



Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization

County-City Building
555 South 10th Street - Suite 213
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
(402) 441-7491

JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE

AND

NEW FREEDOM PROGRAM

CALL FOR PROJECTS

July 2, 2012

<http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mpo/>

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 eligible, and willing to accept the terms and conditions provided.

INTRODUCTION

The Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is conducting a competitive Call for Projects to award Federal Transit Administration Job Access and Reverse Commute (49 U.S.C. §5316) and New Freedom (49 U.S.C. Section 5317) funding. It is estimated that \$422,300 in Job Access and Reverse Commute and \$95,400 in New Freedom Program funding will be available for award within the Lincoln metropolitan area.

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, referred to as SAFETEA-LU, authorizes federal expenditures for transportation programs through FY 2009-10 and recently extended through FY 2011-2012. SAFETEA-LU authorized two new federal programs, to be administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), that provide funding to support enhanced public transportation services:

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program provides funding for local projects designed to transport low-income individuals to and from employment and employment-related activities, and 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 year 2012-13 funding for the Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom programs as apportioned to the Lincoln metropolitan area. An estimated \$422,300 in JARC and \$95,400 in New Freedom funds are expected to be available for award in the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County subject to actual federal appropriations.

Lincoln MPO FTA Funding Estimates

Fiscal Year	<u>Section 5316</u> Jobs Access and Reverse Commute	<u>Section 5317</u> New Freedom	Total
2013	\$108,100	\$ 56,900	\$165,000
NDOR Transfer	\$312,900	\$ 0	\$312,900
Carry-Over	\$ 1,300	\$ 38,500	\$ 39,800
Total	\$422,300	\$ 95,400	\$517,700

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

The Job Access and 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. Lincoln MPO encourages pilot projects and programs 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 and Reverse Commute or New Freedom program goals and address the goals and strategies/activities identified in the Lincoln MPO's *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. The Attachments contain a summary of the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program and New Freedom Program information, including program goals, statutory authority, and eligible activities. A discussion of the goals and strategies/activities are located in the Lincoln MPO's *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. A copy of the Plan is available on the Web at www.lincoln.ne.gov, keyword MPO, (or www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mpo/), or at the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Department.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

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

Federal match requirements are determined according to the type of expenditure funded. The federal share of eligible planning 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 match 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: 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.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

This Call For Projects is not accepting proposals for the financing of capital project expenses with Job Access and Reverse Commute funds or New Freedom funds. This excludes purchases such as: vehicles, service and support equipment, preventative maintenance, mobile radio units, bus stop signs, and capital support equipment (e.g., computer hardware, software, and other equipment that enhances operating efficiency). For more information, please refer to *Chapter III, Section 4(A) of FTA Circular 9030.1C*.

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 *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. Projects that make it past the initial screening process will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Project meets documented need (60%)

The project directly addresses transportation gaps or barriers identified in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. This is to clearly meet the overall program goals and objectives, and demonstrate how it will meet a specified need. The following will be considered:

- Provides service in geographic area with limited transportation options.
- Serves geographic area where the greatest number of people need a service.
- Improves the mobility of clientele subject to state and federal funding sources (i.e. low income, elderly, persons with disabilities).
- Provides a level of service not currently provided with existing resources.
- Avoids unnecessary duplication.
- Encourages alternate forms of transportation.
- Supplements an existing program that is working effectively.
- Culturally and linguistically able to meet basic needs of diverse people.

Project is cost effective (20%)

The project application indicates the number of trips or other units of service that will be provided with the new funds. The applicant provides a clear rationale for requesting the funds and describes that no other sources of funds are available for this purpose. The project application clearly defines the budget showing project expenditures, revenues and matching funds (if applicable). The following will be considered:

- Services the maximum number of people for the least money.
- Results in efficient use of available resources.
- Maximizes use of funds for direct service.
- Has the potential to be sustained beyond the grant period.

Project Oversight/Coordination (20%)

The application provides a well-defined service operations plan and describes implementation steps and timelines for carrying out the plan. Project sponsors demonstrate their institutional capability to carry out the service as described. Applicants describe their ability to coordinate with other transportation and/or social service resources. Project sponsors also identify project stakeholders, and how they will keep stakeholders involved and informed about the project activities. The following will be considered:

- Builds on and supports existing services and is not duplicating services.
- Involves the participation of local human services and transportation stakeholders.
- Demonstrates an institutional and fiscal capacity to carry out the project.
- Leverages funding from various partnerships (i.e. local match, if required).

The Lincoln MPO is not obligated to fund a proposal from a project sponsor that has demonstrated marginal or unsatisfactory performance on previous grants and contracts with the MPO or other local, regional or state agencies. The MPO 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 the MPO.

The Lincoln MPO may base funding decisions on factors associated with best achieving the goals of the program, and the MPO is not obligated to select a project for funding. Additionally, the MPO may select parts of a proposal for funding and may offer to fund less than the dollar amount requested in a proposal.

PRE-PROPOSAL WORKSHOP

The Lincoln MPO will hold a pre-proposal workshop 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 encouraged, but are not required, to attend the pre-application workshop. Please RSVP to Mike Brienzo at mbrienzo@lincoln.ne.org, via fax at (402) 441-6377, or phone (402) 441-6369 if you plan to attend.

Date: Thursday, July 12, 2012
Time: 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Place: County-City Building
Conference Room #113
555 South 10th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Questions will be taken at the workshop, through email at mbrienzo@lincoln.ne.org, or via fax at (402) 441-6377 through July 26, 2012. Responses to all questions will be posted on the Lincoln MPO website at www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mpo/.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Project Submittal Form, as well as other materials related to the Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom Program Call for Projects may be obtained online at www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mpo/ under Coordinated Human Services Transportation Program or by contacting Mike Brienzo at mbrienzo@lincoln.ne.org, phone (402) 441-6369.

To be considered for funding under the Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom Program Call for Projects, project sponsors must complete and submit project proposals to the Lincoln MPO offices by the submission deadline. Project proposals must consist of one (1) original hard copy and six (6) copies in an 8 ½ x 11 inch format acceptable for photo copying. Proposals utilizing color graphics, maps or photographs will need to be made available for all six (6) copies for distribution to the *Project Selection Task Force*.

Project proposals should be submitted to:

Lincoln MPO / Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Department
ATTN: Mike Brienzo
555 South 10th Street - Suite 213
Lincoln Nebraska 68508

Project proposals must be received by 4 p.m., Thursday, August 2, 2012.

In accordance with the Call for Projects procedures established by the Lincoln MPO Technical committee *Project Selection Task Force*, the submitted project proposals must be received “in hand” at the Lincoln MPO / Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Department office 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 MPO 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 that may be awarded. Entities selected to receive grant funding will be required to enter into a contract with the Lincoln MPO. Projects selected for funding through this Call for Projects 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 Lincoln MPO, a copy of the executed contract will be returned to the applicant, at which time the grant will be considered awarded. Project funding will be on a reimbursement basis drawn on the project grant based upon eligible project claims submitted.

Grant recipients will be required to submit monthly and/or quarterly information as determined by Lincoln MPO. Upon execution of the contract, successful applications will be required to submit Monthly Status Reports to Lincoln MPO 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; document work activities anticipated for the following month by task; document 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mike Brienzo, Transportation Planner
Lincoln MPO / Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Department
555 South 10th Street - Suite 213
Lincoln Nebraska 68508

email: mbrienzo@lincoln.ne.org

fax: (402) 441-6377

phone: (402) 441-6369

SCHEDULE

Task	Date
Call for Projects Opens	Thursday, July 2, 2012
Pre-Proposal Workshop	Thursday, July 12, 2012
Last Day to Submit Questions	Thursday, July 26, 2012
Call for Projects Closes	Thursday, August 2, 2012
Task Force Evaluate & Select Proposals	August 2 – August 30, 2012
Action Item: MPO Technical Committee	September, 2012
Action Item: MPO Officials Committee	September, 2012
Project Selections Announced	September, 2012
Lincoln MPO Submits FTA Grant Application	September, 2012
FTA Awards Lincoln MPO Grant Application	September, 2012
Lincoln MPO Executes Agreements with Applicants	October, 2012

ATTACHMENTS

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

FEDERAL/LOCAL MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

PROGRAM GUIDANCE AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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EVALUATION CRITERIA

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

There are two categories of eligible recipients of Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316) and New Freedom (Section 5317) program funds:

- 1) **Private non-profit organizations** which are corporation or association determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described by 26 U.S.C. 501(c) and is exempt from taxation under 26 U.S.C. 501(a) or one which has been determined under State law to be non-profit and for which the documentation certifying the status of the non-profit organization has been received.
- 2) **State or local government authorities.**
- 3) **Operators of public transportation services** including private operators of public transportation services.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

1) *Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (Section 5316)*

Funds from the JARC Program are available for planning and operating expenses that support the development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment and to support reverse commute projects.

Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to, planning and operating assistance to support activities such as:

- a. Late-night and weekend service;
- b. Guaranteed ride home service;
- c. Shuttle service;
- d. Expanding fixed-route public transit routes;
- e. Demand-responsive van service;
- f. Ridesharing and carpooling activities;
- g. 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);
- h. Local car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides;
- i. Promotion, through marketing efforts, of the:
 - (1) use of transit by workers with non-traditional work schedules;
 - (2) use of transit voucher programs by appropriate agencies for welfare recipients and other low-income individuals;
 - (3) development of employer-provided transportation such as shuttles, ridesharing, carpooling; or
 - (4) use of transit pass programs and benefits under Section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

- j. Supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs. This activity is intended to supplement existing transportation services by expanding the number of providers available or the number of passengers receiving transportation services. Vouchers can be used as an administrative mechanism for payment to providers of alternative transportation services. The JARC program can provide vouchers to low-income individuals to purchase rides, including (1) mileage reimbursement as part of a volunteer driver program, (2) a taxi trip, or (3) trips provided by a human service agency. Providers of transportation can then submit the voucher to the JARC project administering agency for payment based on pre-determined rates or contractual arrangements. Transit passes for use on fixed route or Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) complementary paratransit service are not eligible. Vouchers are an operational expense which requires a 50/50 (federal/local) match;
- k. Acquiring Geographic Information System (GIS) tools;
- l. Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), including customer trip information technology;
- m. Integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling and dispatch functions;
- n. Deploying vehicle position-monitoring systems;
- o. Subsidizing the costs associated with adding reverse commute bus, train, carpool van routes or service from urbanized areas and nonurbanized areas to suburban work places;
- p. Subsidizing the purchase or lease by a non-profit organization or public agency of a van or bus dedicated to shuttling employees from their residences to a suburban workplace;
- q. Otherwise facilitating the provision of public transportation services to suburban employment opportunities;
- r. Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. Mobility management is an eligible program cost. Mobility management techniques may enhance transportation access for populations beyond those served by one agency or organization within a community. Mobility management is intended to build coordination among existing public transportation providers and other transportation service providers with the result of expanding the availability of service.

2) *New Freedom Program (Section 5317)*

New Freedom Program funds are available for operating expenses that **support new public transportation services beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) 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 purpose of the New Freedom Program, “new” service is any service or activity that was not operational on August 10, 2005, and did not have an identified funding source as of August 10, 2005, as evidenced by inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) or the State Transportation Improvement Plan (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.

Eligible projects funded with New Freedom funds may continue to be eligible for New Freedom funding indefinitely as long as the project(s) continue to be part of the Coordinated Transportation Plan.

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.

This list of eligible activities is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Recipients are encouraged to develop innovative solutions to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in the community.

- a. New Public Transportation Services Beyond the ADA. The following activities are examples of eligible projects meeting the definition of new public transportation.
 - (1) Enhancing paratransit beyond minimum requirements of the ADA.
 - (a) Expansion of paratransit service parameters beyond the three-fourths mile required by the ADA;
 - (b) Expansion of current hours of operation for ADA paratransit services that are beyond those provided on the fixed-route services;
 - (c) The cost of providing same day service;
 - (d) Enhancement of the level of service by providing escorts or assisting riders through the door of their destination;
 - (e) 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. This would permit the acquisition of lifts with a larger capacity, as well as modifications to lifts with a 600 lb design load, and the acquisition of heavier-duty vehicles for paratransit and/or demand response service; and
 - (f) Installation of additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by the ADA.
 - (2) Feeder services.
 - (3) Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations.
 - (4) Travel training.
- b. 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:
 - (1) Supporting the administration and expenses related to new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers. Vouchers are an operational expense which requires a 50/50 (Federal/local) match.

