

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

2015 CALL FOR PROJECTS

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) FUNDING
AVAILABLE FOR:

§5307 – URBANIZED AREA FORMULA PROGRAM:

JOB ACCESS/REVERSE COMMUTE PROJECTS ONLY

§5310 - ENHANCED MOBILITY OF SENIORS AND
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM

APPLICATIONS DUE: APRIL 10, 2015

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 FTA Guidance for each program and 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.

1. Who is eligible to apply for Job Access/Reverse Commute and Enhanced Mobility funding?

State and local governments as well as non-profit organizations may apply for new and existing Job Access/Reverse Commute projects. Public transit providers may apply for new Enhanced Mobility projects; while state and local governments, non-profit organizations and private operators of public transportation may apply for both new and existing Enhanced Mobility projects. Please review page 1 on each of the submittal forms for additional clarification.

2. Is the application due on April 10?

Yes, applications are due on April 10th by 5 p.m.

3. Does a project have to be called out in a local (city-wide) plan and the Access North Texas plan?

Projects should support one or more strategies identified in Access North Texas, the coordination plan for our region. It is not necessary for the project to have been identified in a city-wide plan, though it might be advantageous to explain in your proposal that the need has been identified through prior planning efforts if that is the case.

4. Am I eligible to apply for an extension for an existing JA/RC project?

Local governments and non-profit organizations may apply for an extension of an existing JA/RC project. Transit providers can submit funding requests through the annual program of projects process for an extension of an existing JA/RC project.

5. Can transit providers assist local governments and non-profit organizations interested in applying for JA/RC funding?

State and local governments as well as non-profit organizations are highly encouraged to work with existing transit providers when seeking service in their communities or for clients. Preliminary discussions and partnerships should be included in the proposal. While the transit provider may not submit the application, support letters outlining the proposed partnership are encouraged.

6. Can transit authorities request Transportation Development Credits (TDCs)?

Transit authorities may request TDCs. However, it is important to note that the intent of the TDC set-aside is to assist smaller providers. Decisions to award TDCs to transit authorities and other organizations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

7. Do I have to have local matching funds for a project when I request TDCs?

It is recommended that local matching funds be available in the event that TDCs are not awarded. Also, documentation of the local financial investment in the proposed project may be considered as a strength in the evaluation process.

8. What is the match for vehicle purchases?

The federal and local match on vehicles is 85 percent federal and 15 percent local. Projects awarded funds for vehicles must purchase vehicles that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The budget form will automatically calculate the appropriate federal and local portions.

9. I am interested in purchasing one vehicle for my existing program. What do I note in the “list of assumptions” section of the budget?

If the vehicle cost was not determined using Appendix B in the Application Information Packet, discuss how the cost was derived. A discussion on how the quantity and type of vehicle(s) requested was determined may also be helpful in the proposal evaluation process.

10. How many years may I request funds for?

Proposals may request funding for up to 3 years.

11. Is there a maximum or minimum amount of funds I can request?

No, projects of all dollar amounts will be considered.

12. Can I apply for funding in the McKinney UZA?

The North Central Texas Council of Governments does not administer funding for the McKinney UZA. TxDOT’s Public Transportation Division (PTN) makes funds available regularly for the McKinney UZA. Please visit <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/public-transportation/local-assistance.html> for more information.

13. Can you clarify how the funds are competitive but allocations have already been made?

Federal guidance for the Urbanized Area Formula Program and the Enhanced Mobility of Individuals and Seniors with Disabilities Program does not require designated recipients (the designated recipient for urbanized funds in this region is the North Central Texas Council of Governments) to award the funding competitively. However, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has set a policy that allows for both an allocation process and a competitive award process for Job Access/Reverse Commute (JA/RC) projects and Enhanced Mobility projects. For the Urbanized Area Formula Program, 2% of the funds available annually are set-aside to be awarded competitively for JA/RC projects. For the Enhanced Mobility Program, funds are first awarded to public transit providers to ensure they can continue to provide existing levels of service, while the remaining funds are then available to be awarded competitively.

14. What are TDCs? How do you indicate that you want to apply for them in the application?

TDCs, or Transportation Development Credits are a funding tool which is used to leverage federal funding matching requirements. These credits are generated through toll revenues in the area and may count towards the local match on a project. Applicants can request TDCs for capital and planning expenses only by indicating so at the top of the Budget Form in the Budget Workbook.

15. Can existing NCTCOG subgrantees apply for Enhanced Mobility funds?

NCTCOG’s existing subgrantees may request funding for new projects only. Funding requests to continue an existing project should be requested through the annual program of projects process.

16. Is there some opportunity to have existing services reexamined for efficiency with any of these funds?

Planning funds are available through the Urbanized Area Formula Program (for JA/RC projects). Planning funds are not available through the Enhanced Mobility Program.

17. Are camera monitoring systems eligible for funding? Is this considered a capital expense?

Camera systems are eligible for JA/RC and Enhanced Mobility project funds. This would be considered a capital expense, but applicants should explain in the proposal how the project would enhance transportation services for seniors, individuals with disabilities and/or low-income workers.

18. Are sidewalks an eligible expense under the Enhanced Mobility program?

Infrastructure improvements (such as sidewalks or curbcuts) are an eligible expense. The proposed improvement should serve to build an accessible path for seniors and individuals with disabilities to a transit stop, station or other facility that is currently inaccessible.