



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor

Department of Transportation

Public Transit Division
Mill Creek Office Building
555 13th St NE, Suite 3
Salem, OR 97301-4179
Phone: (503) 986-3300
Fax: (503) 986-4189
www.oregon.gov/odot/pt

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To: Public Transit Division Partners and Stakeholders

From: Jean Palmateer, Special Transportation Program Manager

Subject: Frequently Asked Questions about the FY 12-13 Statewide Public Transit Division Grant Solicitation

As you are aware, the Public Transit Division is offering an opportunity for transit agencies to apply for grants funds to be used between the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. See the link for program materials: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/PT/transit-providers.shtml#Grant_Opportunities

We anticipate that there will be more demand for funds than there are funds available in this program. Do not let the potential limitation of funds be a barrier to your application – we would like to know about your program needs in case additional funds become available.

We have been fielding a number of questions requesting clarification about the program. See the following Responses to Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Question: Program materials state that eligible applicants must be current grant recipients; would other applicants be considered for funding?

Response: PTD is interested in working with partners with expertise in our transit grant programs and with current transit projects so that these funds can be spent by June 30, 2013.. However, any potentially eligible agency may apply for funds. Please refer to the Public Transit Division State Management Plan for more information about applicant eligibility.

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/PT/PROGRAMS/SHARED/state_mgmt_plan.shtml

2. Question: What if my project will take longer than one year to complete?

Response: It is Public Transit Division's goal to spend these funds by the end of the State's biennium (June 30, 2013). However, we recognize that some projects can not be completed in one year. An example of a project that is likely to need additional time is purchasing large buses that can not be delivered within the one year period.

We will amend projects for time if more time is needed due to circumstances beyond your control. However, please plan your grant as if you will complete it by June 30, 2013. We will amend agreements for time on a case-by-case basis.

3. Question: Does the stated goal of the program “sustaining services” mean that there is a priority for vehicle replacement applications over vehicle expansion applications?

Response: No—we will review each request for vehicles and other capital based on the need and proposed use for the item(s). Important to the decision is the division staff understanding of why the expansion is needed: Is the current vehicle too small or too large for the amount of rides being provided? Is there a safety issue, for example, too many standees at certain times of day? We look at the service need as a predictor of the vehicle size – there is nothing in the program policy that would limit the size of vehicles eligible for funding.

Likewise, for mobility management and operations-type projects, a new service might be desirable. For example, an agency may identify a new opportunity for using existing equipment to provide a new segment of service or there is a new partner to be served, such as for veterans transportation. It is not the intent of this program, however, to initiate services that are entirely new and have low likelihood of surviving without additional future funds.

4. Question: Provide clarification of the term” sustaining services”.

Response: In addition to the definition provided in the program announcement, sustaining service should be viewed from the passengers’ perspective, for example, if one agency has ceased service and another agency is assuming responsibility for the same or similar service, that situation would also be included in the definition for “sustaining services”.

5. Question: The program materials state that facility projects are not eligible. Is planning for facilities an acceptable application?

Yes, agencies with facility planning/architectural/engineering needs may apply. Please use the form “Capital Equipment” to describe your project. Such projects may be funded, pending the availability of future funds.

6. My proposed project is not included in the “Coordinated Plan”, but the project is needed. What do I do?

Response: The projects must be “derived” from the locally adopted “Coordinated Plan”. The purpose of the plan is to engage the community in identifying and evaluating needs and gaps in service. Projects do not need to be specifically called out by name in the plan, for example, there is likely to be statements of need regarding replacing vehicles when they need to be replaced and about sustaining services. These statements may be sufficient justify the project. However, some plans do not discuss topics such as providing services to veterans and acquiring technology.

The entities that are responsible for the preparation and adoption of the Coordinated Plan are the STF Agencies: Please see the following link for more information:

<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/PT/docs/STF/STF-Guidebook-041311.pdf> (See Appendix B for the planning requirements. If you need assistance to find your STF Agency contact, consult the Public Transit Division.)

If the plan for your area does not reflect your project, please contact the STF program administrator for your area. You may request a plan addendum for your project. Please be aware that the STF Advisory Committee for the area will need to be consulted regarding such an update and the elected officials who govern the STF Agency will need to adopt the change.