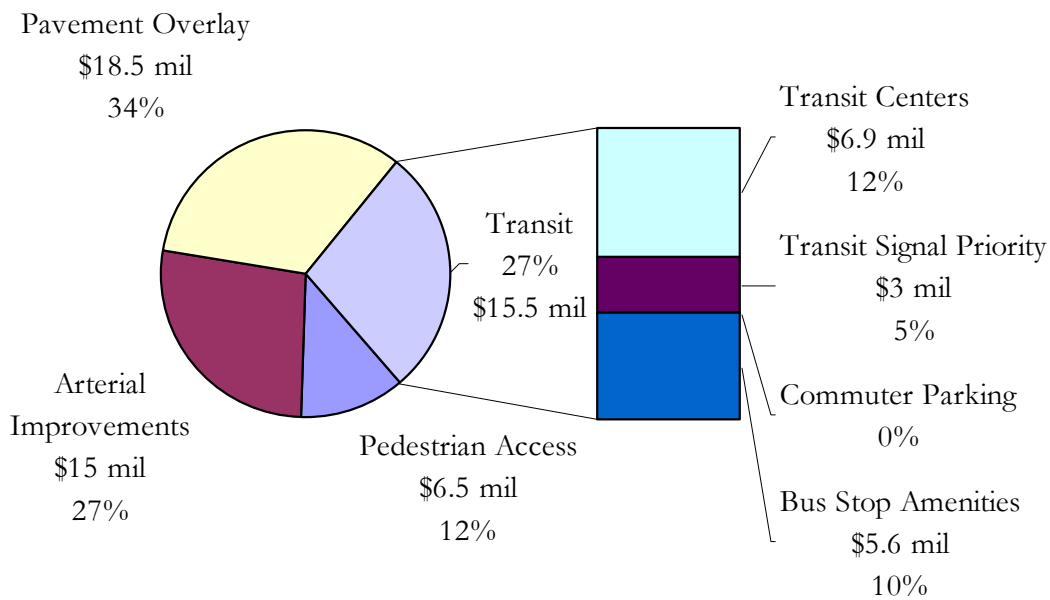

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CHAPTER XV – FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

The role of the Capital Element of the *Bellevue Transit Plan* is to provide a framework for assessing and prioritizing transit-oriented capital investment projects over the next 10 years. As part of this assessment, a variety of system needs and recommended projects have been identified. In combination, the recommended projects have the potential to improve the circulation of transit services in Bellevue, provide enhanced access to transit services in the City, and augment the attractiveness of transit as a travel option in Bellevue. However, the cost of these projects as well as underlying system needs is staggering (Figure XV-1). Based on the analysis in the previous chapters, \$55.5 million is necessary to fully implement all transit capital funding needs.

Only 27 percent of the \$55.5 million total, or \$15.5 million, is necessary for transit-only improvements. Transit-only improvements include transit center, transit signal priority, commuter parking, and passenger amenity improvements. The remaining \$40 million is for improvements with both transit and broader modal benefits. These include pavement overlay, pedestrian access, and arterial HOV improvements.

Figure XV-1
Transit Capital Funding Needs



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Projects with broader modal benefits were included in the analysis because clearly, improvements to pavement, pedestrian access, and arterial HOV have a beneficial impact on transit ridership. Each, however, also helps the city meet its overall priorities. For example, the pavement overlay projects will improve the overall transit experience by fixing pavement in poor condition, which slows buses. This improvement will also improve freight mobility, fire response time, and overall safety; it is not a “transit-only” benefit. Along the same line, pedestrian access projects provide much needed links between neighborhoods and bus stops. Pedestrian access projects also address overall city policies on pedestrian mobility. The types of improvements are discussed below:

- **Pedestrian Access Improvements to Transit: \$6.5 million** for the highest priority projects. These projects scored the highest possible but are just a small subset from a project list that identifies more than \$119 million in needs.
- **Bus Stop Amenities: \$5.6 million** for combined improvements to 823 bus stops in Bellevue, including ADA access improvements at 113 locations.
- **Arterial Improvements: \$15 million** for eighteen projects to improve safety, as well as transit speed and reliability.
- **Pavement Overlay: \$18.5 million** for the highest priority projects. Total needs for pavement overlay is nearly \$27.4 million.
- **Transit Centers: \$6.9 million** for implementing long- and short-term transit center recommendations.
- **Transit Signal Priority: \$3 million** to implement TSP improvements at the 169 individual approaches at 82 intersections where TSP could provide speed and reliability improvements.
- **Commuter Parking:** No additional funding is necessary to meet parking needs in the I-90 corridor in Bellevue through 2006. Meeting commuter parking needs for the I-90 corridor in Bellevue through 2015 will require an additional \$13.9 million in expenses.

The level of readily available resources for capital improvements required by the transit service network in Bellevue is limited and can not support all the potential projects identified within the Capital Element.

The City’s recognition of this lack of resources for transportation is reflected in the Council’s interest statement related to the findings of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation:

BR-2

Transportation Revenue. Funding must be dramatically increased at all levels: state, regional and local. The City supports greater reliance on a user-fee based approach, clearly establishing a link between those using the system and those paying for it, in a manner understandable to and supported by the public.

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This section of the Capital Element outlines some of the existing and potential funding sources for the projects envisioned within the Capital Element. However, a discussion of new potential “user-fee” sources is not undertaken as this is a strategy still being considered at the regional and state level. Additionally, direct linkages between funding sources and individual projects are not provided here. Instead the information in this section is intended as a template for discussion of funding options for Bellevue’s transit vision from existing sources.

Potential Federal Funding Opportunities

There are a number of federal funding opportunities that may be available to an urban non-transit agency for transit-oriented capital projects. These programs include:

- Urbanized Area Formula Grants
- Capital Investment Programs
- Flexible Funds (includes STP and CMAQ funds)

Each of these federal funding sources is outlined below.

Urbanized Area Formula Grants

Under the funding process of the Urbanized Area Formula Grants, funds are allocated by statutory formula to individual transportation management areas (TMA = urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or more). The level of funding earmarked for an individual TMA is based on a combination of bus revenue vehicle miles, bus passenger miles, fixed guideway revenue vehicle miles, fixed guideway route miles, population, and population density. The Greater Seattle TMA received \$62,041,338 in the 2002 apportionment.

Urbanized Area Formula Grants may be used for the planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies. These monies may also be used for capital investments in bus and bus-related activities including the construction of maintenance and passenger facilities.

However any use of these grant monies requires some level of local match. The level of local funds required depends on the nature of the project. The Federal share of any individual project budget cannot exceed 50 percent for operating assistance projects, 80 percent for capital projects, and 90 percent for bicycle projects or vehicle-related equipment to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act or the Clean Air Act.

Capital Investment Programs

Capital Investment Programs provide funds for large projects that cannot be funded from an agency’s Urbanized Area Formula apportionment. There are four Capital Investment Programs:

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- **Fixed Guideway Modernization** (40% of Capital Investment Program Funds)
- **New Starts and Extensions** (40% of Capital Investment Program Funds)
- **Bus and Bus Facilities** (20% of Capital Investment Program Funds)
- **Clean Fuels Formula Grant Program** (Funded through a takedown from the Bus & Bus Facilities and the Urbanized Area Formula Programs).

Allocation of these funds is at the discretion of the Transportation Secretary; however, Congress fully earmarks all available funding.

Of the program areas outlined above, it is the Bus and Bus Facilities Program that may offer funding opportunities for Bellevue transit projects. In this program area, eligible purposes for Capital Investment Program funds include transfer facilities, bus malls, transportation centers, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, and development of passenger amenities such as shelters and bus stop signs.

As with other federal funding sources, some level of local funding match is required for use of these funds. The federal share of a project funded by Capital Investment Program funds shall not exceed 80 percent.

For 2002, \$29,007,851 was earmarked for projects in Washington State under this program. This included \$1,584,046 for the Bellevue Transportation Center.

Flexible Funds

Flexible Funds are certain legislatively specified funds that may be used either for transit or highway purposes. This provision was first included in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1999 (ISTEA) and has continued within the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

Flexible funds allow local areas to choose to use certain Federal surface transportation funds based on local programming priorities, not on restrictive definitions of program eligibility. Flexible Funds include the Federal Highway Administration's Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and the FTA's Urban Formula Funds.

Washington State's 2003 appropriation of STP and CMAQ funds that qualify under the flexible funding provision include \$27,000,000 under CMAQ and \$80,000,000 under STP. Although Washington State is not required to designate any of these funds for transit, STP and CMAQ funding can be programmed for a variety of capital programs. Including roadway development and street improvements, investments in TSP technology, as well as development of park-and-ride facilities.

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Summary of Federal Funding Opportunities

As outlined, there are a few federal funding programs that provide opportunities for funding in-part the transit capital improvements envisioned by Bellevue. With regard to the types of improvements outlined in the Capital Element of the *Bellevue Transit Plan*, certain investment types would readily lend themselves to consideration for particular federal funding sources. These potential funding “linkages” are outlined in Table XV-1.

Table XV-1
Summary of Federal Funding Opportunities and Related Transit-Oriented Capital Investments

Capital Investment Type	Potential Federal Funding Option
<i>Pavement Overlay to Support Transit</i>	Flexible Funds - STP/CMAQ
<i>Pedestrian Linkages to Transit</i>	Flexible Funds - STP/CMAQ
<i>Transit Signal Priority</i>	Flexible Funds - STP/CMAQ
<i>Arterial HOV</i>	Flexible Funds - STP/CMAQ
<i>Commuter Parking Facilities</i>	Flexible Funds - STP/CMAQ
	Capital Investment Program - Bus and Bus Facilities
<i>Transit Center Development</i>	Capital Investment Program - Bus and Bus Facilities
	Urbanized Area Formula Grants
<i>Turning Radius Improvements</i>	Flexible Funds - STP/CMAQ
<i>Bus Stop Improvements</i>	Urbanized Area Formula Grants
	Capital Investment Program - Bus and Bus Facilities

State Funding Opportunities

At this point, state funding opportunities for transit improvements are fairly limited. The Public Transportation System Program established in 1990 and administered by the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) is no longer accepting new projects. Washington State’s 2003 Transportation Demand Management Programs (Commuter Trip Reduction, Vanpool, and Park-and-Ride) are dependent on the outcome of Referendum 51.

Regardless, there are some state and local funding programs that consider transit or could benefit transit:

- Public Works Trust Fund loans for roadway improvements
- TIB’s Transportation Partnership Program
- TIB’s Congested Corridor Program (dependent on Referendum 51)

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- TIB's Arterial Improvement Program
- TIB's Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Program

However, these programs are not earmarked for transit-only. Therefore, access to these funds would require that the envisioned transit improvements be woven into larger projects related to the primary purpose of the program.

Regional Transit Partners

Although the City of Bellevue has taken a leadership role in developing a transit-oriented strategy for addressing its transportation needs, its role as a non-transit provider requires its partnering with transit providers to ensure that Bellevue's vision for its transit service network and related improvements are realized. Among other benefits, the transit providers have access to capital program funds that are designed to serve transit-specific needs.

Much of this funding has been locally generated and has been contributed by City residents and businesses. In light of this, partnering with King County Metro (Metro) and Sound Transit is a critical strategy for developing the Bellevue transit vision and bringing it to fruition. Recognition of the City's responsibility for helping to guide investments by its transit partners is reflected in policies within the Comprehensive Plan:

Policy TR-70

Secure a share of regional transit system facilities and service priorities for Bellevue residents proportional to the City's contributed share of regional transit revenues.
[Amended Ord. 5058]

Policy TR-86

Support joint projects, including the contribution of City matching funds, with adjoining cities, unincorporated King County, the transit provider, or the state, where such partnerships may help establish or accelerate a project beneficial to the City.

