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FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

FTA Annual Report on Technical Assistance and Workforce Development for FY 2020

DECEMBER 2020

FTA Report No. 0180
Federal Transit Administration

PREPARED BY
Federal Transit Administration

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

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Federal Transit Administration
Office of Research, Demonstration and Innovation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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SYMBOL	WHEN YOU KNOW	MULTIPLY BY	TO FIND	SYMBOL
		LENGTH		
in	inches	25.4	millimeters	mm
ft	feet	0.305	meters	m
yd	yards	0.914	meters	m
mi	miles	1.61	kilometers	km
		VOLUME		
fl oz	fluid ounces	29.57	milliliters	mL
gal	gallons	3.785	liters	L
ft^3	cubic feet	0.028	cubic meters	m^3
yd^3	cubic yards	0.765	cubic meters	m^3
		NOTE: volumes greater than 1000 L shall be shown in m^3		
		MASS		
oz	ounces	28.35	grams	g
lb	pounds	0.454	kilograms	kg
T	short tons (2000 lb)	0.907	megagrams (or "metric ton")	Mg (or "t")
		TEMPERATURE (exact degrees)		
^oF	Fahrenheit	5 (F-32)/9 or (F-32)/1.8	Celsius	^oC

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14. ABSTRACT

This statutorily required annual report provides information on FTA's Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Program (49 U.S.C. § 5314). It provides information on technical assistance, workforce development, standards, human resources, and training projects active in FY 2020. The report also includes information on FTA's process for making upcoming allocations for FY 2021.

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U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration

Dear Colleague:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is pleased to provide its Annual Report on Technical Assistance and Workforce Development for FY 2020 as required by Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. §§ 5314(a)(3), (b)(2)(E)). This report describes eligible activities in the areas of technical assistance, standards development, training, and workforce development.

FTA's Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Program has four major functional areas for eligible projects: technical assistance, standards, workforce development, and training. This report notes the results of these projects.

Projects funded by FTA continue to provide technical assistance to improve access to public transportation and employment for people with disabilities and older adults. FTA's new Crime Prevention and Public Safety Awareness program will produce training and other measures to assist transit agencies with detecting and preventing Human Trafficking on U.S. transit systems, supporting the U.S. Department of Transportation strategic goal of safety. FTA's training and workforce activities continue to support the infrastructure goal commensurate with the strategic objective of economic competitiveness. The National Transit Institute, one of FTA's transit training providers, offered several courses and workshops online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, taking innovative approaches to continue supporting transit agencies across the United States.

Sincerely,

K. Jane Williams
Deputy Administrator

Abstract

This annual Report to Congress provides information on FTA's Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Program (49 U.S.C. § 5314) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. The primary goal is to provide technical assistance, standards development, human resources, workforce development, and training projects to more effectively and efficiently provide public transportation service to improve public transportation. The report includes a section on frontline workforce activities and trends and notes expectations and processes for allocating funding for FY 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Federal Transit Administration (FTA) report is required by Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. §§ 5314(a)(3), (b)(2)(E)). It provides information on projects active during Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. Active projects refer to projects and programs that involved FTA resources during the fiscal year and are typically funded from appropriations enacted by Congress in earlier fiscal years. This is a retrospective report on the results of prior investments. There are four major types of eligible projects for this FTA program: technical assistance, standards development, human resources/workforce, and training. This report is organized into three sections:

- **Section 1** provides detailed information on technical assistance, standards development, human resources, and training projects, including descriptions and key results of each project.
- **Section 2** discusses frontline workforce development projects, including descriptions and key results of each project, and recommendations to improve program effectiveness.
- **Section 3** provides information on expectations, directions, and processes for allocating FY 2021 funding.

The FTA has a long history of investments in training, technical assistance, standards, and workforce development. The major goals for these programs include more effectively and efficiently providing public transportation service, training the public transportation workforce, and fielding innovative frontline workforce projects.

