



The Life of a Grant
Helpful Tips for Federal Grant Spending

IOWA | DOT



Today's Discussion

BACK TO THE BASICS

how do I get my money?

THE LIFE OF A GRANT

contracts, spending and close-outs

Reminders from your TPA

reimbursement checklist and more

HELPFUL TIPS & RESOURCES

tips to keep your project on track

Grant programs managed by Iowa DOT

- **5311: Formula Funding for Rural Areas** (operating and capital)
- **5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities** (operating and capital)
- **5339: Bus and Bus Facility Grants** (formula and competitive)
- **STA: State Transit Assistance** (formula, urban fellowships, special projects)
- **CRP: Carbon Reduction Program**
- **STBG: Surface Transportation Block Grant** (planning dollars used for transit)
- **ICAAP: Iowa's Clean Air Attainment Program**
- **PTIG: Public Transit Infrastructure Grants**
- **ICB: Intercity Bus Funding**
- **RTAP: Rural Transit Assistance Program** (training and rural fellowships)

Useful Grant Terminology

- **Award:** application has been selected and must be programmed / obligated into TrAMS
- **Period of Availability:** timeframe for which funds must be obligated, varies by grant type (1 -2yr)
- **Lapse:** expiration in Period of Availability, could result in loss of funding due to non-compliance
- **Obligate:** awarded funds are programmed for a particular project(s), typically 1 -5 years
- **Period of Performance (POP):** timeframe for funds to be spent once obligated, varies by grant
- **Milestone Progress Report (MPR):** timely updates of grant spending, quarterly or annual
- **Close-Out:** a grant funds used to full extent, and ready for closure –
** a contract close-out does not mean the grant will be closed, there may be other active projects still occurring.*

Hierarchy of a Grant

- 1 GRANT: 5310, 5311, 5339, ICB, etc.
- 2 Grant dollars are then broken down into PROJECTS or SCOPE, like operations or type of bus for purchases (from your TIP)
- 3 Each project must be further defined into an ACTIVITY LINE ITEM
- 4 Iowa DOT takes those project elements and creates a CONTRACT

Can I make changes to my project?

Scenario: TPA receives a request to modify a contract, TPA needs to gather information to understand various factors, which helps the Grant Manager:

- Determine if the new / modified project is eligible within the current scope of the grant
- Funds can be shifted between activity lines, if it does not affect other active projects
- Develop a budget revision in TrAMS to make the modification – if the original scope does not include the newly proposed project, DOT must amend the grant to add a new activity line
- Any modification may trigger a new contract signature and/or modification of the TIP

EXAMPLE:

Grant Number: IA-2022-008-00

Project Scope Code: 641-00 (i.e., 5310, accessible vans, mobility management)

Activity Line Items (ALI): 11.12.03 (30'bus), 11.32.10 (shelter), 11.7A.00 (prev.maint), 11.12.15 (van)

*****each project must align with a particular ALI***

Contracts & Payments



How do I get my money?

FTA and State funded projects are developed using information gathered from:

- A locally developed **Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)***
 - programmed through the **Transportation Program Management System (TPMS)**
 - reviewed by Iowa DOT
- Projects programmed into the TIP are combined into a **Statewide TIP (STIP)** and used to apply for statewide formula and competitive funding opportunities
- **Public Transit Management System (PTMS)** helps Iowa DOT to prioritize vehicle replacement and rehabilitation projects

** Projects and vehicles must be programmed into the TIP to be eligible for funding*

Funding Agreements

Contract (Joint Participation Agreement): between Iowa DOT and its 35 transit systems, for the use of operations (1 year) or vehicle purchase and capital improvements (2+ years)

- Signing [Part II of the Joint Participation Agreement](#) holds your agency accountable for meeting all compliance related milestones and spending of the funding contract
 - *“Inability to procure a vehicle within 12 months of the original expiration date could forfeit any awarded funding”*
- Part II is subject to change, Iowa DOT utilizes the [FTA Master Agreement](#) for all contracting related compliance

** Failure to spend within this timeframe could result in the removal of funding to be used by another eligible project*

Reimbursement Checklist

When submitting a rolling stock reimbursement:

1. Enter new vehicles into Blackcat filling out information in the inventory form completely, including procurement and contract information.
2. Submit completed bus reimbursement form to your TPA and attach the following:
 - a. Copy of the final bus vendor invoice to verify costs on reimbursement form.
 - b. Copies of "make ready cost" invoices to verify costs on reimbursement form. If make ready have not been completed at the time of the bus reimbursement and there are still funds remaining on the bus contract, please note on the reimbursement form that an additional reimbursement for make ready costs will be submitted at a future date.
 - c. Proof of Payment for invoices and make ready costs (canceled checks or ACH transactions)
3. Submit Rolling Stock Post-Delivery Audit Certifications
This 2-page form can be found on the Iowa DOT forms portal or by using the link in the table at the end of this document.

***The form will also include the certifications for Post Delivery and FMVSS.*

- a. Post-Delivery Buy America Certification with documentation from vendor that shows the vehicle you procured is over the required 70% American Made and the Final Assembly location (must be in America)
 - b. FMVSS / CMVSS Certification and Compliance Summary documentation provided by vendor of the vehicle.
4. Submit Application for Title/Registration following the process for your type of transit agency (non profit or government) as they are different.

