

Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

Recommended Grant Awards for Job Access & Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs and Section 5310 Specialized Transportation Program FY 2009-10

Report to Lincoln MPO Officials Committee: June 23, 2009 Summation of *Project Selection Task Force* Grant Award Recommendations as recommended by the MPO Technical Advisory Committee

Federal legislation (SAFETEA-LU) requires that projects seeking Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds through the Job Access & Reverse Commute (JARC), the New Freedom and Section 5310 Specialized Transportation programs must be competitively selected and derived from a locally developed *Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. A call for projects for JARC and New Freedom proposals was issued by the MPO on February 1, 2009, lasting approximately six weeks. During that time, four applications were received for a separate projects (3-JARC and 1-NF) requesting these funds to be used for a portion of operating costs. Over the same period, the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) sought proposals to fund specialized transit vehicles to be used to transport handicapped and elderly persons. This call for proposals yielded four requests of assistance for five specialized transit vehicles.

Job Access & Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs

The *Project Selection Task Force* reviewed each project against evaluation criteria designed to assess projects based upon their ability to achieve the strategies or activities set forth in the *Coordinated Plan*. Sufficient funds are available this year to fund all four projects as requested and is recommended.

Section 5310 Specialized Transportation Program

The *Project Selection Task Force* reviewed each proposal and is recommending funding for three vehicles based upon the estimated vehicle cost and the limits of available MPO funding. If actual vehicle costs are lower than estimated and/or additional Section 5310 funds become available through NDOR, funding for an additional vehicle awarded to the Madonna Foundation is recommended.

Attached: Recommended project funding for each FTA Program.

Grant Proposals Summary

Job Access & Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs FY 2009-10

Job Access & Reverse Commute Program

Lincoln Literacy Council – Transportation Support for New Americans Preparing for Work Entry

Program Proposal

This proposal is to use Job Access funds to develop a door-to-door **transportation and voucher program** for refugees and their preschool children and infants in traveling to and from work-readiness English classes. The Lincoln Literacy Council provides such classes in various locations in Lincoln on weekdays and Saturdays. These classes are crucial to refugees and new Americans in the community in becoming employable and achieving self-sufficiency. The *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* indicates that low-income people from the Literacy Council's service area lack adequate transportation and notes there are cultural and linguistic barriers for non-English speakers in accessing transportation. The Lincoln Literacy Council primarily serves low-income, non-English-speaking refugees and new Americans and has experience in providing the mix of efficient, effective transportation and language services necessary to refugees to become employable.

The transportation and voucher program focuses on providing agency administered van rides and "gasoline vouchers" to encourage a self administered ride provision for individuals and families for low-income people between their residence and place of employment, job training, or education. These services are intended to supplement existing nonprofit van service which is at its limits of practical use, operating six days a week.

Discussion

This is the second year this program is recommended for funding. The Lincoln Literacy Council transportation service program is targeted to address a well defined, existing need and has experience in providing this service and currently average over 200 passenger miles per week. They also have proven the concept in distributing gas vouchers in evening health class for women and have developed procedures to maximize efficiency and assure appropriate use. The management plan appears to be well developed and this has a proven coordination and outreach program. The administration plan and project budget is well developed with the potential of becoming self-sustaining with the assistance of the Cooper Foundation and Lincoln Literacy Council funds that are identified for program start-up.

The *Project Selection Task Force* ranked this project as their first choice with the following JARC grant funding recommendation. This is 100% of the funds requested.

JA Funds Requested: \$15,500

Recommended Funding: \$15,500

StarTran/City of Lincoln – Subsidize StarTran Bus Route

Program Proposal

The **StarTran Bus Route** project proposal is to use Job Access & Reverse Commute (JARC) funds to fill a gap in unmet transportation need by providing transportation for low-income persons and persons with disabilities to access employment and job training opportunities. Specifically, funding will be used to subsidize two bus routes identified in the approved Transit Development Plan. These two routes, the “Havelock/Heart Hospital” and “West A/Gaslight” routes, are key routes in providing employment opportunities by serving new employment centers that are not being served by StarTran today. Route service on both routes will operate on weekdays from 5:15 am - 7:10 pm and Saturdays from 5:55 am - 7:10 pm. Regular service on “Havelock/Heart Hospital” will operate every 30 minutes during weekday peaks and 60 minutes during mid-days and Saturdays and the “West A / Gaslight” route will operate every 60 minutes all day with no service for two-hours during mid-day.

