Purpose

The purpose of this report is to identify potential U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) funding sources and other resources (i.e. technical assistance/data). These funding sources may be available to support long-term recovery efforts in Mississippi as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

It is anticipated that transportation funding sources would be reevaluated and redistributed to be supportive of long-term community recovery efforts related to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. For information regarding transportation improvement funding, contact the regional metropolitan planning organization or the State Department of Transportation.

I. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

The Department of Transportation was established by an act of Congress on October 15, 1966. The mission of the Department is to serve the United States by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future.

There are 13 agencies within the Department of Transportation listed below. The research for this report included internet searches of strategic planning and budgeting documents for those agencies with potential funding sources for the long-term community recovery efforts. This is not necessarily a comprehensive, all-inclusive list of funding sources within the Department of Transportation. The agencies in bold have additional information in the remaining sections of the document on programs with potential funding opportunities for the long-term community recovery efforts.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) www.fta.dot.gov
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) www.fra.dot.gov
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) www.phmsa.dot.gov
Maritime Administration (MARAD) www.marad.dot.gov
Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST) www.dot.gov/ost/index.html
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) www.faa.gov
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) www.fmcsa.dot.gov
Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) www.rita.dot.gov
Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC) www.seaway.dot.gov
Surface Transportation Board (STB) www.stb.dot.gov

II. SAFETEA-LU

On August 10, 2005, the President signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). With guaranteed funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation totaling $244.1 billion, SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation's history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)—shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on this firm foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure.
SAFETEA-LU addresses the many challenges facing our transportation system today challenges such as improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment – as well as laying the groundwork for addressing future challenges. SAFETEA-LU promotes more efficient and effective Federal surface transportation programs by focusing on transportation issues of national significance, while giving State and local transportation decision makers more flexibility for solving transportation problems in their communities.

SAFETEA-LU continues a strong fundamental core formula program emphasis coupled with targeted investment, featuring: Safety, Equity, Innovative finance, Congestion Relief, Mobility & Productivity, Efficiency, Environmental Stewardship and Environmental Streamlining.

SAFETEA-LU authorized a number of programs. Fact sheets for all the programs can be found at: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/factsheets.htm. There may be programs other than those listed in this document that may be applicable.

III. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The Federal Highway Administration coordinates highway transportation programs in cooperation with states and other partners to enhance the country’s safety, economic vitality, quality of life, and the environment. Major program areas include the Federal-Aid Highway Program, which provides federal financial assistance to the States to construct and improve the National Highway System, urban and rural roads, and bridges. This program provides funds for general improvements and development of safe highways and roads. The Federal Lands Highway Program provides access to and within national forests, national parks, Indian reservations and other public lands by preparing plans and contracts, supervising construction facilities, and conducting bridge inspections and surveys. The FHWA also manages a comprehensive research, development, and technology program.

Emergency Relief Program
Contact: FHWA Office of Program Administration at (202) 366-4655
One of the many programs authorized by SAFETEA-LU. The Emergency Relief program provides funds for the repair or reconstruction of Federal-aid highways and roads on Federal lands that have suffered serious damage as a result of natural disasters or catastrophic failure from an external cause.

The Emergency Relief Program is funded by a permanent authorization of contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund with obligations not to exceed $100 million per year, available until expended, and exempt from the Federal-aid highway obligation limitation.

In addition to the permanent authorization, SAFETEA-LU authorizes from the General Fund of the Treasury such sums as may be necessary to supplement the permanent authorization in years when Emergency Relief allocations exceed $100 million. Congressional legislation would be necessary to make additional funds available.
IV. Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
The Federal Transit Administration assists in developing improved mass transportation system for cities and communities nationwide. Through its grant programs, FTA helps plan, build, and operate transit systems with convenience, cost and accessibility in mind. While buses and rail vehicles are the most common type of public transportation, other kinds include commuter ferryboats, trolleys, inclined railways, subways, and people movers. In providing financial, technical and planning assistance, the agency provides leadership and resources for safe and technologically advanced local transit systems while assisting in the development of local and regional traffic reduction. The FTA maintains the National Transit library, a repository of reports, documents, and data generated by professionals and others from around the country. The NTL is designed to facilitate document sharing among people interested in transit and transit related topics.

