

ITEM 10- Information

June 18, 2014

Briefing on an Update of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program

Staff

Recommendation: Receive briefing on the key elements of the update of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan which include the competitive selection framework for the Enhanced Mobility Program.

Issues: None

Background: The Coordinated Plan, which was approved by the TPB in 2009, must be updated to guide funding decisions for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility Program of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. On June 12, the key elements of the update of the plan were released for a 30-day public comment period that will end July 12. At the July 16 TPB meeting, the Board will be asked to approve the key elements of the Coordinated Plan in preparation for a grant solicitation for the Enhanced Mobility funds from August to October. The TPB will be asked to approve the entire update to the Coordinated Plan in September.



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Wendy Klancher, Principal Transportation Planner
Lynn Winchell-Mendy, Transportation Planner III

SUBJECT: Summary of the Key Elements of the Update to the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities Program

DATE: June 12, 2014

The Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan (“Coordinated Plan”) must be updated to guide funding decisions for the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA’s) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities program. The TPB’s first Coordinated Plan was adopted in 2007 and an update was approved in 2009 to guide funding decisions for FTA’s Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom programs.

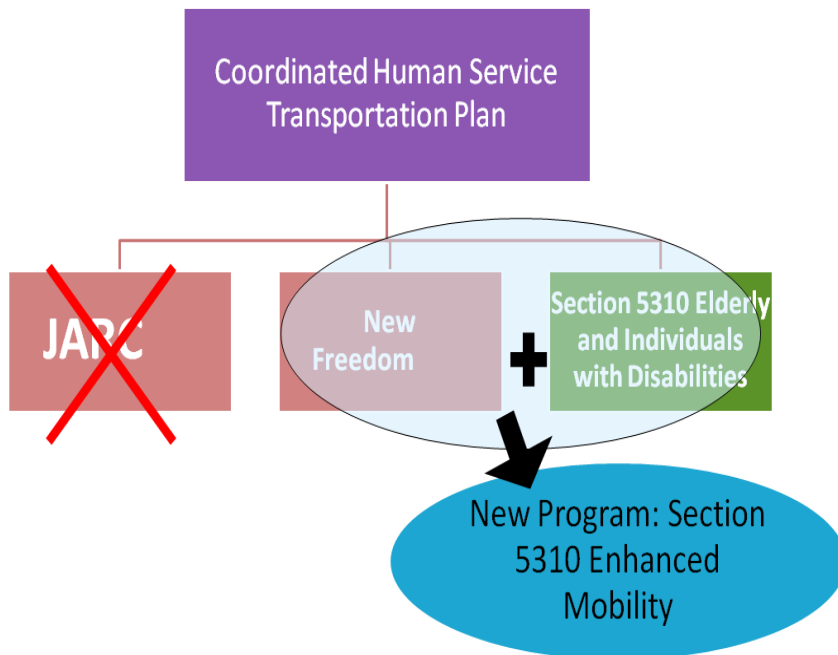
This memorandum provides a summary of the key elements of the update of the Coordinated Plan as well as solicitation details for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility program. On June 12, the key elements of the update of the plan were released for a 30-day public comment period that will end July 12. At the July 16 TPB meeting, the Board will be asked to approve the key elements of the Coordinated Plan in preparation for a grant solicitation for the Enhanced Mobility funds from August to October. The TPB will be asked to approve the entire update to the Coordinated Plan in September. The major sections of the Coordinated Plan document are the key elements described in this memorandum.

Background

The FTA issued final guidance for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program on June 6, 2014 ([FTA C 9070.1G](#)). The TPB will be asked to approve the key elements of the update to the Coordinated Plan so that a solicitation for Enhanced Mobility funds can begin in August. In September, the TPB will be presented with the entire document for the update to the Coordinated Plan for approval. The Coordinated Plan from 2009 can be found [here](#).

The two-year transportation authorization, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), made significant changes to the JARC and New Freedom programs: it eliminated the JARC program and consolidated the New Freedom and the Section 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program into a new program “Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities”. These changes are illustrated in Figure 1 below. Federal rules require that funding decisions for the Enhanced Mobility program, as with JARC and New Freedom, must be guided by a Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan.

