

United States Senate

June 18, 2019

Mark G. Bathrick, Program Manager
Federal Transit Administration
Office of Program Management
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Bathrick:

I am writing to you in support of the City of Billings MET Transit's application for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Buses and Bus Facilities Program 5339 (b) competitive grant.

The Billings MET Transit provides between 450,000 and 500,000 rides per year to users through its fixed-route and paratransit systems. Out of their 25 bus fleet, 16 vehicles have exceeded their life standard and one more bus will qualify for replacement at the end of the year. And while they are in the process of purchasing seven replacement buses, 10 vehicles will still be outdated. Many residents, including the elderly, those with disabilities, and individuals who cannot afford to buy a care, rely solely on public transportation to get to their jobs, school, doctors' appointments, and the grocery store.

If successful, funds will be used for the replacement of two buses that have exceeded their useful life. Additionally, funds will be used to upgrade MET's fixed-route fleet with technology enhancements including automated passenger counters, automated voice destination announcements, and mobile ticketing. Updated technology is expected to increase safety and efficiency for both MET passengers and personnel.

I trust you will give this application fair and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator