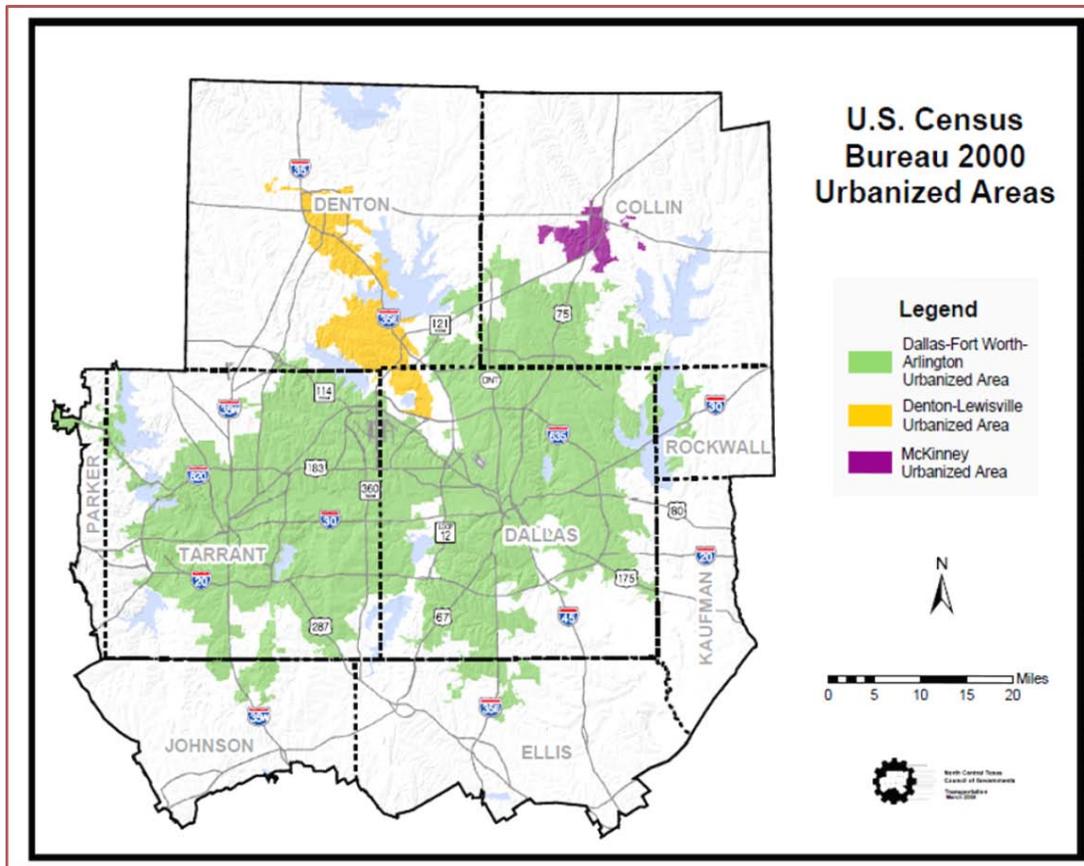
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INTRODUCTION

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is conducting a competitive Call for Projects to award Federal Transit Administration Job Access/Reverse Commute (49 U.S.C. §5316) and New Freedom (49 U.S.C. §5317) funding. Over \$5.3 million in Job Access/Reverse Commute and \$2.9 million in New Freedom Program funding is available for award.

Funds are available for eligible projects within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area that focus on the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington or Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas. A map is provided below for reference.



BACKGROUND

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Pub. L. 109-59), commonly referred to as SAFETEA-LU, authorized two innovative federal programs to be administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that provide funding to support enhanced public transportation services:

The **Job Access/Reverse Commute Program** supports public transit projects designed to transport low-income individuals to and from employment and employment-related activities; as well as residents of urban, rural and suburban areas to suburban employment opportunities.

The **New Freedom Program** supports new public transit services and public transit facility improvements that address the mobility needs of individuals with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

This Call for Projects is to award fiscal years 2010 and 2011 Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom funds apportioned to the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Denton-Lewisville urbanized areas. In the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington (DFWA) Urbanized Area, approximately \$5.1 million in JA/RC and \$2.8 million in New Freedom funds are available for award. Approximately \$213,300 in JA/RC and \$127,800 in New Freedom funds are available for award in the Denton-Lewisville (DL) Urbanized Area. The table below provides a summary of funding available by urbanized area.

FY	Job Access/Reverse Commute		New Freedom	
	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	Denton-Lewisville	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	Denton-Lewisville
2010	\$2,547,015	\$106,753	\$1,385,666	\$63,757
2011	\$2,543,184	\$106,592	\$1,392,823	\$64,086
Total	\$5,090,199	\$213,345	\$2,778,489	\$127,843

Funds available to small urbanized areas (e.g., McKinney) and non-urbanized areas are administered by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). TxDOT conducts its Coordinated Call for Projects to award these funds, which opened August 5, 2011, and closes to applications on December 1, 2011. Additional information may be obtained on TxDOT's website at http://www.txdot.gov/business/governments/grants/public_transportation.htm.

