

Grant Application Development Frequently Encountered Issues

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Pre-Award Activities



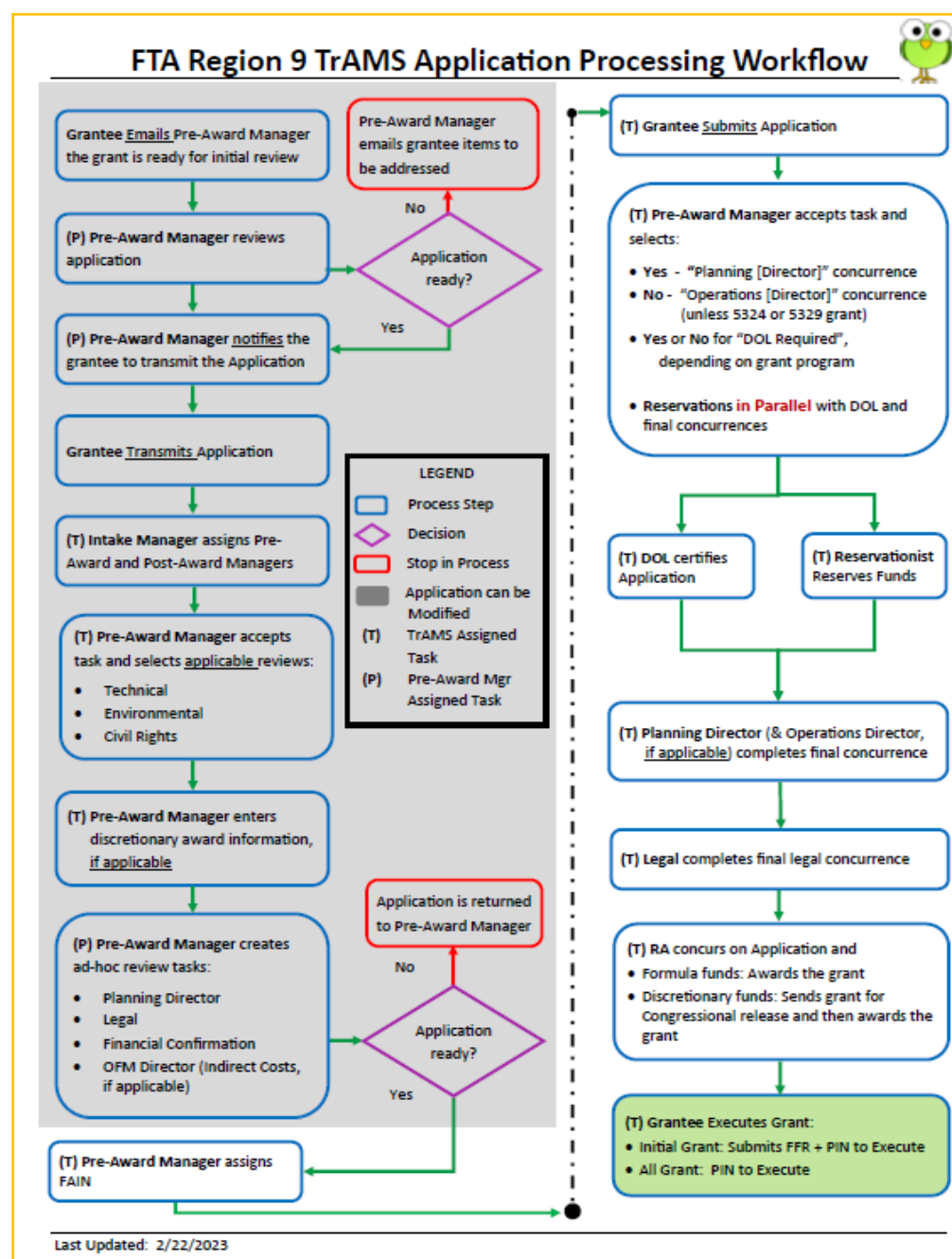
U.S. Department of Transportation
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Cross-Cutting Program Requirements

- Planning
- Legal, Financial, and Technical Capacity
- Annual Certifications and Assurances
- Civil Rights
- Environmental Review
- Procurement
- Safety

Grant Application Development Process

TrAMS Workflow Diagram



Pre-requisite Issues



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Pre-requisite Issues

1. Missing Required Documentation
2. Annual Certifications & Assurances (C&As) Submission
3. SAM Registration Expiration Date
4. Civil Rights Program Document Submission
5. Points of Contact (Grantee, Labor Unions, etc.)

