Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project

TIGER Grant VII
FY2015 National Infrastructure Investments

TIGER ID: txdot1707
Type: Capital
Location: 78612 (Two Components)
Context: Non-urbanized Rural, Transit—Bus
Type of Eligible Applicant: State Agency

TIGER VII Request	**$20,802,400**
Other Funds	$29,544,802
Total Project Cost	$50,347,202

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Project Summary

Texas is the largest federally funded rural transit program in the country. Texas collaborates with 38 rural transit districts to provide an integrated, seamless network of critical mobility services supported with essential fleet, operating/maintenance and passenger facility investments.

The Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project is a state-wide effort by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to bring critically needed rural program transit facilities and fleet in the state to a state of good repair (SGR). A significant share of the rural transit fleet in Texas is operating beyond the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) recommended minimum useful life standards. Outdated facilities are no longer sized or equipped to keep pace with population growth and advances in vehicle technology.

TxDOT is seeking $20,800,402 of TIGER VII funding. The project will construct final phases of four facilities (operating, maintenance, and passenger) and procure 325 replacement transit vehicles for use in non-urbanized (i.e., rural) Texas. The overall total benefit cost analysis concludes, depending on the discount rate, a range of 1.90 – 2.68.

Rural Texas

Texas has the largest rural population in the United States (see Table 1):

- 5,766,741 in 2000.
- 6,197,604 in 2010.

Rural population increased 7.5 percent from 2000 to 2010. This population growth is after taking into account that urbanized land area increased 32 percent and urbanized population increased 26 percent. The average population density in rural transit districts was 24 persons per square mile in 2010 – indicating very low density, dispersed populations.

In 2014, **rural transit districts in Texas** spent **$100.9 million** to provide **32.9 million revenue miles** of service using a fleet of **1,808 vehicles** to carry **6.5 million passengers**. This vast, coordinated infrastructure of service and facilities provides a basic mobility network that supports and creates ladders of opportunity for a variety of diverse trip purposes: 23 percent travel to work, 12 percent to education/training, 24 percent to

Table 1. Section 5339 in MAP-21

Rank	State	Rural Population	$1.25M per State per Year, Divided by Population
1	Rhode Island	100,466	$12.44
2	Delaware	280,952	$4.45
3	Nevada	364,329	$3.43
4	Hawaii	388,226	$3.22
5	Alaska	394,475	$3.17
6	North Dakota	403,535	$3.10
7	Wyoming	425,490	$2.94
8	Vermont	517,001	$2.42
9	Utah	520,444	$2.40
10	Connecticut	542,117	$2.31
11	South Dakota	570,593	$2.19
12	Massachusetts	634,929	$1.97
13	New Jersey	681,986	$1.83
14	New Hampshire	693,302	$1.80
15	Montana	727,278	$1.72
16	Idaho	775,739	$1.61
17	Nebraska	844,144	$1.48
18	Maryland	950,683	$1.31
19	New Mexico	952,458	$1.31
20	Maine	980,224	$1.28
21	Colorado	1,163,725	$1.07
22	West Virginia	1,237,740	$1.01
23	Arizona	1,274,234	$0.98
24	Kansas	1,421,694	$0.88
25	Oregon	1,437,681	$0.87
26	Washington	1,683,065	$0.74
27	Louisiana	1,752,966	$0.71
28	Arkansas	1,763,081	$0.71
29	Iowa	1,777,391	$0.70
30	Oklahoma	2,033,779	$0.61
31	South Carolina	2,045,319	$0.61
32	Mississippi	2,147,775	$0.58
33	Minnesota	2,227,893	$0.56
34	Florida	2,361,374	$0.53
35	Virginia	2,416,985	$0.52
36	Alabama	2,454,432	$0.51
37	Wisconsin	2,513,604	$0.50
38	Kentucky	2,560,839	$0.49
39	Illinois	2,569,961	$0.49
40	Missouri	2,598,866	$0.48
41	Indiana	2,647,218	$0.47
42	Tennessee	2,895,390	$0.43
43	Michigan	3,323,477	$0.38
44	Georgia	3,353,382	$0.37
45	New York	3,359,958	$0.37
46	Pennsylvania	3,724,842	$0.34
47	California	3,826,267	$0.33
48	Ohio	4,001,818	$0.31
49	North Carolina	4,302,684	$0.29
50	Texas	6,197,604	$0.20
	Total	**88,823,415**	**$0.70**

shopping/personal business, 36 percent to health care, and 5 percent for other purposes.

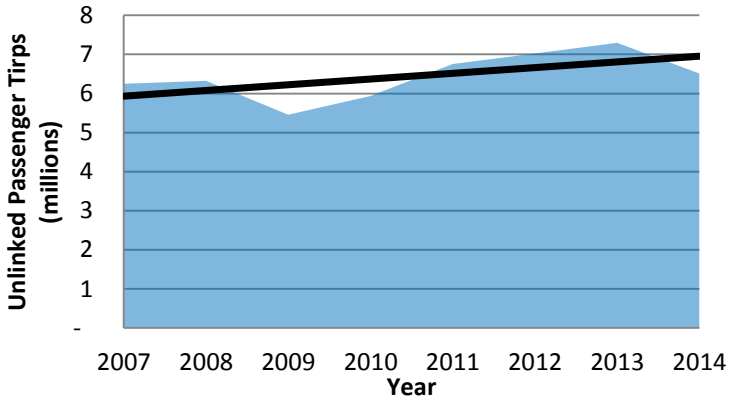


Figure 1. Passenger Trips by Year

The rural transit vehicle fleets in Texas are primarily comprised of buses and vans with an FTA-recommended minimum useful life of 4 to 7 years. The average age of the 325 vehicles to be replaced is 9 years and all are at least 133 percent beyond recommended minimum service miles. Fleets with vehicles beyond useful service life have higher operating costs and maintenance costs, less reliability due to higher failure rates, and a larger negative impact on air quality (Useful Life of Transit Buses and Vans, FTA).

The facility replacements were included in Texas Rural Transportation Plan 2035 and again in Texas Transportation Plan 2040, both plans officially adopted by the Texas Transportation Commission. A TIGER VII grant will significantly advance the first phase of planned investments and move rural transit services toward a SGR. The net result will be improved capability to meet the rural public's demand for services (see Figure 1).

Federal Funding

The federal authorization bill to fund surface transportation, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), provides for the FTA Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Program (Section 5339). For rural areas, Section 5339 is a fixed $1.25 million annually per state. Table 1 highlights how this apportionment of Section 5339 funds translates to dollars (cents) per capita per year for rural bus replacement and bus facility improvements. Texas receives $0.20 per capita, one-third less than the second most populous rural state, North Carolina, and less than 2 percent of what Rhode Island receives per capita for asset replacements. A TIGER award will help rural transit districts in Texas replace aged vehicles and construct four vital facilities. Without the requested TIGER funding, by 2017 72 percent of the rural fleet will exceed FTA-recommended useful life standards and construction of the four facility projects will stretch for years into the future, further delaying other, critically needed investments.

TxDOT requests a TIGER grant for $20,802,400 to move the state's rural transit districts toward SGR and improve services for rural populations. Funds to construct four bus facilities and replace 325 buses and vans that operate rural transit service across the state will improve services in growing rural areas with populations that are proportionally older and lower income and include a higher percent of people with disabilities—providing a mobility ladder of opportunity.

Note: the Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project (TIGER ID txdot1707) was submitted in the Pre-Approval stage with an estimated TIGER request of $26,100,000. The final application requests $20,802,400 in TIGER funds, with no change in the total project cost. The difference is due to the fact that TxDOT prioritized $5,200,600 in state funds for the project; this represents 14% of the additional funds required and is a considerable investment in rural transportation, especially considering no matching funds are required for rural proposals.

Project Parties

Lead Project Party: TxDOT

TxDOT is the lead project party and will act as the grant recipient. TxDOT is the designated recipient for FTA Section 5311 Formula Grant for Rural Areas and for Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Program. TxDOT also manages and awards state funds for public transit. TxDOT collects and reports annual transit data to the FTA for the Rural National Transit Database. TxDOT provides the FTA with an annual "State Management Plan" for the state's rural transit services. TxDOT represents public transit in the planning and programming process and prepares funding-needs projections for the state's rural transit districts.

TxDOT is recognized nationally as a best practice agency, receiving a United We Ride Leadership Award in 2008 for its work in promoting coordination planning. Recently, the National Center for Senior Transportation recognized TxDOT for its public involvement processes. TxDOT promotes extensive collaboration and partnerships among stakeholder groups such as Centers for Independent Living, local workforce boards and employers, and educational institutions as evidenced by the group of support letters included in this application.

Other Project Parties: Rural Transit Districts

Additional project parties include rural transit districts in Texas. The term "rural" and "non-urbanized" are used synonymously in this document as rural transit districts, by definition, provide service to non-urbanized populations. The districts vary in geographic size and population. They rely upon federal, state, and local funds to provide for capital and operating expenses; local funds include funds from contract services and support from county and municipal governments. Rural transit districts coordinate with other rural districts and often with one or more urban transit providers to connect the riding public to local and regional services. Figure 2 depicts the size and distribution of rural transit districts in Texas.

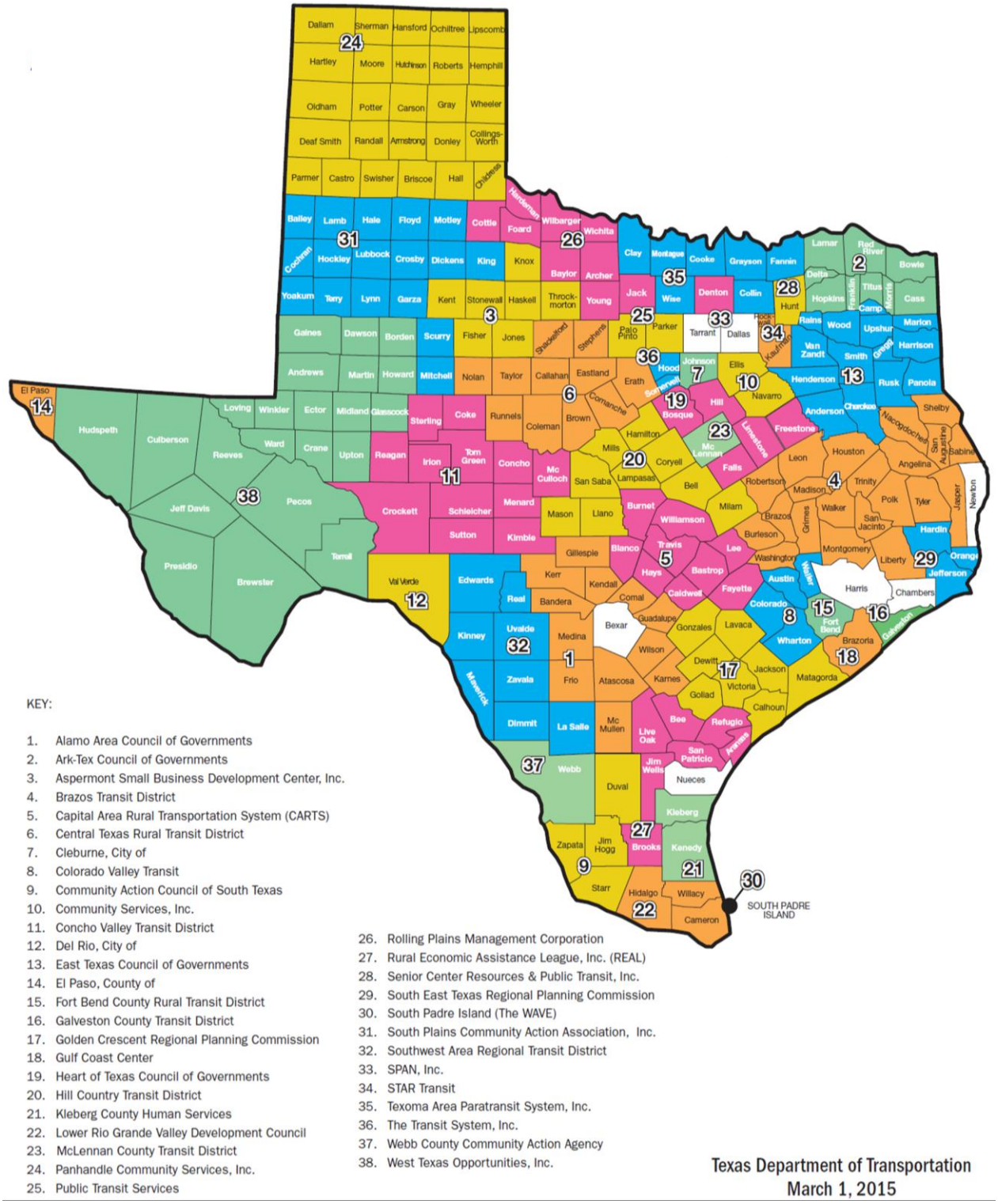


Figure 2. Rural Transit Districts in Texas

Project Description and Locations

The Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project requests TIGER VII funds for two components. Component 1 is to replace vehicles to bring the non-urbanized fleet toward SGR. Component 2 is to construct final phases of four rural transit facilities. The Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project is part of a larger program to update rural transit fleet and facilities. Figure 3 highlights the location of each of the components in the request for TIGER VII funds. The figure also identifies the location of facilities TxDOT and rural transit districts intend to fund as the next phase for investment in rural transit. A TIGER award will accelerate pursuit of SGR for rural transit in Texas.

