

DVRPC Guidance for CHSTP Project Selection

Part 1: Upcoming FY12/FY13 Program Information

Introduction

Executive Order 13330 signed on February 24, 2004, established the new Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). The purpose of the Council is to coordinate 62 different Federal programs across 9 Federal departments that provide funding to be used in support of human services transportation. The CAMM then established United We Ride, an interagency Federal national initiative that supports States and their localities in developing coordinated human service delivery systems and plans. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom (NF) programs both aim to bridge barriers to employment opportunities for low income and disabled persons through increasing access to transportation programs.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greater Philadelphia Region, and is responsible for allocating federal funds for transportation and transportation-related improvements in the region. SAFETEA-LU directs MPOs to program and prioritize projects on a regional basis. DVRPC facilitates the separate selection processes for both the JARC and New Freedom programs in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) acts as the designated recipient of the federal funds, administers the program, and also is a provider of specified services in the Pennsylvania side of the region, while New Jersey Transit provides a similar function for the New Jersey Counties in the region.

JARC and the New Freedom programs are authorized under the provisions set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, (SAFETEA-LU), enacted on August 10, 2005. JARC is codified at 49 U.S.C. 5316 and the New Freedom Program is codified at 49 U.S.C. 5317. Further program information on JARC is located in FTA Circular 9050.1 and for the New Freedom Program in FTA Circular 9045.1, both issued on May 1, 2007. Most of the following information concerning JARC and New Freedom is taken directly from the FTA Circulars. **We strongly advise all potential applicants to review the FTA JARC Circular Guidance Summary for further clarification, located on the DVRPC CHSTP website: <http://www.dvrpc.org/CoordinatedHumanServices/>.**

Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan

Federal transit law, as amended by SAFETEA-LU, requires that projects funded from the JARC and New Freedom programs be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit human services transportation plan (CHSTP). A coordinated plan should maximize the programs' collective coverage by minimizing duplication of services. DVRPC's plan, *Improving Access to Opportunities in the Delaware Valley Region*, publication #07008, was adopted by the DVRPC Board in 2007. This plan serves as the guiding document for JARC and New Freedom, and includes goals and priorities for the region (see Chapter 4, pages 52-59). A summary version of this document is also available (publication #10009, see pages 8-12). All Pennsylvania applicants in the DVRPC region must reference this plan and identify how their application is consistent with the goals and priorities in the plan. Additionally, in this round, all Pennsylvania counties are asked to rank the three projects of greatest importance to each County. All New Jersey applicants in the DVRPC region must reference the regional plan AND their applicable county coordination plan. Additional information on CHSTP, including application materials, is located at <http://www.dvrpc.org/CoordinatedHumanServices/>.

New Freedom Initiative

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 in society. The program seeks to reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Individuals that are transportation-disadvantaged face different challenges in accessing services depending on whether they live in urban, rural, or suburban areas. The geographic dispersion of transportation-

disadvantaged populations also creates challenges for human service programs hoping to deliver transportation for their passengers.

Geographic Areas

PennDOT has designated three geographic categories which have differing funding and selection protocols: The Philadelphia urbanized area, small urbanized areas, and non-urbanized areas. Separate funding allocations, designated recipients, and selection process apply for each geographic area. A regional map illustrating the appropriate geographic areas in PA counties of the DVRPC region is located in **Part 5**.

Philadelphia Urbanized Area

To apply for Philadelphia Urbanized Area funds, the service requesting JARC and New Freedom funds must be located in the Philadelphia Urbanized Area. For the Philadelphia Urbanized Area in Pennsylvania, SEPTA is the designated recipient for all JARC and New Freedom funds. DVRPC will facilitate this selection process.

Small Urbanized Areas and Non-urbanized Areas

Parts of Bucks, Chester, and Montgomery counties are outside of the Philadelphia Urbanized Area or are in different urbanized areas. PennDOT is the designated recipient for small urbanized areas under 200,000 in population and non-urbanized Areas. DVRPC will solicit applications in these areas and forward applications to PennDOT.

Eligibility

Eligible Organizations and Agencies

The following organizations and entities are eligible to apply for funding

- Private non-profit organizations;
- State or local governmental authorities; and
- Operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation service

Eligible Activities

Activities identified by FTA as potential projects for both programs are listed in **Part 2**. Because local priorities vary, not all eligible projects may be recommended for funding. Additionally, due to liability concerns, any submitted projects are subject to legal review by the designated recipient. Liability issues may limit eligibility for some project applications and should be discussed and arranged in advance.

