

your State. If you need the name and address of the State Director in your State, you can call (202) 366-9579 between the hours of 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Sample Proposal Available

A sample proposal was developed and could be used by the States as a guideline for submitting their own proposals. The sample proposal can be obtained on-line, in portable document format, from the AAMVA web site (<http://www.aamva.org>) and clicking on "Must See Items." If you have any problems retrieving the document from AAMVA's web site, please call (703) 908-2822. The proposal is also available from the FHWA's web site at (<http://www.mcregis.fhwa.dot/forms.htm>) or from the State Director in the FHWA's Office of Motor Carrier and Highway Safety in your State.

Evaluation of Proposals and Award

A panel comprised of representatives from the NHTSA and the AAMVA will assist the FHWA in its technical review of project proposals. The AAMVA and the FHWA will also participate in project monitoring, evaluation, and information sharing with other States. Members of the panel will be available for technical assistance during all phases of the projects and will review the evaluations of each final product. The panel will evaluate each proposal based on the following factors: (1) The intrinsic merit of the proposal; (2) the technical competency of the proposal; (3) the potential for utilization of results; (4) reasonableness of the costs proposed; and (5) adequacy of proposed resources to complete the project requirements satisfactorily, and in a timely manner; and (6) the adequacy of the project evaluation design.

Proposals which most closely meet the seven content criteria and the six evaluation criteria as outlined above will be considered for funding. In addition, it is understood that States which receive funding may be visited by the FHWA representatives who will review the progress of their projects, as well as seek input and feedback on the Initiative.

Project Funding

This notice announces the FHWA's intent to provide funding in FY 1999 for a number of projects relating to driver licensing systems and State driver license procedures. States are invited to submit proposals outlining their projects to the FHWA's Office of Motor Carriers and Highway Safety. The FHWA will fund project management

and implementation of State systems or revision of State procedures. This grant will not require matching funds. The FHWA has \$700,000 available for this purpose in FY 1999 and contemplates making several awards from the proposals submitted. States are also encouraged to explore other funding sources in both the private and public sectors to implement integrated driver history tracking systems.

Authority: Pub. L. 105-277, 112 stat. 2681 (1998); 49 U.S.C. 31102; and 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on: May 3, 1999.

Gloria J. Jeff,

Federal Highway Deputy Administrator.

[FR Doc. 99-11925 Filed 5-11-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

[FHWA Docket No. FHWA-1999-5088]

Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 Implementation Guidance for Public Lands Highways Discretionary Program Funds

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice; FHWA solicitation memorandum for FY 2000 funds; request for comments on selection criteria for FY 2001 and beyond.

SUMMARY: The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continued the public lands highways (PLH) discretionary program through FY 2003. This document provides implementation guidance on the PLH discretionary program for FY 2000 and beyond. Also, it contains information on the selection criteria used by the FHWA in evaluating candidate projects. An implementation guidance memorandum on this topic was issued to division offices soliciting candidate projects from State transportation agencies for FY 2000 public lands highways (PLH) discretionary funding. The text of that memorandum is incorporated here. This document seeks comments from all interested parties on the selection criteria and their continued use by FHWA for FY 2001 and beyond.

DATES: Comments on the selection criteria for PLH discretionary funding for FY 2001 and beyond must be received on or before July 12, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Your signed, written comments on project selection criteria for PLH discretionary funding for FY 2001 and beyond must refer to the docket number appearing at the top of this document and you must submit the comments to the Docket Clerk, U.S.

DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments should include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard.

Applications for candidate projects for FY 2000 funding should be submitted to the FHWA Division Office in the State of the applicant in accordance with the guidance provided in the solicitation memorandum.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Larry Beidel, Office of Program Administration, (202) 366-1564; or Wilbert Baccus, Office of the Chief Counsel, (202) 366-1396; Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

Internet users can access all comments received by the U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, by using the universal resource locator (URL): <http://www.dms.dot.gov>. It is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. Please follow the instructions online for more information and help.

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded using a modem and suitable communications software from the Government Printing Office Electronic Bulletin Board Service at (202) 512-1661. Internet users may reach the **Federal Register's** home page at: <http://www.nara.gov/fedreg> and the Government Printing Office's database at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara>.

The solicitation memorandum will also be available on the FHWA web site at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/discretionary>.

