



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

American Recovery & Reinvestment Act Regional Information Center

Meetings & Outreach

Transportation

In the past month, the bus transit stimulus proposal has been presented to the Study Task Force (4/15), the Access For All Advisory Committee (4/23), the TPB Regional Bus Subcommittee (4/28), the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee (4/30) and the TPB Technical Committee (5/1).

Housing

As follow-up to the March COG Board and MDPC discussions, COG staff convened a conference call with Brookings Institution Greater Washington staff to discuss possible opportunities for collaboration, including potential for joint research and work on foreclosure and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (Round 2).

COG staff met with Michael Bodaken, President of the National Housing Trust, to discuss opportunities in ARRA for housing-related research and collaboration, with focus on weatherization.

COG's Housing Directors Advisory Committee is planning to hold a forum on NSP 2 at its May 22 meeting that would include a review of recent regional foreclosure data, a facilitated discussion of regional foreclosure priorities, and discussion of a possible regional NSP consortium application. The meeting will be held in the COG Board Room from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Climate, Energy and Environment

COG held a workshop in conjunction with EPA Region 3 and Mid-Atlantic Diesel Collaborative on the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) funding opportunities.

On March 19 and April 16, the COG Energy Advisory Committee met to discuss regional planning and coordination for the U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants program. Participants discussed local plans for programs to include state and local block grant applications.

On April 7, 2009, COG staff held a conference call with state energy officials to discuss collaboration for training and certification of energy auditors and contractors in the region. Significant new funding is available for home energy audits and home weatherization. Vocational programs and standardized certification is needed for those who inspect, build, renovate and maintain buildings to support retrofitting of residential and commercial properties. This project was highlighted for the COG Board at its last meeting.

On April 28, COG held a Climate and Energy Outreach Coordination Meeting. The goal of the meeting was to discuss energy efficiency outreach and education programs in the region with a variety of stakeholders including State and Local Energy Officials, State Public Service Commissions, area electric and gas utilities, and Clean Air Partners. The meeting provided an opportunity to review efforts underway and identify opportunities for coordination/collaboration. Participants agreed that COG staff should develop a proposal for consideration at a follow-up meeting to be scheduled for July.

Grant Funding Updates

Deadlines

Weatherization: May 12; total funding \$5 billion; Funding Opportunity Number: DE-FOA-0000051

Clean Cities: May 29, 2009 (Round 1) and September 30, 2009 (Round 2); total funding \$300 million; Funding Opportunity Number: DE-PS26-09NT01236-04

Neighborhood Stabilization: July 17, 2009 ****DATE UPDATED****; total funding \$1.98 billion; Funding Opportunity Number: HUD-RA-04

COG Funding Action

Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA):

COG submitted a funding proposal, "Reducing Emissions from heavy Duty Diesel Equipment in the Metropolitan Washington Region." The proposal bundles several projects, partnering with 12 equipment owner operators to reduce emissions from heavy duty diesel fleets in the Washington Metropolitan region. The participants in the bundled grant request are Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Washington Area Sewer and Water Authority (DCWASA); Montgomery County, MD; Fairfax County, VA; Prince William County, VA; and private fleet owner/operators: Pleasants Construction, CJ Miller, LaFarge, Beuchert, GDS Rentals, Chaney Construction and Facchina Construction. The total grant request is \$3,774,636.

Water:

COG will be receiving a grant of \$80,000 from the District of Columbia to revise the District's existing Water Pollution Control Contingency Plan for better response, coordination and appropriate remedies for spill events in the District's separate storm sewer system or water bodies. The existing Water Pollution Control Contingency Plan was developed in 1999 for better coordinated response to various spill events in the District's waters and most of the information is dated. Since 2001 the District's emergency protocols and organizational structure have significantly changed. In addition, there has been new focus on smaller spill incidents in the District's MS4 areas. Therefore, the District's current water pollution control contingency plan is in need of revision. Funding for this important project will be provided through an ARRA Clean Water Act Section 604(b) water quality management grant. Section 604(b) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) provides for reservation each fiscal year of 1% of each State's Clean Water State Revolving Fund allotment (or \$100,000, if greater) "to carry out planning" under Section 205(j) and 303(e) of the CWA."

Web Site Updates

- Addition of Employment and Training page
- Department of Housing and Urban Development Update: (HUD) Releases Criteria for NSP Funding
In addition, HUD has allocated another \$50 million to be awarded on a competitive basis to support NSP grantees and sub-recipients. The NSP-Technical Assistance (TA) program is open to both national and local TA providers. The deadline to apply for NSP-TA funding is June 8, 2009. Workforce Investment Act Funding
- Several member jurisdictions and national associations have included a link to COG's recovery page on their own sites; the COG site also provides links to those entities.
- Staff is beginning to compile and map specific projects in the region funded by ARRA dollars; this information will be posted to the web as appropriate.

COG Initiatives & Events

Energy Audit

Additional meetings will be held in the near future with COG members to discuss use of a portion of their stimulus funding to support a regional home energy audit and retrofit program. Also to be discussed is crafting a regional proposal for competitive grant funding to support this initiative.

Rapid Bus Transit

TPB staff are now assembling a list of all potential candidate bus projects in the region, in effect developing a regional bus plan based off of local and state plans. This regional bus plan will be the master list from which regional bus priority corridors will be drawn for potential funding under ARRA. Candidate projects will be selected after the federal guidelines and criteria for the discretionary grant program are published, due mid-month.

Housing

With the release on May 4 of the NSP 2 NOFA (HUD-RA-04), DCPS staff are now preparing for a May 22 forum for local housing directors and housing advocacy groups at COG. The forum will include an analysis of recent foreclosure activity and a facilitated discussion of funding opportunities within the NOFA for local governments. COG staff is also planning additional meetings with housing advocacy groups to identify other potential opportunities for collaboration on NSP 2, as well as with the HUD Regional Field office staff to determine other potential funding opportunities.

Events:

“Opportunities for Priority Bus Transit in the Washington Region”

Wednesday June 24, 2009 A One-Day Conference on Providing New Transportation Choices through Transit Prioritization Strategies