

rather than through intermediaries or third parties.

K. Jane Williams,

Acting Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

FY 2020 Competitive Funding Opportunity: Passenger Ferry Grant Program

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of funding opportunity (NOFO).

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces the opportunity to apply for \$30 million in competitive grants under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Passenger Ferry Grant Program (Ferry Program) (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance #20.507). As required by Federal public transportation law, funds will be awarded competitively to designated recipients or eligible direct recipients of Urbanized Area Formula funds to assist in the financing of capital projects to support existing passenger ferry service, establish new ferry service, and to repair and modernize ferry boats, terminals, and related facilities and equipment. FTA may award additional funding made available to the program prior to the announcement of project selections.

DATES: Complete proposals must be submitted electronically through the *GRANTS.GOV* "APPLY" function by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time March 30, 2020. Prospective applicants should initiate the process by promptly registering on the *GRANTS.GOV* website to ensure completion of the application process before the submission deadline.

Instructions for applying can be found on FTA's website at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/applying/applying-fta-funding> and in the "FIND" module of *GRANTS.GOV*. The funding opportunity ID is FTA-2020-008-Ferry. Mail and fax submissions will not be accepted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Vanessa Williams, FTA Office of Program Management, (202) 366-4818, or vanessa.williams@dot.gov.

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A. Program Description

Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5307(h)) authorizes FTA to award grants for passenger ferries through a competitive process, as described in this notice. The Ferry Program provides funding to designated recipients and direct recipients under FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Program, as well as public entities engaged in providing public transportation passenger ferry service in urban areas that are eligible to be direct recipients. Projects under the program are for capital to improve the condition and quality of existing passenger ferry services, support the establishment of new passenger ferry services, and to repair and modernize ferry boats, terminals, and related facilities and equipment. FTA recognizes that passenger ferries provide critical and cost-effective transportation links in urban areas throughout the United States, but face a critical backlog of state of good repair and safety investments.

In FY 2020, FTA is encouraging applicants to propose projects that introduce innovative technologies or practices in support of FTA's Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM) initiative. FTA is focused on the introduction of new technology not commonly found within U.S. transit systems such as integrated fare payment systems permitting complete trips or advancements to propulsion systems. Innovation can also include practices such as new public transportation operational models, financial or procurement arrangements, or value capture.

B. Federal Award Information

Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5338(h)(1)) authorizes \$30 million in FY 2020 funds for grants under the Ferry Program. The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 appropriated \$30 million for the FY 2020 Ferry Program. FTA may award additional funding made available to the program prior to the announcement of project selections. In FY 2019, the program received applications for 20 projects requesting approximately \$99.3 million from 9 states. Nine projects were funded at a total of \$32.8 million, using a combination of funding from FY 2019 and funding remaining from prior year appropriations.

FTA will grant pre-award authority to incur costs for selected projects beginning on the date that project selections are announced. Funds are only available for projects that have not already incurred costs and will be available for obligation five years after the fiscal year in which funding is allocated under this competition.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include designated recipients and direct recipients as defined in FTA Circular "Urbanized Area Formula Program: Program Guidance and Application Instructions" (FTA.C.9030.1E), as well as public entities engaged in providing public transportation passenger ferry service in urban areas that are eligible to be direct recipients.

If an applicant does not currently have an active Urbanized Area Formula Program grant with FTA, the applicant is encouraged to contact the Ferry Program manager for assistance with determining if it is eligible to receive funds under the Ferry Program. Eligible applicants that do not currently have an active grant with FTA will, upon selection, be required to work with the FTA regional office to establish its organization as an active grantee. This process may require additional documentation to support the organization's technical, financial, and legal capacity to receive and administer Federal funds under this program.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

a. The maximum Federal share for projects selected under the Ferry Program is 80 percent of the net project cost, with the following exceptions.

b. The maximum Federal share is 85 percent of the net project cost of acquiring vehicles (including clean-fuel or alternative fuel vehicles) for purposes of complying with or maintaining compliance with the Clean Air Act (CAA) and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

c. The maximum Federal share is 90 percent of the net project cost of acquiring, installing or constructing vehicle-related equipment or facilities (including clean fuel or alternative-fuel vehicle-related equipment or facilities) for purposes of complying with or maintaining compliance with the ADA and/or r CAA. The award recipient must itemize the cost of specific, discrete, vehicle-related equipment associated with compliance with ADA or CAA to be eligible for the maximum 90 percent Federal share for these costs.

