

Tips for completing CDOT's Consolidated Call for Capital Projects Application Forms

October 18, 2012

- Be brief and concise. Think of the evaluator's time—they'll have many applications to read! Brevity and clarity can be the keys to a successful application.
- Read the entire application before you begin filling it out. Pay particular attention to the required appendices and materials to be included with the application. This will enable you to boil down your answers to the questions that appear in the application itself.
- The boxes will expand as you enter material. However, we want all page 1's to be of the same size, so please limit your entries, particularly in the Agency Description box, so that "Annual Revenue Hours" is the last item on the Page 1.
- Submission of applications in MS Word format is required, unless your application is considerably large
- On all applications, in the agency description, be sure to explain the primary service your organization provides (e.g., is it fixed route or demand responsive?), information on your clientele (general public, elderly and disabled), information such as how long you've been in operation, who sponsors you (if that's not already clear from your name), how many days/week/hours per day you operate, etc. If you are not a direct provider, explain your connection to transit and your reason for applying for FASTER or FTA funds. Don't assume that the evaluator is familiar with your organization. Think of this as your chance to introduce to yourself to them—succinctly.
- In responding to the questions re: technical and financial capacity, if you are a CDOT and/or FTA grant recipient in good standing, it may be adequate to briefly mention that information (how many years? have you had successful reviews without major findings?) If you are new or relatively new as an applicant to CDOT for transit funds, you should provide information that can assure CDOT you have the capacity and capability to manage funds and projects. Or if you have been a recipient that has turned back funds in the past or encountered financial findings, you should address those issues and how you have or are resolving them.
- Spare Ratio Note: As a reminder, a fleet's spare ratio is defined as the number of spare vehicles divided by the number of vehicles required for annual maximum service (annual maximum service is the revenue vehicle count during the peak season of the year, on the week and day that maximum service is provided). FTA guidelines stipulate that while local circumstances can be considered in determining a "reasonable" spare ratio, an agency's spare ratio should typically not exceed 20%.
- Vehicle Condition Note: For those applications that are requesting replacement rolling stock, we will consider the overall condition of vehicles to be replaced (per FTA definitions) under the "Special Considerations" criteria of the scoring. The application mentions it, but is worth noting again that if you are reporting a vehicle's condition to be marginal or poor, we are requiring documentation of the factors that justify those particular condition ratings.

- Maintain your organization's credibility: be realistic about the timeframe for completion of your project. If your project would not really be able to start construction until year two, don't ask for the funds in year one. If your project would take 18 months to construct, then propose to phase the project funding over two years.

Good luck!