

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

# Regional Connections Grant

Planning for Sustainable Communities

Program Guidelines & Application  
FY 2017-2018

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## **Basics**

Thank you for your interest in Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's *Regional Connections* grant program. To be considered for a *Regional Connections* grant, please make sure the following elements have been addressed and are understood.

### **Eligible areas**

Municipalities and counties within the TCRPC regional planning area.

### **Who May Apply**

Municipal or county governments that have a signed MOU with TCRPC - see the attached MOU to sign on, or the listing of municipalities that already have signed to check your status.

### **Eligible Activities**

Planning, ordinances, design, preliminary engineering, market analyses, feasibility studies or capacity building activities that support the TCRPC Regional Growth Management Plan and connect resilient land use decisions with transportation decisions supported by the Regional Transportation Plan.

### **Ineligible Activities**

Acquisition of land or buildings, infrastructure or site preparation, final engineering, bid/construction documentation, or general construction.

### **Available Funds**

\$100,000 which comes from federal transit transportation funds through PennDOT. All funds must be expended by June 30, 2018.

### **Required Match**

20% of total project cost (must be cash, non-federal source)

### **Contract Requirements**

All awardees must enter into a contract with TCRPC. If using an outside consultant, proof of a competitive process will be required.

### **Application/Supporting Materials Deadline**

August 31, 2016 at 4:00 PM. Only the MOU and the chief elected official signature on the application cover sheet will be accepted through October 31, 2016.

### **Application Link**

<http://www.tcrpc-pa.org/RGMP/>

### **Questions**

All questions should be directed to Diane Myers-Krug, at [dkrug@tcrpc-pa.org](mailto:dkrug@tcrpc-pa.org).

## Purpose

The *Regional Connections* program was created in 2011 as an opportunity for Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) to support local planning and development efforts in individual municipalities that help implement our regional long range land use and transportation plans – *Regional Growth Management Plan* and *Regional Transportation Plan* (RGMP and RTP). Central to this effort is the creation of greater quality of life choices by providing and maintaining essential infrastructure (including stormwater management and flooding pollution prevention), supporting local and regional economic development, and linking land use and transportation decision-making. To that end, activities undertaken have served to manage growth, enhance community character, and maximize existing infrastructure capacity.

*Regional Connections* provides a mechanism for local governments to undertake locally-directed, collaborative activities to improve their communities, which implement local and county comprehensive plans and support the goals of our regional plans. Through the *Regional Connections* program we also hope to support and leverage other programs by providing funding to undertake planning, analysis or design initiatives which implement the RGMP and RTP, and link land use and transportation planning to create a more sustainable and resilient region.

Some of the RGMP and RTP policies that directly relate to the *Regional Connections* program are:

- *Plan regionally and implement locally.* Intergovernmental cooperation among neighboring municipalities to provide a regional context in local decisions.
- *Concentrate development and provide infill opportunities based on “land needs”.* Target development activity and investment priorities where infrastructure is already in place.
- *Provide efficient infrastructure and community services while protecting the environment.* Align local capital investments to achieve balanced built and natural support systems for efficient functioning on a regional scale.
- *Livability and sustainability.* Integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, and transportation infrastructure management decisions which support conservation, resiliency and quality of life goals.

## Who May Apply?

Municipalities and county governments within the TCRPC regional planning area are eligible to apply for funding. All applicants must have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TCRPC, which demonstrates their support of the concepts of the *Regional Growth Management Plan*, as adopted in January 2011. A copy of the MOU is attached to this document, and a list of municipalities that have already signed the MOU is also provided.

Applications should demonstrate how the grant award will:

- improve overall livability and sustainability
- provide efficient infrastructure and services
- target investments
- lead to implementation, construction or activities which leverage additional investment
- protect or enhance community, natural and water resources
- encourage multi-municipal cooperation
- help realize the goals of the RGMP and RTP

### Livability & Sustainability

- ❖ provide more transportation choices
- ❖ promote equitable, affordable housing
- ❖ enhance economic competitiveness
- ❖ support existing communities
- ❖ coordinate policies and leverage investment
- ❖ value 'place' (communities & neighborhoods)
- ❖ achieve development without undermining its physical, economic or social systems of support

### Land Needs Concept

Where and how much ...

Areas targeted for future development are based on expected mix and desired density of use, as well as presence of natural resources, features and existing infrastructure

## Eligible Activities

This round of funding is supported through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); therefore **projects must focus on their multi-modal nature and connectivity improvement, especially those supporting increased transit opportunities.**

The *Regional Connections* program can support planning studies, analyses, feasibility studies, ordinance writing, preliminary engineering or design. It emphasizes initiatives built around the "land needs" concept, planned growth and community service areas, integration with a multi-modal regional transportation network, but allows applicants to define their projects and describe how it advances the overall policies of the RGMP and RTP.

Projects may be located in planned growth areas where improvements to existing infrastructure can be planned and integrated regionally, and coordinated and implemented locally. Projects may be located in downtowns, rural areas, commercial centers, neighborhoods, along corridors, or serve to protect and enhance conservation areas. Previous awards have supported regional trail planning, urban redevelopment, corridor

improvement alternatives, form-based zoning, official maps, and comprehensive transportation, land use and watershed management projects.

A sampling of eligible project types for this FTA-supported round of funding include, but are not limited to:

Land Use:

- ordinances promoting mixed use development, roadway/sidewalk/trail connectivity, and alternative modes of transportation (pedestrians, bicycles, transit)
- sidewalk inventories, feasibility and gap analysis
- revitalization/redevelopment plans, especially those featuring transit-oriented design (TOD)
- traditional neighborhood design (TND)
- healthy community planning, including walkability and access to transit
- official maps
- comprehensive plans

Transportation:

- transit feasibility studies with smart transportation, land use and community design components
- active transportation planning including walking, bicycling, using wheelchairs, skateboarding and rollerblading
- walkability and safe routes plans
- park and ride feasibility studies, car & bike sharing opportunities
- “Complete Streets”, streetscape improvement, trail and sidewalk improvement plans and design standards requiring street network connectivity and access management
- mobility and connectivity study (around a bus/train station)
- planning for Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) eligible projects (including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, environmental mitigation, recreational trail program projects, and safe routes to school projects)
- parking policies
- corridor plans

And other proposed activities not specifically listed above, which meet the *Regional Connections* program objectives, may also be considered.

## Funding

Funding for the *Regional Connections* program comes from federal transportation funds through PennDOT and is administered by Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. For this round of funding, up to \$100,000 per project is available. A minimum 20% local (non-federal), cash match must be provided by the applicant. This 20% is calculated based on the total project budget; put differently, the federal dollars cannot exceed 80% of the total budget. You may also calculate the required match by simply multiplying your grant amount request by 25%. For the total \$100,000 available, a minimum \$25,000 match must be provided.

Grant awards are made by TCRPC to municipal/county governments on a competitive basis, based on project merit and adherence to the *Regional Connections* program guidelines, and assessed through the selection criteria (see page 11). A review committee of TCRPC representatives will conduct the evaluation and make the final selection(s).

Upon award notification, successful applicants must attend a mandatory meeting to review grant details and contracting requirements including budget, invoicing and payment terms. Contracts between the applicant(s) and TCRPC must be executed within 6 months of the notice of award date. **Any project work completed or other project cost incurred prior to the effective date of the contract with TCRPC is not eligible for reimbursement through the *Regional Connections* program.**

Applicants will work with TCRPC staff who will provide project funding oversight; applicants also may be requested to meet with TCRPC staff during the term of the contract to review progress, including periodic progress reports.

## Contracting

Successful applicants are required to enter into a contract with TCRPC, with all project tasks and deliverable products completed no later than **June 30, 2018**. All funds are available on a reimbursement basis only; no advanced, “up front” funds will be given. Once started, the grant award is binding to completion; if the grantee fails to complete the project, the full amount of the grant must be repaid.

Proposed project activities may be undertaken by the municipal staff, county staff, an outside consultant or team of consultants, or some combination of the above as appropriate. Existing municipal planning or engineering consultants may only be used if that consultant was previously selected through a competitive selection process within the past five (5) years. If an outside consultant is sought, selection must be on a competitive basis in

accordance with all state and federal requirements.<sup>1</sup> Municipalities are responsible for procurement process compliance<sup>2</sup>; TCRPC can assist the applicant by posting Requests for Proposals (RFPs) on the TCRPC website and providing technical assistance in consultant selection. Any award in excess of \$10,000 requires a competitive RFP/consultant selection process, the costs of which cannot be reimbursed through the *Regional Connections* award.

## **Project Deliverables**

- Data and materials, including GIS files, generated under the TCRPC Regional Connections program shall be the property of TCRPC and it shall have full right to use such data for any official purpose in whatever manner deemed desirable and appropriate, including making it available to the general public.
- Press releases and other public dissemination of information concerning the project work must acknowledge the grant support made possible through the TCRPC *Regional Connections* program.
- Final project product must acknowledge that the project was made possible through the TCRPC *Regional Connections* program.
- Prior to payment of the final invoice the selected applicant must make a presentation to the TCRPC.

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<sup>1</sup> Advertisements shall be a minimum of three (3) weeks.

