

## **Announcement of Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom Grants for the Austin Urbanized Area**

### **About the Programs**

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The Federal government, through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), provides financial assistance to develop new transit systems and to improve, maintain, and operate existing systems.

- The FTA **Job Access - Reverse Commute** program supports projects relating to the development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment, and public transportation projects designed to transport residents of urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities.
  
- The FTA **New Freedom** program supports projects that provide new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives that assist individuals with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services. In order to be eligible for New Freedom funds, the project must go above and beyond the service required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is soliciting project proposals for these grant programs within the Austin Urbanized Area. This competitive project selection process will award Federal funding that was authorized for FY 2006 and FY 2007 under SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users).

### **Funding Available to Austin Urbanized Area<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Job Access Reverse Commute</b>	365,476	385,250	<b>750,726</b>
<b>New Freedom</b>	189,086	178,952	<b>368,038</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>554,562</b>	<b>564,202</b>	<b>1,118,764</b>

### **Who Can Apply**

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- State or local governmental authorities.
- Private non-profit organizations.
- Operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation services.

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<sup>1</sup> Excludes funding available for grant administration and coordination planning. FY 2006 funding must be obligated by October 1, 2008.

## What Projects Are Eligible

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- Project must serve the Austin Urbanized Area (see attached map)
- Sponsor and project operator must be able to certify that they meet all related FTA requirements.
- Proposal must meet minimum award threshold of \$100,000.
- Project must be consistent with the Regional Transportation Coordination Plan for the Capital Area in one of the following ways:
  - It must meet the goals of the plan, or
  - It must further one of the action items identified in the plan.
  
- **Job Access Reverse Commute program** funds are available for a wide range of project types including, but not limited to:
  - Developing new or expanded transportation projects or services that provide access to employment opportunities;
  - Promoting public transportation by low-income workers, including the use of public transportation by workers with nontraditional work schedules;
  - Promoting the use of transit vouchers for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals;
  - Promoting the use of employer-provided transportation, including the transit pass benefit program under section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
  - Subsidizing the costs associated with adding reverse commute bus, train, carpool, van routes, or service from urbanized areas and other than urbanized areas to suburban workplaces;
  - Subsidizing the purchase or lease by a nonprofit organization or public agency of a van or bus dedicated to shuttling employees from their residences to a suburban workplace;
  - Facilitating public transportation services to suburban employment opportunities.
  
- The **New Freedom** program funds are available for a wide range of project types that provide public transportation services and alternatives, beyond those required by the ADA, that assist individuals with disabilities. These include, but are not limited to:
  - Purchasing vehicles and supporting accessible taxi, ride-sharing, and vanpooling programs.
  - Providing paratransit services beyond minimum requirements (3/4 mile to either side of a fixed route), including for routes that run seasonally.
  - Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations.<sup>2</sup>
  - Supporting voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.
  - Supporting volunteer driver and aide programs.
  - Supporting mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies that provide transportation.

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<sup>2</sup> NOTE: The ADA requires that any alterations or renovations to an existing facility must be accessible, whether it is a key station or not. See 49 CFR 37.43. FTA seeks comment on how to define accessibility improvements that would be beyond the scope of the ADA for purposes of the New Freedom Program.

**Funding and Match Requirements**

- The project sponsor must have sufficient funds to carry out the project—grant payments are issued as a reimbursement for eligible expenses and project deliverables.
- These programs require local match funding. The applicant will be required to identify local match funding of at least 20% for Capital Projects, and at least 50% of the total project cost for Operations. (The local funding share may be met using federal funding, if that funding comes from a source which is not administered through the US Department of Transportation.)