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

The Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs are competitive grant programs. The three (3) categories of eligible recipients include:

1. Private non-profit organizations;
2. State or local governmental authorities; and
3. Operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation services.

Applicants may include local government agencies, social service agencies, tribal governments, public transit operators, non-profit organizations, and regional transportation planning agencies.

A non-profit organization is a corporation or association determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described by 26 U.S.C. §501(c) which is exempt from taxation under 26 U.S.C. §501(a) or one which has been determined under State law to be non-profit. Documentation certifying the status of the non-profit organization must be submitted as part of the application process.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Funding under the two programs is limited, and as such is intended to be used to pilot new and innovative solutions to address the unmet transportation needs of individuals with disabilities and/or limited incomes. NCTCOG encourages pilot projects that demonstrate a new or innovative idea that leverages funding and other resources, encourages coordination among public and private sector partners, and can be replicated throughout the region. Applicants should consider long-term sustainability and identify potential funding sources for continuing the project beyond the grant period.

To be eligible for funding, project activities must meet the Job Access/Reverse Commute or New Freedom program goals and also address the goals, policies, or strategies identified in the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. Please reference the appendices listed below for detailed information and guidance.

- **Appendix A** contains a comprehensive summary of the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program, including program goals, statutory authority, and eligible activities.
- **Appendix B** contains a comprehensive summary of the New Freedom Program, including program goal, statutory authority, and eligible activities.
- **Appendix C** contains a summary of the goals, policies, and strategies identified in the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. A complete copy of the Plan can be found on NCTCOG's website at www.nctcog.org/jarc.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

Job Access/Reverse Commute funds may be used to finance capital, planning, and operating expenses. New Freedom funds may be used to finance capital and operating expenses.

Federal match requirements are determined according to the type of expenditure funded.

The federal share of eligible capital and planning costs may not exceed 80 percent of the net cost of the activity. The federal share of eligible operating costs may not exceed 50 percent of the net cost of the activity. All of the local match share must be provided from sources other than federal Department of Transportation (DOT) funds. Some examples of potential sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share include: State or local apportionments; other non-DOT federal funds; dedicated tax revenues; private donations; revenue from human service contracts; and net income generated from advertising and concessions.

Other federal, non-DOT funds may be used for local match when transportation is an allowable expense under the given program. Examples of types of programs that are potential sources of local match include: employment training, aging, community services, vocational rehabilitation services, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). To be eligible as match to FTA funds, the other federal funds must be used for activities included in the total net project costs of the FTA grant. Expenditures of other federal funds for transportation outside of the scope of the project cannot be applied as a credit for local match in the FTA grant.

- **Appendix D** contains information on reimbursement rates determined by whether funds are utilized for operating, capital or planning.
- **Appendix E** provides information to assist agencies in selecting and determining a budget for vehicle purchases. Please note, however, that vehicle purchases are viewed as a last resort and proposers should coordinate with and utilize existing providers and/or resources to the maximum extent possible.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Projects will be awarded through a competitive selection process. Each project proposal will be screened for completeness and timeliness. Proposals that are deemed incomplete or arrive after the deadline will not be reviewed. Complete proposals received prior to the deadline will undergo a two step screening and evaluation process.

The initial screening process will seek to confirm basic requirements such as agency, program, and project eligibility, as well as consistency with the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. Projects that meet these basic eligibility requirements will be evaluated based on the following scoring matrix:

Needs Assessment	25 points
Implementation, Operations and Sustainability	40 points
Coordination, Collaboration and Partnership	20 points
Overall Strategic Value	<u>15 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points

- **Appendix F** contains more information on the criteria used to evaluate the project as well as a guide to assist in developing the Project Narrative (Section II).

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria above and projects recommended for funding will be brought to the Surface Transportation Technical Committee (STTC) and the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for final approval. Applicants will be notified of the final awards after the Executive Board takes action on recommended project selections, scheduled for March 2012.

NCTCOG is not obligated to fund a proposal from a project sponsor that has demonstrated marginal or unsatisfactory performance on previous grants and/or contracts with NCTCOG or other state agencies. NCTCOG is not obligated to fund a proposal from a project sponsor based on a determination of the risks associated with the project sponsor, including the financial condition of the project sponsor and other risk factors as may be determined by NCTCOG.

NCTCOG may base funding decisions on factors associated with best achieving the goals of the program, and NCTCOG is not obligated to select a project for funding. Additionally, NCTCOG may select parts of a proposal for funding and may offer to fund less than the dollar amount requested in a proposal. NCTCOG reserves the right to not fund every project and reprogram remaining funds for a later call.

Interested applicants are urged to develop projects that involve multiple jurisdictions and/or agencies partnering to provide service over a greater area and to serve a higher number of individuals. This in turn can broaden the impacts of a project and enable a greater number of people to be served more cost effectively than several small projects. Additionally, local matching share of a regional project can be distributed among several partners, allowing agencies to realize the highest impact with less capital invested.

STRATEGIC PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has identified three strategic project focus areas for the 2011 Call for Projects. Project proposals involving **Infrastructure, Technology, and Leveraged Resources** are believed to maximize existing resources and funding, generally have an extended useful life and can be implemented within a short period of time. Staff highly encourages the submission of projects that involve these strategic focus areas and/or contain some element of infrastructure enhancements, technology advancements and/or leveraged resources.

- **Appendix G** contains examples of eligible activities for the three strategic project focus areas identified.

PRE-PROPOSAL WORKSHOPS

The North Central Texas Council of Governments will hold two pre-proposal workshops for prospective project sponsors to learn more about the Call for Projects and to ask questions about the programs or prospective projects. Project sponsors are strongly encouraged to attend the pre-proposal workshops. The workshops will cover the same information so it is only necessary to attend one. Please RSVP to Therese Bergeon at tbergeon@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9267 for the workshop you plan to attend.

DATE	October 17, 2011	October 18, 2011
TIME	1:30pm to 3:00pm	10:30 am to Noon*
LOCATION	Denton North Branch Library 3020 N. Locust Street Denton, Texas 76209	NCTCOG (Transportation Council Room) 616 Six Flags Drive, Centerpoint Two Arlington, Texas 76011

* If you are unable to attend in person, the October 18 workshop will be broadcast via webinar. To participate in the webinar, please register online at www.nctcog.org/jarc before Noon on Friday, October 14, 2011. The webinar will also be available for viewing after the workshop.

Questions will be taken at the workshops, through email at jkeshav@nctcog.org, or via fax at (817) 640-3028 until Friday, October 21, 2011. Responses to all questions will be posted on the NCTCOG website at www.nctcog.org/jarc no later than Wednesday, October 26, 2011.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Project Submittal Form, as well as other materials related to the Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs Call for Projects may be obtained online at www.nctcog.org/jarc or by contacting Therese Bergeon at tbergeon@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9267.

To be considered for funding under the Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs Call for Projects, project sponsors must complete and submit project proposals to the NCTCOG offices by the submission deadline. Project proposals must consist of one (1) original signed hard copy and one (1) copy in electronic format to be provided on CD or disk in portable document format (PDF). Graphics, such as maps or photographs, should also be submitted as portable document format (PDF) files.

- **Appendix H** contains a checklist to ensure all required documents are included in your proposal.

Project proposals should be submitted to:

Mail:

North Central Texas Council of Governments
Transportation Department
Attn: Jamie Keshav
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

OR

Physical location:

North Central Texas Council of Governments
Transportation Department
Attn: Jamie Keshav
616 Six Flags Drive
Centerpoint Two
Arlington, Texas 76011

Project proposals must be received by 5 pm, Central Daylight Time, on Friday, November 18, 2011. In accordance with the Call for Projects Procedures established by the Regional Transportation Council Bylaws, NCTCOG must have the submitted project proposals “in hand” at the NCTCOG offices by the submission deadline. Proposals that are postmarked, but not received, by the deadline do not constitute an on time submission. In addition, supplemental information will not be accepted after the submission deadline. Project sponsors are encouraged to submit their proposals far enough in advance of the submission deadline to allow NCTCOG staff to review proposals for completeness.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Successful applicants will be notified in writing of their selection and the amount of grant funds awarded. Entities selected to receive grant funding will be required to enter into a contract with the North Central Texas Council of Governments¹. Entities are obligated to fulfill the requirements of the contract, including complying with all Federal Transit Administration requirements, which include, but are not limited to civil rights, procurement, and drug and alcohol testing. In addition, all services or work carried out under a contract awarded as a result of this Call for Projects must be completed within the scope, time frames, and funding limitations specified by the contract. Upon signature and execution of the contract by NCTCOG, a copy of the executed contract will be returned to the applicant.

Grant recipients will be required to submit monthly and/or quarterly information as determined by NCTCOG. Upon execution of the contract, successful applicants will be required to submit Monthly Status Reports to NCTCOG by the 15th of the subsequent month. Reporting may be done by traditional mail or email, as appropriate. Monthly Status Reports shall include: work accomplished and the current status for each project task; work activities anticipated for the following month by task; existing or anticipated problems that may affect the project schedule

¹ Existing designated recipients under the Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307) will submit their JA/RC and/or New Freedom grant application(s) directly to the Federal Transit Administration.

and proposed solutions; and updated project schedule with milestones and deliverables. Forms will be provided to successful applicants as part of their contract.

SCHEDULE

Task	Date
Call for Projects Opens	Friday, October 7, 2011
Pre-Proposal Workshops	Monday, October 17, 2011 and Tuesday, October 18, 2011
Last Day to Submit Questions	Friday, October 21, 2011
Response to Questions Posted to Website	Wednesday, October 26, 2011
Call for Projects Closes	Friday, November 18, 2011
Internal Review and Evaluation	November 2011 – January 2012
Public Meetings	February 2012
Anticipated Regional Transportation Council Action	Thursday, March 8, 2012
Anticipated NCTCOG Executive Board Approval	Thursday, March 22, 2012
Project Awards Announced	Late March 2012
NCTCOG Submits FTA Grant Application	April 2012
Anticipate FTA Approval of NCTCOG Grant Application	July 2012
Anticipate Executing Agreements with Successful Applicants	September 2012

CONTACT INFORMATION

Website:

www.nctcog.org/jarc

NCTCOG Project Staff:

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APPENDIX A.