Table 1 *Active Projects by Eligible Areas*

Program/Project Name	Eligible Activities *											Amount
	Technical Assistance (TA)									Std*	HT**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Crime Prevention and Public Safety Awareness						×		×				$2,000,000
National Center for Applied Transit Technology (N-CATT)								×				$1,500,000
Transit Automation Technical Assistance								×				$450,000
Mobility on Demand (MOD) On-Ramp Program								×				$499,342
Multimodal Public Transportation System Connectivity Performance Measures					×							$300,000
Transportation Research Board (TRB) Core Program Support								×				$250,000
Safety Awareness Technical Assistance								×				$350,000
Mobility on Demand (MOD) Technical Assistance and Outreach Support	×	×	×									$385,000
National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC)	×	×	×									$5,000,000
National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)		×	×									$2,500,000
Transit Research Analysis Committee (TRAC)						×		×				$1,725,000
Transit Standards Development Program – Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR)									×			$5,000,000
Transit Standards Development Program – American Public Transportation Association (APTA)									×			$1,000,000
National Transit Institute (NTI)											×	$5,000,000
FY 2015 Innovative Transit Workforce Development Projects										×		$1,253,000
											Total	**$27,212,342**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

1. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

2. Human Services Transportation Coordination

3. Transportation Needs of Elderly Individuals

4. Increase Transit Ridership in Coordination with Metropolitan Planning Organizations

5. Improve Transportation Equity and Efficient Public Transportation Planning for Low-income and Minority Individuals

6. Facilitate Best Practices in Bus Driver Safety

7. Meet Buy America and Rolling Stock Purchase Requirements

8. Other technical assistance activity that advances the interests of public transportation

****STANDARDS (Std)***

9. Standards

*****HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING (HT)***

10. Human Resources

11. Training

Requirements for This Report

Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. § 5314 (a)(3)) requires the Secretary of Transportation to submit a Report to Congress for all projects active under this section during the previous fiscal year. This annual report must be submitted to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the U.S. Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and the Committee on Appropriations of the U.S. House of Representatives not later than the first Monday of February in the following year.

This annual report must include:

- A description of each project that received assistance under this program during the preceding fiscal year.
- An evaluation of the technical assistance and standards activities carried out by each organization that received assistance during the preceding fiscal year.
- A process to determine allocations for the FTA Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Program for the subsequent fiscal year.
- Measurable outcomes and impacts of the Human Resources & Training and National Transit Institute (NTI) programs.

SECTION 1

Active Projects Results

Section 1 groups projects by the authorized program areas: Technical Assistance, Standards, Human Resources, Training, and Workforce Development. Each project provides information on the recipient; a detailed description of each funded activity, including its purpose and goal(s); relevant project results listing pertinent activities, measurable outcomes, and impacts to the industry and the community; the year the project was awarded, the total amount funded; and the anticipated completion date in each section. The projects are ordered by when they were awarded, with the most recent awards noted first.

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance (TA) investments - totaling $14,959,342 - furthered the mobility of older adults and people with disabilities, expanded mobility management awareness, supported the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, enhanced public safety awareness in transit systems, and expanded access to human services transportation through coordination initiatives.

Title: *Crime Prevention and Public Safety Awareness*

Recipients: Associations and a non-profit organization

Project Description:

This technical assistance is part of FTA's Human Trafficking Awareness and Public Safety Initiative. The program will develop and disseminate technical assistance materials supporting public safety awareness campaigns that address public safety in transit systems, including crime prevention, human trafficking, and operator assault.

Results:

On March 29, 2019, FTA announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) that closed on May 28, 2019. Three organizations were competitively selected to receive funding through cooperative agreements. On January 28, 2020, Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao announced $2 million in technical assistance as part of FTA's Human Trafficking Awareness and Public Safety Initiative at a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) event. All projects will be active in FY 2021.

FTA Funding: $2,000,000

Title: *National Center for Applied Transit Technology (N-CATT)*

Recipient: Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

Project Description:

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019, Public Law 116-6, provided $1,500,000 under FTA's Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Program (49 U.S.C. § 5314) for a cooperative agreement to assist small urban, and rural and tribal public transit recipients and planning organizations with applied innovation and capacity-building. N-CATT is a partnership between CTAA and FTA to provide practical, replicable resources that help solve local challenges by applying technological solutions. N-CATT accomplishes its mission through collecting, understanding, communicating, planning, encouraging, and spurring implementation of cost-effective, value-adding technologies.

Results:

The N-CATT began its one-year cooperative agreement in September 2019. Relevant activities for N-CATT in this reporting period included releasing a Request for Information (RFI) for a Return on Investment Calculator, releasing an Innovation Technology Strike Team call for applications, hosting meetings of the N-CATT Advisory Council, contracting with a podcast production company, and hosting its first webinar on technology decision-making.

