



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION X
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REGION 10 BULLETIN NO: 06-40

SUBJECT: Applying for the New Small Starts Program

PROGRAM AREAS: Grants

DATE: December 12, 2006

As many of you know, the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU) authorized \$200 million/year for a new program commonly called Small Starts. The program applies to projects seeking under \$75 million in Small Starts funding with a total cost under \$250 million. To implement the program the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced the availability of the Interim Guidance and Instructions for Small Starts on August 8, 2006. That document

http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/SS_Interim_Guidance_73106.pdf provides potential sponsors of Small Starts projects with the information required to apply for funding for their projects prior to issuance of the regulation which will cover Small Starts. The regulation is not expected until early 2008. The document also describes the process that FTA will use to evaluate proposed Small Starts projects to approve those projects into project development and support FTA funding recommendations.

The information needed by FTA for Small Starts has been significantly simplified compared to New Starts. Simplifications have been made in the number of alternatives considered in planning, the determination of project benefits, descriptions of transit-oriented development, and evidence of the financial capacity of the agency. In addition, FTA has created a funding category referred to as Very Small Starts with informational requirements that likely do not exceed those that a transit agency would need if they were not pursuing FTA funding.

In the Federal Notice announcing availability of the Guidance, we mentioned that project information must be received by September 15, 2006 in order for a project to be considered for a funding recommendation in the FY2008 Annual New Starts Report.

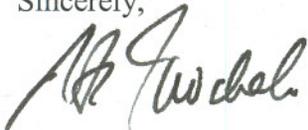
Now that the initial submittal deadline has passed, **requests for entry into project development can be made to FTA at any time** that the project sponsor determines that it has sufficient information to support the request. Projects cannot be recommended for Project Construction Grant Agreements unless they have been approved for entry into project development. As with the New Starts program, FTA will report on all Small Starts projects that are approved into project development, no matter when that approval occurred, in each year's Annual Report on Funding Recommendations. It is likely that the success of the program will be judged in part based on the number of meritorious projects which are in the pipeline.

Bulletin- Applying for New Small Starts Program

We want to encourage you to review the Small Starts program requirements and contact the Regional FTA office for further information or questions. Please contact Ken Feldman at 206-220-7521 or email kenneth.feldman@dot.gov. You may also contact the Office of Planning and Environment at FTA Headquarters at 202-366-4033 should you have any questions about the process or your project's eligibility under this program.

We understand this program is of interest to many agencies that are unfamiliar with FTA funding generally, and others which have had no experience with the New Starts program. This is an important new program for FTA and we are dedicated to assisting you as we get it underway

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. F. Krochalis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

R. F. Krochalis
Regional Administrator