

FY 17 Technical Assistance

Description

This program supports technical assistance to help improve public transportation or commuter assistance related services. It can be used to conduct a wide range of planning and technical analysis that is needed as input into a decision making or evaluation process.

Eligible Recipients

Eligible grant recipients include:

- Local and State Government
- Transportation District Commissions
- Public Service Corporations
- Planning District Commissions
- Human Service Agencies Involved in Rural Public Transportation
- TDM/Commuter Assistance Agencies

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include the cost of preparing technical studies including the following:

- Capital and/or Operating Financial Plans
- Comprehensive Operations Analysis
- Equipment Purchases
- Industry Peer Reviews
- Management and Performance Evaluations
- Marketing Plans and Programs
- Procurement Assistance
- Project Development
- Public Transportation or Commuter Assistance Related Services
- Strategic Plans
- Transit Development Plans
- Transportation Demand Management Plans
- Transit Feasibility Study

Match Ratio and Limits of Funding

Technical Assistance projects are typically funded at the maximum state match ratio of 50 percent. The funding for this program comes from the Special Projects fund, which includes funding for DRPT's Demonstration Assistance, Technical Assistance, TDM Operating Assistance, Transportation Management Project Assistance and Intern Programs. The amount of funding spent from the Special Projects fund for each one of these programs varies each year depending upon needs; however the total amount of funding for Special Projects is consistently in the range of \$2 million.

In addition, all technical assistance project applications are automatically considered by DRPT for federal funding under the FTA Section 5304 Metropolitan and Statewide Planning Program. Subject to the availability of federal funds and project eligibility, federal funds may be provided

to support 80 percent of project costs. In the event that federal funds are awarded the state share will be 10 percent with a 10 percent match required from local sources.

Application Evaluation Process

Technical Assistance applications will be evaluated by DRPT using the following criteria:

- Project Justification – explanation of the need/problem that the project will address
- Planning – documentation that sufficient planning has been conducted to execute the project (not necessary if the application is for conducting a plan)
- Project Scope – approach to addressing the need/problem
- Project Readiness – ability to initiate and substantially complete the project within the fiscal year the funds are being applied for
- Technical Capacity – identification of project management team and ability to execute the project
- Project Budget – ability to execute the project scope within the proposed project budget
- Project Schedule – ability to execute the project scope within the project schedule
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – approach to measuring performance and evaluating the results of the project

To assist local entities with planning for new transit systems or new service for existing systems, DRPT has developed Transit Service Design Guidelines (<https://olga.drpt.virginia.gov>). These guidelines provide useful information that can be used as a first step in the planning process. DRPT encourages local entities to involve DRPT in any transit system planning efforts. DRPT also has staff and consultant resources available to help manage transit system planning studies on behalf of local entities.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, DRPT includes the recommended applications and allocation in the Draft Six Year Improvement Program. The CTB approves the release of the draft program to the public for comment and following receipt of public comments, the CTB approves the final Six Year Improvement Program.

Application Procedure

Applications for all State Aid Grant Programs are submitted online using DRPT's On-Line Grant Application system (OLGA) at: <https://olga.drpt.virginia.gov>.

Required data include:

- Contact information (including Project Manager)
- Project justification
- Planning documentation
- Project scope
- Project budget
- Project schedule/milestones
- Monitoring and evaluation plan

In order to ensure that local matching funds will be available for all applications recommended by DRPT for funding, a certification from the Chief Executive Officer of the entity applying for funding must be submitted to DRPT in May prior to the development of the Final Six Year Improvement Program. DRPT will provide future guidance on the form of the certification.