

The Supporting Statement

Introduction: This is a new request for two programs from our Office of Planning. First, the Transportation, Community, and System Preservation (TCSP) Program. The TCSP Program is a comprehensive program to address the relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices and identify private sector-based initiatives to improve such relationships. Secondly, for the Transportation Planning Excellence Awards (TPEA) Program, which are a biennial awards program developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to recognize outstanding initiatives across the country.

Part A. Justification.

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary:

For the TCSP Program, the information collection supports Section 1117 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) which requires that the Secretary of Transportation make grants based on applications from States, tribal, regional, and local governments to carry out eligible projects to integrate transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices.

For the TPEA Program, the information collection supports the FHWA Mission, Vital Few and Strategic Goals by recognizing outstanding initiatives across the country to develop, plan and implement innovative transportation planning practices. The information about the projects selected may be shared as a noteworthy practice for others. The categories for submission include transportation asset management, education and training, freight planning, homeland and personal security, linking planning and operations, modeling and technology applications, planning leadership, public involvement and outreach, safety planning, transportation and land use integration, transportation planning environment and tribal transportation planning. Transportation stakeholders desire information and noteworthy practices from other regions, states, authorities and agencies that can provide techniques and efficient solutions that will result in an improved transportation system.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used:

The TCSP Program is a comprehensive program to address the relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices and identify private sector-based initiatives to improve such relationships. States, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments are eligible for discretionary grants to carry out eligible projects to integrate transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices that:

- Improve the efficiency of the transportation system of the United States.
- Reduce environmental impacts of transportation.
- Reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments.
- Ensure efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade.
- Examine community development patterns and identify strategies to encourage private sector development patterns and investments that support these goals.

Section 1117 of SAFETEA-LU authorized the TCSP Program through FY 2009. A total of \$270 million is authorized for this Program in FY's 2005-2009. The Secretary of Transportation will make grants for projects from States, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments, with priority consideration given to projects that:

- Have instituted coordinated preservation or development plans that promote cost-effective investment and private sector strategies,
- Have instituted other TCSP polices such as those addressing high-growth areas, urban growth boundaries, “green corridors” programs that provide access to major highway corridors for controlled growth areas,
- Address environmental mitigation, and
- Encourage private sector involvement.

The FHWA will use the information collected to make recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation regarding which projects should receive TCSP Program funds.

For the TPEA Program, FHWA, FTA, and the American Planning Association sponsor the awards. Each submittal is evaluated using criteria that are designed to address a number of areas that represent good transportation planning. Anyone may submit a nomination. However, eligible nominations must be for a project, process, group, or individual involved in a project or process that has used Federal Highway Administration and/or Federal Transit Administration funding sources to make an outstanding contribution to the field of transportation planning. Winning entries are selected by an independent panel of judges representing diverse backgrounds and expertise. The award recipients are recognized at a ceremony at a national transportation planning meeting. Information about the awards recipients and the submittal is made available on the Transportation Planning Excellence Awards Program web site, in a published report, and in newsletters and articles.

The purpose of the TPEA Program is to recognize outstanding initiatives across the country in the field of transportation planning that plan and implement innovative transportation planning practices. Recognition is given to projects that go beyond the standard practices and incorporate truly innovative and extraordinary efforts. Those innovative transportation planning practices include qualities such as public participation that is authentic and broadly inclusive, collaboration among jurisdictions, and plans that are truly comprehensive and well-integrated, leading to efficient project implementation that expands choice, mobility, and access. The Program is open to all transportation professionals for plans, process, projects or people that have demonstrated outstanding work that would benefit others in the field.

