

FTA Tips, Tricks, and Updates

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September 25, 2024

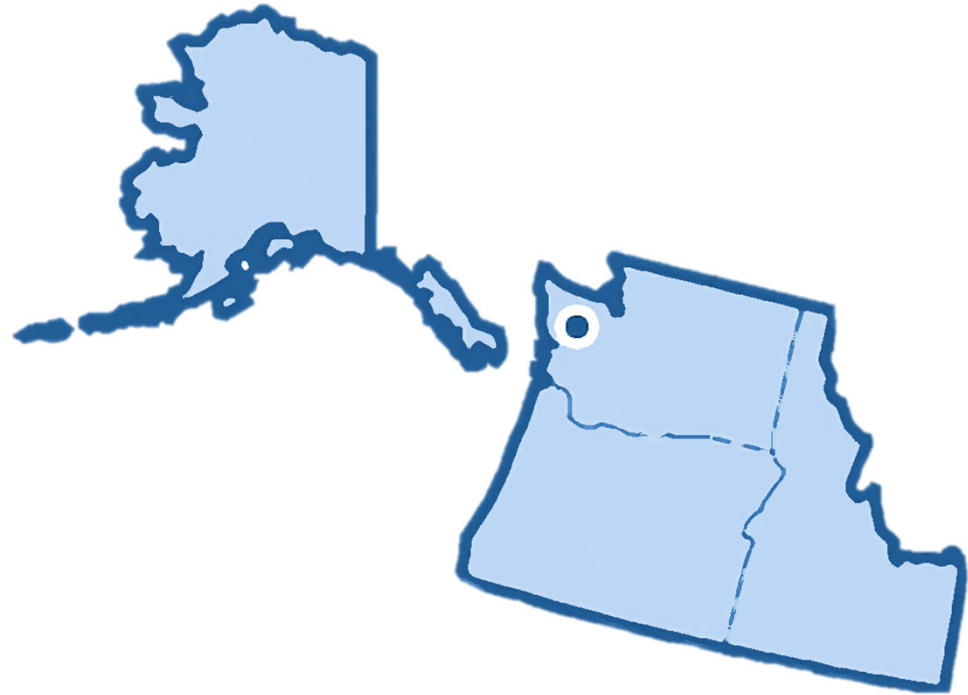


U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration



Agenda

- FTA Updates
 - Staffing
 - Region 10 Statistics
 - BIL Implementation
 - Oversight
- Grant-Making
 - Process
 - Common Questions
 - Tips
- Resources
- Questions



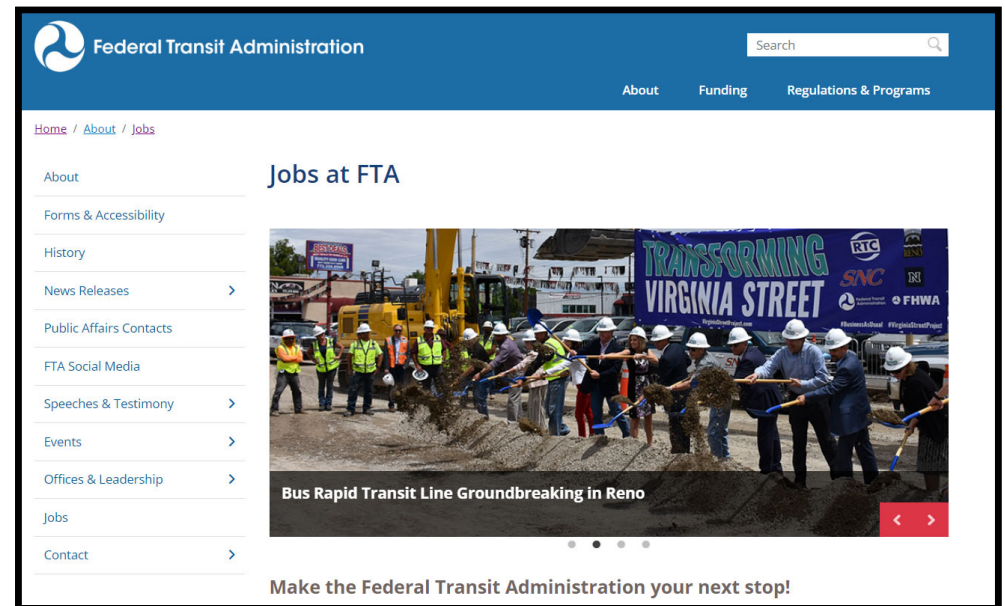
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/pictures/Region10.png>

FTA Updates



Agency-Wide Staffing

- Previously: ~550 staff nationwide
- Under BIL:
 - More transit funding = more projects/work
 - Additional funding = more FTA employees
 - 550 → 800 (45% increase)
- Currently: 706 staff nationwide
 - We are still hiring!
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/jobs>