Eligible sources of local match include:

Cash from non-governmental sources other than revenues from providing public transportation Public Transportation services;

- i. Non-farebox revenues from the operation of public transportation Public Transportation service, such as the sale of advertising and concession revenues;
- ii. Monies received under a service agreement with a State or local social service agency or private social service organization;
- iii. Undistributed cash surpluses, replacement or depreciation cash funds, reserves available in cash, or new capital;
- iv. Amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to a department or agency of the Government (other than the U.S. Department of Transportation), that are eligible to be expended for public transportation;
- v. In-kind contributions integral to the project;
- vi. Revenue bond proceeds for a capital project, with prior FTA approval; and
- vii. Transportation Development Credits (TDC) (formerly referred to as Toll Revenue Credits).

If an applicant proposes a Federal share greater than 80 percent, the applicant must clearly explain why the project is eligible for the proposed Federal share.

NOTE: Please refer to FTA Circular 9030 for more information regarding the use of TDCs. FTA will not retroactively approve TDCs as match if they are not included in the proposal submitted under this competition.

3. Eligible Projects

Eligible projects are capital projects for the purchase, replacement, or rehabilitation of ferries, terminals, related infrastructure, related equipment (including fare equipment and communication devices) and expansion. Projects are required to support a passenger ferry service that operates within an urbanized area, as defined under Federal public transportation law, but may include services that operate between an urbanized area and non-urbanized areas. Ferry systems that accommodate cars must also accommodate walk-on passengers in order to be eligible for funding.

Recipients are permitted to use up to 0.5 percent of their requested grant award for workforce development activities eligible under Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5314(b)) and an additional 0.5 percent for costs associated with training at the National Transit Institute. Applicants must

identify the proposed use of funds for these activities in the project proposal and identify them separately in the project budget.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address

Applications must be submitted electronically through *GRANTS.GOV*. General information for submitting applications through *GRANTS.GOV* can be found at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/applying/applying-fta-funding> along with specific instructions for the forms and attachments required for submission. Mail and fax submissions will not be accepted. A complete proposal submission consists of two forms: The SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance (downloaded from *GRANTS.GOV*) and the supplemental form for the FY 2020 Passenger Ferry Grant Program (downloaded from *GRANTS.GOV* or the FTA website at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/passenger-ferry-grant-program-section-5307>). Applicants may also attach additional supporting information. Failure to submit the information as requested can delay or prevent review of the application.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

A strong transportation network is critical to the functioning and growth of the American economy. The nation's industry depends on the transportation network to move the goods that it produces, and facilitate the movements of the workers who are responsible for that production. When the nation's highways, railways, and ports function well, that infrastructure connects people to jobs, increases the efficiency of delivering goods and thereby cuts the costs of doing business, reduces the burden of commuting, and improves overall well-being.

Rural transportation networks play a vital role in supporting our national economic vitality. Addressing the deteriorating conditions and disproportionately high fatality rates on our rural transportation infrastructure is of critical interest to the Department, as rural transportation networks face unique challenges in safety, infrastructure condition, and passenger and freight usage. Consistent with the R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative, the Department encourages applicants to consider how the project will address the challenges faced by rural areas.

i. Proposal Submission A complete proposal submission consists of two

forms: (1) The SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance; and (2) the FY 2020 Passenger Ferry Grant Program supplemental form. The supplemental form and any supporting documents must be attached to the "Attachments" section of the SF-424. The application must include responses to all sections of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance and the supplemental form, unless indicated as optional. The information on the supplemental form will be used to determine applicant and project eligibility for the program, and to evaluate the proposal against the selection criteria described in part E of this notice.

