Protection of the Environment

Required **if the proposed project is for the construction of facilities.** Please see below for supplementary information.

Most transit projects funded under Section 5310 will be classified by FTA as categorical exclusions. Examples of categorical exclusions include purchase of transit vehicles, and purchase of office equipment. If the proposed project is for construction or acquisition of facilities or other buildings, further evaluation may be required before a determination can be made that the project is a categorical exclusion. A Categorical Exclusion (CE) is described in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.4 and 23 CFR 771, as a project which, based upon experience with similar actions, does not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect, and is excluded from the requirement to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Therefore, a project that qualifies as a CE generally requires a lower level of documentation. These projects do not bring significant impacts to planned growth or land use for the area; do not require the relocation of significant numbers of people; do not have a significant impact on any natural, cultural, recreational, historic, or other resources; do not involve significant air, noise, or water quality impacts; do not have significant impacts on travel patterns; and do not otherwise individually or cumulatively have any significant environmental impacts.

Types of projects that have been determined by FTA to qualify as CEs, and normally do not require any further National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) approvals by FTA, are listed in 23 CFR 771.118(c). Additional actions which meet the criteria for a CE but may be designated as CEs only after FTA approval are listed in 23 CFR 771.118(d). In these cases, the applicant must submit documentation which demonstrates that the specific conditions or criteria for these CEs are satisfied and that significant environmental effects will not result.

To meet the requirements of a CE determination, a proposed project may not be impermissibly segmented from a larger project. This means that a project may be proposed to be implemented in phases or as part of a larger undertaking, but must still demonstrate independent utility, connect logical termini, and should not restrict consideration of alternatives. In order to meet a CE designation, a proposed project cannot have substantial controversy on environmental grounds, or significant impact to properties protected by Section 4(f) of the US DOT Act (public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites) or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (cultural resources including historic and archaeological sites). The presence of features such as wetlands and floodplains within the project area would likely also require additional documentation.

The applicant should contact the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Office for assistance with determining the level of documentation required. The FDOT will use a description of the proposed project, along with any maps or figures to assist with determining if a proposed project is likely to meet FTA criteria for a CE. ***The CE worksheet is provided for reference only and not required for application submittal.***

FTA Region 4
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION and
DOCUMENTED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION WORKSHEET

Note: The purpose of this worksheet is to assist sponsoring agencies (grantees) in gathering and organizing materials for environmental analysis required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), particularly for projects that may qualify as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) or Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE). The use and submission of this particular worksheet is NOT required. The worksheet is provided merely as a helpful tool for assembling information needed by FTA to determine the likelihood and magnitude of potential project impacts. **NOTE: Fields are expandable, so feel free to use more than a line or two if needed.**

Submission of the worksheet does not satisfy NEPA requirements. FTA must concur in writing in the sponsoring agency's NEPA recommendation. Project activities may not begin until this process is complete. Contact the FTA Region 4 office at (206) 220-7954 if you have any questions or require assistance. If this is the first time you have filled out this form, FTA encourages you to review http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_CE_Presentation.pdf. Feel free to contact Region 4 for additional assistance. **Please see the end of this document for submittal procedures.** For links to other agencies or for further topical guidance, please go to Region 4's Grantee Resources: Environment site.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Sponsoring Agency	Date Submitted	FTA Grant Number(s) (if known)
Project Title		
Project Description (brief, 1-2 sentences)		
Purpose and Need for Project (brief, 1-2 sentences, include as an attachment if adopted statement is lengthy)		
Project Location (include City and Street address)		
Project Contact (include phone number and email address)		
If your project involves construction, include the following maps: • Project Vicinity • Project Site Plan • USGS quad		

II. NEPA Class of Action

Answer the following questions to determine the project's potential class of action. If the answer to any of the questions in Sections A or B is "YES", contact the FTA Regional office to determine whether the project requires preparation of a NEPA environmental assessment (EA).

A. Will the project significantly impact the natural, social and/or economic environment?

☐ YES (contact FTA Regional office)
☐ NO (continue)

B.1 Is the significance of the project's social, economic or environmental impacts unknown?

☐ YES (contact FTA Regional office)
☐ NO (continue)

B.2 Is the project likely to require detailed evaluation of more than a few potential impacts?

☐ YES (contact FTA Regional office)
☐ NO (continue)

B.3 Is the project likely to generate intense public discussion, concern or controversy, even though it may be limited to a relatively small subset of the community?