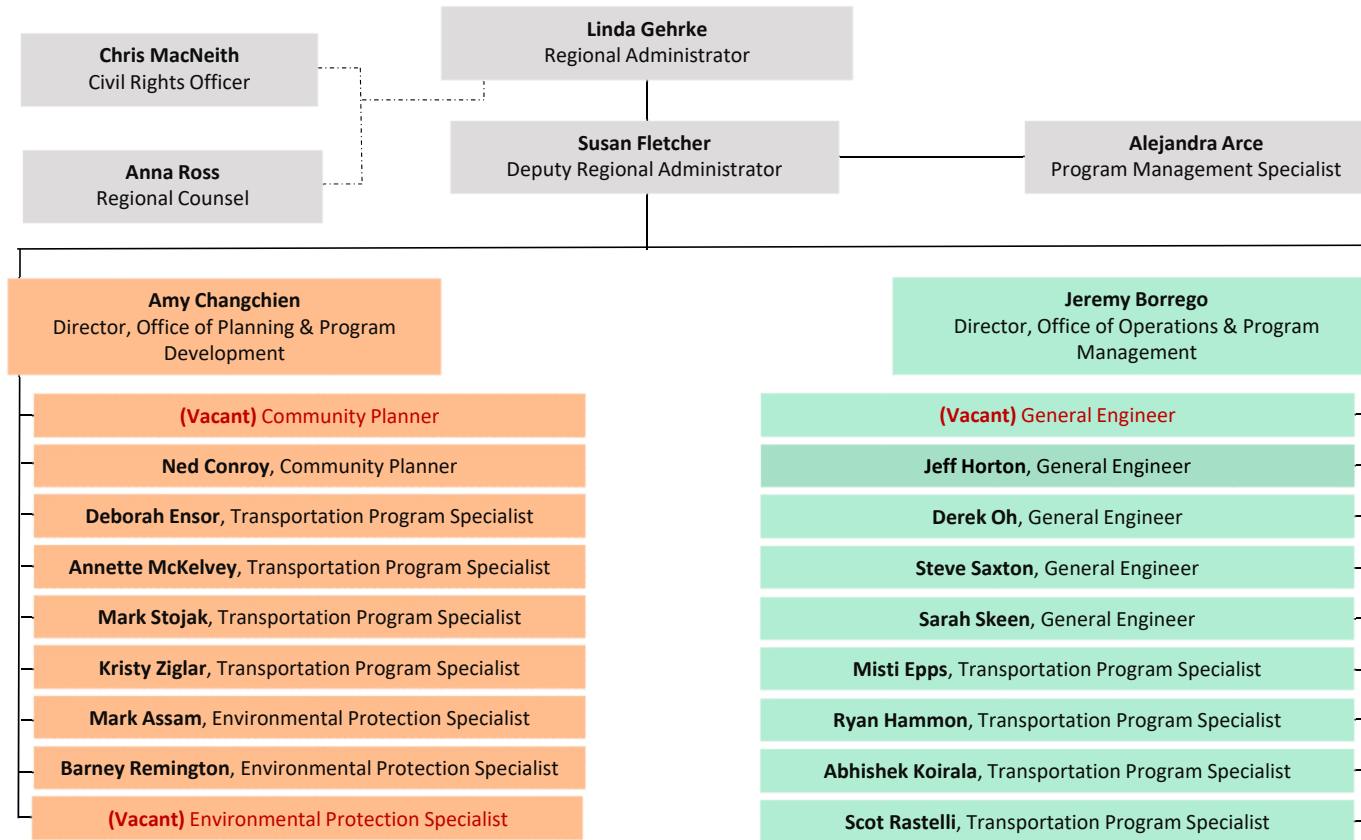


Region 10 Staffing

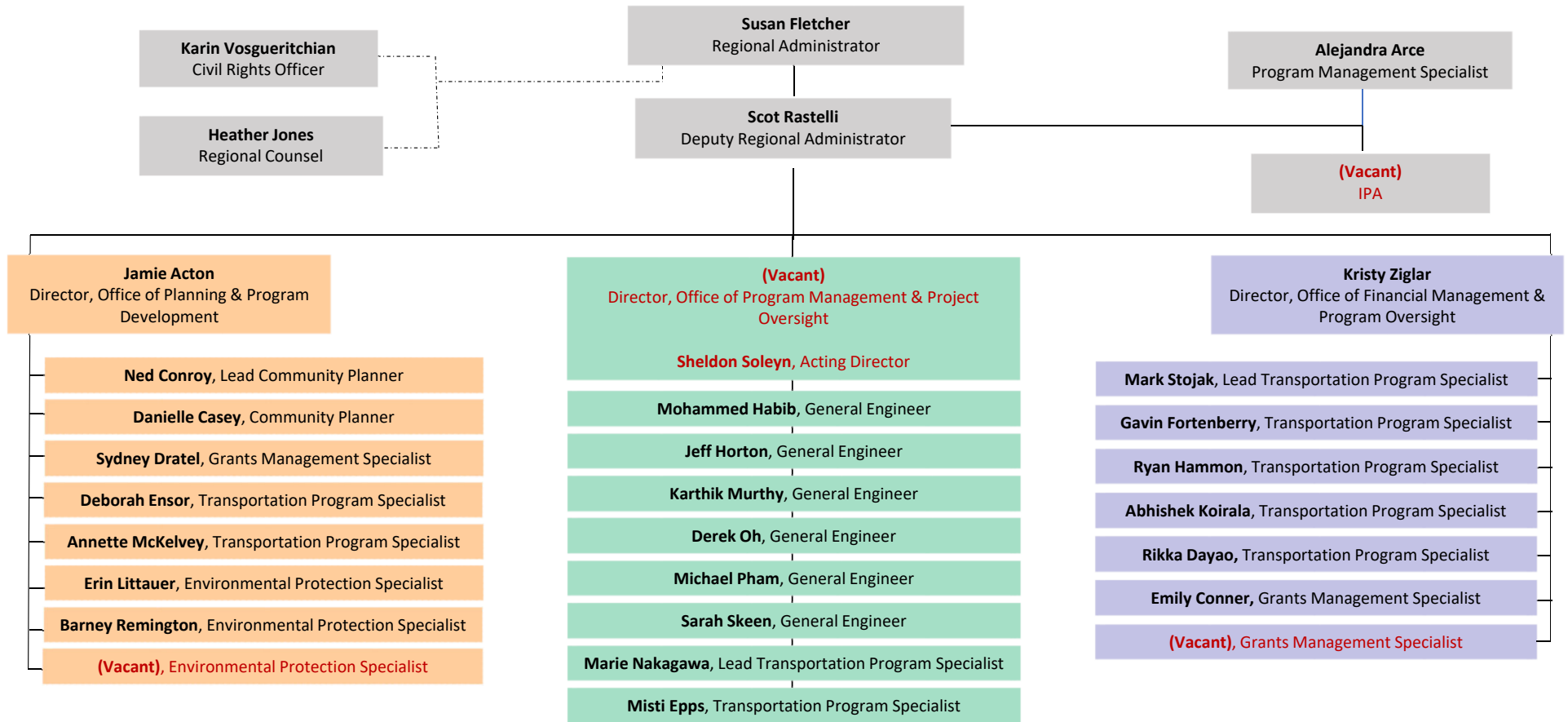
- In FY 2022: team of 23 + 2 in HQ
- Today: team of 29 + 1 IPA + 2 in HQ
 - IPA = “Intergovernmental Personnel Agreement”
- Summary of changes:
 - Creation of the **Financial Management and Program Oversight Office**
 - 22 positions (76%) impacted by change:
 - Job creation
 - Promotions
 - Duties
 - Team changes



