

Project Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

Project eligibility for the Low-No Program includes:

- 1) purchasing or leasing low or no emission buses;
- 2) constructing or leasing facilities and related equipment for low or no emission buses,
- 3) constructing new facilities to accommodate low or no emission buses; and
- 4) rehabilitating or improving existing facilities to accommodate low or no emission buses.

To be recommended for funding from the Low-No Program, projects must demonstrate significant reductions in carbon emissions, energy consumption and harmful emissions.

Project eligibility for the Buses and Bus Facilities Program includes capital projects for:

- 1) replacing, rehabilitating, purchasing or leasing buses, vans, and equipment; and
- 2) rehabilitating, purchasing, constructing or leasing bus-related facilities regardless of propulsion type or emissions.

To be recommended for funding from the Buses and Bus Facilities Program, projects must improve the condition of the transit system to deliver reliable service, improve resilience of transit facilities, and/or enhance access and mobility for disadvantaged populations and people with disabilities.

For either program, 5% of the requested grant award for zero emission buses and infrastructure must be for related workforce development activities, including those provided through registered apprenticeships and other joint labor-management training programs. Planning, preventive maintenance and operations activities are ineligible for funding.

For grant applications related to zero emission vehicles under either program, the FTA requires applicants to submit a Zero Emission Fleet Transition Plan. To address this requirement, Operations staff updated our agency's Draft Zero Emission Bus Program Master Plan to ensure it addresses all of the six elements that the FTA requires, including demonstrating a long-term fleet management plan with a strategy on how our agency intends to use the federal and other funding sources included in the grant applications and for future acquisitions of buses and charging infrastructure. Board approval of the staff recommendation will support implementing our agency's Zero Emission Bus Master and Rollout plans, with the battery-electric buses that are proposed to be procured in our grant applications scheduled to be delivered in Fiscal Years (FY) 2024 and 2025.

The FTA will give funding priority to projects that create good-paying jobs with the "free and fair choice to join a union", include workforce representatives in the development of the Zero Emission Fleet Transition Plan, identify the use of labor-management

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partnerships for training, and use registered apprenticeship training to support skilling of incumbent and entry-level workers.

The FTA will also prioritize projects that create significant community benefits relating to the environment and have considered climate change and environmental justice during their planning and design.

The FTA will give funding priority consideration to applications that advance racial equity in two areas: (1) planning and policies related to racial equity and overcoming barriers to opportunity; and (2) investments that either proactively address racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence as a form of barrier, or redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity. Additionally, the FTA will evaluate how projects proposed for grant award benefit “historically disadvantaged communities”, including “areas of persistent poverty”, and support President Biden’s overall Justice40 Initiative.