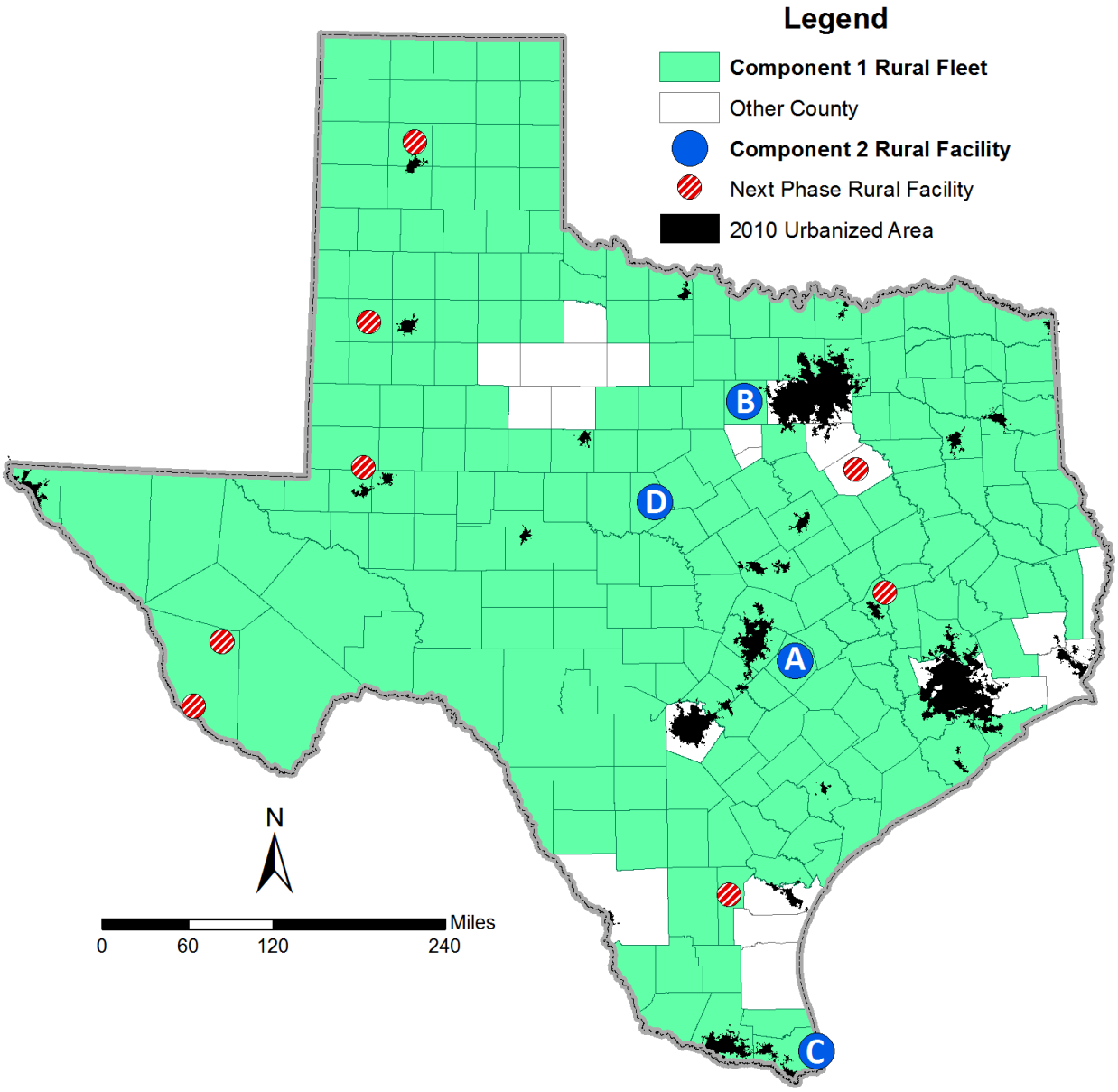


Figure 3. Map of Component Locations

The following pages describe project financing, scalability, and the two project components—325 vehicles and four facilities.

Project Financing

The total cost of the Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project is $50,347,202. The project parties request $20,802,400 in TIGER VII funds (58 percent of the additional funds needed). The project parties have $14,207,202 in expended and obligated funding for the project (28 percent of the total cost). TIGER funds will not supplant already obligated federal and state funds; rather, a TIGER award will allow for accelerated advancement of other important SGR projects. For example, without TIGER funds, construction on each of the four facilities will be delayed by at least 5 to 6 years due to lack of other funding sources. Table 2 summarizes financing for the project.

Table 2. Project Financing

Project Financing Summary			
Total Project Cost	**$50,347,202**		
	Amount	**% of Total**	
*Expended and Obligated Funds	$14,207,202	28.2%	
Additional Funding	$36,140,000	71.8%	
Total Project Cost	**$50,347,202**	**100%**	
Additional Funding	**Amount**	**% of Additional**	
**State	$5,200,600	14.4%	
***Other Federal	$10,137,000	28.0%	
TIGER VII	$20,802,400	57.6%	
Total Additional Funding	**$36,140,000**	**100%**	
	Component 1 (Fleet)	**Component 2 (Facilities)**	**Total**
*Expended and Obligated Funds	$0	$14,207,202	$14,207,202
Additional Funding			
**State	$2,000,000	$3,200,600	$5,200,600
***Other Federal	$10,137,000	$0	$10,137,000
TIGER VII	$7,903,000	$12,899,400	$20,802,400
Total Project Cost	**$20,040,000**	**$30,307,202**	**$50,347,202**

** Includes local (cities, counties, and rural transit district), FTA Section 5311, FTA Section 5309, and FTA Section 5339 funds*

*** TxDOT will adjust state funds to match ratio of actual TIGER award to requested award amount (state funds not to exceed $5,200,600)*

**** Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Program funds flexed to FTA*

Project components are entirely located in non-urbanized areas and do not require local match. Table 3 documents the total cost of the project by sub-component.

Table 3. Component Cost to Complete

Component	Description	Subrecipient	Location	Expended and Obligated Funds	Cost to Complete	Total Cost
1	Vehicles	**Rural Transit Districts**	Rural counties	$ -	**$ 20,040,000**	$20,040,000
2a	Facility	**Capital Area Rural Transportation System**	Cedar Creek, Texas	$ 5,758,878	**$ 9,891,382**	$15,650,259
2b	Facility	**Public Transit Services**	Weatherford, Texas	$ 1,766,570	**$ 2,706,374**	$ 4,472,943
2c	Facility	**South Padre Island**	South Padre, Texas	$ 2,088,878	**$ 3,261,123**	$ 5,350,000
2d	Facility	**Central Texas Rural Transit District**	Early, Texas	$ 4,592,878	**$ 241,123**	$ 4,834,000

Project Scalability

The Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project is scalable, if necessary, in the event of a partial TIGER award. Component 1 is vehicle replacement. Vehicle replacement will be prioritized using asset condition to replace vehicles most past useful life in terms of service miles or age. Component 2 facilities are phased construction facilities that will benefit from even a partial award contributing to the cost of completing one or more phases of construction.

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

The rural transit fleet in Texas was 1,808 vehicles in 2014. The fleet is comprised primarily of buses and vans with a 4- to 7-year and 100,000- to 200,000-mile minimum useful service life, according to FTA standards.

SGR Rural Fleet Challenge

A significant share of the 1,800-vehicle rural fleet is operating in excess of FTA's minimum useful life standards. Component 1 will replace 325 transit vehicles beyond recommended service life. The average age of the 325 vehicles to be replaced is 9 years. For example, the lowest mileage vehicle to be replaced has 199,500 miles and is 33 percent beyond minimum service life (a cutaway bus with a 5-year/150,000-mile minimum life). Figure 4 describes four concepts of useful life according to the FTA.

Useful Life Concept	Definition
Expected or Planned Useful Life *The age at which agencies "expect" or "plan" to retire their vehicles*	The age at which transit operators plan to retire their transit vehicles under the assumption that these assets will be completely worn
Average Useful Life *The age at which agencies "do" retire their vehicles*	The average age at which U.S. transit operators "actually" retire their transit vehicles
Optimal Useful Life *The age at which agencies "should" retire their vehicles*	The financially optimal point for vehicle retirement (i.e., the point at which life-cycle costs are minimized)
Minimum Useful Life *The minimum age at which agencies are "allowed" to retire their federally funded vehicles without penalty*	The *minimum* age/mileage to retire a vehicle. This point assumes that most vehicles still have additional years of useful and cost-effective service but that most of the asset's value has been consumed

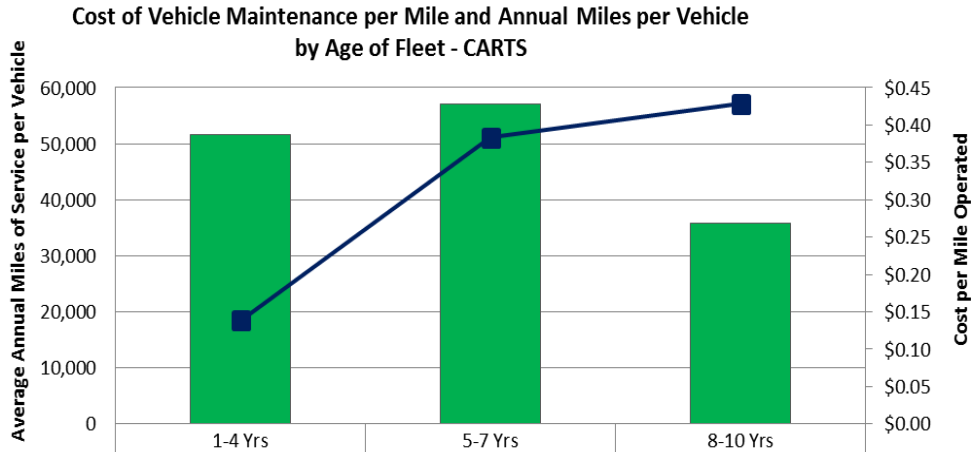
Figure 4. FTA Useful Life Concepts (Useful Life of Transit Buses and Vans)

Every vehicle to be replaced is more than 133 percent of the FTA recommended minimum useful life standard used to measure SGR. MAP-21 provides each state with a fixed $1.25 million in Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Program funds each year. The funds are a welcome contribution toward rural fleet SGR but are not adequate to keep vehicles and facilities in good repair. A TIGER award will keep rural fleet SGR from degrading further to a critical condition.

TxDOT studied each of the 1,808 rural fleet vehicles to determine the likely change in SGR from 2014 to 2017 based on each vehicle's accumulated service miles. In 2014, 889 rural vehicles were beyond 100 percent FTA minimum vehicle life standards. With known funding sources

(including Section 5339) the number of vehicles beyond service life will increase to 1,304 vehicles beyond minimum service life by 2017 – nearly 75 percent of the rural fleet.

