



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the ARRA and how much funding is available?

The "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, 2009" [Pub. L. 111-5; "ARRA"], signed into law by President Barack Obama Feb. 17, 2009, includes \$8.4 billion for transit capital improvements. Below is an excerpt from a March 5 White House news release:

*Today, Vice President Joe Biden and U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced the availability of \$8.4 billion from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for public transportation.*

*"All over the country, resources are being put to work not only creating jobs now – but also investing in the future. A future that strengthens our transit system, makes us more energy efficient and increases safety," said Vice President Joe Biden. "With this recovery package, we will be creating jobs, saving jobs, and putting money in people's pockets. And with these resources, we'll not only be rebuilding roads and bridges and schools, we'll be rebuilding America."*

This law uses the transit formula program related provisions of the ARRA and provides program and grant application requirements for these funds, to be made available through Federal Transit Administration (FTA) assistance programs. The funding formula is a set standard used by the FTA to determine other funding amounts that go to transit agencies.

Votran will receive \$8.4 million in federal transit funding from the economic-stimulus measure passed by Congress and signed by President Obama. It is infrastructure-focused federal economic stimulus funding. The federal register published on March 5, 2009 designated the following amounts available for Volusia County:

Deltona UZA	\$2,461,585
Daytona UZA	\$5,958,540
Total	\$8,420,125

### What expenditures are allowed by the ARRA?

- Capital expenses *only* are eligible
- The funding cannot be used to replace other purchases already committed (cannot supplant).
- 100-percent federal share, except new starts
- No waiver of FTA program requirements (planning/NEPA/Buy America/Labor Protections)
- Cannot mix recovery funds in same grant with any other funds
- Grant obligation deadlines apply

Requirements were set with the intent to identify projects that can be pursued immediately (shovel ready).

### What are the timelines for these purchases?

Funds must be obligated within 180 days after March 5, 2009, with completion of the project within two years. The first 50 percent of funds must be obligated within 180 days of apportionment, with the remaining 50 percent obligated within one year of apportionment.

Administrative steps - require projects to be identified in the MPO TIP and the FDOT STIP and follow all the necessary procedures.

The FTA advises submission of grant applications no later than May 29, 2009

### Why is Votran recommending this set of projects for ARRA funding?

Votran officials strive for a consistent planning approach. Votran has targeted system improvements that are consistent with the most recent transit development plan. Goals pursuing green initiatives, passenger amenities, fleet replacement etc are supported by the allocation of ARRA funds.

### What projects are being considered for ARRA funding?

#### Votran ARRA Projects

Total cost: \$8,420,125

<b>Upgrade our fleet</b>	<i>Upgrade a planned bus replacement of five vehicles with hybrid-electric powered buses rather than standard diesel engines and purchase three vehicle replacements advanced from 2009-2010</i>	<b>\$4,858,507</b>
<b>Support SunRail</b>	<i>Purchase four buses to provide transit connections to SunRail, a commuter rail system expected to be operational in 2011- cost of upgrade to electric-hybrid</i>	<b>\$354,438</b>
<b>Upgrade our Paratransit fleet</b>	<i>Planned bus replacement of five paratransit vehicles upgraded to hybrid-electric powered buses rather than standard diesel engines</i>	<b>\$700,000</b>
<b>Improve infrastructure</b>	<i>Make improvements to local area infrastructure that will increase passenger accessibility.</i>	<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>Reduce consumption</b>	<i>Conduct an assessment of our facilities and operating practices and identify progressive solutions to reduce consumption, save energy and lower expenses.</i>	<b>\$2,007,180</b>

### Why hybrid vehicles?

Hybrid vehicles are more efficient and cleaner than traditional diesel vehicles. The Gillig model that Votran proposes to purchase offers a fuel economy savings of 20- 40 percent and decreased emissions by 25-35 percent. The Gillig hybrid engine is smaller and quieter, therefore, it has significantly lower noise levels than the conventional diesel engine.

The hybrid vehicle has a minimum vehicle life of 12 years / 500,000 miles. It offers a premium pay back of about nine years through savings on brake life; fuel costs and mid-life engine rebuilds. When stopping or decelerating, vehicle energy is converted to electrical energy and stored, with a longer brake life.

**Paratransit Bus Comparison of Performance**

<b>Vehicle characteristics</b>	<b>Diesel vehicle</b>	<b>Hybrid</b>
Initial vehicle cost	\$62,000	\$110,000
Average fuel consumption per mile	.11 gallon	.08 gallon
<b>Life cycle cost</b>		
Vehicle life	\$52,745	\$56,150
<b>Emissions</b>		
CO2 savings (life)	361,905 pounds	-11,000 pounds
NOX reduction (life)	-63.4 percent	control

All fixed route vehicles come equipped with a comprehensive package of advanced technology features and accessibility equipment that includes wheelchair lifts, ramps and bicycle racks. Advanced technology features include automatic passenger counters, security cameras, vehicle locators, electronic headsigns, the Mobile Data Terminal (operates the farebox counter, headsigns and talking bus) Datapoint performance information gathering system, an integrated computerized maintenance and diagnostic package, CommandPoint for onboard communication with dispatch.