

Questions & Answers

Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Federal Transit Administration Section 5310)

1. Q. How long do I have to spend all funds awarded under this grant?

A. Funding is intended to be spent within one year from the beginning of distribution. However, all grant funds must be expended prior to the end of the second year.

2. Q. Who distributes and administers funding for the grant?

A. The Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA, aka MAX) is the designated recipient for the grant funds. This means that they are responsible for securing the money from the FTA and distributing it to the grantees. The applicant/subrecipient will work directly with BJCTA for contracting and invoicing. The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham assists the BJCTA with writing the RFP and vehicle procurement.

3. Q. Are contributions of funds from human service agencies eligible to be used as local match? How are these applied as local match?

A. Local funds and non-U.S. DOT federal funds may be used as local match for these programs. If human service agencies are using other federal funds as a source of local match, the applicant should verify that those funds are eligible to be used as match monies for the project.

4. Q. Can farebox revenue be used as local match?

A. Farebox revenue cannot be used as local match; however, it can be used to reduce the net project cost of a project.

5. Q. Can the title for vehicles purchased pass from a designated recipient through to a subrecipient?

A. The subrecipient will be listed as the owner of the vehicle; the BJCTA will be listed as the 1st lienholder and will hold the title until the vehicle has reached its useful life.

7. Q. Which activities are capital and which are operating? Where can grantees find guidance on determining the difference? Specifically, are insurance costs, costs associated with car loan programs, and costs associated with voucher programs operating or capital expenses?

A. The basic definition of an operating cost is something that does not have a useful life of more than one year. In contrast, a capital item is usually a tangible item that has a useful life of more than one year. For example, vouchers are considered an operating expense, consistent with FTA program requirements; insurance is considered an operating expense; a guaranteed loan fund or a revolving fund used to make loans are capital expenses; and

funds used to pay the administrative costs of loan programs are operating expenses. The construction of bus stops, installation of elevators, and the purchase of buses are examples of capital expenses. Also, mobility management is defined by law as an eligible capital expense. Chapter III of FTA Circular 9070.1G contains a list of eligible activities for the program.

8. Q. Can mobility management projects be funded and implemented over multiple years?
 - A. Yes. Although mobility management refers to short term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services, these activities can occur on a multi-year basis.
9. Q. Is travel training considered a capital expense or an operating expense?
 - A. Travel training is a component of mobility management, which is considered a capital expense and is eligible for up to 80 percent federal match.
10. Q. If a project includes purchase of a vehicle for a specific program and the program ceases to exist before useful life of the vehicle is achieved, what happens to the vehicle?
 - A. Applicants/subrecipients must follow the requirements of 49 CFR Part 18 or Part 19 and Chapter VI, Section 5 of FTA C 9070.1G. At a minimum, BJCTA needs an annual written notification of the status of the vehicle.