On average, older vehicles beyond FTA recommended useful service life are less reliable, operating fewer miles per year due to more time required for repairs. For those miles operated, the cost of maintenance per mile is higher, reflecting the reduced efficiency of the older fleet. Figure 5 highlights the cost of vehicle maintenance per mile and average annual miles by vehicle age based on analysis of Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS) fleet information as of March 2015. Maintenance cost-per-mile is in line with Transit Cooperative Research Program Report 61 findings published in 2000 (TCRP Report 61 Analyzing the Costs of Operating Small Transit Vehicles). CARTS provides approximately 9 percent of all rural transit revenue miles of service in Texas, and the district maintains excellent maintenance records. The illustration shows as a vehicle's age advances the number of miles of service operated each year declines and maintenance cost per mile increases.



	1-4 Yrs	5-7 Yrs	8-10 Yrs
Average Annual Miles per Vehicle	51,542	57,027	35,880
Maintenance Cost per Mile Operated	$0.14	$0.38	$0.43

Figure 5. Mileage and Maintenance Expenses of Rural Vehicles with Age

In addition to increasing maintenance costs, an older vehicle's initial fuel efficiency rating degrades, and the vehicle does not have design characteristics relating to fuel efficiency compared to a modern replacement vehicle. For the same reasons, emissions levels degrade over time. Generally, older vehicles provide a poorer quality of service due to ride quality, climate control, and interior condition. Vehicle fleets with vehicles beyond useful service life have higher operating costs and less reliability and are higher polluting.

Proposed Replacements to Improve SGR

TxDOT requests a TIGER award to replace 325 worn-out buses on the road in rural areas. The award will improve services to high-growth areas with populations that are older and lower income and include a higher percent of people with disabilities—a mobility ladder of opportunity.

TxDOT reviewed existing vehicles to identify the 325 vehicles recommended for replacement. The steps to identify the vehicles were:

1. Rank-order vehicles by mileage depreciation rating (1,808 vehicles).
2. Identify vehicles beyond 130 percent of the recommended minimum service life (425 vehicles).

3. Cap proposed replacement per rural transit district to one-third of the district's fleet and replace vehicles with greatest need.
4. Reallocate funding that would have gone to replace vehicles in excess of the district cap to other districts with vehicles high on the depreciation list until 325 vehicles are identified, for a replacement cost of $20,040,000.

The primary reason for the per-district cap (step 3) is to avoid the creation of a replacement need spike for a transit district 7 to 9 years after the TIGER award. The cap also results in a broader distribution of vehicle replacements between rural transit districts. The unbiased vehicle selection process resulted in 32 of 38 districts having vehicles selected for replacement. Table 4 documents proposed vehicle replacements by vehicle type.

Table 4. Component 1 Vehicle Types

Vehicle Type	TIGER Vehicle Replacements	Average Vehicle Cost
Trolley Bus	1	$300,000
Medium-Duty Cutaway Bus	3	$110,000
Light-Duty Cutaway Bus	218	$70,046
Vans	103	$40,194
TOTAL	**325**	**$61,662**

TxDOT will manage the distribution of TIGER funds and monitor subsequent vehicle procurements. Each of the recipient rural districts will be allowed to select fuel type and other vehicle characteristics according to their preference.

Table 5 documents proposed vehicle replacements by rural transit district.

Table 5. Component 1 Vehicle Replacements by Rural Transit District

Rural Transit District	2010 Rural Population	2014 Unlinked Passenger Trips	2014 Revenue Vehicle Fleet	Current Fleet Fuel Type			TIGER Vehicle Replace-ments	Percent of Fleet to be Replaced
				Diesel	Gas	Other		
Alamo Area Council of Governments	407,529	113,161	102	13%	83%	5%	25	25%
Ark-Tex Council of Governments	229,857	134,571	80	29%	71%	0%	25	31%
Brazos Transit District	805,898	241,430	58	34%	60%	6%	12	21%
Capital Area Rural Transportation System	398,674	573,260	116	56%	12%	32%	25	22%
Central Texas Rural Transit District	190,802	153,493	86	3%	96%	1%	16	19%
City of Cleburne	106,596	39,957	18	8%	92%	0%	4	22%
City of Del Rio Transportation	48,879	61,213	20	43%	57%	0%	6	30%
City of South Padre Island	2,699	626,330	10	17%	83%	0%	3	30%
Colorado Valley Transit	132,858	85,415	22	13%	77%	9%	6	27%
Community Action Council of South Texas	92,068	99,158	29	16%	78%	6%	4	14%
Concho Valley Transit District	57,196	37,979	54	35%	58%	7%	10	19%
East Texas Council of Governments	600,618	122,295	62	0%	98%	2%	18	29%
El Paso County	28,273	367,299	80	0%	88%	13%	2	3%
Fort Bend County	38,177	388,478	53	33%	41%	26%	3	6%
Galveston County Transit	61,937	860,922	25	82%	18%	0%	3	12%
Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission	161,645	212,245	60	52%	45%	3%	8	13%
Gulf Coast Center	86,202	21,753	9	30%	70%	0%	3	33%
Heart of Texas Council of Government	176,895	42,574	26	68%	25%	7%	5	19%
Hill Country Transit District	164,934	165,041	67	65%	25%	11%	17	25%
Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council	118,351	69,911	10	85%	15%	0%	1	10%
McLennan County Transit District (new in 2015)	62,528	NA	12	NA	NA	NA	3	25%
Panhandle Community Services	231,276	385,505	86	58%	41%	0%	13	15%
Public Transit Services	147,148	94,417	38	0%	100%	0%	2	5%
Rolling Plains Management Corp.	83,908	140,624	74	22%	78%	0%	7	9%
Rural Economic Assistance League	169,910	205,697	70	0%	79%	21%	10	14%
Senior Center Resources and Public Transit	86,129	63,285	17	68%	32%	0%	5	29%
South Plains Community Action Agency	200,627	164,819	63	0%	88%	12%	14	22%
Southwest Area Regional Transit District	118,131	158,305	76	20%	63%	17%	16	21%
SPAN Inc.	75,149	66,597	34	50%	50%	0%	1	3%
STAR Transit	113,378	141,842	58	0%	100%	0%	17	29%
Texoma Area Paratransit System	272,968	160,941	58	9%	86%	6%	19	33%
West Texas Opportunities	198,733	141,175	131	11%	89%	0%	22	17%
TOTAL	**5,669,973**	**6,139,692**	**1,704**	**30%**	**64%**	**6%**	**325**	**19%**

Component 2a Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS) Facility

Rural Transit District Description: CARTS

CARTS provides a network of public transportation services across a nine-county region with a non-urbanized population of 398,674 people. In 2014, CARTS provided 573,260 rides using a fleet of 116 vehicles. CARTS is a leader in the rural transit industry's efforts to modernize and coordinate with urban/rural partners. For 35 years, CARTS has been successfully connecting communities and bridging gaps in service, overcoming disjointed jurisdictional boundaries in partnership with Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro in Austin, Texas), TxDOT, and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Component 2a is to complete CARTS's Tucker Hill Lane Complex. The capital investment requested will enable CARTS to continue to be successful in connecting communities and become an even more effective partner in regional collaboration—resulting in operation and cost efficiencies and seamless services for riders.

Existing Facilities

CARTS's existing headquarters is located separately from other district functions. The facility is outdated and confined space limits the ability of the district to grow as rural transit demand grows. CARTS operates a network of seven intermodal transit stations in its district. CARTS constructed the first phases of the new Tucker Hill facility in 2013 and 2014, which consisted of site preparation and the vehicle maintenance building. A TIGER award will enable the district to advance construction plans by about 9 to 10 years. The district anticipates the benefits to having administrative, dispatch, training, maintenance, fueling, and all other functions on one site along a rural highway that feeds into the Austin urbanized area.

Figure 6. Retired Maintenance Facility

CARTS recently completed the first phase of new site and facilities, which was the Vehicle Maintenance Center. Figure 6 is the previous maintenance facility for CARTS fleet of 116 vehicles.

Proposed New Facility

The first phase of the facility development was completed in October 2014 and is the Vehicle Maintenance Center. TIGER funds will be combined with other funding sources to construct the remaining phases of the project. CARTS invested over $6 million in the initial phase to streamline and increase the efficiency of the construction of remaining phases. The facility will consolidate core district functions (see Figure 7):

- Vehicle maintenance (repairs, washing, fueling, paint shop, and body shop).
- Operations (training, dispatch, and customer service).
- Intermodal station.
- Park-and-ride facility.

The new facility is strategically located to be accessible to CARTS's large service area, allows for service expansion to meet anticipated population change, intercepts heavy commuter traffic

on the adjacent highway corridor, and provides a hub for employment transportation in an economically challenged area. Approximately 56 percent of the population near the new facility site is of Hispanic origin. The facility will enhance regional connectivity for rural residents outside the Austin, Texas, urbanized area.

TIGER funds for Component 2a will allow CARTS to complete full consolidation of core functions and provide more efficient and effective transit services in its region. Improvements will enhance the ability of CARTS to continue extensive demand-response services for people with disabilities and older residents living in the surrounding area.

Figure 7. CARTS Proposed Facility Design

The project site is located entirely in a rural area but on an emerging growth and commuter corridor supporting interconnectivity between the metropolitan and rural transit services. A successful integration of the transit services of CARTS and Capital Metro at the new transit hub in this corridor will encourage commuters to park their cars and ride transit. These routes, the park-and-ride, and intermodal connections, along with new jobs created at the site, will establish a ladder to success for workers from the surrounding area, especially those that can benefit from affordable and reliable work trip transportation.

Component 2b Public Transit Services (PTS) Facility

Rural Transit District Description: PTS

PTS provides demand-response services in two counties in North Texas—Parker and Palo Pinto Counties. The service area is roughly 1,900 square miles, consisting of primarily in a rural area of north Texas. PTS provides service to the public for access to employment, education, health care, and other life-enriching and life-sustaining needs. Annually, PTS provides close to 90,000 trips, with Parker County accounting for 65 percent of all trips. The mission of PTS is to "be a significant influence in meeting the changing transportation needs of residents". PTS also strives to help families who are faced with extreme poverty and crisis, while encouraging them to turn poverty into opportunity and attain a higher, healthier quality of life. PTS services provide freedom of mobility at very modest cost. PTS provides residents in the rural area with an opportunity for employment and self-sufficiency, which might otherwise be impossible.

Component 2b of the project to fund PTS's new Multimodal Transit Facility in Weatherford, Texas.

Figure 8. PTS Existing Administration Trailer

Existing Facilities

The current facility in Weatherford consists of two portable office trailers and a parking area that currently has no fence or security system (see Figure 8; only the portable building belongs to PTS). PTS currently operates in a confined area with limited office space and parking for the district's vehicles. Dispatchers and administrators use one trailer, and drivers report to the other; neither trailer is adequate for operating modern, rural transit services using an automated routing and scheduling system. The leased property does not provide adequate security and/or covered parking or protection for transit vehicles. The lack of space will continue to disrupt critical functions necessary to manage and ensure efficient and effective operations as the district grows and the demand for service increases due to population growth.

Proposed New Facility

The new facility will extend the district's services and collaboration with local and regional partners by augmenting PTS's existing multimodal facility in Mineral Wells, Texas. The rural city of Weatherford is growing, and so PTS to meet service demand. PTS strategically initiated this project in three phases. Phase 1 is complete and included land acquisition, environmental review, surveying, and site development. PTS seeks TIGER funds to complete phases 2 and 3. Phase 2 is final site preparation and phase 3 is a design-build contract (see Figure 9 for site plan).

Parker and Palo Pinto Counties will be served under this project with extended benefits provided for all surrounding counties, including connectivity with Tarrant, Wise, Erath, and Hood Counties. In addition, training facilities will provide further benefit because the facility will adequately support training programs and meetings for rural/urban providers in the region. Surrounding counties will benefit from shared use of the preventive maintenance facilities.

The proposed transit facility aims to improve administrative and operating efficiencies and to centralize functions by offering a multimodal transit facility, bus maintenance complex, regional

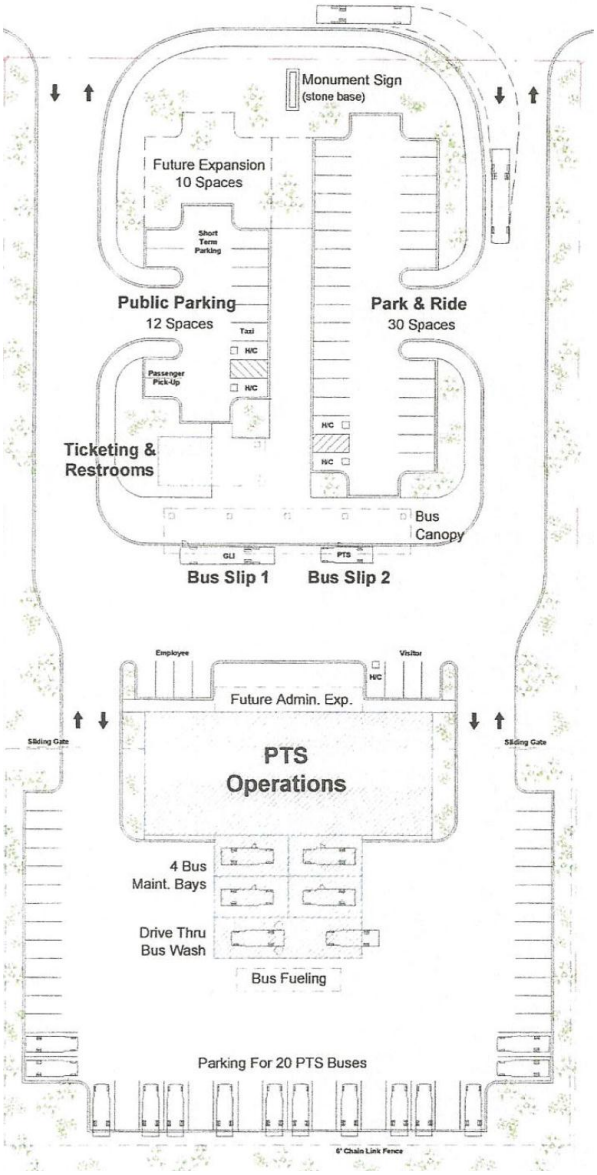


Figure 9. PTS Facility Site Plan

training facility, centralized dispatching and operations, and secure storage location for vehicles and other valuable assets used to provide service (see Figure 10). Further, the infrastructure project proposes to host a park-and-ride and serve as a transfer point between modes operating locally and regionally. PTS will offer feeder routes to its park-and-ride facilities with direct pickup (demand response) and transfer points. This will allow individuals to access rail and transfer points and intercity bus stations, thus providing connectivity from the rural service area to the region, state, and connections beyond the state.

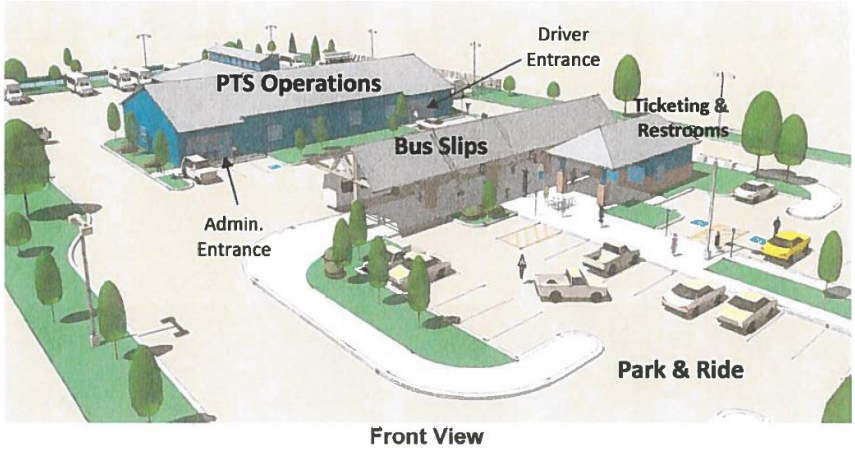


Figure 10. PTS Proposed Facility Design

Component 2c City of South Padre Island (SPI) Facility

Rural Transit District Description: SPI

SPI's rural transit service, the Wave, annually provides more than 580,000 rides. SPI's mission is to provide safe, reliable, and friendly service to all residents, employees, employers, and the public. SPI's service is free and available to anyone in the general public regardless of need. Routes are designed to provide access to the greatest number of essential needs and work areas such as medical facilities, pharmacies, grocery stores, post offices, city halls, museums, libraries, and retail, restaurant, and hotel establishments. For many local residents, The Wave is the only means of transportation available. The Wave operates from 7:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. every day of the year with the exception of three holidays. The Wave's fixed-route service covers South Padre Island, Port Isabel, Laguna Heights, and, provides connections to the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Laguna Madre area through transfer to other regional transit providers, Metro Connect and Valley Metro. The general bus routes cover a 25.6-mile loop from the north end of South Padre Island to Port Isabel, and to Laguna Heights and back again.

SPI's service area has an unusually high ridership for a rural system. SPI attributes its high ridership to serving an economically distressed population, certified informal colonia (informal settlements), and a large senior population that makes SPI's service area home for up to six months of the year. The proposed transit facility will make regional service coordination possible in a rural area of the United States. The new facility will be the eastern anchor of a chain of passenger facilities linking extreme south Texas together.

Existing Facilities

The City of South Padre Island is currently leasing office space for the Wave, its fifth location in just seven years. Displacement has occurred often due to rapid growth, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues, and a change in building owners. Parking at the present location is inadequate. SPI riders suffer the greatest challenges using existing facilities.

Currently, SPI has no multimodal hub. Regional transfers between the SPI, Metro Connect, and Valley Metro transit systems currently take place at a regular bus stop location in a small parking lot in Port Isabel (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. SPI Existing Facility

The picture above was taken at a non-peak hour; at peak times during the day, there are easily 75 people transferring between various urban and rural public transportation systems—the current bus shelter seats six people. Essential facilities like public restrooms, an indoor lobby, and protection from the harsh elements are absent from the current outdoor transfer location.

Proposed New Facility

SPI will use TIGER funds to help construct Component 2c, a new multimodal facility that will serve as a one-stop transportation hub in Cameron County to serve the eastern area of Lower Rio Grande Valley region. Because of its location, the project will be a true, natural gateway to South Padre Island. All vehicles entering the island must encounter the project site as they come off the bridge and onto the island (see Figures 12 and 13). The hub will include a transfer station to be used by SPI, the regional transit system Metro Connect, the rural transit system Valley Metro, future intercity bus providers, charter buses, and taxis. Other modes of transportation accommodated by the project are pedestrian, car share, and bike share. The terminal will also connect to two international airports and two international bus terminals through its coordination with regional transit systems. Also included in the project are passenger amenities, driver amenities, administrative offices, and a park-and-ride site. Income-generating opportunities will be added such as kiosks in the lobby, information counters, public pay phones, and charter bus parking.

Figure 12. SPI Proposed Facility Design

The facility will enhance intermodal connections by providing a better transfer location. Safety will be much improved with the design of the bus berths and circulation on the project site. Currently, buses and private vehicles enter and exit the transfer location through five possible access points, moving in all different directions. Private vehicles can move without restriction throughout the parking lot. Passengers walk in front of or behind buses and vehicles at any time. The new facility will restrict private vehicles from entering the bus circulation area and buses will enter through one access, unload and load at a berth, and then pass through one exit. Passengers will approach buses at the passenger entrances only. Intermodal connections will be

enhanced through passenger unloading/loading under canopies. In addition, wait quality will be significantly improved by providing protection from the harsh elements, ample seating, restrooms, a climate-controlled waiting area, and real-time bus location and time information.

Figure 13. SPI Proposed Site Plan

Component 2d Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD) Facility

Rural Transit District Description: CTRTD

City and Rural Rides (CARR) is a rural public transit service operated by CTRTD. CARR rural transit is available to the general public; anyone can schedule a ride to any location in the service area and to limited cities outside the service area. In 2014, CTRTD used its fleet of 86 buses to provide 153,000 passenger trips. Riders use the service to go shopping, get to work, visit family and friends, get to health care appointments, etc. Residents of CTRTD's service area face many mobility-related challenges. CTRTD's service area is a 19-county region covering 18,000 square miles (larger than Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut combined). Differences in demographics, travel patterns, transportation needs, and economic strengths exist in each county. The region has no central operations facility or multimodal hub.

CTRTD's service area is also very low density; for example, six counties in the service area have a density of five or fewer persons per square mile—frontier counties. In addition, the region has a very large senior population; 16 percent of the population in CTRTD's service area is age 65 or older. Four counties reported more than 20 percent of households with income below $15,000 in 2010. Examining the overall population demographics, paying special attention to the aging rural population with substantial levels of lower income households, indicates significant needs for transit service. The region has a higher frequency of persons living in poverty, a lower than average per-capita income, and a higher percentage of elderly than national averages.

CTRTD needs a TIGER award to complete funding for Component 2d, a project to rehabilitate and repurpose an existing building and property into the region's first rural multimodal facility.

Existing Facility

CTRTD currently operates out of two facilities, one in neighboring Brownwood and the other in Coleman, Texas, which is located 32 miles west of the new facility site. These facilities, particularly the Brownwood facility, are not suitable for continued operations due to a lack of size now needed to support the increasing demand for rural transit services (see Figure 14). The Brownwood facility layout is inefficient and undersized, and the parking lot can accommodate needed parking by double- and triple-parking vehicles (pictures at right). All vehicle maintenance is currently completed by vendors because no space is available for even routine, preventive maintenance.

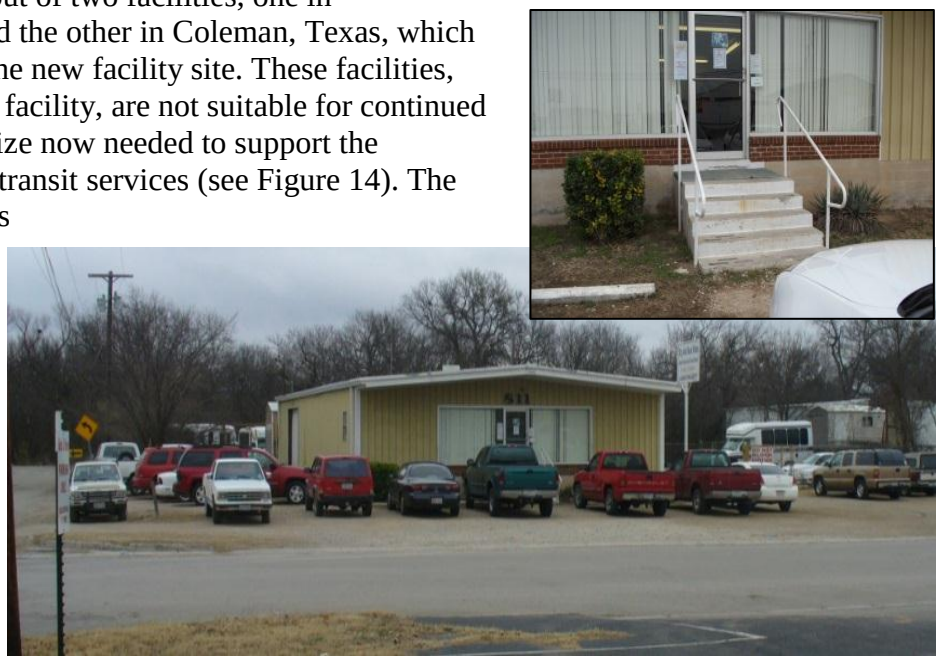


Figure 14. CTRTD Existing Facility

Proposed New Facility

Component 2d is a new facility that will replace CTRTD's existing, inadequate facility in Brownwood, Texas, with a new facility in the adjacent rural community of Early, Texas. The new multimodal facility will include operations, administrative, preventive maintenance, and intermodal hub functions. In addition, the new facility will increase the opportunity for the region to successfully attract a national intercity bus operators to resume services in the region—connecting residents to other parts of Texas and the nation. Two other rural districts will also access the facility daily: Concho Valley Transit District (CVTD) and Hill Country Transit District (HCTD). CVTD has a 12-county service area, and HCTD has a nine-county service area. The combined area of impact for the new TIGER-funded facility is a 32-county rural region spanning 34,000 square miles. The new multimodal facility will enable any demand-response rider using the three transit systems to access a much larger regional service area.

The Multimodal Facility Project involves the renovation of an existing 12,078-square-foot building and associated two-acre site. Improvements to the new facility will include paving and parking areas with vehicle shelters, a storage facility, a bus wash bay, visitor and passenger waiting areas, office space, training/meetings rooms, ADA compliant upgrades, and structural changes (see Figure 15). The facility will be equipped with high-speed data to serve administrative offices, a boardroom, a training room, and a multipurpose room that can also serve as a banquet and meeting space available to the community. The multimodal facility will also provide leased space for organizations that provide services complementary to transit.

CTRTD anticipates completion of the multimodal facility in a maximum of two years. Currently, CTRTD is using existing grant funds to start the first phase of the project. Phase 1 includes demolition, full site grading, driveway and partial parking construction, fencing, canopies, and necessary utility upgrades. Phase 2, funded in part by TIGER, will complete the project and includes building renovations, front and side parking, wash bay and equipment, dumpster

enclosure, and landscaping. Phase 2 will begin upon receipt of TIGER grant funding. The facility concept is below.

Figure 15. CTRTD Proposed New Facility Design

Primary Selection Criteria

This section contains descriptions of the benefits of the project, split into "Component 1 Vehicle Replacement" and "Component 2 Facilities," for each primary selection criterion.

State of Good Repair

The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) states: "Proactively maintain critical transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

The frontline in maintaining SGR in a rural setting is that most essential element of a rural transit system, its rolling stock. The most essential aspect of SGR, especially when the safety aspect is considered, is the improved maintenance of rolling stock that will result from the completion of these projects:

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 replaced a large number of rural vehicles in 2009 and 2010. Districts are struggling to find funds to replace vehicles because the spike in purchasing means a needed spike in replacement. TxDOT will use TIGER funds to spread replacement of 325 vehicles over a 2-year period to alleviate this problem.
- A rural transit fleet in better SGR will help Texas rural operators:
  - Reduce heavy maintenance expenditures.
  - Reduce emissions and improve the impact on air quality.
  - Reduce fuel expenditures.
  - Provide a much better rider experience.
  - Have consistently functional, modern wheelchair lifts.

- Possess more environmentally friendly and functional climate control systems.

Component 2 Facilities

The project requests TIGER support to replace inadequate existing facilities with new multimodal, multi-purpose facilities. Purpose-built facilities will have many positive impacts on SGR:

- Existing facilities are technologically outdated; new facilities will be purpose built.
- Existing facilities are too small to accommodate current and future demand:
  - Multimodal, coordinated services will accommodate increasing trip demand.
  - Station amenities and transfer hubs will safely accommodate riders.
  - Operations and maintenance facilities will provide adequate space to administer and maintain valuable federal and state resources (vehicles and services).
- New facilities will reduce operating expenses and allow districts to bring in-house some previously outsourced operations (e.g., preventative maintenance).
- New facilities cost less to operate due to more efficient use of utilities.
- New facilities will allow districts to coordinate internal operations more effectively from central headquarters.
- Safe and secure parking for transit vehicles protects from theft and weathering.

In some cases, constructing the new facility will allow a rural transit district to continue using an older facility for uses more compatible with the older structure (such as a general office or accounting), thus extending the SGR of an existing facility.

Economic Competitiveness

The NOFA states: "Prioritize transportation policies and investments that create ladders of opportunity, support strong communities, and bring lasting and equitable economic benefits to the nation and citizens."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

- Fleets in better SGR cost less to operate, are more reliable, and are a more attractive/comfortable alternative. Districts will put cost savings back into providing more trips for the public and disadvantaged populations.
- More reliable rural transit fleets mean more reliable services for rural residents and will improve their participation in the economy by having useful access to jobs, education, medical services, and other necessities.
- Branding and marketing are a challenge in rural areas. Often, the primary marketing tool is markings on vehicles. Advancements in wraps on vehicles will allow districts to purchase new vehicles with better wraps and increase awareness of their services as a resource for the public and disadvantaged populations, increasing ridership.

Component 2 Facilities

- New facilities cost less to operate and replace leased facilities with owned facilities. Districts will put cost savings back into providing more trips for the public and disadvantaged populations.
- Rural transit is sometimes the only viable, independent, and enabling transportation option for persons in households with no car, persons with a disability, and members of low-income households.

- The new facilities will, in every case, be the primary transfer point for the respective system. Common transfer points between modes/districts create more seamless travel options capable of helping a proactive citizen to find economic opportunity.
- The basis of all four facilities is to improve economic mobility through enhanced multimodal connections to employment centers, educational institutions, and services, and in all four cases, facilities are located in areas with one or more economically challenged demographics.
- The facilities will improve long-term efficiency, reliability, and cost competiveness in the movement of workers and goods by virtue of investments in needed transportation infrastructure for rural mobility.
- The construction of intermodal facilities will allow for the development of new commuter ridership and deliveries of goods throughout the region (i.e., CARTS operates regional intercity bus services interlined with Greyhound and so also carries freight).
- Perhaps the key project outcome, along with significant and immediate job creation, leveraged economic development, and environmental friendly technologies, is the forward-looking integration of all of these into the creation of needed transportation infrastructure that will add sustainable transportation services to four rural regions.
- The high cost of driving, insuring, maintaining, and fueling a car is a large burden for many individuals. Rural public transportation can assist in making transportation affordable and allow those without adequate, reliable transportation the opportunity to reach their place of employment.
- Transportation of residents from outlying rural areas into small to large communities for jobs and training supports economic development.
- Each of the facilities will have space for training and administrative functions; space will be provided for mobility managers to provide travel training to improve transportation for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes through a range of activities including client education and outreach activities

Quality of Life

The NOFA states: "Foster quality of life in communities by integrating transportation policies, plans, and investments with coordinated housing and economic development policies to increase transportation choices and access to transportation services for all."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

- Retired vehicles with some minimal useful life remaining can be repurposed to provide disadvantaged transportation to fill transit service gaps (e.g., Ride Connection has a retired vehicle program in which government entities and non-profit organizations can rent vehicles to provide transportation to those 65+ and people with disabilities).

Component 2 Facilities

- Rural transit improves connectivity to larger cities and their recreational, commercial, health care, and educational resources. This increases quality of life and makes rural areas viable locations to live and thrive by alleviating the effect of physical isolation.
- Rural transit hubs, such as the four proposed facilities, foster coordination and connectivity between service providers and increase the utility of dollars invested in public transportation.

- Developing multi-use/shared regional safety training facilities (which each facility includes) provides benefit to rural/urban transit districts, senior centers, and community stakeholders and increases the awareness and visibility of each organization's services.
- Facilities offer amenities to riders (especially important for persons with disabilities), such as shelter, clean bathrooms, food, and drink.
- New multimodal transit hubs will complement existing services in areas strategically sited for attracting new ridership. The hubs will enable rural transit districts to have a much greater impact on reducing single-occupancy vehicles on highway corridors and create economies of scale by adding ridership on existing lines, improving the local quality of life.

Environmental Sustainability

The NOFA states: "Advance environmentally sustainable policies and investments that reduce carbon and other harmful emissions from transportation sources, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, and promote public health."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

The FTA minimum useful service life of a light-duty cutaway bus used in rural transit service is typically about 5 years. The average age of the 325 vehicles to be replaced is 9 years. The vehicles to be replaced lasted 9 years in some cases due to deferred replacement necessitated by long periods of insufficient funding and in some cases due to good maintenance practices, including vehicle rehabilitation. About 64 percent of the vehicles use gasoline, and most of the remainder use diesel. There is a significant difference, environmentally, between the emissions footprint of a 2006 transit vehicle and that of a 2015 transit vehicle.

For example, a 6.8-liter Ford V8 manufactured and installed in 2006 releases approximately 96 percent more nitrogen oxide (NOx) than the same engine manufactured and installed in 2015; NOx is tracked by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). NOx is a precursor to the formation of ground-level ozone, which is the most widespread air quality problem in the United States and in Texas (http://www.epa.gov/air/ozonepollution/). Table 6 compares the best emission test results of the gasoline engines manufactured in 2006 vehicles (lowest emission level) to the highest emission levels recorded in tests performed on the gasoline engines manufactured in 2015, meaning the emission reduction indicated here is a minimum. This Ford engine is a typical engine for rural transit vehicles.

Table 6. NOx Emissions Comparison

Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) Emissions Comparison of Typical Cutaway Bus Being Replaced (Model Year 2006) to Typical Replacement Cutaway Bus (Model Year 2015)		
Year, Engine, Fuel, and Vehicle Application	**NOx level**	**Comment**
2006 Ford, 6.8 L Gasoline	0.70	Emissions are reduced by approximately 96%
2015 Ford, 6.8 L Gasoline	0.03	
Source: EPA's Engine Certification Information Center (http://www.epa.gov/otaq/certdata.htm) Units: grams per brake-horsepower-hour		

Rural transit service vehicles may contribute to the emission inventories of metropolitan airsheds. Rural transit frequently provides trips to and from urban areas. Even though most rural vehicle emissions occur outside a given metropolitan airshed, regional transport phenomena

contribute significantly to the pollutant inventory of metropolitan airsheds, meaning that the geographic distribution of pollutant sources is significantly larger than the typical air quality study area and could include rural areas and rural transit vehicles (source: http://files.harc.edu/Projects/AirQuality/Projects/H060/H60UHExecutiveSummary.pdf).

Therefore, replacing vehicles beyond their useful service life will:

- Significantly reduce harmful emissions.
- Improve fuel economy and reduce fossil fuel consumption.
- Allow districts to purchase alternative-fueled vehicles, such as:
  - Propane.
  - Compressed natural gas.
  - Hybrid.
  - Electric.

Component 2 Facilities

New facilities will improve SGR and environmental sustainability. Rural transit districts are moving toward more sustainable transport systems by focusing on three major areas:

- Centralizing resources and services for efficiency.
- Making it easier for people to use more sustainable forms of transportation.
- Improving the environmental efficiency of fleet, facilities, and services.

Rural transit facilities, especially these four new facilities, will improve environmental sustainability by reducing the use of automobiles, alleviating congestion, and improving air quality. Construction practices, materials, design standards, and in-use functionality contribute to these facilities improving environmental sustainability:

- High-efficiency utilities, heating, and air conditioning.
- A rooftop-mounted photovoltaic system.
- Rainwater collection and storage.
- Electric vehicle charging stations for the public.
- Use of some recycled construction materials.

The SPI facility will be constructed and then later certified to a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard.

The CARTS facility includes a fuel depot that incorporates alternate fuels—propane and compressed natural gas.

Safety

The NOFA states: "Improve public health and safety by reducing transportation-related fatalities and injuries for all users, working toward no fatalities across all modes of travel."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

Replacing the most aged, worn vehicles in a rural transit fleet means the net safety of the entire fleet is greatly increased. Older vehicles have fewer safety features to protect both driver and rider. Even with great maintenance, older vehicles are more likely to break down and may do so at unsafe times and situations. Texas is very hot in the summertime and well below freezing in many areas in the wintertime; when a bus breaks down in either condition, the safety and personal health of riders are at risk. In addition, newer vehicles have better accessibility features

for persons with disabilities. A TIGER grant would provide critical funding assistance to public transit operators in Texas that have no other resource to replace unsafe, aged vehicles.

Component 2 Facilities

Component 2 facilities will reduce transportation-related injuries and fatalities:

- Purpose-built transfer locations will keep riders safe, happier, and cleaner while traveling. The difference between waiting for a bus at a clean, well-lit station and waiting for a bus on a street corner or in a generic parking lot is immense.
- New training facilities will allow districts to better train staff to operate service safely. Training facilities will also be used by neighboring rural districts and other local entities.
- Better maintenance (heavy and preventative) will improve the safety of riders because vehicles will operate in good condition.
- New and improved transit facilities marginally reduce the number, rate, and consequences of surface-transportation-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities among drivers in the surrounding area by promoting public transportation use in lieu of driving (bus drivers receive more training and have a much lower rate of crashes per miles driven when compared to the public).

Secondary Selection Criteria

This section describes the benefits of the project, split into "Component 1 Vehicle Replacement" and "Component 2 Facilities," for the two secondary criteria—innovation and partnership.