Funding

Anticipated Philadelphia Urban Area Funding Levels

- Funding totals are NOT guaranteed and are subject to change based on available matching funds.
- A maximum of \$1,600,000 is anticipated for the NF program in both FY 2013 and FY 2014.
- FTA has apportioned approximately \$1,280,000 to the Pennsylvania portion of the Philadelphia Urbanized Area (UZA).
- PennDOT is expected to provide a match of \$320,000, maximum. Please note that the Commonwealth is generously providing matching funds for the projects selected. PennDOT is not required to provide this match and it is NOT guaranteed in full.

FTA Funding Ratio

The Federal share of eligible costs may not exceed the following:

- 80 percent of the net cost for capital expenses and planning activities
- 50 percent of the net operating expenses

The FTA further explains differences between capital and operating expenses. The basic definition of an **operating cost** is something that does not have a useful life of more than one year. In contrast, a **capital cost** is usually a tangible item that has a useful life of more than one year. For example, vouchers are considered an operating expense, consistent with FTA program requirements; insurance is considered an operating expense; and funds used to pay the administrative costs of loan programs are operating expenses. The

construction of bus stops, the installation of elevators, or the purchase of buses, are examples of capital expenses.

Not more than **10 percent** of the recipient's total fiscal year apportionment may be used to fund program **administration costs**. Allowable administrative costs may include, but are not limited to, general administrative and overhead costs, staff salaries, office supplies, marketing, and development of specifications for vehicles and equipment.

Local Match

A non U.S. DOT local match is required for all projects. To date, PennDOT or another state agency has provided matching funds for projects, however, adequate matching funds are not guaranteed if a project is selected. Project applications which evidence sustainability, where they identify external matching funds other than PennDOT, will receive higher scores.

Application Requirements

Just as in previous rounds, all NF applicants are required to contact their applicable county planning office prior to the submission of an application. This will inform the county of the proposed project and provide an opportunity to discuss any potential challenges the project may pose. In addition, if a project is located in more than one county (i.e. rider / user origins in one county destinations in another), please contact DVRPC. County planning agency contacts are located in **Part 4**.

Applications for NF projects will be for two years, FY 2013 and FY 2014. This is the same as previous New Freedom application rounds (FY 2011 and FY 2012).

One application is requested for each project or service. The application provides the information required for this selection process, and for funding by FTA and PennDOT. Applicants will be required to provide information about the proposed project, intended beneficiaries, eligibility requirements, area to be served, additional funding, how FTA funding will be used, evidence of coordination, and organizational capacity. A map of the PennDOT Urbanized Area Boundaries is included in **Part 5**. Specific details concerning the proposed project are also requested.

Schedule and Application Review Process

- New Freedom applications will be made available electronically at www.dvrpc.org by October 7, 2011. Applications will be available for 30 days.
- On October 12, 2011, DVRPC will hold a kickoff meeting for potential Pennsylvania applicants. This meeting will present information on the JARC program and answer questions any applicant may have.
- All completed applications must be returned to DVRPC no later than November 11, 2010.
- DVRPC and CHSTP Sub-Committee will read and score each application, and scores will be compiled for review. The Sub-Committee will then vote on a recommended funding list.
- The Sub-Committee will forward the recommended list to the Regional Transportation Committee, the Regional Citizens Committee, and the DVRPC Board for approval.
- DVRPC anticipates final selection approval at the February 2012 Board meeting.
- After Board approval, recommendations are forwarded to FTA, SEPTA, and PennDOT.

A detailed description of the application process is located in **Part 3**.

Application Evaluation and Criteria

All applications will be evaluated by a selection sub-committee using scoring criteria developed by the regional sub-committee and DVRPC. This takes into account input from FTA, PennDOT, member governments and agencies, as well as precedents established through previous selection rounds. The CHSTP Sub-Committee (composed of County planning representatives; advocate for disabled peoples, and a member of DVRPC's Regional Citizens Committee) reviews applications and makes technical recommendations to the DVRPC Board. Cost per rider, number of riders / users, and sub-committee application notes may be used as tiebreakers.

All applicants must complete a separate application for each project or service. Only the Project Application is required to be completed and returned. Completed applications should be delivered electronically to jhacker@dvrpc.org. For applications that cannot be delivered electronically, please mail to the address below.