JOB ACCESS/REVERSE COMMUTE PROGRAM

Program Summary

Program Goals

The Job Access/Reverse Commute (JA/RC) Program supports the development and maintenance of services designed to transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. The Reverse Commute component supports transportation to suburban employment opportunities for any economic group.

Statutory Authority

49 U.S.C. Section 5316

Eligible Recipients

The Job Access/Reverse Commute Program is a competitive grant program. There are three (3) categories of eligible recipients:

1. Private non-profit organizations;
2. State or local governmental authorities; and
3. Operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation services.

Applicants may include local government agencies, social service agencies, tribal governments, private and public transit operators, non-profit organizations, and regional transportation planning agencies.

Eligible Activities

Job Access/Reverse Commute funds may be applied to the capital, planning, and operating expenses that support the development and maintenance of Job Access and/or Reverse Commute transportation services.

A **Job Access** project provides services that transport low-income individuals – including economically disadvantaged persons with disabilities – to and from employment and employment related activities.

A **Reverse Commute** project facilitates the provision of transportation services for the *general public* from urban, suburban, and rural areas to suburban employment.

Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Late-night and weekend service;
- Guaranteed ride home service;
- Shuttle service;
- Expanding fixed-route public transit routes;
- Demand-responsive van service;
- Ridesharing and carpooling activities;
- Transit related aspects of bicycling (such as adding bicycle racks to vehicles to support individuals that bicycle a portion of their commute or providing bicycle storage at transit stations);
- Promotion, through marketing efforts, of the:
 - use of transit by workers with nontraditional work schedules;
 - use of transit vouchers by appropriate agencies for welfare recipients and other low-income individuals

- development of employer-provided transportation such as shuttles, ridesharing, carpooling, or
- use of employer-provided transportation, including the transit pass benefit program under Section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
- Supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs;
- Acquiring Geographical Information System (GIS) tools;
- Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), including customer trip information technology;
- Integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling, and dispatch functions;
- Deploying vehicle position-monitoring systems;
- Subsidizing the costs associated with adding reverse commute bus service, train, carpool, van routes, or service from urbanized areas to suburban workplaces;
- Subsidizing the purchase or lease by a nonprofit organization or public agency of a van or bus dedicated to shuttling employees from their residences to suburban workplaces;
- Otherwise facilitating the provision of public transportation services to suburban employment opportunities; and
- Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human services agencies providing transportation, including but not limited to:
 - The promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low-income individuals;
 - Support for short-term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services;
 - Operation of transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies, and customers;
 - Provision of coordination services, including: employer-oriented Transportation Management Organizations; Human Service Organizations customer-oriented travel navigator systems; and neighborhood travel coordination activities such as coordinating individualized travel training and trip planning activities;
 - Development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on all travel modes and to manage eligibility requirements and arrangements for customers among supporting programs; and
 - Operational planning for the acquisition of intelligent transportation technologies to help plan and operate coordinated systems inclusive of GIS mapping, Global Positioning System technology, coordinated vehicle scheduling, dispatching, and monitoring technologies as well as technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system and single smart customer payment systems.

Matching Requirements

Job Access/Reverse Commute funds may be used to finance capital, planning, and operating expenses. Federal match requirements are determined according to the type of expenditure funded:

- For capital and planning expenses, JA/RC funds may provide up to 80 percent of the cost of the project.
- For operating expenses, JA/RC funds may provide up to 50 percent of the project's net operating cost.

The local share must be provided from sources other than federal Department of Transportation (DOT) funds. Some examples of sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share required include, but are not limited to State or local appropriations; other non-DOT

federal funds; dedicated tax revenues; private donations; revenue from human service contracts; and net income generated from advertising and concessions.

Other federal, non-DOT funds may be used for local match when transportation is an allowable expense under the given program. Examples of types of programs that are potential sources of local match include, but are not limited to, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Employment Training, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Community Services and Administration on Aging. To be eligible for local match for FTA funds, the other non-DOT federal funds must be used for activities included in the total net project costs of the FTA grant. Expenditures of other federal funds for transportation outside of the scope of the project cannot be applied as a credit for local match in the FTA grant.

Planning Requirement

Projects selected for funding under the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. To be considered derived from the regional coordination plan, projects must be consistent with the goals, policies, and/or strategies contained in the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. A summary is provided in Appendix C, with the complete Plan available on NCTCOG's website at www.nctcog.org/jarc.

Other Requirements

The basic grant management requirements for States and local governments are contained in the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments," 49 CFR Part 18. The comparable DOT rule for private non-profit organizations is "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations," 49 CFR Part 19.

Other federal requirements, such as those related to Civil Rights, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Buy America, School Transportation, Lobbying, and Drug and Alcohol Testing apply to JA/RC funded projects. This includes Labor protections required under Title 49 U.S.C. 5333(b).