Background

TEA-21, Pub. L. 105-178, 112 Stat. 107 (1998), continued the PLH discretionary program through FY 2003 and provides \$66.6 million in FY 1998 and \$83.6 million in each of FY 1999 through 2003 for the program. On March 4, 1999, the FHWA issued a memorandum to its division offices, located in each State, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, soliciting from the State transportation agencies candidate projects for FY 2000 PLH discretionary funding. This memorandum is published here for informational purposes. The

memorandum contains information on the PLH discretionary program, eligible activities, the application process, and the selection criteria used by the FHWA in evaluating candidate projects.

Also, the purpose of this document is to invite comments on the selection criteria used by the FHWA for evaluating candidate projects for FY 2001 and beyond. The attachment to the March 4, 1999, memorandum presents the selection criteria that the FHWA will be using for FY 2000. These criteria reflect areas which are given preference when evaluating candidate projects; however, any project submitted by a State transportation agency which meets the eligibility requirements for this discretionary program can potentially be selected for funding. These are the same general selection criteria that the FHWA has used for several years to evaluate candidates for this discretionary program. Occasionally, a selection criterion may be added for an individual year that reflects a special emphasis area, but for the most part the selection criteria have remained unchanged.

The FHWA plans to continue to use these same basic selection criteria for FY 2001 and beyond for this discretionary program. However, before doing so, the FHWA is interested in the views of the States or others on these selection criteria. Accordingly, comments are invited to this docket on the selection criteria that FHWA will use for the PLH discretionary program for funding available for FY 2001 and beyond.

Publication of the implementation guidance for the public lands highways discretionary program satisfies the requirement of section 9004(a) of the TEA–21 Restoration Act, Pub. L. 105–206, 112 Stat. 685, 842 (1998).

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 202 and 315; 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on: May 3, 1999.

Gloria J. Jeff,

Federal Highway Deputy Administrator.

The text of the FHWA solicitation and implementation guidance memorandum follows:

Action: Request for March 4, 1999.

Projects for Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 Public Lands Highways (PLH) Discretionary Funds (Reply Due: July 1, 1999).

From: Henry H. Rentz for Vincent F. Schimmoller Program Manager, Infrastructure. HIPA.

To: Division Administrators Program Manager, Federal Lands Highway.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continued the PLH discretionary program through FY 2003. With this memorandum, we are requesting submission of eligible candidate projects for FY 2000 PLH discretionary funds.

TEA-21 authorized \$83.64 million for the PLH discretionary program for FY 2000. Estimating the deductions for FHWA administration, Section 1102(f) of TEA-21, and administrative expenses for Federal land management agencies, and the increase due to the revenue aligned budget authority (RABA) under Section 1105 of TEA-21, it appears that approximately \$70 to \$75 million will be available for allocation to projects in FY 2000. Of this available funding, \$10 million will be used to fund two projects selected for FY 1999 funding that were deferred in order to fund Congressional earmarking in the FY 1999 appropriations act conference report. Therefore, only \$60 to \$65 million will be available for projects in FY 2000.

Attached to this memorandum are the program guidelines that contain information on eligibility, selection criteria, and submission requirements. Please provide this information to your State and work with them to identify viable, quality candidate projects for this program.

We ask that you pay particular attention to the submission requirements listed in the attached guidelines. Many of the candidates submitted last year did not provide all of the necessary information. With the elimination of the region offices, we are relying on you to ensure that all of the applications from your State are completed in accordance with the appropriate submission requirements. This is important to ensure that all candidates receive a fair evaluation. Due to the shortened time frame last year because of the late passage of TEA-21, we were not able to return incomplete

applications, and our evaluation was based on insufficient information in some cases. This year we will return incomplete applications, which could jeopardize consideration of the candidate projects if the applications are not resubmitted in time.

We are requesting that candidate project submissions be received in Headquarters no later than July 1, 1999. *Projects received after this date may not receive full consideration.*

Because the available funding is always far less than the demand, we ask that submissions include only candidate projects that, if funded, can be obligated in FY 2000. Any allocations in FY 2000 will be made on the assumption that the proposed projects are viable and the implementation schedules are realistic. Any unobligated balances remaining on September 15, 2000, will be withdrawn and used for funding future fiscal year requests.

If there are any questions, please contact Mr. Larry Beidel (202-366-1564) of our Office of Program Administration.