Missing Required Documentation

- Authorizing Resolution
- Opinion of Counsel
- Certifications and Assurances
- Designated Recipient Letter from the Governor (if applicable)
- Split letter (Direct recipients that are suballocated funds from a Designated Recipient)
- Delegations of Signature Authority (for TrAMS actions)

TrAMS Designation of Signature Authority
MUST BE ON AGENCY LETTERHEAD

DESIGNATION OF SIGNATURE AUTHORITY
for the
TRANSIT AWARD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
(TrAMS)

The _____ [Name of Organization] _____ hereby authorizes

[Name and Title of Organization's Employee] to be assigned and use of a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the following TrAMS functions:

___ Execution of Annual Certification and Assurances issued by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as **Official**

___ Execution of Annual Certification and Assurances issued by the FTA as **Attorney**

___ Submit FTA grant application as **Submitter**

___ Execute FTA grant applications as **Official**

on behalf of the officials below, for the FTA's TrAMS.

This Designation of Signature Authority serves only to authorize the above referenced persons to take actions in TrAMS; original Certifications and Assurances and original FTA grant agreements must be executed by the Recipient's Designated Official, identified in its Authorizing Resolution, and its legal counsel, unless otherwise delegated in accordance with the Recipient's internal procedures.

[Insert Signature]
[Recipient's Chief Executive Officer's Full Name]
[Title of Recipient's Chief Executive Officer] |

[Insert Signature]
[Recipient's Legal Counsel's Name]
[Title of Recipient's Legal Counsel]

Annual Certs & Assurances Not Pin'd

- Recipients must submit C&As annually.
- C&As must be completed within 90 days of FTA publication date or before grant submission (whichever comes first).
- C&As should be PIN'd in TrAMS by the agency's Official and Attorney
- Not every provision of every certification will apply to every applicant or award.
 - If a provision of a certification was selected but does not apply to the applicant or its award, FTA will not enforce that provision.

Resource(s):

FTA Certifications and Assurances: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/certifications-and-assurances/certifications-assurances>

Other Program Issues

- SAM Registration has expired
 - Grantees will not be able to submit the grant application if SAM registration has expired.
 - FTA cannot award grants while a Recipient's SAM Status is "EXPIRED."
- Civil Rights Program Submissions Missing or Expired
 - Civil Rights Programs must be in "**Concur**" or "**Under Review**" status to submit a grant
- Points of Contact (Grantee, Labor Unions, etc.) Out of Date
 - Contact information should be reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

Resource(s):

SAM: <https://sam.gov/content/home>

Civil Rights: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/civil-rights-ada/civil-rightsada>

Application Details Issues



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Application Summary

- Application Title/Name does not include sufficient information such as:
 - Year of Funds
 - Grant Program
 - Brief description of project activities
- Examples of Acceptable Application Titles:
 - *“FY 22-FY 24 Sec 5307 for Preventive Maintenance and Bus Replacement”*
 - *“FY 22 CMAQ Transfer to Sec 5307 for Bus Fleet Expansion”*

Application Summary

- Required Information Missing from Executive Summary
 - Brief Description of each project
 - Identify each UZA and year/source of funding included in the application.
 - If applicable, a statement noting that an Adjustment Amount will be applied to this Project.
 - A statement confirming that all projects funded under the Section 5337 SGR program must be included in the investment prioritization section of the recipient's current Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan
 - A statement confirming all projects included in this application are included in a locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

Application Summary

- Period of Performance End Date (PPED) is not consistent with project milestones
 - The PPED should be no more than 3 months after the last milestone end date (across all milestones).

Project Level Issues



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Budget/Activity Line Item (ALI) Issues



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Federal Transit Administration

Planning Documents

- Planning Documents not uploaded to TrAMS and/or consistent with the federally approved STIP.
- For each TrAMS “Project”, details should be provided about the uploaded STIP and/or STIP Amendment document (e.g., page number where the project is mentioned).
- Missing Federal Approval date in the STIP/TIP Date field.
 - If applicable, include STIP Administrative Modification information.

The screenshot displays the TrAMS system interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'WELCOME', 'MY WORK (23)', 'RECORDS', and 'REPORTS'. Below this is a 'Project Details' table with the following data:

Project Number	Project Title	Date Created
CA-2020-129-01-00	Bus Stop Enhancements (P-1038)	2/14/2020 10:16 AM PST

Below the table is the 'Program Plan Documentation' section, which is divided into three sub-sections:

- STIP/TIP**
 - Existing Documents: 1674-2020-2-P1 - Program Plan - STIP_TIP
 - STIP/TIP Date: Mar 5, 2019
 - Description: MTC TIP Revision 2019-04
Page 12 of 13 and last page
Provide details about the uploaded STIP document (e.g., page number where the project is mentioned in the document)
- UPWP**
 - UPWP Date
 - Description
Provide details about the uploaded UPWP document (e.g., page number where the project is mentioned in the document)
- Long Range Plan**
 - Existing Documents: 1674-2020-2-P1 - Program Plan - Long Range Plan
 - Long Range Plan Date: Oct 2, 2014