Selected Funding Sources

FTA has several major assistance programs for eligible activities. Funds are provided through legislative formulas or discretionary authority. Funding from these programs is provided on an 80/20 Federal/local funding match basis, unless otherwise specified. The following information can also be found at the following website or by calling the FTA Region IV Office at (404) 562-3500, or visit the website at http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/4187_ENG_HTML.htm

Metropolitan Planning
Contact: FTA Metropolitan or Region Office http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/metropolitan_planning/4070_ENG_HTML.htm
Regional or metropolitan transportation planning (49 USC §5303-5306) in urbanized areas (those over 50,000 in population) is performed by the metropolitan planning organization (MPO). MPOs are responsible for developing a long-range transportation plan (minimum 20 years) and the three- to five-year transportation improvement program (TIP) for the area, in cooperation with the state(s) and affected public transit operators. The TIP must be consistent with the long-range plan and must include all projects in the metropolitan area that are proposed for funding with federal transit funds.

Statewide Planning
Each state is responsible for the statewide transportation planning process within its jurisdiction. This planning process produces both the 20-year statewide transportation plan and the three- to five-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Statewide transportation plans include the future state vision for mobility that considers the same factors as the metropolitan planning process (above).

STIPs are short-term documents that list the projects to be advanced by the state over three to five years with FTA funding. Only projects listed in the STIP can receive FTA funding and must be consistent with the long-range transportation plan. STIPs include all capital projects in rural areas as well as all capital projects contained in the metropolitan TIPs. STIPs are approved by the state, FTA, and the Federal Highway Administration at least biannually.

Urbanized Area Formula Program
This program makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas.
Nonurbanized Area Formula Program  
Contact: FTA Office of Resource Management and State Programs: (202) 366-2053  
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/non_urbanized/4161_ENG_HTML.htm  
This program provides operating and/or capital formula funding to states for supporting public transportation in areas of less than 50,000 population.

New Starts Planning and Project Development Process  
Contact: FTA Metropolitan or Region Office  
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/major_capital_investments/4271_ENG_HTML.htm  
FTA’s discretionary New Starts program is the federal government’s primary financial resource for supporting locally planned, implemented, and operated transit guideway capital investments. SAFETEA-LU authorizes $8.1 billion in Section 5309 New Starts funding through Fiscal Year 2009 (> $1.5 billion/year) for the construction of new transit projects. Projects seeking New Starts funding, like all federally-funded transportation investments in metropolitan areas, must emerge from a locally-driven, multimodal transportation planning process and follow FTA’s New Starts planning and project development process. Steps in the process include:

- Alternatives Analysis, in which local agencies evaluate several modal and alignment options for addressing mobility needs in a given corridor and select a locally preferred alternative to implement;
- Preliminary Engineering, in which project costs, benefits, and impacts are refined; federal environmental studies are completed; and local funding commitments are secured; and
- Final Design, which includes right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and the preparation of final construction plans.

SAFETEA-LU, like ISTEA and TEA-21 before, directs FTA to evaluate and rate New Starts projects as they proceed through the project development process and as input into federal funding recommendations published in the Department of Transportation’s Annual Report on New Starts to Congress. The rating and evaluation of proposed New Starts are used to help identify those projects that are most worthy of federal investment.

SAFETEA-LU also specifies a new category of projects to be funded separately out of the New Starts program. This new category encompasses smaller scale projects, referred to as Small Starts. Projects requesting less than $75 million in New Starts funds with a total project cost less than $250 million will be eligible to receive funds under the new Small Starts provision.

Bus and Bus-Related Program  
Contact: FTA Office of Resource Management and State Programs: (202) 366-2053  
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/buses_facilities/4247_ENG_HTML.htm  
This program provides capital funding for buses, bus maintenance and administrative facilities, transfer facilities, park-and-ride stations, bus maintenance, passenger shelters and bus stop signs, and other bus-related purchases.

Job Access and Reverse Commute Program  
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/job_access_reverse_commute/4339_ENG_HTML.htm  
This program provides capital funding to develop transportation services for welfare recipients and low income individuals to and from jobs, and to develop transportation services from urban centers to suburban employment opportunities.
Flexible Funding
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/flexible_funds_highway_transit_flexible_funding/4328_ENG_HTML.htm
This is a capital funding mechanism, authorized under TEA-21, which allows some highway funds to be transferred to transit projects, and vice-versa.

