Chapter 1 Guidelines for All Projects

This chapter outlines requirements related to your grant funding and guidelines for all project types.

Grants Contracts

The Washington State Department of Transportation expects your organization to carry out the project as described in your application for funding and subsequent grant agreement. Occasionally, despite the best efforts to effectively plan and manage a project, changes are necessary.

Project Change Requests

Your organization's project cannot be modified, adjusted or changed without written approval from WSDOT. All aspects of the grant agreement remain in force until WSDOT provides written confirmation of the approved change. All aspects of your organization's grant agreement remain in force until written approval with an effective date is received from WSDOT. In some cases, project changes require a formal amendment to the existing grant agreement.

Total Project Cost

A grantee must notify WSDOT if the total project cost decreases by 10 percent or more. Your grant must not provide more than 80 percent of the total project cost. Each agency's financial participation will be adjusted to maintain the matching percentage described in the grant application.

Transit Agencies Only

In order to be eligible to receive grant funds, a transit agency must have a policy in place to allow other users the use of a transit agency-owned park and ride lot. Rent can be charged, and WSDOT will not review or approve an agency's policy. A policy must be in place before a reimbursement request can be processed.

Project Change Request Process

Before your organization develops and submits a formal written (letter or email) project change proposal to WSDOT, we strongly recommend that you contact, collaborate with and obtain input from organizations/entities that may be affected by the proposed project change. Your assigned WSDOT community liaison will aid you in the process. All changes must be requested in writing to your WSDOT community liaison, either through U.S. mail or email.

Change requests must include:

- Specific information about the proposed change (i.e., scope, schedule and budget).
- Comparisons to existing grant commitments.
- Reasons for the requested change.
- Expected benefits and costs associated with the proposed change and impact on stakeholders.

In addition, it may be helpful to include information about other potential solutions that were considered but rejected. For competitive grant programs, explain how the revised project scope will better meet the needs of your organization and the community you serve.

Examples of project changes include but are not limited to:

- **Scope of Work**
  - Service modification – Schedule and route changes.
  - Change in the type or size of vehicles to be purchased.
  - Number of parking spaces in a park and ride lot.
  - Transit station location.
  - Using grant funds for elements of work not listed in the original scope of work (e.g., paying for a new signal on an adjacent road instead of the park and ride lot construction listed in the scope of work).
  - Change of specifications used to guide the work (e.g., using local design specifications instead of state design specifications, shifting from an environmental impact statement to an environmental assessment, or documented categorical exclusion).
- **Schedule**
  - Change to project begin or end date.
- **Budget – Construction Projects**
  - Overall project budget.
  - Local match percentage.
  - Funding for phase of work (e.g., shifting funds from construction to an earlier phase of work such as design or real estate acquisition).
- **Assignment**
  - Transferring grant responsibilities from one organization to another organization.
  - Shifting grant funds between projects.

Most of the changes listed above will require an amendment to the grant agreement.

Relationships with Employees and Officers of WSDOT

Under state ethics laws (RCW 42.52.080), WSDOT staff members are not allowed to accept loans, gratuities, or gifts of money in any form from your organization or any of your representatives. In addition, WSDOT employees are not allowed to work for an organization if they have oversight responsibilities or are involved with contract negotiations with that organization. For more information about ethics requirements, refer to the "Ethics" clause in your agreement with WSDOT and to federal regulations 31 USC 3801 and 49 CFR Part 31.

Purchasing Policies

Grantees that use state funds to purchase vehicle and equipment must use a competitive procurement process. The procurement process must be in accordance with each grantee's purchasing policies and must follow all applicable state laws.

Transit Asset Management Plan

As a condition of receiving state funding, all public transit systems (as defined in RCW 35.84.060, 36.56, 36.57A and 81.112) are required to have an asset management plan (AMP) certified by WSDOT every two years and submit a self-certification every two years stating that they are still following the same plan or that the changes to their plan are consistent with state requirements. At a minimum, the plan must include an inventory of the transit system's assets, and a preventive maintenance program based on lowest-life-cycle cost methodologies. Guidance for the development of a transit AMP is published in a separate document. For more information, contact a WSDOT Public Transportation Division Capital Programs staff member.

