

ITEM 12 - Action

July 20, 2011

Endorsement of a Proposed TPB Project Application Concept for Funding Under the FY 2011 Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Competitive Grant Program, and of Applications Under Development by TPB Member Agencies for Four FTA Competitive Grant Programs

Staff

Recommendation:

- Receive briefing on a proposed TPB TIGER project application concept to implement transit access improvements in selected rail station areas
- Endorse this proposed TPB TIGER project application concept so that TPB staff can proceed with the development of a pre-application for Board approval at its September 21 meeting
- Authorize the TPB chair to sign letters endorsing project applications under development by TPB member agencies for four FTA competitive grant programs, as described in the enclosed memorandum.

Issues:

None

Background:

On July 1, USDOT released in the Federal Register the Interim Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for \$527 million in discretionary surface transportation grant funding for the FY 2011 TIGER program, with pre-applications due on October 3 and final applications due on October 31. During June,

FTA released NOFAs for four other competitive grant programs with applications from states and designated transit recipients due in the next 30 to 60 days. The TPB will be briefed on project applications under development by TPB member agencies, as described in the enclosed memorandum, and asked to endorse them as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington region.

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Ronald F. Kirby
Director, Department of
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: **Proposed Concept for a FY 2011 TIGER Grant Application, and Review of
FTA Discretionary Grant Opportunities**

DATE: July 14, 2011

The US Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recently announced five discretionary grant opportunities. This memorandum summarizes TPB staff's proposal for application for a regional TIGER grant, and reviews the additional four FTA Competitive Grant Programs, including regional requests for TPB endorsement of applications.

TIGER Discretionary Grant

On July 1, U.S. DOT issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the FY 2011 round of funding under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant Program. There is \$527 million available for funding capital projects; no funding is available "solely for planning, preparation, or design". Awarded funds must be obligated by September 30, 2013, and applicants must provide a schedule for meeting NEPA and planning requirements if not already completed. Projects in urban areas require a minimum 20% local match, from public or private monies, with additional non-federal funds making applications more competitive. Awards by DOT will take into consideration geographic and modal equity (e.g., \$140 million is reserved for rural projects). The minimum application amount for urban projects is \$10 million, not including the local match (i.e., overall the minimum project must be \$12.5 million). A major part of the grant application is a required detailed Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) quantifying the impacts of the proposed project.

Applications will be competitively rated on the primary and secondary selection criteria. Primary Selection Criteria include long-term outcomes (state of good repair, economic competitiveness, livability, environmental sustainability, and safety), and job creation and near-term economic activity. Secondary selection criteria include demonstration of project innovation and partnership. Pre-applications are due October 3, and applications are due October 31.

Overview of Proposed Application Concept for TPB TIGER Application

TPB staff has developed the following proposed concept for a FY 2011 TIGER grant application. TPB staff proposes to seek a TIGER grant to fund small-scale, innovative transit access projects, such as pedestrian/bicycle or other circulation improvements, in selected rail station areas. The grant package would include a limited number of rail station areas throughout the region, numbering at least three but no more than six. The proposal would request funding for capital improvements that are “the result of a planning process which coordinated transportation and land use planning decisions and encouraged community participation in the process”, totaling up to a request for approximately \$20 million.

The transportation projects in the TPB FY 2011 TIGER application will all focus on the common goal of encouraging the development of housing and job centers in locations well-served by transit but currently underutilized for housing and employment. Such locations might include suburban activity centers or potential housing and job centers on the eastern side of region. In many cases, these places would likely be classified as reverse commute destinations.

The application will focus on underutilized rail station areas as untapped regional assets. The proposal will explain that the TPB’s scenario planning has demonstrated that the region can reap significant regional benefits by increasing job and housing growth near Metro and other rail stations. Demand pressures on the transportation system would be alleviated by using trains in reverse-commute directions that are currently operating under capacity, or by selling the same seat twice in peak commute directions (where one group of commuters alights at a mixed-use suburban location and another group boards). More broadly, promoting development near rail station areas would reduce distances between housing and employment, which would reduce VMT and congestion. Looking beyond transportation measures, a more balanced allocation of job growth will benefit the entire region in numerous other ways – for example, by promoting economic development in all jurisdictions, inner and outer, east and west.

