

February 6, 2012

To: MAG Transit Committee

From: Alice Chen, Transportation Planner II

Subject: MAG REGIONAL PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES FOR FEDERAL TRANSIT FORMULA FUNDS
and PROJECT APPLICATION

MAG staff has been working in collaboration with the Transit Committee, Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA), the FTA designated recipient - City of Phoenix, and the Transit Operators Working Group to draft policy guidelines for Regional Programming Guidelines for Federal Transit Formula Funds.

This memo summarizes the discussions during the Transit Committee from the December 2012 and January 2013 meetings. Updates are highlighted in **Red** with the original language ~~striked-out~~.

The **MAG Regional Programming Guidelines for Federal Transit Formula Funds** (attachment 1) outlines the policies and procedures for Transit Programming in the MAG region. The **Project Application** (attachment 2) is specific to the competitive regional process and will be utilized for unprogrammed funds after regional priorities are met.

Programming levels for PM Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale UZA

The baseline programming levels for Preventive Maintenance for TIP Programming years 2014-2018 will be twenty-five percent (25%) of the 5307 apportionment in the Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale UZA. This is the baseline funding amount and contingent upon funding of TLCP projects.

The following recommendation has been included in the guidelines document.

Transit Operators Eligible for Operating Assistance in Large Urbanized Areas may choose utilize Operating Assistance in lieu of Preventive Maintenance.¹ This option does not change the agency's allocation or the regional allocation formula for Preventive Maintenance.

Programming levels for PM Avondale-Goodyear (ANV-GDY) UZA

An apportionment will be allowed to fund transit operations in the AVN-GDY UZA up to the FY 2012 amount for the FY TIP years 2014-2018. The utilization of the balance of funds will be discussed during a future working group meeting comprising members of the Avondale-Goodyear UZA.

¹ Eligible operators are public entities that operate fixed route bus service with 100 or fewer buses in maximum peak hour service, and that operate transit service in a large urbanized area.

JARC allocation of 5307 Funds

A portion of 5307 Funds will be allocated for JARC related projects.

1. For Fiscal Year 2013, the amount will be held constant at the FY 2012 level. For TIP programming Years 2014 - 2018, the amount will be adjusted in accordance with 5307 apportionment increases or decreases.
2. City of Phoenix will lead the JARC evaluation process coordinating with the MAG Human Services Division. Applications would be a coordinated effort between MAG Human Services Division and the City of Phoenix with final approval by the MAG Regional Council.
3. In the event there are unutilized JARC funds, the balance will be distributed as Preventive Maintenance utilizing the existing methodology.

Evaluation Committee for PHX-MESA-GLENDALE UZA Funds

An ad-hoc evaluation group composed of one member from each agency will meet to review the projects. The agency representative is expected to attend all meetings, review all applications, submit the necessary evaluation forms within the timeframe of the evaluation process and be present at the evaluation session. Thus the time commitment must be maintained throughout the process.

Qualifying Criteria

Projects submitted through the competitive grant process need to meet the qualifying criteria before continuing through the process.

1. Local Match as demonstrated by either the:
 - a. CIP Budget; or,
 - b. A letter of commitment from the City Manager or **Agency CEO**;
2. A preliminary project scope;
3. Documentation that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the project has begun for non-Categorical Exclusion projects or demonstration of a Category Exclusion.

Progress/Timelines

Agencies will have a three **four** year period to complete projects and a maximum deferment period of one year after which the funds are available for reprogramming through the close-out process. It is understood that procurement projects have a different process and schedule.

Phase	Step	Time from Award to Complete
Design	Bid	1 Year
	Award	
	Complete	
Environmental	Review Initiated	2 Years
	Documentation Complete	
	FTA Approval	
Right-of-Way	Site Selected	1 Year
	Acquisition Complete	
Construction	Bid	1 Year
	Award	
	Complete	

Close-Out

- A maximum deferment period of **one year is allowed** after which the funds are available for close-out
- One **A Second** deferment may be allowed but must be approved via the appeal process and approved by MAG Regional Council and must demonstrate extraordinary circumstances. The maximum deferment is for one year.

- Call for projects every two years consistent with new TIP programming cycle.
- Balance of funds for reprogramming will be discussed every 6 months at the Transit Committee.
- Transit Committee may request a call for projects as needed or funds be moved to preventive maintenance.

Evaluation Criteria/Metrics

No comments were received during the comment period on the Evaluation Metrics.

Project Application

No comments were received during the comment period on the Project Application.

Next Steps

The **MAG Regional Programming Guidelines for Federal Transit Formula Funds** document and **Project Application**, with recommendation from the Transit Committee, will be presented to Regional Council for approval on March 27, 2013. **In order to meet the MAG programming deadline, the Project Application will be made available prior to Regional Council approval.** Please refer to the table for additional deadlines.

Date	Description
February 14, 2013	Transit Committee - recommends MAG Regional Programming Guidelines for Federal Transit Formula Funds and Project Application to Regional Council for Approval
February 15, 2013	MAG staff - Applications made available to member agencies
March 12, 2013	Applicants - Applications due to MAG – 10:00 a.m.
March 14, 2013	Transit Committee - reviews list of applications/ applicants
March 15, 2013	MAG staff - Application made available to Evaluation Committee on MAG website Public notice of funding available is submitted for publication.
March 27, 2013	MAG Regional Council - approves final MAG Regional Programming Guidelines for Federal Transit Formula Funds and Project Application
March 28, 2013	Public notice of agencies submitting for funding is submitted for publication.
April 2, 2013	Evaluation Committee - questions for applicants due to MAG Staff – 10:00 a.m. MAG Staff - Questions emailed out to applicants with 48 hours.
April 11, 2013	Transit Committee - information/updates as necessary
April 12, 2013	Applicants - Responses from to questions to MAG – 10:00 a.m. MAG Staff - Responses posted to MAG website within 48 hours.
April 19, 2013	Evaluation Committee - Initial Evaluation Scores due to MAG Staff – 10:00 a.m.
April 22, 2013	Applicants - Powerpoints due to MAG – 10:00 a.m.
April 24, 2013	Evaluation team/Applicants - meet for presentation/Q&A – Time depends on number of applications
May 9, 2013	Transit Committee - recommend list of projects for inclusion in TIP
June 26, 2013	MAG Regional Council - approves list of projects
August 21, 2013	Regional Council - Approves TIP
September, 2013	Governor's designee approves MAG 2014-2018 TIP
October, 2013	First Four Years of the MAG 2014-2018 TIP included in 2013-2016 Arizona STIP

For information, discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the MAG Regional Programming Guidelines for Federal Transit Formula Funds and Project Application

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Alice Chen, Transportation Planner II at achen@azmag.gov or 602-554-6300.