King County Metro

Bellevue has partnered with Metro on a number of projects, including the development of a Transit Signal Priority project on NE 8th Street. With regard to future partnerships to fund transit-oriented capital improvements, the City Council recognizes the City's potential role in this regard, as reflected in policy direction adopted on May 8, 2000:

KCM-27

Evaluate the need for City financial contributions to transit services and amenities as part the biennial update of the Capital Investment Plan.

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In addition to existing Metro-Bellevue joint-projects, there are other existing opportunities for partnering with Metro. Within Metro's 2002–2007 Public Transportation Fund Capital Program, there are a handful of budgeted projects from which Bellevue may be able to obtain additional funds for transit capital needs in Bellevue. These programs and their purposes are outlined below:

- **Bus Zone Safety and Access:** Ongoing bus stop improvements including shelters, installation of vandalism-resistant shelter components, ADA improvements, lighting, etc.
- **Bus Zone Comfort/Safety – Six-Year Plan:** Passenger and pedestrian improvements at transfer points and other key transit locations. Includes lighting, ADA, and shelters. This project was specifically linked with the 1996–2001 Six-Year Plan and will sunset at the end of 2003.
- **Bellevue Signal Priority:** King County is working with the City of Bellevue to design and install traffic signal priority for buses at several intersections in the Overlake area.
- **East King County Transit Improvements:** Provides financing for speed and reliability improvements throughout East King County. Funded projects are developed in partnerships with jurisdictions with the goal of implementing road and signal improvements that will improve the flow of transit.
- **Regional Transit Signal Priority:** This project is intended to support the implementation of TSP for transit throughout the region.

Table XV-2 outlines the present level of funding in these project areas.

Table XV-2
King County Public Transportation Fund Capital Program

<i>Metro Project</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>Total</i>
Bus Zone Safety & Access	\$2,532,716	\$3,540,981	\$3,271,981	\$3,382,616	\$3,382,000	\$2,327,250	\$18,437,544
Bus Zone Comfort/Safety-Six Year Plan	\$614,571	\$241,056					\$855,627
Bellevue Transit Priority	\$265,000	\$289,000	\$340,000	\$265,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$1,609,000
East King County Transit Improvements	\$646,000	\$711,000	\$335,000	\$215,000	\$195,000	\$195,000	\$2,297,000
Regional Signal Priority	\$1,178,000	\$1,208,000	\$1,460,000	\$2,460,000	\$2,530,000	\$2,480,000	\$11,316,000
Total	\$5,236,287	\$5,990,037	\$5,406,981	\$6,322,616	\$6,332,000	\$5,227,250	\$34,515,171

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With regard to the projects outlined within the Capital Element, there are potential linkages between these eligible Metro funds and the different project types. These “funding linkages” are summarized in Table XV-3.

Table XV-3
King County Funding Opportunities and Related Transit-Oriented Capital Investments

Capital Investment Type	Potential King County Funding Option
<i>Pedestrian Linkages to Transit</i>	Bus Zone Comfort/Safety – Six Year Plan
<i>Arterial HOV</i>	East King County Transit Improvements
<i>Turning Radius Improvements</i>	East King County Transit Improvements
<i>Transit Signal Priority</i>	Regional Transit Signal Priority
	Regional Transit Signal Priority
<i>Bus Stop Improvements</i>	Bus Zone Safety and Access
	Bus Zone Comfort/Safety – Six Year Plan

Sound Transit

As part of its Phase 1 plan, Sound Transit has and continues to develop transit capital projects in Bellevue including the new Downtown Bellevue Transit Center and the I-405/Downtown Access Project. Bellevue has played and continues to play an active role in Sound Transit’s planning process to ensure that appropriate service and capital investments are made in Bellevue. This dedication is reflected in part in the City Council interest statement regarding Sound Transit adopted on May 18, 1998:

REX-1

Implement an integrated regional and local transit system successfully resulting in:

- Improved transit service over today’s service levels to meet the mobility needs of residents, employees and visitors to Bellevue.
- Increased proportion of trips made by transit, thus making efficient use of available roadway capacity in support of continued economic development.
- Capital investments that are community assets by virtue of their attractive design, efficient operations, and their ability to serve as catalysts for future development.