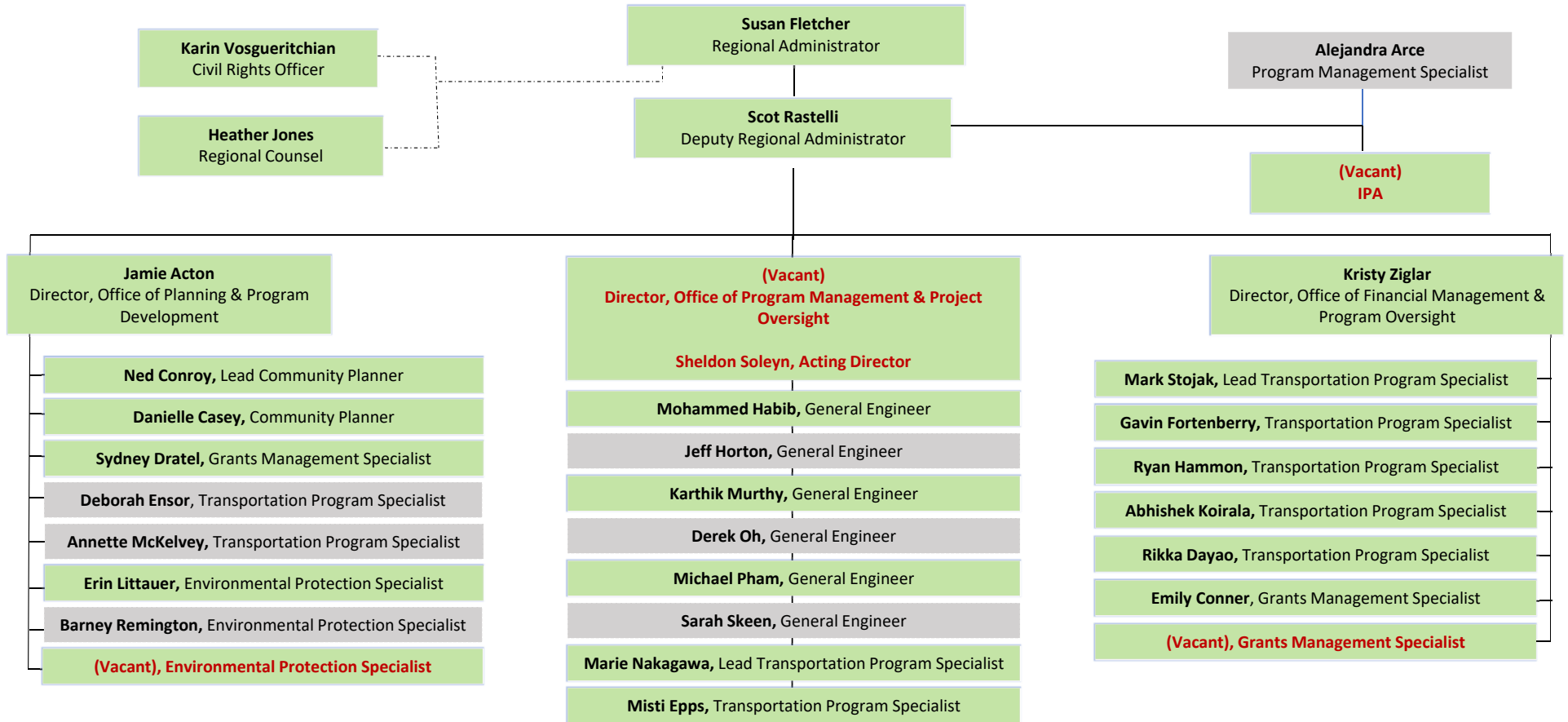
Region 10 Structure: July 2022



Region 10 Structure: September 2024



Region 10 Positions that Experienced Change



Region 10 Recent Statistics

- **Supporting partners in AK, ID, OR, & WA:**
 - 33 Urbanized Areas
 - 72 Tribes & Native Villages
 - 118 Active Grantees
- **In FY 2023:**
 - Awarded 239 Grant Agreements (\$1.28B in Federal funds)
- **In FY 2024:**
 - Managing 736 active grant awards (\$25.2B in Federal funds)
 - Conducting 5 Planning Certification Reviews from a group of 15 TMAs
 - Facilitating 12 Triennial/State Management Reviews & 4 Specialized Oversight Reviews
 - Managing the resolution of 75 deficiencies

