



Transportation Committee

EMERGENCY Item #1 Action

June 2, 2009

Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant Program Call for Projects

Issue: The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) has recently released its draft guidelines for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. USDOT is seeking potential projects for this discretionary grant program. Caltrans held a teleconference to discuss the state's proposed approach to the application process and timeline on May 29th, which was too late to include with the Transportation Committee mail out.

Recommendation: That the Transportation Committee recommend that the Board authorize the Executive Director to release a call for projects to transportation providers and planning agencies in the region for the TIGER grant program so that SACOG can submit a regional list of projects to Caltrans by its July 27th deadline. Staff will bring back a list of recommended projects to the Transportation Committee and Board in August prior to Caltrans' release of a funding recommendation on August 24th. SACOG staff will also coordinate this process with the El Dorado County Transportation Commission and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency.

Discussion: When ARRA was signed into law on February 17, 2009, it included mention of a later \$1.5 billion discretionary grant program. USDOT released guidelines for the program in May, and Caltrans released a draft application process and timeline for a unified State of California application process on May 27. Given the relatively small size of the program—a maximum of \$300 million statewide, with a \$20 million minimum request—and its competitive nature, only a few very strong projects that meet all of the program criteria are likely to be considered.

The primary selection criteria for the program are: “state of good repair,” economic competitiveness, livability, sustainability, safety and jobs creation, and economic stimulus. USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood has commented on the importance of livability and sustainability relative to this program. Projects that tie in to the SACOG Blueprint could capitalize on these two criteria in particular.

Although the federal guidelines allow any state, regional or local transportation agency to submit an application for the process, SACOG staff encourages local agencies to submit projects for consideration to SACOG to go through the Caltrans process, rather than submitting project applications directly to USDOT. The SACOG region has fared quite well working with Caltrans on the previous ARRA funding round, and staff believes it would be worthwhile to continue this positive working relationship. This unified approach does not preclude individual agencies or the region taking a separate approach if they are not satisfied with the results of the Caltrans statewide process.

A summary of the program guidelines (which includes a link to the full program guidelines as published in the Federal Register) is attached. Staff will work closely with local agencies and Caltrans to develop a short list of three to five competitive candidate projects to submit for this program. Staff will bring this back to the Transportation Committee and Board in August. Agencies will still have the opportunity to submit any projects not included on the statewide list to USDOT on their own by the September 15th federal deadline.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

MM:RM:gg
Attachment

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TIGER: TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT GENERATING ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Program Summary:

- \$1.5 billion in discretionary grants
- Awarded by U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
- Projects selected to be announced no later than February 17, 2010
- Goals:
 - 1) Preserve and create jobs and Promote Economic Recovery
 - 2) Invest in transportation infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits.
 - 3) Assist those most affected by the current economic downturn
- Submittal Deadline July 27, 2009, for Caltrans; September 15, 2009, for USDOT
- Available for obligation until September 30, 2011
- Priority must also be given to projects that can be completed by February 17, 2012.
- Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to projects that have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region.

Eligible Applicants: State and local governments, tribal governments, transit agencies, port authorities, other political subdivisions of state or local government, and multi-state or multi-jurisdictional applicants.

Minimum Project Request is \$20 million*; maximum request is \$300 million.

** The Recovery Act gives USDOT discretion to waive the \$20 million minimum grant size for the purpose of funding significant projects in smaller cities, regions, or states (“Smaller Projects”)*

Matching Requirements: TIGER Discretionary Grants may be used for up to 100 percent of project costs, but priority must be given to projects for which federal funding is required to complete an overall financing package that includes non-federal sources of funds.

Eligible Projects include, but are not limited to:

- Highway or bridge projects eligible under title 23, United States Code, including interstate rehabilitation, improvements to the rural collector road system, the reconstruction of overpasses and interchanges, bridge replacements, seismic retrofit projects for bridges, and road realignments;

- Public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, including investments in projects participating in the New Starts or Small Starts programs that will expedite the completion of those projects and their entry into revenue service;
- Passenger and freight rail transportation projects; and
- Port infrastructure investments, including projects that connect ports to other modes of transportation and improve the efficiency of freight movement.

The Primary Selection Criteria include

- Long-Term Outcomes
 1. State of Good Repair
 2. Economic Competitiveness
 3. Livability
 4. Sustainability
 5. Safety

Projects will need to demonstrate a likelihood of significant long-term benefits in all five areas to continue in the evaluation process.

- Jobs Creation and Economic Stimulus.

The Secondary Selection Criteria include:

- Innovation
- Partnership

The Primary Selection Criteria are intended to capture the primary objectives of the TIGER Discretionary Grants provision of the Recovery Act, which include near-term economic recovery and job creation, maximization of long-term economic benefits and impacts on the Nation, a region, or a metropolitan area, and assistance for those most affected by the current economic downturn.

The Secondary Selection Criteria are intended to capture the benefits of new and/or innovative approaches to achieving programmatic objectives.

The Recovery Act permits up to \$200 million of the \$1.5 billion appropriated to be used for TIGER TIFIA Payments at USDOT's discretion if it would further the purposes of the TIGER Discretionary Grants program. TIFIA is a federal credit assistance program that provides secured loans, loan guarantees, and lines of credit to borrowers for up to 33 percent of the costs of major surface transportation projects.

A full description of the TIGER program as listed in the Federal Register can be accessed through the following link:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-11542.pdf>