Building Livable Communities with Transit

Rail~Volution 2010
Time for a Fresh Start

Presented by:
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Challenge Fundamental Principles

- One corridor at a time
Time for a Fresh Start
Time for a Fresh Start
Time to Challenge Some Fundamental Principles

- One corridor at a time
- One size fits all
One Size Fits All

Same Measures and Rating Thresholds applied for all projects, *not* reflecting differences in:

- Size and scale of urban environment
- Project goals and objectives
- Extension or new mode/service
- Operating characteristics
- Regional characteristics and conditions
Time to Challenge Some Fundamental Principles

- One corridor at a time
- One size fits all
- Level playing field
New Starts Project Rating

Summary Rating

Project Justification Rating

Financial Rating

Other Factors

Economic Development (20%)
Mobility Improvements (20%)
Environmental Benefits (10%)
Operating Efficiencies (10%)
Cost Effectiveness (20%)
Land Use (20%)

Non-Section 5309 Share (20%)
Capital Finances (50%)
Operating Finances (30%)
Small Starts Project Rating

Summary Rating

Project Justification Rating
- Economic Development (33%)
- Cost Effectiveness (33%)
- Land Use (33%)

Financial Rating
- Non-New Starts Share (20%)
- Capital Finances (50%)
- Operating Finances (30%)

Other Factors

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Time to Challenge Some Fundamental Principles

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- Time and Uncertainty in FTA project development process and approvals
New Starts Project Development Process

Alternatives Analysis

Preliminary Engineering/NEPA

Max NS Share Set

Final Design

Full Funding Grant Agreement

FTA rating and decision points

1-2 years

2-3 years

3-7 years
Some Fresh Ideas?

- APTA
- New Starts Working Group
- Community Streetcar Coalition
- Transportation Providers and Agencies
- Additional Advocacy Groups such as T4America and National Housing Conference
Expedite Delivery and Reduce Uncertainty

- Eliminate stand-alone New Starts Alternatives Analysis requirement
- Consolidate FTA approval steps (one Project Development approval)
- Establish clear end-points in process
- *Project Development Agreements and Early Systems Work Agreements*
Expedite Delivery and Reduce Uncertainty

- Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) proposal to delegate NEPA decisions to States, consolidate NEPA actions, advance pre-construction activities
One Corridor at a Time

- Ability to use local investment as match for a federally funded project
- Interrelated Program of Projects
- Metro Mobility Concept
- LA Metro 30/10 Initiative
Fix the Cost-Effectiveness measure
Calculate CE on Federal $ not total costs
“The Trip Not Taken”
Carefully consider a roll-up CE measure
Update environmental benefits, land use, economic development measures
Livability and sustainability
One Size Fits All and Level Playing Field

- Re-think the definition and application of the New Starts Baseline
- .....and eliminate it for Small Starts
- .....and establish timely concurrence rules

- Interest in a “Warrants” based approach
Corridors and projects meeting certain conditions and characteristics would advance without traditional project evaluation and rating.

Conditions and characteristics such as:
- Corridor and station area densities
- Existing and forecasted transit ridership
- Service frequencies and operating plans
- Project capital and operating costs

Projects meeting certain “warrants” or conditions could be granted priority funding recommendation.
Apply different “warrants” for different types of projects:
- New fixed-guideway projects
- Extensions to existing systems
- Corridor bus improvements
- Urban circulators
Warrants – FTA Precedents

FTA created “Very Small Starts” based on:
- Corridor characteristics and current ridership
- Project service and operating plan
- Project costs

FTA option for Small Starts Financial Rating if:
- Sound financial plan and agency stability
- Minimal risk (project operating cost less than 5% of system costs)
## Warrants Based Approach

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<th>SMALL STARTS</th>
<th>New Line Haul Service</th>
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<th>Urban Circulator</th>
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Time for a Fresh Start

- One corridor at a time
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- Time and Uncertainty in FTA project development process and approvals

How much risk is acceptable to FTA?
Interested in your Ideas for a Fresh Start
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