

**INFORMATION COLLECTION
SUPPORTING STATEMENT – PART A
ARRA – Supplemental Discretionary Grants for a National Surface
Transportation System**

1. CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE THE COLLECTION NECESSARY. The collection of information is necessary in order to receive applications for grant funds pursuant to Title XII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (“ARRA”). Title XII establishes a new program for the Office of the Secretary of Transportation (“OST”) to provide Supplemental Discretionary Grants for a National Surface Transportation System. OST is referring to these grants as Grants for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or “TIGER Grants.” The purpose of the TIGER Grants program include promoting economic recovery and projects that have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area or a region.

ARRA required OST to publish criteria for TIGER Grants no later than 90 days after the enactment of ARRA, which is May 18, 2009, and to receive applications no later than 180 days after publishing the criteria. To satisfy these requirements, OST collected 1,400 applications from applicants seeking TIGER Grants. The relevant section of ARRA is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The application requirements specified in the solicitation for applications are attached hereto as Exhibit B. The solicitation is still under review by OMB, but we expect to receive clearance at the beginning of next week.

2. HOW, BY WHOM, AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE THE INFORMATION IS TO BE USED AND CONSEQUENCES IF THE INFORMATION IS NOT COLLECTED. The applications collected through this solicitation will be used by OST, and evaluation teams which is likely to include technical representatives from other agencies in the Department, to evaluate applications for funding under the TIGER Grants program.
3. CONSIDERATION OF IMPROVED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. OST collected all applications electronically. Certain agencies within the Department have found that delivery of applications by email is the most reliable way to collect applications. Also, in order to reduce the burden on applicants, OST indicates in the solicitation that website links to documentation that supports the narrative in the application should be provided, where available, rather than copies of these materials.
4. DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION. The applications will generally be project specific and the information is not available elsewhere. However, to reduce duplication, OST indicates in the solicitation that at the applicant’s discretion, relevant materials provided previously to a Department agency in support of a different Department discretionary program may be referenced and described as unchanged. To the extent referenced, this

information need not be resubmitted for the TIGER Grant application.

5. METHODS USED TO MINIMIZE BURDEN ON SMALL BUSINESSES OR OTHER SMALL ENTITIES. Potential applicants for TIGER Grants include state and local governments, not business organizations.
6. CONSEQUENCES IF INFORMATION WAS NOT COLLECTED OR COLLECTED LESS FREQUENTLY. OST will be unable to satisfy the statutory mandate to require the submission of applications if the collection is not conducted. In order to award discretionary grants on a competitive basis, which is the purpose of the program, OST must collect applications that respond to the evaluation criteria.
7. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT REQUIRE THE COLLECTION TO BE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER INCONSISTENT WITH 5 CFR 1320.6. This solicitation for applications will not require respondents to report information to OST more often than quarterly; however, it should be noted that the funding provided to successful applicants will require recipients to comply with all ARRA-related reporting requirements.
8. EFFORTS TO CONSULT WITH PERSONS OUTSIDE THE AGENCY TO OBTAIN THEIR VIEWS. A 60-day Federal Register notice was published on August 21, 2009 (FR Vol. 74, No. 161). Since the release of the initial May 18, 2009, interim Federal Register notice, a total of 145 comments were received to the Docket (DOT-OST-2009-0115) and reviewed by the Department. Many of the comments received were letters supporting applications submitted for TIGER Discretionary Grant funding. These letters of support were submitted by members of Congress and members of the public. In addition, comments were submitted by members of the public requesting changes to the program selection criteria. These comments were considered and changes were made to the selection criteria in a June 17, 2009, Federal Register notice (FR Vol. 74, No. 115). None of the comments submitted to the Docket since the initial May 18, 2009, Federal Register notice were related to the proposed approval to renew the information collection.
9. EXPLAIN ANY DECISION TO PROVIDE ANY PAYMENT OR GIFT TO RESPONDENTS. OST will not provide any payment or gift to respondents, including remuneration of contractors or grantees.
10. DESCRIBE ANY ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED RESPONDENTS. The solicitation requests that applicants use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies that are accepted by industry practice and standards, to the extent possible. If the application includes information that the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the solicitation directs the applicant to do the following: (1) note on the front cover that the submission “**Contains**

Confidential Business Information (CBI);” (2) mark each affected page “**CBI;**” and (3) highlight or otherwise **denote the CBI portions**. The solicitation states that the Department protects such information from disclosure to the extent allowed under applicable law, and notes that in the event the Department receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information, the Department will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulations at 49 CFR § 7.17. The solicitation notes that only information that is ultimately determined to be confidential under that procedure will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

11. ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE. The solicitation does not request any sensitive or private information.
12. ESTIMATE OF THE HOUR BURDEN OF THE COLLECTION AND ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS. OST received 1,400 applications. In addition, because the majority of the projects that have applied for this ARRA-related funding are fairly well developed, OST expects that it will not generally take applicants more than 100 person-hours to assemble individual applications. Therefore, the total annual hour burden of this one-time collection of applications is 140,000 hours.
13. ESTIMATE OF TOTAL ANNUAL COST BURDEN TO RESPONDENTS. Please note that we expect the receipt of one application per applicant. As noted above, the estimated total annual hour burden on respondents of this one time collection of applications is 140,000 hours. We estimate that the average cost for the services of the personnel is approximately \$33 per hour. Therefore, the total annual cost burden to respondents is estimated to be \$4,620,000.
14. ESTIMATE OF THE ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. The estimated cost to the Federal government of this request for applications is \$437,500. This cost reflects the need to establish an evaluation team to review each of the applications and make recommendations about which projects to provide funding for. OST estimates that the evaluation team will include ten people from various agencies in the Department and that the evaluation process will take three months, which is the equivalent of two and one half job years. The estimated pay for the evaluation team members is approximately \$125,000 per year, so the estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for the evaluation team is \$312,500. OST does not expect to need any special equipment or support, other than printing. As noted above in item 12, OST received 1,400 applications. If each application is 25 pages, as requested in the solicitation, OST may need to print as many as 35,000 pages for each of the ten members of the evaluation team, which adds up to a total of 350,000 pages of printing. (It’s likely that some of the members of the evaluation team will review electronic versions of the applications, but for the purpose of this estimate we assume that all members will review hard copies of all applications.) OST’s printing costs are approximately 1 cent per page, which adds up to a total printing cost of \$3,500.

15. EXPLAIN REASONS FOR CHANGES IN BURDEN. At the time the Department initiated this information collection request, the Department estimated the receipt of 500 applications. However, due to a high-level of interest in this program, the Department received 1,400 applications.
16. PLANS FOR TABULATION AND PUBLICATION. The applications collected for the TIGER Grants program will not be published.
17. IF SEEKING APPROVAL NOT TO DISPLAY THE EXPIRATION DATE FOR OMB APPROVAL, EXPLAIN THE REASONS. OST is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.
18. EXPLAIN ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT. OST does not request any exceptions to the certification statement.