Elderly and Persons with Disabilities
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/elderly_disabilities/4226_ENG_HTML.htm
This capital program provides formula funding to States for assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Over-The-Road Bus Accessibility
http://www.fta.dot.gov/grant_programs/specific_grant_programs/over_the_road_bus_program_accessibility/4364_ENG_HTML.htm
This program provides operating funding for private over-the-road bus operators to retrofit vehicles to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Transportation and Community and Systems Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP)
Contact: Office of Budget and Policy 202-366-1668
The Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP) (TEA-21, Section 1221) provides capital funding for a comprehensive initiative including planning grants, implementation grants, and research to investigate and address the relationships between transportation and community and system preservation and to identify private sector-based initiatives.

Any project eligible for funding under Title 23 or chapter 53 of Title 49 U.S.C. is eligible for TCSP funds as well as any other activity relating to the purposes of this section when determined appropriate by the Secretary. These may include corridor preservation activities necessary to implement transit oriented development plans, traffic calming measures, or other coordinated preservation practices. Funds are administered by FHWA

Technical Assistance

Livable Communities Initiative
Contact: FTA Office of Planning and Environment 202-366-4033
The FTA Livable Communities initiative demonstrates ways to improve the link between transportation and communities. It promotes customer friendly, community oriented, and well designed facilities and services. The Initiative encourages transportation agencies and local governments to introduce proposed transportation improvements to communities in the early stages of the planning process.

Innovative Financing
Contact: FTA Office of Budget and Policy 202-366-1675
The Innovative Financing program involves the application of a wide variety of established and newly emerging financing techniques, commonly used in other sectors of the economy, to transit. Effective use of these techniques can reduce the financing costs of transit infrastructure and therefore reduce the overall cost of providing transit service. Additionally, they provide opportunities for transit systems and private sector firms to develop mutually beneficial partnerships for infrastructure investment. These financing techniques include certificates of participation, cross border leases, domestic leases, joint development, turnkey, and state infrastructure banks.
Commuter Choice Program
Contact: FTA Office of Budget and Policy 202-366-1698
The Commuter Choice program provides incentives to employees to commute to work by means other than single occupancy vehicle. It promotes a greater range of employer-provided commuting benefits which can reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and conserve energy. It also allows employers to tailor transportation benefits to their individual employees’ needs and assists employers in attracting and retaining qualified workers in a tight labor market. FTA has published the Commuter Choice Tool Kit, a comprehensive guide to implementing Commuter Choice at the worksite. Hard copies are available from any FTA regional office and an electronic version is posted on the FTA Home Page. Numerous FTA grantees offer Commuter Choice programs to employers in their service areas.

Joint Development
Contact: FTA Metropolitan or Region Office
Joint development involves the common use of property for transit and non-transit purposes. FTA policy, published in March 1997, indicated that transit operators were expected to generate revenue from land around their transit facilities. Transit operators are allowed to sell excess land and retain all of the proceeds to defray the capital costs of a transit project. Proximity to rail transit enhances the value of residential property and increases the opportunity for fostering community and development partnerships.

FTA grantees may use FTA financial assistance for joint development projects that are physically or functionally related to transit or that increase transit ridership in a corridor. Such projects may include disposing of land for nearby real estate development, preparing land for development, providing enhanced access, and developing on-site community services such as dependent care, health care, public safety, or commercial conveniences.

Intelligent Transportation Systems
Contact: Office of Research, Demonstration, & Innovation 202-366-4991
Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are the integrated use of advanced technologies and management strategies to increase safety and efficiency of our surface transportation system. ITS can be used to monitor traffic and notify authorities about stalled vehicles (buses, truck, cars, etc) or collisions so they can be cleared quickly, and traffic can move more efficiently. “Smart signs” warn vehicle operators about collisions ahead and electronic toll collection helps reduce congestion.

In support of ITS, FTA funds may be used for, among other things, electronic fare payment systems, transit management systems, traveler information systems, incident management systems, and signal priority systems.

