

>> Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for your patience. Typically sometimes when you do webinars, you always have some type of technical difficulties and I just want to make sure that we have an interactive experience and that you guys can be able to talk back to me and can see everything clearly and all. So thank you for your patience. So, it is now 2:02. I'm running a couple minutes behind. I apologize. And so I -- hold on for a minute, let me hit record. I have tons of notes to myself to make sure I do everything I'm supposed to do. We're good to go. Good afternoon, my name is Tara Clark, I am the Program Manager for both the no low and -- formula grant program. As we are going along, if you have any technical difficulties, I added a chat box so that you can let me know if there are any difficulties or if you can't hear or whatever the case may be. All right.

So today's agenda, we are going to go through the program itself. I'm going to discuss the evaluation criteria. We will then discuss application requirements and forms, and at the end, we will take some questions. Now, what I'm going to do at the end of the presentation, I will switch over to the questions and answer pod so you will be able to enter your questions in the little Q&A box. So but in the meantime if you have technical difficulties, you can't hear, please be sure to enter it into the chat box. So before you ask a question, please review the low-no FAQs at the top left, there's a file share, there's a copy of the actual webinar presentation, and there's also the FAQs, because we want to try to make sure that everyone's question is addressed because your question may actually be for the good of everyone, so please review before you ask a question. So, I'm very pleased that this is the third year, I cannot believe this is the third year of the Low-No Program underneath 5339, Bus and Bus Facilities program, and this program provides funding for purchase or release of zero-emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, leasing of supporting facilities and equipment. Today's FTA has awarded \$110 million under this program for projects around the country. The unique thing about the Low-No Program is the support of the deployment of advanced technology vehicles, which kind of sets it apart from some of the other grant programs that low-no has. So I want to look -- I think last year I pointed out this as well, I want to look at the term transit. It's used interchangeably with public transportation. Public transportation means regular continuing and shared ride, surface transportation services that are open to the general public. So just in case you're wondering is my project eligible, first you ask yourself is it a public transportation project according to the definition of public transportation. So 2017 low-no competition, we received 128 project proposals from 40 states. A total of \$515 million was requested. We funded 51 projects for a total of \$55 million. There is a list of the funded projects on the FTA website. You can feel free to follow the hyperlink there, and also wanted to say that FDA has processed over 200 applications requesting approximately \$1 million in funding just for the Low-No Program. So it's been very popular and it's been overprescribed in the first -- the two years of -- the first two years of the program. So for this year, the no FO was released on April 23rd, applications are due June 18TH. You can find your application package at Grants.gov, search by using keyword low or no emission or low-no. Applicants must register on Grants.gov at least two to four weeks prior to applying. Project evaluations will take place between June and July, and we hope to make an award announcement late summer of 2018. So for this year, I

was very pleasantly surprised when I received the email stating that Congress had allocated additional funding specifically for the Low-No Program, so usually 55 million is available. Well, this year we have about \$84 million available for projects, so thank you, Congress, for adding that additional \$29.45 million to the FY18 omnibus bill. So project selection is competitive, and based on the criteria that's found in section E application review in the no FO. If so for funding obligation or funds are available for obligation until September 30TH, 2021. So if the awards are made, let's say August of 2018, the funds would be available until September 30TH, 2021. Pre-award authority starts on the day the projects are announced. For example, the 2017 projects were announced in September, but the Federal Register notice was not published until March. However, pre-award authority for those projects actually started on September 15TH, the day that the projects were announced. So who is eligible to apply for no low funding? Designated recipients, states, local governmental authorities, federally recognized Indian tribes. Including a political subdivision of a state, an authority of at least one state or political subdivision of the state, an Indian tribe or a public corporation, board or commission established under the laws of the state. So for rural applications, applicationings for rural areas must be submitted in a consolidated state application. So the Low-No Program is also pretty unique in that it allows an applicant to partner to bring in a partner on the application so an eligible recipient may submit an application that includes partners and they could be manufacturers, consultants and other private sector entities that will participate in implementing the project. The low-no competition satisfies the competitive procurement requirement for partners named in the application. However, if partners are changed aft project is awarded, the applicant may have to go through the competitive procurement process. Also I want to mention that this year I added the actual citation for the notice so you can refer back to the NoFo if you need additional information. So I hope that will help but this comes from section C, eligibility information, subsection 1, eligible applicants, so you can see that for additional information. So for cost sharing matching, the match for vehicles is a maximum of 85% federal, 15% non-federal. For bus-related equipment or facilities, maximum is 90% federal, 10% local, non-federal. Projects that have a higher share may receive additional consideration. Eligible sources of local match are also listed in the notice. See section C, eligibility information of section 2, cost sharing or matching for eligible sources. That's a pretty bus, thank you to my friends -- I believe that's -- valley pretty zero-emission bus there. So which projects are eligible? You may purchase or lease a low or no emission bus, construct or lease facilities and related equipment to support the low or no emission bus. Also rehabilitating or improving existing facilities to accommodate the buses, but I want to make sure you understand the facilities must directly support the deployment of the low or no emission vehicles. So some past facilities projects that have been awarded, in 2016, sun line transit received about \$1.5 million for a maintenance facility to support 20 zero-emission buses. This facility will also house an interactive learning center, I believe they call it their Center Of Excellence. Forgive me, guys, if you're on the line and I just messed that up, but it's an interactive learning center for transit agency staff to be trained on new technology for bus maintenance. In 2017, the Bi-state development agency received funding to update the infrastructure at a facility that will support their battery electric buses. Workforce development. Workforce development is also eligible.