New employment centers include: South Walmart, Nebraska Heart Institute, and Menards Home Improvement Center. These routes will also provide increased service to the other employment centers including Kawasaki, Pfizer, Verizon, Immigration & Naturalization Services, Lincoln Plating, 70th & Pioneer Commercial Center and West A Commercial Center. The objective for the two new bus routes is to achieve approximately 163,475 trips to new employment centers in the first year of service.

Discussion

This is the second year this program is recommended for funding. This is a needed service filling a gap in unmet transportation needs which is documented in a well developed transit service plan. This supports the strategies identified in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* and appears to well designed to meet the goal of increasing access to jobs for low-income, welfare-recipients and persons with disabilities. The management plan appears to be well developed and StarTran has a proven coordination and outreach program. StarTran has qualified and experienced personnel able to provide this service and has provided a well developed implementation plan.

The administration plan is well developed with the potential of effective in meeting the identified service needs. These two bus routes were initiated this past year and have met the stated goals in the StarTran proposal. A concern expressed by the *Project Selection Task Force* is that the JARC funds identified for the StarTran project are initiative funds that would only cover 50% of the total project costs and this sustaining this program is dependent upon the City of Lincoln budgeting process for its success.

The *Project Selection Task Force* ranked this project as their second choice with the following JARC grant funding recommendation. This is 100% of the funds requested.

JA/RC Funds Requested: \$374,594

Recommended Funding: \$374,594

Center for People in Need – Driver Voucher Program

Program Proposal

This is a **Driver Voucher Program** proposed by the Center for People in Need that will reimburse volunteer drivers on a per trip basis for providing eligible low-income workers with transportation to and from employment and employment-related activities. This program is targeted toward eligible low-income workers who will be responsible for locating a driver and making the transportation arrangements that best suits their needs. Program funding will be used to reimburse a volunteer driver on a per-trip basis for car-related expenses. The reimbursement will be a set fee of \$5.00 per round trip, \$2.50 per one-way trip, and \$10.00 per round trip outside the city limits. The intent of the program is to provide transportation for low-income persons and persons to access employment and job training opportunities. Priority for participation will be given to those who are unable to utilize public transportation and who are not eligible for any other type of funding for transportation.

The focus of this program is to distribute travel vouchers to be used for clients attending classes or training relating to employment activities. The focus is for to increase mobility for employment and employment-related activities. Documentation on each trip using this program will need to be provided to program administrator for prior to reimbursement.

Discussion

This is the second year this program is recommended for funding. This is still a new program for the Center for People in Need and the program administrator's role is under development. The director for the Center for People in Need will provide managerial oversight. Her direct experience is that she is an advocate and serves on the StarTran Advisory Board. The Center was founded in 2003 and has the background in developing diverse programs. Coordination with other agencies and transportation services will need to be initiated as part of program development. The clientele for this program also will need to be developed as part of the program through marketing activities to promote public awareness.

The program goal is to become self-sustaining with use of donations and grants. It may also be able to be further developed by engaging in partnerships with other human service agencies and employers. The expectations are for this program to lay the groundwork for future transportation projects and employer voucher programs. However, this is a new program concept for the Center for People in Need and these elements have to be developed. Existing funding for the Center comes through private donations, fund raising, and grants from local foundations. They have not received federal funds in any of their programs to date.

The *Project Selection Task Force* ranked this project as their third choice with the following JARC grant funding recommendation. This is 100% of the funds requested.