- (2) Supporting new volunteer driver and aide programs.
- (3) Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. Mobility management is an eligible program cost.

FEDERAL/LOCAL MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

1) *Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (Section 5316)*

- a. *General.* JARC funds may be used to finance planning, and operating expenses. The Federal share of eligible planning costs may not exceed 80% of the net cost of the activity. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating costs of the activity. Recipients may use up to 10% of their apportionment to support program administrative costs including administration, planning, and technical assistance, which may be funded at 100% federal share. The local share of eligible planning costs shall be no less than 20% of the net cost of the activity and the local share for eligible operating costs shall be no less than 50% of the net operating costs. All of the local share must be provided from sources other than Federal DOT funds. Some examples of sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share include: State or local appropriations; revenue from human services contracts; toll revenue credits; and net income generated from advertising and concessions. Non-cash share such as donations, volunteered services, or in-kind contributions is eligible to be counted toward the local match as long as the value of each is documented and supported, and represents a cost which would otherwise be eligible under the program. Income from contracts to provide human service transportation may be used either to reduce the net project cost (treated as revenue) or to provide local match for JARC operating assistance. In either case, the cost of providing the contract service is included in the total project cost.
- b. *Exceptions.* The Federal share is 90% for vehicle-related equipment and facilities required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). It is only the incremental cost of the equipment or facility required by the CAAA or ADA that may be funded at 90%, not the entire cost of the vehicle or facility, even if the vehicle or facility is purchased for use in service required by the ADA or CAAA. States wishing to apply for assistance at the higher match ratio should consult the FTA regional office for further guidance regarding methods of computing the incremental cost before submitting an application.
- c. *Use of Other Federal Funds.* Local match may be derived from other Federal funds derived from Federal programs that are eligible to be expended for transportation, other than from the Department of Transportation programs. Examples include Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Medicaid, Employment training programs, Rehabilitation Services, and Administration on Aging. 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. Expenditure 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.

2) New Freedom Program (Section 5317)

- a. *General.* New Freedom funds may be used to finance, eligible planning and operating expenses. The Federal share of eligible planning costs may not exceed 80% of the net cost of the activity. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating costs of the activity. Recipients may use up to 10% of their apportionment to support program administrative costs including administration, planning, and technical assistance, which may be funded at 100% federal share. The local share of eligible program planning costs shall be no less than 20% of the net cost of the activity and the local share for eligible operating costs shall be no less than 50% of the net operating costs. All of the local share must be provided from sources other than Federal DOT funds. Some examples of sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share include: State or local appropriations; other non-DOT Federal funds; revenue from human services contracts; toll revenue credits; and net income generated from advertising and concessions. Non-cash share such as donations, volunteered services, or in-kind contributions is eligible to be counted toward the local match. The value of any non-cash share shall be documented and supported, represent a cost which would otherwise be eligible under the program, and be included in the net project cost in the project budget. Income from contracts to provide human service transportation may be used either to reduce the net project cost (treated as revenue) or to provide local match for New Freedom operating assistance. In either case, the cost of providing the contract service is included in the total project cost.
- b. *Exceptions.* The Federal share is 90% for vehicle-related equipment and facilities required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). It is only the incremental cost of the equipment or facility required by the CAAA or ADA that may be funded at 90%, not the entire cost of the vehicle or facility, even if the vehicle or facility is purchased for use in service required by the ADA or CAAA. States wishing to apply for assistance at the higher match ratio should consult the FTA regional office for further guidance regarding methods of computing the incremental cost before submitting an application.
- c. *Use of Other Federal Funds.* Local match may be derived from other Federal funds derived from Federal programs that are eligible to be expended for transportation, other than funds from DOT programs. Examples include Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Medicaid, Employment training programs, Rehabilitation Services, and Administration on Aging. 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. Expenditure 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.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM GUIDANCE AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Full Federal Transit Administration Program Guidance and Application Instructions can be at the following links below:

FTA CIRCULAR C 9050.1 (May 1, 2007): The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program Guidance and Application Instructions [pdf]

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

On March 29, 2007 FTA issued its circular entitled, The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program Guidance and Application Instructions. This circular issues guidance on the administration of the JARC Program under 49 U.S.C. 5316, and guidance for the preparation of grant applications. This issuance incorporates new provisions of SAFETEA-LU, and includes the most up-to-date guidance available for the program.

FTA CIRCULAR C 9045.1 (May 1, 2007): New Freedom Program Guidance and Application Instructions [pdf]

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

On March 29, 2007 FTA issued its circular entitled, New Freedom Program Guidance and Application Instructions. This circular issues guidance on the administration of the New Freedom Program under 49 U.S.C. 5317, and guidance for the preparation of grant applications. This issuance incorporates new provisions of SAFETEA-LU, and includes the most up-to-date guidance available for the program.

PROJECT PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Projects will be selected based on the evaluation criteria established in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* for the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Area. Priority will be given to projects which serve populations qualifying for both JARC and New Freedom funding and that show new innovative approaches to human services transportation planning and services delivery. Project Proposals should not exceed 10 pages in length and should include the following information:

1. **Project Title** - Provide the title of the project, not to exceed one line, for which funding is requested. This title will be used on all MPO project listings.
2. **Name of Implementing Agency** - Identify the agency applying for funding under this Call for Projects. The MPO encourages and accepts multi-jurisdictional/agency applications. If the implementing agency is not a direct recipient of FTA funds, include the name, contact and commitment letter from the direct recipient.
3. **Point of Contact** – Identify a contact person who will serve as the liaison between MPO and the implementing agency for all matters pertaining to the project application and if funding is awarded, for the grant. Include the person’s name, title, mailing address, direct telephone line, fax number, and e-mail address.
4. **Project Funding Sources and Local Match** - Identify, by Fiscal Year, which FTA program you are applying for and local match source(s) for the project. If your project is eligible for either, choose the program that is most applicable to your project’s scope.

MPO Officials Committee reserves the right to make the final decision on which category of funds will be used to fund any given project.

5. **Project Description** – Provide a detailed project description to include:
 - Project context and background
 - Study or service area
 - Key people involved
 - Description of the problem to be addressed and how it will be resolved
 - Description of what will be achieved and what will be delivered to the customer
 - Project goals
6. **Project Benefits** - Provide a description of how your project will (as detailed in the evaluation criteria below):
 - Improve accessibility and mobility for the transportation disadvantaged
 - Improve customer services for Coordinated Transportation Plan users and providers
 - Improve coordination among Coordinated Transportation Plan programs
 - Maximize project cost effectiveness

7. Project Implementation Strategy - Describe in detail the efforts that will be carried out to meet these criteria. This will help MPO determine the quality of service provided by your agency and its financial capability (as detailed in the evaluation criteria below):

- *Ability to Service Target Population*

Describe the target population which this project is designed to serve and what gap in public services will be filled through the use of these funds.

- *Measures of Effectiveness*

Describe the measures which will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Explain how the project will demonstrate to have had a positive impact and how those impacts will be assessed.

- *Need and Use of Proposed Funds*

Applicant must include: the degree and urgency of need for funds; applicant's ability to conduct the proposed project; proposed use of funds; and, if appropriate ridership projections.

- *Sustainability*

Describe what proactive efforts will be undertaken to insure the continuation of the project at the end of the grant period.

- *Fiscal and Managerial Capability*

Applicant must describe its ability to provide efficient/effective transportation services including scheduling, dispatching, compliance with reporting and monitoring requirements; its fiscal accountability; process for hiring and training of drivers and other personnel, if applicable; and funding sources which will enable the applicant to provide required local match, if needed.

8. Project Work Plan - Provide a schedule and work plan for the project – Identify the timeline for the project and schedule by task. Include a start date and specific dates for deliverables.

9. Project Budget - Provide a budget for the project. Outline specific project expenses by task. Specify if the project will be implemented in-house or contracted. Identify operational, and administrative expenses.

SELECTION PROCESS

Projects will be prioritized and recommended by a Coordinated Transportation Plan selection committee made up of representatives of the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization, Nebraska Department of Roads and the Community Services Initiatives-Basic and Emergency Needs Coalition. The Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization Officials Committee will have the final task of determining which projects are selected for funding. Once projects are selected for JARC and New Freedom funding based on the evaluation criteria they will be incorporated into the Transportation Improvement Program through an Administrative Modification.