Innovation

The NOFA states: "Be innovative in terms of design, technology, project delivery, or financing."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

TxDOT will manage the distribution of TIGER funds and monitor subsequent vehicle procurements. Each of the rural districts will be allowed to select the fuel type and other vehicle characteristics according to their preference. Most rural districts in Texas purchase vehicles with the latest generation of onboard technology and connectivity, including fare payment systems, voice and data transmission equipment, tablet computers, automatic vehicle locators, and rider alert tools (e.g., text reminders).

Component 2 Facilities

- Facilities will advance the technological capabilities of each rural transit district by providing digital networks capable of supporting integrated fare payment systems, two-way voice and data transmissions between the base and vehicles, advanced scheduling software (cloud or server based), automatic vehicle locators, on-time bus arrival signage, and interconnectivity between coordinating rural districts in each region.
- Each of the four facilities is the first of its kind in the respective district. As such, the facilities will develop a not-before-seen level of connectivity with common transfer points between transportation modes and a seamless travel experience available to citizens from rural areas to nearby urban areas and from there to the nation's broader transportation network.
- The facilities each combine several funding sources—federal, state, and local. TIGER funds account for about half of construction costs. Funding capital facilities in rural areas

of Texas is a great challenge because rural transit districts cannot levy taxes (such as a 1 percent sales tax) to raise funds.
- Component 2c, by SPI, will be LEED certified.

Partnership

The NOFA states: "Demonstrate jurisdictional and/or disciplinary partnership."

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

TxDOT will partner with the state's 38 rural transit districts to replace the vehicles most critically worn. The rural districts collectively operate millions of trips each year as they in turn partner with each other, health and human service agencies, government entities, intercity bus operators, employers, educational institutions, and TxDOT.

Component 2 Facilities

The facilities are each multimodal and all allow for improved coordination with and the inclusion of human service and workforce agencies as well as intercity bus transportation. The completed projects include facilities accommodating multi-use/shared facilities that provide benefit to rural and urban transit districts, as well as access for community meetings (public and private). In addition, three of the facilities allow for shared preventive maintenance programs.

CARTS's Component 2a partners in its service area include:

- Capital Metro (an urbanized area provider in Austin whose routes pass the proposed new facility).
- Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority.
- Various health and human service agencies, workforce centers, city/county governments, and intercity bus operators.
- TxDOT.

PTS's Component 2b partners in its service area include:

- North Central Texas Council of Governments.
- Greyhound.
- Other transit providers: Fort Worth Transportation Authority, TAPS Public Transit, Catholic Charities of Fort Worth, and City and Rural Rides.
- Human and social service agencies, major employers, and educational institutions.
- TxDOT.

SPI's Component 2c partners in its service area include:

- Metro Connect.
- Valley Metro/Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council.
- Cameron County.
- City of Port Isabel, City of Brownsville, and City of McAllen.
- Intercity and charter bus operators.
- TxDOT.

CTRTD's Component 2d partners in its service area include:

- Hill Country Transit District's the Hop, which brings riders in for medical appointments. Drivers will use the facility to complete paperwork and as a waiting station for their

passengers. In addition, the district will use the facility for training opportunities and events.

- Concho Valley Transit District's Thunderbird Transit, which will use the facility for clients that are farther away from its central location and seeking services in Brownwood to improve and maintain their health and quality of life. The district will use the facility for a waiting station and driver office space.
- Human services and workforce agencies (which CTRTD works closely with) and Central Texas Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Central Texas Opportunities (a community action agency), and local Workforce Centers (which CTRTD has agreements with).
- TxDOT.

Benefit-Cost Analysis

Table 7 summarizes the benefit-cost analysis (BCA) of the project.

Table 7. Summary of BCA

Status and Problem to be Addressed	Change to Baseline	Type of Impacts	Affected Populations	Economic Benefits	BCA reference
COMPONENT 1 VEHICLES					
TxDOT and rural transit districts fall further behind SGR each year due to inadequate funding and therefore struggle to continue to provide safe, efficient, and effective rural service; especially challenging due to rural population increase, aging in place, and remote locations	Replace 325 vehicles more than 133% past FTA minimum service life	Reduce maintenance expenses per mile, bring rural fleet into better SGR, improve passenger safety and comfort, reduce emissions	Rural transit district staff, drivers, existing bus riders, future bus riders, rural transit riders tend to be older and have lower incomes and are more likely to be veterans	**Benefit 2.** New facilities and SGR vehicle replacement preserve ability to provide services to accommodate 80% of population increase (other 20% needs additional fleet) **Benefit 3.** External multiplier for investments in public transportation (unique to Texas) **Benefit 4.** Serve existing foregone trip demand with more reliable fleet **Benefit 5.** Reduced maintenace expense per mile **Benefit 6.** Reduced emissions	See BCA narrative and spreadsheet
COMPONENT 2 FACILITIES					
Rural transit districts struggle to maintain vehicles, operate effective services, train staff, and help passengers safely transfer because of non-existent, outdated, or inadequate multi-modal rural transit facilities	Construct four rural multimodal passenger and operations facilities	Reduce facility operating cost, update technological capabilities, construct adequate training space, provide safer passenger transfers, enable multi-agency transfer locations for coordinated services	Rural transit district staff, rural residents, existing bus riders, future bus riders, rural transit riders tend to be older and have lower incomes and are more likely to be veterans	**Benefit 1.** Annual ridership increases due specifically to facilities that improve access to transit, rider amenities, and inter-agency coordination **Benefit 2.** New facilities and SGR vehicle replacement preserve ability to provide services to accommodate 80% of population increase (other 20% needs additional fleet) **Benefit 3.** External multiplier for investments in public transportation (unique to Texas)	See BCA narrative and spreadsheet

Table 8 summarizes the BCA for each component based on one or more quantifiable and relevant benefits. BCA findings demonstrate that the Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project has a benefit-cost ratio of 2.68 using a 3 percent discount rate and 1.90 using a 7 percent discount rate to establish the net present value (NPV) of project benefits.

Table 8. Summary of Quantified BCA Findings

Component	Description	Total Cost	Benefit	Undiscounted Net Benefit	Benefit NPV 3% Discount	Benefit-Cost 3% Discount	Benefit NPV 7% Discount	Benefit-Cost 7% Discount
VEHICLES				*over 7 years*				
1	**Replace 325 transit vehicles**	**$20,040,000**	**TOTAL**	**$ 45,370,000**	**$ 40,150,000**	**2.00**	**$ 34,460,000**	**1.72**
			Benefit 2	$ 28,200,000	$ 24,660,000	1.23	$ 20,840,000	1.04
			Benefit 3	$ 12,140,000	$ 10,890,000	0.54	$ 9,510,000	0.47
			Benefit 4	$ 1,560,000	$ 1,390,000	0.07	$ 1,200,000	0.06
			Benefit 5	$ 2,560,000	$ 2,370,000	0.12	$ 2,150,000	0.11
			Benefit 6	$ 910,000	$ 840,000	0.04	$ 760,000	0.04
FACILITIES				*over 20 years*				
2a-d	**Multimodal transit-operations facilities**	**$30,307,202**	**TOTAL**	**$136,770,000**	**$ 94,570,000**	**3.12**	**$ 61,060,000**	**2.01**
			Benefit 1	$ 51,330,000	$ 34,510,000	1.14	$ 21,350,000	0.70
			Benefit 2	$ 68,080,000	$ 47,030,000	1.55	$ 30,300,000	1.00
			Benefit 3	$ 17,360,000	$ 13,030,000	0.43	$ 9,410,000	0.31

Note: values rounded to nearest $10,000

Definition of Benefits

Benefit 1. Annual ridership increases due to facilities that improve access to transit, rider amenities, and inter-agency coordination
Benefit 2. Facility and vehicle replacements preserve ability to provide services to accommodate population increase
Benefit 3. External multiplier for investments in public transportation (unique to Texas)
Benefit 4. Serve existing foregone trip demand with more reliable fleet
Benefit 5. Reduced maintenace expense per mile
Benefit 6. Reduced emissions

Description	Total Cost	Benefit	Undiscounted Net Benefit	Benefit NPV 3% Discount	Benefit-Cost 3% Discount	Benefit NPV 7% Discount	Benefit-Cost 7% Discount
PROJECT TOTAL			*over useful life*				
Two components: 325 rural transit vehicles and 4 facilities	**$50,347,202**	**TOTAL**	**$182,140,000**	**$134,720,000**	**2.68**	**$ 95,520,000**	**1.90**
		Benefit 1	$ 51,330,000	$ 34,510,000	0.69	$ 21,350,000	0.42
		Benefit 2	$ 96,280,000	$ 71,690,000	1.42	$ 51,140,000	1.02
		Benefit 3	$ 29,500,000	$ 23,920,000	0.48	$ 18,920,000	0.38
		Benefit 4	$ 1,560,000	$ 1,390,000	0.03	$ 1,200,000	0.02
		Benefit 5	$ 2,560,000	$ 2,370,000	0.05	$ 2,150,000	0.04
		Benefit 6	$ 910,000	$ 840,000	0.02	$ 760,000	0.02

Note: values rounded to nearest $10,000

Figures 16, 17, and 18 highlight the Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project's net benefit to society in the United States (i.e., the value of benefits after removing baseline benefits).

Detailed documentation of BCA methodology and findings is available:

- BCA Workbook with Narrative.

