

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NEW REVENUE FINAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

During the most recent legislative session, WSDOT was entrusted with new revenue to distribute through several grant programs. WSDOT performed outreach to stakeholders to solicit feedback on the use of grant funds. This document summarizes stakeholder comments and WSDOT's final plan for awarding those funds.

Regional Mobility Grant program (\$6.25 million)

WSDOT considered using the existing contingency list from the current-law budget, or conducting a new call for projects. There are advantages associated with either choice.

Comments Received

Conduct New Call for Projects

- More equitable distribution of funds statewide.
- Implementation of new criteria established in statute (HB 1842).
- Better projects may be submitted that more closely align with program intent/goals.

Use Contingency List

- Consistent with past practice and other grant programs.
- Fewer resources required to implement.
- Projects have been vetted and approved by the Legislature.

Other Comments

- Propose limiting the amount of any one grant application to \$3 million.
- Question the applicability of ESHB 2012 to RMG grant program.

WSDOT Plan – Use Contingency List

After considering comments and program goals, WSDOT will award projects on the current-law contingency list. The projects have already been reviewed by staff and ranked by the Legislature. The legislative transportation committee chairs further clarified it was their intent to use the contingency list.

WSDOT agrees that the requirements set out in ESHB 2012 are not applicable to RMG projects.

Considerations for next cycle based on comments

As part of work of the Grant Program Advisory Committee (GPAC) before the next solicitation, WSDOT will refine implementation direction from ESHB 1842 establishing new integration and coordination criteria for projects in the Puget Sound.

Proviso Tiered List (\$13.89 million)

The Legislature provided WSDOT with a list of projects separated into two tiers. With the exceptions of the Island Transit and Skagit Transit projects, no further direction was provided on how to prioritize them. There is not enough funding to fund the entire Tier 1 list in the first biennium.

Comments Received

- Continue working with tiered-list projects to develop an aging plan for the 2015-2017 biennium expenditures.
- If requests exceed the budget, use the existing criteria for the RMG program.
- Since Tier 2 funding may not be available until future biennia, WSDOT is encouraged by stakeholders to work with the Legislature to find ways to accelerate funding for these projects.

WSDOT Plan – Finish Negotiations

WSDOT has asked all Tier 1 and Tier 2 grantees to provide funding milestones and prioritize their projects. Once WSDOT determines the program’s budget for this biennium, WSDOT staff will develop a funding plan for future biennia.

Considerations for next grant cycle

WSDOT will share the aging plans for all projects on tiered lists with the Governor’s office, for consideration when preparing the Governor’s future budget proposals.

Coordination Grants (\$1 million)

WSDOT will work with providers and planners in the Puget Sound area to determine the best criteria and methodology for distributing these funds with existing working groups hosted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC).

Comments Received

- Prior to a call for projects, WSDOT should coordinate with stakeholders to develop criteria and methodology for issuing coordination grants using the committees and membership of PSRC.
- WSDOT should work with the Washington State Transit Association or impacted agencies in the Puget Sound region on program administration.

WSDOT Plan – Work with PSRC stakeholders

WSDOT will work with PSRC stakeholders to develop both short- and long-term solicitation-and-award processes. The GPAC will also provide refined implementation direction for the program.

Rural and Special Needs Grants (RM \$1.72 million, PTSN \$1.25 million)

WSDOT is providing additional funding for the list of projects from this biennium’s solicitation using consistent criteria. Competitive funds will be provided through Rural Mobility and Paratransit Special Needs programs. No comments were received.

Vanpool Investment Program (\$0.97 million)

WSDOT recently completed a vanpool solicitation and had enough funding to award every applicant for expansion vans. WSDOT proposes using the new revenue funding to fund applicants for replacement vans from the same solicitation.

Comment Received

- Vanpool replacement funds remain critically important to sustain vanpool programs around the state.

WSDOT Plan – Fund Replacements

WSDOT will make proportional awards for replacement vans to agencies that submitted applications during the last call for projects (August 2015) and that had at least one van beyond six years old or 150,000 miles.

Considerations for next grant cycle based on comments

WSDOT and stakeholders will examine program policies regarding expansion and replacement vehicles.

If you have any additional feedback, please contact Nicole Patrick at patricn@wsdot.wa.gov or 360-705-6930.