New Freedom Program
Contact: FTA Metropolitan or Region Office
To encourage services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Provides a new formula grant program for associated capital and operating costs. Funds are allocated through a formula based upon population of persons with disabilities.
V. Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
The Federal Railroad Administration promotes safe and environmentally sound rail transportation. With the responsibility of ensuring railroad safety throughout the nation, the FRA employs safety inspectors to monitor railroad compliance with federally mandated safety standards including track maintenance, inspection standards and operating practices. The FRA conducts research and development tests to evaluate projects in support of its safety mission and to enhance the railroad system as a national transportation resource. Public education campaigns on highway-rail grade crossing safety and the danger of trespassing on rail property are also administered by FRA.
Contact: State FRA Rails Engineer

Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF)
Contact: FDR Office of Freight Programs at 202-493-6381
The Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program was established by TEA-21 and amended by the Safe Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Under this program the Administrator is authorized to provide direct loans and loan guarantees up to $35 billion. Up to $7 billion is reserved for projects benefiting freight railroads other than Class I carriers.

The funding may be used to:

- Acquire, improve, or rehabilitate intermodal or rail equipment or facilities, including track, components of track, bridges, yards, buildings and shops;
- Refinance outstanding debt incurred for the purposes listed above; and
- Develop or establish new intermodal or railroad facilities.

Direct loans can fund up to 100% of a railroad project with repayment periods of up to 25 years and interest rates equal to the cost of borrowing to the government.

Eligible borrowers include railroads, state and local governments, government-sponsored authorities and corporations, joint ventures that include at least one railroad, and limited option freight shippers who intend to construct a new rail connection.

VI. Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)
Contact: TIFIA Office of Budget and Policy 202-366-1675
http://tifia.fhwa.dot.gov
The TIFIA program provides Federal credit assistance to nationally or regionally significant surface transportation projects, including highway, transit and rail. The program is designed to fill market gaps and leverage substantial private co-investment by providing projects with supplemental or subordinate debt.

The TIFIA credit program consists of secured loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit designed to address projects’ varying requirements throughout their life cycles. Any type of project that is eligible for Federal assistance through surface transportation programs under Title 23 or chapter 53 of Title 49 U.S.C. (highway projects and transit capital projects) is eligible for the TIFIA credit program. The TIFIA credit program’s fundamental goal is to leverage Federal funds by attracting substantial private and other non-Federal investment in critical improvements to the nation’s surface transportation system.
VII. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) oversees the safety of more than 800,000 daily shipments of hazardous materials in the United States and 64 percent of the nation's energy that is transported by pipelines. PHMSA is dedicated solely to safety by working toward the elimination of transportation-related deaths and injuries in hazardous materials and pipeline transportation, and by promoting transportation solutions that enhance communities and protect the natural environment.

The purpose of the Hazardous Materials Transportation Program, first established by statute in 1974, is to identify and manage risks presented by transportation of hazardous materials in commerce. Safety is of paramount importance as the Department of Transportation seeks to involve the public, industry, and other interested parties in determining levels of risk that are acceptable, affordable, and comparable with other risks inherent in modern society.

For more information on the Department's Hurricane relief efforts for the Gulf area follow http://www.dot.gov/katrinalinks.htm

Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant Program

The Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant program is intended to provide financial and technical assistance as well as national direction and guidance to enhance State, Territorial, Tribal, and local hazardous materials emergency planning and training. The HMEP Grant Program distributes fees collected from shippers and carriers of hazardous materials to emergency responders for hazmat training and to Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) for hazmat planning.

The HMEP grant program evolved from a proposal developed by DOT, FEMA, EPA, DOL/OSHA, and DOE. It was presented to Congress during the legislative process to reauthorize the HMTA of 1974. Federal Hazardous Material Transportation Law (FHMTL) creates an appropriate role for the Federal government to provide financial, technical assistance, national direction, and guidance to enhance State and local hazardous materials emergency planning and training.

The HMEP grant program is carefully crafted to build upon existing programs and relationships. It increases the emphasis on transportation in ongoing efforts. The HMEP grant program was designed to support the framework and working relationships established within the National Response System and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) of 1986 (Title III).

Planning Grants

FHMTL authorizes $5 million in annual planning grants to States, Territories and Native American tribes -- with a required 75% pass-through of funds to Local Emergency Planning Committees. These planning grants are to be used for: 1) developing, improving, and implementing emergency plans under Title III; 2) conducting commodity flow studies; and 3) determining the need for regional hazardous material response.

Training Grants

FHMTL authorizes $7.8 million in annual training grants to States, Territories and Native American Tribes -- with 75% of the funding used to provide training to local responders, including volunteers. Training grants are to be used for training public sector employees to respond safely and efficiently to accidents and incidents involving the transportation of hazardous materials.