<sup>2</sup> Applicants are encouraged to refer to information and guidelines in the PA Unified Certification Program (<http://www.paucp.com/>), which also includes links to PennDOT DBE Supportive Services Center (<http://pennsylvaniadb.com/>), and PennDOT Bureau of Equal Opportunity and Small Business Enterprise ([www.dotsbe.pa.gov](http://www.dotsbe.pa.gov)), and US DOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (<https://www.transportation.gov/small-business/disadvantaged-business-enterprise-dbe-program>).

## Schedule

All applications must be received at TCRPC no later than **4 pm on August 31, 2016**. Faxes or e-mail copies will not be accepted. Applications received after the due date and time will not be accepted. Applicants will be notified of selection by September 30, 2016. Applicants will enter into a contract with TCRPC within 6 months of the notice of award date, with all project tasks and deliverable products completed no later than **June 30, 2018**.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| June 1, 2016.....                           | Funding availability announced; guidelines published  |
| June - August.....                          | TCRPC staff outreach to municipalities, potential applicants  |
| August 31, 2016.....                        | Applications due at TCRPC   |
| September 1 to .....<br>September 30, 2016  | Application review by committee   |
| September 30, 2016 .....                    | Selected applicant(s) notified  |
| October 12, 2016 .....                      | <b>Awardees mandatory meeting</b> with TCRPC staff  |
| October 13, 2016 to .....<br>March 31, 2017 | Selected applicant(s) enter into contract with TCRPC; conduct RFP process (if applicable)   |
| March 31, 2017 to.....<br>June 30, 2018     | Work begins, reporting, invoicing in accordance with contract   |
| June 30, 2018 .....                         | All tasks and products must be complete; adoption/acceptance of ordinances and plans and presentation to TCRPC must occur for final 10% of the grant to be released |

## Application Submission

Applications may be submitted by counties or municipalities in the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission regional planning area. For multi-municipal efforts, one municipality must be the lead applicant for communications and contracting purposes, and a letter documenting commitment to participation in the project and commitment of a portion of the match is required from all partnering communities.

The following items comprise a complete application, not to exceed 10 pages (not including the MOU and partner commitment letters):

1. Cover Sheet (1 page, with appropriate signatures – included at end of this document)
2. Copy of executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TCRPC (fillable pdf format included at end of this document and [online](#))
3. An 8-1/2 x 11 inch location map, indicating the extent of the project area (1 page)
4. A narrative description of the project, consisting of the following: (5 page limit)
  - Statement of the problem - purpose and need of the project
  - A description of the project area including existing conditions and growth trends
  - Efforts to date to address the problem, if any
  - Scope of work, including proposed project approach, budget and schedule
  - Discussion of how the project will link land use and transportation to enhance growth management, regional resiliency and the efficiency of the transportation network
  - Proposed approach to gather public input and cooperation, including a list of stakeholders
  - Project results and deliverables
5. Narrative describing the proposed strategy to implement the plans, ordinances or results of the *Regional Connections* project. The narrative should include general implementation approach, community's commitment and identified potential funding sources, where required, to move the *Regional Connections*-funded planning project forward. (1 page limit)
6. An assessment of the project advancing the policies of the RGMP and RTP listed on page 3, as well as the ability to link land use and transportation. (1 page limit)

7. Supporting materials such as references/links to related plans or studies (1 page limit), and letters indicating commitment of project partners only. **Do not include general letters of support.**
8. Both a hard copy and an electronic version (Word doc or pdf) of the application on a CD are required to be submitted.

Completed application packages must be sent to:

Diane Myers-Krug, AICP  
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission  
112 Market Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

All applications must be received at TCRPC no later than 4 pm on **August 31, 2016**. Faxes or e-mail copies will not be accepted. Applications received after the due date and time will not be accepted. Applicants will be notified of selection by **September 30, 2016**.

#### References:

- TCRPC Regional Growth Management Plan – [www.tcrpc-pa.org/RGMP](http://www.tcrpc-pa.org/RGMP)
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) template – [MOU form](#)
- HATS Regional Transportation Plan – [www.tcrpc-pa.org/HATS/Regional-Transportation-Plan](http://www.tcrpc-pa.org/HATS/Regional-Transportation-Plan)
- Smart Growth - <http://smartgrowth.org/why-smart-growth/>
- PA Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment & Resource Conservation - <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/pkp.pdf>
- PA Smart Transportation Initiative: [Linking Land Use & Transportation Planning](#)
  - [Improving Connectivity and System Function through Local Planning](#) (Pub 731)
  - [Improving the Land Use – Transportation Connection through Local Implementation Tools](#) (Pub 662)
  - [Integrating Transportation and Land Use in Comprehensive Plans](#) (Pub 688)
- Transportation Alternatives Program - <https://sportal.dot.pa.gov/Planning/AppReg/Pages/default.aspx>