Further, Bellevue remains dedicated to involvement in future planning of service and capital facilities by Sound Transit as reflected in the following Comprehensive Plan policy:

Policy TR-69a

Provide regional leadership for Sound Transit Phase 2 planning efforts. [New Ord. 5247]

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With regard to near term investments, Sound Transit presently has a surplus of tax revenues collected from East King County residents and businesses. Under Sound Transit's planning policies, these funds should be invested in additional transit improvements in the East King County region. Ensuring adherence to this doctrine and engaging in the planning process for allocation of these revenues has been a Bellevue policy since 1998:

REX-2

To the extent excess East King County subarea revenues are collected, support additional Sound Transit capital and service investments beyond those originally identified in Sound Move for Downtown Bellevue, in recognition of its position as the State's second largest downtown employment center behind Downtown Seattle.

The latest projection from Sound Transit's finance department regarding unanticipated revenues outlined an estimated \$61 million (YOE) as available for potential programming under Sound Transit's allocation policies for such revenues. This is based on the present Phase 1 period of 1996–2006. At this point, only \$9 million of this total has been earmarked for specific projects.¹ As such, \$52 million is available for additional project needs in the East King County subarea.

A primary criterion for Sound Transit investments is whether the project in question is a part of the regional transportation system and, in the case of Phase 1 additional investments, in-line with the vision of *Sound Move*—the regional transit plan. Under this criterion, projects of every type are outlined in the Capital Element that could be considered eligible for support.

The evaluative criteria applied to the potential projects in the *Bellevue Transit Plan* favor projects that are served by regional services or provide direct access to such services. As such, the priority projects identified in this plan should be strong candidates for unanticipated revenue funding and/or inclusion in Phase 2.

Regardless, keeping Bellevue staff and decision-makers involved in helping to shape the disposition of Phase 1 unanticipated revenues and the development of the Phase 2 plan in a manner that is consistent with Bellevue's transit vision, should remain a top priority.

Local Funding

Beyond the potential funding opportunities with local, state, and federal partners, is the allocation of locally generated revenues to capital improvements in the City. The priority and schedule of funding for capital investments in the City of Bellevue managed within the Capital Investment Program (CIP) planning process. Overall, the CIP plan is intended to directly link capital investments to measurable outcomes identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

¹ The 2002 Service Implementation Plan outlined a need of \$9 million for bus replacement on ST Express Route 550. This has been approved by the ST board and will be reflected in ST's 2003 budget.

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Given the City's dedication to a transit-oriented strategy for addressing transportation needs in the City, one change in CIP policy worth consideration is creating a *Transit Capital Program* within the CIP. Such a program would support the Transportation Element of the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan and be influenced by the *Bellevue Transit Plan*.

In turn, the improvements identified in the *Bellevue Transit Plan* could be directed to this Transit Capital Program. The prioritization and evaluative criteria outlined in the Capital Element of this plan would be used as the Project Prioritization Criteria for the program. Among other things, this would provide an opportunity to better coordinate efforts underway at Metro and Sound Transit for improving transit services and facilities. In addition, it could assure a steady funding source for the smaller scale projects identified through this study.

The level of dedicated funding for programming in Transit Capital Program would have to be determined in light of all competing needs in the City.

Local Partnerships

A final area of opportunity for funding of transit development projects are partnerships with private sector interests and community groups. A number of Bellevue policies point toward the potential role of public-private partnerships in transit projects.