Scenario planning over the last decade has emphasized the logic of promoting development closer to transit station areas, locating jobs and housing closer together, and improving multimodal transportation options. But planners at the TPB and COG have also found that local, often small-scale, actions are necessary to make these principles truly come to life. The TPB’s Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program was established to help jurisdictions plan small improvements – such as streetscaping, sidewalks or community circulation systems – to make activity centers work better as vibrant, mixed-use places. TLC projects will serve as the inspiration for this regional TIGER grant application concept.

Many of the planning efforts completed under the TLC Program suggest capital improvements, such as pedestrian facilities or multi-modal concepts for intersections or streets, that further the ability of all modes to function well in a dense, multi-modal area. There are other such planning efforts around the region that have deliverables suited to this proposed concept for a TIGER application, including the “Metrorail Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Improvements Study,” which the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) recently concluded. That study identified strategies to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity in and around Metrorail stations, providing recommendations for a range of physical infrastructure improvements.

The TPB TIGER application will highlight the need for the coordinated implementation of a transportation system that recognizes all modes and facilitates a balanced approach to economic development. The projects in the grant application will allow businesses to better integrate with surrounding communities and will provide employees with viable housing and transportation options, including the possibility to take transit and then travel “the last mile” on foot, by bike or by local circulator.

The NOFA emphasizes that livability investments must be designed and planned in such a way that they have a positive impact on qualitative measures of community life. The NOFA further states that attention will be paid to the degree to which such projects contribute to broader traveler mobility through intermodal connections, enhanced job commuting options, or improved connections between residential and commercial areas.

Suggested Criteria for the Selection of Projects to Include in a TPB TIGER Application

TPB staff has developed six core criteria for project selection that will help to unify the TPB’s slate of projects into a coordinated application:

1. Projects will be located within ½ mile of a rail transit station. A rail transit station may be commuter rail or Metrorail, and may be existing or under construction. An ideal transit station project would significantly enhance the regional transportation network.
2. Projects will be located in existing, under-utilized, or emerging employment or housing centers.
3. Projects will demonstrate support and coordination with local development. An ideal project would be a component of a larger project funded by a developer, a local jurisdiction, or a state DOT.
4. Project planning will have been fairly well completed.
5. Projects will be part of larger developments/projects that exemplify the regional goal of balanced growth, including reverse commute or selling the same seat twice. Such larger projects will also contribute to the goal of reduction of regional VMT.
6. Projects should provide replicable regional examples that are innovative in design, concept, or implementation.

TPB staff is recommending that each project included in the region’s grant application will be approximately \$3 million, with up to 80 percent of project costs eligible for federal funding. Each project must demonstrate a commitment for at least a 20 percent match.

TPB staff recommends that the total grant application make a total request of up to \$20 million, comprised of three to six projects that address the six criteria above, with no more than two projects for each state-level jurisdiction. While the grant proposal will have a strong unifying theme, it will be designed as a package of discrete projects that federal reviewers may only partially fund, if they so choose. Based upon recent federal grant experiences, allowing for a scalable grant package can be attractive to federal reviewers.

Six “Strawman” TLC and WMATA Projects Appropriate for the TPB TIGER Proposal

There are numerous examples of joint transportation and development projects around rail stations in the Washington region that support the concept of reverse commute or selling the same seat twice. In this grant proposal, the TPB seeks to put forward three to six transportation infrastructure projects based on previous planning efforts and community involvement that will each serve as a catalyst towards building vibrant, mixed-use communities around rail stations. A number of project concepts have been completed through the TLC Program and the WMATA Metrorail Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Improvements Study that with additional work would be suitable for inclusion in the TPB TIGER grant application. The six summarized below provide a “strawman package” that highlights multimodal capital improvements that complement development plans already underway and provide options for “the last mile”. Additional information would be solicited from jurisdictions and organizations to prepare final design and construction cost estimates and collect the other necessary information for a grant application.

