

## **ITEM 11 - Action**

June 17, 2009

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 solicitation and selection process for 2009 JARC and New Freedom funding and on the next project solicitation scheduled for early 2010.
- Adopt Resolution R37-2009 to approve the 10 projects for funding as described in the attached material.

#### **Issues:**

None

#### **Background:**

In the Fall of 2006 the TPB became the designated recipient of the FTA Job Access Reverse Commute (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 4 through April 29. In May, a selection committee chaired by Mr. Lovain reviewed the project applications and recommended that 10 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 sets forth strategies that the projects must respond to and the Coordinated Plan included recommended priority projects for JARC and New Freedom funding;

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

**WHEREAS**, the TPB adopted five projects for funding under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs at its regular meeting on September 19, 2007 (R6-2008) after the TPB's first solicitation for projects held May 1 through June 30, 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB adopted twelve projects for funding under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs at its regular meeting on June 18, 2008 (R25-2008) after the TPB's solicitation for projects held January 8 through April 30, 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, a solicitation for JARC and New Freedom projects was conducted from February 4 through April 29, 2009, during which approximately 1,800 organizations and agencies received a brochure or email announcing the availability of transportation funds; and

**WHEREAS**, five 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 during 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 forwarded the recommendations to the TPB Officers for concurrence in presenting to the TPB; and

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

**WHEREAS**, the TPB Officers concurred with the recommendations for presentation to the TPB;

**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 11, 2009

**To:** Transportation Planning Board  
**From:** Tim Lovain, Selection Committee Chair  
TPB Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force Chair  
**Subject:** **Approval of Project Recommendations for Funding Under the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs**  
**CC:** Ronald Kirby, Director of Transportation Planning

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I am pleased to present to the TPB for approval ten endorsed 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 two years, these ten new projects will improve the mobility of persons with disabilities and low-income commuters throughout the metropolitan area.

## Background

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 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 April 18, 2007. The Coordinated Plan identifies the unmet transportation needs of low-income workers, people with disabilities and older adults and lists priority 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. These projects are currently operational.

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, with the exception of the accessible taxicabs in D.C. that are currently being procured, are operational.

## 2009 Solicitation for JARC and New Freedom Projects

The TPB solicitation for JARC and New Freedom funds was conducted from February 4 through April 29, 2009. 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 five 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 35 different organizations and agencies.

The Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (“Task Force”) identified four priorities for the 2009 solicitation. Three of the priorities were to support the transportation needs of low-income workers. The first priority is transportation vouchers for low-income workers, including taxi vouchers or gas cards. The second priority is expanded transit in underserved neighborhoods, and the third is shuttles or vanpools to suburban employment sites. The fourth priority is travel training, which helps individuals with specialized transportation needs learn to navigate and travel on public transportation. These priorities were released for public comment via the TPB website in November 2008.

At the conclusion of the solicitation period, 12 applications were received: 6 applications for JARC funding, 5 applications for New Freedom funding, and one application for combined JARC and New Freedom funding. Funding recommendations were made by the Selection Committee based on the Task Force’s four 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 12 applications received, 5 be funded at the level of funds requested, 4 be funded at a greater level to ensure needs are adequately addressed, one be provided partial funding, and 2 not be funded. The 10 proposals that are recommended for funding provide balanced geographic coverage. The two applicants whose proposals are not recommended for funding will receive letters explaining how their applications may be strengthened for the next solicitation.

### Selection Committee and Selection Process

I 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, Fastran
2. Eve Hill, Burton Blatt Institute
3. Carolyn Jeskey, Community Transportation Association of America
4. Harold Morgan, Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association
5. Gwen Rubinstein, Washington Area Women’s Foundation

Each member reviewed and scored the applications using the TPB-approved selection criteria. The Selection Committee met 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.

Recommended projects

The following 10 projects were recommended for funding by the Selection Committee.

