



**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**

JOB ACCESS/REVERSE COMMUTE

AND

NEW FREEDOM PROGRAM

CALL FOR PROJECTS

April 24, 2009

www.nctcog.org/jarc

IMPORTANT: Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds require a large 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 federal funds in the past, please review the documents associated with this Call for Projects to determine if your agency is willing to accept the terms and conditions required, and has the institutional capacity to comply.

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 \$4.8 million in Job Access/Reverse Commute and \$1.7 million in New Freedom Program funding is available for award. Funds are available for projects within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area that focus on the Denton-Lewisville or Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington urbanized areas. A map is provided for reference in [Appendix A](#).

BACKGROUND

In August 2005, the President signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users (Pub. L. 109-59). This federal transportation law, commonly referred to as SAFETEA-LU, authorizes federal expenditures for a wide range of transportation programs for fiscal years 2006 through 2009. 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 (JA/RC) Program* provides funding for local projects designed to transport low-income individuals to and from employment and employment-related activities, or to develop transportation services for residents of urban centers and rural and suburban areas to suburban employment opportunities.

The *New Freedom Program* supports new public transportation services and new alternatives to public transportation services to address the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

This Call for Projects is to award fiscal years 2008 and 2009 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 \$4.7 million in JA/RC and \$1.5 million in New Freedom funds are available for award. Approximately \$132,000 in JA/RC and \$116,000 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.

	JA/RC		NEW FREEDOM	
FY	DFWA	DL	DFWA	DL
Amount Carried Over from 2008 CFP	\$2,070,441	\$20,735	\$147,077	\$51,668
2009	\$2,663,915	\$111,652	\$1,411,870	\$64,963
Total	\$4,734,356	\$132,387	\$1,558,947	\$116,631

Funds available to small urbanized areas (e.g., McKinney) and non-urbanized areas are administered by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Additional information on the administration of these funds may be obtained online from 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, private and 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 people with disabilities and individuals with 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.

To be eligible for funding, activities must meet the Job Access/Reverse Commute or New Freedom program goals and address the goals, policies, or strategies identified in the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. [Appendix B](#) contains a summary of the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program, including program goal, statutory authority, and eligible activities. New Freedom Program information is provided in [Appendix C](#). The goals, policies, and strategies identified in the North Central Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan are summarized in [Appendix D](#). 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 operating costs 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 for local match for 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.

SELECTION 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 regional coordination plan. Projects that make it past the initial screening process will be evaluated based on the following emphasis areas:

Seamless Transportation Services

- Work to minimize the impact of boundaries on the delivery of seamless transportation services throughout the region
 - Eliminate service gaps both within and between service areas
 - Provide service where no service exists
 - Encourage cost-sharing agreements between providers to transport clients to/from other jurisdictions and programs
- Promote innovative projects that utilize multiple funding sources
- Establish policies and procedures that encourage and reward coordination
- Encourage common technology use among providers
 - Develop common reservation, scheduling, and dispatch practices throughout the region

Resources

- Maximize the efficient use of transportation resources available in North Central Texas
 - Identify underutilized vehicles that can be shared to increase efficiencies
 - Eliminate idle wait times for providers by coordinating with other providers
- Leverage traditional and non-traditional funding to expand services across the region
- Coordinate long-term funding to expand service provision

Communication/Education

- Educate the public regarding available programs and services
- Improve communication among providers and agencies

NCTCOG is not obligated to fund a proposal from a project sponsor that has demonstrated marginal or unsatisfactory performance on previous grants and 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.

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. Prospective project sponsors are strongly encouraged to attend one of the pre-proposal workshops. Please RSVP to Therese Bergeon at tbergeon@nctcog.org or (817) 695-9267 for the workshop you plan to attend.

Wednesday, May 6, 2009 **

1:30 p.m.
North Central Texas Council of Governments
Regional Forum Room
616 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, Texas 76011

Thursday, May 7, 2009

10:30 a.m.
Highland Village City Hall
Council Room
1000 Highland Village Drive
Highland Village, Texas 75077

** If you are unable to attend in person, the May 6 workshop will be broadcast via webinar. To participate in the webinar, please register online at www.nctcog.org/jarc before Noon on Tuesday, May 5, 2009.

Questions will be taken at the workshops, through email at jpowell@nctcog.org, or via fax at (817) 640-3028 until Friday, May 15, 2009. Responses to all questions will be posted on the NCTCOG website at www.nctcog.org/jarc no later than Wednesday, May 20, 2009.

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 hard copy and one (1) copy in electronic format to be provided on CD or disk in Microsoft Office Software (not via email). Graphics, such as maps or photographs, can be submitted as portable document format (PDF) files.

Project proposals should be submitted to:

Mail: North Central Texas Council of Governments
Transportation Department
Attn: James Powell
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, Texas 76005-5888

or

Physical location: North Central Texas Council of Governments
Transportation Department
Attn: James Powell
616 Six Flags Drive
Centerpoint Two
Arlington, Texas 76011

Project proposals must be received by 5 p.m., Central Daylight Time, on Friday, June 5, 2009. 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

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.

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, at which time the grant will be considered awarded.

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 and proposed solutions; and updated project schedule with milestones and deliverables. In addition, successful applicants will be required to submit quarterly Milestone Status Reports (MSR) and Financial Status Reports (FSR) as required by FTA. Sample forms will be provided to successful applicants as part of their contract.

SCHEDULE

Task	Date
Call for Projects Opens	Friday, April 24, 2009
Pre-Proposal Workshops	Wednesday, May 6, 2009 and Thursday, May 7, 2009
Last Day to Submit Questions	Friday, May 15, 2009
Response to Questions Posted to Website	Wednesday, May 20, 2009
Call for Projects Closes	Friday, June 5, 2009
Internal Review and Evaluation	June – July 2009
Information Item: Surface Transportation Technical Committee	Friday, July 25, 2009
Information Item: Regional Transportation Council	Thursday, August 14, 2009
Action Item: Surface Transportation Technical Committee	Friday, August 22, 2009
Action Item: Regional Transportation Council	Thursday, September 11, 2009
Project Awards Announced	Late September 2009
NCTCOG Submits FTA Grant Application	Winter 2009/2010
FTA Approval of NCTCOG Grant Application	Spring 2010
NCTCOG Executes Agreements with Successful Applicants	Summer 2010

CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.nctcog.org/jarc

NCTCOG Project Staff:

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(817) 695-9283

REFERENCES

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

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