JA/RC Funds Requested: \$65,000

Recommended Funding: \$65,000

New Freedom Program

League of Human Dignity, Inc. – Extended Hours Service (EHS)

Program Proposal

The League of Human Dignity is proposing to convert the newly developed “Extended Hours Service” (EHS) program from a one-year, foundation funded “demonstration project”, to an on-going program of providing accessible transportation services to Lincoln’s mobility limited residents. This program extends service is beyond the hours and days provided by StarTran’s ADA-compliant services. Under the demonstration project, up to 70 trips per week are provided within the City of Lincoln for any purpose, other than medical, and during weekends and legal holidays when StarTran buses do not run. The program strategy is to address gaps and needs in transportation service for the mobility limited which is need identified in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. The “Extended Hours Service” program is to be provided on weekdays from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm, Saturdays from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm, and Sundays and Holidays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. This will fill a gap in Handi-Van transportation services, a gap that has become greater since StarTran is limiting its hours of evening Handi-Van operations.

The League will be using the services of Transport Plus as a contract provider which is a well developed and experienced provider of Handi-Van transportation services. Transport Plus has been contract provider of Handi-Van reliever services for StarTran for more than five years. The League has over 35 years of continued service in Lincoln and Lancaster County in providing services to persons with disabilities. The League also has a well developed relationships with StarTran and is a founding member of the Human Services Federation for Lincoln and Lancaster County.

Discussion

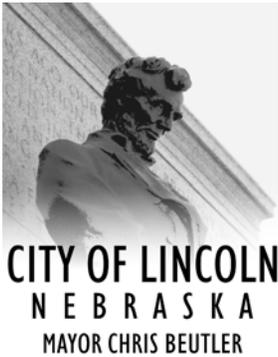
This is the second year this program is recommended for funding. The “Extended Hours Service” project administered by the League of Human Dignity fills a portion of the widening gap in transportation services by providing mobility for individuals with limited mobility. The foundation developed and funded the “demonstration project” that was successful in filling a need and this grant will enable the program to become fully operational. Coordination is called for in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* and is a key element in this project.

This program builds on and extends existing Handi-Van operations and the overall plan appears to have the ability and resources to become an effective and sustaining program. Experience is an important element in program success that is evident in this program. The League is an established provider of services to persons with disabilities and Transport Plus has been a trusted contract provider of Handi-Van services in Lincoln for years. They have the infrastructure in place to take reservations, check eligibility, and schedule rides within the contract limits. This type of program is identified in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* and is an eligible activity under the New Freedom Program guidelines. This appears to be cost effective since it administered primarily on the League of Human Dignity resources and is operated on a cost reimbursement basis.

The *Project Selection Task Force* supports this project fro New Freedom grant funding with the following recommendation. This is 100% of the funds requested.

New Freedom Funds Requested: \$44,440

Recommended Funding: \$44,440



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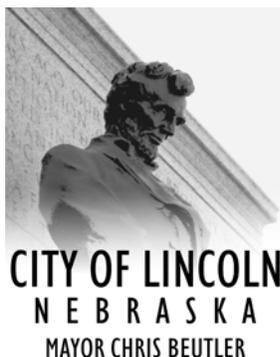
Recommended Project Awards for Job Access & Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs FY 2009-10

Project	Sponsoring Agency	Project Title	Requested Funds	Local Match	Total Costs	Operating / Planning	FFY	Type	Recommended Grant Award
Section 5316: Job Access & Reverse Commute Program									
1	Lincoln Literacy Council	Transportation Support for New Americans Preparing for Work Entry	\$ 15,500	\$ 15,500	\$ 31,000	Operating	2010	JA/RC	\$ 15,500
2	StarTran/City of Lincoln	Subsidize StarTran Bus Route	\$ 374,594	\$ 374,594	\$ 749,489	Operating	2010	JA/RC	\$ 374,594
3	Center for People in Need	Driver Voucher Program	\$ 65,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 130,000	Operating	2010	JA/RC	\$ 65,000
JA/RC Funds Requested:			\$ 455,094			Recommended Funding:			\$ 455,094
JA/RC Available:			\$ 473,289			Carry-over Funds:			\$ 18,000
Section 5317: New Freedom Program									
1	League of Human Dignity, Inc.	Extended Hours Service (EHS)	\$ 44,440	\$ 44,440	\$ 88,880	Operating	2010	NF	\$ 44,440
2	Lincoln Seniors Transportation Program ⁽¹⁾	Lincoln Seniors Transportation Program	none			Operating	2010	NF	none
New Freedom Funds Requested:			\$ 44,440			Recommended Funding:			\$ 44,440
New Freedom Funds Available:			\$ 113,103			Carry-over Funds:			\$ 68,663

* April 21, 2009

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(1) The Lincoln Seniors Transportation Program received a two years of NF grant funding last year covering FY 2008-09 and FY 2009-10.