FTA Funding: $1,500,000

Title: *Transit Automation Technical Assistance*

Recipient: The Volpe Center

Project Description:

The purpose of this program is to provide technical assistance on bus transit automation to public transit agencies. This project supports the DOT strategic goal of Innovation by advancing the adoption of automation technologies and related practices to improve the safety and performance of transit systems.

Results:

This program was awarded funding in September 2018 and is expected to conclude in November 2021. In FY 2020, the program produced an internal technical assistance needs assessment findings document and developed a framework/scope for the Community of Practice Initiative. Through this program, FTA is developing a greater understanding of the state of transit

bus automation and the potential opportunities for transit bus automation to improve safety and performance.

FTA Funding: $450,000

Title: *Mobility on Demand (MOD) On-Ramp Program*

Recipient: Shared-Use Mobility Center (SUMC)

Project Description:

The MOD On-Ramp Program provides technical assistance to public transportation agencies on advancing innovative MOD projects. The goal of this effort is to support the successful development of MOD ideas and business plans for future implementation as pilot projects.

Results:

This program was awarded funding in September 2017and is expected to conclude in late October 2020. The program provided technical assistance and strategic planning by hosting workshops with local stakeholders to educate transit agencies and local partners on MOD initiatives. The MOD Learning Center, accessible at https://learn.sharedusemobilitycenter.org/, completed the program as a repository of resources and references for MOD projects.

FTA Funding: $499,342

Title: *Multimodal Public Transportation System Connectivity Performance Measures*

Recipient: The University of Texas at Austin

Project Description:

Researchers at The University of Texas at Austin and Arizona State University developed new performance measures to support public transportation system efforts to assess network connectivity and accessibility with a focus on disadvantaged population groups.

Results:

This project was awarded funding in October 2017 and ended in April 2020. In FY 2020, the project finalized a guidebook and outlined several replicable system and characteristic measures ranging from institutional structures and partnerships to geo-spatial analysis. It recommended measures and methods

that explicitly incorporate community goals for transportation equity so that transit providers can quickly determine how their decisions are affecting greater connectivity for all users, especially disadvantaged populations.

FTA Funding: $300,000

Title: *TRB Core Program Support*

Recipient: Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS)

Project Description:

This project provides FTA with access to TRB's core technical activities such as the TRB Annual Meeting, standing committees and task forces, and research archival and dissemination tools. Additionally, this projects helps to facilitate the exchange of transit research information and results at the national level.

Results:

Key outcomes in FY 2020 included FTA involvement in the TRB Annual Meeting and access to TRB reports and webinars. This project provided FTA staff with access to all online TRB resources including the Transportation Research International Documentation (TRID) database. Research sponsors use TRID to avoid costly duplication and assure timely dissemination of results. TRB processes approximately 30,000 new transportation-related publications into TRID per year.

FTA Funding: $250,000

Title: *Safety Awareness Technical Assistance*

Recipient: Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI)

Project Description:

The objective of this project is to reduce grade crossing, trespassing, and related incidents on transit systems by increasing public awareness of safe behavior around tracks and trains. The project funds the development of training and educational materials and the dissemination of information to assist transit agencies to make the public aware of transit-related rail safety issues.

Results:

Current project funding was awarded in September 2016 and will end in September 2020. Additional funding was approved to continue the program

with a new statement of work for FY 2021. In FY 2020, OLI disseminated a variety of training and educational materials. OLI funded rail transit safety awareness campaigns at 10 transit agencies (https://oli.org/about-us/news/operation-lifesaver-awards-rail-safety-grant-funding-10-transit-agencies) and worked with transit grant recipients to develop new materials, including brochures, videos, radio ads, digital ads, posters, children's safety passport books, and a mobile safety photo studio. OLI also updated its website to be mobile-friendly and easier to navigate, retaining its library of materials for safety campaigns, accessible at https://oli.org/materials?name=&file_type=All&material_type=All&audience=All&topic=124. During September 22–28, 2019, OLI held the 3rd Annual Rail Safety Week in cooperation with Operation Lifesaver Canada; a summary report of the week's results is available at https://yearly.report/from/#/oli/rail-safety-week-2019.