Resource

Federal Transit Administration, Circular 9050.1: The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program Guidance and Application Instructions, 05/01/07.
http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_C_9050.1_JARC.pdf

Staff Contact

For additional information, or questions on the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program, contact:

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APPENDIX B.

NEW FREEDOM PROGRAM Program Summary

Program Goals

The New Freedom Program seeks to reduce barriers to transportation services and supports new public transit services and public transit facility improvements that expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Statutory Authority

49 U.S.C. Section 5317

Eligible Recipients

The New Freedom Program is a competitive grant program. There are three (3) categories of eligible recipients:

1. Private non-profit organizations;
2. State or local governmental authority; and
3. Operators of public transportation services including private operators of public transportation services.

Applicants may include local government agencies, social service agencies, tribal governments, private and public transit operators, non-profit organizations, and regional transportation planning agencies.

Eligible Activities

New Freedom funds are available for capital and operating expenses that support new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the ADA designed to assist individuals with disabilities with accessing transportation services, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services.

For the purposes of the new Freedom Program, “new” services is any service or activity that was not operational as of August 10, 2005, and did not have an identified funding source as of August 10, 2005, as evidenced by inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). In other words, if not for the New Freedom Program, these projects would not have consideration for funding and proposed service enhancements would not be available for individuals with disabilities.

Both new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives are required to go beyond the requirements of the ADA and must:

1. be targeted toward individuals with disabilities; and
2. meet the intent of the program by removing barriers to transportation and assisting persons with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment services.

Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative solutions to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in their communities. Detailed information is provided below:

Paratransit Enhancements

ADA complementary paratransit services can be eligible under the New Freedom Program in several ways, as long as the services provided meet the definition of “new.” Examples of eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Expansion of paratransit service parameters beyond the three-fourths mile required by the ADA;
- Expansion of current hours of operation for ADA paratransit services that are beyond those provided on the fixed-route services;
- Incremental cost of providing same day service;
- Incremental cost of making door-to-door service available to all eligible ADA paratransit riders (but not as a reasonable modification for individual riders in an otherwise curb-to-curb system);
- Enhancement of the level of service by providing escorts or assisting riders through the door of their destination;
- Acquisition of vehicles and equipment designed to accommodate mobility aids that exceed the dimensions and weight ratings established for common wheelchairs under the ADA and labor costs of aides to help drivers assist passengers with over-sized wheelchairs; and
- Installation of additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by ADA.

New Public Transportation Services Beyond the ADA

The following activities are examples of eligible projects meeting the definition of new public transportation:

- Feeder Services - New “feeder” service to commuter rail, commuter bus, intercity rail, and intercity bus stations, for which complementary paratransit services is not required under the ADA.
- Accessibility Improvements - Improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations and not required as part of an alteration or renovation to an existing stations, so long as the projects are clearly intended to remove barriers that would otherwise have remained. New Freedom funds are eligible to be used for new accessibility enhancements that remove barriers to individuals with disabilities so they may access greater portions of public transportation systems, such as fixed-route bus service, commuter rail, light rail, and rapid rail. This may include:
 - Building an accessible path to a bus stop that is currently inaccessible, including curb cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features;
 - Adding a ramp, detectable warnings, or other accessibility improvements to a non-key station that are not otherwise required under the ADA;
 - Improving signage, or wayfinding technology; or
 - Implementation of other technology improvements that enhance accessibility for individuals with disabilities including Intelligent Transportation System (ITS).
- Travel Training – New training programs for individual users on awareness, knowledge, and skills of public and alternative transportation options available in their communities. This includes travel instruction and travel training services.

New Public Transportation Alternatives Beyond the ADA

The following activities are examples of projects that are eligible as new public transportation alternatives beyond the ADA under the New Freedom Program:

- Accessible Vehicles - Purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, ride sharing, and/or vanpooling programs.
- New Voucher Programs - Supporting the administration and expenses related to new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.

- Volunteer Driver Programs - Supporting volunteer driver and aide programs that meet the requirements of both “new” and “beyond the ADA”.
- Mobility Management - Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation, including but not limited to:
 - Promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low-income individuals;
 - Support for short-term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services;
 - Operation of brokerages to coordinate providers, funding, agencies, and customers;
 - Provision of coordination services, including employer-oriented Transportation Management Organizations and Human Service Organizations customer-oriented travel navigator systems and neighborhood travel coordination activities such as coordinating individualized travel training and trip planning activities for customers;
 - Development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on all travel modes and to manage eligibility requirements and arrangements for customers among supporting programs; and
 - Operational planning for the acquisition of intelligent transportation technologies to help plan and operate coordinated systems inclusive of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, Global Positioning System technology, coordinated vehicle scheduling, dispatching, and monitoring technologies as well as technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system and single smart customer payment systems.

Matching Requirements

New Freedom funds may be used to finance capital and operating expenses. Federal match requirements are determined according to the type of expenditure funded.

- The federal share of eligible capital costs may not exceed 80 percent of the net cost of the activity.
- The federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50 percent of the net operating costs of the activity.

