



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration



FACT SHEET:
FIXED GUIDEWAY CAPITAL INVESTMENT GRANTS
Chapter 53 Section 5309

	FY15 /MAP-21	FY16 (millions)	FY17 (millions)	FY18 (millions)	FY19 (millions)	FY20 (millions)
Section 5309	\$2,120.0	\$2,301.8	\$2,301.8	\$2,301.8	\$2,301.8	\$2,301.8

PROGRAM PURPOSE:

The discretionary Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program provides funding for fixed guideway investments such as new and expanded rapid rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit, and ferries, as well as corridor-based bus rapid transit investments that emulate the features of rail. There are four categories of eligible projects under the CIG program: New Starts, Small Starts, Core Capacity, and Programs of Interrelated Projects:

- **New Starts** projects are new fixed guideway projects or extensions to existing fixed guideway systems with a total estimated capital cost of \$300 million or more, or that are seeking \$100 million or more in Section 5309 CIG program funds.
- **Small Starts** projects are new fixed guideway projects, extensions to existing fixed guideway systems, or corridor-based bus rapid transit projects with a total estimated capital cost of less than \$300 million and that are seeking less than \$100 million in Section 5309 CIG program funds.
- **Core Capacity** projects are substantial corridor-based capital investments in existing fixed guideway systems that increase capacity by not less than 10 percent in corridors that are at capacity today or will be in five years. Core capacity projects may not include elements designed to maintain a state of good repair.
- **Programs of Interrelated Projects** are comprised of any combination of two or more New Starts, Small Starts, or Core Capacity projects. The projects in the program must have logical connectivity to one another and all must begin construction within a reasonable timeframe.

Each type of project has a unique set of requirements in FAST, although many similarities exist among them. All projects must be evaluated and rated by FTA in accordance with statutorily defined criteria at various points in the development process. In order to be eligible to receive a construction grant, all projects must go through a multi-step, multi-year process and receive at least a “Medium” overall rating, in addition to other requirements.

Statutory References:

49 U.S.C. Section 5309 / FAST Section 3005

Eligible Recipients:

State and local government agencies, including transit agencies.

What's Changed Regarding the Overall CIG Program?

Period of Funding Availability

- Changes the period of funding availability for Section 5309 CIG funds from five years to four years.

Project Eligibility

- Allows joint public transportation and intercity passenger rail projects to qualify as New Starts or Core Capacity projects. Specifies a methodology for determining eligible project costs and project ratings for such joint projects.

Evaluation and Rating Process

- Removes language that would have required FTA to double count the land use and economic development criteria when developing an overall project rating.

Programs of Interrelated Projects

- Allows Small Starts projects to qualify.
- Clarifies the evaluation criteria to be used for Programs of Interrelated Projects.

Overview of FAST Provisions Related to New Starts Projects

This discretionary program requires projects to proceed through a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding with FTA evaluation and rating required at various points in the process. The first step is called Project Development, the second Engineering, and the third a Full Funding Grant Agreement for construction.

Eligible Activities:

Design and construction of new fixed-guideways or extensions to fixed guideways (projects that operate on a separate right-of-way exclusively for public transportation, or that include a rail or a catenary system).

What's Changed Regarding New Starts Projects?

Total Cost and CIG Share Threshold

- Because the FAST Act changes the total project cost and CIG share threshold for Small Starts projects, New Starts projects are now defined as projects with a total estimated capital cost of \$300 million or more, or that are seeking \$100 million or more in Section 5309 CIG program funds. The former thresholds under MAP-21 were \$250 million and \$75 million, respectively.

Calculation of Cost Effectiveness Evaluation Criterion

- Specifies that for purposes of calculating the cost effectiveness of a New Starts project, FTA shall not deduct the cost of art and non-functional landscaping from the annualized capital cost calculation.

Maximum CIG Funding Share

- FAST specifies that New Starts projects are limited to a maximum Section 5309 CIG program share of 60 percent. The maximum Federal contribution from all Federal sources to a New Starts project is 80 percent.

Overview of FAST Provisions Related to Small Starts Projects

This discretionary program requires projects to proceed through a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding with FTA evaluation and rating required at various points in the process. The first step is called Project Development and the second is a construction grant agreement.

Eligible Activities:

- Design and construction of new fixed-guideways or extensions to fixed guideways (projects that operate on a separate right-of-way exclusively for public transportation, or that include a rail or a catenary system).
- Design and construction of corridor-based bus rapid transit projects operating in mixed traffic that represent a substantial investment in the corridor and emulate the features of rail.

What's Changed Regarding Small Starts Projects?

Total Cost and CIG Share Threshold

- FAST changes the total project cost and CIG share threshold for Small Starts projects. Small Starts projects must have a total estimated capital cost of less than \$300 million and must be seeking less than \$100 million in Section 5309 CIG program funds. The former thresholds under MAP-21 were \$250 million and \$75 million, respectively.

Definition of Corridor-Based Bus Rapid Transit

- Changes the definition to eliminate the requirement to provide frequent, bi-directional service for a substantial part of weekend days.

Optional Early Rating

- Adds a provision that Small Starts projects may seek an optional rating upon completion of the environmental review process.

Funding

- Maximum CIG share is 80 percent. Total Federal funds may not exceed 80 percent.

Overview of FAST Provisions Related to Core Capacity Projects

This discretionary program requires projects to proceed through a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding with FTA evaluation and rating required at various points in the process. The first step is called Project Development, the second Engineering, and the third a Full Funding Grant Agreement for construction.

Eligible Activities:

Design and construction of a corridor-based investment in an existing fixed guideway system that improves capacity not less than 10 percent in a corridor that is at capacity today or will be in five years.

What's Changed Regarding Core Capacity Projects?

- The FAST Act did not make any changes to Core Capacity projects.

Funding:

- Maximum Section 5309 CIG share is 80 percent. Total Federal funds may not exceed 80 percent.

For Additional Information on FTA and the FAST Act, please visit: www.fta.dot.gov/fast.html

Overview of FAST Provisions Related to Programs of Interrelated Projects

This discretionary program requires federally funded projects in the Program of Interrelated projects to proceed through a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding, with required FTA evaluation and ratings of the program at various points in the process.

Eligible Activities:

- Design and construction of a program of two or more projects that have logical connectivity to one another and will each begin construction within a reasonable timeframe. Projects in the program may include:
 - Design and construction of new fixed-guideways or extensions to fixed guideways (projects that operate on a separate right-of-way exclusively for public transportation, or that include a rail or a catenary system); and/or
 - Design and construction of corridor-based bus rapid transit projects operating in mixed traffic that represent a substantial investment in the corridor and emulate the features of rail; and/or
 - Design and construction of corridor-based investments in an existing fixed guideway system that improve capacity not less than 10 percent in corridors that are at capacity today or will be in five years.

What's Changed Regarding Programs of Interrelated Projects?

- Allows Small Starts projects, including corridor based BRT projects, to be part of Programs of Interrelated Projects.
- Clarifies the evaluation criteria to be used by FTA when evaluating a Program of Interrelated Projects.
- Clarifies the steps in the process that projects within the program must proceed through to be eligible for funding.

Funding:

- Maximum Section 5309 CIG share for the Program of Interrelated Projects as a whole is 80 percent. Total Federal funds for the Program of Interrelated Projects as a whole may not exceed 80 percent.
- Any non-Federal funds committed to a project in the Program of Interrelated Projects may be used as match for any other project in the Program of Interrelated Projects as long as the Federal share of each project within the Program does not exceed 80 percent.