FTA Funding: $350,000

Title: *Mobility on Demand (MOD) Technical Assistance and Outreach Support*

Recipient: Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITSA)

Project Description:

The purpose of this program is to provide targeted outreach support to transit agencies, local governments, and vendors involved in MOD services.

Results:

This program was initially awarded funding in November 2016 and ended in May 2020. In FY 2020, the program promoted the results of mobility innovation in the public transportation industry by producing the *Mobility Rush* newsletter bi-weekly publication (https://itsa.org/mobility-rush-archives/).

FTA Funding: $385,000

Title: *National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC)*

Recipient: Easter Seals, Inc.

Project Description:

The NADTC is a partnership between Easter Seals and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a). Its purpose is to promote the mobility of people with disabilities and older adults, ensuring that public transportation

supports independent living in communities. The Center provides training, technical assistance, best practice resources, partnerships with other national centers and industry organizations, and seed funding for targeted local projects.

Results:

The multi-year technical assistance program was initially awarded in September 2015 and is expected to operate through December 2020. NADTC was awarded funds from previous fiscal years and received an additional $2,500,000 from FY 2019 appropriations. Activities in FY 2020 included launching online courses, holding webinars, providing targeted technical assistance, publishing a newsletter, and developing useful resources. NADTC also conducted a national survey of core constituencies to identify transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities and provided grant assistance to local communities for implementation of innovative transportation solutions and creating replicable models of excellence.

The NADTC's activities achieved broad outreach in FY 2020. From October 1, 2019 through March 30, 2020, approximately 847 people participated in NADTC online courses and webinars, and more than 390 attended conference presentations given by NADTC staff. There were 30,890 unique visits to the NADTC website, www.nadtc.org from October through March 2020.

FTA Funding: $5,000,000

Title: *National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)*

Recipient: Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

Project Description:

The NCMM is a partnership among CTAA, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), and Easter Seals, Inc. It supports mobility management professionals in developing and implementing strategies that improve transportation access for older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals and families.

Results:

The current project was awarded funding in May 2019 and is expected to operate through February 2021. During this reporting period, NCMM held webinars and information-sharing sessions, developed e-learning training courses and useful online materials, and provided technical assistance to public transit agencies through various methods. It helped train mobility management practitioners on emerging service models and new technologies that increase mobility and also supported the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM),

an interagency Federal initiative that supports states and their localities in developing coordinated human service delivery systems.

FTA Funding: $2,500,000

Title: *Transit Research Analysis Committee (TRAC)*

Recipient: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS)

Project Description:

The TRAC is an interdisciplinary committee of experts from industry, academia, and the private and public sectors that provides independent recommendations to FTA on future investments in transit research, development, and innovation. Its goal is to examine and recommend actions FTA can take to ensure that its research and innovation program is relevant, timely, and effective in meeting the diverse and changing needs of the public transportation community.

Results:

The current project was awarded funding in June 2018 and will be extended to June 2022. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the next meeting was moved to mid to late FY 2021.

FTA Funding: $1,725,000

Standards Development

The FTA provided $6 million in funding for the development of voluntary and consensus-based standards and best practices for the public transportation industry in the areas of safety, fare collection, intelligent transportation systems, accessibility, procurement, security, and asset management to maintain a state of good repair, operations, maintenance, vehicle propulsion, communications, and vehicle electronics.

Title: *Transit Standards Development Program – CUTR*

Recipient: University of South Florida (USF) Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR)

Project Description:

This program collects information required to develop transit standards by suggesting new or revised voluntary standards, guidelines, and best practices.

Results:

The program was awarded funding in September 2017 and will end in December 2021. In FY 2020, the program conducted research and analysis in safety areas recommended by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and provided a mechanism for FTA to engage closely with stakeholders, Standards Development Organizations (SDOs), and industry standards working groups. The program completed five research internal reports on transmission-based train control, accident investigations and guidelines for bus and rail, employee safety reporting, and APTA standards evaluation. Additionally, the program organized a stakeholder working group meeting in Tampa on November 6–7, 2019, and one in Houston on February 19–20, 2020. The program also presented research information on roadway worker protection, employee safety reporting, and suicide and fatality prevention at the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) meeting on February 25–26, 2020.

FTA Funding: $5,000,000

Title: *Transit Standards Development Program – APTA*

Recipient: American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

Project Description:

This project supports FTA in its leadership role to coordinate with the transit industry and SDOs to develop and maintain voluntary standards and best practices to help improve the performance, reliability, efficiency, and safety of transit systems.