Agencies can use up to 0.5% of their grant award for workforce development activities and an additional 0.5 half a percent for training at the national training institute. Workforce development should directly relate to low-no buses. It could also include site visits to agencies that have already have low-no buses in their fleet for information sharing like a peer to peer thing. Another example is participation in a training program that's sponsored by a transit agency. So there's some wiggle room and different things you can do with that. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me directly. This information comes from section C, eligibility information, in the notice. So eligible projects. So for this program, preference is not given to projects in non-attainment areas. Vehicles must make greater reductions in energy consumption and harmful emissions than comparable standard diesel buses or other low-no buses, which include older technology buses such as CNG. That was a mouthful that I just said. What does that mean? That means that we are looking for projects that reduce the most amount of emission as well as we are focused on advanced technology projects as well. Proposed projects must be included in the fleet management plan. Documentation of that should be attached to the application. Testing must be completed prior to disbursement of funds. Projects must comply with DBE regulations. More information on DBE requirements is in the NoFo, section F, federal award administration, subsection 2. Buy America requirements requires all iron, steel or manufactured products be produced in the U.S. FAST ACT amended those requirements to provide for a phased increase in the domestic content for rolling stock. More information on the Buy America requirements is also in the notice in section F, federal award administration, subsection 2. All right. So what is a low or no emission bus? So a low or no emission bus is a passenger vehicle that provides public transportation and it significantly reduces energy consumption, air pollution or direct carbon emissions when compared to a standard or diesel vehicle. An example of a low emission vehicle would be CNG, compressed natural gas, electric or propane. A zero-emission transit bus also falls into that definition, and that's defined as buses that produce no direct carbon emissions and no particulate matter emissions under any and all possible operational modes and conditions. Examples of zero-emission vehicles include battery electric buses and hydrogen fuel cell buses. So this is a picture of the DC circulator. If you've ever been to D.C. , there are a few lines -- the circulator has a few lines and typically it's concentrated like in the touristy areas. DOT is actually on a stop for the circulator and the circulator just added 14 -- I believe it's 14 battery electric buses, and according to their website, it's the largest electric bus fleet in the D.C. region and the current largest electric fleet on the East Coast. I have not verified that information, that's what they have on the website, so if you come to DOT sometime, you guys are able to come visit, perhaps you'll get an opportunity to ride on one of their zero-emission buses. Ineligible products include operating expenses, preventive maintenance, development or deployment of prototype vehicles, previous project expenses, mobility management, and planning and design studies that are independent of a capital project. If you have any questions about what is eligible, please feel free to email me. I know you guys are really good at asking questions. I've been asking questions pretty much since the notice was released. That is fine, no problem. If there is a need, please reach out to me and feel free to ask me if your particular project would be eligible under the program. So let's get to the good stuff. So how do we submit an application? There's a link to