District of Columbia

Van Ness/UDC Metro Station and Commercial Corridor Enhancement Study (TLC)

Cost: This project does not have cost estimates. DDOT should be able to develop an estimate for the cost of recommendations.

Capital Improvements: Improvements consist of constructing low-impact design (LID) streetscaping, plaza improvements, crosswalks and curb reconstruction.

This TLC project was part of the FY 2011 TLC technical assistance program. The consultant developed a set of recommendations and low impact streetscape design options to enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections between the Van Ness/UDC Metrorail station on the western portion of the Metro Red Line, the University of the District of Columbia, and the surrounding community. The result will be a long-term plan that will make Metro, UDC, and local retail more accessible and attractive to students and area residents, thus reducing vehicle use. The purpose of the study was to develop design recommendations, which would be implemented by DDOT, WMATA and local property owners.

District of Columbia: Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station Access Improvements (WMATA)

Cost: This project has developed early preliminary cost estimates.

Capital Improvements: Bicycle and pedestrian improvements between the station, Rhode Island Avenue, and the commercial properties.

This WMATA project surveyed the Rhode Island Metrorail Station, which has a growing concentration of commercial and residential development. The single vehicular access point is a road off of Rhode Island Avenue that also provides access to the commercial properties. This road includes only partial sidewalks, leading to numerous conflicts between modes. The WMATA study identified small-scale pedestrian and bicycle access improvements between the station, Rhode Island Avenue, and the commercial properties.

Maryland

City of Bowie: Community Charrette on Pedestrian Trail Feasibility to the Bowie MARC Station and Bowie Heritage Trail (TLC)

Cost: Cost estimates were not provided. Each report acknowledges that design work still remains to be conducted.

Capital Improvements: Construct the multi-use trail in whole or in phases.

In 2008, the City of Bowie applied for TLC technical assistance to study alignment options for a bicycle and pedestrian path connecting Old Town Bowie to the Bowie State MARC commuter rail station and Bowie State University. The proposed alternative developed through this study connects the greatest number of residents to Old Town Bowie, the MARC Station at Bowie State University, and the WB&A Trail. The report details the next steps the city should take toward implementing the trail plan and pays special attention to the near term possibilities. The Bowie Heritage Trail report, completed in 2009 with TLC technical assistance, provides phasing recommendations for implementation of the trail and a detailed list of next steps the city should take to secure funding for construction. Preferred alignments have been selected and access to the right-of-way is not a serious concern.

Prince George's County: Recommendations for "Complete Streets" in the Prince George's Plaza Transit District (TLC)

Cost: \$1.9 million (figured provided in report)

Capital Improvements: A series of bicycle, pedestrian, streetscape, and curb reconstruction projects.

The 2008 TLC technical assistance grant to Prince George's County provided consultant services to develop a plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle conditions in the Prince George's Plaza Transit District, adjacent to the Prince George's Plaza Metrorail Station on the northern portion of the Metro Green Line. The station area has commercial, residential, and business uses. The consultant identified the accommodations needed for bicyclists and pedestrians, identified gaps in the existing pedestrian and bicycle network, and outlined potential retrofit opportunities to address these needs. The consultant proposed upgrades to an area built for the automobile but which is seeing a renaissance of bicycle and pedestrian use with the construction of new dense, mixed use development. The report outlines a list of upgrades with planning level cost estimates and an assessment of the ease of implementation.

Virginia

Fairfax County: Wiehle Avenue Station Multimodal Mobility Needs Analysis (TLC)

Cost: Varies (projects with funding levels are identified, but a slate of projects associated with this study would be determined by available funding and application of the project methodology)

Capital Improvements: A series of bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and road improvements that will enhance multimodal accessibility to the station.