Results:

The project was awarded funding in September 2017 and will end in October 2020. In FY 2020, APTA reviewed and updated 42 of 77 of the latest standards documents.

FTA Funding: $1,000,000

Human Resources and Training

This section reviews the results of FTA-funded projects associated with public transportation human resource activities and includes a discussion of the training activities of the National Transit Institute (NTI).

Title: *National Transit Institute (NTI)*

Grantee: Rutgers University

Project Description:

The FTA's Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Program (49 U.S.C. § 5314) funds NTI (49 U.S.C. § 5314(c)), housed at Rutgers University, which develops and conducts courses, educational programs, and webinars for Federal, State, and local government employees and for non-profit leaders engaged in government-funded public transportation work. NTI strategically develops and delivers courses across the country in partnership with regional transit agencies, state DOTs, municipal governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and state and national transit-related associations. NTI plans and develops its work in close alignment with FTA's respective offices and with the public transit industry to ensure that NTI courses and activities are tied to FTA's strategic goals and support the training needs of the public transit industry.

Results:

In FY 2020, NTI delivered 169 training courses throughout the U.S. to 5,626 participants. It reduced the number of training courses delivered and course participants in FY 2020 compared to FY 2019 due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. NTI is now expanding its virtual course delivery capabilities, online, and webinar-based portfolio.

FTA Funding: $5,000,000

FY 2015 Innovative Transit Workforce Development (ITWD) Projects

In October 2015, FTA awarded funding totaling $8,308,882 to 17 recipients for the FY 2015 Innovative Transit Workforce Development (ITWD) projects. Of the 17 projects awarded in 2015, 14 projects were completed by the end of FY 2019. In FY 2020, three projects were active; two were completed in FY 2020, and one remains active and is slated for completion in August 2021.

Table 2 *Active FY 2015 Innovative Transit Workforce Development (ITWD) Projects*

Project Title	Grantee Name	City and State	Investment Areas*					Funds Awarded	Status in FY 2019
			1	2	3	4	5		
Village Vans Program	Intercity Transit	Olympia, WA				×		$200,000	Completed in FY 2020
Second Chance	Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)	Chicago, IL	×			×		$750,000	Active in FY 2020
Skilled Laborer Job Training Program	Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority	Buffalo, NY				×		$303,000	Completed in FY 2020
Total Active FY 2015 Projects								**$1,253,000**	

** Types of Workforce Development grants:*

1. *New Entrants (e.g., veterans, women, re-entrants, etc.)*
2. *Incumbent Worker Training (e.g., frontline (bus/rail operators), supervisors/managers, etc.)*
3. *Youth Engagement & Outreach*
4. *Internship, Apprenticeship, Work-Based Skills Training or New Technology Training*
5. *Curriculum Development*

The FTA established seven priorities for the FY 2015 ITWD projects:

1. Targeting areas with high rates of unemployment.
2. Helping local communities benefit directly from employment opportunities created by the construction and operation of new transit capital projects or other public transportation activities within their region.
3. Providing career pathways that support the movement and employment of traditionally disadvantaged communities or those who were underrepresented in transit and transit construction.
4. Helping to increase target recruitment of minorities, including Tribal citizens, women, veterans, returning citizens, persons with disabilities and low-income individuals.
5. Addressing gaps in job areas where current or projected workforce shortages in fields related to public transportation exist.
6. Pre-employment training/preparation/tracking.
7. Recruitment and hiring.

Title: *Village Vans Program*

Recipient(s): Intercity Transit

Project Description:

The Village Vans Program addressed barriers faced by low-income job seekers related to transportation and provided job training and work experience to individuals interested in transportation-related careers. Key program

partners were WorkSource Thurston County, the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council, and the Washington State Department of Social and Human Services. Participants were selected for training as volunteer drivers and/or administrative assistants for the program or as clients who use the service. Three vans operated transportation services for clients and their dependents to reach jobs, job search activities, employment training, or other employment support destinations, such as child care and medical appointments that were difficult or impossible for them to access otherwise.

