

Coordinated Call for Projects Questions and Answers

This document contains questions which were submitted during this call for projects and also relevant questions which have been asked during previous calls for projects. The questions submitted this year are in bold text.

#1	Question	Answer
#1	GENERAL QUESTIONS	
1-1	Since we are to be looking at needs for the next 2 fiscal years and requesting funding for those, how do we handle projects that do not extend for full 2 years? Or the 2 projects are related but one project precedes the other.	<p>Project funding requests do not have to be for 2 year projects. What must be considered is if an agency will want to request funds for either of the two years covered by the current call for projects, an application must be submitted for either of the two years at this time.</p> <p>An agency requesting funding for each of the two years would submit separate and discrete applications for each project for each year and funding stream. It must be clear in the project timeline and budget which of the two FY's funds are being requested for.</p> <p>If two projects are being requested, one for each of the two years included in the call and the projects are related, two applications are required. The relationship of one project to the other can be discussed in the project narrative and in the time line; however, the project budgets need to show the expenses for each unique project, year and funding stream.</p>
1-2	Do the budgets for all of these programs need to be for 1 year or the full 3 years?	Applicants can request funds for a maximum of two (2) years for each application. For two year projects the agency should enter the full 2 year request amount under the "award amount" column in the budget. A multiyear budget worksheet is required for applications requesting funding for more than one year.
1-3	Can a multi-modal facility serve not only as a connection point for all transit operators, but also serve as a preventive maintenance facility, parking area for transit users and the general public in order to reduce congestion in the downtown area?	Yes.
1-4	Can a facility such as this (a multi-modal facility) be a revenue generating facility? If yes, from whom and where can those revenues be appropriated?	Yes, revenue would be distributed among the partners, in the same ratio as the funding for construction. The circular states: "These and other joint development improvements will be eligible for FTA funding if they satisfy the eligibility criteria set forth at 49 U.S.C. 5302(a)(1)(G), and do not fall within the exclusion detailed at 49 U.S.C. 5302(a)(1)(G)(ii), which excludes the construction of a commercial revenue producing facility (other than an intercity bus station or terminal) or a part of a public facility not related to public transportation
1-5	Are costs incurred for grant consultants in preparation of the application eligible expenses?	<p>If an agency has a current grant that has consulting services as an allowable activity and a current consultant procurement that includes preparing grant applications in the current contract the consultant costs could be allowable.</p> <p>If an agency is requesting funds to pay the consultant for activities that occur outside of</p>

		the contract period, TxDOT does not allow pre-award authority to subrecipients of federal funds. Therefore, only costs incurred after TxDOT and the subrecipient have a fully executed grant agreement are eligible.
1-6	For successful grant applications, can third party grant administration be an eligible expense?	Third-party grant administration can be an eligible expense, as long as the all costs are part of the submitted and approved application (proposal) and meet the federal cost guidelines outlined in 2 CFR 200.
1-7	Can in-kind services be included as all/part of the 20% match requirement, or does it have to be cash?	For most programs, in kind match can be used for all of the 20% match, as long as the in-kind match is well documented and TxDOT has preapproved the match and the match specifically relates to the project. A letter of commitment from the agency providing the match delineating exactly what the match is and how it will be calculated must be included in the project application. The TxDOT "In-Kind Contribution Form – PTN 143" http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/forms-publications/forms/public-transportation.html must be included with each reimbursement request to validate the contribution for the billing period.
1-8	Which type of non-profit status does TxDOT require?	Non-profit Organization means a corporation or association determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described by 26 U.S.C. 501(c) which is exempt from taxation under 26 U.S.C. 501(a) or one which has been determined under State law to be non-profit and for which the designated State agency has received documentation certifying the status of the non-profit organization. Other restrictions may apply we recommend you contact TxDOT for further clarification if necessary.
1-9	If I am not sure which funding stream my project falls under how should I submit?	Submit under the program for which the project best qualifies. TxDOT may determine that the project is eligible under another program and the project may be moved to another program.
1-10	Can capital costs for radios and communication equipment also include recurring airtime costs?	Recurring airtime costs would be considered an operating cost and matched at 50%.
1-11	When will projects begin?	For projects selected for award, we anticipate contracts will be executed either Sept 2020 or Sept. 2021 depending on the project timeline and fund availability.
1-12	If building costs go up after I have been awarded funds for a project can I request more funds?	The proposal should to the best of its ability reflect the projected payout amount. Additional funds, if needed, will need to be addressed through future project calls or from other available revenue streams.
1-13	Will contracts be extended or will new contracts be issued for multi-year projects?	Contracts will be written for an appropriate time frame usually dependent on project phases and funding availability .
1-14	If an agency gets funding in one year will they be penalized in future years when applying for the coordinated call?	Agencies will not be penalized for prior years funding but TxDOT does review statewide funding amounts to ensure equitable distribution across the state. TxDOT may also consider performance on previously awarded projects (both competitive and formula based awards) when evaluating future awards.
1-15	If an agency is urban and rural and have a project which would be in both areas how can they apply for funds?	The agency should include a cost allocation plan which shows how rural and urban funds will be used.
1-16	What is the total amount of funding available?	At this point apportionments have not been released; funding amounts are dependent on federal apportionment amounts for each year.
1-17	Can a project to construct a facility which includes paving and entries and a paving project in another city be submitted	The projects are considered two separate projects and require two separate proposals.

