American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Route Planning Restoration Program Discretionary Grant
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The contents of this webinar do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This webinar is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. Grantees and subgrantees should refer to FTA’s statutes and regulations for applicable requirements of the Route Planning Restoration Program.
American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

Overview:

Appropriated $25M for planning to restore transit routes

Transit routes to be restored must:

- Increase ridership and reduce travel times, while maintaining or expanding the total level of vehicle revenue miles, or
- Make service adjustments to increase the quality or frequency of service provided to “low-income riders and disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities”
American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

Overview, Cont.:

Low-income riders
  ▪ Reference U.S.C 5302(11) “low-income individual”

Disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities”
  ▪ Reference FTA Circular C4702.1B – Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for FTA Recipients “minority population” and “low-income population”

No local match requirement
  ▪ Minimum Federal Share 100 Percent
Eligibility

Eligible Recipients:
- Section 5307 recipient
- Reduced transit service on or after January 20, 2020, due to COVID-19

Eligible Activities:
- FTA Circular 8100-1D - Program Guidance for Metropolitan and State Planning and Research Program Grants
- FTA Circular 9030.1E - Urbanized Area Formula Program: Guidance and Application Instructions
Eligibility, Cont.

Sample Eligible Activities

Reference FTA Circulars 8100-1D and FTA Circular 9030.1E

- Data collection
- Estimation and travel forecasting
- Transit operational strategies
- Outreach and public engagement
- Identifying opportunities for multimodal connectivity, accessibility and increased access to transit hubs
Eligibility, Cont.

Ineligible Activities:

- Capital, operating, and maintenance activities;
- Route planning specifically related to transitioning public transportation service provided as of the date of receipt of funds to a transportation network company or other third-party contract provider, unless the existing provider of public transportation service is a third-party contract provider;
- Route planning that is not focused on service areas where services have been reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Evaluation Criteria

Demonstrated Need
  ▪ Level of Service (pre-pandemic vs. current)

Demonstrated Benefits
  ▪ Impacts on transit ridership, EJ populations etc.

Project Implementation Strategy
  ▪ Strength of the work plan, project schedule and process

Technical, Legal and Financial Capacity
  ▪ Ability to undertake the project
Administration’s Priorities

Advancing Equity and Environmental Justice
- Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government
- Executive Order 13990: Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle Climate Crisis

Addressing Climate Change
- Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad
Grant Conditions

Maximum Award up to $1M
- FTA encourages applicants to submit a scalable project amount

No Local Match Requirement
- FTA will not review more favorably applications that propose non-Federal funding contributions (*cash, in-kind, toll revenue credits, advertising concessions etc.*)

Pre-award Authority
- Pre-award authority guidance to be made available and described with notice of award selections

Federal Planning Requirements
- Planning requirements apply - Reference 23 CFR Part 450
Application and Submission

- Apply through grants.gov (FTA-2021-007-TPE)
- SF 424 Mandatory/Supplemental Forms with attachments
- Cumulative 15-page limit for Application and all attachments
- Confirmed eligibility and legal, technical, and financial capacity
Common Questions

1. Who can apply for Route Planning Restoration Program funds?
Applicants must be recipients eligible under 49 U.S.C. 5307 as of the date the NOFO is published.

2. What is the local match requirement for this program?
There is no local match requirement as the federal share is 100%. FTA will not review favorably and applicant who proposes a local match.
3. What is the maximum amount of funding for which an applicant may apply?
Maximum grant awards maybe up to 1M. FTA reserves the right to a scaled amount.

4. How will projects be selected for Route Planning Restoration Program funding?
FTA recommends applicants to reference Section E of the NOFO (Application Review Information) for evaluation criteria.
Common Questions Cont.

5. Does it matter when my transit service was reduced due to COVID-19?
In order to apply for funding eligible applicants’ must have had transit service reduced on or after January 20, 2020, due to COVID-19.

6. Which routes can I use Route Planning Restoration Program funds on?
Route Planning Restoration Program funds can be used on transit routes designed to—(i) increase ridership and reduce travel times, while maintaining or expanding the total level of vehicle revenue miles of service provided in the planning period; or (ii) make service adjustments to increase the quality or frequency of service provided to low-income riders and disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities.
7. How does the FTA define a “low-income rider”? 
FTA is recommending applicants to utilize the definition of “low-income individual” in 49 U.S.C. 5302(11) when considering the service provided to “low-income riders”.

8. How does the FTA define a “disadvantaged neighborhood” or “community”? 
FTA is recommending applicants to utilize the definition of “minority population” and “low-income population” found in FTA Circular C4702.1B- Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients when considering the service provided to “disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities”.
9. What activities can I use Route Planning Restoration Program funds for?

Applicants should reference FTA Circular C8100.1D - Program Guidance for Metropolitan Planning and State Planning and Research Program Grants, and FTA Circular 9030.1E – Urbanized Area Formula Program: Program Guidance and Application Instructions for a detailed discussion of eligible activities.