☐ YES (contact FTA Regional office)
☐ NO (continue)

C. Does the project appear on the following list of potential Categorical Exclusions (CEs)?

The projects listed below are generally categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis under 23 CFR 771.117(c) unless certain circumstances exist, such as the presence of wetlands, historic buildings and structures, parklands and floodplains in the project area.

☐ YES (If checked AND there are no special circumstances, as described above, mark the applicable activity and proceed to the signature block on the back page.)
☐ NO (continue to Section D)

☐ Activities not involving or directly leading to construction (technical studies, planning, preliminary engineering, etc.)

☐ Utility installations along or across a transit facility

☐ Construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, excluding those requiring construction in new right-of-way

☐ Installation of noise barriers or alterations to existing publicly-owned buildings to provide for noise reduction

- ☐ Landscaping
- ☐ Installation of fencing, signs, pavement markings, toll facilities, control centers, vehicle test centers, small passenger shelters, traffic signals, railroad warning devices, and signal controls with no substantial land acquisition or traffic disruption
- ☐ Emergency repairs under 23 USC 125
- ☐ Acquisition of scenic easements
- ☐ Ridesharing activities
- ☐ Bus, ferry, and rail car rehabilitation (including conversions to alternative fuels)
- ☐ Alterations to facilities or vehicles to make them accessible to elderly or handicapped persons
- ☐ Program administration (including safety programs), technical assistance, and operating assistance to continue existing service or increase service to meet routine changes in demand
- ☐ Purchase and lease of vehicles and equipment for use on existing facilities or new facilities that also qualify as CEs (including the capital cost of contracts for transit services)
- ☐ Track, railbed, and wayside system maintenance and improvements when carried out in existing right-of-way
- ☐ Purchase and installation of operating, maintenance and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) equipment to be located solely within the transit facility and with no significant off-site impacts
- ☐ Mitigation banking
- ☐ Resurfacing and restriping
- ☐ Routine maintenance

D. Does the project appear on the following list of potential documented Categorical Exclusions?

These projects may be categorical exclusions under 23 CFR § 771.177(d), but require additional documentation demonstrating that the specific conditions or criteria for the CEs are satisfied and that significant effects will not result.

☐ YES (Check and continue to Part III)
☐ NO (Contact FTA Regional Office)

- ☐ Grade separations requiring land acquisition to replace existing at-grade railroad crossings and bridge rehabilitation (including approaches to bridges and excluding historic bridges or bridges providing access to ecologically sensitive areas)
- ☐ Corridor Fringe Parking facilities (generally located adjacent to a mass transportation corridor such as an Interstate highway system)
- ☐ Carpool programs and activities requiring land acquisition and construction

☐ Safety improvements including seismic retrofit and mitigation of wildlife hazards

☐ Construction of new bus storage and maintenance facilities and new ITS control centers in areas used predominantly for industrial or transportation purposes where such construction is consistent with existing zoning and located on a street with adequate capacity to handle anticipated traffic

☐ Rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing rail and bus buildings and ancillary facilities where only minor amounts of additional land are required and there is not a substantial increase in the number of users

☐ Construction of bus transfer facilities (an open area consisting of passenger shelters, boarding areas, kiosks, and related street improvements) when located in a commercial area or other high activity center in which there is adequate street capacity for projected bus traffic

☐ Construction of rail storage and maintenance facilities (or other similarly sized support facilities) in areas used predominantly for industrial or transportation purposes where such construction is consistent with existing zoning and where there is no significant noise impact on the surrounding community

☐ Area-wide coordination of multiple ITS elements

☐ Advance land acquisition including:

- Acquisition of underutilized private railroad rights-of-way (ROW) to ensure that adjacent land uses remain generally compatible with the continued transportation use of the ROW
- Acquisition of land for hardship or protective purposes, consistent with 23 CFR 771.117 (D)(12)

(Note: the eligibility of hardship and protective buys is very limited and must be approved, in writing, by the Regional FTA office before proceeding with any acquisition activities. Failure to do so will render the project ineligible for Federal participation.)

III. Information Required for Documented Categorical Exclusions

If you checked "Yes" to any of the options in Part II, Section D, complete Part III and submit to FTA.

A. Detailed Project Description

Include a project description and explain how the proposal satisfies the purpose and need identified in Part I.