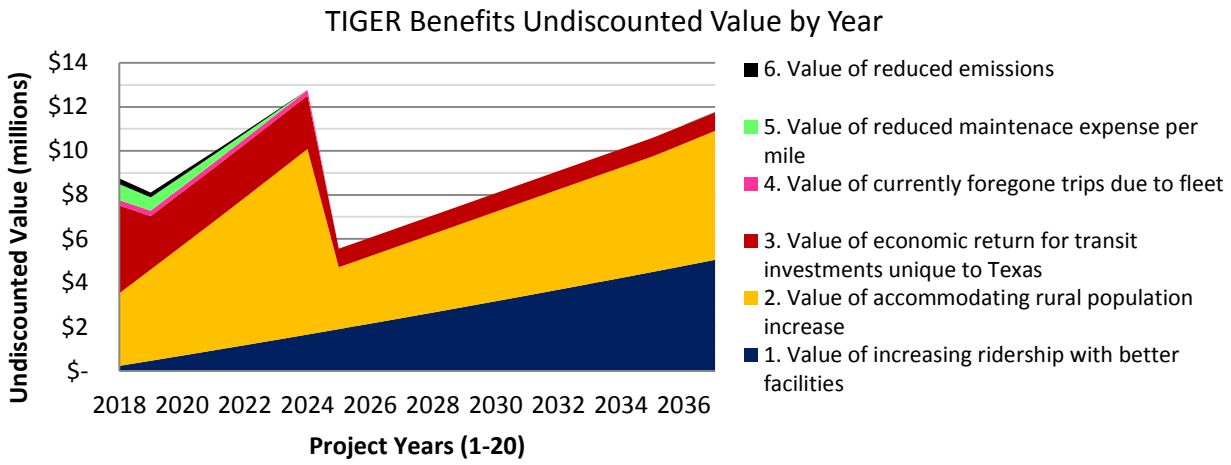


Figure 16. Undiscounted Benefit Value by Year

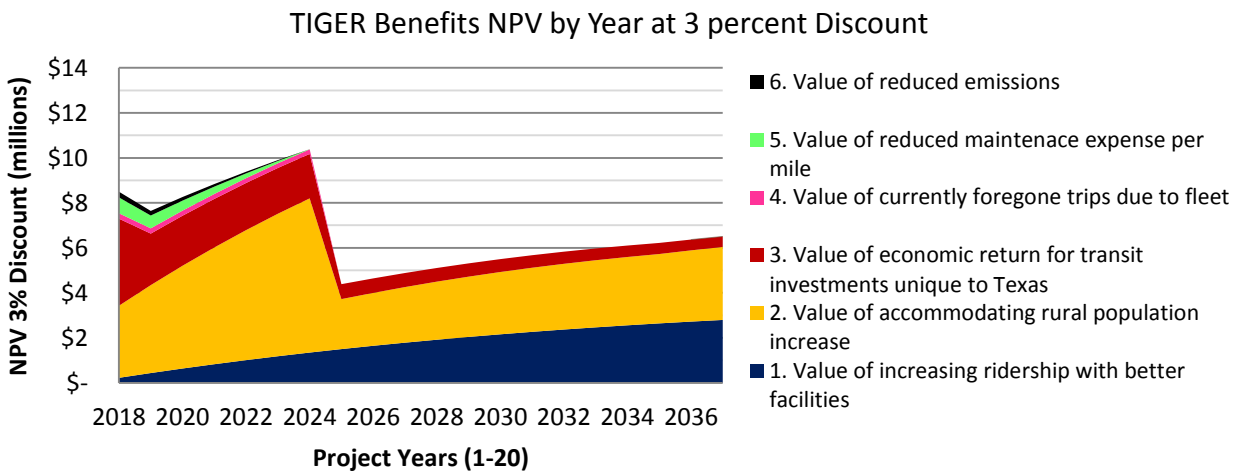


Figure 17. NPV of Benefits by Year at 3 Percent Discount

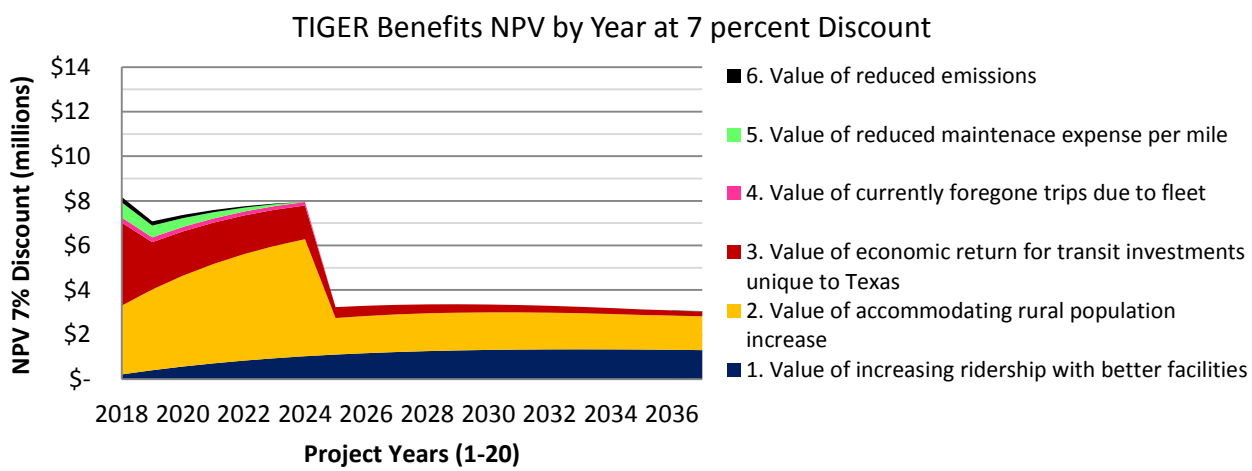


Figure 18. NPV of Benefits by Year at 7 Percent Discount

Project Readiness

TxDOT is the lead project party and directs project implementation through to completion. TxDOT is a strong supporter of both project components, both financially and institutionally, because it is familiar with the critical need for the facilities and vehicles. TxDOT has committed funding to early phases of the facilities to help rural transit districts prepare for seeking TIGER funds to complete the four critical facilities. TxDOT will mitigate risk by continuing to be a financial partner in each component, as needed, should any unforeseen conditions arise above the TIGER funding dedicated to the project.

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

Component 1 is ready for implementation as soon as funds are awarded:

- TxDOT and rural districts have existing processes and practices to facilitate distribution of funds and procurement of vehicles (including the Buy America requirement and other FTA bus procurement requirements).
- No National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is required.
- No legislative approvals are necessary.
- Project partnership and implementation agreements are active.
- TxDOT project managers are capable and ready to lead the TIGER project.
- Vehicle replacement will be fully funded once a TIGER award is provided.

All vehicle procurements will be monitored by TxDOT as part of the normal compliance program for FTA grants, as described in the Certifications and Assurances executed annually by TxDOT, and as described in the Texas State Management Plan. All rural transit districts have experience in procuring vehicles. TxDOT will be able to obligate Component 1 funds by September 30, 2017.

Components 2 Facilities

Component 2 facilities are ready for construction or recently began early phases of construction:

- The four districts have obtained all local, state and regulatory permits.
- Each facility has completed NEPA process and each was determined to be a Categorical Exclusion. The environmental phase of each project is complete.
- Each facility is listed in appropriate Transportation Improvement Programs and the State Transportation Improvement Program.
- Each facility site is already purchased or under long-term lease contract.
- Legislative approvals are not required for any of the facilities.
- State and local planning requirements are complete for each facility.
- The district constructing each facility has identified project management staff and possesses a clear project schedule.
- Each facility is ready for construction and will be fully funded upon a TIGER grant award.

TxDOT will be able to obligate all TIGER funds for Component 2 by September 30, 2017.

Project Schedule

The Component 1 vehicle replacement timeline is as follows:

- Execute TIGER grant agreement between TxDOT and FTA 2/1/2016
- Enter into grant agreement with subrecipients (districts) 3/1/2016
- Issue bid documents 5/1/2016
- Open bid documents 8/1/2016
- Enter binding agreements with vendors 11/1/2016
- Acquire vehicles 12/1/2017

The Component 2 facilities timeline is as follows:

- Execute TIGER grant agreement between TxDOT and FTA 2/1/2016
- Enter into grant agreements with subrecipients (districts) 3/1/2016
- Issue bid documents 6/1/2016
- Open bid documents 9/1/2016
- Enter binding agreements with contractors 1/1/2017
- Begin construction of facilities 5/1/2017

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

TxDOT reviewed the vehicle component and each of the four facility components to identify potential risks and potential mitigating strategies.

Component 1 Vehicle Replacement

TxDOT determines there are no significant risks to successful implementation of this component on time as planned.

Component 2 Facilities

TxDOT found Component 2 facilities to have only minimal risk because each facility has completed environmental review, acquisition, and site survey, and is in the process of site preparation for construction.

Component 2d for CTRTD has a point of minimal risk. The facility will rehabilitate and repurpose a facility (formerly a bowling alley) into a multimodal operations, maintenance, and passenger transfer facility. An asbestos survey of the property showed very minimal asbestos existing in the building. CTRTD construction budgets include an assumed cost to remove the asbestos. There is some risk that these costs will be higher than estimated and budgeted. The mitigating strategy is for CTRTD to continue to take all steps to follow federal environmental guidelines in advance of facility construction. CTRTD and TxDOT are committed to seeing the project through and understand another small portion of the project budget may need to be flexed from one aspect of the project to cover any additional asbestos removal expenses.

Letters of Support

Attached are a combination of Congressional and Stakeholder Letters of Support for TxDOT's TIGER VII application (link here). The stakeholder letters of support are from a small, but representative, cross-section of a larger group of State and local entities TxDOT and Rural Transit Districts partner with to expand access to, and services offered in, the rural areas of Texas.

Congressional Letters of Support

Senator John Cornyn

Representative Henry Cuellar, PhD.

Representative Blake Farenthold

Representative Louie Gohmert

Representative Kay Granger

Representative Rubén Hinojosa

Stakeholder Letters of Support

Texas Transit Association

Texas State Independent Living Council

Tarleton State University

Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board, Inc.

Cargill Meat Solutions Corporation

Inteplast Group

Federal Wage Rate Certification

As part of the normal compliance program for FTA grants, TxDOT annually executes the Certifications and Assurances agreement with FTA, and this certification includes monitoring compliance with Davis-Bacon requirements for applicable projects implemented by subrecipients. The Federal Wage Rate Certification is attached to the grant application and may also be accessed here.

JOHN CORNYN
TEXAS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–4305

May 27, 2015

Mr. Peter Rogoff
Under Secretary for Policy
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Under Secretary Rogoff:

I am writing to express my support for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) applications submitted to U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). As you and your staff review the proposal, I trust you will give full consideration to the many strengths of both applications.

TxDOT's first application seeks to reconstruct an existing Suspension Bridge between Roma, Texas and Ciudad Miguel Aleman, Mexico, restoring functionality and bringing it into a state of good repair. I have been informed that a successful project would result in increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic, as well as generate increased economic activity in the area.

TxDOT's second application seeks funds for the Texas Rural Transit Assessment Project. As you know, Texas is the largest federally funded rural area transit program in the county. Currently, a significant share of transit assets are operating near useful life standards. If awarded, TxDOT anticipates replacing or updating four maintenance facilities and 325 transit vehicles. A successful grant award would maintain safe and reliable mobility for rural Texans, including many who rely on transit for access to work, healthcare and education.

I would appreciate your efforts to ensure that I am kept informed as to the progress of this application. Please contact Josh Jemente, my Assistant for State Projects, with any developments this proposal as soon as they are available.

Thank you for your assistance and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Cornyn

JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 4, 2015

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Secretary Foxx,

I am writing in strong support of the Texas Department of Transportation's TIGER application for its Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project.

The Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project is a statewide effort designed to bring critically needed transit facilities and fleet throughout Texas to a State of Good Repair, maintaining safe and reliable mobility opportunities to work, healthcare, education, and other needs. This critical project will replace or update four operating and maintenance facilities and 325 transit vehicles.

Additionally, the project will make improvements in almost every county in Texas, increasing mobility and accessibility for thousands of Texans living in rural areas.

Texas is the largest federally funded rural area transit program in the country. However, current formula funding does not take into account each state's proportional share of rural area population and allots with each state with $1.25 million in formula funding for rural area needs. Comparing rural area populations, Texas receives only $0.20 per capita while Rhode Island receives $12.40.

This project will go a long way toward improving rural transit in Texas. Again, I strongly support this application and encourage your office to award the requested TIGER funds to the Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project.

Sincerely,

Henry Cuellar, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

BLAKE FARENTHOLD
27TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

DEPUTY WHIP

1027 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-225-7742
202-226-1134

101 NORTH SHORELINE BLVD, SUITE 300
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78401
361-884-2222
361-884-2223

5606 NORTH NAVARRO STREET, SUITE 203
VICTORIA, TX 77904
361-894-6446
361-894-6460

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–4327

COMMITTEES:
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

JUDICIARY

May 26, 2015

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I understand that the Texas Department of Transportation summited a TIGER application for its Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project.

The Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project is a statewide effort designed to bring critically needed transit facilities and fleet throughout Texas to a State of Good Repair, maintaining safe and reliable mobility opportunities to work, healthcare, education, and other needs. This critical project will replace or update four operating and maintenance facilities and 325 transit vehicles.

Additionally, the project will make improvements in almost every county in Texas, increasing mobility and accessibility for thousands of Texans living in rural areas. One of the facilities that will be updated is the Capital Area Rural Transit Service's (CARTS) Tucker Hill Lane Complex located in the district I represent. CARTS provides service to residents in the rural areas in Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties. In 2014, CARTS provided over 570,000 passenger trips.

Texas is the largest federally funded rural area transit program in the country. However, formula funding does not take into account each state's proportional share of rural area population and allots with each state with $1.25 million in formula funding for rural area needs. Comparing rural area populations, Texas receives only $0.20 per capita while Rhode Island receives $12.40.

This project will go a long way toward improving rural transit in Texas. Again, I strongly ask that you give TxDOT's TIGER application all due consideration for its Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project.

Sincerely,

Blake Farenthold

BLAKE FARENTHOLD
Member of Congress

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT
FIRST DISTRICT, TEXAS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2243 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3035
FAX: (202) 226-1230

COMMITTEES:
JUDICIARY
NATURAL RESOURCES
REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Secretary Foxx,

I am writing in strong support of the Texas Department of Transportation's TIGER application for its Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project.

The Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project is a statewide effort designed to bring critically needed transit facilities and fleet throughout Texas to a State of Good Repair, maintaining safe and reliable mobility opportunities to work, healthcare, education, and other needs. This critical project will replace or update four operating and maintenance facilities and 325 transit vehicles.

Additionally, the project will make improvements in almost every county in Texas, increasing mobility and accessibility for thousands of Texans living in rural areas.

Texas is the largest federally funded rural area transit program in the country. However, current formula funding does not take into account each state's proportional share of rural area population and allots each state with $1.25 million in formula funding for rural area needs. Comparing rural area populations, Texas receives only $0.20 per capita while Rhode Island receives $12.40.

This project will go a long way toward improving rural transit in Texas. Again, I strongly support this application and encourage your office to award the requested TIGER funds to the Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project.

