



Metropolitan Planning Organization

**Broward MPO Municipal Grants Management
Assessment - Full Report**

DRAFT

Updated as of March 14, 2022

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Executive Summary

This study assesses Broward MPO member governments' ability to apply for and administer federal discretionary transportation grant awards, as well as administer and implement Local Agency Program (LAP) projects. Through a voluntary online survey sent to all member governments' city managers, Broward MPO was able to gauge differences in capacity of its municipal partners in order to better assist in the delivery of federally funded projects. The results of this survey showed an incomplete ability across cities of all sizes to fully implement complex federally funded and LAP projects. Additionally, the study indicates a lesser ability of smaller cities to apply for and oversee the awarding of federal discretionary grants, and a lesser familiarity and capacity with LAP requirements.

Methodology

The primary goal of this research is to assess the capabilities of Broward MPO member governments to apply for and facilitate federal competitive grants and to oversee the implementation of LAP projects. Staff capacity and expertise were of particular interest, as well as assessing the respondents' availability of various data and resources. The secondary goal was to investigate the relationship between a city's size and LAP/Grant administration capacity.

Broward MPO's procurement department in collaboration with the government relations department designed the survey questions, which were divided into two focus areas: a "Federal Grants checklist", and Local Agency Program (LAP) Capabilities. Survey invitations were sent to city managers and MPO board members from all 31 member governments via email from Greg Stuart, Executive Director, with follow up reminders sent periodically.

The survey was open for a period of 2 months, from December 2021 to January 2022. Responses were received from 17 different municipalities across the county, consisting of small, medium, and large cities and towns. For analysis, member governments were divided by population size into small, medium, and large municipalities. Population data was collected from 2020 US census. For purpose of analysis, the municipalities were divided into groups based on population, defining their city sizes as follows:

- Small cities: <20,000 population (n=5)
- Medium cities: 20,000 to 100,000 population (+/- 5,000) (n=6)
- Large cities: >100,000 population (+/- 5,000) (n=6)

For the purposes of analysis of this survey, affirmative answers were interpreted as "positive," meaning they demonstrate greater ability of a member government to administer LAP projects and/or pursue grant opportunities. Respondents' answers were sorted by population group to evaluate the relationship between city size and grant management capacity. Affirmative response total were first divided by focus area (federal grants and LAP capabilities), divided by total number of questions per focus areas, then analyzed both individually and by city size.

A potential weakness of this survey methodology was an incomplete response rate. With 17 of the 31 member governments responding (54.8%), however, the distribution of respondents, both in terms of geography and city size is sufficient and constitutes a representative sample of Broward MPO’s member governments. The survey may have benefited from an inclusion of definitions for certain terms used in questions, as to provide more uniformity in understanding for the respondents. The survey did not provide extensive explanation of certain terms, as a way to further gauge ability. Additionally, confirmation of certain abilities and certifications was not available given the voluntary and online nature of the study.

Results and Analysis

Of the 31 member governments, 17 unique responses were received. All five Broward MPO municipal districts were represented in the survey responses, as well as a satisfactory distribution of small, medium, and large cities.

For both the Federal Grants and LAP capabilities focus areas, small cities on average scored lower in the survey than medium and large cities.