B. Location and Zoning

Attach a map identifying the project's location and surrounding land uses. Note any critical resource areas (historic, cultural or environmental) or sensitive noise or vibration receptors (schools, hospitals, churches, residences, etc). Briefly describe the existing zoning of the project area and indicate whether the proposed project is consistent. Include a description of the community (geographic, demographic, economic and population characteristics) in the vicinity of the project.

C. Traffic

Describe potential traffic and parking impacts, including whether the existing roadways have adequate capacity to handle increased bus or other vehicular traffic. Include a map or diagram if the project will modify existing roadway configurations. Describe connectivity to other transportation facilities and modes.

D. Aesthetics

Will the project have an adverse effect on a scenic vista?

☐ No
☐ Yes, describe

Will the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

☐ No
☐ Yes, describe

Will the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

☐ No
☐ Yes, describe

E. Air Quality

Does the project have the potential to impact air quality?

☐ NO
☐ YES, describe

Is the project located in an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-designated non-attainment or maintenance area?

☐ NO
☐ YES, indicate the criteria pollutant and contact FTA to determine if a hot spot analysis is necessary.

☐ Carbon Monoxide (CO)
☐ Ozone (O_3)
☐ Particulate Matter (PM_{10})

If the non-attainment area is also in a metropolitan area, was the project included in the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) air quality conformity analysis?

☐ NO
☐ YES

Date of USDOT conformity finding

F. Coastal Zone

Is the proposed project located in a designated coastal zone management area?

☐ No
☐ Yes, describe coordination with the State regarding consistency with the coastal zone management plan and attach the State finding, if available.

G. Environmental Justice

Indicate whether the project will have disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations. Describe any potential adverse effects. Describe outreach efforts targeted specifically at minority or low-income populations.

H. Floodplains

Is the proposed project located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year floodplain?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts and include the FEMA map with the project location identified.

I. Hazardous Materials

Is there any known or potential contamination at the project site?

☐ No, describe the steps taken to determine whether hazardous materials are present on the site.

☐ Yes, note mitigation and clean-up measures that will be taken to remove hazardous materials from the project site.

J. Navigable Waterways

Does the proposed project cross or have the potential to impact a navigable waterway?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts and any coordination with the US Coast Guard.

K. Noise and vibration

Does the project have the potential to increase noise or vibration?

☐ NO

☐ YES, describe impact and provide map identifying sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, parks and residences. If the project will result in a change in noise and vibration sources, you must use FTA's "Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment" methodology to determine impact.

L. Prime and Unique Farmlands

Does the proposal involve the use of any prime or unique farmlands?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts and any coordination with the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

M. Resources

Does the project have the potential to impact any of the resources listed below?

☐ NO

☐ YES, if checked, describe resource and impacts. Impacts to cultural, historic, or recreational properties may trigger Section 4(f) evaluation, which requires consideration of avoidance alternatives.

☐ Natural

☐ Cultural

☐ Historic—Indicate whether there are any historic resources in the vicinity of the project. Attach photos of structures more than 45 years old that are within or adjacent to the project site.

☐ Recreational

☐ Biological--The project sponsor must obtain a list of threatened and endangered species in the project area from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-Fisheries (NOAA-Fisheries). Attach species map, if available. Describe any critical habitat, essential fish habitat or other ecologically sensitive areas. See appendix for more information.

☐ Other, describe

N. Seismic

Are there any unusual seismic conditions in the project vicinity? If so, indicate on project map and describe the seismic standards to which the project will be designed.

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe

O. Water Quality

Does the project have the potential to impact water quality, including during construction.

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts

Will there be an increase in new impervious surface or restored pervious surface?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts and proposed treatment for stormwater runoff.

Is the project located in the vicinity of an EPA-designated sole source aquifer?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts and include a map of the sole source aquifer with project location identified.

P. Wetlands

Does the proposal temporarily or permanently impact wetlands or require alterations to streams or waterways?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe potential impacts

Q. Construction Impacts

Describe the construction plan and identify impacts due to construction noise, utility disruption, debris and spoil disposal, and staging areas. Address air and water quality impacts, safety and security issues, and disruptions to traffic and access to property.

R. Cumulative and Indirect Impacts

Are cumulative and indirect impacts likely?

