Grant Application Development
Frequently Encountered Issues

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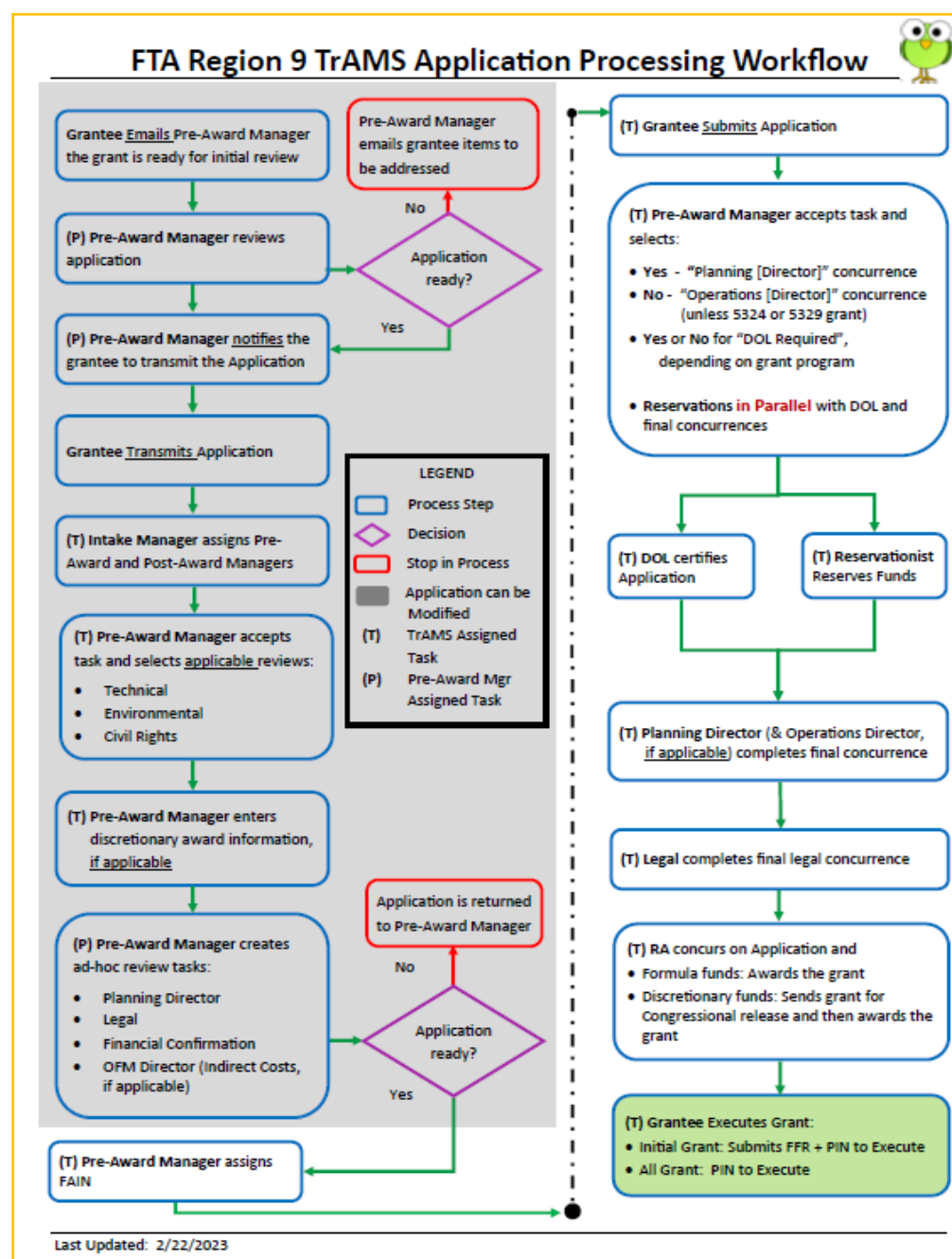
Pre-Award Activities

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Cross-Cutting Program Requirements

- Planning

- Legal, Financial, and Technical Capacity

- Annual Certifications and Assurances

- Civil Rights

- Environmental Review

- Procurement

- Safety

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Grant Application Development Process

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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.)

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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]

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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

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Other Program Issues

- SAM Registration has expired

  o Grantees will not be able to submit the grant application if SAM registration has expired.

  o FTA cannot award grants while a Recipient's SAM Status is "EXPIRED."

- Civil Rights Program Submissions Missing or Expired

  o 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

  o 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

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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"*

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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).

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Project Level Issues

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Budget/Activity Line Item (ALI) Issues

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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.

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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)

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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

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Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Adjustment Amount

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

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Budget / Activity Line Item Issues -

Environmental Determination

- Documentation Incomplete or Missing

- Incorrect Environmental Determination Selected

  o Categorical Exclusion (CE)

  o Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE)

  o Environmental Assessment (EA)

  o Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- Incorrect use of "Cross Agency CEs"

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Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Environmental Determination Selection

- One for All ALIs vs. One for each ALI

- [Mary and Amy will work on this.

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

Application Budget Control Totals

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		Transportation Development Credits are non-additive and included within FTA fund amounts (e.g. Section 5307).	$0
State/In-Kind			$0
Other Federal			$0
Transportation Development Credit			$400,000
Adjustment			$0
Total Eligible Cost			$8,475,000

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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

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

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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

<u>Reference(s):</u>
- 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

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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

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Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

3rd Party Contractor Use Selection

- Incorrect selection made

    o Any activity <mark>where a contractor will be used</mark> 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

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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."

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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

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Budget / Activity Line Item Issues

Bus Stop Improvement Projects

- Insufficient information provided

  - o Number of bus stops

  - o Location of bus stops

  - o Type of improvement (i.e., NEPA review)

  - o Other grants funding the same project

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Resources

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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

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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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