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Implementation Updates



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BIL Overview

- On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)
 - authorized \$108B to support Federal public transportation programs
- Advances public transportation through **4 key priorities**:
 - Safety
 - Modernization
 - Climate
 - Equity



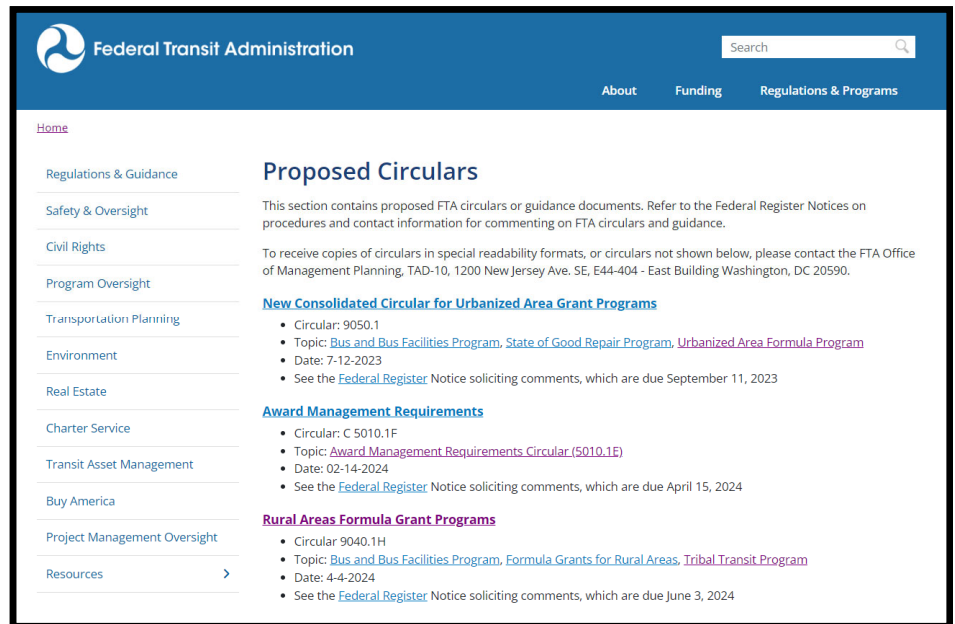
BIL Implementation

- **Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP):**
 - First major update proposed April 9, 2024
 - Proposed changes:
 - Advance Safety Management System (SMS) process
 - Increase frontline transit worker involvement
 - Expand de-escalation training
 - Address safety risk
 - Webinar: August 13, 2024 (2–3:00 p.m. ET)
- **Disposition Proceeds:**
 - Now limited to \$5,000
 - All other proceeds must be returned to FTA



BIL Implementation

- Funding:
 - 30% average increases (Formula & Competitive)
- Circular updates underway:
 - Currently available for public comment
 - **5010.1** – update to Award Funds Management requirements
 - **9050.1** - consolidation of urban-focused programs
 - Section 5307 (9030.1)
 - Section 5337 (5300.1)
 - Section 5339 (5100.1)
 - **9040.1H** – consolidation of rural-focused programs
 - Section 5311
 - Section 5311 TTP
 - Section 5339 (5100.1)



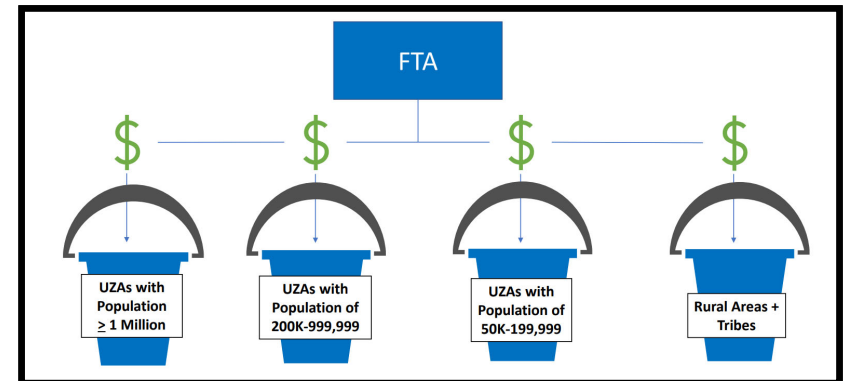
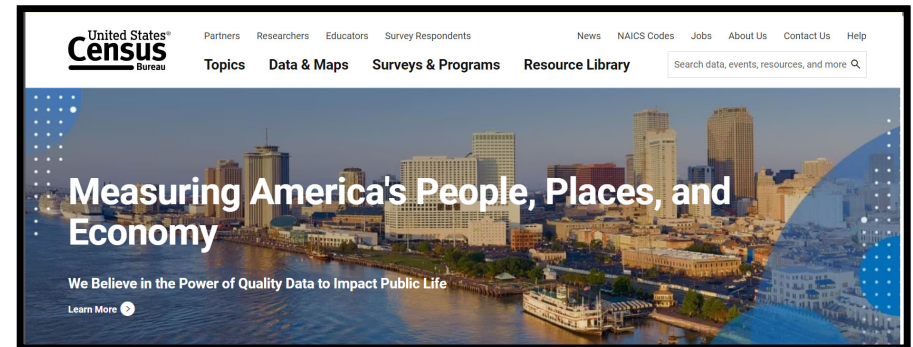
The screenshot shows the Federal Transit Administration website. The header includes the FTA logo, the text "Federal Transit Administration", a search bar, and navigation links for "About", "Funding", and "Regulations & Programs". The main content area is titled "Proposed Circulars" and contains the following information:

- Proposed Circulars**
 - This section contains proposed FTA circulars or guidance documents. Refer to the Federal Register Notices on procedures and contact information for commenting on FTA circulars and guidance.
 - To receive copies of circulars in special readability formats, or circulars not shown below, please contact the FTA Office of Management Planning, TAD-10, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, E44-404 - East Building Washington, DC 20590.
- New Consolidated Circular for Urbanized Area Grant Programs**
 - Circular: 9050.1
 - Topic: [Bus and Bus Facilities Program, State of Good Repair Program, Urbanized Area Formula Program](#)
 - Date: 7-12-2023
 - See the [Federal Register](#) Notice soliciting comments, which are due September 11, 2023
- Award Management Requirements**
 - Circular: C 5010.1F
 - Topic: [Award Management Requirements Circular \(5010.1F\)](#)
 - Date: 02-14-2024
 - See the [Federal Register](#) Notice soliciting comments, which are due April 15, 2024
- Rural Areas Formula Grant Programs**
 - Circular: 9040.1H
 - Topic: [Bus and Bus Facilities Program, Formula Grants for Rural Areas, Tribal Transit Program](#)
 - Date: 4-4-2024
 - See the [Federal Register](#) Notice soliciting comments, which are due June 3, 2024

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

2020 Census Impacts on 2024 Apportionments

- **Changes to Region 10 urbanized areas:**
 - Rural to Urban – 2 areas
 - Small Urban to Large Urban – 2 areas
 - Funding adjustments
 - due to changes in overall UZAs
- **Updated National Transit Database (NTD)**
 - Data now from FY 2020
- **FY 2024 apportionments use:**
 - new 2020 UZAs
 - 2022 NTD service data

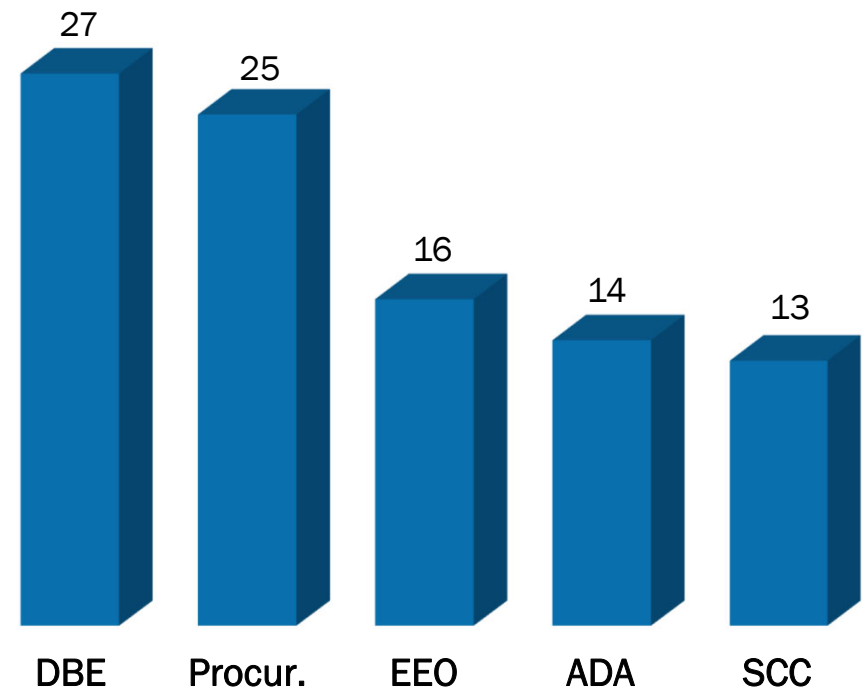


Oversight Updates



Oversight at Region 10

- FY 2024 Oversight complete:
 - Triennial Reviews
 - State Management Reviews
- Top Region 10 deficiency areas over 3 years:
 - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
 - Procurement
 - Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Satisfactory Continuing Control (SCC)



Oversight Trends: Indirect Costs

- If using indirect costs:
 - **Must** have Federally approved & negotiated indirect cost rate *or* de minimis rate
 - Not all agencies eligible for de minimis rate
 - **Must** be programmed grant within all required fields *and* a specific Budget ALI
- Tips:
 - Contact FTA often and early before any work is done
 - Identify your cognizant federal agency
 - If FTA, a contractor will be procured to review the proposed indirect cost rate
 - Plan ahead—the process is lengthy



Grants: Process, Common Questions, & Tips



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration



What is a grant rep?

