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FTA Back to the TAM Basics Webinar Transcript April 27, 2023

Tamalynn Kennedy: Okay. It's one after, so we'll get started. Welcome everyone to the Transit Asset Management webinar Back TAM Basics. My name is Tamalynn Kennedy, and I am the FTA's TAM Program Manager. Next slide, please. Today's presentation is available now on the TAM website. And I think we've also dropped the link into the chat. You can access all of the linked resources from the PDF. A recording of the webinar will also be posted as soon as it becomes available. Closed captioning is available by clicking show captions. There will also be a question-and-answer session after the presentation, so please type any questions you have into the Q&A box available at the bottom of your screen. Next slide. I'd like to start off today with an icebreaker poll to find out more about what's happening where you are. This is a question of what's the weather like outside of your window? It looks like the sun is shining is winning, which is it's shining here in Virginia. And only a few of us are dealing with some rain. So a rather nice day around the United States. Okay. We'll move on. Thank you for participating in that nice little icebreaker poll. I wanted to briefly mention upcoming events. We have scheduled our 2023 TAM round table on July 9. This will be an in-person event that is open to public sector employees only. Registration is open now. We'll place a link to the registration page in the chat. I would also like to mention the NTI course, Enhancing Your Transit Asset Management Program with Lifecycle Management. This course is designed to help transit agency staff mature their TAM programs by going beyond the minimum TAM requirement and incorporating life cycle analysis to manage risk, minimize costs and maximize the performance of assets. Registration for the May course is waitlist only, but please, check NTI's website for future course offerings. And we'll also address what you consider when updating your TAM plan. We will also review the tools and resources available to agencies that will help you prepare for an update. This webinar is aimed at those who are putting together TAM plans for the first time, and also those who have submitted them before but need a refresher on the requirements. Next slide. To that end, it's time for our second poll. This poll will help us gauge the audience familiarity with TAM plan requirements. Can we end the poll? Wow, that's amazing. We're about a three-way split on I've heard of the TAM plan, but have not read it. I've read the TAM plan, but was not involved in its development. And I was involved in developing of our agency's TAM plans. So we have a wide range of practitioners here today. That's great. Next slide, please. We'll just go right into the next slide. What is Transit Asset Management? It's a business model that uses the condition of assets to guide the optimal prioritization of funding at transit properties in order to keep our transit networks in a state of good repair. Next, slide. These are some key features of the TAM rule. The TAM plan was required October 1, 2018. The first update was due October 1, 2022. While FTA created the TAM plan four-year horizon with other federal, metropolitan, and statewide planning processes in mind, the four-year TAM plan horizon may not coincide with all planning processes that transit agencies must consider. Transit agencies are not required to have their TAM plan horizon follow the October deadline every four years. Agencies can choose to update their TAM plan to better align with the horizons of partnering agencies such as state departments of transportation and metropolitan planning organizations. For example, if your agency updated its plan, June 1, 2020, a required update would not be expected until June 1, 2024. The FTA suggests an update is triggered by a significant unexpected change that exceeded the agency's established threshold for a simple amendment to existing TAM plans. But your agency must establish its own threshold. We encourage agencies to establish criteria that triggers an update, and to document that

procedure to ensure consistency in determining when an update is appropriate. Next slide, please. Who does the TAM rule apply to? All recipients or sub-recipients of federal financial assistance under 49 USC Chapter 53 that own, operate, or managed capital assets used in the provision of public transportation. It is important to remember that the TAM plan includes all assets, not just federally-funded ones. Next slide, please. The type of information to include in the TAM plan is determined by the tier each agency belongs to. Tier I providers must develop their own TAM plan. Tier II providers may develop their own TAM plan or may participate in a group plan. Recipients with sub-recipients must develop a group plan for their Tier II sub-recipients that do not opt out of the group plan. A Tier II provider may participate in a group plan, even if it is not a sub-recipient of the group plan sponsor. For example, an urban provider may request to participate in a state's TAM plan, even though it is a direct recipient and does not receive any FTA funds, as a sub-recipient of the state. The state may or may not allow that direct recipient to join its group plan. You may learn more about your tier designation on the TAM FAQ website. Next slide, please. As you update your plan to determine your plan tier ask yourself what is my level of service over the course of my TAM planning horizon, which is generally the four-year plan. If at any point you will provide Tier I service you are Tier I service provider and should develop a Tier I plan. Next slide. It's important for agencies to identify their tier because it impacts the type of information they include in their TAM plans. Tier I and Tier II agencies must report on capital assets, condition assessment, decision support tools and investment privatization. Only Tier I providers are required to have at a TAM and SGR policy, implementation strategy, key annual activities, resources, and the evaluation plan. It is important to note that a condition assessment and an inventory are distinct elements. A condition assessment of inventoried assets for which a provider is not required for those assets for which a provider does not have direct capital responsibility. I'll say that