All of the local share must be provided from sources other than federal Department of Transportation (DOT) funds. Some examples of sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share include, but are not limited to State or local appropriations; other non-DOT federal funds; dedicated tax revenues; private donations; revenue from human service contracts; and net income generated from advertising and concessions.

Local match may also be derived from other federal programs that are eligible to be expended for transportation, other than funds from DOT programs. Examples of types of programs that are potential sources of local match include, but are not limited to employment training; aging; community services; vocational rehabilitation services; and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). To be eligible for local match for FTA funds, the other non-DOT federal funds must be used for activities included in the total net project costs of the FTA grant. Expenditures of other federal funds for transportation outside of the scope of the project cannot be applied as a credit for local match in the FTA grant.

Planning Requirement

Projects selected for funding under the New Freedom Program must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. To be considered derived from the regional coordination plan, projects must be consistent with the goals, policies, and/or strategies contained in the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. A summary is provided in Appendix C, with the complete Plan available on NCTCOG's website at www.nctcog.org/jarc.

Other Requirements

The basic grant management requirements for States and local governments are contained in the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments," 49 CFR Part 18. The comparable DOT rule for private non-profit organizations is "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations," 49 CFR Part 19.

Other federal requirements, such as those related to Civil Rights, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Buy America, School Transportation, Lobbying, and Drug and Alcohol Testing apply to New Freedom funded projects. Labor protections, required under Title 49 U.S.C. 5333(b), do not apply to grants/recipients under the New Freedom Program.

Resource

Federal Transit Administration, Circular 9045.1: New Freedom Program Guidance and Application Instructions. 05/01/07.

http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_C_9045.1_New_Freedom.pdf

Staff Contact

For additional information, or questions on the New Freedom Program, contact:

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(817) 695-9283

APPENDIX C.

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN Plan Summary

A complete copy of the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan can be found on the NCTCOG website at www.nctcog.org/jarc.

Vision

To have coordinated, efficient, and accessible transportation services in North Central Texas that eliminate waste, promote use by the general public, and are environmentally friendly.

Mission

To develop a regional public transportation plan for North Central Texas that includes short and long-term implementation strategies to move the region towards coordinated, accessible, and efficient public transportation services.

Regional Coordination Goals

- Customer First
- Seamless Services
- Enhanced Communication between Agencies, Providers, and Users
- Education for Agencies, Providers, and Users
- Efficient use of Resources

REGIONAL COORDINATION POLICIES

Communication/Education

- Educate the public regarding available programs and services.
- Improve communication among providers and agencies.
- Improve the flow and consistency of information provided between funding agencies and providers.

Resources

- Maximize the efficient use of transportation resources available in North Central Texas.
- Facilitate the development of common procurement practices throughout the region.
- Leverage traditional and non-traditional transportation funding to expand services across the region.
- Streamline reporting requirements and reduce duplication in grant administration activities.

Seamless Transportation Services

- Work to minimize the impact of boundaries on the delivery of seamless transportation services.
- Encourage uniform definitions and procedures across services and providers to improve mobility.
- Establish policies and procedures that encourage and reward coordination.
- Encourage common technology use among providers.
- Promote innovative projects that utilize multiple funding streams.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
Short - Term Implementation Strategies
Develop a linked system of common transfer points between transit providers.
Develop regionally accepted certification for clients eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (e.g., Regional ADA Pass, Regional ADA Certified Database, etc).
Update Existing Transportation Provider Inventory (TPI) and make more visible on NCTCOG website and link from other transit agency websites.
Create Transportation Provider Inventory (TPI) based "pamphlet" to distribute throughout the region in libraries, community centers, senior centers, workforce centers, etc.
Establish a standing Regional Transit Operations Work Group with smaller subgroups of those "that touch you."
Develop standardized eligibility standards (e.g., definitions of elderly and disabled).
Eliminate idle wait times for providers crossing jurisdictional boundaries by coordinating with other providers (e.g., trips to DFW).
Encourage cost-sharing agreements between providers to transport clients to/from other jurisdictions.
Identify underutilized vehicles that can be shared to increase overall efficiencies.
Encourage regional, rather than local taxi cab certification/registration.
Coordinate rate and fares for similar services.
Medium - Term Implementation Strategies
Develop regional policies to support integrated services across jurisdictional boundaries.
Develop common application/certification process among ADA providers.
Create a GIS-based website to map routes Throughout the region and across jurisdictional boundaries.
Eliminate service gaps both within and between service areas.
Provide service where no service exists or is limited (e.g., expand Job Access).
Coordinate long-term funding to expand service provision (e.g., Medicaid, etc.).
Coordinate alternative fuel requirements for new vehicles (e.g., move to emission-based standards).
Eliminate overlap between service areas.
Develop a common ID card for users.
Establish a coordinated capital asset management plan to centralize vehicle disposition and replacement.
Develop standardized vehicle specifications for suggested use classifications.
Develop a regional customer education program to address how to read schedules, identify the bus, pay the fare, etc.
Develop recommendations for common reservation, scheduling, and dispatch practices throughout the region.
Long - Term Implementation Strategies
Establish a regional point of contact to access transportation services.
Coordinate payment collection, such as by a Universal fare card.