FTA will only accept one supplemental form per SF-424 submission. FTA encourages States and other applicants to consider submitting a single supplemental form that includes multiple activities to be evaluated as a consolidated proposal. If a State or other applicant chooses to submit separate proposals for individual consideration by FTA, each proposal must be submitted using a separate SF-424 and supplemental form.

Applicants may attach additional supporting information to the SF-424 submission, including but not limited to letters of support, project budgets, fleet status reports, or excerpts from relevant planning documents. Supporting documentation must be described and referenced by file name in the appropriate response section of the supplemental form, or it may not be reviewed.

Information such as applicant name, Federal amount requested, local match amount, description of areas served, etc. may be requested in varying degrees of detail on both the SF-424 and Supplemental Form. Applicants must fill in all fields unless stated otherwise on the forms. Applicants should not place N/A or "refer to attachment" in lieu of typing in responses in the field sections. If information is copied into the supplemental form from another source, applicants should verify that pasted text is fully captured on the supplemental form and has not been truncated by the character limits built into the form. Applicants should use both the "Check Package for Errors" and the "Validate Form" validation buttons on both forms to check all required fields on the forms, and ensure that the Federal and local amounts specified are consistent.

ii. Application Content

The SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance and the supplemental form will prompt applicants for the required information, including:

- a. Applicant name
- b. Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number
- c. Key contact information (including contact name, address, email address, and phone)
- d. Congressional district(s) where project will take place
- e. Project information (including title, executive summary, and type)
- f. A detailed description of the need for the project
- g. A detailed description on how the project will support the Ferry Program objectives
- h. Evidence that the project is consistent with local and regional planning objectives
- i. Evidence that the applicant can provide the local cost share
- j. A description of the technical, legal, and financial capacity of the applicant
- k. A detailed project budget
- l. An explanation of the scalability of the project
- m. Details on the local matching funds
- n. A detailed project timeline
- o. Whether the project impacts an Opportunity Zone

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant is required to: (1) Be registered in SAM before submitting an application; (2) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (3) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which the applicant has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by FTA. These requirements do not apply if the applicant has an exemption approved by FTA under Federal grants and agreements law (2 CFR 25.110(d)). FTA may not make an award until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time FTA is ready to make an award, FTA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. SAM registration takes approximately 3–5 business days, but FTA recommends allowing ample time, up to several weeks, for completion of all steps. For additional information on obtaining a unique entity identifier, please visit www.sam.gov.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Project proposals must be submitted electronically through *GRANTS.GOV* by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 30,

2020. *GRANTS.GOV* attaches a time stamp to each application at the time of submission. Mail and fax submissions will not be accepted.

FTA urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the due date to allow time to correct any problems that may have caused either *GRANTS.GOV* or FTA systems to reject the submission. Proposals submitted after the deadline will only be considered under extraordinary circumstances not under the applicant's control. Deadlines will not be extended due to scheduled website maintenance. *GRANTS.GOV* scheduled maintenance and outage times are announced on the *GRANTS.GOV* website.

Within 48 hours after submitting an electronic application, the applicant should receive an email message from *GRANTS.GOV* with confirmation of successful transmission to *GRANTS.GOV*. If a notice of failed validation or incomplete materials is received, the applicant must address the reason for the failed validation, as described in the email notice, and resubmit before the submission deadline. If making a resubmission for any reason, include all original attachments regardless of which attachments were updated and check the box on the supplemental form indicating this is a resubmission.

Applicants are encouraged to begin the process of registration on the *GRANTS.GOV* site well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration is a multi-step process, which may take several weeks to complete before an application can be submitted. Registered applicants may still be required to take steps to keep their registration up to date before submissions can be made successfully: (1) Registration in SAM is renewed annually; and (2) persons making submissions on behalf of the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) must be authorized in *GRANTS.GOV* by the AOR to make submissions.

