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| **Title:** | Develop Guidebook for Managing System Costs: Operational and Capital Cost Management at Rural and Small Urban Public Transit Systems |
| **The Problem:** | Public transit is continuously challenged to deliver the highest quality service as efficiently as possible. This challenge has been further increased as a result of the COVD-19 pandemic. Transit agencies throughout Texas have a need to understand and implement best practices to help control operational and capital costs to maintain efficiency in the face of potential revenue and ridership losses. Rural and small urban transit systems often also face the challenge of management staff turnover and a lack of knowledge management practices. These transit systems need reliable, easy-to-use, and offer up-to-date assistance to help them control costs while still offering the highest-quality service.<br><br>This project will update and build upon TxDOT research project 0-6694, Identifying Best Practices for Managing Operating Costs for Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Systems, which resulted in guidance that needs updating due to changes in technology, new federal guidance, new resources, and updates to transit agency operating environments. |
| **Technical Objectives:** | This research will provide guidance for rural and small urban public transit systems for operational and capital cost control. The work to be performed shall include:<br>1. Conduct a national scan of rural and small urban public transit system practices for operational cost control and capital cost control.<br>2. Synthesize findings into a series of best practices modules organized by topic, with supporting toolkits.<br>3. Develop an updated online guidebook to serve as a resource for Texas state-funded transit districts, replacing the previous guidance, including sequential courses and toolkits on each topic.<br>4. Develop instructor-led courses to cover guidebook topics and toolkits.<br><br>The expectation of the project end product(s) shall attain a Technology Readiness Level of 8. |
| **Anticipated Deliverables:** | 1. Technical memorandum for each task completed.<br>2. Monthly progress reports.<br>3. Value of Research (VoR) that includes both qualitative and economic benefits, to be included in the final research report; not a stand-alone deliverable.<br>4. Product: Rural and Small Urban Public Transit Systems Cost Management Guidebook.<br>5. Product: Instructor-led training and materials<br>6. Product: Recorded instructor-led training and materials for virtual learning.<br>7. Research report documenting the findings of the research.<br>8. Project Summary Report. |
| **Proposal Requirements:** | 1. Utilize the "Proj/Agre" and "PA_Form" templates located at the TxDOT RTI website.<br>2. Proposals will be considered non-responsive and will not be accepted for technical evaluation if they are not received by the deadline or do not meet the requirements stated in RTI's University Handbook, which is also located at the RTI website.<br>3. Proposals should be submitted in PDF format, 1 PDF file per proposal. File name should include project name and university abbreviation.<br>4. This project will be tracked during the life of the project using a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale. For more information about the use of a TRL, click. |