	as one proposal? Both requests will be from the same funding stream.	
1-18	If your project involves construction of a facility, with elements that could fall into multiple funding categories (RD, ICB), will the applicant be allowed to indicate multiple funding categories at the time of submission?	The applicant should select the most appropriate funding source for the project. If the applicant submits applications under separate programs they should cross-reference the applications.
1-19	Is an approved FTA Categorical Exclusion needed before applying for funds for a real estate purchase?	An agency can submit an application for funds for real estate prior to having an FTA Categorical Exclusion.
1-20	Could you clarify what is the purpose of the percentage breakdown of service area in the project summary section? And what it means or how it will impact the application?	The percentage breakdown in the service area is informative for the reviewer and may be an aspect that is analyzed when determining funding amounts for projects which should be cost allocated between urban and rural.
1-21	Is there any guidance on recommended project size?	There is no guidance on recommended project size but we recommend that projects submitted be scalable and the applicant identify how the project can be scaled.
#2	INTERCITY BUS	
2-1	If an agency is submitting more than one intercity bus route project, does the agency need to submit separate applications per route?	Multiple applications are not necessarily needed but can be submitted if appropriate. If the agency would like to submit a single application with multiple routes multiple Operating Assistance forms can be created by clicking the "Add" button at the top of the Operating Assistance form. One form for each route should be completed.
2-2	When applying for a facility project is it better to submit an exaggerated timeline in order to ensure the project will be done within the timeframe submitted?	An agency should not submit an exaggerated time line; TxDOT understands that the timeline is an estimate.
2-3	Can Intercity Bus companies which are not based in the USA apply for ICB funds?	Any Intercity Bus company applying for ICB funds must be a registered carrier in the USA.
2-4	Can a transit agency apply for Intercity Bus funds?	Yes, the project must meet the requirements of the intercity bus program.
2-5	If we are submitting 2 year budgets for three routes does the budget need to be separated by FY?	The budget needs to be separated by route and by FY. It is critical to show the amount of funding being requested for each route for each FY.
2-6	The agency is proposing to fund an administrative position to manage three routes, how should we budget for that?	How the position is funded is an agency decision. If the position will have a relationship with all three routes, it is recommended the position be cost allocated across all routes.
2-7	As a County Government we qualify to apply for the Planning Assistance and the ICB Program but I noticed that eligible projects within the ICB is planning. Does that mean we would be apply for both planning and ICB funding? If our project included a planning process.	The agency can request planning funds either through the Planning program or through the Intercity bus program. A request submitted under the ICB program must meet the specific intercity bus requirements for the program.
2-8	Will TDC be available for operating expenses	No, TDC will only be available for capital items.
#3	RURAL DISCRETIONARY	
3-1	Our agency intends to submit a request for several projects in the RD category; the projects are distinct from one another. Can each project be written as a separate application, or should they be combined into one RD project	Each project should be written as a separate project and submitted in separate eGrant applications.