Results:

This project started in September 2017 and ended in December 2019. More than 11,082 trips transported clients and their families to job interviews, work, school and daycare; 262 volunteer drivers were trained and provided rides for employment support; and 39 participants achieved employment as of December 2019. In addition, Village Vans staff attended 26 meetings and forums with strategic partners who were instrumental in getting together volunteer drivers interested in job training and clients that needed rides to jobs. More than 11,344 potential drivers and riders were reached through Village Vans' strategic partnerships.

FTA Funding: $200,000

Title: *Second Chance*

Recipient: Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)

Project Description:

This grant expands CTA's currently existing Second Chance program, which provides individuals who face barriers to employment, such as those previously incarcerated, abuse survivors, and the homeless, with an opportunity to obtain full-time, temporary employment and training through 265 CTA bus and rail car servicer positions. This nationally-recognized 12-month program provides participants with job skills training, real-life work experience, and career coaching to help them reach self-sufficiency through permanent employment. Additionally, CTA's Second Chance Priority Careers Program provides participants with the opportunity to acquire certificates of completion from recognized programs through a partnership with City Colleges of Chicago, including the Customer Service for Transit Professionals and Basic Mechanical Skills training programs. Other certifications eligible for program participants include FEMA's Incident Command System 100 (ICS 100) certification, OSHA 10-HR General Industry Certification, State of Illinois Department of Motor Vehicles Commercial Driver's License Permit (CDLP) credentials, and many more. Partnerships with 14 local social services agencies ensure that enrollees receive the support they need on the road to self-sufficiency.

Results:

The FTA's support of CTA's existing Second Chance Priority Careers Program began in August 2015. As of May 2020, CTA had enabled a total of 297 participants to participate in the program's expansion, with 247 participants successfully completing training in fields such as maintenance, operations, and customer service. To date, Second Chance has provided permanent frontline and entry-level transit jobs at CTA for 106 program participants, who were placed in positions such as bus servicers, rail car servicers, rail car repairers, customer service representatives, flag workers, stockroom clerks, bus operators, and bus maintenance coordinators. An additional 19 participants found employment elsewhere. The training program has a 92 percent success rate for participants gaining employment. The program was expected to end in May 2020; however, due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, CTA needs additional time to complete its *Program Handbook*, which will include an evaluation of the program.

FTA Funding: $750,000

Title: *Skilled Laborer Job Training Program*

Recipient: Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA)

Project Description:

The Skilled Laborer Job Training Program recruited, trained, and provided career pathways for traditionally underserved populations and semi-skilled incumbent NFTA workers in industrial electricity, programmable logic controls, mechanical drives, hydraulics, pneumatics, sheet metal, pipefitting, welding, machining, and commercial driver's license (CDL) bus training. The Skilled program addressed current and pending employment vacancy and diversity issues at NFTA.

Results:

This training program began in February 2016, and all project tasks were completed as of January 2020. A final report was submitted and approved by FTA in May 2020. The program trained eight groups in the areas of electricity, hydraulics, pneumatics, machining, mechanical drives, pipefitting, welding, CDL bus training, and OSHA safety, over an 18-week schedule. A NFTA training bus was retrofitted as a mobile classroom to assist in teaching lower-skilled applicants and employees to work on a vehicle in a controlled environment to improve their mechanical skills. The program sponsored 83 participants through the 8 training groups, 51 of whom completed the 18-week training program. Of the 51 participants, 25 were offered employment and 21 accepted employment.

FTA Funding: $303,000

SECTION 2

Frontline Workforce Development Program Trends and Next Steps

Federal public transportation law (49 U.S.C. § 5314(b)(2)(E)) requires the Secretary of Transportation to make publicly available a report on the Frontline Workforce Development Program for each fiscal year, not later than December 31 of the calendar year in which that fiscal year ends. The report must include a detailed description of activities carried out under this section, an evaluation of the program, and policy recommendations to improve program effectiveness.

In FY 2021, FTA plans to release a new competitive solicitation for technical assistance and workforce development to assist public transit agencies in recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining the workforce needed not only for today but, more importantly, for tomorrow. The Transit Workforce Center (TWC) will fall under two goals of the FTA Technical Assistance and Workforce Development statute: 1) to carry out technical assistance activities that enable more effective and efficient delivery of transportation services, foster compliance with Federal laws, and improve public transportation service; and 2) to address public transportation workforce needs through research, outreach, training and the implementation of a frontline workforce grant program, and conduct training and education programs in support of the public transportation industry. The mission of the TWC will be to enable the exchange and sharing of best practices and lessons learned for workforce development and to provide technical assistance as agencies implement workforce projects. The TWC will be tasked with cataloging and promoting successful and innovative models for ensuring worker safety and training during national emergencies and public health emergencies such as COVID-19. Among other tasks, the TWC also will address the recommendations made by the 2019 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report "Transit Workforce Development: Improved Strategic Planning Practices Could Enhance FTA Efforts" (GAO-19-290). The report, including the three recommendations to FTA, is accessible at https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/697562.pdf.