5. Funding Restrictions

Funds made available under the Ferry Program may not be used to fund operating expenses, planning, or preventive maintenance. Any project that does not include the purchase, replacement, or rehabilitation of ferries, terminals, related infrastructure, or related equipment is not eligible. Funds made available under this NOFO cannot be used to reimburse applicants for otherwise eligible expenses incurred prior to FTA award of a grant agreement until FTA has issued pre-award authority for selected projects.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants are encouraged to identify scaled funding options in case insufficient funding is available to fund a project at the full requested amount. If an applicant indicates that a project is scalable, the applicant must provide an appropriate minimum funding amount that will fund an eligible project that achieves the objectives of the program and meets all relevant program requirements. The applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the project budget would be affected by a reduced award. FTA may award a lesser amount whether or not a scalable option is provided.

E. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be evaluated primarily on the responses provided in the supplemental form. Additional information may be provided to support the responses; however, any additional documentation must be directly referenced on the supplemental form, including the file name where the additional information can be found. FTA will evaluate project proposals for competitive passenger ferry grants based on the criteria described in this notice.

Consistent with the Department's R.O.U.T.E.S. Initiative (<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>), the Department recognizes that rural transportation networks face unique challenges. To the extent that those challenges are reflected in the merit criteria listed in this section, the Department will consider how the activities proposed in the application will address those challenges, regardless of the geographic location of those activities.

a. Demonstration of Need

Applications will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate how the proposed project will address an unmet need for capital investment in passenger ferry vehicles, equipment, and/or facilities. FTA will also evaluate the project's impact on service delivery and whether the project represents a one-time or periodic need that cannot reasonably be funded from FTA formula program allocations or State and/or local resources. In evaluating applications, FTA will consider, among other factors, certain project-specific criteria as outlined below:

- i. For vessel replacement or rehabilitation projects:
 - The age of the asset to be replaced or rehabilitated by the proposed project, relative to its useful life.

- Condition and performance of the asset to be replaced by the proposed project, as ascertained through inspections or otherwise, if available.

- ii. For facility infrastructure improvements or related-equipment acquisitions:

- The age of the facility or equipment to be rehabilitated or replaced relative to its useful life.

- The degree to which the proposed project will enable the agency to improve the maintenance and condition of the agency's fleet and/or other related ferry assets.

- iii. For vessel or facility-related expansion or new service requests:

- The degree to which the proposed project addresses a current capacity constraint that is limiting the ability of the agency to provide reliable service, meet ridership demands, or maintain vessels and related equipment.

- The degree the proposed new service is supported by ridership demand.

b. Demonstration of Benefits

Applications will be evaluated based on how the ferry project will improve the safety and state of good repair of the system, provide additional transportation options to potential riders within the service area, or accelerating innovation. FTA will consider potential benefits such as increased reliability of service, improved operations or maintenance capabilities, or expanded mobility options, intermodal connections, and economic benefits to the community.

Applicants should address how the ferry service to be supported by the proposed project is integrated with other regional modes of transportation, including but not limited to: Rail, bus, intercity bus, and private transportation providers. Supporting documentation should include data that demonstrates the number of trips (passengers and vehicles), the number of walk-on passengers, and the frequency of transfers to other modes if applicable.

FTA will evaluate the potential for the project to accelerate the introduction of innovative technologies or practices such as integrated fare payment systems permitting complete trips or advancements to propulsion systems. Innovation can also include practices such as new public transportation operational models, financial or procurement arrangements, or value capture.

c. Planning and Local/Regional Prioritization

Applicants must demonstrate how the proposed project is consistent with local

and regional planning documents and identified priorities. This will involve assessing whether the project is consistent with the transit priorities identified in the long-range transportation plan and/or the State and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (STIP/TIP).

Applicants should note if the project could not be included in the financially constrained STIP or TIP due to lack of funding, and if selected that the project can be added to the federally approved STIP before grant award.