This TLC project, completed in 2010, developed a Multimodal Level of Service (MMLoS) methodology to evaluate an array of potential projects to accommodate the mobility needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and local bus and auto users at the new Metrorail Station at Wiehle Avenue in Reston. The projects, provided by Fairfax County, were ranked based on priorities developed in the Station Access Management Plan and then organized by short, medium and long term implementation schedules. The result of the study is a new model that can help planners analyze the relative merits of projects against each other, as well as promote safety and accessibility to a new

station that cannot be analyzed by the MMLOS model. Fairfax County is currently evaluating multimodal projects around the future Wiehle Avenue Metrorail Station to determine the construction sequencing related to funding availability.

Fairfax County: Huntington Metro Station Access Improvements (WMATA)

Cost: \$1 - \$4 million

Capital Improvements: Sidewalk improvements, crosswalks, bicycle facilities, and a pedestrian bridge.

This WMATA study surveyed the Huntington Metro Station, located at the southern terminus of the Metrorail Yellow Line. The station serves the surrounding neighborhood and businesses, as well as bus riders and park and ride users. The Metro study identified small and large scale pedestrian and trail improvements to facilitate access to the station from the neighborhoods and along Huntington Avenue. These projects include widening sidewalks, adding crosswalks, installing a bike lane or shared lane markings, and constructing a bridge.

Additional Examples of Candidate TLC and WMATA Projects

TPB staff reviewed all completed TLC projects for rail station proximity and capital improvement recommendations. A number of projects met these criteria, though due to the level of specificity of the deliverables, those listed above provide greater detail for this FY2011 TIGER application. TPB staff also reviewed the WMATA Access Improvements Study and found those project listed above to be most suited for the TIGER application. However there are several other projects identified through this study that would be appropriate. An additional seven projects are listed below that could be candidates for the TPB TIGER application.

District of Columbia

Independent Shuttle Bus Consolidation Strategy for the Greater Brookland Community (TLC)

Cost: The project provided an estimate for the design of a shuttle station.

Capital Improvements: Construct a formal shuttle bus zone around the station to facilitate customer movements between rail and the shuttle buses, and add pedestrian and shuttle bus stop amenities.

Maryland

Prince George's County: Pedestrian Safety Measures for the New Carrollton Metro Station (TLC)

Cost: \$1.2 million (figure provided in report)

Capital Improvements: Sidewalk and crossing improvements and signal timing changes.

Prince George's County: Central Avenue TOD Corridor Pedestrian and Mobility Study (TLC)

Cost: The report does not include cost estimates (these could be easily estimated using data from other projects or by collaborating with DDOT or Prince George's County).

Capital Improvements: curb reconstruction, traffic signal, lighting, intersection reconfiguration, sidewalk and crossing signal improvements.

Prince George's County: Naylor Road Metro Station Area Accessibility Improvement Study (TLC)

Cost: \$1.4 million (figure provided in report)

Capital Improvements: Construct sidewalks and curb extensions, update pedestrian signals, add bus stop amenities.

Prince George's County: Non-Motorized Transportation Study (Town of Cheverly) (TLC)

Cost: \$13 million (this figure is the sum of individual project cost estimates provided in the report. These projects are close to the Cheverly Metrorail station. The report includes other projects).

Capital Improvements: Trail construction, construct a pedestrian bridge, and provide on-road bicycle facilities.

City of Rockville: Accessibility and Rockville's TODs: Safer Walkways to Transit (TLC)

Cost: \$750,000 (derived from specific project recommendations and cost estimates for specific treatments, both provided in report)

Capital Improvements: construct and improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and medians; add bicycle parking.

Prince George's County: West Hyattsville Metro Station Access Improvements (WMATA)

Cost: \$3.1 million

Capital Improvements: Construct sidewalks and trails to improve access to the station, create a full service bicycle station at the station.

Virginia

Fairfax County: Vienna Metro Station Access Improvements (WMATA)

Cost: \$3.1 million

Capital Improvements: Bicycle facilities around the station and pedestrian treatments.

Benefit Cost Analysis

Any application for TIGER funding requires a thorough benefit-cost analyses of the proposed projects, quantifying both transportation and other factors. Specifically, each of the five long term outcomes must be analyzed: 1) state of good repair, 2) economic competitiveness, 3) livability, 4) environmental sustainability, and 5) safety. This will require information on the affected population, the long-term operating and maintenance costs, forecast travel demand, and other data.

Project owners would need to collect and submit the necessary information to enable accurate calculation of the benefits and costs of the proposed projects. A solicitation will be disseminated outlining the required information as well as other project details, and then inter-agency meetings will be used to further develop inputs for the cost-benefit analysis.

TPB has consultant services available to provide expert assistance in applying current best practices in calculating the benefits and costs of such factors as safety, greenhouse gases and other emissions, travel time savings, discount rates, and other parameters.

Next Steps

Contingent upon TPB approval of this proposal, TPB staff will immediately solicit projects for inclusion in the TPB's FY 2011 TIGER Application. TPB staff will develop a project submission form that will request basic project information, including specific location, specific capital improvements to be funded (design and engineering activities may be eligible to the extent that they

are part of an overall construction project that receives TIGER funding), local match information, data for the benefit cost analysis, and descriptions of linkages to current development efforts.

Project sponsors will also be asked to demonstrate how a project meets the criteria outlined above, as well as the primary and secondary selection criteria outlined in the NOFA. Sponsors for all potential projects (including those referenced in the projects above) would need to provide those items by 5:00 p.m. on August 10.

Milestones

August 10:	Deadline for project information to TPB staff.
August 17:	Meeting to discuss project proposals and additional information needed, and to review the strongest proposals.
August 31:	Meeting to finalize the slate of projects and identify any additional information needed.
September 9:	TPB Technical Committee review of recommended projects and pre-application package.
September 21:	TPB approval of recommended projects and pre-application package.
October 3:	Pre-application submitted in accordance with NOFA deadline.
October 7:	TPB Technical Committee review of final application package.
October 19:	TPB approval of final application package.
October 31:	Final applications submitted in accordance with NOFA deadline.

Additional Federal Discretionary Grant Opportunities

In addition to TIGER, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has recently released a series of notices for funding availability for four other discretionary grant programs. FTA discretionary grants applications require metropolitan planning organization endorsement to ensure that funded projects will be incorporated into long-range plans (i.e., the CLRP) and transportation improvement programs (i.e., the TIP).

FTA Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction (TIGGER) and Clean Fuels Grants

The next round of the TIGGER (also known as TIGGER III) Grant Program and the Clean Fuels Grant Program were announced June 24 by the FTA. Up to \$49.9 million in FY2011 funds are available for TIGGER and up to \$51.5 million for Clean Fuels. The TIGGER grant has two options: (1) capital investments that will assist in reducing the energy consumption of a transit system; or (2) capital investments that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions of a public transportation system. Applications must include estimates of energy reduction or greenhouse gas emissions and descriptions of estimating methodology. Eligible applicants are State DOTs and public transportation agencies for TIGGER; Section 5307 recipients for Clean Fuels. Local match is typically 10%, depending upon the nature of the proposed project. MPO concurrence letters are recommended as well as "coordination with and support of other transit operators" in the MPO area. Applications are due August 23.

FTA Bus Livability Grants (Section 5309)

Also announced on June 24 by the Federal Transit Administration was the next round of bus livability grants. There is \$150 million from FY2011 discretionary bus and bus facility program funds that will be distributed through this program. Awards will be made for capital projects for bus and bus facilities that meet livability principles, which include: 1) more transportation choices; 2) equitable, affordable housing; 3) economic competitiveness; 4) support existing communities; 5) coordinate policies and leverage investment; and 6) value communities and neighborhoods. Eligible applicants include Section 5309 recipients (e.g., WMATA, MTA) and a local match of 20% is needed. MPO endorsement is specifically mentioned as a rating criterion. Applications are due July 29.

FTA Alternatives Analysis Grants (Section 5339)

The Alternatives Access program has up to \$25 million available in FY2010 and FY2011 discretionary funds. This grant program funds project/corridor planning, including alternatives analysis, project analysis, selection of a locally preferred alternative (LPA), and adoption of the LPA as part of a long-range transportation plan. Eligible applicants include states, agencies, local governments, and MPOs; a local match of 20% is needed. Applications are due July 29.

FTA Bus State of Good Repair (SGR)

The FTA announced on June 24 a competitive application process for State of Good Repair (SGR) funds for buses and bus facilities in the amount of \$750 million. Eligible applicants include Section 5309 recipients (e.g., WMATA, MTA) and a local match of 20% is needed. Proposed projects require consistency with the MPO long range plan and "coordination with and support of other transit operators" in the MPO area. Applications are due on July 29.

Regional Requests for TPB Endorsement of FTA Grant Applications

The TPB has received the following requests for endorsement of applications for Federal Transit Administration discretionary grants.

1. Montgomery County

Montgomery County is submitting two applications for FTA discretionary grants. One application will be for \$13 million under the Bus State of Good Repair (SGR) Grant Program, to purchase 48 diesel buses to replace a series of cutaway buses that are unreliable. The second application will be to purchase 11 hybrid buses and 5 CNG buses for \$6 million under the Clean Fuels Grant Program. (Attachment: Letter from Director Arthur Holmes).

2. Prince George's County

Prince George's County will be requesting \$240,000 of funding under the Bus State of Good Repair Program to purchase two Eldorado vehicles at a cost of \$300,000. The vehicles will be used to replace vehicles past their useful life.

3. Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)

PRTC is submitting an application for \$5.6 million under the Bus State of Good Repair Grant Program to fund the mid-life overhaul of 28 OmniRide buses.



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Director

July 13, 2011

The Honorable Muriel Bowser, Chair
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Chairman Bowser:

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) requests support from the Transportation Planning Board on the County's behalf. The grant applications are for the "State of Good Repair" and "Clean Fuels" programs.

The first grant application is for "State of Good Repair" program funding for \$13 million in federal funding. These funds will be matched by Montgomery County and be used to replace 48 Champion International cutaway buses with 48 29' heavy-duty diesel buses. These Champion buses were purchased in 2007 and are unreliable and have been pulled completely out of service on two separate occasions to address severe safety concerns with the braking systems. The lack of availability of buses has led to a reduced level of customer service to Ride On passengers.

The second grant application is to purchase 16 (11 hybrids and five CNG) buses for \$6 million in federal "Clean Fuels" grant funding to be matched by Montgomery County. These 16 buses will replace 11 gas-fueled Champion buses and five compressed natural gas buses (CNG) that have reached their useful life. These hybrid and new CNG buses reduce emissions over the buses scheduled to be replaced.

The grant applications require that the Metropolitan Planning Organization determines that the applications are consistent with the Long Range Plan, that the Transportation Improvement Program can be amended to include these projects, if approved for funding by the Federal Transit Administration, and is coordinated and supported among the region's transit operators.

The "State of Good Repair" application is due July 29, 2011, and the "Clean Fuels" grant application is due August 23, 2011, so we appreciate your consideration at the July 20, 2011,

Office of the Director


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Located one block west of the Rockville Metro Station

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
July 13, 2011
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Transportation Planning Board Meeting. Please contact me or Mr. Gary Erenrich at 240-777-7156 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Director

AH:ge

cc: Donald Halligan, Director, Office of Planning and capital Programming, MDOT
Diane Ratcliff, Director Office of Planning for the MTA
Carolyn Biggins, Chief, Transit Division, MCDOT
Gary Erenrich, Special Assistant to the Director for WMATA Affairs, MCDOT