



Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Revised Notification of
Audit of the Federal Transit Administration
New Starts Criteria
Project Number: 04M3003M000

Date: January 22, 2004

From: Debra S. Ritt 
Assistant Inspector General
for Surface and Maritime Programs

Reply to JA-40
Attn of:

To: Federal Transit Administrator

On November 24, 2003 the Office of Inspector General announced its intent to conduct an audit of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) New Starts Criteria. The announced objective was to determine whether FTA's guidance is sufficient to ensure that alternative modes and/or alignments analyzed as part of the metropolitan planning process support the selection of projects forwarded to FTA for proposed New Starts funding.

In response to a December 8, 2003 request from the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury, and Independent Agencies of the House Appropriations Committee, the Office of Inspector General is revising its audit notification to expand the audit scope. In addition to the objective originally announced, we will:

- Determine whether FTA's processes and criteria for evaluating proposed New Starts projects adequately identify those projects that will result in the greatest tangible benefits to those who pay for the system.
- Identify improvements needed in the alternative analyses and evaluation processes to ensure transportation projects recommended for New Starts funding represent the best local solutions and the best use of taxpayer dollars.

As discussed at the December 23, 2003 entrance conference with members of your staff, we will conduct the review at FTA Headquarters and regional offices and at grantees to be determined during the audit. The Program Director for this audit is Sarah Batipps, and the Project Managers are Robert Meisenhelder and Jim Corcoran. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at (202) 493-0331 or Sarah Batipps at (202) 366-8543.

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cc: Audit Liaison, OST
Audit Liaison, FTA