Figure 1: Changes to the JARC and New Freedom Programs under MAP-21



The Enhanced Mobility Program

The Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility program combines the former New Freedom program with the old Section 5310, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities program. The goal of the Enhanced Mobility program is to “improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities ... by removing barriers to transportation services and expanding the transportation mobility options available¹”. The annual apportionment for the Washington, DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area of approximately \$2.8 million can be spent throughout the Urbanized Area (see Figure 4). In consultation with The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and

¹ http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/MAP-21_Fact_Sheet_-_Enhanced_Mobility_of_Seniors_and_Individuals_with_Disabilities.pdf

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the TPB agreed to serve as the Designated Recipient for this new program. In June of 2013 the Governor of Maryland, the Governor of Virginia and the Mayor of the District of Columbia designated COG, as the TPB's administrative agent, the recipient of the Enhanced Mobility Program for the Washington, DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area.

The FTA final guidance for the Enhanced Mobility program states that projects must be included in the Coordinated Plan. MAP-21 requires that Enhanced Mobility funds be matched: 50 percent for operating projects and 20 percent for capital and mobility management projects. The combined Enhanced Mobility program incorporates elements from both previous programs, including the mobility management designation, which enables those projects that improve access to multiple transportation options to take advantage of the 20 percent capital match. The TPB funded several mobility management-type projects under the JARC and New Freedom programs.

The Enhanced Mobility program includes a requirement that at least 55 percent of program funds must be used on capital projects that are “public transportation projects planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate or unavailable,”² .

The FTA final guidance includes reporting requirements for subrecipients regarding ridership, asset conditions and vehicle inventories, some of which would have to be reported in the National Transit Database, in addition to significant procurement, Title VI and DBE requirements.

TPB Role in Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom

Under SAFETEA-LU, COG, as the administrative agent for the TPB, served as the Designated Recipient for JARC and New Freedom for the Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area. The TPB role under SAFETEA-LU with the JARC and New Freedom programs was to 1) establish a Task Force on human service transportation coordination to oversee the development to the Coordinated Plan, 2) solicit project proposals and select projects, and 3) administer and provide oversight for the grants as the designated recipient of JARC and New Freedom funds.

Since 2007, the TPB has facilitated seven project solicitations and selections, and TPB staff has provided grant administration and oversight of 59 JARC and New Freedom which total over \$22 million in Federal and matching funds. Grants include travel training, wheelchair-accessible taxicabs, low-interest car loans to low-income families, shuttles to employment training or sites, taxi vouchers, and door-to-door escorted transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. The types of agencies that

² http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/MAP-21_Fact_Sheet_-_Enhanced_Mobility_of_Seniors_and_Individuals_with_Disabilities.pdf

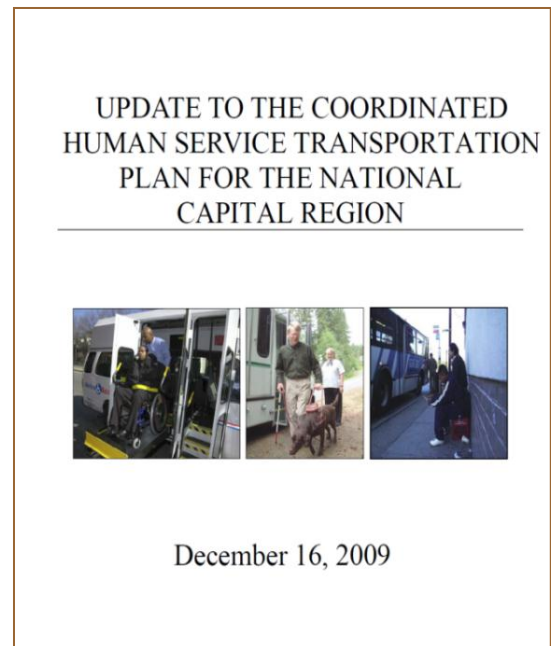
received grants include non-profits, local government agencies, private transportation providers and WMATA.

COG/TPB staff will continue to administer and oversee the approximately 50 JARC and New Freedom grants that are still active.

The Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force

The Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (“Task Force”) was created by the TPB in 2007 to oversee the development of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan. Each year between 2007 and 2012 the Task Force established priority projects for the solicitation of JARC and New Freedom grant applications. In addition, the Task Force helps facilitate regional discussions about how to improve coordination and service delivery for people with disabilities, individuals with lower incomes and older adults.

The Task Force membership includes a representative from every TPB member jurisdictions’ transportation agency and human service agency. In addition, non-profit organizations, private transportation providers and consumers with disabilities and older adults are represented on the Task Force. A list of the Task Force’s current membership can be found [here](#).



At Task Force meetings held between October 2013 and May 2014, including two with the Access for All Committee (AFA), members guided the development of the key elements of the Update to the Coordinated Plan and the competitive selection criteria. At the May 15 Task Force meeting, members concurred with these key elements and selection criteria for presentation to the Board.

Key Elements of the Update to the Coordinated Plan

As previously stated, the TPB adopted the first Coordinated Plan in 2007 and approved an update to the Coordinated Plan in December 2009. These Coordinated Plans were used to guide funding decisions for the FTA’s JARC and New Freedom programs. The Coordinated Plan must be updated to respond to the requirements of the Enhanced Mobility Program.

Figure 2: Key Elements of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan



There are five key elements of the Coordinated Plan outlined in FTA’s guidance. As Figure 2 illustrates, the key elements include 1) an identification of unmet transportation needs of people with disabilities and older adults, 2) an inventory of existing transportation services for these population groups, 3) strategies for improved service and coordination, 4) priority projects for implementation and 5) project selection criteria.

Unmet Transportation Needs

Significant unmet transportation needs for people with disabilities, older adults and those with low-incomes were identified by Task Force and AFA members, and are the foundation for the strategies and priority projects. Five basic themes emerged from the numerous transportation needs identified. The five themes are the need for:

- Coordination of transportation services and programs within and across jurisdictions;
- Customer-focused services and more training for transportation providers;
- improved information and marketing on existing services;
- improvements and connections to existing services; and
- The need for additional options and more funding.

Inventory of Existing Services

An inventory of existing transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults is another key element for the Update of the Coordinated Plan. A draft listing of specialized services by jurisdiction has been developed with information from the Reach-a-Ride database. [Reach a Ride](#) provides tailored information on the variety of specialized transportation options available in D.C., Suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia. The draft inventory can be found [here](#).

Strategies for Improved Service and Coordination

Federal guidance states that all projects funded under the Enhanced Mobility program must either be included in the Coordinated Plan, or respond to one of the strategies identified in the Plan. Four broadly defined strategies have been developed so that a wide range of project types could be implemented to improve transportation for people with disabilities and older adults:

- Coordinate transportation services and programs;
- Provide customer-focused services, improve marketing and training;
- Improve the accessibility and reliability of existing services; and
- Develop and implement additional transportation options.

Priority Projects

The priority projects identified below were developed to respond to the unmet transportation needs. The purpose of the priority projects is to signal to potential applicants the kinds of projects that are most needed in the region. Implementation is dependent on a project sponsor that is able and willing to carry out the project and provide the appropriate match funding. Agencies may also apply for other project types not listed as priority projects. It is important to note that applications for priority projects are not weighted more heavily than other project ideas; they are subject to the same competitive selection criteria and scoring mechanisms.

A. Mobility Manager Positions at the Local Government Level

A staff position within a county or city government that would facilitate coordination of transportation services provided by numerous agencies and non-profits within the jurisdiction and within the region to improve the quality and efficiency of services for people with disabilities and older adults.

B. Challenge Grant for Coordinated Planning Efforts

A jump start for human service transportation coordination efforts at the local level which would provide support for a planning process to explore how human service and transportation agencies can work together to improve the mobility of people with disabilities and older adults, by possibly sharing vehicles and resources.

C. Personal Mobility Counseling Services (Mobility Management at the Individual Level)

One to one help to customers in identifying their mobility needs and preferences, understanding the available options in their community and providing assistance with the application process or planning and reserving a trip as requested.

D. Travel Training

Teaching people with disabilities or older adults who are unfamiliar with public transit how to use fixed-route services.

E. Door-through-Door or Escorted Transportation Service

Escorted transportation services, sometimes referred to as door-through-door or assisted transportation, provide assistance to a rider who needs an aid and extra support to travel to and from their destination.