1. JARC projects (4 projects):

- a. **Northern Virginia Family Service Ways to Work Program:** Funding for a car repair loan program for low-income individuals to perform car maintenance. The project is part of a larger program that has operated since 1998 throughout Northern Virginia and benefits families with limited access to transit.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$37,500	Recommended JARC Funds	\$75,000
Proposed Match	\$37,500	Required Match	\$75,000
Total Proposed Project	\$75,000	Revised Total Project	\$150,000

- b. **Family Matters of Greater Washington:** Start up and implementation of a car loan program for low-income working families to purchase cars. The program will serve individuals in Southeast D.C. and Prince George’s County with limited access to public transit that meets their reverse commute and child-care related transportation needs.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$223,399	Recommended JARC Funds	\$368,535
Proposed Match	\$191,719	Required Match	\$305,175
Total Proposed Project	\$415,118	Revised Total Project	\$673,710

- c. **Doorways for Women and Families:** Funding to provide taxi vouchers for agency clients to attend job training, conduct job searches or reach employment locations throughout Northern Virginia.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$41,915	Recommended JARC Funds	\$41,915
Proposed Match	\$41,915	Required Match	\$41,915
Total Proposed Project	\$83,830	Revised Total Project	\$83,830

- d. **Prince George’s County Department of Public Works & Transportation:** Funding for continuation of UPS shuttle, which provides off-peak service to the Greenbelt Metro station, Prince George’s Community College, and the UPS facility in Laurel, Maryland. UPS is a partner in the project and pays the \$2 per trip fare for its employees.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC Funds	\$211,949	Recommended JARC Funds	\$211,949
Proposed Match	\$211,949	Required Match	\$211,949
Total Proposed Project	\$423,898	Revised Total Project	\$423,838

2. New Freedom projects (5 projects):

- a. **Prince William County Area Agency on Aging:** Funding for the development of a Mobility Management Plan to identify the transportation resources required to address the transportation needs of persons who are older, unable to drive and/or disabled who reside in the Prince William, Manassas, and Manassas Park portion of the Washington, DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area. Funding will also be provided for early implementation of the Plan.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$120,000	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$200,000
Proposed Match	\$30,000	Required Match	\$50,000
Total Proposed Project	\$150,000	Revised Total Project	\$250,000

- b. **Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind:** Funding to hire Orientation & Mobility Specialists on a contract basis to provide classroom, group and individualized travel training to 200 individuals in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties who are visually-impaired or blind.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$164,000	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$259,000
Proposed Match	\$ 41,000	Required Match	\$ 64,750
Total Proposed Project	\$205,000	Revised Total Project	\$323,750

- c. **Boat People SOS:** Funding to provide intensive, hands-on travel training to older Vietnamese individuals with disabilities in Northern Virginia on how to use public transit options.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$187,400	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$165,848
Proposed Match	\$64,850	Required Match	\$41,452
Total Proposed Project	\$252,250	Revised Total Project	\$207,300



- d. **DC Office on Aging:** Funding to support a marketing campaign to raise awareness about the availability of information and assistance provided by the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), including information about available transportation options for D.C. agency clients.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$16,500	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$16,500
Proposed Match	\$16,500	Required Match	\$16,500
Total Proposed Project	\$33,000	Revised Total Project	\$33,000

- e. **Melwood Horticultural Training Center:** Funding for the implementation of a GIS-based software program to optimize van routes and for additional salaries to provide employment-related transportation for people with disabilities to and from home and the agency's contracted worksites in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested New Freedom Funds	\$135,600	Recommended New Freedom Funds	\$135,600
Proposed Match	\$131,400	Required Match	\$131,400
Total Proposed Project	\$267,000	Revised Total Project	\$267,000

3. Joint JARC and New Freedom Project

- a. **Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Comprehensive Individualized Level of Travel Training Project:** A project to provide comprehensive, individualized travel training for people with disabilities in collaboration with the ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia, Independence Now in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, and the D.C. Center for Independent Living. The project also includes support for the distribution of transit fare cards to individuals who complete the travel training curriculum.

Requested		Recommended	
Requested JARC and New Freedom Funds	\$968,407	Recommended JARC and New Freedom Funds	\$968,407
Proposed Match	\$193,685	Required Match	\$193,685
Total Proposed Project	\$1,162,092	Revised Total Project	\$1,162,092

Next Steps

If all 10 of the above recommended projects are funded, all but \$211,499 of the New Freedom money and \$922,193 of the JARC money 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 2010. 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 me at [timothylovain@aol.com](mailto:timothylovain@aol.com) or 202-329-1648 or Beth Newman on the TPB staff at [bnewman@mwkog.org](mailto:bnewman@mwkog.org) or 202-962-3253.