

Passenger Rail Study for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor

Quarterly Meeting of the
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

September 11, 2024

Past Efforts in the Corridor

- **Feasibility Study (1998)** concluding commuter rail is technically and financially feasible in the corridor
- **Corridor Study (2003)** analyzing commuter rail and bus alternatives
- **Technical Studies (2005–2011)** to complete alternatives analysis, prepare a draft environmental impact statement, and submit a “New Starts” application to the Federal Transit Administration
- **Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (2009–2011)** was created by the State in 2009 to construct, operate, and manage the line and was dissolved in 2011
- **VISION 2050 (updated in June 2024)** continues to identify the corridor as part of a larger commuter rail network
- **WisDOT (2022)** requested entry into FTA New Starts on behalf of a private entity

Study Overview

- **\$5 million** provided by Senator Baldwin through Congress to the City of Racine in 2022
- Building on **extensive previous studies**
- Considering **different approaches** to service design, sponsorship, and local funding
- **Goal** of entering a federal funding program

- Regional Planning Commission is assisting with the study (similar to previous studies)
- An advisory Steering Committee is guiding the study
- An advisory Technical Working Group is reviewing technical aspects

Primary Objectives

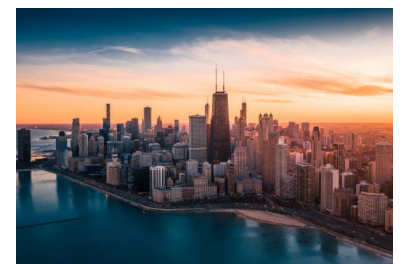
Determine a preferred service alternative, identify a project sponsor and funding, and develop a federal funding program request

An Opportunity To...

- **Connect** Racine, Kenosha, and other lakeshore communities to a world-class economic region and cultural center
- **Grow** jobs, **spur** development, and **lift** property values
- **Increase** wealth, wellbeing, and equity
- **Attract** new residents and businesses

Lakeshore Communities Need **Better Options** for Connecting to Chicago and Milwaukee

- Proportion of households without access to a car in the Cities of Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine is **twice the regional average**
- The three cities exhibit a development pattern that is **shaped by pre-automobile transportation**
- Regional connectivity is critical for promoting **economic growth**, attracting and retaining a **skilled workforce**, promoting **tourism**, and creating a **vibrant business community**
- Increased transit access and regional rail connectivity is critical in addressing Southeastern Wisconsin's **stark disparities in socioeconomic measures between black and white residents** such as household income, education attainment, unemployment rates and homeownership



Steering Committee

Role

- Meets monthly to guide the study, providing high-level input and recommendations on the general direction of the study
- Seeks consensus for key study decisions such as identifying a project sponsor, determining funding options to explore, and selecting a preferred service concept

Current Members

- Mayor Cory Mason, City of Racine (*Chair*)
- Trevor Jung, City of Racine
- Mayor David Bogdala, City of Kenosha
- Tim Casey, City of Kenosha
- Lafayette L. Crump, City of Milwaukee
- Dave Misky, City of Milwaukee
- Ian Ritz, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Stephanie Hacker, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Technical Working Group (TWG)

Role

- Meets twice a month to help guide and shape the project's technical aspects
- Provides feedback on technical analyses conducted by the study's primary consultant, DB E.C.O. North America

City/Transit System (4 representatives)