F. Expanded and On-Going Sensitivity and Customer Service Training for Taxi, Bus and Paratransit Drivers

More extensive and more comprehensive training (and refresher training) for front-line service providers who have direct interaction with older adults, people with disabilities and people of different socio-economic statuses.

G. Shuttle or Taxi service to Bus Stops and Rail Stations

Feeder service that addresses the “last-mile” problem and transports people who are unable to access their local bus stop or Metrorail station to nearby rail stations and bus stops that will link them to the regional transit system.

H. Bus Stop and Sidewalk Improvements

This project strives to eliminate barriers to the use of public transit by people using with mobility impairments with infrastructure improvements such as adding or redesigning curb cuts, sidewalks, and signage.

I. Deviated Bus or Feeder Service for Targeted Areas or Population Groups

For customers with disabilities who use human service agency services and currently rely on MetroAccess, an alternative would be a deviated bus or feeder service with public transit or a private service. The service could be targeted for people with developmental disabilities that attend day programs which are close in geographic proximity.

J. Pilot Programs that Expand the Use of Taxis for Medical Trips

The use of taxis for medical appointments, in particular for dialysis, instead of customers using MetroAccess, could help curb the cost of specialized transportation service and improve the customer’s experience.

K. Volunteer Driver Programs

Using volunteers to drive agency-owned or private vehicles to transport seniors and people with disabilities for any trip purpose or select trip purposes.

L. Tailored Transportation Service for Clients of Human Service Agencies

For people with disabilities who depend on agency transportation services because public transit is not a viable option (either because it is unavailable or due to the nature of disability). This project could include agencies providing direct transportation through owned or leased vans, and/or working together to provide a van or shuttle to common destinations which are geographically clustered.

Competitive Selection Criteria

The competitive selection process will be much like it was under the JARC and New Freedom programs. The selection committee will be chaired by the Task Force chair, and will include members from local human service and transit agencies, as well from national organizations with expertise in transportation for people with disabilities. Members will review and score the applications based on the selection criteria, and will make a set of funding recommendations to the TPB. The TPB will be asked to approve the recommendations based on the selection committee's deliberations.

The selection criteria have been reevaluated based on the TPB's experience in awarding and administering grants under the JARC and New Freedom programs. The selection criteria have remained substantially the same, with small changes being made to emphasize the importance of project feasibility and an agency's institutional capacity to manage an FTA grant. The following selection criteria include a maximum of 100 total points:

- **Responsiveness to strategies in the Coordinated Plan (20 points)**
Points will be awarded based on how many strategies in the Coordinated Plan that the project application addresses, in addition to how well the application responds to the strategies.
- **Demonstrates Coordination Among Agencies (25 points)**
Coordination can include providing service to clients of multiple agencies, coordinated purchasing, joint project planning and operation.
- **Institutional Capacity to Manage and Administer an FTA grant (20 points)**
This criterion considers the availability of sufficient management, staff and resources to implement an FTA grant, and stable and sufficient sources of funds to provide required match.
- **Project Feasibility (15 points)**
Proposed activities that are consistent with the objectives of funding, applications that clearly spell out how a project will be implemented with defined roles and responsibilities, and include an action plan with milestones and timelines.
- **Serves a Regional Need (10 points)**
Projects that serve more than one jurisdiction will be awarded more points than a project that includes only one jurisdiction.
- **Customer Focus and Involvement (10 points)**
To what extent does the applicant demonstrate an awareness of the needs of a targeted population group and how will customers be involved in the development and implementation of the proposed activity.

Solicitation Details

The TPB will be asked to approve the key elements for the update to the Coordinated Plan at its July 16 meeting. With that approval, a solicitation for grant applications for the Enhanced Mobility program could begin in August with applications due on October 1. \$5.04 million in Federal FY13 and FY14 funds will be available under the solicitation. Applicants will be asked to apply for two-year grants, with a recommended minimum grant application of \$250,000. The \$250,000 recommended grant request includes both the Federal portion and the match over a two-year period (\$125,000 per year).