the notice of funding opportunity, which is on the Federal Register's website. For application information, you can go to Grants.gov, there's the link there. Applications must include the SF-424 application for federal assistance, which is the mandatory across the board if you're applying for any type of grant funding from the federal government, you must use the SF-424. In addition to that, the low-no program supplemental form, you can get that from Grants.gov or the FTA website. Very, very important, if you downloaded the supplemental form prior to May 1st, you will not be able to save that form unless you have like an Adobe professional application. We fixed it, we put a new form up, so if you downloaded it prior to May 1st, please, please go back and download the updated form. You can go to Grants.gov or the FTA website. I want to remind you that we are unable to take any applications that have been scanned like if you scan it and save it as a PDF, we cannot accept that. So please be sure to download the correct form. So applications must also include supporting documentation. All applications have to be submitted through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 18TH, 2018. Late applications may not be accepted. I want to also say, if you can, please submit your application prior to 5:00 because after 5:00 p.m., no one will be in the office to help you if you have any technical difficulties. That is, for instance, with our supplemental form or something like that, if you have any technical difficulties with Grants.gov, then you'll have to contact them. So additional information, the supplemental form and supporting documents must be attached to the attachment section of the SF-424. I believe there's an attachment form that's in that package with the SF-424 and the supplemental form. New for this year, one supplemental form per SF-424. So one supplemental, one SF-424. And supporting documents must be referenced by file name in the narrative where they may not be reviewed. Very important. And I suggest labeling your attachment. It makes it a lot easier for the reviewers to find the attachment and also, again, if you're referencing them in the narrative, it also makes it very easy for the reviewers to line up the narrative and the supporting documents. If you choose not to label your attachment, at the very least, include a description of that document and the file name in the narrative. Our reviewers have a lot of applications to review in a very short A time, so we're trying to do everything that we can to make it easy for them to make sure they see all of your information and that they've received the best picture or the clearest picture of, you know, your proposed project. Okay. Now, I'm going to stop here and take a water break because this next slide has a lot of information and I'll be doing a lot of reading. So please bear with me so evaluation criteria. How are we going to evaluate your application? So applications will be evaluated on how well they demonstrate the criteria in section E, application review, in the NoFo, or as I call them and I called them last year on this webinar, the six hows. I figured this would be pretty easy for people to remember, six hows, and how to represent something or how to show something, so I'm hoping that will be helpful. So I'm going to just go through a brief overview of the criteria, but for additional information and requirements, as always, refer to the NoFo if you have any questions, you can always reach out and ask me. So demonstration of need. Fundamental question there is, how will the proposed project address an unmet need for capital investment? Specifically applications must demonstrate that there is a need to replace existing vehicles that have exceeded their useful life or there is a need to expand by adding additional vehicles to meet ridership

needs or there is a need for additional improved facilities to support no low vehicles. It must be consistent with the fleet management plan, provide information on the age and condition of the vehicles to be replaced, or provide documentation of the need for service expansion for expansion projects, and for facilities to include information on the age and condition of the facility that be replaced. Please also do not forget about your spare ratio, indicate your spare ratio in the demonstration of need section as we've asked in previous years. Applications must address how the project complies with the spare ratio guidelines. All of the information that I just went through, all of that is also in the notice. Demonstration of benefits. How will this proposed project support the program objectives of reducing energy consumption, reducing harmful emissions, reducing direct carbon emissions? The application must describe how the proposed project will reduce emissions and energy consumption compared to more standard or diesel vehicles. For facilities projects, the facilities must directly support the vehicles that will reduce emissions and energy consumption. So facilities must directly support the appointment of the low or no emission vehicle. So planning and local regional prioritization, how is this proposed project consistent with local and regional long-range planning documents and local government priorities? We are looking for projects that are consistent with planning documents. Example of planning documents are in the notice for documentation, you can submit a letter from the NPO stating that, yes, this project is definitely consistent with a plan, we need some type of documentation to show that the project is consistent with your local/regional planning priorities. It's not enough to state in your narrative that, yes, this is consistent. We must see documentation of that. We have to see evidence. We also want to see that this project is a priority in your community, and this is demonstrated by letters of support from local government officials, community partners, private sector partners. And examples of letters of support definitely also in the notice, and for letters of support unless you need back an official response, you can feel free to just address them to me, and that's also in the FAQs, my address and everything where you can send the letters. All right. So local financial commitment. How will the local funds be secured? Applications must include evidence that the local share has been secured. Examples of local share sources are in the notice. Applications can request funds for the incremental cost of low-no vehicles over the cost of replacing standard vehicles. Formal and low-no funds can be combined. This year I have a section on the supplemental -- so that that can be shown a little easier. We'll get to that a little later. If an application includes a partnership and combined funding and that application is selected for funding, then the low-no competition satisfies the competitive procurement requirement. Project implementation strategies. How will the proposed project be implemented? The strategy should be detailed, reasonable and complete, should include a project timeline with key dates, milestones. If the project requires coordination with the partners or with partners or other agencies, applications must have documentation of that coordination. You must demonstrate that the project is either already in the -- can be added -- and again that's just really a letter from the NPO stating that the project is already in -- or it can be added. And be sure to include NEPA documentation. This is very, very important for facilities projects and include what type of work you've already done or if you have a -- indicate the that in the project implementation strategy section. Technical, legal and financial capacity. Does the applicant have the know-how to carry out the

proposed project? So this criterion indicate whether your agency has the ability to successfully undertake the project. Typically that means just letting us know what your agency's recent tri- -- if there are any deficiencies, please identify them up front in that section and also include any steps that the agency is taking to rectify those deficiencies. Let me catch a breath. So you know I always have to plug my low-no webpage. I work very hard with my congressional affairs office to keep it updated. They are a wealth of resources there. I think the webinars that were put on by -- Cal start and CTE last year, I think they're still posted there. There's also -- I believe there's a link to the national RCAC website, they also did a webinar for us specifically for rural agencies. The NoFos posted and they're also linked to previous project selection, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention the wonderful YouTube video that we have on the Low-No Program that our congressional affairs office did. Please feel free to check that out. It's pretty cool. So, for Grants.gov, I am not a Grants.gov expert but I just have a few screen shots on some of the pages that you would probably need to access for Grants.gov, so work space, that's the method of application submission that Grants.gov is using. Registration, be sure to register for Grants.gov. There is a page that's dedicated to letting you know how to register to be able to submit an application. The next one, and I'm not sure if these are coming in clear on your side, they look a little fuzzy on my side, I apologize if they're not clear. But there is also a page specifically for training, so if you're new to grants.gov, they actually have quite a few links to YouTube videos and different things on their website, so feel free to go over and take a look. If you have any Grants.gov questions or you're having any difficulties with Grants.gov, please contact them. If you have any programmatic questions, then you contact me, questions on a supplemental form, then you contact me. So it's just a screen shot of the search, going in and searching for the Low-No Program. And that's just the actual grant opportunity for the Low-No Program. And again, if it's fuzzy on your side, I apologize. So the SF-424 form or it's known as the application for federal assistance, that is a mandatory form as I mentioned before, that is required when applying for any federal grant. This form will be on Grants.gov as part of the application package. It's this form, it's the supplemental form, and I know there's an attachment form and lobbying form as well, but everything you need to apply is right there at Grants.gov. So this is the supplemental form, specifically for the Low-No Program if you have applied in the past or if you've applied for any of the other competitive programs, you're very familiar with this form. This is essentially your project proposal. Again, if you downloaded it prior to May 1st, please go back and download the updated version or you will not be able to save unless you have Adobe pro. Just please, go and download the updated version. And this form is different from last year's form. Every year I add something, I take something out, I tweak it, so you can't use last year's form. Please, please, please download this year's form. So some of the updates that I've made to the form, under applicant information, the question for populations served now has three choices, so instead of just urbanized area and rural area, you have large urbanized area, small urbanized area and rural. That's really just to help us to collect better information and collect better metrics, especially when we're asked by management to provide a report of basically who applied and where they're coming from. So the "add project" button was removed as a result of our new policy of one project per supplemental form. So no more "add

