

FTA Section 5303 - Metropolitan Planning

Description

This program supports multi-modal and transit planning expenses to support cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning for making transportation investment decisions in urbanized areas.

Eligible Recipients

Eligible grant recipients include the fourteen Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that cover designated urbanized areas in Virginia, the Washington Metropolitan Area and parts of Tennessee (Bristol and Kingsport).

Eligible Expenses

Section 5303 funds should be used on multi-modal, transit or transportation demand management (TDM) planning studies or projects, such as Transit Development Plans, Comprehensive Operations Analysis, multi-modal transportation planning, land-use planning, bicycle and pedestrian planning, Long Term Vision Plans for public transportation operators, and Long Term Plans for commuter assistance agencies.

DRPT recommends that MPOs whose urbanized area population exceeds 200,000 use no more than 20 percent of Section 5303 funds for items in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) identified as Administration. For MPOs whose urbanized area population is 200,000 or less, DRPT recommends that no more than 30 percent of Section 5303 funds be used for items in the UPWP identified as Administration.

Eligible expenses are identified in FTA Circular 8100.1C, Program Guidance for Metropolitan Planning and State Planning and Research Program Grants, and include the following planning activities:

- Studies related to management, planning, operations, capital requirements, and economic feasibility;
- Evaluation of previously funded projects;
- Peer reviews and exchanges of technical data, information, assistance, and related activities in support of planning and environmental analysis among MPOs and other transportation planners;
- Work elements and related activities preliminary to and in preparation for constructing, acquiring, or improving the operation of facilities and equipment;
- Systems planning and corridor-level alternative analysis;
- Development of 20-year transportation plans, short-range transportation improvement programs (TIPS), and UPWPs; Safety, security, and emergency transportation and evacuation planning;
- Transportation and air quality planning and conformity analysis;
- Public participation in transportation planning;
- Multimodal facilities planning;

- Plan, engineer, design, and evaluate a public transportation project;
- Computer hardware and software needed to support planning work; and
- Participation in educational programs for technical staff, as well as executive and board leadership.

Funding Allocation and Match Ratio

Applications are typically funded at the maximum federal match ratio of 80 percent and the maximum state match ratio of 10 percent. In Federal Fiscal Year 2013, the FTA Section 5303 apportionment for Virginia was approximately \$2.5 million. Funds are allocated among the state's MPOs in designated urbanized areas based on a formula.

A portion of the Federal 5303 funds shall be set aside annually for allocation to the air quality non-attainment/maintenance areas. The amount provided to an area shall be based on the severity of the air quality problem in that area (extreme/maintenance - \$30,000, severe/maintenance - \$25,000, serious - \$20,000, moderate/maintenance - \$15,000, or marginal/maintenance - \$10,000). When a non-attainment/maintenance area contains jurisdictions from more than one metropolitan study area, the allocation for air quality planning shall be proportioned to these study areas based on urbanized area population percentages for the non-attainment/maintenance jurisdictions only. Adjustments shall be made so that the minimum allocation of Federal 5303 funds available for air quality consideration shall not be less than \$5,000.

The amount to be allocated annually from the remaining Federal 5303 funds to each of the MPOs in urbanized areas of the state shall be a base amount equal to \$50,000 times the percent that the area's urbanized population within Virginia is to its total urbanized area population, plus a proportionate share of the balance based on the ratio that each area's urbanized population within Virginia is to the total urbanized area population of the state.

Application Evaluation Process

DRPT will evaluate FTA Section 5303 applications by using the following criteria:

- Eligibility – whether the project is eligible for FTA Section 5303 funds
- Consistency of Planning Effort – ability of tasks in UPWP to meet minimum metropolitan planning requirements
- Planning Study or Project Justification – explanation of the need/problem that the planning study or project will address
- Planning Study or Project Scope – the scope should include a detail of the overall objective of planning study or project, including specific planning tasks that will be achieved throughout the planning process, list of deliverables, project schedule with deliverable dates, public and stakeholder involvement.

- Project Readiness – ability to initiate and substantially complete the planning study or project within the fiscal year the funds are being applied for
- Project Budget – ability to execute the planning study or project scope within the proposed budget
- Project Schedule – ability to execute the planning study or project scope within the project schedule, as identified in the planning study or project scope
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – approach to measuring performance and evaluating the results of the project

All third-party (consultant) services procurement made within the Section 5303 program will be in accordance with the Common Rule (state procurement procedures) or FTA Circular 4220.1F, Third Party Contracting Guidelines.