A core strategy available to the City of Bellevue is working with developers within the development review process to integrate transit facilities into the design of development projects. The use of this process is reflected in a number of Comprehensive Plan policies:

Policy TR-53a

Work with private developers and the transit providers to integrate transit facilities and pedestrian and bicycle connections into residential, retail, manufacturing, commercial office, and other types of development. [Amended Ord. 5058]

Policy TR-7

Incorporate transit-supportive and pedestrian-friendly design features in new development through the development review process. Examples include:

- Orient the major building entries to the street and closer to transit stops;
- Avoid large surface parking areas between the building frontage and the street;
- Provide pedestrian pathways that minimize distances to activities and to transit stops;
- Where feasible, cluster major buildings within developments to improve pedestrian and transit access;
- Provide weather protection in key areas, such as covered walkways or arcades connecting buildings in major developments, and covered waiting areas for transit and ridesharing;

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- Design for pedestrian safety, including adequate lighting and paved, hazard-free surfaces;
- Provide bicycle connections and secure storage convenient to major transit facilities;
- Use design features to create an attractive, interesting pedestrian environment that will stimulate pedestrian use;
- Design transit access into large developments, considering bus lanes, stops, and shelters as part of project design; and
- Encourage the availability of restrooms for public use.

Policy TR-13

Require new development to incorporate physical features designed to promote use of alternatives to single-occupant vehicles, such as:

- Preferential parking for carpools and vanpools;
- Special loading and unloading facilities for carpools and vanpools; and
- Transit facilities, including comfortable bus stops and waiting areas, adequate turning room, and where appropriate, signal preemption and queue-jump lanes; and bicycle parking and related facilities.

Another potential area of partnership that the City has been active in and should continue participating in are more typical public-private partnerships through actual contributions to facilities to avoid parking investments and/or transit-oriented development projects linked with facility investments. As with leveraging of the development review and permitting process, dedication to these strategies is reflected in adopted City policy:

KCM-11

Joint development at new and existing park-and-ride lots should also be evaluated for possible public-private partnerships. Consistency with local/neighborhood land uses is critical.

KCM-26

The City of Bellevue recognizes the importance of transit-friendly design and where appropriate, transit-oriented development (TOD). Evaluate opportunities for advancing TOD principles in all long-range transportation and land use plans where appropriate. Consistency with local/neighborhood land uses is critical.

Policy TR-76

To promote transit use and achieve land use objectives, transit system planning shall include:

- Provision of supportive land uses, including mixed use and night-time activities;
- A safe, pedestrian-friendly environment, with restrictions on auto access;

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- Integration of multiple access modes, including buses, carpools and vanpools, bicycles and pedestrians;
- Urban design and community character;
- Protection of nearby neighborhoods from undesirable impacts; and
- Potential transit-oriented development opportunities with the private and public sectors. [Amended Ord. 5058, 5247]

There is a final partnership strategy worth consideration that could assist with support of City goals for passenger amenities: partnering with community, neighborhood, and business groups for sponsorship of amenity improvements.

Like many other transit agencies—such as Tri-Met in Portland, Oregon and the Denver RTD—Metro manages an Adopt-a-Stop program that allows individuals and organizations to volunteer to maintain a bus stop. The program commitment consists of picking up trash at the bus stop and, in some cases, removal of graffiti. However, this program idea can be expanded upon to allow businesses, homeowners' associations or individuals to sponsor the addition of site amenities such as benches, landscaping, or art at transit stops. Recognition could take the form of a placard at the stop of a “sponsored by” indication on the stop flag.

A more dramatic “sponsorship” model would include full development of a stop and or shelter with a theme that reflects the sponsoring entity in some manner without being a pure advertisement. This type of bus stop sponsorship is being successfully employed by the Orlando, Florida’s transit agency - Lynx.

Conclusions

A core goal of the *Bellevue Transit Plan* is to provide a framework that allows for the objective evaluation of potential transit capital facilities. Such evaluation not only assesses overall facility need but underlying project priority. This prioritization remains critical as the transportation funding environment remains a competition for scarce resources.

As outlined, there are some existing and potential funding sources for the projects envisioned within the Capital Element. However, given that Bellevue is not a transit operator, local opportunities for funding remain the most promising. These opportunities include partnerships with transit agencies, partnerships with private interests, and earmarking of locally generated funds.