

Please note the following when developing your grant application in TrAMS:

Attachments:

Make sure all documentation related to the grant application is uploaded in TrAMS as applicable. The most common attachments are:

- The project listing(s) from the STIP and UPWP.
- The Federal Transit Administration (FTA)/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) signed Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) approval letter for all capital and operating assistance projects and the FTA/FHWA, signed Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) letter for all planning projects.
- The FTA signed STIP or UPWP amendment letter (if the grant application contains projects that were amended in the STIP or UPWP after the date of original STIP or UPWP approval).
- STIP modification documentation (if your project(s) had minor changes that only require a modification).
- Supporting environmental documentation (see Environmental Findings Section in this document), such as the FTA-approved documental categorical exclusion (CE) checklist, environmental assessment, or environmental impact statement and the respective FTA documented CE approval letter, Finding of No Significant Impact, or Record of Decision.
- Transportation Development Credit (TDC) letter from the State DOT (if applicable).
- Funding allocation letter.

Part 2: Application Information (Executive Summary Section):

This section should provide a general explanation of the type of projects that you are applying for. In this section you should provide the following information:

- Grantee name.
- Federal fiscal year of the funding that will be used.
- The type of funds that will be used (Section 5307, 5311, 5339, etc.).
- The projects/activities that are included in the grant application (purchasing replacement buses, operating assistance, preventive maintenance, renovation of a bus garage, etc.).
- The source of local funds.
- The supporting documents that are attached in the grant application (STIP approval letter, STIP project listings, etc).

Part 3: Project Information (Project Description Section):

This section should provide more detail on the specific projects. In this section you should mention the following:

- Federal fiscal year of the funding that will be used.
- The type of funds that will be used (Section 5307, 5311, 5339, etc.).
- More details about the project. For example if you are renovating a bus garage, you should provide details about the specific activities that will take place (such as replacement of the lighting, roof replacement, installation of new garage doors, etc.).

Part 3: Project Information (Budget Activity Line Item – Extended Budget Description Section):

This section should include the following:

- A description of the project.
- Useful life information for capital items such as vehicle purchases, facility renovations, software/hardware purchases, etc. Be sure to state useful life information for both the old asset and the new asset.
- For Operating Assistance and Preventive Maintenance...the period of time that the funding will cover (for example January 1, 2016-December 31, 2016).
- A statement that includes the dollar amount of the TDC (if TDC is part of the local match).
- STIP/UPWP ID number and/or page where the project is listed in the STIP or UPWP.

Part 3: Project Information (Milestones):

Each activity line item (ALI) must have at least 2 milestones. The number of milestones should be reflective of the complexity of the project. For example, if you are constructing a new bus maintenance garage, you should include milestones that reflect significant events such as:

- Dates for Request for Proposals (RFPs) for design/construction.
- Contract award dates.
- Start/Completion dates of any environmental mitigation.
- Start/end dates of design and construction.
- Grand opening date.
- If your project involved completion and FTA approval of environmental work (a documented categorical exclusion approval, Finding of no Significant Impact, or a Record of Decision), then the milestones should include significant environmental events such as:
 - Submission and approval dates of environmental documents.
 - Section 106 initiation and completion dates.
 - Initiation and completion dates of studies or reports such as Phase I Site Assessments, Traffic Studies, or an Environmental Justice Analysis.

Federal Share of Project Costs:

The typical Federal/Local Share of project costs are (80% Federal/20% Local) for Capital and Planning projects, and (50% Federal/50% Local) for Operating Assistance. There are instances where the Federal share of a project can be higher than 80%. For example the federal share for project costs for acquiring vehicle-related equipment or facilities (including clean fuel or alternative fuel vehicle-related equipment or facilities) for purposes of complying or maintaining compliance with the Clean Air Act Amendments, or required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, is 85 percent.

- When using a Federal funding share that is more than 80/20 for Capital or Planning, or 50/50 for Operating Assistance, you should clearly state the reason for the increased Federal Funding in the extended budget description for that activity line item (ALI).
- When developing your project budgets in TrAMS for each ALI, be mindful not round the Federal share up, thereby causing it to be over the maximum amount allowed.

Requirement for Planning Projects: (See Page VI-1 of the Section 5307 Circular (Circular 9030.1E)).

Planning projects **are required** to be in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) if you are in an urbanized area with a population over 50,000, or a Statewide Planning Program document for those areas under 50,000 in population. The project listing and budget from the UPWP or Statewide Planning Program document must be uploaded in TrAMS.

- The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) can list planning projects but not in lieu of listing them in the UPWP.

Capital Cost of Contracting:

If you have an ALI for Capital Cost of Contracting, the extended budget details must clearly demonstrate compliance with the circular by stating: the type of contract; total contract expense; total eligible percentage and amount; and the total federal allowable percentage and amount. See the example grant application template for appropriate language and page VI-11 of the Section 5307 Circular (Circular 9030.1E) for more information.

Environmental Findings:

TrAMS offers the option of selecting an Environmental Finding (EF) at the Project level (which means that all ALIs under that project are covered in one finding), or at the ALI level (which means that each ALI activity may have a different EF).

Prior to approving a grant in TrAMS, FTA must find that the action complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and any other applicable environmental laws. For most entries in TrAMS, there will be one EF per "Project" in TrAMS (e.g., a bus purchase). In some cases, it may be desirable for one "Project" to have multiple EFs, and in that instance, there would be one EF identified per ALI (e.g., large formula grants covering multiple independent activities or Projects that involve permissible early acquisition of real property where the early property acquisition has not been set up as its own "Project") rather than at the Project level. Contact your grant representatives if you have questions about whether you should select the EFs at the Project or ALI level.

Be sure the proper EF is selected for each Project/ALI. Some of the EFs are straight forward and do not require additional information or documentation (such as C-4 for Operating Assistance and Planning Activities, and C-7 for vehicle purchases and preventive maintenance).

Additional environmental documentation and/or FTA approval may be required if you have a project that contains renovations or construction. The review and approval of environmental documentation can sometimes take several months (or more) to complete, so it's important to contact your grant representative well in advance of when you put the project in a grant application. FTA can then make a determination on whether additional environmental information is required.

If environmental documentation and FTA approval are completed:

- The appropriate EF should be selected.
- The environmental documents should be attached to the grant application.

- The signed FTA approval letter should be attached to the grant.
- A statement that environmental documentation was completed and the date FTA signed the approval letter should be provided in the EF Details section.

Helpful Links:

FTA Website:

www.fta.dot.gov

FTA Circulars:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/fta-circulars>

Environmental Guidance:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/environmental-programs/fta-environmental-impact-and-related-procedures>

TrAMS Guidance:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams>

FY 2016 Certifications and Assurances:

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