project" button, one supplemental, one SF-424. But for states, you can submit one consolidated project, for instance, if you had five rural agencies that are interested in applying and perhaps they want two buses each, then you would apply for 10 buses under one consolidated application. So I also added a section for project statement of work, and this is so we can basically identify exactly what you are asking for. So the statement of work is more specific than the project executive summary. Typically what I've seen over the years, the project executive summary will reflect how the project is going to fit into your overall vision of we plan to have all zero-emissions fleet by 2025 or what have you, so this year I decided to just have a separate section specifically so you can say this is what we need and this is how much we're asking for. So I included an example of how it should be written and this also makes it easier for our reviewers as well. This year I'm really, really trying to get them as many tools as necessary to help them get through the reviews a little quicker. So basically you'll tell me who you are, how much you're requesting, so ABC transit is requesting X million dollars to fund the purchase of however many electric buses so who you are, how much you're requesting, the project, and whether it's a replacement or expansion project. Very simple, one sentence. So please, please, please, if you can use this as just a template for the statement of work, very simple, one sentence. All right. And also I added a section for you to list supporting documentation, so please list the documents by file name. Again, if you want to label them, you can list it that way or however you indicated them or whatever they -- if it's -- again, if you labeled it or it's a file name, however, make sure you put your document, your supporting documents in the chart. And you'll see it when you get to the supplemental form. All right. So if your proposed project is for vehicle replacement or facility rehabilitation, I'm asking this year that you provide a description with the asset that will be replaced. This is under demonstration of need. If you apply for Bus and Bus Facilities, last year I kind of stole this idea from my colleague, Mark Bathrick, because I thought it was pretty cool and I figured it would make it a little easier for you to show exactly, you know, what you're trying to replace. So project budget. Now this particular part of this really only will apply to applicants who are using formula funds or 5339 bus formula to supplement low-no funds for the project. Hold on one minute, please. Sorry about that. And you will use the local financial commitment section to show the detailed breakdown. So for instance, you can see for the federal amount, hopefully you can see that, but I have low-no funds. So for federal amount, you would put whatever you're requesting for the Low-No Program. Other federal funds would be your formula -- I put 5307 there as an example, so that would be 5307 funds, and then for the local match, the total local match for all of the federal funds, so whatever it would be for low-no as well as the formula. Now for the matching funds section, you would put the local match for low-no only. Hopefully it's the no too complicated, if you have any questions or anything, please feel free to reach out to me and I'd be more than happy to help you, and also there under matching funds, you put the source of your matching funds and with the supporting documentation. All right. Now, very, very, very important, federal amount. The amount -- the federal amount on the SF-424 and the supplemental form must match. Because if the amount is different, it really throws things off in our system. We've had that problem in previous years and this year we're trying to be as clean as possible. So if the amounts are different, our system may not be able to process it correctly and your application may not be

reviewed. So make sure the federal app, when the SF-424 is exactly what you're indicating on your supplemental form. And that's true for the local as well. I didn't want to put a -- I put a cool little red box here in case you will be one of the people who will be using formula funds in addition to your low-no funds. If you have any questions about this or a little concern about how it's supposed to be done, please feel free to reach out to me. All right. Last slide. I used this slide last year. I'm the type of person, I do not like to reinvent the wheel, and if it's something that I feel like it could work or it's pretty good or repetition or what have you, then doggone it, I use it again. So if you remember nothing else about this webinar, please remember these three things. Everything you need to know about the program and the application requirements is in the NoFo. Use it, please. Respond to each criterion completely. The NoFo tells you exactly what we are looking for in a successful application. We are not a bunch of gotcha people. We're very -- put it up there, put it up there. Please read the NoFo. Application must include documentation to support the information that is in the supplemental form narrative. Documentation is crucial. Tell your story. The reviewers do not have a clue about your agency. This is your opportunity to show how committed you are to the project, how it will benefit your community and also show that you are ready to -- and able to implement the project. If you're out there and I've debriefed you or we've had a conversation, I always say we're looking for shelf-ready -- shovel-ready, I guess, projects. All we basically need is money, FTA. We need you to give us some money, we've got our project together, we have everything we need, here's our proposal. Please give us the money. That's essentially what we're all looking for. We're all looking to see that you are ready and able and willing to undertake the project. Okay. So, I've done a whole lot of talking. Here's my contact information. It's also in the notice. There's also the PDF of the webinar in the file share. Please download it. I'm going to switch over to the question and answer module. What I'm going to do is -- hopefully this will work, but I'm going to give control to you so that you can go through the slides and perhaps refer to a previous slide in order to ask a question or you can download the webinar PDF.

>> And just to let had people know, they've been typing questions in the chat 3 pod under the presentation view. We have recorded all of those questions and we'll be answering them now. You may type additional questions in the Q & A pod on the left, which we will get to in order after the questions we received after the presentation.

>> Okay. So I apologize, I did not introduce the two gentlemen that are in the room with me. I was so excited to talk about low-no, but my Division Chief, Adam Schildge, is here, and the Bus and Bus Facilities Program Manager, Mark Bathrick, he's also here with me, and Adam is going to be helping to answer questions especially maybe the first few so that I can drink some more water, and try and catch my breath.

>> All right. I'll also be posing some of the questions to you so we can have sort of a question and answer format.

the first question that came through is, are transportation development credits an eligible source under this local grants program?

>> Yes.

>> The second question, what definition are we using for rural, designating those rural projects versus urbanized projects?

>> For rural projects, you would typically be in a rural area; you would be considered a rural agency, especially if you were receiving 5311 funds. You're in an urbanized versus rural area, you typically know which one you belong to. If you have any questions, please contact me.

>> So we're using the same definition as -- 307 and 5311?

>> Mm-hmm.