PLAN STRATEGIES

The Coordinated Transportation Plan established nine strategies or activities that will begin to address the identified gaps and needs for the public transit-human services transportation system. These strategies are listed in greater detail in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. Below is an abbreviated listing to provide applicants with an idea what the MPO hopes to accomplish with the projects funded.

1. Continue to support and expand the “Ride for Five” bus passport program.
2. Support the Lincoln Transit Development Plan recommendations for improving the fixed route services.
3. Promote use of vanpools, carpooling, or other innovative transportation services to provide transportation service when StarTran is not available or an option.
4. Expand availability of specialized transportation services to accommodate needs of the elderly and disabled.
5. Encourage human services agencies to expand education efforts to their clients on using StarTran.
6. Develop and fund voucher program(s) for low income people to purchase rides for work.
7. Support of a service, or the purchase or lease of a vehicle, by a nonprofit or public agency to shuttle low-income people between their residence and a place of employment, job training, or for education.
8. Support volunteer driver and aide programs for elderly and disabled people. The definition of “aide” will need to be clearly defined since it is open to interpretation.
9. Support collaboration and coordination of nonprofit agencies that provide transportation services and programs.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following evaluation criteria were designed to score projects based upon their ability to achieve the strategies or activities set forth in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* for the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Area . The evaluation criteria were derived from the strategies and finalized by the CSI-Basic and Emergency Needs Coalition. They are designed to encourage innovative strategies for serving transportation disadvantaged populations. A set of broad categories was created in which applicants will receive scores based on their ability to achieve these objectives. Within each category, suggestions are made of strategies that might be used to complete the strategy; however these guidelines are only suggestions and are not meant to be interpreted as a checklist of required components.

As a precursor to the evaluation criteria, applicants must qualify for funding under the guidelines set by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under one or both of the programs under consideration, JARC (Section 5316) or New Freedom (Section 5317). In order to provide an incentive to serve all Coordinated Transportation Plan populations in an efficient and convenient manner, proposals serving populations that qualify for JARC and New Freedom funding will be given priority. Additionally, in order to ensure that projects are cost-effective, proposals must include adequate measures of effectiveness. These measures must be able to demonstrate that the service can address the unmet transportation needs of the elderly, disabled, or low income workers. Without adequate measures of effectiveness, proposals will not be given further consideration. Qualifying applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Project meets documented need

The project should directly address transportation gaps or barriers identified through the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The project should clearly state the overall program goals and objectives, and demonstrate how it will meet a specified need. Specifically, the following will be considered:

- Provides service in geographic area with limited transportation options.
- Serves geographic area where the greatest number of people need a service.
- Improves the mobility of clientele subject to state and federal funding sources (i.e. low income, elderly, persons with disabilities).
- Provides a level of service not currently provided with existing resources.
- Avoids unnecessary duplication.
- Encourages alternate forms of transportation.
- Supplements an existing program that is working effectively.
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate and able to meet basic needs of diverse people.

WEIGHT: 60 percent

2. Project is cost effective

The application should indicate how many trips (or other units of service) will be provided with the new funds. For the development of new programs, applicant must provide a solid rationale for requesting the funds, and describe that no other sources of funds are available for this purpose. The project application should provide a clearly defined budget, indicating project expenditures and revenues, including required matching funds, if any. Specifically, the following will be considered:

- Services the maximum number of people for the least money.
- Results in efficient use of available resources.
- Maximizes use of funds for direct service.
- Has the potential to be sustained beyond the grant period.

WEIGHT: 20 percent

3. Project Oversight/Coordination

Applicants should provide a well-defined service operations plan and describe implementation steps and timelines for carrying out the plan. Project sponsors should demonstrate their institutional capability to carry out the service as described. Applicants should describe their ability to coordinate with other community transportation and/or social service resources. Project sponsors should identify project stakeholders, and how they will keep stakeholders involved and informed about the project activities. Specifically, the following will be considered:

- If applicable, builds on and supports existing services and does not duplicate services.
- Involves participation of local human services and transportation stakeholders.
- Demonstrates institutional and fiscal capacity to carry out the project.
- Leverages funding from various partnerships (i.e. local match, if required).

WEIGHT: 20 percent