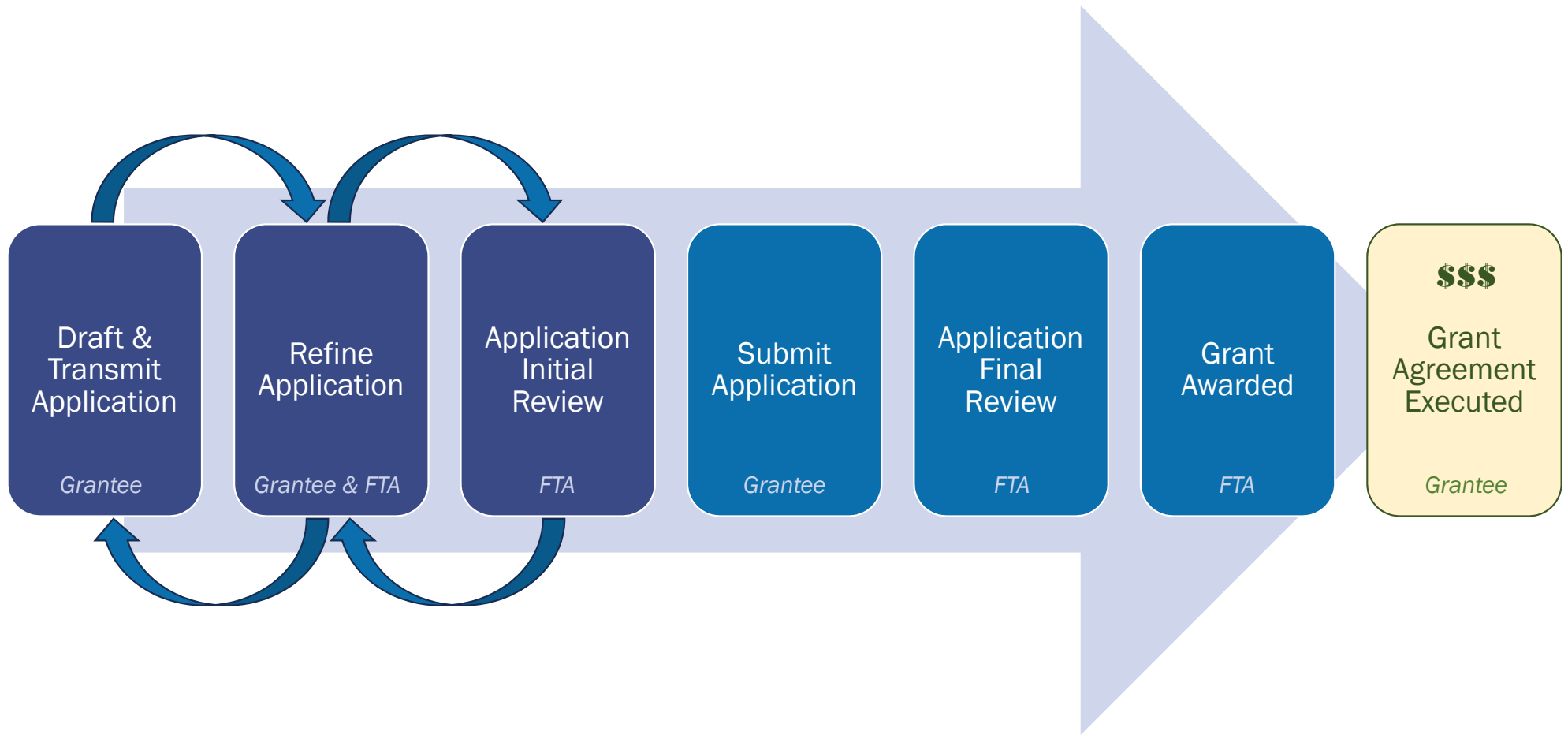
- Assigned to you by FTA—your go-to person!
- Monitors your grants from beginning to end
- Can vary based on grantee & funding type
- Provides technical assistance
- Shares information & resources
- Facilitates & supports grantees in all phases
 - Guidance/strategy
 - Transportation planning
 - Grant management
 - Environmental review
 - Oversight

When in doubt, ask your grant rep!

Pre-Award Common Questions



Grant-Making: Pre-Award



What are the regulations & guidance?

The image is a screenshot of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) website. At the top left, it says "United States Department of Transportation" and "Federal Transit Administration" with the FTA logo. A search bar is on the top right. The main navigation menu includes "About", "Funding", and "Regulations & Programs". The "Regulations & Programs" menu is expanded, showing two columns of links. The left column is titled "Oversight & Policy Areas" and includes: Safety & Oversight, Civil Rights, Program Oversight, Transportation Planning, Environment, Real Estate, Charter Service, and Transit Asset Management. The right column is titled "Resources" and includes: Research & Innovation, Legislation, Federal Register Notices & Rulemaking Documents, **FTA Circulars** (highlighted with a yellow box), Dear Colleague Letters, and Technical Assistance. A banner image of a subway station with the text "Improving America's Communities through Public Transportation" is visible in the background.

FTA Website: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/>

How long do I have to obligate funds?

- **Period of Availability** determines how long you have to obligate funds to a grant.
 - Varies by funding program & year of funding; always check the Federal Register!
- As funds reach the end of their period of availability, they are at risk of **lapsing**.
 - When funds lapse, they are no longer available to the grantees.

Formula*

Funding Source	Period of Availability
5303 / 5304	FY + 3 years
5307	FY + 5 years
5310	FY + 2 years
5311(a)	FY + 2 years
5337	FY + 3 years
5339(a)	FY + 3 years

*these periods change with different funding authorizations, **always** review the Apportionment Notice for each fiscal year.

Discretionary**

Funding Source	Typical Period of Availability
5307(h)	FY + 5 years
5309 (CIG)	Variable
5311(b/j)	FY + 2 years
5339(b/c)	FY + 3 years
CMPJ	n/a

these periods vary widely by program and fiscal year, **always review the Notice of Funding Opportunity and Project Selection Notice for each fiscal year.

Other

Funding Source	Period of Availability
5324	n/a
5329	FY + 2 years
FHWA Flex	Variable <i>*should be obligated within 4 years</i>

When can I start spending money?

- Pre-award authority can allow grantees to start incurring costs before funds are obligated.
- HOWEVER:
 - Not all grants/funding programs have this—always check your guidance.
 - All federal regulations still need to be followed; this is not a free pass.

Definition from Circular 5010.1E:

(113) Pre-award Authority: Pre-award authority means authority given under specific and limited circumstances to incur costs for eligible project activities (before the Federal Award Date of an Award), without prejudice, to possible federal participation in the cost of those project activities. Applicants must comply with all applicable federal requirements. Failure to comply with applicable federal requirements will render those project costs or, in certain cases, the project in its entirety, to be ineligible for FTA assistance.

What planning elements are required?