>> There was an interesting question about a provision in federal law about appropriations accounts. We saw that. We can answer that for you in detail. But please reach out to us directly. We do not believe that applies to this program. And now people can download this presentation right off the Adobe Connect site, is that right?

>> Yes, actually it should be in the file share. There's the webinar and the FAQs.

>> Ok. I see that up on the upper left there.

>> Yes, upper left.

>> We have a question about eligible applicants. Can an NPO apply?

>> No. I don't think so.

>> So if there are operating for urbanized area, the eventual grant application should apply

>> yes

>> So you have mixed responsibilities, states or NPOs work closely together, let us know and we'll talk to you directly about your situation. In terms of local and regional planning, there was a question about what kind of documentation we would be looking for. They said would we simply need letters of support or do we also need excerpts from planning document, and I think the question is would a letter of support from the NPO suffice?

>> Yes, and I think I actually mentioned that earlier. You can submit a letter of support from the NCO that indicates that this project is consistent with planning documents. You can also just take the excerpt of your plan that applies to the project and submit that as supporting documentation.

>> And I think the important point there is that I don't expect our reviewers to read your entirely hundred-page long-range transportation plan and find the place where the first hello or zero-emission vehicles so please indicate that in the narrative response of the supplemental form and provide the documentation as backup. Is there a page limit or overall limitation to attachments?

>> I would say had I believe I have something on that in the FAQs and I honestly can't remember exactly offhand what that is. Check the FAQs if it's not there, please send me an email because right now it's not coming to me. I don't think it's -- I think you have a lot of room, I think there's a lot of bandwidth. Somehow 2 megabytes is speaking to me but I don't want to speak without being sure so if you don't see it in the FAQs, shoot me an email and I'll get that answer to you.

>> And I think applicants can rest assured that we will not be evaluating them on the amount of attachments included. We have listed in the NoFo what it is that this program is requiring in terms of documentation, pretty much exclusively our ratings will be based on the responses in the supplemental form in the presence of certain attachments that TARA listed in the NoFo. In large urban and small urban, which population area should they check or does the form allow multiples?

>> Oh, that's a very good question. I did not think about -- I don't think the form -- it's like a radio button so it will not allow you to do multiple.

>> So I think where the vehicles will be used?

>> Yeah, where the vehicles will be used is fine. You may also want to put a note in the beginning section where you're discussing your agency or whatever, please indicate that you operate as both, and I'll try to flag that.

>> You mentioned at one point in a statement of work section of the supplemental form that you could really summarize it with a sentence. In fact, your example was one sentence. Is that the length that we're expecting or is a longer narrative appropriate?

>> I would very much so appreciate you keeping it that one sentence. That's really all we need. For that particular section. Now if you want to --

>> And for that example.

>> Yeah, with that example. If you want to discuss it more in your executive summary, step 5, but essentially what I was trying to do is just to get one good sentence that basically provides a overall exactly what you're asking.

>> So if that project is selected for funding, in other words, and FDA is preparing an announcement on the website, what would you like to see there?

>> UH --

>> I mean, I think that's what we're asking, what would you like to see there?

>> That sounds like a trick question. [laughter]

There was a good question here on demonstration of need regarding current or projected mileage. If their fleet has -- is currently at a high mileage but has not yet exceeded the -- should they put in the current mileage or expected mileage at the time of the award? I think we typically ask for the current mileage.

>> You put in the current mileage, but this is the thing about useful life. The vehicle should have reached useful life by the time the ending time of the project, so basically once the new buses are delivered, the project should have met or exceeded useful life.

>> Mark, I'm reviewing the ones online. Did you see any other questions?

>> No, you covered the ones we were getting in the chat box. If we missed any during that, please feel free to submit it there in the Q & A spot that we're going through.

>> I'm going to widen the screen a little bit so we can read this. I think I can do that.

>> You should be able to.

>> Yes, ways able to. So we have a question as I read it, we may find that we've already answered it. Our application may involve multiple public transportation providers. One who is a rural agency and as -- executes the awards for them and one designated urban agency -- could two separate grants result from one application, one under the DOT from the rural agency buses and one under the direct recipient that's using for service from the rural area to the urban area? Well, to me that sounds like two separate projects.

>> that is two separate projects.

