

## **ITEM 8 - Action**

June 16, 2010

Approval of Projects for Funding Under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

### **Staff**

#### **Recommendation:**

- Receive briefing on the project solicitation and selection process for 2010 JARC and New Freedom funding and on the next project solicitation scheduled for early 2011.
- Adopt Resolution R24-2010 to approve ten projects for funding as described in the attached materials.

#### **Issues:**

None

#### **Background:**

In the Fall of 2006 the TPB became the designated recipient of the FTA JARC and New Freedom program funding for the Washington Urbanized Area. These funds are for improving mobility options of low-income commuters and persons with disabilities. A project solicitation for JARC and New Freedom funds was conducted from February 2 through April 16. In April and May, a selection committee chaired by Ms. Bowser reviewed the project applications and recommended that ten projects be presented to the TPB for funding approval.

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002**

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE TEN PROJECTS FOR FUNDING UNDER THE JOB  
ACCESS REVERSE COMMUTE (JARC) AND NEW FREEDOM PROGRAMS OF THE  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

**WHEREAS**, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under the provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Area; and

**WHEREAS**, under SAFETEA-LU, projects funded by three Federal Transit Administration (FTA) human services transportation programs: Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316), and New Freedom (Section 5317) must be derived from a “locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and JARC and New Freedom projects must be selected on a competitive basis; and

**WHEREAS**, in July 2006 the TPB established the Human Services Transportation Coordination Task Force to oversee the development of the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan and a competitive selection process for identifying projects for JARC and New Freedom funding in the National Capital Region; and

**WHEREAS**, the JARC program provides capital and operating funding for services that improve access to jobs for low-income persons; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Freedom program provides capital and operating funding for transit and paratransit services and improvements for persons with disabilities that are new and go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act; and

**WHEREAS**, in August 2006 the TPB was designated by the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Governor of Maryland, and the Governor of Virginia as the recipient to administer the JARC and New Freedom programs in the Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area; and

**WHEREAS**, the Coordinated Plan was developed under the guidance of the task force which included the active participation of representatives from public, private and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by membership of the public who provided insight into local transportation needs and strategies for improvement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Coordinated Plan also includes the selection criteria to be used in the competitive selection process of JARC and New Freedom projects and to inform the selection of Elderly and Disabled Individual Program (Section 5310) projects administered by the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia Departments of Transportation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Coordinated Plan, the selection criteria and the process for a competitive selection process were adopted by the TPB at its regular meeting on April 18, 2007 (R22-2007); and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB adopted an Update to the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan at its regular meeting on December 16, 2009 (R13-2010); and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB has approved twenty-five projects for funding under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs since 2007;

**WHEREAS**, a solicitation for JARC and New Freedom projects was conducted from February 2 through April 16, 2010, during which approximately 1,800 organizations and agencies received a brochure or email announcing the availability of transportation funds; and

**WHEREAS**, four pre-application conferences were conducted during the solicitation period for interested organizations and agencies to receive technical assistance on the application process and FTA requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, a selection committee comprised of local and national experts in transportation and human services familiar with special needs populations met twice in April and May to review the applications for completeness and evaluate them against the selection criteria; and

**WHEREAS**, the selection committee recommended ten projects for funding based on its review and evaluation; and

**WHEREAS**, the ten projects recommended for funding are described in the attached memorandum;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD approves the ten projects described in the attached memorandum for funding under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs of the Federal Transit Administration.

# **National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board**

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June 10, 2010

**To:** Transportation Planning Board

**From:** Wendy Klancher, Principal Transportation Planner  
Beth Newman, Transportation Planner III  
Department of Transportation Planning

**Subject: Approval of Project Recommendations for Funding Under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs**

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This memorandum presents for TPB approval ten project recommendations for funding under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom programs of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Like the projects funded by the TPB in the past three years, these ten new projects will improve the mobility of persons with disabilities and low-income commuters throughout the metropolitan area.

The TPB is the designated recipient for two Federal Transit Administration programs: 1) Job Access Reverse Commute, which provides funding for low-income workers to reach employment and employment training activities and for reverse commute activities; and 2) New Freedom, which funds new transportation services for persons with disabilities. As the designated recipient of these program funds, the TPB is able to fund projects to implement the Update to the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan ("Coordinated Plan"), which includes selection criteria for the federally-required competitive selection of projects and which the TPB approved on December 16, 2009. The Coordinated Plan identifies the unmet transportation needs of low-income workers, people with disabilities and older adults and lists recommended projects for addressing those unmet needs. The eight selection criteria are used to score and rank applications. A copy of the selection criteria is attached.

## Prior Year Solicitations

The TPB's first solicitation for JARC and New Freedom funds was conducted from May 1 through June 30, 2007. Five projects (3 JARC projects and 2 New Freedom projects) were funded, which totaled \$619,300 and which were provided with \$334,419 in federal funding. Two of these projects have concluded, and the remaining three are winding down.

Based on lessons learned from the 2007 solicitation, several changes were made to the 2008 solicitation. The application period was doubled to four months to give applicants extra time to prepare an application and secure the appropriate local matching funds. The grant period was lengthened to two years to provide more time to grantees to implement and operate the projects, and to provide additional time for evaluation of those projects. In 2008, 11 projects (4 JARC projects and 7 New Freedom projects) totaling \$3,027,212 were funded, and were provided with \$2,314,856 in federal funding. All of these projects are operational.

In 2009, 10 projects (4 JARC projects, 5 New Freedom projects, and 1 joint JARC and New Freedom project) totaling \$3,571,904 were funded, and were provided with \$2,434,319 in federal funding. All but one of these projects is operational.

## Coordinated Plan Update

In the fall of the 2009, the Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (“Task Force”) updated the Coordinated Plan, incorporating lessons learned from the three previous solicitations and focusing on the elements of the Plan – Unmet Needs, Strategies for Improving Service and Coordination and Recommended Projects – that provide guidance to organizations in submitting proposals. The TPB approved the Update to the Coordinated Plan on December 16, 2009.

## 2010 Solicitation for JARC and New Freedom Projects

The TPB solicitation for JARC and New Freedom funds was conducted from February 2 through April 16, 2010. Approximately 1,800 organizations or agencies received a brochure or email announcing the availability of funds to help low-income individuals or persons with disabilities. TPB staff conducted four pre-application conferences to instruct interested organizations on the application process. Conferences were held in Maryland and Virginia in addition to D.C. and were attended by over 20 different organizations and agencies.

The Task Force identified five priorities for the 2010 solicitation:

- Transportation vouchers for low-income workers, including taxi vouchers or gas cards
- Travel training for people with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities
- Volunteer driver programs
- Same-day paratransit service
- Sensitivity and customer service training

These priorities were released for public comment via the TPB website in December 2009.

At the conclusion of the solicitation period, 11 applications were received: 7 applications for JARC funding and 4 applications for New Freedom funding. Of the 11 applications, 5 included transportation vouchers, which were a priority project in this solicitation. Funding recommendations were made by the Selection Committee based on the Task Force’s five priorities and on the responsiveness to and consistency with the selection criteria and the priorities in the Coordinated Plan.

The Selection Committee recommended that, of the 11 applications received, 9 be funded at the level of funds requested, one be funded at a greater level to ensure needs are adequately addressed, and one not be funded. The 10 proposals that are recommended for funding provide balanced geographic coverage. The applicant whose proposal was not recommended for funding will receive a letter explaining how its application may be strengthened for the next solicitation.

## Selection Committee and Selection Process

TPB First Vice-Chair Muriel Bowser chaired the Selection Committee of five people that was comprised of national and local organizations representing disability, workforce development, transit and private provider expertise. The Selection Committee members are:

1. Michael Artson, Fairfax County Fastran\*
2. Karen Wolf Branigin, Easter Seals Project ACTION
3. Carolyn Jeskey, Community Transportation Association of America
4. Harold Morgan, Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association
5. Gwen Rubinstein, Washington Area Women's Foundation\*

\*Task Force members

Each member reviewed and scored the applications using the TPB-approved selection criteria. The Selection Committee convened twice to discuss the applications and make final decisions about which projects to recommend for funding. Before its second meeting, the Selection Committee submitted written follow-up questions to the applicants to enable them to clarify elements of their proposals before making its final recommendations. After a thoughtful and deliberative process, the Selection Committee recommended that 10 projects be funded. The attached table provides a summary of the applications received, the projects proposed and the recommended grant awards. Where applicable, the narrative includes the priorities met by each application.

#### Recommended projects

The following ten projects were recommended for funding by the Selection Committee.

