

PUBLIC TRANSIT NEWSLETTER

June 2024

FTA RELAUNCHES ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS PORTAL

At FTA's Earth Day event on April 22, 2024, FTA Acting Administrator Veronica Vanterpool announced the relaunch of FTA's Environmental and Sustainability Management System (ESMS) program. The training and technical assistance program will help up to five transit agencies develop and implement an ESMS at their facilities. An ESMS is a set of management processes and procedures that allows an organization to analyze, control and reduce the environmental impact of its activities, products and services, and operate with a greater efficiency and control. The program includes an on-site baseline environmental review, three virtual workshops, a virtual gap audit and an on-site final audit.

Transit agencies interested in applying for the program should submit a signed letter of application by May 22, 2024, as outlined in the application instructions. More information about the program, reports of past rounds, and a suite of ESMS resources can be found on FTA's ESMS website.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) has many upcoming events: Community Transportation (ctaa.org)
- American Public Transportation Association (APTA) has upcoming conferences and webinars: APTA Future Meetings and Conferences (apta.com)
- National Rural Transit Assistance Program (National RTAP) has available several conferences and upcoming webinars: National RTAP Conference
- Sound Transit, Seattle WA, created a new training video to assist drivers and customer service professionals when working with deafblind riders. The video was made in partnership with Lighthouse for the Blind and the DeafBlind Service Center of Seattle, as well as passengers and staff. Effective Communication with Travelers who are Deafblind - Full Video (youtube.com)

STA Withholding Increase

As announced during the Iowa DOT's presentation at the IPTA's Legislative Meeting in March, the State Transit Assistance Special Project withholding amount will increase to \$600,000 starting in FY2025 (July 2024). This increase will allow more funding for large urban training fellowships, special projects, and continued funding for GTFS, iowarideshare.org, and our low-no emission vehicle consultant group. The breakdown will be as follows:

- \$228,100 to Statewide Projects (IPTA Training Contract, Low-No Grant Consultant, iowarideshare.org, and statewide fixed route GTFS)
- \$175,000 for large urban fellowships
- \$196,900 for STA Special Projects



CELEBRATE RURAL TRANSIT DAY ON JULY 16, 2024

Recognizing riders and staff of rural transit agencies. [Link to More Info](#)

USDOT SMART GRANT

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping Grants

Grant Focus Categories:

- Safety and Reliability
- Resiliency
- Equity and Access
- Climate
- Partnerships

Applications are due July 12th at 5 PM ET. **NOFO**

KRISTIN'S KEYWORDS

Trust is earned, not given. Communication is key. There are reasons these sayings became old adages... they're true and stand the test of time.

Over the last several years we have been working to build a public transit team Iowa's transit agencies and the general public can rely on. In 2020, Iowa DOT had a public transit staff of five, with two vacant positions. Since that time, we have had two retirements, two long-term illnesses, two resignations, and one new position created. As of August 2023, we have been fully staffed with a team of nine. While many of our team members are brand new to transit, in my opinion, the public transit team as it stands today is fantastic. The team members are smart, inquisitive, cooperative, compassionate, while also being pragmatic. I have told the team on several occasions that I look forward to our in-office days because I 'get to' work with them rather than 'have to' work with them – I look forward to our meetings and interactions because of the people they are and the good qualities they possess. Unfortunately, there have been some bumps along the way and all of these positive traits are not always seen through emails and phone calls with our public transit agency partners.

We have heard feedback from transit managers about needing clearer communication, confusion on processes, not knowing who to contact with questions, and rushed deadlines. For those reasons, our transit team has discussed ways we can improve in those areas.

One of Iowa DOT's training courses required of employees is known as CARE. CARE stands for Consistent, Accountable, Responsive, and Engaging. The public transit team is putting CARE principles into practice. To increase communication and engagement, this newsletter will be coming out quarterly, with more usable content. Also, to help with consistency, the transit programs administrators (TPAs, Laura and Matt) are sending out monthly emails with useful tips and reminders about reporting and deadlines. To keep us accountable and responsive, the public transit team members will work to reply to emails within 24 hours, at a minimum acknowledging receipt and letting the sender know we are working to answer their questions. We also distributed a list of transit team members with our contact information and our days of availability at the March IPTA Legislative Meeting to help transit agency staff identify the best person to contact with questions. If you need a copy of that contact list, please email Emma Simmons, emma.simmons@iowadot.us.

To address the rushed deadlines experienced over the last year, especially with National Transit Database (NTD) reporting, many of the difficulties leading to those tight turnaround times will be alleviated because we will all have a year of experience of having gone through the NTD process under our belts. Also, we will be sharing in this newsletter a calendar of upcoming deadlines – mostly taken from the Transit Manager's Handbook – to literally get all of us on the same page with expectations. Speaking of the Handbook, we do realize it is in need

of an update and it will be made current in the coming year, even if only a chapter at a time.

In these last four years, public transit has changed a lot – from funding, to costs, to service offerings, to the types of projects we're undertaking. The public transit team has changed a lot, too, and in many cases we are learning right along side of you. I hope as we all get to know this new public transit landscape we can earn and keep your trust and keep the lines of communication open.

Thank you for all you do for public transit in Iowa. You're all bussin'!

- Kristin

2024 STAFF TRAINING

- 2024 State & Tribal Public Transportation Partnerships Conference
- 2 - Transit Manager Handbook Trainings
- Council on Public Transportation and AASHTO Transit Management Annual Meeting
- TrAMS Application Award Enhancement
- Procurement 1
- FTA Region 7 Procurement Systems Review Workshop
- CTAA Conference
- PTA Mobility Conference
- CIE Quarterly 2024 Coalition Meetings
- FTA Triennial Review Workshop
- 2024 Passenger Transportation Summit
- 2024 IPTA Annual Meeting
- State Management Review Training

Calendar

State Fiscal Year

(July 1 – June 30)

JULY

- 1 Fiscal Year Begins
- 1 Record Odometer Readings for each transit vehicle prior to start of service (unless recorded after end of service on June 30)
- 1 Contingency Fleet Plans due, if applicable
- Within 90 Days of Contract Start** Copy of Transit Service Contracts due
- 25 Regional/Small Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due
- 30 4th Quarter Fuel Tax Report due
- 30 Large Urban System DBE (Next FFY) Goals due to FTA
- 30 Large Urban Quarterly TrAMS Reports (if in TMA) due to FTA

AUGUST

- 1 Large Urban System DBE (Next FFY) Goals due to FTA
- 15 4th Quarter Statistical Report or Year End Statistical Report due
- 15 Year End Odometer Report due

OCTOBER

- 1 Intercity Bus Applications due
- 1 ICAAP Applications due to *Systems Planning Bureau*
- 1 STA Special Project applications due
- 25 Regional/Small Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due
- 30 1st Quarter Fuel Tax Report due
- 30 Regional/Small Urban System DBE (April-Sept.) Semi-Annual Reports due
- 30 Large Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due to FTA
- 30 Large Urban Quarterly TrAMS Report (if in TMA) due to FTA
- 30 Large Urban Annual TrAMS Reports (if in 50,000-200,000 UZA) due to FTA

NOVEMBER

- 15 1st Quarter Statistical Report due
- 30 Large Urban NTD Reports due to *NTD*

DECEMBER

- 1 Large Urban System DBE (April-Sept.) Semi-Annual Report due to FTA

JANUARY

- 25 Regional/Small Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due
- 30 2nd Quarter Fuel Tax Report due
- 30 Large Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due to FTA

FEBRUARY

- 1 Draft Passenger Transportation Plans due to *Systems Planning Bureau*
- 15 2nd Quarter Statistical Report due
- 15 Regional/Small Urban System MIS Drug & Alcohol Report (Previous Calendar Year) due

MARCH

- 15 Large Urban System MIS Drug & Alcohol Report (Previous Calendar Year) due to FTA

APRIL

- 1 Consolidated Transit Funding Public Hearing due
- 25 Regional/Small Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due
- 30 3rd Quarter Fuel Tax Report due
- 30 Regional/Small Urban System DBE (October-March) Semi-Annual Reports due
- 30 Triennially, Regional/Small Urban System DBE Projection Worksheet (for next three Federal Fiscal Years, October 1 – September 30) due
- 30 Large Urban System Quarterly Charter Report due to FTA
- 30 Large Urban Quarterly TrAMS Reports (if in TAM) due to FTA

MAY

- 1 Consolidated Transit Funding Applications (including Statewide 5339, 5310, 5311, Public Transit Infrastructure Grant, and AMOCO Loan) due
- 1 Passenger Transportation Plans due
- 15 3rd Quarter Statistical Report due

JUNE

- 1 Large Urban System DBE (October-March) Semi-Annual Report due to FTA
- 15 Triennially, State and Large Urban System DBE (Next three FFYs) Goals Published for Comment (45 days before August 1)
- 30 2 CFR 200 Audit (Previous State Fiscal Year) due
- 30 Record Vehicle odometer readings at end of service or prior to start of service on July 1
- 30 End of Fiscal Year

MISCELLANEOUS

- February-March** Next Fiscal Year STA and FTA 5310 & 5311 Forecasts announced
- Within 90 Days of Contract Start** Copy of Transit Service Contracts due
- Two (2) Weeks Prior to Training** Application for Training Fellowships due
- Within 60 Days after Training** Fellowship Reimbursement Requests due
- Within 45 Days after Accepting New Vehicles under a Statewide Grant**

Posting of Replaced Vehicles on Iowa DOT Classifieds due

*Please Note: All applications, reports, etc. due to the Iowa DOT Public Transit Section, unless otherwise indicated.

**** THIS CALENDAR CAN BE FOUND IN THE TRANSIT MANAGER'S HANDBOOK**

STATUS OF GRANTS

| Grant Name | Grant Status |
|---|----------------------------------|
| FFY23/SF24 5310 | Active (Executed) |
| SFY25 IRXB – CMAQ Funding | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Urban Vehicles | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Regional Vehicles | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| FFY22 Bus and Bus Facilities Formula (Urban/Rural) Shortfall 5339 | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| FFY22 CMAQ Urban - Shortfall | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| FFY22 CMAQ Regional - Shortfall | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| DART Transit Shelters TAP | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| Flex Funds from MAPA | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |
| ICAAP Projects | Transmitted/Ready for FTA Review |

LOW-NO/BUS AND BUS FACILITIES APPLICATION - FY24

Bus and Bus Facilities Federal Request of \$36.9 million

- 133 replacement vehicles

Low-No Federal Request of \$32.1 million

- Cedar Rapids Transit – 5 hybrid vehicles = \$4,674,717
- Sioux City Transit – transit facility, 1 electric vehicle = \$12,805,898
- MuscaBus – transit facility, 2 electric vehicles = \$1,116,839
- SWITA – transit facility, 2 electric vehicles = \$13,459,681

**WELCOME
KORI MAHIEU**



KORI MAHIEU
IPTA TRAINING SPECIALIST

Kory Mahieu is the Training and Event Coordinator for IPTA where she is responsible for creating and coordinating trainings and events for members. She works in partnership with the Executive Director of IPTA and the Iowa DOT Bureau of Public Transportation to meet training objectives as well as plans and conducts activities around events, such as the Annual and Mid-Year Meetings. Kori has had a successful career working with other reputable associations including the Iowa Funeral Directors Association and the Iowa Streets and Road Maintenance Supervisors Association. Please contact Kori any time at staff@iapublictransit.com or call her directly at 515-750-2260.

WHO TO CONTACT

FIND YOUR TPA!

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