FTA encourages applicants to demonstrate local support by including letters of support from State Departments of Transportation, local transit agencies, local government officials and public agencies, local non-profit or private sector organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. In an area with both ferry and other public transit operators, FTA will evaluate whether project proposals demonstrate coordination with and support of other related projects within the applicant's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or the geographic region within which the proposed project will operate.

d. Local Financial Commitment

Applicants must identify the source of the local cost share and describe whether such funds are currently available for the project or will need to be secured if the project is selected for funding. FTA will consider the availability of the local cost share as evidence of local financial commitment to the project. Additional consideration will be given to those projects for which local funds have already been made available or reserved. Applicants should submit evidence of the availability of funds for the project, for example by including a board resolution, letter of support from the State, or other documentation of the source of local funds such as a budget document highlighting the line item or section committing funds to the proposed project.

An applicant may propose a local cost share that is greater than the minimum requirement or provide documentation of previous local investments in the project, which cannot be used to satisfy local matching requirements, as evidence of local financial commitment. Additional consideration will be given to those projects that propose a larger local cost share.

Applicants that request a Federal share greater than 80 percent must clearly explain why the project is eligible for the proposed Federal share.

e. Project Implementation Strategy

Projects will be evaluated based on the extent to which the project is ready to implement within a reasonable period of time and whether the applicant's proposed implementation plans are reasonable and complete.

In assessing whether the project is ready to implement within a reasonable period of time, FTA will consider whether the project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion, or whether the required environmental work has been initiated or completed for projects that require an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. As such, applicants should submit information describing the project's anticipated path and timeline through the environmental review process. The proposal must also state whether grant funds can be obligated within 12 months from time of award, if selected, and indicate the timeframe under which the Metropolitan TIP and/or STIP can be amended to include the proposed project. Additional consideration will be given to projects for which grant funds can be obligated within 12 months from time of award.

In assessing whether the proposed implementation plans are reasonable and complete, FTA will review the proposed project implementation plan, including all necessary project milestones and the overall project timeline. For projects that will require formal coordination, approvals, or permits from other agencies or project partners, the applicant must demonstrate coordination with these organizations and their support for the project, such as through letters of support.

f. Technical, Legal, and Financial Capacity

Applicants must demonstrate that they have the technical, legal, and financial capacity to undertake the project. FTA will review relevant oversight assessments and records to determine whether there are any outstanding legal, technical, or financial issues with the applicant that would affect the outcome of the proposed project. Applicants with outstanding legal, technical, or financial compliance issues from a FTA compliance review or FTA grant-related Single Audit finding must explain how corrective actions taken will mitigate negative impacts on the project.

F. Review and Selection Process Information

In addition to other FTA staff that may review the proposals, a technical evaluation committee will evaluate proposals based on the published evaluation criteria. Members of the technical evaluation committee and other FTA staff may request additional information from applicants, if necessary. Based on the findings of the technical evaluation committee, the FTA Administrator will determine the final selection of projects for program funding. In determining the allocation of program funds, FTA may consider geographic diversity, diversity in the size of the transit systems receiving funding, projects located or that support public transportation service in a qualified opportunity zone designated pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 1400Z-1, the applicant's receipt of other competitive awards, the percentage of the local share provided, and whether the project includes an innovative technology or practice. FTA may consider capping the amount a single applicant may receive and prioritizing projects that serve small urban or both urban and rural areas. Projects that have a higher local financial commitment may also be prioritized.

After applying the above preferences, the FTA Administrator will consider the following key Departmental objectives:

- Using innovative approaches to improve safety and expedite project delivery;
- Supporting economic vitality at the national and regional level;
- Utilizing alternative funding sources and innovative financing models to attract non-Federal sources of infrastructure investment;
- Accounting for the life-cycle costs of the project to promote the state of good repair; and

• Holding grant recipients accountable for their performance and achieving specific, measurable outcomes identified by grant applicants.

Prior to making an award, FTA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information Systems accessible through SAM. An applicant may review and comment on information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. FTA may consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards

when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in the Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200.205).

G. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Federal Award Notices

Final project selections will be posted on the FTA website. Only proposals from eligible recipients for eligible activities will be considered for funding.

There is no minimum or maximum grant award amount; however, FTA intends to fund as many meritorious projects as possible. Due to funding limitations, projects that are selected for funding may receive less than the amount originally requested. In those cases, applicants must be able to demonstrate that the proposed projects are still viable and can be completed with the amount awarded.

Recipients should contact their FTA Regional Offices for additional information regarding allocations for projects under the Ferry Program.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

i. Pre-Award Authority

At the time the project selections are announced, FTA will extend pre-award authority for the selected projects. There is no blanket pre-award authority for these projects before announcement. FTA does not provide pre-award authority for competitive funds until projects are selected and even then, there are Federal requirements that must be met before costs are incurred. For more information about FTA's policy on pre-award authority, please see the FY 2019 Apportionment Notice published on July 3, 2019. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-07-03/pdf/2019-14248.pdf>.

ii. Grant Requirements

If selected, awardees will apply for a grant through FTA's Transit Award Management System (TrAMS). All Ferry Program recipients are subject to the grant requirements of the Urbanized Area Formula Grant program (49 U.S.C. 5307), including those of FTA Circular "Urbanized Area Formula Program: Program Guidance and Application Instructions" (FTA.C.9030.1E). All recipients must also follow the Award Management Requirements (FTA.C.5010.1) and the labor protections required by Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5333(b)). Technical assistance regarding these requirements is available from each FTA regional office.

iii. Buy America and Strengthening Buy-American Preferences for Infrastructure Projects

FTA requires that all capital procurements meet FTA's Buy America requirements (49 U.S.C. 5323(j)) which require all iron, steel, or manufactured products be produced in the United States. Federal public transportation law provides for a phased increase in the domestic content for rolling stock between FY 2016 and FY 2020. For FY 2020 and beyond, the cost of components and subcomponents produced in the United States must be more than 70 percent of the cost of all components. There is no change to the requirement that final assembly of rolling stock must occur in the United States. FTA issued guidance on the implementation of the phased increase in domestic content on September 1, 2016 (81 FR 60278). Applicants should read the policy guidance carefully to determine the applicable domestic content requirement for their projects. Any proposal that will require a waiver must identify the items for which a waiver will be sought in the application. Applicants should not proceed with the expectation that waivers will be granted.

Consistent with Executive Order 13858 *Strengthening Buy-American Preferences for Infrastructure Projects*, signed by President Trump on January 31, 2019, applicants should maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States, in Federal procurements and through the terms and conditions of Federal financial assistance awards.

iv. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

Projects that include ferry acquisitions are subject to the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program regulations (49 CFR part 26) and ferry manufacturers must be certified Transit Vehicle Manufacturers (TVMs) to be eligible to bid on an FTA-assisted ferry procurement. The rule requires that, prior to bidding on any FTA-assisted vehicle procurement, entities that manufacture ferries must submit a DBE Program plan and annual goal methodology to FTA. The FTA will then issue a TVM concurrence/certification letter. Grant recipients must verify each entity's compliance before accepting its bid. A list of certified TVMs is posted on FTA's web page at www.transit.dot.gov/TVM. Recipients should contact FTA before accepting bids from entities not listed on this web-posting. In lieu of using a certified TVM, recipients may also establish project specific DBE goals for ferry purchases. The FTA will provide

additional guidance as grants are awarded. For more information on DBE requirements, please contact Scheryl Portee, Office of the Chief Counsel, 202-366-0840, email: scheryl.portee@dot.gov.

v. Planning

FTA encourages applicants to notify the appropriate State Departments of Transportation and MPOs in areas likely to be served by the project funds made available under these initiatives and programs. Selected projects must be incorporated into the long-range plans and transportation improvement programs of States and metropolitan areas before they are eligible for FTA funding. As described under the evaluation criteria, FTA may consider whether a project is consistent with or already included in these plans when evaluating a project.

vi. Standard Assurances

The applicant assures that it will comply with all applicable Federal statutes, regulations, executive orders, directives, FTA circulars, and other Federal administrative requirements in carrying out any project supported by the FTA grant. The applicant acknowledges that it is under a continuing obligation to comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement issued for its project with FTA. The applicant understands that Federal laws, regulations, policies, and administrative practices might be modified from time to time and may affect the implementation of the project. The applicant agrees that the most recent Federal requirements will apply to the project, unless FTA issues a written determination otherwise. The applicant must submit the Certifications and Assurances before receiving a grant if it does not have current certifications on file.

