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Recovery Act Discretionary (TIGER) Grants

Question

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Answer

Note: The solicitation for the TIGER Discretionary Grants program is now “on file” for public display at the Federal Register, at the following link: http://www.federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2009-11542_PI.pdf. It will be published in the Monday edition of the Federal Register.

TIGER Grants (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Frequently Asked Questions:

What are the objectives of the TIGER Grants Program?

The objectives of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the “Recovery Act”) include preserving and creating jobs, promoting economic recovery and investing in transportation infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits. Title XII of the Recovery Act appropriates \$1.5 billion, available through September 30, 2011, for Supplementary Discretionary Grants for a National Surface Transportation System. These grants are to be awarded to State and local governments or transit agencies on a competitive basis for capital investments in surface transportation projects that will have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area or a region.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (“DOT”) is calling these Supplementary Discretionary Grants for a National Transportation System “TIGER Grants” (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery).

When will the criteria for TIGER Grants be published, when are applications due, and when will the TIGER Grants be awarded?

The Recovery Act requires the Secretary of Transportation to publish criteria on which to base the competition for TIGER Grants not later than 90 days after the enactment of the Recovery Act, that is, by **May 18, 2009**. The Recovery Act requires that applications for TIGER Grants be submitted not later than 180 days after the publication of such criteria, and that all projects selected for TIGER Grants be announced not later than one year after the enactment of the Recovery Act, that is, by February 17, 2010. DOT hopes to accelerate the schedule specified in the Recovery Act for these actions.

What criteria will be used to evaluate applications for TIGER Grants?

The Recovery Act identifies certain criteria that are to be considered in the competitive award of TIGER Grants. TIGER Grants are to be awarded to State and local governments or transit agencies for projects that will have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. In addition, priority is to be given to projects that require a contribution of Federal funds in order to complete an overall financing package, and to projects that are expected to be completed within 3 years of enactment of the Recovery Act, that is, by February 17, 2012.

The published criteria will provide additional information regarding the criteria DOT will use to evaluate applications.

Who can receive funds under a TIGER Grant?

The Recovery Act specifies that TIGER Grants are to be awarded to “State and local governments or transit agencies.” The published criteria will provide further guidance to potential applicants about eligibility.

What types of transportation projects are eligible to receive TIGER Grants?

The Recovery Act specifies that capital investments in surface transportation projects which are eligible for funding “shall include, but not be limited to”:

- highway or bridge projects eligible under title 23, United States Code, including:
 - interstate rehabilitation,
 - improvements to the rural collector road system,
 - 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 Recovery Act also specifies that the Secretary may use an amount not to exceed \$200 million for the purpose of paying the subsidy and administrative costs of projects eligible for federal credit assistance under chapter 6 of title 23, United States Code, if the Secretary finds that such use of the funds would advance the purposes of the paragraph of the Recovery Act that appropriates funding for TIGER Grants. Chapter 6 of title 23, United States Code, establishes the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) credit assistance program.

Are there any other statutory requirements for the distribution of TIGER Grants?

The Recovery Act specifies the following additional requirements for the distribution of TIGER Grants:

- The Secretary shall take such measures so as to ensure an equitable geographic distribution of funds and an appropriate balance in addressing the needs of urban and rural communities.
- TIGER Grants shall not be less than \$20 million and not greater than \$300 million; and the Secretary may waive the \$20 million minimum grant size for the purpose of funding significant projects in smaller cities, regions, or States.
- Not more than 20 percent of the funds available for TIGER Grants may be awarded to projects in a single State.
- The Federal share of the costs for which an expenditure is made may be up to 100 percent (although, as noted in Question 3, priority is to be given to projects that require a contribution of Federal funds in order to complete an overall financing package).

Projects receiving funds must comply with Federal wage rate requirements.

For more information on federal Recovery Act provisions, [Click Here](#)