The initiatives that are recognized serve as exemplars for other transportation stakeholders to improve the coordination, cooperation and consultation of the transportation planning process. By sharing these outstanding initiatives throughout the transportation planning community, agencies support one another to raise the standard of transportation across the board. This Program exemplifies the FHWA and FTA commitment to share and promote innovative planning and implementation tools that are proven and implemented. The Program categories for submission include transportation asset management, education and training, freight planning, homeland and personal security linking planning and operations, modeling and technology applications, planning leadership, public involvement and outreach, safety planning, transportation and land use integration, transportation planning environment and tribal transportation planning.

3. Extent of automated information collection:

The TCSP Program grant application is a Microsoft Word document that is used to collect project information in which FHWA can properly evaluate the candidate projects for review and approval by the Secretary of Transportation. The form is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes. The grant application limits the size of responses by indicating the amount of text that should be included in the application to ensure that the information provided is concise and clear.

For the TPEA Program, the on-line submission form is a tool for the submitters to nominate a process or group or individual. The form is designed to be completed in approximately 90

minutes. This on-line submission form limits the length of responses by indicating the number of words that can be used for a response to each question to ensure that responses are concise and clear. All information is submitted electronically and supporting documentation is optional.

4. Efforts to identify duplication:

In order for grants to be awarded yearly through the TCSP Program by the Secretary of Transportation, FHWA must solicit grant applications from eligible grantees. This information is not readily available and is unique to FHWA.

The biennial TPEA Program facilitates the submittal of current practices. The TPEA Program is the only awards program which is open to all transportation stakeholders for plans, process', projects or people that have demonstrated outstanding work that would benefit others in the field. FHWA and FTA work together to sponsor this single program for transportation planning excellence.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses:

No special equipment is required to apply. Submittal of entries can be completed electronically. If for any reason, this is not possible, fax and mailed copies are acceptable.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information:

In accordance with Section 1117 of SAFETEA-LU, the TCSP Program is expected to solicit grant applications from States, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments on a yearly basis.

The biennial TPEA Program facilitates the submittal of current, innovative practices. If the program were less frequent, FHWA and FTA might miss opportunities to highlight significant planning process, project or people.

7. Special circumstances:

Not Applicable.

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

Federal Register Volume 71, Number 213, Friday November 3, 2006. Three comments were received; however none addressed the information collection request and were not relevant to the collection.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents:

Not Applicable.

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

Not Applicable.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

Not Applicable.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

For the TCSP Grant applications they are to be submitted to FHWA annually. It is estimated that 100 forms will be received annually and each form will take 90 minutes to complete for an annual burden of 150 hours. Labor burden is estimated to be \$43.28 per hour for an annual labor burden of \$6,492.

FHWA anticipates it will take 1 hour to complete each of the 150 TPEA award nomination applications that will be submitted biennially, for an average of 100 annual burden hours over the 3 year period. Labor burden is estimated to be \$43.28 per hour for an annual labor burden of \$4,328.

Total annual burden hours are 250 with \$10,820 in labor burden annually.

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents:

Not Applicable.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government:

The anticipated cost to the Federal government is \$23,379. This figure is based on a GS-14 hourly staff salary of \$44.96 and 520 hours (2,080 * 25% Staff Time) per year to review, process, and manage the TCSP Program.

The anticipated cost to the Federal government is \$18,703. This figure is based on a GS-14 hourly staff salary of \$44.96 and 416 hours (2,080 * 20% Staff Time) every other year to review, process, and manage the TPEA Program.

Total Federal government cost is \$42,082.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

This is a new collection of information mandated by Section 1117 of SAFETEA-LU for the TCSP Program. This is also a new collection of information for the TPEA Program.

16. Publication of results of data collection:

The results will be published on the FHWA TCSP Program web site following the announcement of awards by the Secretary of Transportation. For the TPEA Program, the results will be published on both the TPEA web site and the American Planning Association web site immediately following the award ceremony; in a published report approximately six months after recipients are recognized and in various newsletters; and possibly locally by the recipients.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date of OMB approval:

FHWA expects to display the expiration date of OMB approval on the TCSP Program grant application as well as the TPEA application.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

Not Applicable.