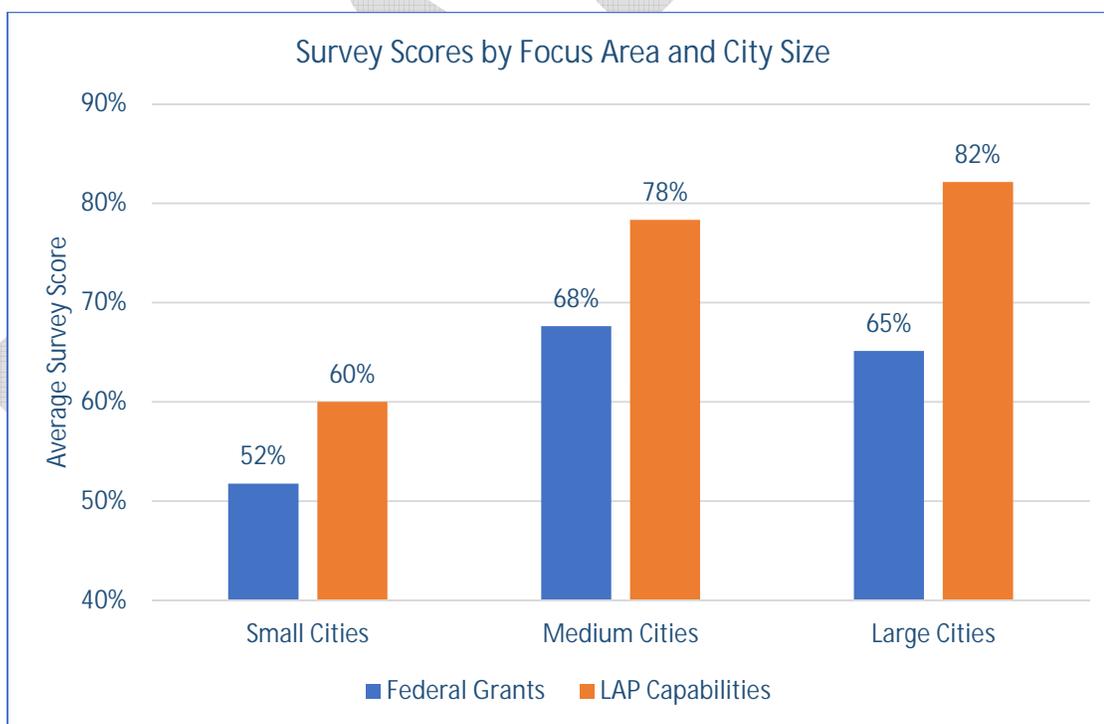


Table 1 Average focus area scores for each population group is shown. As the questions were created such that a “yes” answer indicates greater capability or proficiency, the score is calculated by dividing the number of affirmative responses by the total number of questions in each focus area.

Federal Grants Capabilities – Focus Area 1

Under focus area 1, Federal Grants, the average overall score for small cities (52%) was 16% lower than medium cities (68%), and 13% lower than large cities (65%).

Among member governments who responded, smaller cities were less likely than medium and large cities to indicate that they follow a “goals first planning” principle in which they select projects for grant consideration based on long term plans.

Small cities also indicated that they were on average less prepared to identify transportation-related issues in their municipality and demonstrate how prospective projects would address them.

Fewer small and large-sized cities indicated that they have the requisite types of data available for federal grant applications compared with medium cities.

Large cities had the highest scores when it came to being able to provide information on candidate projects which would support the case for positive impacts, such as environmental sustainability and quality of life improvements.

Small cities scored highest when it came to metrics indicating their ability to commit staffing resources to completing tasks relating to the pursuit of federal competitive grant awards.

Local Agency Program (LAP) Capabilities – Focus Area 2

Of the 17 respondent cities, only 3 indicated that they are currently LAP certified, with each of their LAP certifications expiring in 2023. Of the 5 small cities who responded, only one is currently LAP certified.

Under focus area two, LAP capabilities, the average score for small cities (60%) was well below average, with medium cities scoring 78% and large cities scoring 82%.

Just 60% of responding small cities indicated that their staff possessed the requisite “knowledge of the federal and state requirements for transportation planning processes”, compared to 100% of medium cities, and 83% of large cities.

Large cities and medium sized cities were also more likely to indicate that staff held “experience in design... [of] infrastructure projects similar in scope utilizing federal funds,” as well as experience in “construction oversight of transportation projects.”

City size also correlated with differences regarding equity- and wage-related regulations compliance: just 2 of the 5 small cities indicated that they have experience in Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) tracking and compliance with minimum wage rate decisions and payroll verification, while a majority of both medium (4 of 6) and large cities (5 of 6) answered in the affirmative.

Larger cities were the most likely group to indicate adequate capacity to dedicate a full-time employee as the “responsible charge,” a requirement of the Federal Highway Administration pursuant to 23 CFR 635.105.

Finally, small cities indicated less ability to commit to LAP project delivery versus their larger peers. The average small city was least likely to indicate that their staff have the technical skills and abilities to carry out LAP projects, least likely to indicate an ability to “communicat[e] and cooperate with FDOT’s project management teams,” and least likely to indicate an ability to comply “with the LAP Manual and other federal and state requirements, laws, rules and regulations.”