10. Can I apply for Route Planning Restoration Program funds if my service is contracted through a 3rd party?

Funds appropriated under this program cannot be used to transition public transportation service as of the date of receipt of funds to a transportation network company or other third-party contract provider, unless the existing provider of public transportation service is a third-party contract provider.
11. What is meant by “planning period,” i.e., when does the “planning period” start and end?

The “Planning period” is the length of time the applicant has determined that it will take to implement their proposed eligible planning activities.

12. Does the FTA’s “Full and Open” Competition procurement requirements apply to the Route Planning Restoration Program?

All Third Party Contracting and procurement rules applies to this program. Partnering would not satisfy FTA’s full and open competition requirement if awarded.

Reference FTA Circular C4220.1F – Third Party Contracting Guidance
13. Can Route Planning Restoration Program Funds be used to plan new routes?
Planning for new routes are eligible when the planning activity is related to restoring service on an existing route that was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic on or after January 20, 2020. New route planning must increase ridership and reduce travel times, maintain or expand the total level of vehicle revenue miles or make service adjustments to increase the quality or frequency of service provided to “low-income riders and disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities.”

14. Is my project eligible if my transit service was reduced due to COVID-19 and has already been restored?
Restored routes are eligible as long as proposed projects are designed to— (i) increase ridership and reduce travel times, while maintaining or expanding the total level of vehicle revenue miles of service provided in the planning period; or (ii) make service adjustments to increase the quality or frequency of service provided to low-income riders and disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities.
Contact Information

For questions or additional information:

Colby McFarland
Email: Colby.McFarland@dot.gov
Phone: 202-366-1648
Applying for FTA Grant Opportunities in Grants.gov
FTA Notice of Funding Opportunity

FTA website:
https://www.transit.dot.gov/

Funding Opportunity Notices:
https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/notices
FTA Notice of Funding Opportunity

FTA NOFO Page contains:

- Summary Description
  - Application requirements
  - Eligibility
- Supplemental Form
- Links to Grants.gov
- Links to Program Information
- Other references and links

https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/notices

FTA NOFO provides hyperlinks to Grants.gov opportunity notice, related documents, and application package.
Download Application

NOTE: Anyone can download the application package from Grants.gov. However, only “authorized organizational representatives” can submit applications in Grants.gov.
Application Package

Select Grant Opportunity Package

PLEASE READ BEFORE APPLYING!
If you view and complete your application package using Grants.gov downloadable PDF forms, you MUST have Adobe Reader installed. You may receive a validation error using incompatible versions of Adobe Reader. To prevent a validation error, it is now recommended you uninstall any earlier versions of Adobe Reader and install the latest compatible version of Adobe Reader. If more than one person is working on the PDF forms, ALL applicants must be using the same Adobe Reader version. Click for more information on Adobe Reader Compatibility.

Opportunity Package(s) Currently Available for this Funding Opportunity:

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Preview Opportunity Package Details:

Agency Contact Information: Colby McFarland
Office of Planning and Environment
202-366-1648

Who Can Apply: Organization Applicants

PACKAGE FORMS:

Mandatory Forms (Click to Preview)
- SF 424 Mandatory Form [V3.2]
- Grant.gov Lettering Form [V1.1]
- Attachments [V1.2]
Application Package

The “Attachment Form” shown below is included in the SF-424 Grant Application Package in Grants.gov.

Please attach the FTA Supplemental Form to the Attachment Form shown below when submitting in Grants.gov.

CAUTION: Do not use “Supplemental Form” from prior years or create your own form. Please use the file provided on the FTA website.
Grants.gov – Applicants

https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html
Organizations must register in Grants.gov in order to submit applications.
Workspace in Grants.gov

Get Started on Your Workspace Application

Workspace is the standard way for organizations or individuals to apply for federal grants in Grants.gov. Workspace allows a grant team to simultaneously access and edit different forms within an application. Plus, the forms can be filled out online or offline—your choice.

Grants.gov Workspace also allows applicants and organizations to tailor their application workflow. Here are three approaches that applicants can take when completing a Workspace application:

1. Basic
   - Best for organizations with 1-2 registered Grants.gov users
   - Application forms are downloaded and emailed to collaborators before being uploaded back to the workspace

2. Intermediate
   - Best for organizations with 3-5 registered Grants.gov users
   - Application teams are typically comprised of an AOR who submits, as well as a Workspace Owner who oversees form completion

3. Advanced
   - Best for organizations with external Grants.gov users such as consultants
   - Workspace Owner manages form completion
   - Workspace Owner submits forms

Using Custom Roles in Workspace

Organizations are also able to create custom roles and assign these roles to the users affiliated with the organization.

LEARN MORE >
Web Addresses

FTA Funding Opportunities:

- [https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/notices](https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/notices)

Grants.gov:


Contact Grants.gov Support Center to get help with Grants.gov issues:

**GRANTS.GOV Applicant Support**

1-800-518-4726

[support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)