Matching Funds

Matching funds represent the grantee's share of the total project costs. You may use local, state, federal and private funding (as long as the state funds are not from another WSDOT competitive grant) as local match. Prior investments in project design, real-estate acquisition or construction may also be used as match.

Examples of Matching Funds

- Local tax revenues such as sales tax receipts.
- Funds from other public agencies.
- Private donations.
- Advertising revenue.
- Foundation grants.
- State funds from any source except other competitive WSDOT grants.
- Revenue from other grants awarded to your organization.
- Federal funds from any source.
- Previously acquired land to be used for the project.
- WSDOT-owned land.
- Previous non-planning project expenditures.
- Surplus or retained earnings from other activities in your organization.

Project Records

Grantees are expected to keep project records in order to adequately document project activities and costs. The procedures used for recordkeeping must comply with 2 CFR Part 200. WSDOT uses the OMB circulars, Governmental Accounting Standards Board and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as standards when assessing if an organization has adequately documented project costs.

Compliance with OMB Circulars

To comply with the OMB circulars, grantees are required to keep a separate set of accounts (or a subaccount within an accounting system) that clearly identify project costs and associated revenue. In addition, accounting records must include:

- Vouchers or purchase orders prepared for all payments made to vendors. These vouchers must identify:

  - Goods or services purchased.
  - Name of the vendor from which the purchase was made.
  - Name of the program(s) charged for the expenses.
- Time sheets for each employee charging to the project. The time sheets must include the hours spent working on the project.

Requesting Reimbursements

To receive payment for eligible expenses incurred under the grant agreement, a reimbursement request form must be completed, signed by your financial manager or authorized representative and emailed to the WSDOT Public Transportation Division, attention Business Team at PTDInvoices@wsdot.wa.gov, with a cc to your community liaison. If the reimbursement request form is incomplete or inaccurate, payments will be withheld until the form is corrected and approved.

All required quarterly progress reports must be submitted before a payment can be processed. Although reimbursement requests may be submitted as frequently as once per month, WSDOT prefers that you submit reimbursement requests quarterly.

RMG grantees must have their projects performance measurement plan reviewed and approved by WSDOT before a reimbursement request will be processed for payment.

A reimbursement request or an estimate of charges must be submitted by July 15 every state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) of the term of project. If the contractor is unable to provide an invoice by this date, the contractor shall provide an estimate of the charges to be billed so WSDOT may accrue the expenditures in the proper fiscal period. Any subsequent reimbursement request submitted will be limited to the amount accrued as set forth in this section. The contractor's final payment request must be received by WSDOT by July 15 immediately following the final fiscal year of the term of project, within 30 days of the completion of the project, or within 30 days of the termination of this agreement, whichever is sooner. Any payment request received after the 15th day after the end of the grant period will not be eligible for reimbursement

Refer to Appendixes A, B, C, and D for examples of reimbursement request forms and detailed instructions for completing the forms.

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Factory visits (if required and/or pre-approved by WSDOT). These expenses must fall within state/federal per diem rates. A written request must be submitted to WSDOT for review and approval prior to taking the trip. WSDOT will not reimburse trip expenses without prior written approval. Contact your WSDOT community liaison prior to taking the trip for more detailed information and requirements.
- Costs of equipment identified in your grant agreement, including any associated sales or use taxes paid.
- The purchase and installation of other vehicle equipment identified in the grant agreement or otherwise pre-approved by WSDOT (e.g., signage, bike racks, radios, cameras, fare boxes).
- The purchase and installation of striping and/or logos on the exterior of any vehicles purchased under the grant agreement.

- The purchase and installation of non-vehicle equipment specifically identified in the grant agreement.
- Required inspection costs, if performed by an outside vendor.