



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: Lynn Winchell-Mendy, TPB Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Solicitation Notice for Funding for the Federal Transit Administration's American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP)
DATE: April 30, 2021

The purpose of this notice is to provide details about the availability of supplemental funding for the 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), and outline TPB/COG's proposed process to allocate the apportionment of \$591,362 for the DC-MD-VA urbanized area.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On March 11, 2021, the ARP was signed into law. It includes \$30.5 billion in federal funding to support the nation's public transportation systems as they continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to support vaccination. \$50 million is to be distributed to the 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program through formula grants.

The apportionment for the Washington, DC/VA/MD urbanized area is \$591,362 (Federal). After allowable Program Administration dollars, \$532,226 will be available for projects through an application in TrAMS to TPB, with COG as the administrative agent, as the Designated Recipient for Enhanced Mobility.

While the Enhanced Mobility grant program solicitations and awards are implemented on a biennial basis, Section 3.3.6 of the Program Management Plan (PMP) allows for special solicitation outside of the regular every two-years. While the Enhanced Mobility program does not require competitive selection, as Designated Recipient, COG and TPB have elected to make it competitive, as reflected in the PMP. As such the solicitation and award of the supplemental ARP funding will follow a competitive process, and on an expedited schedule.

Recently, the TPB-approved projects that will receive funding from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSSA). The purpose of ARP funding is different than CRRSSA. ARP funding is to support [expenses eligible under Enhanced Mobility](#), and recipients are directed to prioritize payroll and operational needs. Allocations to grantees/subrecipients are a local decision.

The following additional requirements apply to the supplemental funding:

- Projects must benefit older adults and/or people with disabilities residing in the DC-MD-VA urbanized area
- 100% Federal, no match required
- Pre-award authority is retroactive to January 20, 2020

- Must follow the existing Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan
- Providing transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities to COVID-19 vaccination sites is an eligible expense
- Administrative requirements are the same as for the Enhanced Mobility program (application in TrAMS, Program of Projects, quarterly Milestone Progress Reports, quarterly Federal Financial Reports, compliance, etc.)
- Requires an update to the TIP/STIP depending on the type of projects

The net amount of grant funding awarded will be \$532,200 after providing for grant administration (by COG staff). All suballocations will be reviewed and approved by FTA within TrAMS, per standard award procedure.

Additional information regarding the ARP award can be found on FTA's website at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/american-rescue-plan-act-2021>

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The same eligibility requirements used for the CRRSAA solicitation will be used for ARP:

- Funding will be made available to existing subrecipients and recent subrecipients of Enhanced Mobility (or JARC and New Freedom projects funded under an Enhanced Mobility solicitation) who qualify.
- The application must be for the benefit of the same project as the existing or recently closed award, and/or for transportation to COVID vaccination sites. If for vehicles already delivered, it should be to support the purpose of the vehicles, i.e. driver salaries, coordination staff, operating costs, etc.
- Applicants will be required to document impact, specifically the need to end or limit activities or services and lay off or furlough staff.
- Applicants will be required to document that any CARES act dollars received have been fully expended or were not used for the project in the application.
- It is recommended that the request be at least \$75,000 - \$100,000 for ease of management but does not preclude applying for funding for lower amounts.

NEXT STEPS

- Staff will develop an application and solicitation similar to the one used for CRRSAA, for implementation through the Foundant grants management system.
- Existing subrecipients, regardless of current "active" project status, will be notified of the opportunity to apply and parameters.
- Solicitation will launch (after the May TPB meeting) on May 21 and applications will be due at 3pm on June 21.
- Staff will convene an internal selection committee (end of June).

- Staff will convene a briefing for TPB Officers and the AFA Chair on applications received and recommendations for funding (early July).
- TPB approval of projects recommended for funding and update to the TIP will be sought in July.
- The application will be completed in TrAMS to receive the funds from FTA and contract with selected subrecipients to manage the award (after July TPB meeting).

cc: Kanti Srikanth, Deputy Executive Director for Metropolitan Planning
Lyn Erickson, Director, Plan Development and Coordination
Dan Sheehan, Transportation Program Operations Manager
Nicholas Ramfos, Director, Transportation Operations Programs

Program Management Plan

<https://www.mwcog.org/coordinated-human-service-transportation-plan/> - 2018 update

Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan

<https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2016/10/21/program-management-plan-for-enhanced-mobility-of-seniors-and-individuals-with-disabilities-funds-section-5310/>

SELECTION CRITERIA

The competitive selection process includes an internal COG/TPB staff selection committee. Members will review 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 are based on the TPB's experience in awarding and administering grants for the Enhanced Mobility program. Adaptions made to the Enhanced Mobility selection criteria for the ARP funding reflect the proposal to offer the opportunity to apply to existing or recently closed Enhanced Mobility projects only. For example, applicants will have already been scored on Coordination, Responsiveness to the Coordinated Plan, and Equity Emphasis Areas in their original Enhanced Mobility application, so those criteria are not necessary for the ARP selection.

The following proposed selection criteria include a maximum of 100 total points:

Project Focus (45 points)

This criterion looks at how the project meets the intent of the funding and addresses a demonstrated need, in consultation with the target population. Per FTA guidance, projects that request payroll and operational funding will take priority and may score higher. Transportation to vaccination sites is an eligible expense under ARP. Applications that address this important need and serve equity emphasis areas on the process may score higher.

Project Feasibility (25 points)

This criterion looks at how well the application addresses how the project will be implemented, including defined roles and responsibilities and an action plan that is achievable within an 18-month timeframe.

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 past grant performance.

Partnerships/Coordination (10 points)

This criterion considers projects that coordinate efforts or develop partnerships that aid older adults and people with disabilities in accessing mobility services during the pandemic. Additional points will be awarded to partnerships across departments or jurisdictions.