

## Information for Potential New Freedom Program Applicants

### I. Program Goals

#### *New Freedom Program*

The New Freedom formula grant program aims to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation into society. Lack of adequate transportation is a primary barrier to work for individuals with disabilities. The 2000 Census showed that only 60% of people between the ages of 16 and 64 with disabilities are employed. The New Freedom formula grant program seeks to expand the transportation mobility options available to persons with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Funds are only available for new service – any service or activity that was not operational on August 10, 2005 or after, and did not have an identified funding source as of August 10, 2005.

### II. Funding

Shown below are the New Freedom funds available for this solicitation. Funding is available for eligible projects from July 01, 2009 to June 30, 2011. Projects will be selected for funding through a competitive process. There is no cap on the amount of funding for which applicants may apply, as long as the appropriate match can be provided.

	<b>Federal Funding Available for the 2008 Solicitation</b>	<b>Total With 50/50 Match (Operating Projects)</b>	<b>Total With 80/20 Match (Capital Projects)</b>
New Freedom	\$702,396	\$1,404,792	\$877,995

### III. Eligible Applicants

There are three categories of eligible subrecipients of New Freedom funds:

- 1) Private non-profit organizations;
- 2) State or local governmental bodies; and
- 3) Operators of public transportation services.

Private operators of public transportation services can partner with an eligible subrecipient and receive Federal funds, however they cannot be a direct subrecipient.

### IV. Eligible Projects

Funding under the two programs is limited, therefore the intent of these funds is for new and innovative projects to meet the unmet transportation needs of people with disabilities and individuals with low incomes. Funding may be used for capital or operating projects that meet the New Freedom Program goals, respond to one or more of the strategies identified in the *Richmond/Petersburg Metropolitan Planning Areas Coordinated Human Service Mobility Plan* (see Section VII, page 4), and serve the Richmond urbanized area. For proposed projects that partially serve the urbanized area, funding is available only for those trips originating or concluding in the urbanized area.

**New Freedom Projects** – Activities that are eligible for funding may vary from region to region. Examples of activities include, but are not limited to:

#### Operating Activities

- Expansion of paratransit service beyond the minimum requirements of ADA
- Expansion of current hours for paratransit service
- Enhancement of services
- Voucher programs
- Volunteer driver programs

#### Capital Activities

- Acquisition of accessibility equipment beyond ADA requirements
- Purchasing accessible vehicles to support taxi, vanpooling, and/or ridesharing programs
- Mobility management activities

Note – SAFETEA-LU allows projects considered “mobility management” eligible as a capital expense under New Freedom. “Supporting new mobility management and

coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation” is specifically referenced as an eligible project in the FTA guidance.

## V. Federal/Local Match Requirements

The Federal share of eligible capital expenses may not exceed 80% of the net project costs. The Federal share of eligible operating expenses may not exceed 50% of the net operating costs.

<b>Match Requirements</b>		
<i>Type of Funding</i>	<i>Federal Share</i>	<i>Local Share</i>
Capital	80%	20%
Operating	50%	50%

Consistent with FTA guidance, all of the local share must be provided from sources other than Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) funds. No FTA program funds can be used as a source of local match for other FTA programs, even when used to contract for service. However, other non-DOT Federal funds can be used as a source for matching funds, and a list is provided in Appendix B.

Other examples of match sources includes local appropriations, dedicated tax revenues, private donations, revenue from human service contracts, toll revenue credits, and net income generated from advertising and concessions. Income from contracts to provide human service transportation may be used either to reduce the net project cost (treated as revenue) or to provide local match for New Freedom operating assistance. In either case, the cost of providing the contract service is included in the total project cost. Non-cash share such as donations, volunteered services, or in-kind contributions is eligible to be counted toward the local match as long as the value of each is documented and supported, represents a cost which would otherwise be eligible under the program, and is included in the net project costs in the project budget.

## Example of Matching Requirements

If the project being submitted is for an operating service (i.e. vanpool service to the Rte.288 corridor) and the project's total cost is \$250,000, then the required match is \$125,000. If the project is for capital costs (i.e. purchasing five wheelchair accessible taxis) and the project's total cost is \$100,000, then the required match is \$20,000.

Type of Project	Match Requirement	Example of Project	Total Cost	Match Required
Capital	80/20	Purchase 5 wheelchair accessible taxis	\$100,000	\$20,000
Operating	50/50	Operating vanpool service to I-270 employment sites	\$250,000	\$125,000

## VI. Application Timeline

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>
May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Program announcement via newspaper and e-mail</i></b></li> </ul>
May 11, 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application process begins</li> <li>• Application meetings with GRTC staff (dates to be determined)</li> </ul>
June 24, 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline for submission of applications. <i>Applications submitted online, via email or fax</i> are due by Noon on June 24, 2009. Mailed applications must be postmarked by Noon on June 18, 2009. Hand-delivered applications will be accepted until Noon on June 24, 2009</li> </ul>
July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection Committee convenes to review and score applications and make recommendations to GRTC Transit</li> </ul>
September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification of awards</li> </ul>
October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline for signed Certifications and Assurances</li> </ul>
October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant agreements executed</li> </ul>