>> Two separate operating areas. Now we do allow consolidated applications that the state wishes to apply on behalf of multiple or if a designated recipient wishes to apply on behalf of the multiple. But recognize that those will be evaluated as a single project, so if the benefits and demonstrations of need are substantially different between the two projects, we would encourage you to submit two separate projects even if they're coming from the same agency. And from the same person, with additional funding made available by Congress, does FTA anticipate making a larger number of awards or instead making larger awards per applicant? No, I think that that would be speculative for us to answer being that we don't make the final decisions. We evaluate projects and present scenarios. We could see either happening. There's always a desire to fund the largest number of highly rated projects possible and there's also a desire to make meaningful awards that will move the ball forward for a particular agency in

implementing their low and no emission vehicle program, and those will need to be balanced.

>> And if I can ask something, Adam, if I may, every year is different, it depends on the number, how we recommended that we ended up having, it also depends on the amount of funding that's requested, so each year the decision makers really pretty much thought it over and decided based on the information that we have presented to them. So it's very difficult and I've talked to a lot of you out there, and you asked me this question and it's so hard for me to kind of give you an answer because we honestly don't know. And I guess if you were to the Acting strayed tore, she'd tell you I don't know, we haven't really looked at anything, so every year we pretty much start the slate, you know, fresh, brand new. I encourage everyone who is interested in the programs to please apply. I'm very pleased that we do have additional funding. I'm optimistic this year. But again, we can't tell you definitively.

>> You know, Tara, it kind of seems like you answered the next question as well in your response, and that's from someone who's clearly read the NoFo carefully, they may consider receipt of other competitive awards in determining the allocations. What exactly does this mean and how much weight will be given?

>> So the past couple of years, 2016 and 2017, one of the factors that the Acting -- are now acting administrator, previously the administrator and the secretary looked at whether or not an agency received either low or no -- low-no funds or Bus and Bus Facilities funds in the immediate proceedings in the school year. So for instance, for applicants in FY17 when we made the project selections, if they received funding in FY2016 for a low and no low -- we did not award them. Again, I don't know if that's going to be a factor again this year, and keyword is may, that's something that may be considered. I can't give a definitive answer for that.

>> I think that was a strong response given what we're able to tell at the moment. You know, I think it's fair to say six months ago you received a maximum award under the program, that may be taken into consideration but at the same time, if your project is one of the few that rate at the very top, that may indeed be an indication that you have a strong program in place and might be selected. So we wouldn't suggest that anyone not apply just because of that factor. So the next question, are there restrictions on the size of vehicles that are eligible? For example, would a fleet of 14 person shuttles be eligible? Now, I guess that's not something we funded in the past and what it comes down to is whether or not the vehicles are substantially innovative in terms of technology compared to other vehicles on the market. Most likely a hybrid van for commuter service would likely not be rated highly, but it really depends on what kind of vehicles those 14-person shuttles are, and what the service characteristics are where they'll be used. Do state vouchers qualify for local match, specifically the California HIVP. I can't say that I'm familiar with that.

>> I did receive a question from a California agency and apparently there's some type of grant funding that is available. I would like additional information. I cannot answer

that until I have additional information on the program, is it a grant program or what have you. Please email me and provide the information on that. Now, specifically if it's, for instance, a grant sponsored by California to, you know, specifically purchase low or no emission vehicles, that would be allowable as local match, as long as the grant stipulates that it is okay to use it as local match for federal -- for a federal grant program.

>> So to be fair and simplistic, if it's money and it's not from us, it is probably eligible as local match.

>> Probably but I never like to give out a definitive answer until I've actually explored it.

>> So please contact us if you have any questions at all about the eligibility of your local match. Will there be preference given to urban versus rural operators or projects? And I think the NoFo did mention the potential service area as a consideration. If you followed some of the priorities of this administration, you'd see that rural projects are being prioritized across a variety of programs. So while this program is not historically been a rural-focused program, good rural projects may -- you know, if they score highly, may be considered under this program.

>> And we have awarded rural projects in the past. I believe Park City, Utah was awarded last year, mountain rides, they were awarded for FY2017, and actually I had mentioned the national RTAC. I was fortunate enough to do a webinar specifically for rural applicants who were interested in applying for low-no funds. If you are interested and you are -- you need to go over to national art's website and download it, it's very, very good. And we have three speakers who were from transit agencies in rural or small urban areas that had actually been successful. I mean, they did an incredible job of describing exactly what went into their application, and what considerations they had had and based upon being a smaller agency, Seneca, South Carolina, they were one of the speakers from cat bus, Seneca, Mountain Rides, and I believe Park City, Utah.

>> The next question is, FTA will evaluate the benefits of the buses to be procured as compared to comparable standard buses. Can you define what we mean by standard bus?

>> Diesel.

>> Okay.

>> So throughout the presentation, I've kind of been using diesel and standard for now, a diesel bus is pretty much a standard bus now in two, three, four, five years, it may be different, hopefully you'll have a hydrogen fuel cell or something else that's standard.

>> That's for evaluation of the emissions, not necessarily for the eligibility, with are we would be comparing it to more commonly available vehicles, where that would CNG and other technologies?

>> Yes, now you with that, I think I had mentioned CNG is an older low emission technology so that may not be as competitive as say, for instance , the zero-emission or I believe a series hybrid is something, probably -- hydrogen fuel cell is zero-emission.

>> Okay. We have an answer here in the question pod, thank you very much. It says the FAQs document says file size cannot be larger than 3 megabytes. So thank you very much for that.

>> Thank you very much. That's Joyce.

>> Similar to rural and urban, what if with operate in two different states with rural FTA regions. If you are one agency, you should apply to us under this program and we will work out which region that you will work with in obtaining your grant. So the question is regarding SF-424. It seems with the new San Francisco -- aggregate the needs of the states under one project -- rather than the 424, we're talking about supplemental form here. If that's the case, would that mean that the state may need to decide how to allocate awarded fund if the full grant is not awarded? And I think that's always been the case. If a state applies for a package of bus procurements for a variety of sub-recipients and they are rewarded less than the original question, that is then up to the state for allocating those funds among the eligible projects listed in the application. And that's largely the same every time an applicant is awarded less than their original amount or scalable amount. There's another question about prior award. We've answered that. For bus procurement projects, when does FTA -- costs are incurred when a contractor signed. You can certainly do research, you can even begin a procurement but you cannot issue a notice to proceed or execute a contract prior to FTA issuing pre-award availability for this program. Asking for more guidance on projects in rural answers, I think we've answered that as well. Would technology such as idle reduction technology be eligible for funding? So if you were to install this equipment on a diesel bus that reduces emissions, no because this program funds buses. I guess that is bus equipment, but we're talking about the underlying technology. May an applicant resubmit a project that was presented last year and presumably not selected for funding?

>> Yeah, not --

>> Absolutely, you can take some of the information I presented here with my wonderful webinar and, you know, kind of make sure your application fits some of the things indicated or are oh if you have any questions, give me a call, but why not?

>> Just to reiterate, make sure you use the current supplemental form so you have the changes to it.

>> Yes, yes, yes. They've got it anyway. Next question, will innovative technologies to be used on the buses run through -- otherwise be taken into consideration? And I think that if you're talking about innovative technologies that reuse emissions, would we consider that on a case-by-case basis? If you're talking about innovative technologies

that otherwise improved how the transit agency would be able to operate those vehicles, we would certainly be interested in seeing what it is that that technology is or promises to do, but if it's not aligned with one of the evaluation criteria here, it may be eligible but it wouldn't be an effective factor. There is a note that we were looking for. The next question, can you please advise if an applicant chooses to include formula funding do they need to go through the competitive procurement process, and that's a question because of the product under the low or no emission program satisfies the requirement for competitive procurement for the project, any other FTA funds used toward that project will be already deemed to have satisfied the procurement requirement. What if you are replacing CNG vehicles with electric, would that be an eligible project?

>> Yes, that is an eligible project.

>> Although it probably has a lower --

>> Yes.

>> That is the last question in the Q & A pod, and we are at 3:02. Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share, Tara, or Mark, with your experience with the bus system?

>> I will say that it has been a pleasure working with all of you, all of the agencies that I've spoken with throughout the last couple of years, I know some of the non-profits that we've worked with are probably on the webinar. It really has been a pleasure and I've learned a lot and I still have a lot more to learn, but I am happy and willing and able to answer any of your questions. If I don't note answer, I'll get it to you as soon as I can. And just, you know, it's nice to see how this program has been expanded. Mark was telling me he had an opportunity to attend a lot of no low sessions on the bus. I was very pleased he was able to 50 and kind of pull out information, and it's really nice to see the technology or this industry really growing.

>> And certainly the additional appropriations reflects highly upon the work that's going out at transit agencies around the country, and recognize it's been demonstrated through previous rounds of this program.

>> All right, Tara?

>> I think that's it. Any more questions? No? All right.

>> Is there a question deadline? Well, there is a question deadline and the question deadline was at 3:00 p.m. today. So we're sorry, your late questions may or may not be considered. Oh, bad, bad program humor. Thank you very much for being with us here today. We look forward to hearing from you directly, and best of luck in compiling your applications.

>> All right. Thank you, everybody. Take care.