



OCTOBER VIRTUAL SUMMIT

POLICY

STATE OF GOOD REPAIR POLICY DISCUSSION

Policy Issues and Next Steps:

- 1. 5337 Funds and Eligibility criteria:** Are cities or other operators that have not historically received 5337 funds eligible to apply directly for State of Good Repair competitive funds for streetcar systems?
 - Solution: Work with the FTA to ensure Streetcar Owners that have not previously received 5337 funds directly are eligible to apply for State of Good Repair Funds.
 - Next Steps: Set up a call with the FTA to discuss.
- 2. State of Good Repair Requirements:** Cities, not transit agencies, are typically the owners of streetcar systems and as such are not familiar with the State of Good Repair requirements of the FTA. Asset Management plans and specific transit related expertise in asset management may not exist at the City level.
 - Solution: Coalition has an opportunity to establish best practice guidelines for State of Good Repair programs that could be shared with all streetcar owners across the country.
 - Next Steps: CSC should establish a Working Group to develop State of Good Repair best practice guidelines that could be shared across our membership.
- 3. Spare Parts Availability:** Supplier side consolidation has made State of Good Repair proactivity and parts purchases difficult for the owners.
 - Solution: Coalition has an opportunity to create a working group to discuss parts consortium to allow agencies to obtain better pricing and more availability of spare parts.
 - Next Steps: CSC to create a Working Group of Streetcar owners to discuss coordination.

4. **Rolling Stock Replacement Program:** The Infrastructure Bill creates a new State of Good Repair competitive grant program for rolling stock replacement, and the Coalition wants to ensure streetcar vehicle investments are eligible.
 - Solution: Support language in the Infrastructure Bill to allow streetcar systems to be eligible for the new competitive grant program focused on Rolling Stock replacement program.
 - Next Steps: Follow up with Congressman Blumenauer's staff to understand whether the existing language in the Infrastructure Bill is prescriptive or flexible.

5. **Limited Vehicle Suppliers in Market:** Lack of vehicle suppliers is a challenge for the industry and current Buy America requirements limit the number of suppliers in the market.
 - Solution: Communication with the FTA that the State of Good Repair challenges for Streetcar systems focus on the vehicles, and work with FTA to ensure funding opportunities reflect that challenge.
 - Next Steps: CSC is organizing a panel on this topic at the May Summit and will invite FTA to participate in the panel discussion.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS POLICY DISCUSSION

Policy Issues and Next Steps:

1. **Project Delivery**-Over the course of a project, many things can happen. Like traveling through a jungle or the desert, the best way through is to have a guide.
 - Solution: Develop a library of completed projects. Interview each successful project owner, grant/accounting specialists, engineers, contractors, and builders. Identify governance structures, funding sources, and technical expertise that made the project a success. Work with FTA to develop a cheat sheet for project funding and delivery.
 - Next Steps: Form a working group to develop questions. Submit questions to each streetcar property. Schedule interviews between a private sector host and streetcar property administrator as part of virtual summits or in addition to the summits, which will be archived along with written answers on the website.

2. **Safety Certification**-There is a lack of consistency and timeline as the safety certification process migrates from the federal to the local levels. A lack of understanding of federal requirements makes the local level review inconsistent.

- Solution: Work with FTA to develop a guidebook for locals that will provide a better understanding of the project, systems, and risk.
- Next Steps: Set up a meeting either virtually or at the in-person Summit in May with FTA and a few property representatives with an understanding of the issue.

3. **Alternative Funding Paths**-Determining appropriate funding for each project is difficult and identifying the best source of funding for streetcar projects, whether it be local, state, or federal, can be tricky.

- Solution: Ask Build America Bureau as well as FTA's Project Development team for a guide to funding sources (grants, expertise, and loans) that could be used for streetcar. Interview streetcar owners for their funding sources with regards to planning, construction, maintenance, and operations.
- Next Steps: Using the matrix that Stephanie McVey with HDR presented during the Virtual Summit in October, develop a working group of CSC participants, and invite FTA to join in once the group has substantial product.

4. **Buy America**-While Buy America, as a concept, is fully supported by the Coalition; however, when it comes to vehicle overhaul, small part purchases, foreign-made parts, and supply chain limitations, it is difficult to know which rules apply.

- Solution: Focusing on FTA discretion, ask for guidance for waivers and provisions. Determine the level of discretion at the region and headquarters. Think about talking to lawmakers about thresholds.
- Next Steps: Reach out to FTA, asking for their Buy America lead/expert to participate in the May Summit as well as a virtual summit. At the May Summit, CSC will request FTA to host "office hours" to help with individual properties and their issues.

5. **Federal Timeline-** When working with local authorities and building momentum for a project, the duration of the full funding grant agreement can be difficult. Lengthy waiting periods and unknown outcomes can make local officials skittish and decrease the chances of projects coming to fruition.

- Solution: Start a conversation with FTA about the potential for process efficiencies. Bring together streetcar owners with examples and begin to dialogue before the next rulemaking.
- Next Steps: This item can be folded into the Barriers to Federal Dollars when CSC reaches out to FTA. CSC is organizing a panel on a related topic at the May Summit and will invite FTA to participate in the panel discussion.

CAPITAL FUNDING POLICY DISCUSSION

Policy Issues and Next Steps:

1. **Barriers to Federal Dollars-**When it comes to receiving federal dollars, the process can be arduous and somewhat unpredictable, leaving locals feeling less than supported and political leaders thinking that the process is impossible; therefore, withdrawing their support of the project. These barriers include the burden and cost of pursuing federal transit program; lack of federal commitment early in the process; O&M funding required to support capital; syncing of multiple federal program opportunities; and increasing project costs; and local and national politics. (See *also federal timeline item*)

- Solution: Right-sizing of federal programs (small starts / new starts / etc.); increasing federal share of all federal programs (80/20 instead of 50/50); pre-FFGA federal commitment (early federal funding for planning and project development); ensuring sufficient FTA expertise and capacity to support process and not slow down process; CIG Evaluation and Rating Relief from ridership effects from COVID or other impacted metrics; comparative FHWA an FTA project development requirements; and streamline transit programs to look more like those supporting highway.
- Next Steps: Contact FTA with the concerns listed above and start a dialogue. CSC is organizing a panel on this topic at the May Summit and will invite FTA to participate in the panel discussion.

2. **COVID-Related Problems-** Problems include drops in ridership, construction delays, and increase in costs affect access to funding.

- Solution: Relief from ridership effects from COVID related to federal funding- look at 2019 data instead of 2020

- Next Steps: CSC is organizing a panel on lessons learned from the pandemic at the May Summit and will invite FTA to participate in the panel discussion.

3. **Access Funding for Green Infrastructure-** The Green Infrastructure program is not clearly defined or specifically allocated for streetcar projects.

- Solution: Ask FTA for better guidance and provide updates to CSC, so that we can keep the membership informed about changes through newsletters.
- Next Steps: CSC is organizing a panel on funding at the May Summit and can include this topic in the discussion.