APPENDIX D.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

The Job Access/Reverse Commute (JA/RC) and New Freedom Programs provide several reimbursement rates determined by the category of the expense. The three funding categories are operating, capital and planning. Please keep this in mind when developing your budget.

FUNDING CATEGORIES AND TYPICAL USES
Operating (50% Federal / 50% Local Match*)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salaries and wages (for employees working directly on the project)• Driver Training• Commercial driver's license fees (if applicable)• Fuel• Vehicle inspection and registration fees• Insurance• Office supplies, computer and office equipment (under \$5,000)• Information materials• Drug and alcohol testing (if applicable)• Purchased transportation (contracting for service) <p><u>Note:</u> Operating costs are reduced by fares or other revenue collected by the project.</p>
Capital (80% Federal / 20% Local Match*)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vehicles• Communication equipment• Preventive maintenance (fluid changes, replacement filters, tire rotation, ADA equipment inspection, etc.)• Mobility management activities
Planning (JA/RC only – 80% Federal / 20% Local Match*)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning directly related to the provision of JA/RC services

* Sources for local matching funds may include, but are not limited to:

1. Cash
2. State Grant
3. Federal Grant (non-Department of Transportation)
4. Contract Revenue
5. In-kind

For additional guidance on local matching funds, please reference:

Page III-11 of the Federal Transit Administration JA/RC Program Circular 9050.1:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_C_9050.1_JARC.pdf

Page III-12 of the New Freedom Program Circular 9045.1:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_C_9045.1_New_Freedom.pdf

APPENDIX E.

VEHICLE PURCHASES

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has extensive competitive procurement requirements. These requirements apply to purchases, including vehicle(s), requested through the Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs. In an effort to streamline procurement efforts and ensure compliance with FTA rules and regulations, NCTCOG will competitively procure vehicles on behalf of agencies awarded such funds. If you have questions, concerns or are considering requesting vehicles, please contact James Powell, Senior Transportation Planner, at (817) 695-9283 or jpowell@nctcog.org.

The following information is provided to assist agencies in selecting and determining a budget for vehicle purchases.

Sedan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seating: 4-5 including driver• Fuel: Gasoline or Hybrid• \$20,000 - \$25,000 Gasoline; \$25,000 - \$30,000 Hybrid
Minivan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seating: 3-5 passengers plus 1-2 wheelchairs• Modified low floor with ADA ramp• Fuel: Gasoline• \$39,000 - \$42,000 with manual ramp and doors; \$42,000 - \$45,000 with power ramp and doors
Narrow Body Bus (center aisle with 2 seats on driver's side and 1 seat on curb side)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seating: 7-8 passengers plus 1-2 wheelchairs• Built on a cutaway chassis with ADA power lift (front or rear installation)• 10,700 lb. - 12,300 lb. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating; 138" – 139" wheelbase• Fuel: Gasoline or Diesel• \$50,000 - \$56,000
Wide Body Bus (center aisle with 2 seats on either side)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seating:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Vehicle length less than 22 feet: 8-10 passengers plus 1 wheelchair○ Vehicle length greater than 22 feet: 10-16 passengers plus 2 wheelchairs• Built on a cutaway chassis with ADA power lift (front or rear installation)• 14,050 lb. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating; 158" – 176" wheelbase• Fuel: Gasoline or Diesel• \$60,000 - \$66,000

The JA/RC and New Freedom Programs require that vehicles purchased are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible. A waiver to this requirement may be requested if accessibility across the organization's entire fleet of vehicles is sufficient to meet the needs. Prior to budgeting for a sedan(s), please contact NCTCOG to discuss whether your organization may qualify for a waiver.

When determining the appropriate vehicle to purchase, seating capacity is a major consideration. A simple method to establish appropriate capacity is to determine the lowest and highest number of riders the vehicle is expected to carry at one time and choose a vehicle that is capable of carrying the mid-point or median number of passengers.

APPENDIX F.

PROJECT EVALUATION GUIDE

Section II. Project Narrative

Projects will be evaluated in the following four areas and should respond to the points outlined below.

Needs Assessment

1. The applicant clearly demonstrates how the project need was identified or determined.
2. The project justifies a need/gap and will bring value to a given area or population it serves.
The applicant describes:
 - How the project improves access to local employment centers and work related activities and supports local economic development activities
 - OR
 - How the project will expand the available transportation services for persons with disabilities, including but not limited to access to quality of life activities and local employment centers
3. The project adequately responds to the need by using the most appropriate match of service delivery.
4. Pertinent demographic data and/or maps are included.