Sincerely,

Hon. Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

LONGVIEW OFFICE
101 EAST METHVIN STREET, SUITE 302
LONGVIEW, TX 75601
PHONE: (903) 236-8597

LUFKIN OFFICE
300 EAST SHEPHERD
LUFKIN, TX 75901
PHONE: (936) 632-3180

MARSHALL OFFICE
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MARSHALL, TX 75670
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NACOGDOCHES, TX 75961
PHONE: (936) 715-9514

TYLER OFFICE
1121 ESE LOOP 323, SUITE 206
TYLER, TX 75701
PHONE: (903) 561-6349
TOLL FREE: (866) 535-6302

KAY GRANGER
12TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

CHAIRWOMAN,
STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

MEMBER, DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE

MEMBER, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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kaygranger.house.gov

July 3, 2015

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Secretary Foxx,

I am writing in strong support of the Texas Department of Transportation's TIGER application for its Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project.

The Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project is a statewide effort designed to bring critically needed transit facilities and fleet throughout Texas to a State of Good Repair in order to maintain safe and reliable mobility opportunities. This critical project will replace or update four operating and maintenance facilities as well as 325 transit vehicles.

The project will make improvements in almost every county in Texas, increasing mobility and accessibility for thousands of Texans living in rural areas. Within the 12th District, the project will help develop a new Multi-Modal Transit Facility in Weatherford for Public Transit Services (PTS).

Public Transit Services (PTS) serves approximately 1,900 square miles of mostly rural area in North Texas, and operates close to 90,000 trips annually. PTS provides many rural residents access to employment and an opportunity for self sufficiency. The new Multi-Modal Transit Facility will help support PTS as Weatherford continues to grow.

The Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project will go a long way toward improving rural transit in Texas. Again, I strongly support this application and encourage your office to award the requested TIGER funds to the Texas Rural Transit Replacement Project.

Sincerely,

Kay Granger
Member of Congress

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training
Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises
Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit

House of Representatives
Rubén Hinojosa
15th District, Texas

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Fax: (202) 225-5688

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Phone: (956) 682-5545
Fax: (956) 682-0141

SEGUIN OFFICE:
100 South Austin, Suite 1
Seguin, TX 78115
Phone: (830) 401-0457
Fax: (830) 379-0984

Rep.Hinojosa@mail.house.gov
www.house.gov/hinojosa

June 3, 2015

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx,

As Congressman for the 15th Congressional District of Texas, I would like to convey to you my full support for the application submitted by the Texas Department of Transportation for its Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project to the U.S. Department of Transportation's TIGER grant program.

The Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project is a statewide effort designed to bring critically needed transit facilities and fleet throughout Texas to a State of Good Repair, maintaining safe and reliable mobility opportunities to work, healthcare, education, and other needs. This critical project will replace or update four operating and maintenance facilities and 325 transit vehicles. If funded, the proposed project will make improvements in almost every county in Texas, increasing mobility and accessibility for thousands of Texans living in rural areas.

The State of Texas is home to the largest federally funded rural area transit program in the country and yet current formula funding does not take into account each state's proportional share of rural area population. Each state is allotted $1.25 million in formula funding for rural area needs, while Rhode Island receives $12.40 per capita Texas receives only $0.20, a clear disparity.

The Texas Department of Transportation is to be commended for their leadership and efforts to increase the mobility and accessibility for our rural Texas residents. I strongly support this proposal and urge your favorable consideration. If you need further information regarding this application, you may contact me or my Grants Coordinator, Jessica Treviño at (956) 682-5545.

Sincerely,

Rubén Hinojosa

Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress

This mailing was prepared, published, and mailed at taxpayer expense
PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Texas Transit Association

June 5, 2015

Lt. Gen Joe Weber, USMC (Ret.), Executive Director
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear General Weber:

I am writing on behalf of the residents of rural Texas, and customers and operators of rural transit in Texas, in support of the Texas Rural Transit Asset Replacement Project for the 2015 TIGER discretionary grant application. Officially, I am the President of the Texas Transit Association, representing public transportation across the great State of Texas, including large urban, small urban, and rural areas of the state.

Rural public transportation is a vital link between citizens in rural areas and their employment, educational opportunities, medical appointments, and other needs of daily life. Texas has the largest rural population in the United States; in fact, if it were a separate state, the rural part of Texas would rank in the top ten by *total* population among US states. Providing transit service to the largest rural population brings special challenges to Texas' 38 rural transit districts, and we greatly appreciate the efforts of the Texas Department of Transportation to bring desperately needed resources in support of those challenges.

We are especially concerned with the huge discrepancy between the capital project needs, both in transit fleet and facilities, and the funding dedicated at the federal level to address those needs. This discrepancy is evident by comparing the annual apportionment of $1.25M to the need for over $5M in fleet replacement *every year*, and over $20M need in facility upgrades and replacements, as identified in the most recent TxDOT call for projects.

Again, the Texas Transit Association is pleased to express our support for this project and agree this project meets the established qualifying criteria for the TIGER grant program.

Please let me know if I can provide any more information in support of this very important proposal. Thank you again for your support for transit in Texas.

Sincerely,

John L. Hendrickson
President

4319 James Casey St.
Suite 100
Austin, TX 78745

Phone: 512-371-7353
Fax: 512-371-7370
URL: txsilc.org

Council Members:
Randell Resneder, Chair
Jim Brocato, Vice Chair
Karen Swearingen, Secretary
Shannon Alexander
Jim Batchelor
Richard Couder
Calvin Turner
Lynne Richardson
Paul Luther

Wesley Yeager, Ex-Officio
Terri Richard, Ex-Officio
Laurie Pryor, Ex-Officio
Jonas Schwartz, Ex-Officio

Executive Director
Regina Blye

June 3, 2015

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Gleason:

The SILC supports TxDOT and their TIGER Discretionary Grant application. The grants focus to improve access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation while emphasizing improved connection to employment, education services, and workforce development speaks directly to the long term goals of the collaboration between TxDOT and TXSILC.

For over three years, the Texas State Independent Living Council (SILC) has partnered with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on projects designed to assess transportation needs for people with disabilities. The project specifically focuses on accessing work in communities under 200,000 residents.

Transportation Works began operation in 2013 with the goal of assisting Centers for Independent Living with non-traditional. The results, so far, are 7,230 service trips to consumers in their area. The project also allowed two Centers for Independent Living, to obtain buses for their organizations in order to further fill gaps in services within their areas.

Our second project, *Transportation Works: Assess and Deliver*, began in August 2014 with the goal of surveying public transportation for people with disabilities using public transportation in many rural Texas communities. The results, thus far, the SILC has conducted over 20 town hall meetings, disseminated over 10,000 surveys, and partnered with over 100 different organizations and community advocates to receive input on the state of transportation. All of the information gathered will be compiled into a comprehensive report.

Thanks to our collaboration with TxDOT on these projects, the SILC has been able to expand our scope of work beyond just accessing the service needs of people with disabilities. We have also been able to identify barriers that keep prevent people from achieving independence.

Texas State Independent Living Council appreciates the opportunity to support TxDOT with an opportunity to create more ways to empower people with disabilities to live independently with as much choice as possible no matter where they live.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information on these projects.

Sincerely,

Executive Director
Texas State Independent Living Council

TARLETON
STATE UNIVERSITY
Member of The Texas A&M University System

June 3, 2015

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Gleason:

As Tarleton State University began planning for the 2014 Fall Semester, it became apparent that there were going to be more students than the campus had the capacity to house. Tarleton had to turn to off campus apartments to meet the housing needs of the growing student population.

Tarleton State has been working with Central Texas Rural Transit District, CARR (City and Rural Rides) on a project that brought students to Tarleton for classes. The University turned to the rural transit provider to help with a transportation solution for the off campus students. With assistance from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), CARR was able to begin service for the 2014 Fall Semester ensuring students a reliable way to get to and from classes at the University.

Since the beginning of the transportation service in September, CARR has provided 32,611 trips. Tarleton State fully supports the TxDOT in their TIGER request for additional rural infrastructure, including a major necessity, vehicles.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information regarding this service.

Sincerely,

Darla Daty

Tarleton State Representative

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE
Box T-0680, Stephenville, TX 76402 | Office (254) 968-9081 | Fax (254) 968-9680 | www.tarleton.edu/studentlife

WORK FORCE SOLUTIONS
★★★ HEART OF TEXAS ★★★

May 22, 2015

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Gleason,

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR TIGER GRANT

The Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board, Inc. (dba. Workforce Solutions) offers our full support to the Texas Department of Transportation in their pursuit of a TIGER 2015 grant. We are confident that the proposed project will provide significant and measurable improvements. The proposed capital projects will generate economic development and improve access in rural communities with an emphasis on workforce development opportunities.

Over the last eight years, many rural communities in the Heart of Texas region have benefitted from the funds, support, and involvement of TxDOT in the development and expansion of our rural public transportation service and the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council that brought together partners to address the needs of our rural communities most in need.

The original LINK service provided public transportation service from five rural communities to employment at Sanderson Farms and educational opportunities at MCC and TSTC, Waco. The service has seen a passenger increase of 15-20% every year since it began. Sanderson Farms has seen a significant decrease in its turnover rate, reduced absenteeism, and has become an employer of choice. This success led to numerous other benefits including: the region's first evening service for 2nd shift workers, a unified fare structure with the region's small urban system – Waco Transit, and the implementation of the region's first IRS transportation benefit.

The Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board looks forward to continuing its work with TxDOT. We are delighted to offer our endorsement for a proposal that will generate economic development and address one of the greatest barriers to economic security – namely access to jobs and education.

Sincerely,

Anthony Billings
Executive Director
Anthony.billings@hotworkforce.com

The Heart of Texas Workforce Board, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer/programs and auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to include individuals with disabilities. TTY/TDD via RELAY Texas service at 711 or (TDD) 1-800-735-2989 / 1-800-735-2988 (voice).
Aquanetta Brobston, Quality Assurance Coordinator/EO Officer/504 Coordinator, (254) 296-5300.

Cargill
Meat Solutions

June 1, 2015

Eric Gleason, Director, Public Transportation Division1
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Gleason:

In February 2013, Cargill Meat Solutions was forced to close its plant in Plainview, Texas. This closure had a dramatic effect on Plainview's unemployment rate. Cargill worked with the local rural transportation provider, SPARTAN Public Transportation to figure out a public transportation solution to save as many jobs for the Plainview community as possible.

In this particular instance, due to the help of the rural public transportation provider, approximately 70 jobs were saved by transporting plant workers from Plainview to the plant in Friona, a distance of 80 miles. Our Cargill situation is only one rural Texas example of how a private business and a rural transportation system, in partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has been able to provide vital workforce transportation to the very rural areas of Texas.

Transporting Cargill employees daily is a 160 mile round trip, putting a great deal of wear and tear on vehicles used five to six days a week. Cargill Meat Solutions supports the TxDOT TIGER grant application for rural infrastructure, including replacement of much needed buses. Cargill appreciates this opportunity to provide evidence of the use of rural buses in supporting economic opportunity in rural Texas.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information regarding this service. I can be reached during business hours at (806) 295-8236. You can also reach me at my email address margaret_renteria@cargill.com.

Sincerely,

Margaret Renteria

Margaret Renteria
Human Resource Manager

INTEPLAST GROUP®

June 1, 2015

Mr. Eric Gleason
Director of Public Transportation
Texas Department of Transportation
125 East 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Dear Mr. Gleason:

The purpose of this letter is to report to you on the continued success of our partnering on rural public transportation with the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission. This joint effort is providing transportation to workers at the Inteplast Group Lolita, Texas site. Our remote location created problems for workers to attend to their work schedules and the increasing prices of fuel contributed to a loss of workers in the 2006 to 2007 time period.

The shuttle service has assisted greatly in stabilizing our workforce and providing reliable transportation to people who either do not have an automobile or perhaps they have only one in their family. In reviewing turnover statistics for the peak turnover months of June, July and August I was able to determine that turnover on our plant site has reduced by over 50% since the inception of this program.

Not only for Inteplast, but the entire local economy receives benefits from this program.

We appreciate your help and assistance very much.

Regards,

Brenda Wilson
Senior Director of Human Resources and Communications

CC/cc: Lisa Cortinas
Director of Transportation Services
Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission