




**Assessment of the
Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New
Freedom Programs
Administered by the National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board (TPB)**

TPB Meeting
January 18, 2012

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FTA JARC and New Freedom Programs

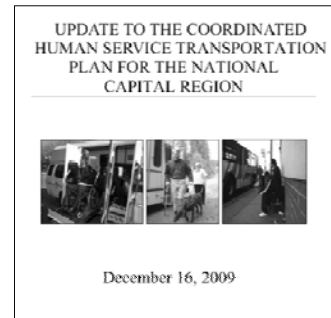
- Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)
 - Support s job-related transportation for low-income workers
- New Freedom
 - Supports transportation for persons with disabilities
- Match required
 - 50% for Operating
 - 20% for Capital and Mobility Management
- Projects Must be “Derived from” a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)


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TPB Role

- Became Designated Recipient in 2006
- Administers JARC and New Freedom programs for Washington DC-VA-MD Urbanized Area
- Established the Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force in 2006
- Adopted an Update to the Coordinated Plan in 2009



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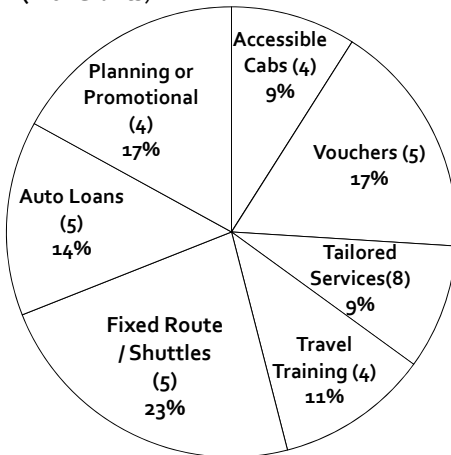
Background

- Purpose of Assessment
 - Review program administration and oversight (TPB role)
 - Comparison to agencies in other metro areas and states
 - Assess data from the 35 grants funded between 2007 and 2010 and customer benefits
- Nelson/Nygaard conducted the assessment between March and November 2011
 - Interviewed grantees, customers and the Task Force
 - Reviewed FTA-required reports from grantees
 - Presented findings and recommendations to the Task Force

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Grants Funded Between 2007 and 2010

Percentage of Grants by Type
(# of Grants)



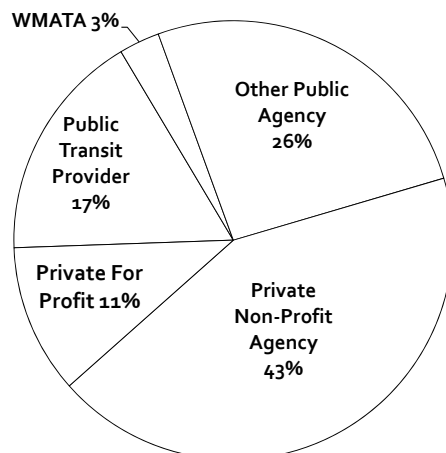
35 grants total \$10.3 million

- Wide variety of grants funded
- 15 grants out of 35 are 50% or more complete
- Over 2/3 of the total grant amounts less than \$300k (Federal + Match)
- 80% of funding went to grants responding to priorities set by the Task Force

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Project Sponsors by Agency Type

2007 to 2010



- Wide range of project sponsors

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Grants Expand Customer Choices

Better Options with Lower Costs for People with Disabilities

- Regional Travel Training
- Regional Bus Stop Access Improvements
- D.C .Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Pilot
- Reach-a-Ride: Website and call center for specialized transportation information



www.reacharide.org

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Compared to peer agencies, the TPB:

- Has a more proactive role in program administration
- Is one of only a few to undertake as assessment of this scope
- Has been successful in obligating all of its JARC and New Freedom funds
- Funded a wider range of grants, and also has a wider variety of project sponsors
- Selection committee composition tended to be more diverse
- Selection Committee is chaired by a Board Member

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The TPB, like it's agency peers:

- Found FTA regulations and processes to be cumbersome
 - Too much lag time from selection to FTA approval
 - Activities eligible for funding too limited
 - Match requirement for operating grants (50%) is too high

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Key Findings

TPB Role

- No widespread changes to the TPB administrative and oversight process called for

From the 15 grants examined:

- Implementation slower than expected
 - New programs take time to set up
 - Recruiting program participants sometimes challenging
- Most grants did not meet the estimated number of people to be served originally stated in application
- Customer benefits from programs significant, but hard to quantify (e.g. one person who is travel trained could experience daily benefits over a long-period of time & rely less on paratransit) 10

Key Findings

From the Grantees:

- Matching funds difficult to find
- Grant administration took more time than anticipated
- Reluctance to start new services when future funding is uncertain
- Even more challenges with economic downturn – more need, fewer staff and less funding available
- All project sponsors highlighted successes that improved transportation for clients

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Improvements We Will Make to the TPB Process

Spring 2012: Grant Solicitation and Selection Summer/Fall 2012

- Provide project templates as resource to prepare applications
- Rotate selection committee members more often
- Refresh Task Force membership
- Strengthen grant performance measurements and monitoring
- Provide opportunities for grantee exchange on lessons learned
- After 2012, solicit for grants every 2 years (rather than every year)



Examples of Project Templates

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Suggested Changes to Federal Requirements

Changes Could Improve Program Efficacy

- Lower the match requirement to 20% for all project types
- Streamline and reduce administrative requirements (which were set up for conventional transit programs)
- Expand activities eligible for funding:
 - Allow transit fares
 - Remove trip restrictions under JARC
- National Independent Evaluation to allow program administrators and project sponsors to learn from each other

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For More Information

- Full Report and details for 2012 solicitation available at www.tpbcoordination.org

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