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Section 5310 Specialized Transportation Program

Specialized Transportation Program Overview

Name of Program: Specialized Transportation Program, as authorized by the Federal Transit Administration, 49 USC Section 5310.

Funding for the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Area: \$143,000 Federal Transit Administration Funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2009-10.

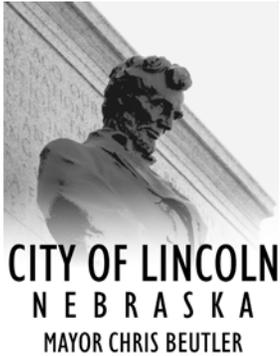
Program Goal and Brief Description: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides Federal funds for the purchase of equipment to support transportation services for the elderly and people with disabilities where existing transportation is unavailable, inappropriate, or insufficient. The Federal Transit Administration provides 80% of the cost of capital items; the remaining 20% must be provided by local funding. Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) writes the specifications and purchases the vehicles with costs reimbursed by FTA and the recipient.

Who Can Apply?: Private nonprofit (501(c)(3)) corporations, public bodies identified by the state as lead agencies in a coordination project, or public bodies which certify that no private nonprofit corporations exist within their jurisdiction for the provision of elderly and disabled transportation.

Application Process: Funds are available each Federal Fiscal Year and are distributed through a competitive application process. There are two types of applicants - those from urbanized areas and those from non-urbanized areas. While NDOR administers the program for the entire state, certain responsibilities are assigned to the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO). NDOR has established the eligibility requirements to be used for all applicants. Each MPO may establish additional eligibility requirements and deadlines to fit its urbanized area's needs so long as such requirements and deadlines are not less restrictive than NDOR's.

Contact Person: Jerry Wray, Transit Liaison Manager, Rail & Public Transportation Division, NDOR (402) 479-4694 or Jerry.Wray@nebraska.gov

NOTE: Effective for Federal Fiscal Year 2007 funding, the Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU) requires that projects funded from the Specialized Transportation Program (Section 5310) be derived from a Locally Developed Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan. The Lincoln MPO's *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* is available on the Web at www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/mpo/, or at the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Department.



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Recommended Project Awards for FTA Capital Assistance Program (Section 5310) FY 2009-10

Project	Sponsoring Agency	Vehicles Request	Estimated Cost	Federal Share (80%)	Local Share (20%)	Est. Pass per Month	Boardings per Year	Projected Boardings	Rec. Award	Recommended Grant Award
Section 5310: FTA Capital Assistance Program										
1	Seniors Foundation	1	\$ 55,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 11,000	1,405	18,869	16,700	1 Bus	\$ 44,000
2	Tabitha Inc.	1	\$ 55,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 11,000	2,634	29,243	31,607	1 Bus	\$ 44,000
3	Madonna Foundation ⁽¹⁾	2	\$ 110,000	\$ 88,000	\$ 22,000	1,500	18,000	18,500	1 Bus	\$ 44,000
4	Clark Jeary Retirement Community ⁽²⁾	1	\$ 55,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 11,000	30	360	390	none	NA
Totals:			\$ 275,000	\$ 220,000	\$ 55,000				Recommended Funding:	\$ 132,000
Available Section 5310 Funding:				\$ 143,000					Available Funding:	\$ 143,000
Unfunded Amount:				(\$ 77,000)					Carry-over Funds:	\$ 11,000

April 21, 2009

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(1) The second Madonna Foundation vehicle is recommended for funding if additional Section 5310 funds become available.

(2) The Clark Jeary Retirement Community application did not meet the required application criteria.