#### 1. JARC projects (6 projects):

- a. **Northern Virginia Family Service Vehicles for Change Program:** In partnership with Vehicles for Change, funding to purchase 168 cars over two years to provide to low-income families for a program fee. The program requires participants to register for a ridesharing service, and benefits families with limited access to transit.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$568,479	Recommended JARC Funds	\$568,479
Proposed Match	\$248,943	Required Match	\$248,943
Total Proposed Project	\$817,422	Revised Total Project	\$817,422

- b. **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments:** Funding for ongoing maintenance, including database updates and website revisions, for the Regional Transportation Information Clearinghouse, a website that will provide consumers and social service agencies with improved access to information about specialized transportation options.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$ 80,000	Recommended JARC Funds	\$ 80,000
Proposed Match	\$ 20,000	Required Match	\$ 20,000
Total Proposed Project	\$100,000	Revised Total Project	\$100,000

- c. **Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind:** Funding for a taxi voucher project, which is a priority project in the solicitation. The vouchers will assist working adults who are visually impaired to travel to and from job sites or the training classes that the agency provides.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$100,005	Recommended JARC Funds	\$100,005
Proposed Match	\$100,005	Required Match	\$100,005
Total Proposed Project	\$200,010	Revised Total Project	\$200,010

- d. **Boat People SOS:** Continuation of the Road to Independence through Savings and Education (RISE) Employment project, which prepares Vietnamese refugees and immigrants for employment by providing job skills and other training opportunities. Project also includes a taxi voucher component to assist clients in getting to jobs for the first four months after job placement, which is a priority project.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Fund	\$224,704	Recommended JARC Funds	\$224,704
Proposed Match	\$102,784	Required Match	\$102,784
Total Proposed Project	\$327,488	Revised Total Project	\$327,488

- e. **SkillSource Group:** Funding for a transportation voucher project, including taxi vouchers and gas cards, to assist low-income job seekers with transportation to and from training activities, and for the first four to six weeks after securing a job. This application also meets the solicitation priority for voucher projects.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Fund	\$114,000	Recommended JARC Funds	\$114,000
Proposed Match	\$114,000	Required Match	\$114,000
Total Proposed Project	\$228,000	Revised Total Project	\$228,000

- f. **Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation:** Funding to establish early morning shuttle bus service from the Southern Avenue Metrorail station to Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center at National Harbor. The shuttle will provide early morning service to assist workers employed at National Harbor to take public transportation to get to work in off-peak hours.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Fund	\$111,350	Recommended JARC Funds	\$111,350
Proposed Match	\$111,350	Required Match	\$111,350
Total Proposed Project	\$222,700	Revised Total Project	\$222,700

2. New Freedom projects (4 projects):

- a. **Prince William County Area Agency on Aging:** Funding for a prototype voucher program, which is a priority project in this solicitation. The funding would provide adults with disabilities with access to taxi service for medical appointments and other services for which they would otherwise not have transportation. This project was scaled up to a level indicated in the application to ensure needs are better addressed.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$20,000	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$30,000
Proposed Match	\$20,000	Required Match	\$30,000
Total Proposed Project	\$40,000	Revised Total Project	\$60,000

- b. **Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind:** Funding to provide specialized door-to-door transportation to and from the agency’s activities and programs for visually impaired children and teens.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$ 76,500	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$ 76,500
Proposed Match	\$ 76,500	Required Match	\$ 76,500
Total Proposed Project	\$153,000	Revised Total Project	\$153,000

- c. **Prince George’s County Department of Public Works & Transportation:** Funding for a demonstration project to install voice annunciation systems on 22 replacement buses and to conduct a survey of riders in collaboration with the Prince George’s County Department of Family Services to determine the usefulness of the system in improving bus accessibility for the visually impaired.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$236,800	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$236,800
Proposed Match	\$ 59,200	Required Match	\$ 59,200
Total Proposed Project	\$296,000	Revised Total Project	\$296,000

- d. **DC Office on Aging:** Funding to purchase two wheelchair accessible vans for use at two new senior wellness centers and for a taxi voucher program for agency clients to use for taxi trips. The application meets the solicitation priority for voucher projects.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$142,200	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$142,200
Proposed Match	\$ 81,600	Required Match	\$ 81,600
Total Proposed Project	\$223,800	Revised Total Project	\$223,800

The selection committee is recommending that these 10 projects (6 JARC projects and 4 New Freedom projects) totaling \$2,628,420 be funded. These projects would be provided with \$1,684,038 in federal funding.



## Project Not Recommended For Funding

The following project was not recommended for funding by the Selection Committee:

- a. Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation:** Funding to support the UPS Shuttle, which operates between the Greenbelt Metrorail Station, Prince George's Community College and the Parcel Service Facility in Laurel. The Selection Committee expressed concerns about the project's exclusive use by UPS employees and the inability of others to use the service.