Additionally, every contract will include all clauses required by Federal statutes and executive orders and their implementing regulations as identified in grant contract documents and FTA Circular 4220.1F. The clauses required by Federal statutes and executive orders and their implementing instructions are included in the Federally Required and Other Model Clauses Appendix A - Governing Documents, but the recipient must also check the latest edition of FTA's Master Agreement to determine which provisions have been added, changed, or rescinded. All procurement is also made in accordance with FTA Circular 5010.1D Grant Management Requirements where appropriate.

Application Procedure

DRPT has established May 1 as the date by which MPOs must submit an application for FTA Section 5303 funds. Upon completion of the application and evaluation process, DRPT includes the recommended allocation in the Six-Year Improvement Program for CTB approval.

Applications for all State Aid Grant Programs (the state matching funds for Section 5303 funds) are made online on DRPT's On-Line Grant Application system (OLGA) at: <https://olga.drpt.virginia.gov>.

MPOs are required to submit the following application items:

- Project budget (with reference between UPWP line items and FTA budget line items).
- Authorizing resolution
- Commitment of local share
- Previous federal fiscal year certifications and assurances for FTA assistance programs
- Civil rights updates certification
- UPWP Submittal
 - Large urban areas with a population greater than 200,000 - Submit UPWP directly to FTA for approval and an electronic copy of the

- MPO's UPWP must be submitted in OLGA with the completed 5303 application.
- Small urban areas with a population less than 200,000 - an electronic copy of the MPO's UPWP must be submitted in OLGA with the completed 5303 application.

The Federal Aid Grant Program calendar is summarized in Exhibit 3-1. Applicants for Federal Aid grants must provide certifications and assurances relevant to the grantee's application for assistance, as described in Section 5.1.1.

DRPT will review each MPO's FTA Section 5303 application and submit a Statewide FTA Section 5303 application to the FTA.

Per FTA guidance, DRPT will not apply for additional Section 5303 funds for an MPO during the typical grant application cycle if an MPO still has two full years of funds remaining on existing executed grant agreements. The funds will still be available for the MPO. DRPT will apply for the 5303 funds once the MPO demonstrates substantial progress in accomplishing tasks included in the UPWP and spending down the older grant funds.

Upon approval of the application, DRPT will initiate agreements with each MPO. If FTA's approval is not received prior to July 1, upon request DRPT may issue a "letter of no prejudice" that allows the MPO to begin work on the UPWP elements on July 1.

Work Element Implementation

DRPT has a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program with a goal that three percent of contractible federal funds will be awarded to certified DBEs. MPOs are encouraged to reach that goal as well.

Title VI Requirements: In order to integrate, into MPO planning activities, considerations expressed in the USDOT Order on Environmental Justice, MPOs should have an analytic basis in place for certifying their compliance with Title VI, in accordance with FTA Circular C 4702.1A Title VI and Title VI-Dependent Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients. Those MPOs that are direct recipients of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) shall report to FTA consistent with the reporting procedures in Chapter II part 4 of Circular C 4702.1A. Other MPOs should report on their Title VI procedures (consistent with Chapter II part 4 of Circular C 4702.1A) annually during the FTA 5303 grant application process.

FTA Section 5304 - Statewide Planning

Description

This program provides funding to support statewide transit planning efforts under taken for cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning and decision-making.

Eligible Recipients

DRPT is the designated federal recipient for FTA Section 5304 Statewide Planning funds and uses these funds for statewide transit and TDM planning activities. However, DRPT is authorized to provide discretionary funding to subrecipients for the purpose of conducting transit or TDM planning studies that will contribute to or compliment statewide planning activities. Subrecipients include agencies that are eligible to receive federal funding, such as: Local Governments, Transportation District Commissions and Public Service Corporations.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses are identified in FTA Circular 8100.1C, Program Guidance for Metropolitan Planning and State Planning and Research Program Grants, and include the following planning activities:

- Activities authorized under Section 5303;
- Development of long-range statewide transportation plans and STIPs;
- Joint development planning;
- Training and educational activities; and
- Human resource program activities

Match Ratio and Limits of Funding

DRPT may choose to fund applications for eligible projects from other programs that accept applications for planning in order to achieve a higher federal and state match ratio. Applications are typically funded at the maximum federal match ratio of 80 percent and the maximum state match ratio of 10 percent. In Federal Fiscal Year 2013, the FTA Section 5304 apportionment for Virginia was approximately \$457,000.

Application Evaluation Process

DRPT's recommendation for projects to be funded with Section 5304 funds in the Draft Six-Year Improvement Program will be developed based on anticipated needs and by evaluating applications for eligible projects from other programs. The CTB approves the release of the draft program to the public for comment in April or May and following receipt of public comments, the CTB approves the final Six-Year Improvement Program in June.

Application Procedure

There is no separate application required for this program.