again. Third-party owned assets are not required to have a condition assessment. Only those assets for which the provider has direct capital responsibility. You can find more about direct capital responsibility on the TAM FAQ website. Next slide, please. The purpose of the group plan option is to reduce the planning and reporting burden on smaller transit agencies from having to develop individual plans and to report to NTD on their own. Common group plan sponsors include state DOTs, MPOs, Tier I agencies and Tier II direct recipients. A group TAM plan sponsor is typically a state DOT or direct or designated 5310 or 5307 recipient. Group plan sponsors must offer participation to all sub-recipients and have the option of inviting other small 5307 recipients to join the group plan. Sub-recipients are allowed to opt out and develop their own plans. The group plans also has the four requirements of asset inventory, condition assessment, decision support tools and investment prioritization. If you are unclear about your group plan status, you can use the FTA checklist available on the TAM website and linked to in this presentation. Next slide, please. Each NTD developing at a TAM plan must submit an annual report for asset management to the National Transit Database or the NTD. This submission includes projected targets for the next fiscal year, as well as asset inventories and condition assessments. A narrative report including a description of the change in condition of the transit system and the progress towards achieving the performance targets set for the previous fiscal year must also be submitted to the NTD. For group TAM plans the descriptions will be for the Amalgamated system and progress toward the uniform performance targets, as group plan sponsors will report on behalf of the participants in the group plan. Next slide, please. And this is a look at the NTD data reporting forms. The A-90 is the form used to report performance targets. So you submit your targets for report year 2023. You forecast to report your 2024 targets. Next slide, please. Both Tier I and Tier II agencies must include an asset inventory in their TAM plans. Asset inventory and condition assessments are also required to be

reported annually to the NTD. It is important to note that the asset inventory requirements differ between TAM and NTD. TAM plans must include non-vehicle equipment assets of \$50,000 and all assets using the provision of public transit regardless of capital responsibility with the exception of third-party equipment assets. Next slide, please. The TAM wheel [ph?] requires agencies to track four high-level performance measures one for each asset category. Equipment and rolling stock which are measured by aged. Infrastructure measured by performance and facilities measured by condition based on the term scale. Every year as part of your NTD submission, you report performance targets and condition performance data that reflect whether or not you are meeting the targets. As a reminder, there is no punishment or reward for either meeting or missing the targets. While you are not required to include the measures or targets in the TAM plan, we recommend that you review the NTD submission data to understand your baseline data and trends. We also recommend that you revisit your TAM policies and investment prioritization to confirm that the strategies you are using are consistent with your targets, trends and any longer term goals or projections. Next slide, please. Now that we've reviewed what makes a TAM plan, let's discuss record-keeping. It is important to continuously maintain records that support your TAM plan by sharing new and updated information each time you amend your TAM plan, whether that's every four year cycle. Or if you update sections on a more frequent basis. This applies to any change in performance targets, investment strategies, and annual condition assessments. It's worth keeping lines of communication open with your state and MPO Partners if your goals and overall strategy changes. In addition to TAM requirements it might be helpful for agencies to be mindful of connections of planning when making their TAM plan updates. Some TAM plan requirements can overlap with planning actions. It's also important to note that some agencies may make more frequent changes than others. As previously discussed, you may update your plan earlier than the standard four-year cycle. Next slide, please. If you are a group plan sponsor or a member of a group plan, you have additional requirements to keep in mind. Group plan sponsors must provide evidence of coordination and communication amongst all group plan participants. They must also obtain notification of approval from each group plan participant's accountable executive. Group plan participants must identify that executive and provide evidence of their participation in a group TAM plan. Next slide, please. TAM plans must be certified by the agency's accountable executive. Please note that the group plan sponsor is not the same as the group plan accountable executive. Each plan participant must identify their own executive. As part of the annual certifications and assurances process transit agencies attest that they are following the requirements related to TAM. An FTA reviews TAM plans during triennial and state management reviews. Next slide, please. In summary, it's important for agencies to review the information they already have from past TAM plans, data collection and other required reporting as they approach at a TAM plan update. Agencies should ensure that your appropriate tier is designated, and the plan includes all required elements. That the accountable executive is identified. The group plan sponsors and participants have fulfilled the respective obligations. TAM plans are shared with state and MPO planning agencies and sub-recipients are monitored properly. I want you to know agencies are not required to submit their TAM plans to the FDA. However, it is still a requirement to update your TAM plan. The FTA reviews the TAM plans during the agency's triennial review, and the data agencies update, and their TAM plans are reported annually to NTD. Next slide, please. Now, that we fully understand what is included in the TAM plan and what needs to be updated, let's break down how to approach at a TAM plan update. Next slide. First and foremost think of a plan update as more than an amendment. An update is not the same as an amendment. An update is not just a revision to the original document. It is a complete review of the

previous submission. Think of this as an opportunity to look at your TAM plan with new eyes and start from scratch. Next slide. The update at a plan is an opportunity for transit agencies to improve their process on specific TAM plan elements such as data collection, how the data is collected, cleaned, and analyzed. Has the process changed. Why? Or why not? Alignment with agency and regional priorities. New revised agency goals from the last update. It is also a chance to incorporate changes or updates. New investment prioritization criteria, new safety procedures or capital plans and updated TAM or SGR policies. Again, this is a complete review of your TAM plan, not just a quick update to data. Next slide. Now, we're going to review the tools and resources that you can use to identify information and support your process for updating your TAM plan. First a poll to help us gauge your familiarity with the resources on the TAM website. It looks like almost everyone has answered. And we can end the poll. Very close. About half have said yes, and half have said no. So hopefully this will be a refresher for some and some new resources for others. There are a number of reports and tools agencies can use to help with updating their TAM plan. This is just a small number. As an example, there's a TAM plan self-assessment tool, the group plan sponsor workbook, the transit asset preservation tool. And, again, all of these resources are available on the TAM website and are linked in this presentation. Next slide, please. The TAMPLATE is also designed to help Tier II providers and group plan participants gather the information they need to include in their TAM plans. It replaced the small provider Excel template that agencies may have used previously. The TAMPLATE is very useful as it automatically populates TAM asset data from the NTD. Next slide. This means that agencies using the TAMPLATE for TAM plan updates today will use report year 2021 NTD data, or you can manually update the data. Agencies must also remember to include assets that are not required to be reported to the NTD, but are required to be reported in TAM plans such as equipment over \$50,000 in acquisition value that they own or have direct capital responsibility for. And non-rail fixed guideway infrastructure assets. For more information again, you can refer to the FAQs on the TAM website. Next slide, please. I want to point out how to search for the resources on the TAM website. You'll navigate to resources search in the left side bar to search for the technical assistance resources. Next slide. You can narrow your search by document type or tag as I have done here. Or you may also search by keyword. Next slide. Previous webinar materials are available after navigating to the TAM events page. You'll navigate to TAM events from the left sidebar and then webinar materials. Next slide. Webinar recordings are linked from the webinar materials page, but you can also visit the FTAs YouTube page directly to search for content. And that is USDOT FTA if you're searching for the FTA's page. Next slide. Finally, stay in the know about new resources and outreach by signing up for email updates. Next slide. You do this by navigating to the page footer and clicking on subscribe to email updates. You'll be directed to a new page where you will select your subscriber preferences. Select state of good repair and transit asset management to receive all notifications from the TAM program. Next slide. And last but certainly not least the most valuable resource for agencies are the TAM regional contacts. Please reach out to them when you're stuck, but also make sure to review the materials that we discussed in this presentation and the resources available on the website should you need answers to your questions. Next slide. If you have any remaining questions, we do have ample amount of time to get to them today. Please, you can add them into the chat, into the Q&A pod and we'll get to them as time allows. Thank you for attending. And let's open up the questions from the chat. Navigate over to that. A question from the chat, please clarify who needs to do the facility assessments? Who does not? All facilities for which an agency has capital responsibility for are required to have a condition assessment. So that's even if you have partial capital responsibility, then say you've worked it out that it's a shared

facility, that you only have 50 percent capital responsibility for the facility, you are still required to perform a condition assessment on that facility. Can you touch on the TAM requirements for an MPO to set targets? How often is this required? That is a planning rule rather than a TAM rule. So generally, I believe it's 180 days after TAM targets are set that an MPO has to set its own targets. But I believe you would have to-- I don't know that there is a schedule. You'd have to check with your resources at the region and in planning to verify that for sure. Just give me one moment here while I go through some of the questions in the chat. So every time we update a question from the chat-- so every time we update our TAM plan we are only required to update it four years from the most recent update. That's correct. That's called a TAM horizon. The TAM plan is required to cover a period of four years. So when you're doing your investment prioritization or looking at your list of projects the time period should be over the next four years. So that's called the planning horizon. So that's correct. You can, of course, have longer planning periods if that is what your agency is used to. But four years is the required planning horizon. A question, is it mandatory to submit data within term light or is the yearly NTD reporting sufficient? I'm going to guess you mean TAMPLATE. Is it mandatory to submit data within TAMPLATE? Or is the yearly NTD reporting sufficient? TAMPLATE is-- and again come back to us if you did mean term light. But TAMPLATE is a tool that's provided to create your TAM plan. However, it is not a required tool. You do not need to use it. You must submit your data annually to the NTD using the NTD forms. Using the TAMPLATE to create your TAM plan does not replace reporting to the NTD on an annual basis. Okay. I'm responsible for creating and maintaining the TAM plan, but I'm not an NTD expert. What is the A-90? And how does that play into updating the TAM plan? The A-90 is the form on which you report your annual performance targets, and your forecasted performance targets which are required from the TAM rule. Those performance targets are what percentage of assets you anticipate to be in a state of good repair or falling into the state of good repair backlog. And so, while you don't have to formally report your targets inside your TAM plan, it is recommended that you do so because everything from your investment prioritization process will roll up to whether or not you're meeting your TAM targets and your performance measures. So how does that play into updating the TAM plan? And again the A-90-- so your performance measures is part of the annual reporting that you do every year to the NTD. And ideally, you would put your most recent performance measures in your TAM plan as well when you're updating it. Just a moment, bear with me while I'm going through the chat here. Another question about TAMPLATES. Are they used for Tier II or both. Any Tier I agencies can also use the TAMPLATE. It might become unwieldy depending on the amount of assets that you have, so that's why we suggest it for Tier II or group plan sponsors, but the TAMPLATE can be used by any size agency. Let me continue to look through the chat here. How are TAM targets linked to formula grants? Does it mean if an agency has X percent of facilities below term scale three, they get X percent of funding? No. It is not-- it is not that direct. Again, the TAM program is not a grant funding organization, grant funding program. It is a technical assistance program. So we are-- the TAM program is not involved in the grant making and determining who receives grant funding and who does not receive grant funding. I can't speak the how the grant funding is determined. This says it seems that TAM plan guidance indicates that goals should be set for the TAM horizon or four years. However, the NTD report requires that only the next year be presented. Will you clarify why there is the difference? Also, should the four year horizon split out each year separately? The NTD report only captures the next report year. So you report on your current report year targets and then you forecast just for the next fiscal year or the next report year. Again, the performance measures do not need to be part of the TAM plan. You can add them in there in any manner that you would like. So if you would-- if it's easier

for you to split them out individually as every four years you may do that. Are you required to report on an asset that is being disposed, but not gone off the property during a regular reporting time? You are required to report on active fleet, not inactive fleet. Just a moment, bear with me while I go through the chat a little bit. Just one moment. The question is did the FTA adopt the proposed guidance on the use of TAM metrics and demonstrating progress towards SGR as a precursor to TIG grant eligibility? I would say that it's a phased-in response. There is not a certain metric that you must meet at this point. If you look at the way that the guidance is written, you do not need to have had a particular decrease in your state of good repair backlog to be eligible for the CIG grant. That's the current guidance, but the guidance could change. Just a few more questions here I see in the chat. We have DOT coming next month for our compliance review. What areas in our program should we be focusing on that they ask about? I am the new operations manager for our transportation department and was curious on what to expect. Yes Tam is included in the triennial comprehensive review. There's a manual online that shows what's included in the review. We can certainly post that in the chat. Some areas of focus are making sure that you have included all the TAM plan elements that are required for your tier. As well as making sure that you have a named accountable executive. And that the accountable executive has performed their required duties with regard to the TAM plan and performance metrics, setting the performance metrics and on an annual basis with the NTD. Another area that is part of the triennial review that agencies might be mindful of is that the group plan sponsors that we talked a little bit about group plan sponsors record-keeping and group plan sponsors are required to show that engagement with their participants when developing their group plan. When doing facility assessments should you include photos of the major components and structures? I think that's always a great addition. It's not required in the TAM plan, but I think that's a great just for a documentary resource. I think that's a great method for completing facilities assessments. So if you're looking at say a crack and you can document, take a picture of it one year and six months later-- or in the next year see if the crack has grown, but it is not a required element in the TAM plans. The final question I see in the chat is I'm not too clear on what is the minimum size of a TAM reportable facility. Also is a storage shed without any utilities connected to it reportable? There is a FAQ about that. And I don't want to misquote, so I'm going to that FAQ. Any maintenance or administrative facility under 100 square feet does not need to be included, such as a storage shelter in which no work is performed in either of your inventories. Again, there if you look on the TAM FAQs that is in there. So the answer to that one is 100 square feet. Okay, let me jump back here. Is there FDA guidance on establishing target methodology? There is performance targets training available on the TAM website. You'll need to register through the TSI to take the course, but that is free. We can also post that link in the chat if you're interested in taking that course. Again, that performance targets training is available through TSI. And you can get to that through the TAM website. So I think we've taken about 15 minutes for questions today. I know I wasn't able to get to all of them or may not have answered all of them to your satisfaction. So you can always reach me or the TAM team at tam@dot.gov. Or you can reach me directly at Tamalynn.Kennedy@dot.gov. I want to thank you for your participation in today's webinar and I look forward to seeing you at a future TAM event. Thank you, everyone.