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Preventive Maintenance

- Performance period not included
- No basis for the funding requested (annual cost)
- Request exceeds more than 3 years of Preventive Maintenance (per Circular 9030.1E, Appendix D, page D-6)

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Operating Assistance

- Time period not included (start/end dates)
- No basis for the funding requested (annual cost)
- Request exceeds more than 3 years of Operating Assistance

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Adjustment Amount

[Amy to add a simple example or point to the reference citation of 9030.1E, Appendix

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues -

Environmental Determination

- Documentation Incomplete or Missing
- Incorrect Environmental Determination Selected
 - Categorical Exclusion (CE)
 - Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE)
 - Environmental Assessment (EA)
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Incorrect use of “Cross Agency CEs”

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Environmental Determination Selection

- One for All ALIs vs. One for each ALI
- [Mary and Amy will work on this.]

The screenshot displays a web application interface with a dark blue header. The header contains navigation links: WELCOME, MY WORK (23), RECORDS, and REPORTS. The user is logged in as 'Research Transit Administration'. The main content area is titled 'Preventive Maintenance' and 'Budget Activity Line Items Associated to NEPA Class of Action'. Below this title is a table with the following data:

Scope Code	Scope Name	Line Item Number	Line Item Name	FTA Amount	Total Eligible Cost
641-00	S310 PROJECTS	11.7A.00	PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE	\$509,641.00	\$637,052.00

Below the table, there is a detailed description: 'Class 1(C) - Categorical Exclusions (C-List) - Type 07: Acquisition, installation, rehabilitation, replacement, and maintenance of vehicles or equipment, within or accommodated by existing facilities, that does not result in a change in functional use of the facilities, such as: equipment to be located within existing facilities and with no substantial off-site impacts; and vehicles, including buses, rail cars, trolley cars, ferry boats and people movers that can be accommodated by existing facilities or by new facilities that qualify for a categorical exclusion.'

The interface also includes sections for 'Description Details' (stating grant activities are a categorical exclusion under NEPA), 'Environmental Finding Dates' (with a table showing 'Class 1(C) CE Approved' on 'Nov 16, 2023'), and 'Documentation for NEPA Class of Action' (with a table showing 'No items available').

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Funding Source and Match Ratio Selections

- An incorrect funding source selection in TrAMS can mean your grant can't move forward.
- Match Does not Meet Minimum Requirements

Type of Funding	Match Requirement
Planning and Capital	80% federal and 20% local
Operating	50% federal and 50% local
Vehicles (ADA & CAA compliant)	85% federal and 15% local
Facilities & Equipment (ADA & CAA compliant)	90% federal and 10% local

Funding Source	Section of Statute	CFDA Number	Amount
5307 - Urbanized Area Formula Grants (2013 and forward)	5307-2A	20507	\$6,780,000
Local			\$1,695,000
Local/In-Kind			\$0
State			\$0
State/In-Kind			\$0
Other Federal			\$0
Transportation Development Credit			\$400,000
Adjustment			\$0
Total Eligible Cost			\$8,475,000

Reference(s):

Funding Source List: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/trams-funding-source-list>

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Incorrect Scope /ALI Codes Selected

- Recipients should use the ALI Tree to select correct scope and ALI codes for each activity

Scope Code	Scope Code Name	Activity Type	ALI #	ALI Description
111-00	Bus Rolling Stock	Bus Rolling Stock	11.17.00	Vehicle Overhaul - Up to 20% Vehicle Maint
111-00	Bus Rolling Stock	Engineering & Design - Capital Bus	11.11	01 Bus STD 40 FT
		Bus Replacements - Capital Bus	11.12	02 Bus STD 32 FT
		Bus Expansion - Capital Bus	11.13	03 Bus 30 FT
		Repair \ Rebuild Capital Bus	11.14	04 Bus < 30 FT
		Mid Life Rebuild	11.15	05 Bus School
		Lease - Replacement - Capital Bus	11.16	06 Bus Articulated
		Lease Expansion - Capital Bus	11.18	07 Bus Commuter \ Suburban
				08 Bus Intercity
				09 Bus Trolley STD
				10 Bus Trolley Artic.
				11 Bus Double Deck
				12 Bus Used
				13 Bus School Used
				14 Bus Dual Mode
				15 Van
				16 Sedan \ Station Wagon
				20 Light Rail Car
				21 Heavy Rail Car
				22 Commuter Rail Self Propelled - Elec.
				23 Commuter Rail Car Trailer
				24 Commuter Locomotive Diesel
				25 Commuter Locomotive Electric
				26 Commuter Rail Car Used
				27 Commuter Locomotive Used
				28 Commuter Rail Self Prop - Diesel
				30 Rebuild Cable Car
				31 Rebuild People Mover Car
				32 Rebuild Incline Railway Car
				33 Ferry Boat
				39 Rebuild Transported Vehicles
				40 Rebuild Spare Parts \ Assoc Capital
				Maintenance Items

Reference(s):

- ALI Tree: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/scope-activity-line-item-tree>
- Circular 5010.1E: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/urbanized-area-formula-program-program-guidance-and>

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Useful Life Information Missing

- Projects that include the purchase of a capital asset (e.g., vehicle, equipment and property **greater than \$5,000**) should identify the minimum useful life in the extended budget discussion

Reference(s):

- ALI Tree: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/scope-activity-line-item-tree>
- Circular 5010.1E: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/urbanized-area-formula-program-program-guidance-and>

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

1% Security Expenditure and 0.75% Safety Expenditures

- A statement is not included in Extended Budget Description (The expenditure may be embedded in the overall cost of a bus procurement or construction of a facility, etc. For example, security cameras onboard a new bus.)
- Sec 5307 recipients in large UZA must provide a short narrative noting how the 0.75% safety expenditure requirement is met.

Reference(s):

- Federal Register Notice, April 28, 2022: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations/federal-register-documents/2022-09143>
- Notable Changes to Select FTA Program Requirements Resulting from the 2020 Census: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2023-01/Notable-FTA-Program-Requirement-Changes-from-2020-Census.pdf>

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

3rd Party Contractor Use Selection

- Incorrect selection made
 - Any activity where a contractor will be used should select “YES...” at Budget Activity Line Item and Milestone Section [We may need to check on what the TrAMS User Guide says... and update the references list below, as appropriate.]

Will 3rd Party contractors be used to fulfill this activity line item?

Yes, 3rd Party Contractors will be used for this line item.

No, 3rd Party Contractors will not be used for this line item.

Reference(s):

- Federal Register Notice, April 28, 2022: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations/federal-register-documents/2022-09143>
- Notable Changes to Select FTA Program Requirements Resulting from the 2020 Census: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2023-01/Notable-FTA-Program-Requirement-Changes-from-2020-Census.pdf>

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Milestones (for Procurement and Construction) Missing

- Projects where a 3rd Party Contractor (typically for construction activities) is used should include milestones for:
 - ✓ RFP Issue
 - ✓ Contract Award
 - ✓ Project Starts
 - ✓ Project Ends
 - ✓ Contract Closeout

[Source: Circular 9030.1E, Appendix A, page A-4] “**Project Milestones.** Every ALI in a grant budget must have associated project milestones. The FTA electronic award management system will automatically generate milestones for some ALIs; for example, rolling stock purchases will have five associated milestones. If it does not prepopulate specific milestones for a particular ALI, use the add function to add a minimum two milestones reflecting the estimated start and end dates for that ALI to the grant application. Recipients should include estimated milestone dates for such events as bid advertisement, bid award, and contract completion.”

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Vehicle Purchase for Replacement vs. Expansion

- Insufficient information provided
 - useful life missing
 - information for vehicles being replaced
 - vehicle type, size and fuel type, if applicable
 - other grants funding the same project
 - Fleet Status module not updated

Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Bus Stop Improvement Projects

- Insufficient information provided
 - Number of bus stops
 - Location of bus stops
 - Type of improvement (i.e., NEPA review)
 - Other grants funding the same project

Resources

Resources

- FTA Grant Programs
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding>
- FTA Program Circulars
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/final-circulars>
- *New!* USDOT – DOT Navigator
<https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>
- Understanding Non-Federal Match Requirement
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/understanding-non-federal-match-requirements>
- TrAMS – Guidance and Training
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/trams-guidance-training>
- 2 CFR 200 – “Super Circular”
https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.t

Resources (continued)

- Master Agreement
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/sample-fta-agreements/fta-grant-agreements>
- Certifications and Assurances
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/certifications-and-assurances/certifications-assurances>
- National Transit Institute (training)
<https://www.ntionline.com/>

FTA Mission, Vision, Values



Mission

Improve America's Communities through Public Transportation



Vision

A Better Quality of Life for All Built on Public Transportation Excellence

Values

Service

Provide reliable, transparent, responsive, and anticipatory services to meet stakeholder needs

Integrity

Commitment to the highest professional and ethical standards

Innovation

Foster new ideas, concepts, and solutions for improved outcomes

Sustainability

Optimize decisions, resources, and systems to make long-term positive impacts on the environment, infrastructure, and safety

Equity

Remove barriers for systemically underserved communities to access all aspects of economic, social, and civic life

Thank you!

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