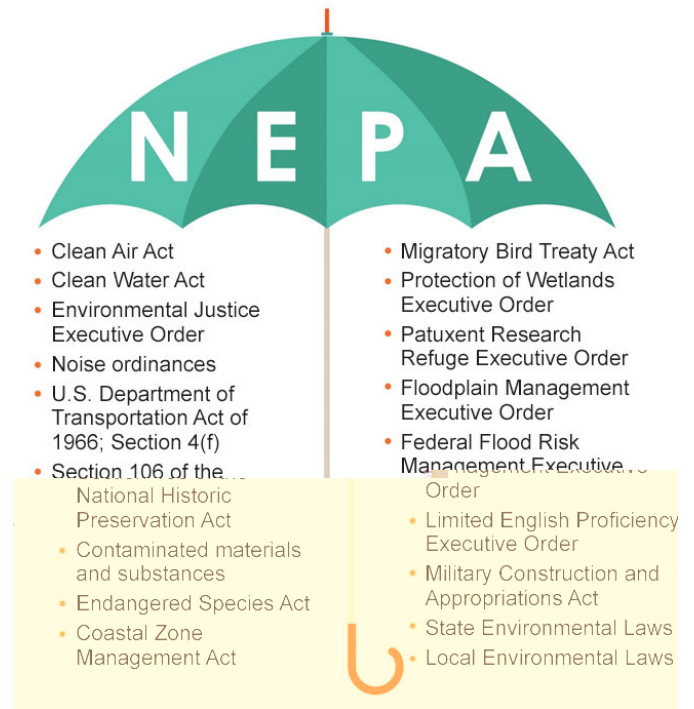
- All projects need to be in your Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).
 - It can take many months to get projects added to a STIP, and get that change approved by FTA.
- Some key elements FTA looks for are:
 - Project Title
 - Scope of work / project description
 - STIP ID #
 - Funding Source
 - Funding Amount
 - Federal Approval Date



[R.d8f06577e48caf1c63dd4606280a154d \(1648 x 1503\) \(bing.com\)](https://www.bing.com)

What environmental elements are required?

- All federally funded projects need environmental review as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
 - Needs to be completed prior to starting purchases or any physical project activities.
 - Can require different classes of action:
 - Categorical Exclusion (CE)
 - Environmental Assessment (EA)
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Talk to your grant rep early in project planning.
- Contact fta.tro10.environmental@dot.gov with questions.

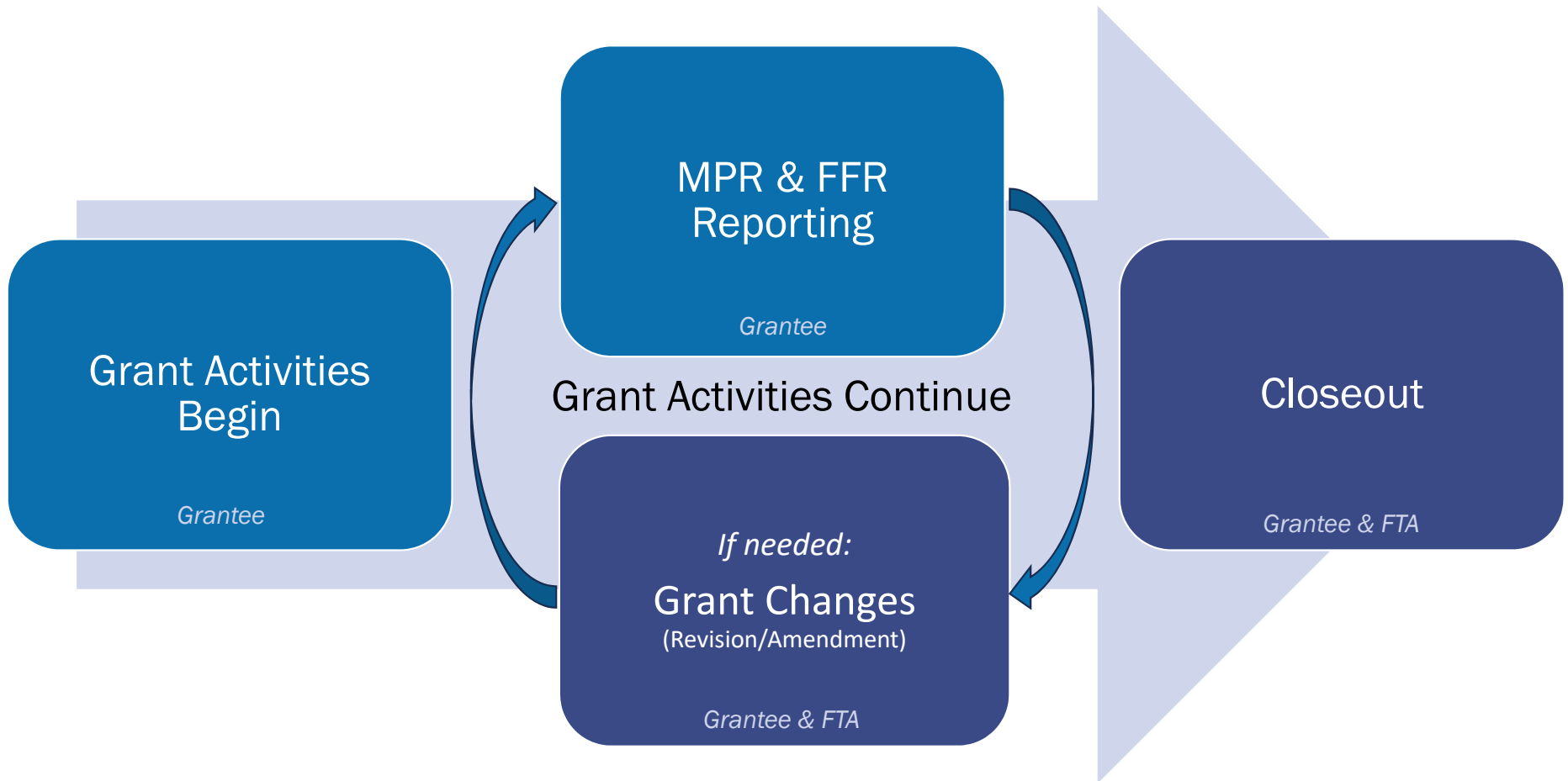


More information: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-H/part-771/section-771.113>

