



Federal Transit Administration New Starts Project Development Process

Joni Roeseler
FTA Region VII

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

- FTA is part of the US DOT.
- FTA's mission is to support public transit through grant programs and policies.
- Annual Budget of approximately \$9 Billion
- Program is administered through a headquarters office in Washington DC and 10 regional offices.
- FTA Region VII – IA, NE, KS, MO

What is New Starts?

- Fixed Guideway Projects such as light rail, heavy rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit and busways
- Funded by the FTA 5309 Capital Investment Program-New Starts (discretionary funding program)
- Very Competitive Program – all projects compete nationally for funding (5 times as many projects as funds available)
- 2007 Authorization ceiling \$1.5 Billion to fund current and new FFGAs

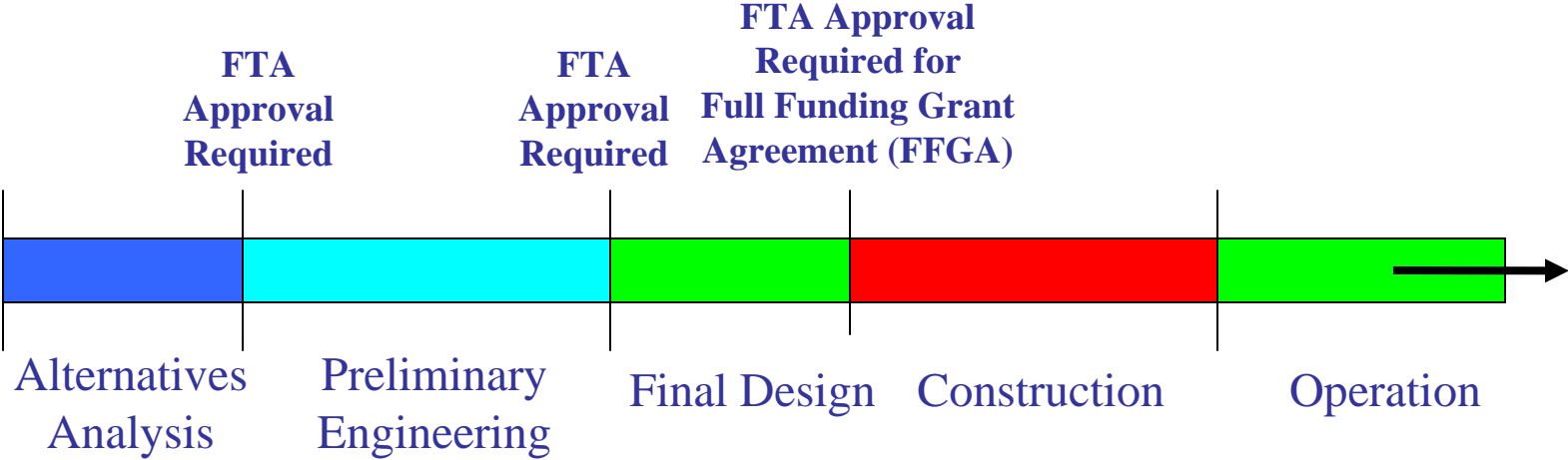
Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process

- A coordinated, continuing, cooperative transportation planning process is required for all urbanized areas with a population of greater than 50,000.
- The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the lead local agency responsible for the process.
- For the Kansas City Urbanized area the Mid America Regional Council is the MPO
- Systems Planning is a component of the process. The Smart Moves Plan is an example of systems planning.

Required New Starts Project Development Process

- Alternatives Analysis (generally a multi-year process)
- Preliminary Engineering (generally a multi-year process)
- Final Design (generally a multi-year process)
- Full Funding Grant Agreement
- Construction
- Revenue operations

Project Development Process



What do we mean by FTA Approval?

- Formal written approval from FTA is required before the project can enter the next stage of project development.
- A key determining factor is the analysis of data to support the FTA New Starts Criteria.
- FTA must rate the project and the project must be rated “medium” (or higher) in order to move to the next stage of project development.

What are New Starts Criteria?

- Mobility improvements
- Cost effectiveness
- Environmental benefits
- Operating efficiencies
- Land Use
- Economic Development (new!)
- Local financial commitment
- Other factors

Alternatives Analysis (AA) (Corridor Level Study)

- Identify the Transportation Problem
- Define the Corridor
- Develop Alternatives Solutions
- Involve the Public
- May begin the Environmental Evaluation (National Environmental Policy Act - NEPA) Process
- Includes some initial design work
- Results in a general Mode and Alignment

Results of Alternatives Analysis (Corridor Level Study)

- Project Sponsor selects Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).
- MPO includes LPA in the Urbanized Area's financially constrained and conforming Long Range Transportation Plan.
- Project Sponsor develops the data for FTA New Starts Criteria.
- Project Sponsor requests FTA approval to enter Preliminary Engineering (PE).

Preliminary Engineering (PE)

- Significant design work occurs
- Further refinement of the Financial Plan
- Refinement of Project Scope / Cost Estimates – lock in New Starts amount of project costs
- Complete the Environmental Analysis (NEPA) Process
- FTA makes the Environmental Finding (such as a Record of Decision (ROD) based on an Environmental Impact Statement-EIS).
- Project Sponsor updates data for New Starts Criteria
- Submit request to FTA to enter Final Design

Final Design - FD

- Complete Design
- Prepare construction documents
- Begin Right of Way Acquisition
- Commitment of all non-New Starts Funding
- Submit updated New Starts Criteria Data
- Request a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA)

Sampling of Prerequisites to an FFGA

- Approved Project Management Plan
- Fleet Management Plans
- Financial Capacity Review
- State Safety Oversight Management Plans
- Operating Agreements
- Etc.

Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA)

- Defines the Project Deliverables: includes detailed project budget, scope, and schedule; list of environmental mitigation items; FTA funding schedule and amounts, etc.
- Commits FTA funding at a maximum dollar amount, if the money is made available by Congress.
- Commits Project Sponsor to deliver the project on time, on budget, and to pay for any cost overruns.
- Provides authority that allows the project to move forward in advance of FTA funding availability.

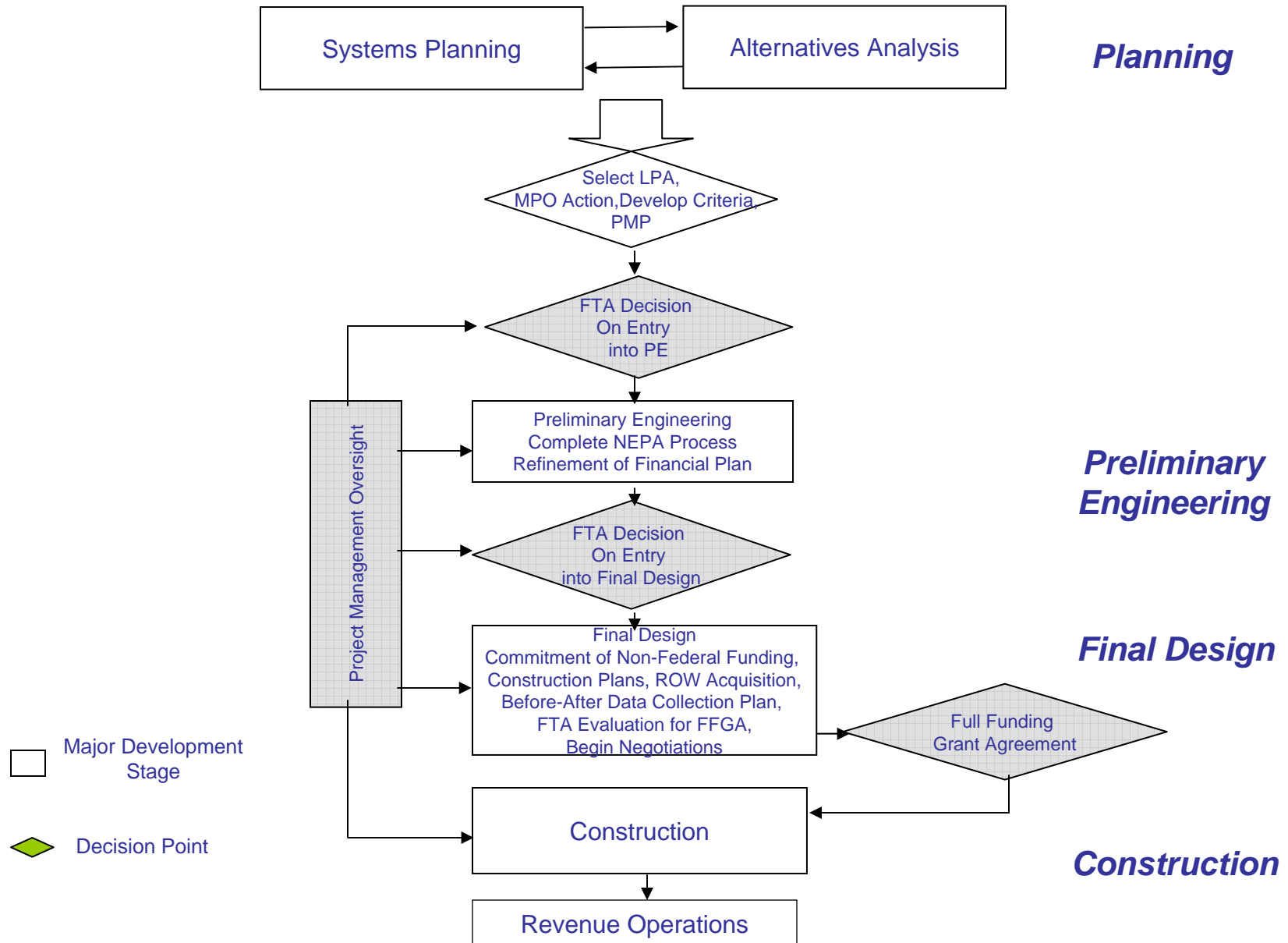
Construction

- FTA participation is based upon the project as detailed in the FFGA
- FTA Oversight Contractors serve as an extension of FTA staff in the field during the construction process (often also during PE and FD).
- State Safety Oversight Agency Certification
- Includes system and vehicle testing and start up.

Revenue Service

- The project is now complete and operational – congratulations!
- Once revenue service begins, FTA will not pay for system operations for areas over 200,000 in population, except for preventive maintenance.

New Starts Planning and Project Development Process



Things to Consider

- Identification of a Project Sponsor - must be a public entity
- Systems Planning required before AA starts
- Regional Transit Travel Demand Model needs to meet FTA Travel Methodology Standards (ridership)
- Corridor size and complexity can impact schedule
- Funding for the Bus system cannot be compromised (maintenance of effort is a statutory requirement)
- Recent FFGAs Federal share at 50% or less
- New Starts or Small Starts – not both

Questions?

www.fta.dot.gov

Contact:

Joni Roeseler

FTA Region VII

816-329-3936

joan.roeseler@dot.gov