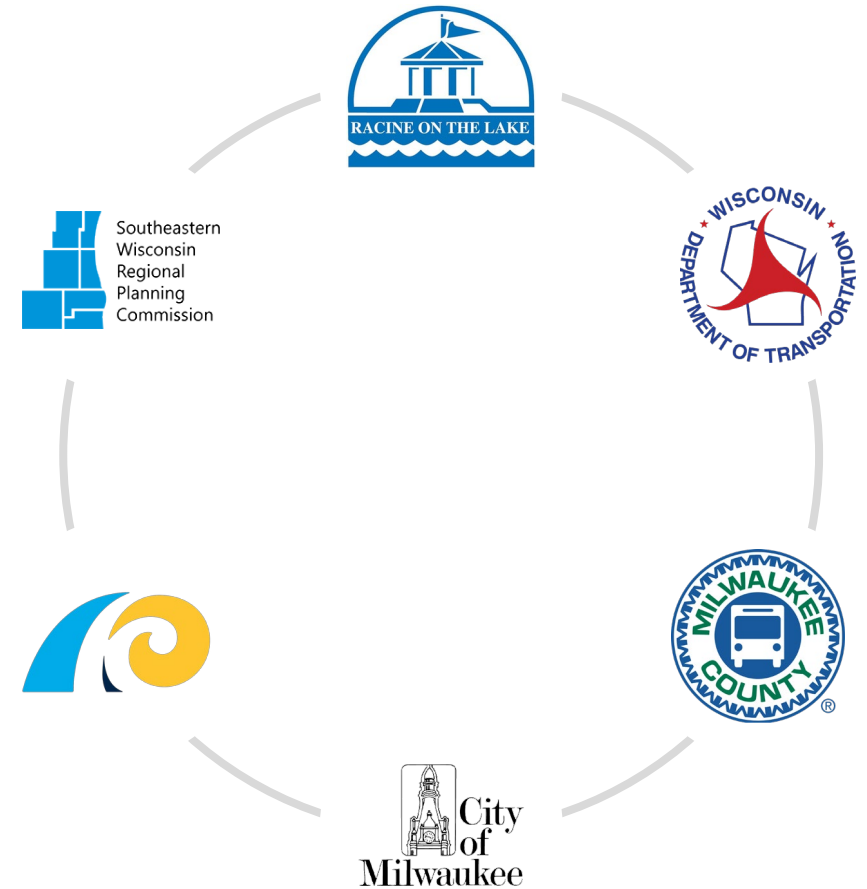
- Cities of Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee
- Milwaukee County Transit System

WisDOT (2 representatives)

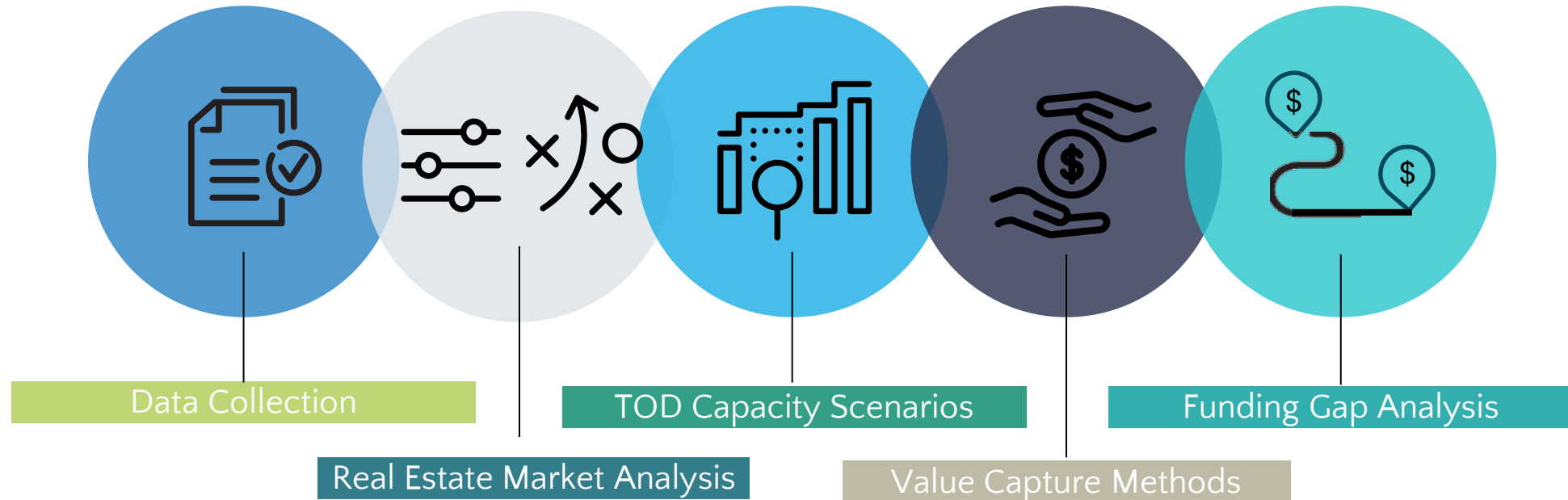
- Transit Section and Southeast Region Office

Regional Planning Commission (3 representatives)

- Transportation and Special Projects Divisions



Real Estate Market Analysis/TOD Value Capture Process (AECOM)



Real Estate Market Analysis → Future growth trends, existing development value

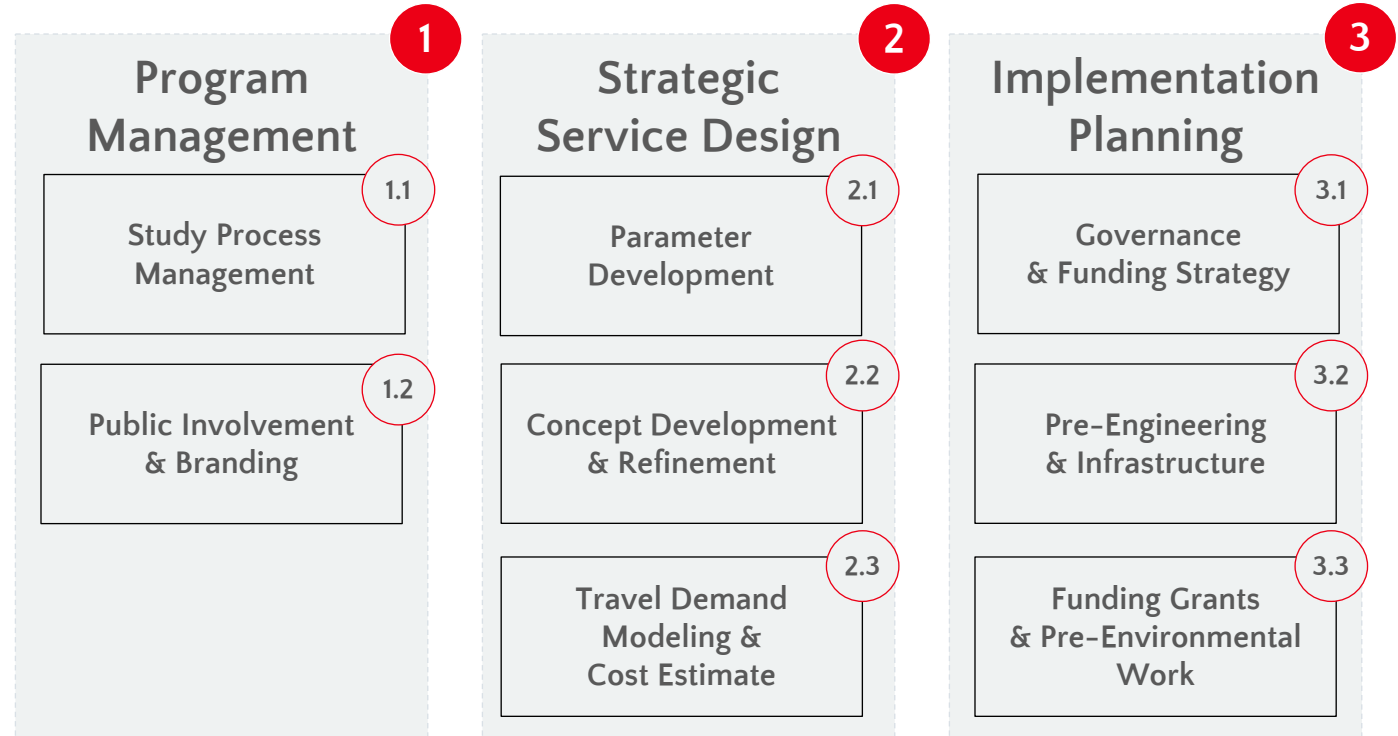
- **Susceptibility to Change Analysis** → New development potential

TOD Capacity Scenarios → New development estimate

Value Capture Methods → New development value and revenue

Funding Gap Analysis → Value capture revenue comparison with project costs

Main Study Consultant Team & Scope



Study Tasks

Task 1 Program Management	Activity
Task 2 Strategic Service Design	1.1 Study Kick-Off
	1.2 Steering Committee
	1.3 Process Strategies
	1.4 Public Involvement/Branding
	2.1 KRM Document Review
	2.2 Existing Conditions
	2.3 Rolling Stock
	2.4 Station Locations
	2.5 Preliminary Service Concepts
	2.6 TWG Service Concepts Review and Direction
2.7 Preliminary Service Concept Technical Review	
2.8 Steering Committee Service Concepts Review	
2.9 Service Concepts Alternatives Analysis	
2.10 Preferred Alternative (PA)	
2.11 Travel Demand Model	
2.12 Operating Plan and Cost Estimates for PA	
2.13 Maintenance Facility for PA	
Task 3 Implementation Planning	3.1 Organizational Structure Options
	3.2 Funding Sources
	3.3 Recommended Project Sponsor
	3.4 Funding Strategy
	3.5 Station Facility Plans
	3.6 Station-Area Land Use Plans
	3.7 Station-Area Renderings and Video
	3.8 Recommended Infrastructure Improvements
	3.9 Capital Cost Estimates
	3.10 Project Development Cost Estimates
	3.11 Kinnickinnic River Bridge
	3.12 Business Case
	3.13 Federal Funding Request
	3.14 Preparation for Environmental Phase



Key Milestones

Funding

- Prepare federal funding request
- Identify non-federal funding sources and obtain commitments

Governance

- Select project sponsor
- Establish service operator
- Obtain documented support for project from stakeholders
- Conduct public engagement and incorporate input

Design

- Select preferred service option
- Determine station locations and conduct station area planning
- Initiate environmental review

Costing

- Develop capital/operating cost estimates for preferred service option
- Develop project development cost estimates (PE/NEPA)

Benefits

- Develop travel demand and ridership estimates
- Conduct benefits-cost analyses

Service Concept Development

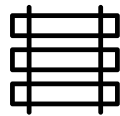
Example Service Parameters

Origin - Destination	Time of Day	Pattern	Frequency	Day Type
Milwaukee - Chicago	All Day	Local	30"	Daily
Milwaukee - Kenosha	Peak	Express	Hourly	Weekdays
Connect to Kenosha Metra			2-Hourly	Weekends
			Connection-based	

Other Considerations



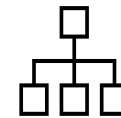
Equipment



Existing
Infrastructure



Level of
Capital
Investment



Governance



Fare Structure

FRA Corridor ID and FTA New Starts



Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program

- New program created by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to fund planning for intercity passenger rail projects
- \$365M for FY22 Corridor ID planning and development activities (5% of Federal-State Partnership program funding)
- 69 passenger rail corridors were accepted into the Corridor ID Program (4 WisDOT Corridor ID projects)
- Not currently accepting applications for additional corridors to enter the program

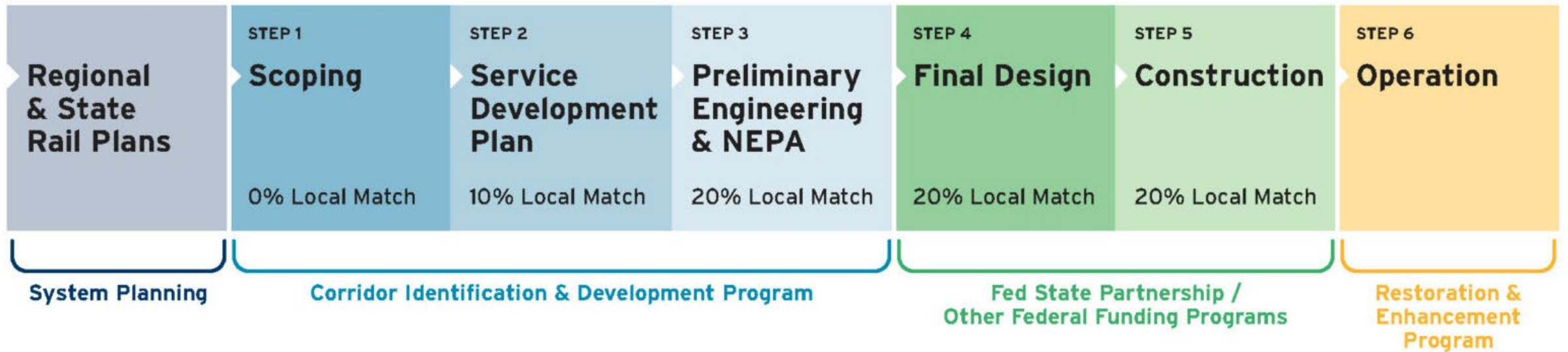


**Federal Transit
Administration**

Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program (New Starts)

- Discretionary program that funds fixed-guideway investments, including new/expanded commuter rail
- Maximum annual appropriations for CIG is \$4.6B
- FTA requested \$3.97B for FY2025 in total appropriations (\$3.21B for New Starts)
- Requests to enter the program are reviewed on an ongoing basis

FRA Corridor ID



Corridor ID Program Steps

Step 0: Submit application with Corridor Narrative

Step 1: Develop scope, schedule, and cost estimate for preparing SDP (no local match, \$500k)

Step 2: Prepare an SDP (10% local match)

Step 3: Prepare additional Project Development work, complete of PE and NEPA activities (20% local match)

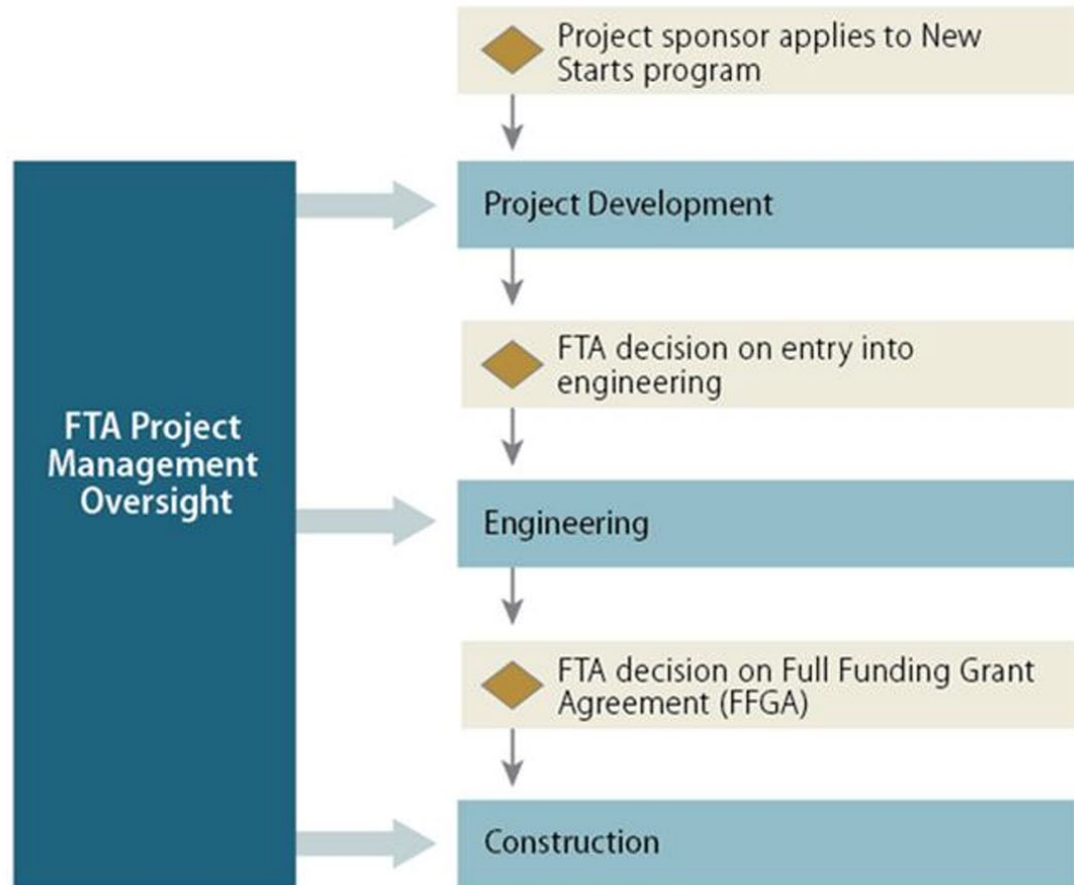
Eligible Corridors

New or existing routes under 750 miles (except commuter rail)

Existing long-distance routes

Long-distance routes discontinued by Amtrak or operating on April 30, 1971

FTA New Starts



Overview

- New Starts projects must be new or extensions to fixed-guideway systems
- Must have capital cost of \$400 million or more or that are seeking \$150 million or more in CIG program funds
- Max CIG Share – 60% | Max Federal Share – 80%

Step 0: Entry into Project Development

Step 1: Project Development (30% of non-CIG funding committed)

Step 2: Entry into Engineering (50% of non-CIG funding committed)

Step 3: Entry into Construction (50% of non-CIG funding committed)

- FTA must respond to Entry to PD requests in 45 days
- Requests should not be made Aug-Oct during annual report prep; Nov-Dec also difficult
- PD must be completed within the two-year timeframe



www.sewrpc.org/Passenger-Rail-Corridor-Study