



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON *PAW*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: MARTHA WELBORNE, FAIA *MW*
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER

**SUBJECT: FFY 2015 FEDERAL PASSENGER FERRY DISCRETIONARY
GRANT OPPORTUNITY**

ISSUE

On August 3, 2015, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for about \$20 million in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2015 funds from the Section 5307 Passenger Ferry Program to be awarded through a competitive selection process for eligible capital projects in urbanized areas. Although Metro does not provide public transportation ferry service, it may apply on behalf of other public agencies that provide such service. We have reached out to agencies in our region that may be eligible to apply for this funding opportunity. If requested, we will provide technical support to assist them in preparing competitive proposals. Applications are due to FTA by October 2, 2015.

BACKGROUND

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) authorized the discretionary Passenger Ferry Grants Program. A set-aside of \$30 million per year from the FTA Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants Program funds this ferry grant program. However, with the release of the NOFA, FTA has made available about \$20 million in funding that a MAP-21 extension authorized through May 31, 2015. With the approval of another extension of MAP-21 authorizing funds through October 29, 2015, FTA is expected to make available the full amount of \$30 million that was authorized for the grant program in FFY 2015.

FTA's priority is to fund eligible capital projects that help expand ladders of opportunity and improve safety. Examples include enhancing access to work, education, and other training opportunities, as well as supporting partnerships that expand access to and improve coordination of services provided by transportation providers and other agencies (e.g., medical, social, etc.). Metro is an eligible applicant because it is a direct

recipient of other Section 5307 funds and is “engaged” in providing public transportation ferry service by allocating funds to public agencies that do operate such service.

NOFA Summary

The NOFA describes applicant and project eligibility, local funding share requirements, project evaluation criteria and grant application requirements. Eligible applicants must be eligible direct recipients of FTA Section 5307 funds engaged in providing public transportation ferry service. However, FTA will accept applications from entities in urbanized areas that are eligible to be direct recipients, even if they do not have such designation at the time of submittal. Only capital projects are eligible for funding, including the purchase, replacement, or rehabilitation of ferries and terminals and related equipment and infrastructure. As applicable to our region, the project(s) to be funded must be in the urbanized area of Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim (UZA 2). A service area may include some portions of non-urbanized areas, provided that the ferry service begins in and services UZA 2.

The local (non-federal) share of a project’s net cost ranges between 10 and 20 percent. The federal share is 90 percent of the net project cost only for vehicle-related equipment or facilities required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or for purposes of complying with or maintaining compliance with the Clean Air Act. The local match may include cash from non-governmental sources other than revenues from providing public transportation services, in-kind contributions, and federal funds from a source other than the United States Department of Transportation.

The FTA evaluation criteria include the following: i) demonstration of need and benefits; ii) planning and local/regional prioritization; iii) project readiness; iv) technical, legal, and financial capacity of the applicant to implement the proposed project(s); and v) connectivity to other modes of transportation. Geographic diversity and the applicant’s receipt of other federal funding for ferries may be considered in FTA grant award decisions. The FTA Administrator will determine the final selection and funding amount for each project.

The ferry grant program requires that an applicant selected for funding award must adhere to the customary FTA Section 5307 Program grant requirements. One key requirement is that the grantee must ensure that the non-peak hour ferry fare for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and individuals presenting a Medicare card is not more than 50 percent of the peak hour ferry fare.

NEXT STEPS

We will continue our outreach and coordination efforts and, if requested, we will provide technical support to assist with preparing competitive proposals. We will inform the Board of Directors of the outcome of any proposal(s) that Metro may submit on behalf of agencies that provide public transportation ferry service in Los Angeles County and meet the eligibility requirements of this funding opportunity.