## Review & Selection Criteria

Each of the following five (5) criteria will be used to evaluate the applications. Points listed are the maximum allowable, with typical considerations to assess the applications suggested as a guide below each. A minimum score of 75 is required to be eligible for funding.

|  | <u>Points</u> |
|--|---------------|
| <b>1. Land Use-Transportation Linkage (RGMP-RTP implementation)</b> ..... 30<br><i>How well the proposal furthers connecting the TCRPC Regional Growth Management Plan and HATS Regional Transportation Plan policies. Items for consideration include:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase in transportation options (ie. walking, biking and public transit)</li> <li>b. Improvement in form of development (density, infill) as related to transportation</li> <li>c. Targets investment; uses existing infrastructure capacity</li> <li>d. Implements PA Keystone Principles and Criteria, as well as “smart” growth and transportation concepts</li> </ol> | 30            |
| <b>2. Implementation Strategy</b> ..... 20<br><i>How well the proposal furthers the ability to influence local land use decisions for regional benefit. Items for consideration include:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Degree of community, agency and other stakeholder involvement</li> <li>b. Follow up on recommendations from a previously adopted study</li> <li>c. Ability to leverage other funds; reasonable budget</li> <li>d. Detail of implementation approach, schedule, achieving results, evaluation</li> </ol>   | 20            |
| <b>3. Project Status</b> ..... 20<br><i>Demonstrates “fit” with surrounding municipalities and ability to implement the proposal. Items for consideration include:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Likelihood to provide knowledge transferrable to other municipalities in the region</li> <li>b. Ability of the municipality to manage the project and prior record of performance</li> <li>c. Innovative concept or design</li> <li>d. Advances RGMP and RTP goals</li> </ol>   | 20            |
| <b>4. Multi-municipal projects</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 2 municipalities.....5</li> <li>b. 3 or 4 municipalities ..... 10</li> <li>c. 5 or more municipalities ..... 15</li> </ol>  |               |
| <b>5. Project Benefits</b> ..... 15<br><i>How well the proposal helps to further the overall quality of life in the region. Items for consideration include:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Enhancement in community character and quality of life</li> <li>b. Degree of added benefits that support livability and sustainability</li> <li>c. Degree of positive physical, economic and social impact on community</li> <li>d. Supports planned growth and community service areas, land needs concept</li> </ol>  | 15            |

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**Total Points**

**75 – 100**

## Contract Management

Projects selected for *Regional Connections* program funding require a contract with TCRPC. Awardees are required to attend a mandatory meeting with TCRPC staff to review grant details and contracting requirements including budget, invoicing and payment terms. Contract execution with TCRPC must be completed within 6 months of award notification (March 31, 2017), including the competitive RFP selection process, as applicable. **Failure to complete the RFP and contracting procedures within this timeframe could result in the removal of the project funds.**

Once a contract is fully-executed between the applicant and TCRPC, the applicant is obligated to provide all project tasks and deliverable products no later than **June 30, 2018**. Awardees are strongly encouraged to keep TCRPC staff involved in advisory/steering committee meetings as the project progresses.

The *Regional Connections* program is based on the reimbursement of costs only. Project costs will be reimbursed based on the submittal of invoices and progress reports documenting the costs and containing the information in the format provided by TCRPC. Invoices and progress reports documenting all labor and reimbursable expenses must be submitted on a **monthly** basis, unless otherwise provided in the contract. **Any project work completed or other project cost incurred prior to the effective date of the contract with TCRPC is not eligible for reimbursement through the *Regional Connections* program.**

Up to 90% of the grant will be awarded upon completion of the work product, and the final 10% will be released upon the acceptance or adoption of the project by the governing bodies/participating municipalities, as well as upon receipt of one (1) hard copy and one (1) electronic copy of the final product, data and materials by TCRPC. Prior to payment of the final invoice the awardee or its selected consultant is required to make a presentation of the project to TCRPC.

**Regional Connections**  
*Planning for Sustainable Communities*

**Cover Sheet**

**Applicant:**

Municipality/County: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Elected Official and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Contact and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Memorandum of Understanding with TCRPC: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Project Title/Description:**

**Project Location**

(Include 8-1/2 x 11 map indicating the extent of the project area.)