Implementation, Operations and Sustainability

1. Service operations and implementation plan:
 - a. The applicant provides a clearly defined service operations and implementation plan.
 - b. A detailed timeline that includes major milestones is included.
 - c. The agency demonstrates operational and technical capability to carry out the proposed project successfully.
 - d. For projects seeking funds to support program operations, a service area and/or route map is included.
 - e. For projects seeking funds for capital purposes, the agency has provided a detailed list of current vehicle fleet and agency fleet plan that describes how maintenance is/will be addressed.
2. Personnel:
 - a. The agency identifies staff implementing the proposed project and provides a summary of their qualifications.
 - b. Information regarding value added by each staff member, specific roles of staff, and time allocated towards project are included.
 - c. The applicant includes job descriptions for new staff persons being hired (if applicable).
 - d. The agency demonstrates institutional capability to carry out the proposed project successfully.
3. Marketing and Outreach:
 - a. Applicant describes what mediums will be used to disseminate information to audiences that can utilize and benefit from service.
 - b. The applicant strategically explores partnerships that can assist in distributing and increasing information about services provided by the proposed project.
4. Budget:
 - a. The proposed project budget is clearly defined and identifies expenses, revenues, and sources of local match.

- b. Supporting documentation for secured local match is included.
 - c. The budget demonstrates the greatest value of service received for the number of persons served.
5. Performance Measures:
- a. The applicant describes how he/she intends to evaluate the success of the project by providing specific performance measures and indicators that will be used to determine project success. The proposed data to be collected is relevant to the specific measures.
 - b. The proposed project demonstrates an efficient use of resources.
 - c. The applicant identifies courses of action if expectations and performance measures are not met.
6. Sustainability:
- a. The applicant demonstrates commitment to project continuation by identifying long term efforts to incorporate processes and plans to sustain the service.
 - b. Options for funding sources beyond grant period are discussed.
 - c. The project proposes and identifies potential partners for collaboration efforts in the future.

Coordination, Collaboration and Partnership

- 1. The proposed project identifies coordination and partnership with other public transportation, community transportation and/or social service agencies.
- 2. The applicant addresses the level of collaboration and engagement of project partners, local stakeholders and the general public.
- 3. Letters of support from key stakeholders are included.
- 4. Project relationship to the Regional Coordination Plan:
(Information regarding the Regional Coordination Plan can be found in Appendix D).
 - a. The applicant demonstrates one or more of the Regional Coordination Goals are being achieved through the proposed project.
 - b. The project takes into account one or more of the Regional Coordination Recommendations by identifying which short, medium or long term implementation strategies are incorporated.
 - c. The project identifies one or more of the Regional Coordination Policies relevant to the project and justifies how the project furthers that policy.

Overall Strategic value

- 1. The project encourages and allows for larger scale coordination and collaboration within the region and amongst agencies in the future.
- 2. The applicant demonstrates coordination efforts above and beyond the minimum required.
- 3. The project is innovative and finds a unique way to address the transportation needs of disadvantaged citizens.
- 4. The proposed project can serve as a model to other agencies and can be replicated around the region.
- 5. The applicant implementing the proposed project has successful experience with similar projects.
- 6. The agency has a secured and documented local cash match commitment for the proposed project.
- 7. The proposed project is ready to be implemented within a short time frame.

APPENDIX G.

STRATEGIC PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has identified three strategic project focus areas for the 2011 Call for Projects:

- Infrastructure
- Technology
- Leveraged Resources

Examples of eligible activities for the above focus areas are listed below. Please note that these project ideas, concepts and models are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative solutions to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and/or limited incomes in their communities by concentrating on the given focus areas:

Infrastructure

- Accessibility improvements to stations (accessible paths such as curb cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals; elevators, ramps, detectable warnings; improved signage and way finding technology)
- Improvements at stops (sidewalks, ramps, shelters, concrete pads, benches, lighting)
- Bicycle enhancements related to transit (bicycle racks to vehicles, bicycle storage at stations)
- Additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by the ADA

Technology

- Acquiring Geographic Information System (GIS) tools
- Vehicle position monitoring systems
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to capture customer trip information, enhance accessibility for individuals with disabilities, improve safety, travel reliability
- Smart card customer payment and technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system
- Integrating information (such as uniform applications and eligibility determination), scheduling and dispatch functions across providers and organizations

Leveraged Resources

- Mobility Management activities
- Guaranteed ride home services
- Demand responsive services
- Ridesharing and carpooling activities
- Transit and taxi voucher programs
- Volunteer driver and mileage reimbursement programs
- ADA complimentary paratransit services (extended hours, same day service, door to door, door through door, escort or rider assistance)

APPENDIX H.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applications are not complete unless one (1) original signed hard copy and one (1) copy in electronic format is provided on CD or disk in portable document format (PDF). Graphics, such as maps or photographs, may also be submitted as portable document format (PDF) files. Incomplete applications may be disqualified from the evaluation.

Applicant Overview (Section I)

Project Narrative (Section II)

Project Budget Sheet (Section III)

Copy of current IRS W-9 Taxpayer Identification Certification Form

Documentation certifying non-profit status (if applicable)

Supplemental demographic data and/or maps

Supporting documents for local match (if applicable)

Letters of Support from project partners or key stakeholders (if applicable)

Job descriptions for new staff positions to be funded (if applicable)

Current Vehicle Fleet List and Fleet Plan (if applicable)