

New Starts

Total Funding Available: \$750 million

Overview: The New Starts program is the federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally-planned, implemented, and operated transit "guideway" capital investments. Projects include commuter rail, light rail, heavy rail, bus rapid transit, streetcars, and ferries.

Project criteria include:

- **Mobility Improvements:** measured by travel time benefits per project passenger mile, low-income households served, and employment near stations.
- **Environmental Benefits:** measured by change in regional pollutant emissions, change in regional energy consumption, and EPA air quality designation.
- **Cost Effectiveness:** measured as the cost per hour of travel time saved.
- **Operating Efficiencies:** measured by system operating cost per passenger mile.
- **Transit Supportive Land Use & Future Patterns:** measured by existing land use, transit supportive plans and policies and performance, and impacts of policies.
- **Other:** includes a number of optional factors, including the projected economic impact of project, economic development, and the reliability of forecasts.

Special Factors:

- Funds are available until September 30, 2010.
- Periodic reports to the Federal Transit Administration that include information on spending and job creation will be required.
- Priority is given to projects that are currently in construction or are able to obligate funds within 150 days of enactment.
- Funds cannot be commingled with any prior year funds.
- The current match ratio is used. This is a sliding scale that rates the local financial commitment for consideration during the application and award process. It is not a set amount.

How to Access Funding: Grants will be made at the Secretary's discretion. Application guidelines will be available on the New Starts website (see below). The Federal Transit Administration has released guidance that can be found at http://www.fta.dot.gov/index_9118.html.

Federal Contact: Federal Transit Administration
http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/planning_environment_5221.html

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