**Budget:**

Total Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Regional Connections Grant funds requested: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Regional Connections grant amount request can be no more than 80% of the total budget.*

Amount and source of matching funds: \_\_\_\_\_

Other committed funds: \_\_\_\_\_

Source(s) of other committed funds: \_\_\_\_\_

**Schedule:**

Months to complete: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected adoption date (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:**

Chief Elected Official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Memorandum of Understanding

Entered into by and between

\_\_\_\_\_ and  
(municipality)

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC)

The intent of this Memorandum of Understanding is to ensure the 2011 Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) is implemented in an open manner involving regional stakeholders, consistent with Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) policies, and an accurate reflection of the region's values. Its purpose is to form a working relationship between TCRPC and its municipalities in the implementation of the regional plan.

**WHEREAS**, TCRPC has served as a central forum for information sharing, consensus building, and coordination to resolve regional issues since 1966, and continues to establish priorities for implementing projects and programs on a regional basis; and

**WHEREAS**, in June 2000, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania created amendments to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code that give new tools to municipalities for development and implementation of regional plans; and

**WHEREAS**, the most recent update of the TCRPC Regional Growth Management Plan (RGMP) was adopted in January 2011; and

**WHEREAS**, the RGMP, collaboratively created by TCRPC members, business, environmental and elected leaders, provides a regional framework for local decisions on growth and development within the TCRPC region; and

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_ recognizes that local growth and development decisions can impact neighboring municipalities and the region; and

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_ understands that unplanned development can place a significant burden on transportation systems, sewer and water infrastructure, school districts and municipal services; and

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_ is willing to encourage and accommodate planned growth and development, provide for the orderly extension and integration of community services, promote the economic vitality of the region; protect the environment and enhance the quality of life of its residents; and

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_ recognizes that multi-municipal planning and implementation is mutually beneficial, in the public interest, and necessary to provide for the orderly growth and development of the region; and

**WHEREAS,** \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledges neighboring municipalities share many common characteristics such as economic base, development pressure, environmental resources, traffic, and limited infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS,** \_\_\_\_\_ desires to voluntarily and collaboratively set forth the principles defined in the RGMP that illustrate their commitment to address the nature and location of growth within its individual and neighboring municipalities, and the region as a whole; and

**WHEREAS,** this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a mechanism to encourage all municipalities to have plans and ordinances in place that are consistent with the regional planning concepts incorporated into the adopted RGMP.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** in consideration of the above, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby recognizes that there are certain fundamental principles which guide integrated growth and development on a regional scale and agree to rely on the following, as provided in the RGMP:

Intergovernmental cooperation. \_\_\_\_\_ will communicate with neighboring municipalities to incorporate a regional context in local decisions; cooperate in all practical ways with local, state and federal government agencies so as to maximize funding opportunities and enhance the effectiveness of regional plan implementation.

“Land Needs” concept. \_\_\_\_\_ will focus development activity and investment priorities where infrastructure is already in place, as defined by planned growth and community service areas, and based on desired densities and capacities for future growth.

Infrastructure investment. \_\_\_\_\_ will align local capital to achieve balanced built and natural support systems for efficient functioning on a regional scale.

Livability and sustainability principles. \_\_\_\_\_ will integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, and transportation management decisions to promote compact, infill development which supports conservation and quality of life goals.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman —*Tri-County Regional Planning Commission*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Name, Title - Authorized Elected Official*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Memorandum of Understanding - signed to date**

### Cumberland County

Cumberland County Board of Commissioners  
Cumberland County Planning Commission  
Carlisle Borough  
Cooke Township  
East Pennsboro Township  
Hampden Township  
Lemoyne Borough  
Lower Allen Township  
Monroe Township  
Mount Holly Springs Borough  
Newville Borough  
Shippensburg Borough  
Silver Spring Township  
South Middleton Township  
Upper Allen Township  
Wormleysburg Borough

### Dauphin County

Dauphin County Board of Commissioners  
Dauphin County Planning Commission  
City of Harrisburg  
Derry Township  
Halifax Borough  
Halifax Township  
Highspire Borough  
Hummelstown Borough  
Jackson Township  
Jefferson Township  
Lower Paxton Township  
Lower Swatara Township  
Lykens Township  
Middle Paxton Township  
Middletown Borough  
Paxtang Borough  
Rush Township  
Steelton Borough  
Susquehanna Township  
Swatara Township  
Upper Paxton Township  
Washington Township  
West Hanover Township  
Wiconisco Township

### Perry County

Perry County Board of Commissioners  
Perry County Planning Commission  
Liverpool Borough  
Liverpool Township  
Penn Township  
Toboyne Township  
Wheatfield Township

### Other Organizations

Capital Region Council of Governments  
Community Action Commission  
Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS)  
Modern Transit Partnership