Attachment—Public Lands Highways Discretionary Program

Program Guidelines

Background

The Public Lands Highways (PLH) Program was originally established in 1930 by the Amendment Relative to Construction of Roads through Public Lands and Federal Reservations. Funding was provided from the General Funds of the Treasury. The intent of the program is to improve access to and within the Federal lands of the nation. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1970 changed the funding source for the program from the General Funds to the Highway Trust Fund, effective in FY 1972. The program has been continued with each highway or transportation act since then, and the latest transportation act, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21, Public Law 105-178), has continued the program through FY 2003.

Statutory References:

23 U.S.C. 202, 203 & 204; TEA-21 Section
1101(a)(8)(B)

Funding

[In millions]

Fiscal Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Authorization	\$66.6	\$83.6	\$83.6	\$83.6	\$83.6	\$83.6

TEA-21 provides \$196 million in FY 1998 and \$246 million in each of fiscal years 1999 through 2003 for Public Lands Highways. In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 202(a), 34 percent of these funds are available for the PLH discretionary program. For FY 1998, this is \$66.6 million, and for fiscal years 1999 through 2003, this is \$83.6 million per year.

This available funding is reduced by FHWA administration expenses, which may be up to 1.5 percent. The amount of available funding is also impacted by any obligation limitation imposed on the Federal-aid highway program under the provisions of TEA-21 Section 1102(f), Redistribution of Certain Authorized Funds. Under this provision, any funds authorized for the program for the fiscal year, which are not available for obligation due to the imposition of an obligation limitation, are not allocated for the PLH program, but are redistributed to the States by formula as STP funds. In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 204(i), these PLH funds are also available for administration expenses and transportation planning costs of Federal land management agencies.

After these reductions, it is expected that approximately \$70 million will be available for candidate projects each of fiscal years 2000 through 2003. This available funding may also increase or decrease each year depending on the obligation limitation calculation and on the estimated receipts to the Highway Trust Fund.

Federal Share

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 204(b), the Federal share of the costs for any project eligible under this program is 100 percent.

Obligation Limitation

The PLH discretionary funds are subject to obligation limitation; however, 100 percent obligation authority is provided with the allocation of funds for the selected projects. The obligation limitation reduces the available funding for the program under the provisions of TEA-21 Section 1102(f) discussed above.

Eligibility

Under the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 202(b), the funds shall be allocated "among those States having unappropriated or unreserved public lands, nontaxable Indian lands or other Federal reservations, on the basis of need in such States." Therefore, all States are eligible to apply for PLH discretionary funding.

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 204(b), the PLH funds are available for any kind of transportation project eligible for assistance under Title 23, United States Code, that is within, adjacent to, or provides access to the areas served by the public lands highway. A "public lands highway" means a forest road under the jurisdiction of and maintained by a public authority and open to public travel or any highway through unappropriated or unreserved public lands, nontaxable Indian lands, or other Federal reservations under the jurisdiction of and maintained by a public authority and open to public travel. Federal reservations are considered to include lands owned by the Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense and other Federal agencies.

The PLH funds are available for transportation planning, research, engineering, and construction of the highways, roads, and parkways, or of transit facilities within the Federal public lands. Under 23 U.S.C. 204(h), eligible projects under the PLH program may also include the following:

1. Transportation planning for tourism and recreational travel, including the National Forest Scenic Byways Program, Bureau of Land Management Back Country Byways Program, National Trail System Program, and other similar Federal programs that benefit recreational development.
2. Adjacent vehicular parking areas.
3. Interpretive signage.
4. Acquisition of necessary scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.
5. Provision for pedestrians and bicycles.
6. Construction and reconstruction of roadside rest areas, including sanitary and water facilities.
7. Other appropriate public road facilities such as visitor centers.
8. A project to build a replacement of the federally owned bridge over the Hoover Dam in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area between Nevada and Arizona.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134(d)(3), as amended by TEA-21 Section 1203, provides that up to "1 percent of the funds allocated under 23 U.S.C. 202 may be used to carry out the transportation planning process for the Lake Tahoe region," and that highway projects included in these transportation plans "may be funded using funds allocated under 23 U.S.C. 202." Applications for these activities, therefore, could also be submitted requesting PLH discretionary funding.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria are used to evaluate the submitted candidates for selection.

The only statutory criterion is found in 23 U.S.C. 202(b): "The Secretary shall give preference to those projects which are significantly impacted by Federal land and resource management activities which are proposed by a State which contains at least 3 percent of the total public lands in the Nation." The following eleven States have at least 3 percent of the nation's Federal public lands: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming.

