



## TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT

TAM News

November 2023

FTA's Transit Asset Management (TAM) newsletter keeps you up to date on asset management initiatives and creates a forum for the industry to share information and learn from one another.

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## Announcements

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### **Fiscal Year 2024 Rail Vehicle Replacement Grant Program Notice of Funding**

**Opportunity:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) [announced](#) approximately \$197 million in competitive grant funding available through its Rail Vehicle Replacement Program. The Fiscal Year 2024 funds will support efforts to replace our nation's aging railcars for the safety and convenience of riders everywhere. The [Rail Vehicle Replacement Program](#) will fund efforts by transit agencies and state and local governmental authorities to replace rail vehicles that are approaching or have exceeded their useful life. The program, established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, will improve reliability, safety, and accessibility on the nation's rail transit systems. Older railcars contribute to service delays and increased costs and lack newer amenities, such as digital signage and audio tools. They may also lack accessibility features. Applicants must register in grants.gov, and complete proposals must be submitted electronically using [GRANTS.GOV](#) "APPLY" function by Monday, December 18, 2023.

### **Biden-Harris Administration Announces 22 Tribes and Alaska Native Villages Will Receive Nearly \$10 Million in Transit Grants from the President's Bipartisan**

**Infrastructure Law:** The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration [announced \\$9.9 million in grants](#) to 22 American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native communities to improve their public transit systems. The competitive grants under FTA's [Tribal Transit Program](#) allow Tribes to buy transit vehicles, upgrade bus facilities, and expand transit options. The President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes nearly \$46 million in competitive funding over five years for the Tribal Transit Program, an increase of nearly 83%.

## Upcoming Events

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**2024 TAM Peer Working Group Call for Participation:** The [FTA's Transit Asset Management \(TAM\) Program](#) is continuing the success of the 2023 TAM peer working group

with a new opportunity for 2024. The group will convene 11-15 participants in an online forum to discuss best strategies for determining asset condition. The group will meet regularly for one year, focusing on various aspects of strategies for condition assessment. Throughout the process, participants will promote peer learning, share peer-designed resources, and collaborate on best practices. Applicants for the virtual TAM peer working group should complete and submit [this form](#) by Thursday, November 16.

**Winter 2024 Peer Exchange Call for Participation:** In February 2024, the FTA TAM Program will host an in-person peer exchange for agencies to discuss how their approach aligning TAM activities with other related FTA requirements, such as:

- NTD reporting;
- developing [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans](#) (PTASPs); and
- preparing for [Comprehensive Reviews](#).

Three agencies will be selected to send 2-3 individuals to participate in the peer exchange. Participants will share successes and challenges to gain best practices to make reporting processes less burdensome. The 1½ day in-person discussion will be hosted at a transit agency and include a tour of the host agency's facilities. Applicants for the in-person peer exchange should submit [this form](#) by Thursday, November 16.

If you have any questions about either opportunity or FTA's TAM Peer Program, contact [Tamalynn Kennedy](#).

## New Resources

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**Creating the Foundation for Quality Asset Data Webinar:** The TAM program hosted a webinar on September 28, 2023, to review how two agencies established frameworks to produce and maintain quality asset data. The [presentation](#) and [recording](#) are available on the [TAM Events webpage](#). The webinar featured presentations from Utah Transit Authority on software solutions for facility inspections and from Maryland Transit Administration on inventory data maintenance standard operating procedures (SOPs) and challenges that led to their use.

**Inclusive Virtual Public Involvement for Public Transit:** Virtual public engagement can be a more inclusive and equitable way to engage with communities, but it is important to consider the digital divide and use a variety of approaches and tools to reach all community members. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, transit agencies had limited virtual communication tools. However, the pandemic encouraged agencies to adopt new virtual strategies and practices. [This report](#) is designed to assist public transit agencies to enhance public engagement by more effectively using virtual tools and strategies.

**NCHRP Research Report 1076: A Guide to Incorporating Maintenance Costs into a Transportation Asset Management Plan:** [NCHRP Research Report 1076](#), from TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program, leads practitioners through a six-part framework designed to tackle the biggest challenges agencies face in projecting future maintenance costs when developing the required risk-based transportation asset management plans and plan activities.

## Articles

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**Transit Savings Grow as Auto Costs and Gas Prices Increase:** APTA reported that riders can save more than \$13,000 per year by using public transit instead of driving, according to the latest information on public transit fares, auto costs, and gasoline prices. [Increases in auto and fuel costs](#) mean that people can save more than before by using public transportation instead of driving. Prices for new and used cars have increased significantly since the pandemic. Financing costs have increased dramatically due to interest rate hikes. In 2023, gasoline prices have increased 25 percent because of constricted supplies and added demand.

**New Jersey: NJ Transit Closer to Building a Dry Place to Park Trains During Floods:** More than 10 years after Superstorm Sandy rolled over the Garden State, sending flood waters surging into NJ Transit's Meadowlands Maintenance Complex, the agency allocated \$44 million to set the stage to build a [safe dry place to park trains](#). New facilities will protect transit assets when flooding is forecast for NJ Transit's larger storage yards in Hoboken, Kearny and Morrisville, Pennsylvania. The project will include construction of a rail yard, storage track and inspection facility off the Northeast Corridor line, where trains can be parked during flood events.

**Georgia: Augusta Transit to Start Operating Electric Buses in 2025:** The City of Augusta's [public transportation is bringing in electric buses](#), and they're expected to be on the road in 2025. A \$6.2 million grant and a \$1.1 million match from the City of Augusta will be used to purchase five new electric buses for Augusta Transit.

**Florida: Tampa Gets \$1.75M Federal Grant to Fix Public Transportation:** Tampa just got a federal grant to address residents' biggest complaints with transit. The city received \$1.75 million this month to [establish a Regional Infrastructure Accelerator office](#) to stimulate major transportation projects and transit development.

**Washington DC: WMATA got \$104M to bulk up electric bus facilities:** The \$104 million dollars will [expand WMATA's electric bus fleet and help convert bus garages](#), to serve electric vehicles. It's an example of how the fight against climate change is changing transit -- and expanding the skills of the people who keep public transportation running.