**Overview of Application Process**

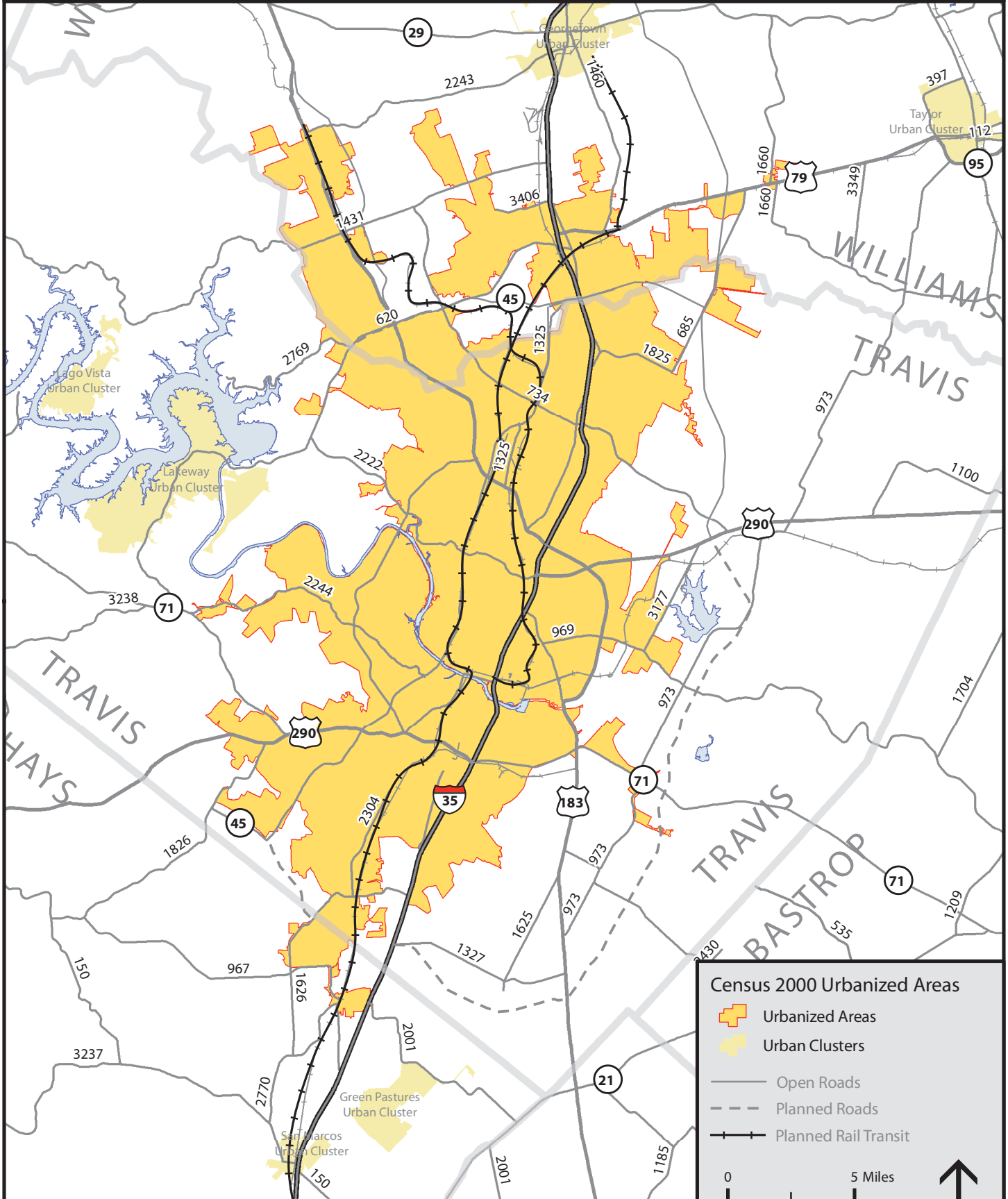
<b>Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
June-July 2007	Staff Available to Meet With Potential Applicants to Answer Questions
August 14 2007	Grant Application Available
August 15-August 30 2007	Pre-Application Workshops (locations and dates TBD)
October 31, 2007	Applications Due
November 2007-December 2007	Technical Review and Scoring of Applications
January-February 2008	Public Hearing and CAMPO Transportation Policy Board Deliberation
March 2008	CAMPO Transportation Policy Board Final Decision and Project Awards

**For More Information.**

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# Austin Urbanized Area, Census 2000



For Census 2000, a UA consists of contiguous, densely settled census block groups and census blocks that meet minimum population density requirements, along with adjacent densely settled census blocks that together encompass a population of at least 50,000 people.