Post-Award Common Questions

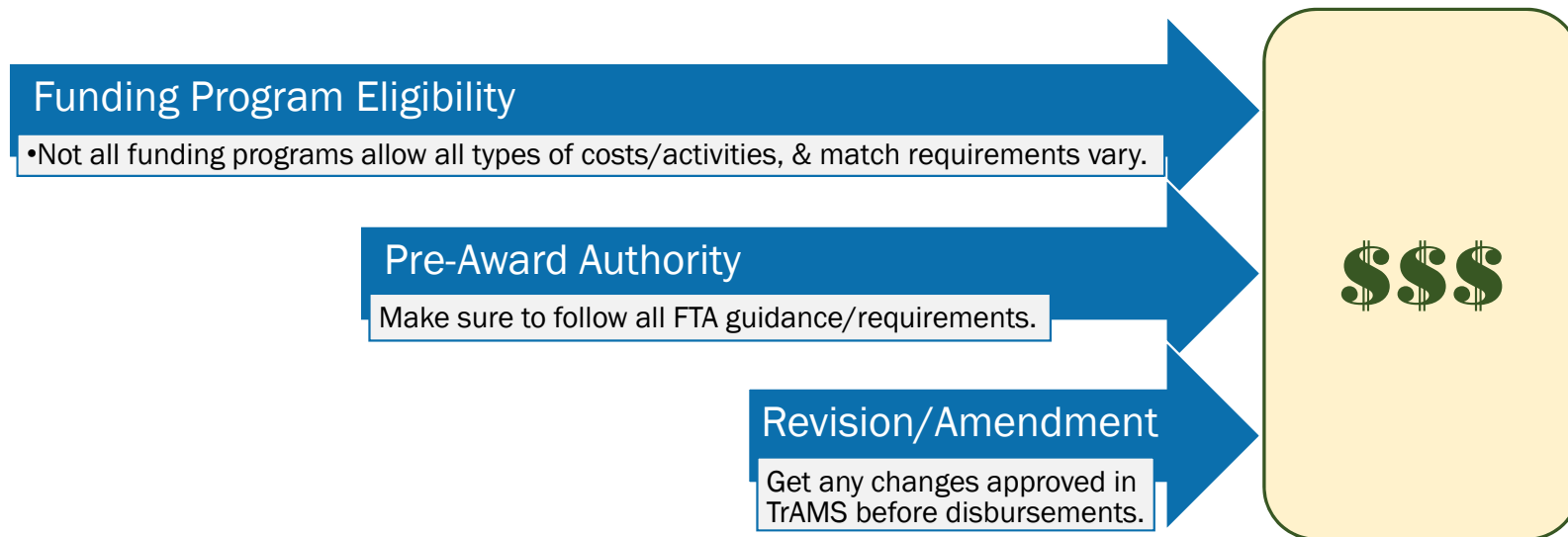


Grant-Making: Post-Award



What if I want to make changes to a grant?

- Changes can be made to grants via budget revisions or grant amendments.
- HOWEVER:
 - Activities **must be eligible** for the funding type & **pre-award authority rules** must be followed.
 - **Disbursements should not be made** until and unless all steps are followed/completed.



When is my grant at risk of being closed?

Inactive Grants:

- No drawdowns in >18 months, even if grant activities are ongoing
 - Flagged when no drawdown in >1 year

Fully Disbursed Grants:

- Funds are fully expended, regardless of grant activity status
 - Flagged when >90% disbursed

Remember to close your grants within 90 days of project completion or full disbursement!

In some cases, if you don't close your grant, FTA will take administration action to do it for you.

Grant Tips



Grant Planning

- Set up regular meetings with your grant rep.
- Be proactive, not reactive!
- Plan ahead:
 - Short term (1 year)
 - Near term (2-5 years)
 - Long term (>5 years)
- Strategize & prioritize:
 - Projects
 - Lapsing funds
- Don't make assumptions.
- Don't skip steps in the process.
 - Address environmental review early!
- Communicate often & early!



<https://hrfibreglass.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/road-map.jpg>

Resources

UPCOMING:

- Oversight Workshop in Anchorage, AK: October 29—November 1, 2024
- NTI: NTD Trainings, virtual & in-person: <https://ce-catalog.rutgers.edu/searchResults.cfm?branchid=67>
- Circular rollout resources forthcoming

- FTA Homepage: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/>
 - Events: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/events>
 - Circulars: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/fta-circulars/circulars>
 - Master Agreement: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/sample-fta-agreements/fta-grant-agreements>
- Trainings:
 - NTD: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/presentations-and-webinars>
 - TrAMS: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/trams-guidance-training>
 - NTI (various topics): <https://www.youtube.com/user/RutgersNTI>
- Oversight:
 - Manual: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/safety/fy24-comprehensive-review-contractors-manual>
 - Workshops: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/program-oversight/grantee-oversight-workshops>
 - Trainings: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/program-oversight/webinars-and-training>
- Census: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/census>

Questions?



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Thank you!

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