Past experience with JARC and New Freedom grants has shown that grants less than \$250,000 were administratively burdensome relative to the size of the grant, and that grantees spent more time and resources to simply administer the grant (such as invoice documentation and reporting) than anticipated. Given that the administrative requirements are even more onerous under the Enhanced Mobility Program, applicants will need to have the institutional capacity to manage an FTA grant. Smaller agencies unable to propose and/or implement a \$250,000 grant are encouraged to partner with other agencies or governmental entities to develop an application. Agencies partnering on a grant application would encourage a major goal of the FTA for this funding: coordination of existing specialized transportation services. The project solicitation, application and selection process will be based on the JARC and New Freedom process. However, the process will be tailored to address the restrictions that FTA included on project type and eligible subrecipients.

Federal rules require that at least 55% of the Enhanced Mobility annual apportionments be spent on capital projects, which can include mobility management³. Eligible subrecipients for the 55% capital funding are non-profit organization and local governments that meet certain conditions. The remaining 45% can be spent on both operating and capital projects and the eligible recipients include non-profit organizations, local governments, transit agencies and private providers.

As with JARC and New Freedom, matching funds must be identified at the time of application submittal. For project proposals that are capital or qualify as mobility management⁴, the required match is 20 percent. Operating projects require a 50 match. The source of the match can be private, local, state, or Federal Non-Transportation funds, but cannot include In-kind or non-cash donations.

³Mobility management is a category of projects that include coordination of more than one transportation provider.

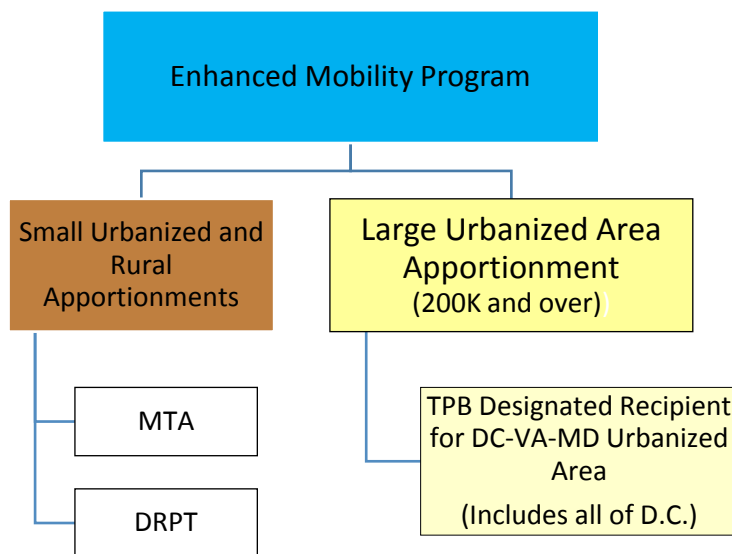
⁴FTA Circular 9070.1G describes mobility management projects eligible for the 20 percent match on Page III-11. The Circular can be found here: http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12349_16011.html

Geographic Eligibility: The Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area

To be eligible for the 5310 Enhanced Mobility Program funds administered by COG/TPB, Federal rules require that **a project or service must end or begin in the Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area** as defined by the 2010 Census, shown in Figure 4 below. Figure 4 also shows that the TPB planning area encompasses most of the Washington DC-MD-VA Urbanized Area, but not all of it, and there are areas within the TPB planning area that are not in the Washington DC-MD-VA Urbanized Area.

For projects that do not end or begin in the Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area, agencies can apply for the 5310 Enhanced Mobility Funds apportioned to Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) for Small Urbanized and Rural Areas, as shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Flow of Funds for the Enhanced Mobility Program



Next Steps

After the 30-day public comment period from June 12 to July 12, the TPB will be asked to approve the key elements for the update to the Coordinated Plan at its July 16 meeting. The TPB staff would then prepare to solicit for grant applications in August with an October 1 deadline. The TPB will be asked to approve the entire update to the Coordinated Plan document in September. A Selection Committee would meet in October to recommend a slate of projects for funding based on the selection criteria. The TPB would be asked to approve these funding recommendations at its November meeting. FTA approval from Region 3 has taken nine to twelve months the last two years for JARC and New Freedom grants. Depending on when FTA provides a final approval, projects would likely begin between February and June 2015.

Figure 4: The 2010 Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area, As Defined by the U.S. Census