The FTA is also continuing activities that support frontline workforce development through specific projects with NTI. On October 10, 2019, FTA hosted a peer exchange to share knowledge about bus maintenance worker training, especially as it relates to advanced propulsion buses such as low- and no-emission transit vehicles that require maintenance workers to have knowledge and skills working with electricity. Participants in the peer exchange

included transit agencies, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of buses and bus parts, trainers, academics, and employee representatives. Significant shifts in transit fleets (e.g., from traditional buses to alternative fuel/low- and no-emission buses) require new and different types of frontline worker training. Today's frontline maintenance workers must be familiar with computer diagnostic systems, advanced electrical systems, video and audio technology, and other new technology-based equipment. The Bus Maintenance and Bus Testing Program Peer-to-Peer Exchange Summary Report can be accessed at https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2020-04/FTA-Report-No.-0160_1.pdf.

Emerging Workforce Trends – Public Health Emergency Preparedness for Frontline Transit Employees

The public transportation industry is significantly impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Some agencies stopped transit service, many significantly reduced service, and a few continued service at normal levels. Many agencies diligently worked to ensure that essential workers in their communities could get to work. Agencies continuing to operate often reported employees testing positive for COVID-19, and some reported related employee deaths, especially among their frontline bus and rail operators, who interact with the public daily to provide a lifeline service for essential workers. Public transportation agencies are innovating to address these new challenges with new practices to protect the frontline workforce.

SECTION 3

FY 2021 Expected Activities and Program Planning Process for Technical Assistance and Workforce Development Allocations

The FTA follows a transparent and collaborative process to allocate appropriated and unallocated funding. Each year, FTA convenes internal meetings to develop technical assistance ideas, vet those ideas across offices, and then present funding options to senior leadership for their review and approval. Once programs and projects are approved, the requisite offices implement them.

In FY 2021, FTA will announce a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) totaling $2.5 million in Technical Assistance and Workforce Development (49 U.S.C. § 5314) funds to establish a Transit Workforce Center (TWC). The TWC NOFO will solicit proposals for a cooperative agreement to build and manage a sustainable public transportation workforce development technical assistance center. As required by statute, an eligible applicant under this notice must be "a National nonprofit organization with demonstrated capacity to provide public transportation-related workforce development technical assistance" (P.L. 116-94). The selected recipient will help transit agencies recruit, hire, train, and retain the workforce needed for today and tomorrow.

The TWC will be the first FTA-funded technical assistance resource to support public transit workforce development programs. Key, overarching functions of the Center will include the provision of targeted technical assistance, training, outreach, research and data analysis, workforce partnership development, and workforce strategic planning. The TWC will be a one-stop shop for transit agencies, stakeholders, and providers to find information and receive assistance on all transit workforce-related areas. It will have many key tasks to achieve in the first year, including assisting FTA with completing actions to respond to recommendations from the GAO report "Transit Workforce Development: Improved Strategic Planning Practices Could Enhance FTA Efforts" (GAO-19-290) (May 6, 2019). Upon completion of its first year of work, the Center and its activities will be evaluated.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
APTA	American Public Transportation Association
CTAA	Community Transportation Association of America
DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
ITSA	Intelligent Transportation Society of America
MOD	Mobility on Demand
NADTC	National Aging and Disability Transportation Center
NAS	National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
NCMM	National Center for Mobility Management
OLI	Operation Lifesaver, Inc.
SDO	Standards Development Organizations
TCRP	Transit Cooperative Research Program
TOD	Transit-oriented development
TRACS	Transit Advisory Committee for Safety
TRB	Transportation Research Board
TRI	FTA Office of Research, Demonstration, and Innovation
TRIS	Transportation Research Information Services
TWC	Transit Workforce Center

U.S. Department of Transportation

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https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/research-innovation