	request?	
3-2	Since JARC type projects are now eligible under 5311 can mobility management projects be submitted under the Rural Discretionary program?	Mobility management projects can be submitted under the Rural Discretionary program but projects submitted will still need to meet the scope and objectives of the rural discretionary program.
3-3	Are private for profit transit providers eligible for 5311 funds directly through this coordinated call?	Private for profit organizations are considered eligible applicants in the §5311(f) Intercity Bus Program. Please refer to the 'Matrix on Funding Choices' on page 4 of the FY 17 Coordinated Call for Projects.
3-4	Can a private non-profit apply for Rural Discretionary funds?	Refer to the Matrix on Funding Choices to determine which sources of funding a private non-profit is eligible for.
3-5	Are indirect costs allowed under the Rural Discretionary program?	Yes.
#4	PLN and RTAP	
4-1	Can a county government apply for PLN funds and ICB funds?	Yes, to both funding sources, however to be eligible for the ICB funds, the project would need to include, and have the support of, an intercity bus company.
4-2	If we propose a project that includes consulting services, can the budget request include our agency's cost to administer the project?	Yes, we would prefer that projects limit administration costs to no more than 10% of the total project.
#5	FLEET REPLACEMENT	
5-1	If a small urban agency is eligible for \$178,000 in FY17 Section 5339 through an application directly to FTA. The agency has a fleet replacement project with a total estimated cash cost of \$356,000. Is it correct and appropriate for that small urban agency to: (1) Apply to TXDOT for Fleet Replacement funding of \$178,000 as 50% of the cash cost of the project. And include in that application a request for TDCs as match for those Fleet Replacement funds. Also, include appropriate narrative and budget information that the agency intends to: (2) Apply to FTA for Small Urban FY17 Section 5339 of \$178,000 for the other 50% of the cash cost of the project. And, apply to TXDOT for the TDCs as match for those FTA Section 5339 \$178,000.	Yes, it would be correct and appropriate for the agency to proceed with the actions as described
5-2	If a rural agency has a fleet replacement project with a total estimated cash cost of \$89,000. Is it correct and appropriate for that rural agency to: (1) Apply to TXDOT for Fleet Replacement funding of \$44,500 as 50% of the estimated cash cost of the project. And include in that application a request for TDCs as match for those Fleet Replacement funds. Also include in that application narrative and budget information that the agency intends to: (2) At the appropriate time, if and when the funds become available, apply to TXDOT for Rural FY17 Section 5339 funds of \$44,500 the other 50% of the estimated cash cost of the project. And include in that application to TXDOT a request for TDCs as match for those TXDOT Rural FY17	Yes, it would be correct and appropriate for the agency to proceed with the actions as described. Rural Fleet replacement is not part of this year's call for projects.

	Section 5339 funds. Based on recent history, the agency projects that at least that amount in Section 5339 funds will become available to it, but, if that funding does not become available, the agency will use banked local cash instead.	
5-3	Is there a maximum dollar amount for applying for fleet replacement?	There is no maximum dollar amount an entity can request through the FR program but the agency must be able to fulfill the 50% contribution and identify the source of the contribution. Fifty percent (50%) of the funds for the project must come from other source which can include §5307, §5311, §5339, State funds, and local funds. As with other programs award amounts are dependent on federal funds available.
5-4	Can a fleet replacement project be broke up in phases or options for funding (for example option 1 replace 3 buses, option 2 replace 10 buses and option 3 replace 20)?	An agency may break up their request in logical phases or options if it makes sense to do so. Additional documentation may be attached in the Vehicle and Other Projects form to provide clarity to the information submitted. Agencies must use information from their Fleet Condition Report to demonstrate the need for specific replacement or rebuild of vehicles.
5-5	Can we use the Fleet Replacement grant to apply for support/service vehicle replacement?	The Fleet replacement program call seeks projects to replace fleet or assist in keeping current capital in a state of good repair for Urban Transit Districts. Eligible types of projects are fleet related capital projects to maintain assets in a state of good repair. The agency must demonstrate how the project meets the scope and objectives of the program and is consistent with the eligible project types identified in the Coordinated Call for Projects instructions document.
5-6	Is rehab for a passenger station/transfer point for Fixed Route urban buses eligible under this program?	This project as presented does not seem to fit within the scope and objectives of the Fleet replacement program. The Fleet Replacement program call for project seeks projects to replace fleet or assist in keeping assets that contribute to fleet maintenance in a state of good repair for Urban Transit Districts. Eligible types of projects are fleet related capital projects to maintain assets in a state of good repair.
5-7	In the presentation the presenter stated, “state funds” can be utilized as another source of funding. Can you be more specific to what is meant by this?	If the agency receives a “State Funds” PGA the funds awarded under that PGA can be used as a contribution amount.
5-8	If an agency includes a 5307 contribution amount, does the agency need to submit a separate TDC only eGrants application to receive TDC for that 5307 contribution	No, the agency does not need to submit a separate TDC only application. The agency should identify in the Fleet Replacement application the request for TDC to match the 5307 funds.