3. Reporting

Post-award reporting requirements include the electronic submission of Federal Financial Reports and Milestone Progress Reports. Recipients of funds made available through this NOFO are also required to regularly submit data to the National Transit Database.

H. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For further information concerning this notice, please contact the Ferry Program manager, Vanessa Williams, by phone at 202-366-4818, or by email at vanessa.williams@dot.gov. A TDD is available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing at 800-877-8339. In addition, FTA will post answers to questions and requests for clarifications

on FTA's website at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/passenger-ferry-grant-program-section-5307>. To ensure receipt of accurate information about eligibility or the program, the applicant is encouraged to contact FTA directly, rather than through intermediaries or third parties.

I. Technical Assistance and Other Program Information

This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." FTA will consider applications for funding only from eligible recipients for eligible projects listed in Section C. Complete applications must be submitted through GRANTS.GOV by 11:59 p.m. EST on March 30, 2020. For issues with GRANTS.GOV, please contact GRANTS.GOV by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or by email at support@grants.gov. Contact information for FTA's regional offices can be found on FTA's website at <http://www.transit.dot.gov/>.

K. Jane Williams,

Acting Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

[Docket No. PHMSA-2019-0223]

Pipeline Safety: Pipeline Research and Development Forum

AGENCY: Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public forum.

SUMMARY: PHMSA is publishing this notice to announce a public meeting for the Pipeline Research and Development (R&D) Forum. PHMSA periodically holds this forum to generate a national research agenda that identifies technical challenges and fosters solutions to improve pipeline safety and protect the environment.

DATES: The forum will be held on February 19-20, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET. On-site registration will begin at 7:00 a.m. on both days. Online pre-registration for the forum is available until February 5, 2020. Individuals requiring accommodations, such as sign language interpretation or other ancillary aids, should notify Robert Smith, Engineering and Research Division, at 919-238-4759 or robert.w.smith@dot.gov by February 1,

2020. For additional information, see the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

ADDRESSES: The forum will be held at the Westin Arlington Gateway, 801 North Glebe Road, Arlington, Virginia 22203, USA, Phone: 703-717-6200, website: <http://www.westinarlingtongateway.com>.

The agenda and any additional information for the forum will be published on the following meeting page at <https://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/meetings/MtgHome.mtg?mtg=145>.

Registration: To help ensure adequate space is provided, attendees should register in advance on the PHMSA public forum website at <https://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/meetings/MtgHome.mtg?mtg=145>. Onsite registration will also be available. Attendees are responsible for their own hotel accommodations. A block of hotel rooms is available on a first come, first served basis at the current government rate. Contact the hotel directly and mention "DOT R&D Forum" to receive the reserved hotel room rate.

The forum will not be webcast; however, presentations will be available on the forum website and in the public docket at <https://www.regulations.gov/>, under docket number PHMSA-2019-0223 within 30 days following the meeting.

Public Participation: The Pipeline R&D Forum will be open to the public. Attendees can participate during the question and answer portions of the agenda during the forum. The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to providing equal access to this meeting for all participants. If you need alternative formats or services because of a disability, such as sign language, interpretation, or other ancillary aids, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Written comments: Persons who wish to submit written comments on the forum may submit them to the docket in the following ways:

E-Gov Website: <https://www.regulations.gov>. This website allows the public to enter comments on any **Federal Register** notice issued by any agency.

Fax: 1-202-493-2251.

Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

Hand Delivery: Room W12-140 on the ground level of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.