FHWA has not established regulatory criteria for selection of PLH discretionary projects; however, in its annual solicitation, FHWA notes that the following criteria are also considered in the evaluation of candidates for this program:

- Equitable distribution of funding among the States—In applying this criterion, the PLH discretionary funding distributed over the past 20 years is considered and two factors are used to determine a State's fair share of this distribution: (1) the State's share of the Nation's Federal public lands and (2) the percentage of an individual State's area that is comprised of Federal public lands. Preference is given to those States that are "behind" in their fair share of the funding.
- Leveraging of private or other public funding—Because the annual requests for funding far exceed the available PLH

discretionary funds, commitment of other funding sources to complement the requested PLH discretionary funding is an important factor.

- Expedient completion of project—Preference is also given to requests that will expedite the completion of a viable project over requests for initial funding of a project that could require a long-term commitment of future PLH funding. For large-scale projects consideration is given to the State's total funding plan to expedite the completion of the project.

- Amount of PLH funding—The requested amount of funding is another consideration. For States that have a relatively small amount of Federal public lands, moderately sized (<\$500,000) project requests are given more favorable consideration.

- State priorities—For States that submit more than one project, consideration is given to the individual State's priorities if specified.

- National geographic distribution of the funding within the PLH program—Although preference is to be given to the States with at least 3 percent of the Nation's public lands, consideration is also given to providing funding to States in the eastern part of the country to provide some geographic balance for the program.

Because the concept of equity was important in the development of TEA-21, project selection will also consider national geographic distribution among all of the discretionary programs as well as congressional direction or guidance provided on specific projects or programs.

Solicitation Procedure

Each year, usually around March, a memorandum is sent from the FHWA Headquarters Office of Program Administration to the FHWA division offices requesting the submission of candidate projects for the following fiscal year's funding. This solicitation is also published in the **Federal Register**. The FHWA division offices provide this solicitation request to the State transportation departments, who are the only agencies that can submit candidates under the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 202(b). The State transportation departments coordinate with local and Federal agencies within their respective States in order to develop viable candidate projects. The State transportation departments submit the candidate applications to the FHWA division offices, who send them in to the Office of Program Administration. Candidate projects are due in FHWA Headquarters usually around the first of July.

The specific timetable for the solicitation process for any particular fiscal year is provided in the solicitation memorandum. The most recent solicitation is provided in these Guidelines for reference.

The candidate project applications are reviewed and evaluated by the Office of Program Administration and an allocation plan is prepared for presentation of the candidate projects to the Office of the Federal Highway Administrator, where the final selection of projects for funding is made. The announcement of the selected projects and the allocation of funds is usually accomplished by the middle of November.

Submission Requirements

Only State transportation departments may submit applications for funding under this program. Although there is not a prescribed format for a project submission, the following information must be included to properly evaluate the candidate projects. With the exception of the project area map, all of the following must be included to consider the application complete. Those applications that do not include these items are considered incomplete and returned.

1. State in which the project is located.
2. County in which the project is located.
3. U.S. Congressional District No.(s) in which the project is located.
4. U.S. Congressional District Member's Name(s).

5. Project Location—Describe the specific location of the project, including route number and mileposts, if applicable.

6. Public Lands Category—Specify what Federal public lands are being served by the project and whether the project is within, adjacent to, or provides access to the public lands.

7. Proposed Work—Describe the project work to be completed under this particular request, and whether this is a complete project or part of a larger project.

8. Project Purpose—The States' submission should show how the proposed project and/or the highway route of which it is a part meet the Federal land and resource management needs in the State. This should include status and adequacy of the existing route with regard to route continuity, capacity and safety and the benefits anticipated from completion of the proposed project.

9. Planning and Coordination—For the proposed project, describe the coordination with and input from the various Federal land management, State, and metropolitan planning agencies involved. Section 204(a) of Title 23, United States Code, as amended, requires all regionally significant Federal lands highways program projects to be developed in cooperation with States and metropolitan planning organizations, and included in appropriate Federal lands highways program, State, and metropolitan plans and transportation improvement programs.

10. Current and Future Traffic—For highway projects provide the current and design year average daily traffic. For other facilities, such as visitor centers, it may be desirable to describe the number of visitors accommodated by the facility.