## Next Steps

If all ten of the above recommended projects are funded, all but \$883,713 of the New Freedom funding and \$1,155,723 of the JARC funding from this solicitation will be obligated. The remaining JARC and New Freedom funds would be carried over to the next solicitation, which will occur in the same timeframe in 2011. The Task Force will again be asked to provide priorities for JARC and New Freedom projects throughout the region.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact Councilmember Bowser at [mbowser@dccouncil.us](mailto:mbowser@dccouncil.us) or 202-724-8052 or Beth Newman on the TPB staff at [bnewman@mwkog.org](mailto:bnewman@mwkog.org) or 202-962-3253.

## JARC and New Freedom Competitive Selection Criteria

Criteria	Definition and Possible Score	Total Score
<p><b>1. To what extent does the project respond to the strategies identified in the Coordinated Plan?</b></p>	<p>Projects that address multiple strategies will make better use of limited funding and will be weighted more heavily. This criterion considers two issues: how many strategies does the project address (there is a total of four), and how well does it address them? Each strategy addressed should be rated on a scale of 1 to 4, with the maximum of 16 points indicating the project would respond well to each of the four strategies.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 16</b></p>	
<p><b>2. To what extent does the project demonstrate coordination among various entities?</b></p>	<p>Service delivery is better where projects are developed and operated with the cooperation and coordination of jurisdictions, agencies, and interested stakeholder organizations. The criterion is defined by multiple jurisdictions, agencies, or stakeholder organizations involved in the project. A maximum score of 16 would be awarded for a project that has three or more partners each in program planning, operations, communications and funding.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 16</b></p>	
<p><b>3. To what extent does the project demonstrate a new or innovative idea that can be replicated elsewhere in the region?</b></p>	<p>Projects that comply with the spirit of SAFETEA-LU are those that combine new and innovative ideas, new technologies, and creative sources of financing to address currently unmet needs. Projects that succeed in meeting unmet needs and can be replicated in other jurisdictions are weighted higher. To the extent an existing program demonstrates innovation and replicability (by other jurisdictions or agencies) it would score well in this category. A score of 11 points would be awarded for a project that employs a new and innovative idea and demonstrates excellent prospects for feasibility of replication.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 11</b></p>	
<p><b>4. To what extent does the project meet a regional transportation need?</b></p>	<p>Jurisdictions may differ in the services they provide, but the need for programs that address the four strategies identified above is regional. “Regional” means that the project is not limited to single geographic area and ideally would serve the entire urbanized area. Programs that are focused regionally will be scored higher than those that are limited in geographic scope. Projects that are proposed as a pilot project should include narrative of how the proposed project serves a regional need. The maximum 11 points would be awarded to projects that reveal both a comprehensive region-wide service area and distribution of trips provided.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 11</b></p>	

Criteria	Definition and Possible Score	Total Score
<p><b>5. To what extent does the project involve the private sector?</b></p>	<p>Cost-effectiveness is often accomplished with the involvement of the private sector and, as such, they are important partners in project planning and development. This criterion will consider the extent to which private sector is involved in the project – such as in service delivery or project sponsorship (i.e. employer-based van pools). A maximum of 10 points will be awarded for the most involvement by private sector partners.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 10</b></p>	
<p><b>6. How many individuals with disabilities and/or with limited-incomes does the project propose to serve or benefit?</b></p>	<p>Applicants will be asked to estimate how many individuals with disabilities and/or individuals with limited incomes the project proposes to serve in the first year. The number of individuals can be estimated in the project proposal, and usage statistics could also be asked for, such as the average number of monthly one-way trips the program hopes to provide. For an infrastructure improvement, an estimate of the number of people living around the improvement who are expected to use it could be provided. Points will be assigned based on the relative number of people to be served or trips expected to be provided.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 11</b></p>	
<p><b>7. To what extent does the application identify reasonable strategies for on-going funding?</b></p>	<p>The limited funding available under SAFETEA-LU requires that projects identify other sources of funding to sustain operations in future years. Projects that have identified reasonable strategies for sources of on-going funding after the first grant will be scored the highest.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 11</b></p>	
<p><b>8. How feasible is the project?</b></p>	<p>The criterion will explore the feasibility of a project in terms of budget, resources and institutional or administrative support. Does the proposal identify and secure the necessary financial, human and institutional capacity to make the project happen? The more feasible the project proposal, the higher the project will score with this criterion. Success is critical for the coordinated planning efforts and for future appropriations of JARC and New Freedom funds.</p> <p><b>Maximum Possible Points: 14</b></p>	
	<p><b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 100</b></p>	