☐ No

☐ Yes, describe the reasonably foreseeable:

a) Cumulative Impacts, which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

b) Indirect impacts, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect impacts may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

S. Property Acquisition

If property is to be acquired for the project, indicate whether acquisition will result in relocation of businesses or individuals.

Note: To ensure the eligibility for federal participation, grantees may not acquire property with either local or federal funds prior to completing the NEPA process and receiving written concurrence in the NEPA recommendation. For acquisitions over $250,000, FTA concurrence in the property's valuation is also required.

T. Public Notification

Describe public outreach efforts undertaken on behalf of the project. Indicate opportunities for public hearings, (e.g. board meetings, open houses, special hearings). Indicate any significant concerns expressed by agencies or the public regarding the project.

U. Mitigation Measures

Describe all measures to be taken to mitigate project impacts.

V. Other Federal Actions

Provide a list of other federal NEPA actions related to the proposed project or in the vicinity.

W. State and Local Policies and Ordinances

Is the project in compliance with all applicable state and local policies and ordinances?

☐ No, describe

☐ Yes

X. Related Federal and State/Local Actions

☐ Corps of Engineers (Section 10, Section 404)
☐ Coast Guard Permit
☐ Coastal Zone Management Certification
☐ Critical Area Ordinance Permit
☐ ESA and EFH Compliance
☐ Flood Plain Development Permit
☐ Forest Practice Act Permit
☐ Hydraulic Project Approval
☐ Local Building or Site Development Permits
☐ Local Clearing and Grubbing Permit
☐ National Historic Preservation Act-Section 106
☐ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Baseline General for Construction
☐ Shoreline Permit
☐ Solid Waste Discharge Permit
☐ Section 4(f) or 6(f) (Recreational and Historic Properties)
☐ Section 106 (Historic Properties)
☐ Stormwater Site Plan (SSP)
☐ Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (TESC)
☐ Water Rights Permit
☐ Water Quality Certification—Section 401
☐ Tribal Permits (if any, describe below)
☐ Other

Describe as applicable:

Submit two paper copies of this form, attachments, and a transmittal letter recommending a NEPA finding to the address below. Submit an electronic version to your area FTA Community Planner. Contact FTA at the number below if you are unsure who this is or if you need the email address. Modifications are typically necessary. When the document is approved, FTA may request additional copies.

Federal Transit Administration, Region 10
915 2nd Avenue, Suite 3142
Seattle, WA 98174-1002

phone: (206) 220-7954
fax: (206) 220-7959

Appendix:
Topical guidance links

Air Quality

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/conformity/ref_guid/sectionf.htm
http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/greenbk/ for a listing of non-attainment areas.

Coastal Zone Management

http://www.ocrm.nos.noaa.gov/czm/czmsitelist.html for a list of state programs.

Cumulative and Indirect Impacts

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/2nd_cml.htm
http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/guidebook/qaimpact.htm

Endangered Species Act and Consultation

http://endangered.fws.gov/consultations/sec7_faq.html#2 for frequently asked questions on the Endangered Species Act and the Section 7 Consultation process.

Endangered Species List

This list must be less than 6 months old at the time the DCE documentation is submitted to FTA. If the list is older than 6 months, you must verify that there have been no changes to the list.

For species under the jurisdiction of NOAA-Fisheries, go to http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1salmon/salmesa/index.htm, click on ESU Maps.

For species under the jurisdiction of USFWS, contact the nearest Ecological Services office. For a directory of USFWS offices, go to http://offices.fws.gov/directory/.

Environmental Justice

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/envjust.html
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/ej2.htm

Farmlands

http://www.info.usda.gov/nrcs/fpcp/fppa.htm

Floodplain

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/water/fldplns.html

Hazardous Materials

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/hazmat.html

Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/histcult.html

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1habcon/habweb/efh/msa2.html
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/magact

Navigable Waterways

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/water/navwater.html

NEPA

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/directives/fapg/cfr0771.htm
http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm
http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/guidebook/index.htm
http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/index.html

Noise and Vibration

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/noisevibration.html

Property Acquisition

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/49cfr24.htm

Tribal Consultation

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/natvamrc/tcqa.htm

Section 4(f)

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/parklands.html#Bckgrd
http://www.section4f.com/
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/4_f.htm

Section 6(f)

http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/protect.html

Sole Source Aquifer

http://www.epa.gov/safewater/ssanp.html

Water Quality

http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/planning/ep/subjarea/water/waterqual.html