Conclusions

The goal of this study was to assess the capabilities of Broward MPO member governments to apply for and facilitate federal competitive grants and to oversee the implementation of LAP projects. This study indicates deficiencies across member governments both large and small in their abilities to apply for and administer federal grants and LAP projects. No single city indicated that they could provide 100% of the required capabilities in either focus area. Moreover, only three member governments indicated that they are currently LAP certified. The results show lower scores among smaller cities versus medium and large cities in both the federal grants focus area and the LAP focus area. This suggests a lesser capacity of small sized cities in both focus areas in comparison with their medium and large sized counterparts within the region. Yet what these results show above all is an incomplete ability across cities of all sizes to fully implement complex federally funded projects.

Appendix Table 2.1 Individual Anonymized Survey Responses		Small Cities					Medium Cities		
		A	C	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Goals first planning: Does your team select projects for grant consideration based on long term plans?		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Is your team prepared to identify the transportation issues within your municipality and identify how perspective project(s) under consideration for federal grants would address these issues?		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Check off all the data which you have readily available regarding your prospective project(s):	Up-to-date socioeconomic and demographic data		a		a	a	a	a	a
	Approximate project costs			a		a		a	
	Funding commitments (non-federal)					a	a		a
	Environmental Risk/Required Approvals						a		
	Project Schedule					a		a	a
	Benefit / Cost Analysis (Quantitative Benefits)								a
Can you provide information on how your prospective project(s) will positively impact each of the following criteria? Check all:	Safety	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Environmental Sustainability				a	a	a	a	
	Quality of Life	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	
	Equity					a		a	
	Partnership					a		a	
Team is able to commit staffing resources to (Check all):	Gather/compile data	a	a		a	a	a	a	a
	Pursue letters of support	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Be an active member of the grant development team		a	a	a			a	a
	Does your city have resources available for federal project administration?	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Section 2 - Local Agency Program (LAP) Capabilities								
	Is the Member Government currently LAP certified?					Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Knowledge of the federal and state requirements for transportation planning processes?			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Experience in design with various types of infrastructure projects similar in scope utilizing federal funds?		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Experience in providing construction oversight of transportation projects, preferably federally funded?		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Experience in Disadvantage Business Enterprise tracking, and compliance with minimum wage rate decisions and payroll verification?				Yes	Yes			Yes
	Full time employee to be delegated as the "responsible charge," pursuant to 23 CFR 635.105- Supervising Agency, as further defined in FHWA Memorandum issued on August 4, 2011?			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Ability and commitment to project delivery, as evaluated by performance management criteria such as but not limited to: (Check all that apply)	Technical skills and abilities of Member Government project management staff		a		a	a	a	a	a
	Communication and cooperation with FDOT's project management teams		a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Invoicing frequency and accuracy		a	a	a	a	a	a	
	Compliance with the LAP Manual and other federal and state requirements, laws, rules and regulations				a	a	a	a	

Table 2.2 Individual Anonymized Survey Responses

		Medium Cities			Large Cities					
		I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
	Goals first planning: Does your team select projects for grant consideration based on long term plans?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
	Is your team prepared to identify the transportation issues within your municipality and identify how perspective project(s) under consideration for federal grants would address these issues?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Check off all the data which you have readily available regarding your prospective project(s):	Up-to-date socioeconomic and demographic data		a	a	a					a
	Approximate project costs	a	a	a	a	a	a		a	a
	Funding commitments (non-federal)	a	a	a	a	a				a
	Environmental Risk/Required Approvals	a		a						
	Project Schedule	a	a	a	a	a			a	a
	Benefit / Cost Analysis (Quantitative Benefits)									
Can you provide information on how your prospective project(s) will positively impact each of the following criteria? Check all:	Safety	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Environmental Sustainability		a	a	a	a		a		a
	Quality of Life		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Equity				a			a		a
	Partnership				a	a				a
Team is able to commit staffing resources to (Check all):	Gather/compile data			a		a	a		a	a
	Pursue letters of support	a		a	a	a	a			a
	Be an active member of the grant development team	a		a	a	a				a
	Does your city have resources available for federal project administration?		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Section 2 - Local Agency Program (LAP) Capabilities										
	Is the Member Government currently LAP certified?									
	Knowledge of the federal and state requirements for transportation planning processes?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
	Experience in design with various types of infrastructure projects similar in scope utilizing federal funds?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Experience in providing construction oversight of transportation projects, preferably federally funded?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
	Experience in Disadvantage Business Enterprise tracking, and compliance with minimum wage rate decisions and payroll verification?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
	Full time employee to be delegated as the "responsible charge," pursuant to 23 CFR 635.105- Supervising Agency, as further defined in FHWA Memorandum issued on August 4, 2011?		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ability and commitment to project delivery, as evaluated by performance management criteria such as but not limited to: (Check all that apply)	Technical skills and abilities of Member Government project management staff	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Communication and cooperation with FDOT's project management teams	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
	Invoicing frequency and accuracy		a	a		a	a	a	a	a
	Compliance with the LAP Manual and other federal and state requirements, laws, rules and regulations		a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a