11. Project Administration—Indicate whether the Federal funds for this project will be administered by the State transportation agency or a Federal Lands Highway Division (FLHD) of FHWA. If the FLHD or other Federal Agencies are involved, the type of involvement, whether it is preliminary engineering or contract administration, or other, should be specified. Also, the FLHD is available to assist with Federal Agency coordination and should provide any data and information requested.

12. Amount of Federal PLH Discretionary Funds Requested—Indicate the amount of Federal PLH funds being requested for that fiscal year. Candidates should only be

submitted from projects that are ready to advance in that fiscal year. If a State is willing to accept partial funding of the request, that should also be indicated. Sometimes partial funding of requests is utilized to provide funding to more projects, since the requests far exceed the funding available.

13. Commitment of Other Funds—Indicate the amounts and sources of any private or other public funding being provided as part of this project. Only indicate those amounts of funding that are firm and documented commitments. The submission must include written confirmation of these commitments from the entity controlling the committed funds.

14. Previous PLH Discretionary Funding—Indicate the amount and fiscal year of any previous PLH discretionary funds received for this project or route.

15. Future Funding Needs—Indicate the estimated future funding needs for the project, including anticipated requests for additional PLH discretionary funding, the items of work to be completed and projected scheduling.

16. Project Area Map—It is suggested that a readable map, clearly showing the proposed project and its relationship to the overall development of a highway route, as well as its relationship to the Federal public lands, be included. The map should also show any previously completed work on this highway route, if any, plus additional work being planned beyond the proposed project.

17. Talking Points Briefing—A one page talking points paper covering basic project information is also needed for use by the Office of the Secretary for the congressional notification process should a project be selected for funding. Each State's request for discretionary funds must include a talking points paper. A sample paper is included in these Guidelines.

State Transportation Agency Responsibilities

1. Coordinate with State, local, and Federal agencies within the State to develop viable candidate projects.
2. Ensure that the applications for candidate projects meet the submission requirements outlined above.
3. Establish priorities for their candidate projects if desired.
4. Submit the applications to the local FHWA division office on time so that the submission deadline can be met.

FHWA Division Office Responsibilities

1. Provide the solicitation memorandum and this program information to the State transportation agency.
2. Request candidate projects be submitted by the State to the FHWA division office to meet the submission deadline established in the solicitation.
3. Review all candidate applications submitted by the State prior to sending them to FHWA Headquarters to ensure that they are complete and meet the submission requirements.
4. Submit the candidate applications to FHWA Headquarters by the established submission deadline.

FHWA Headquarters Program Office Responsibilities

1. Solicit candidates from the States through annual solicitation memorandum.
2. Review candidate project submissions and compile program and project information for preparation of allocation plan.
3. Submit allocation plan to the Office of the Federal Highway Administrator for use in making final project selections.
4. Allocate funds for the selected projects.

FHWA Headquarters Program Office Contact

Larry Beidel, Highway Engineer, Office of Program Administration, Phone: (202) 366-1564, Fax: (202) 366-3988, E-mail: larry.beidel@fhwa.dot.gov

Sample Talking Points Briefing for Secretary

Note: These talking points will be used by the Office of the Secretary in making congressional notification contacts. Since some of the recipients of the calls may not be closely familiar with the highway program, layman's language should be used to the extent possible. Information contained in the talking points may be used by a member of Congress in issuing a press release announcing the discretionary allocation.

Public Lands Highways (PLH) Discretionary Funds

Grantee: <List full name of State

Transportation Agency>

Project: <short name/description of project>

This project provides for reconstructing _____ miles of US 1 in _____ County extending from State Route 2 intersection in Hometown to the County Road 3 in the vicinity of Smallville. Widening 2 feet on either side with improvements on horizontal alignment and installation of 1000 feet of guard rail are included in the project.

FHWA FUNDS: \$xx,xxx,xxx. <requested funds>

Specify other source of funds (for ex: State, local, Forest highways, etc, if any, to supplement Federal funds.

- This project will improve access to the Navajo Indian Reservation and improve the local economy.

- This project is part of the second phase of a 5-year program to reconstruct a 30-mile section of Forest Road 11 (State Route 201) between Town A and Town B.

- The project will be advertised for construction in <month/year> and is scheduled for completion in <month/year>.

[FR Doc. 99-11924 Filed 5-11-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Veterans' Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation, Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Pub. L. 92-463 that a meeting of the Veterans' Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation (VACOR), authorized by Pub. L. 96-466, section 1521, will be held on May 18 through