*** If you are a large urban transit agency and submit your title and registration applications directly to the Iowa DOT Office of Vehicle Services, please make sure the lien information, if applicable, is included on the title and title sent to your TPA.*

If a vehicle was purchased using funds via a DOT contract, the title/registration application should be submitted to the DOT as the lienholder in the first security interest box on the application. The lien remains on the vehicle has met its Federal useful life. Once the useful life of the vehicle has been met, the title should be released and the title returned to your agency.

"Iowa Department of Transportation" rather than public transit section or bureau should be used in the first security interest box. The address is 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50010. The FEIN is 42-0000000.

Forms that may need to accompany the title/registration application include the certification of origin, odometer disclosure statement (if information is not on the certificate of origin), and vehicle damage disclosure form (if buying a used vehicle that is less than 7 years old). Links to these forms are located on the last page of this document or on the Iowa DOT forms portal.

When submitting a non rolling stock reimbursement (PTIG, STA Special Project, or other federal grant):

1. Submit completed reimbursement form and attach the following:
 - a. Copy of vendor invoice(s) to verify costs on reimbursement form.
 - b. Proof of Payment for invoices (canceled checks or ACH transactions)
2. If you are submitting for reimbursement on an FTA facility grant you must also submit Non Rolling Stock Post-Delivery Audit Certifications for manufactured products
This form can be found on the Iowa DOT forms portal or using the link in the table at the end of this document.

Forms to be Used with Reimbursements or Title/Registration Applications

Rolling Stock Post-Delivery Audit Certifications	[Iowa DOT] 020109. Post Delivery Audit Certifications (seamlessdocs.com)
Application for Title/Registration	[Iowa DOT] 411007: Application for Certificate of Title and/or Registration (seamlessdocs.com)
Odometer Disclosure Statement	[Iowa DOT] 411077. Odometer Disclosure Statement (seamlessdocs.com)
Damage Disclosure Statement	[Iowa DOT] 411108. Damage Disclosure Statement (seamlessdocs.com)
Application for Transit Plates	[Iowa DOT] 020025. Application for State of Iowa Transit Bus Plates (seamlessdocs.com)
Non Rolling Stock Buy America Certification	[Iowa DOT] 020083: Buy America Certification, Non-Rolling Stock (seamlessdocs.com)

Reminders from your TPA

- Be aware of **timelines** and **deadlines**
 - quarterly, annually, DBE, drug and alcohol...
 - contracts and reporting
 - If you are late, we are late reporting to FTA (and provide justification)
 - FTA may not extend period of performance if projects are inactive for long periods
- **Timely submission** of reports and reimbursement information
- Invoices match **amounts paid + proof of payment**
- Include bus numbers on documentation (new and replaced)
- **Use the checklist** and **ask questions**, we are here to help!

Helpful Tips & Resources



Why do we ask for so much information??

- **TIP & Long-Range Transit Planning**
 - Guide your projects
 - Ready for future funding and competitive grant projects
 - Tells DOT about the projects you are anticipating and funding amounts to program
- **So where does that information go?**
 - National Transit Database (NTD), repository of data from agencies across the country
 - Data feeds into annual formula funding
 - (2 years in arrears) FY25 → FY27
 - The more service you provide, the more funding Iowa could receive
 - Info used in presentations given by Iowa DOT to partner agencies or DOT Commission

Successful Project Management

- **External Communications**

- Users or riders, partner agencies, community
- Purpose of the project
- Intended goals and outcomes
- Document everything as justification for change

- **Internal Communication**

- Board – create standing items on meeting agendas
- Staff are well informed of goals and outcomes of the project – post signage around the office
- Correct leadership to oversee project, do you need to hire a contractor?
- Establish timelines to meet your milestones (don't wait to last minute)

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Tips for Successful Project Oversight

- **Are You Ready?** be familiar with what is expected as an organization, and are ready to start the project once funded – known as “shovel ready”
- **Develop a Checklist** or an internal process to stay on top of deadlines and budget, especially big projects like vehicle purchases and facilities
- **Reporting** – know ‘what’ is needed for reporting and when. Thoroughly document all data, including budget items, ridership, incidents, etc.
- **Staffing** – Do you have the appropriate staff managing the project? *“All the Right People Around the Table”*or, can you even take on the project right now?

Tips for Successful Project Oversight, cont.

- **Know the Regulations** – thoroughly document all statistics and report them on-time; including ridership, spending, incidents ...or whatever the grant might require
- Maintain **open communication** internal / external (and with Iowa DOT) of any concerns or if your project needs to be modified
- **Compliance** – understand the complexities of each funding source, like procurement, internal oversight and control, audit requirements, financial management, etc.
- **Always Prepared** for a compliance review or audit. Maintain records and documented justifications for decisions made – throughout the project, do not wait until you're contacted

Helpful Tools & Resources

- Federal Fund Braiding or Matching
 - Using non-DOT program funds as match for FTA projects
 - [CCAM Program Inventory | FTA](#)
 - [Fund Braiding | National RTAP](#)
 - [Federal Fund Braiding Guide](#)
- FTA Application Checklist, includes:
 - Sample language for application submissions
 - Tracking project milestones
 - [FTA Recipient Award Toolkit | FTA](#)
 - *“using a standard format within the application, makes managing the grant more efficient from the initial submission into final closeout.”*

Thank You

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