Table 3 - Cities by Population Group, 2020, US Census Bureau

Small cities	Pop. (2020)	Medium cities	Pop. (2020)	Large cities	Pop. (2020)
Hillsboro Beach	1,987	Lauderdale Lakes	35,954	Sunrise	97,335
Southwest Ranches	7,607	Oakland Park	44,229	Davie	105,691
Lighthouse Point	10,486	North Lauderdale	44,794	Miramar	134,721
Wilton Manors	11,426	Coconut Creek	57,883	Hollywood	153,067
West Park	15,130	Weston	68,107	Pembroke Pines	171,178
		Lauderhill	74,482	Fort Lauderdale	182,760

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Table 4.1 - Scores by question and population group: Focus area 1 – Federal Grants Checklist

These tables summarize the answers to each survey question at the population group level. For example, for question one the tables indicates that 100% of medium cities answered “yes,” whereas 83% of large cities answered “yes”. Note: **Red** indicates below average , **green** indicates above average.

		Average (All Cities)	Small Cities	Medium Cities	Large Cities
	Goals first planning: Does your team select projects for grant consideration based on long-term plans?	82.4%	60%	100%	83%
	Is your team prepared to identify the transportation issues within your municipality and identify how perspective project(s) under consideration for federal grants would address these issues?	94.1%	80%	100%	100%
Check off all the data which you have readily available regarding your prospective project(s):	Up-to-date socioeconomic and demographic data	58.8%	60%	83%	33%
	Approximate project costs	64.7%	40%	67%	83%
	Funding commitments (non-federal)	52.9%	20%	83%	50%
	Environmental Risk/Required Approvals	17.6%	0%	50%	0%
	Project Schedule	58.8%	20%	83%	67%
	Benefit / Cost Analysis (Quantitative Benefits)	5.9%	0%	17%	0%
Can you provide information on how your prospective project(s) will positively impact each of the following criteria? Check all:	Safety	100.0%	100%	100%	100%
	Environmental Sustainability	58.8%	40%	67%	67%
	Quality of Life	88.2%	100%	67%	100%
	Equity	29.4%	20%	17%	50%
	Partnership	29.4%	20%	17%	50%
Team is able to commit staffing resources to (Check all):	Gather/compile data	70.6%	80%	67%	67%
	Pursue letters of support	82.4%	100%	83%	67%
	Be an active member of the grant development team	58.8%	60%	67%	50%
	Resources for federal project administration?	76.5%	80%	83%	67%

Table 4.2 - Scores by question and population group: Focus area 2- LAP Capabilities

	Average (All Cities)	Small Cities	Medium Cities	Large Cities	
Is the Member Government currently LAP certified?	17.6%	20%	33%	0%	
Knowledge of the federal and state requirements for transportation planning processes?	82.4%	60%	100%	83%	
Experience in design with various types of infrastructure projects similar in scope utilizing federal funds?	88.2%	80%	83%	100%	
Experience in providing construction oversight of transportation projects, preferably federally funded?	88.2%	80%	100%	83%	
Experience in Disadvantage Business Enterprise tracking, and compliance with minimum wage rate decisions and payroll verification?	64.7%	40%	67%	83%	
Full time employee to be delegated as the “responsible charge,” pursuant to 23 CFR 635.105- Supervising Agency, as further defined in FHWA Memorandum issued on August 4, 2011?	70.6%	60%	67%	83%	
Ability and commitment to project delivery, as evaluated by performance management criteria such as but not limited to: (Check all that apply)	Technical skills and abilities of Member Government project management staff	88.2%	60%	100%	100%
	Communication and cooperation with FDOT’s project management teams	94.1%	80%	100%	100%
	Invoicing frequency and accuracy	76.5%	80%	67%	83%
	Compliance with the LAP Manual and other federal and state requirements, laws, rules and regulations	70.6%	40%	67%	100%