Contact Information

For non-electronic communication, please direct all comments, concerns, and completed applications to:

Joseph F. Hacker
Manager
Office of Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Planning
DVRPC
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520
jhacker@dvrpc.org
215-238-2935.

Part 2: Eligible Activities

Eligible New Freedom Activities (from FTA Circular Chapter III, section 11)

New Freedom Program funds are available for capital and operating expenses that support new public transportation services beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and new public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the ADA designed to assist individuals with disabilities with accessing transportation services, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services.

Eligible projects funded with New Freedom funds may continue to be eligible for New Freedom funding indefinitely as long as the project(s) continue to be part of the coordinated plan.

Both new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives are required to go beyond the requirements of the ADA and must (1) be targeted toward individuals with disabilities; and (2) meet the intent of the program by removing barriers to transportation and assisting persons with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment services.

The list of eligible activities is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Recipients are encouraged to develop innovative solutions to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in their communities.

(1) Enhancing paratransit beyond minimum requirements of the ADA. ADA complementary paratransit services can be eligible under New Freedom in several ways as long as the services provided meet the definition of “new:”

(2) Feeder services. New “feeder” service (transit service that provides access) to commuter rail, commuter bus, intercity rail, and intercity bus stations, for which complementary paratransit service is not required under the ADA.

(3) Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations. New Freedom funds are eligible to be used for new accessibility enhancements that remove barriers to individuals with disabilities so they may access greater portions of public transportation systems, such as fixed-route bus service, commuter rail, light rail and rapid rail.

(4) Travel training. New training programs for individual users on awareness, knowledge, and skills of public and alternative transportation options available in their communities. This includes travel instruction and travel training services.

(5) Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. Mobility management is an eligible capital cost. Mobility management techniques may enhance transportation access for populations beyond those served by one agency or organization within a community. For example, a non-profit agency could receive New Freedom funding to support the administrative costs of sharing services it provides to its own clientele with other individuals with disabilities and coordinate usage of vehicles with other non-profits, but not the operating costs of the service. Mobility management is intended to build coordination among existing public transportation providers and other transportation service providers with the result of expanding the availability of service.

Part 3: Application Process

1. DVRPC will announce the NF application round on the website. A public notice will be sent to potential applicants alerting them to the website posting and inviting them to a kickoff meeting. All materials, including application, will be located electronically on DVRPC's website. Print copies will be available at an applicant's request. The NF application round will be for two years (FY 2013 and 2014).
2. Applicants are required to contact their respective County planner responsible for Coordinated Human Service Transportation Planning prior to submitting an application. This meeting will allow the County to understand the application, and to assist the applicant with proper completion of the application. A list of contacts is shown in **Part 4**.
3. Applications are subject to legal review by the Designated Recipient (SEPTA), in order assess issues regarding liability and compliance with FTA standards. If a project is deemed problematic due to liability or compliance issues, then it may be deemed ineligible for funding.
4. The applicant will submit a completed project application to DVRPC by application deadline. DVRPC reviews the applications for completeness and adherence to guidelines. DVRPC will then fill in required sections of the score sheet and forward materials to the selection committee for review and scoring. DVRPC will insert accurate cost and ridership numbers based on SEPTA data from previously funded sub-recipients, where applicant numbers deviate from official records.
5. The selection committee (composed of County planning representatives; an advocate for disabled peoples, and a member of DVRPC's Regional Citizens Committee) will read and score each application. All individual application scores will be added for a cumulative total.
6. DVRPC staff will review and summarize the completed score sheets, put the totaled results into a matrix, and submit copies to the Selection Committee for review.
7. The CHSTP selection committee will then convene to review the composite application scores and recommend a project list based on the available budget. Applicants may be asked to be available to answer committee questions. At that time, committee members may revisit and change application scores. The lowest ranked projects are removed until a list of projects fits the assigned budget.
8. The CHSTP selection committee's list of projects recommended for funding are forwarded to the DVRPC Regional Citizen's Committee (RCC), and Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) for review and approval, and then on to the DVRPC Board for final approval. Each committee may request additional information prior to approval, and may ask for project modifications prior to approval.
9. Final recommendations are forwarded to the designated recipient (SEPTA), PennDOT and the FTA.
10. The designated recipient (SEPTA) will then work with the recommended project applicants for their application to PennDOT and FTA.
11. DVRPC will continue to work with the CHSTP committee to clarify the application and selection process.

Part 4: CHSTP Contacts

Bucks

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Chester

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Delaware

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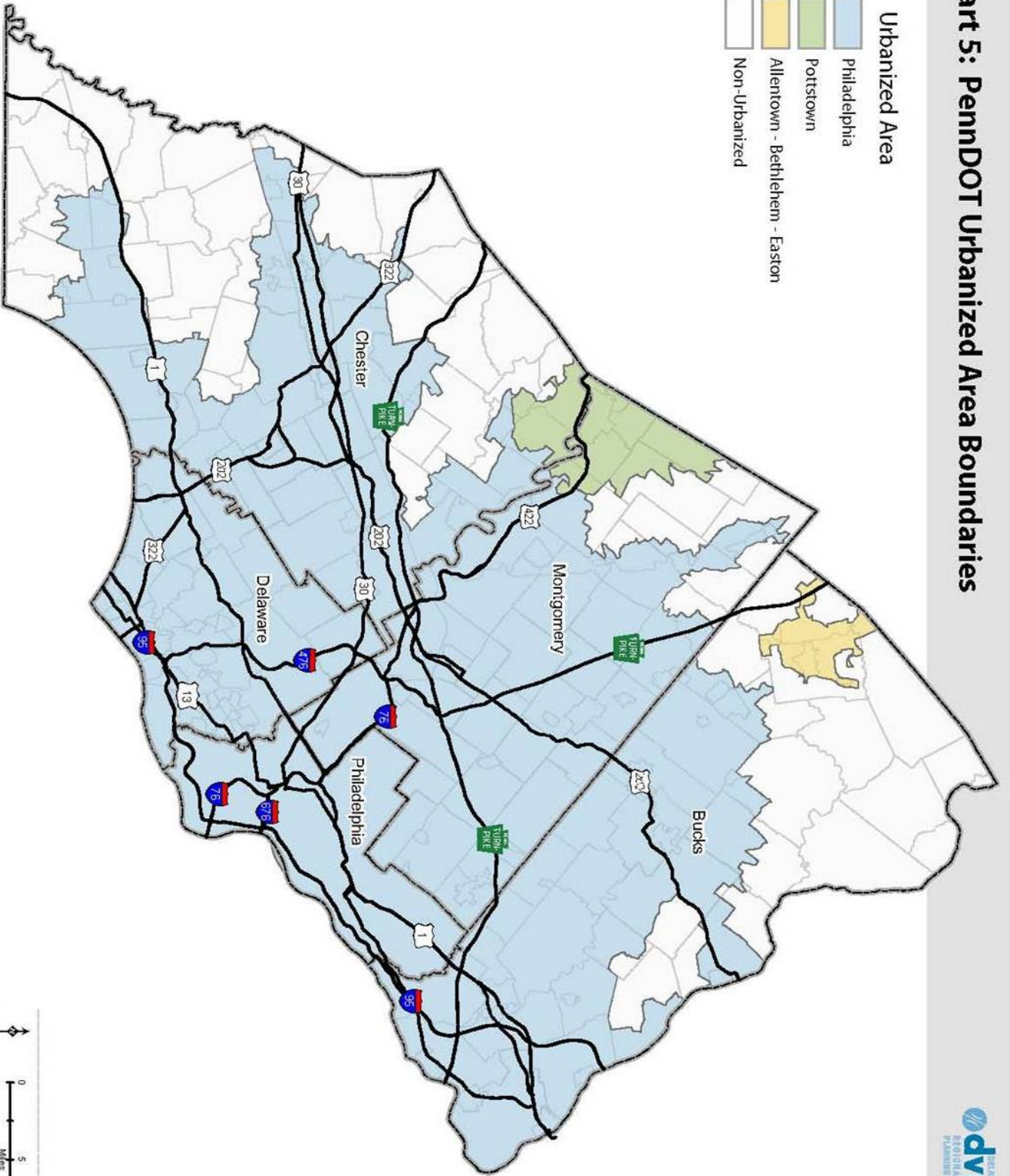
Philadelphia

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Part 5: PennDOT Urbanized Area Boundaries



- Urbanized Area
- Philadelphia
 - Pottstown
 - Allentown - Bethlehem - Easton
 - Non-Urbanized



Source: PennDOT 2005