

## COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

### INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date: April 18, 2019

To: Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chair, County Board of Supervisors

From: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation

Subject: Authorization to Apply for Federal Low or No Emission Grant Funds

#### **POLICY**

Per Section 56.06 of the Milwaukee County General Ordinances, authorization is required from the appropriate county board standing committee prior to applying for discretionary federal or state grants that require a local match.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recently announced the opportunity to apply for \$85 million in competitive grants under the FY 2019 Section 5339(c) Low or No Emission Grant Program. As required by Federal public transportation law, funds will be awarded competitively for the purchase or lease of low or no emission vehicles that use advanced technologies for transit operations, including related equipment or facilities. Projects may include costs incidental to the acquisition of buses or the construction of necessary facilities. Grant awards require a minimum fifteen percent local match and applications are due May 14, 2019.

In FY 2018, the Low-No grant program received applications for 151 projects requesting a total of \$558 million. Fifty-two projects were funded at a total cost of \$84.5 million, an average of \$1.6 million per award. In FY 2019, FTA expects to award grants for 45 projects.

The Department of Transportation intends to apply for \$1.7 million in Low-No funds, leveraging local funds previously appropriated in Project WT124 – Battery-Electric Bus Acquisitions. Project WT124 initiates the transition of Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) buses to battery-electric buses (BEBs) and away from fossil fuels. The \$1.7 million Low-No application will propose to purchase four BEBs at an estimated cost of \$850,000 per bus, while providing a 50 percent local matching share currently available in capital project WT124.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Director, Department of Transportation requests authorization to submit a Low-No Emissions grant application for \$1.7 million in federal funding to aid in the financing of four Battery Electric Buses for the Milwaukee County Transit System.

**FISCAL NOTE**

Should a Federal Section 5339(c) Low-No grant be awarded, there would be no fiscal impact as local matching funds for BEBs are currently available in Project WT124 – Battery-Electric Bus Acquisitions. In addition, DOT will bring any awarded grant back to the County Board for authorization to execute a contract pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 59.52(31).

Prepared by: Steve Nigh, Senior Manager Grants Development, DOT

Approved by:

  
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Donna Brown-Martin, Director of Transportation

Cc: Chris Abele, County Executive  
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