



Urbanized Area Transit Formula Programs Information and Resource Guide

July 2020

Urbanized Area Transit Formula Programs Information

This document is an overview defining commonly used terms and abbreviations of the topics related to transit infrastructure, funding programs, and agencies. The sequential sections provide brief descriptions of associated transit-related programs, entities, legislation, and funding source(s) including formula or competitive grants offered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

- Urbanized Area Transit Formula Programs Information 2
- Definitions 4
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)..... 4
- Bus (MB) 4
- Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT)..... 4
- Capital Project 4
- Demand Response (DR)..... 4
- Demand Response-Taxi (DT) 5
- Designated Recipient..... 5
- Direct Recipient 5
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5
- Fixed Guideway 5
- Fleet Vehicle 5
- High Intensity Motorbus..... 6
- Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) 6
- Metropolitan Planning Area 6
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 6
- National Transit Database (NTD)..... 6
- National Transit Institute (NTI)..... 6
- Operating Expenses 6
- Revenue Service (Miles, Hours, and Trips) 7
- Revenue Vehicle 7
- Ridership..... 7
- Special Transportation Service (STS) 7
- Split Letter 7
- Sub-Recipient..... 7
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)..... 7

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	7
Urbanized Area (UZA)	8
Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)	8
Federal Transit Funding Programs	9
FTA Section 5303	9
FTA Sections 5307 & 5340	9
FTA Section 5310	9
FTA Section 5311	10
FTA Section 5337	10
FTA Section 5339	10
Federal Transit Grant Programs	11

DEFINITIONS

The following section is a glossary and description of the commonly used terms and associated abbreviations of transit-related infrastructure, funding programs, organization, and federal or governmental agencies. The listed definitions from each program can also be located on the National Transit Database glossary of the Federal Transit Administration website: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/national-transit-database-ntd-glossary>

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

The legislation requires transportation providers to make transportation accessible to individuals with disabilities and specifies agencies' responsibilities in this effort.

Bus (MB)

A transit mode comprised of rubber-tired passenger vehicles operating on fixed routes and schedules over roadways.

Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT)

A bus transit system in which the majority of each line operates in a separated right-of-way dedicated for public transportation use during peak periods; and includes features that emulate the services provided by rail-fixed guideway public transportation systems, including defined stations; traffic signal priority for public transportation vehicles; short headway bidirectional services for a substantial part of weekdays and weekend days; and any other features the secretary of the Department of Transportation may determine are necessary to produce high-quality public transportation services that emulate the services provided by rail-fixed guideway public transportation systems.

Capital Project

A category of reimbursable project expenses that includes all activities identified in 49 U.S.C. 5302(3).

Expenses involve purchasing, leasing, constructing, maintaining, or repairing facilities, rolling stock, and equipment for use in a public transportation system. Capital project costs may include all direct costs and indirect costs associated with the project (provided that the grantee has an approved cost allocation plan or indirect cost proposal).

Demand Response (DR)

A transit mode comprised of passenger cars, vans or small buses operating in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who then dispatches a vehicle to pick up the passengers and transport them to their destinations. A demand response (DR) operation is characterized by the following:

- a) The vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule except, perhaps, on a temporary basis to satisfy a special need.
- b) Typically, the vehicle may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations and may even be interrupted en route to these destinations to pick up other passengers.

Demand Response-Taxi (DT)

A special form of the demand response mode operated through taxicab providers. The mode is always purchased transportation type of service.

Designated Recipient

An entity designated, in accordance with the planning process under Sections 5303 and 5304, by the governor of a state, responsible local officials, and publicly owned operators of public transportation, to receive and apportion amounts to urbanized areas of 200,000 or more in population; or

A state or regional authority, if the authority is responsible under the laws of a state for a capital project and for financing and directly providing public transportation.

Direct Recipient

An eligible entity authorized by a designated recipient or state to receive Urbanized Area Formula Program funds directly from FTA.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The Federal Transit Administration is an agency within the United States Department of Transportation that provides financial and technical assistance to local public transportation systems. The FTA is one of ten modal administrations within the DOT.

Fixed Guideway

A public transportation facility using and occupying a separate right-of-way for the exclusive use of public transportation; using rail; using a fixed catenary system; for a passenger ferry system; or for a bus rapid transit system.

Fleet Vehicle

Fleet vehicles are groups of motor vehicles owned or leased by a business, government agency or other organization rather than by an individual or family. Typical examples are vehicles operated by car rental companies, taxicab companies, public utilities, public bus companies, and police departments.

High Intensity Motorbus

Public transportation that is provided on a facility with access for other high-occupancy vehicles; examples: busways, express and/or managed lanes facilities.

Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE)

The Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) is an institutional center located at North Carolina State University. ITRE was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1978, ITRE conducts surface and air transportation research, training, and technical support activities for municipal, state, federal, and international clients in order to address critical transportation issues.

Metropolitan Planning Area

The geographic area determined by agreement between the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the metropolitan area and the governor of the state, within which the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The policy board of an organization designated in cooperation with the state and public transportation operators to carry out the metropolitan planning process, including development of long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs for metropolitan planning areas of a state.

National Transit Database (NTD)

The primary source for information and statistics collected from transit systems that receive FTA formula funding under the Urbanized Area Formula Program (Sec. 5307) or Rural Area Formula Program (Sec. 5311).

Public transportation systems receiving funds from these programs are required by statute to report to the NTD.

National Transit Institute (NTI)

A federally funded training and education initiative housed at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. It was established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to develop, promote, and deliver training and education programs for the public transit industry. NTI is funded by Title 49 U.S.C. Section 5315(d) MAP-21 and Section 5314(c) FAST Act.

Operating Expenses

Operating expenses are those costs necessary to operate, maintain, and manage a public transportation system. Operating expenses usually include such costs as driver salaries, fuel, and items having a useful life of less than one year.

Revenue Service (Miles, Hours, and Trips)

The time when a vehicle is available to the general public and there is an expectation of carrying passengers. These passengers either directly pay fares, subsidized by public policy, or payment through some contractual arrangement. Vehicles operated in fare free service are considered in revenue service.

Revenue Vehicle

The floating and rolling stock of a transit agency used to provide revenue service for passengers.

Ridership

The number of persons who ride a system of public transportation.

Special Transportation Service (STS)

Special Transportation Services operates the paratransit system which is a pre-scheduled, shared-ride, door to door service. STS operates under the ADA law, which guarantees all trips within the systems service area. The service area is defined as an area up to ¼ mile on either side of an existing fixed or local bus route and is available on the same days and times that the fixed-route is operating.

Split Letter

A document issued annually which establishes the allocation of Section 5307 funds in a large urbanized area.

Sub-Recipient

An entity that receives FTA funds via a pass-through agreement with a direct recipient or designated recipient, whereby the original recipient remains responsible for compliance with all terms, conditions, and requirements associated with the grant.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

A prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is developed and formally adopted by an MPO as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process, consistent with the MTP, and required for projects to be eligible for funding under title 23 of the U.S. Code and 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

A program of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area (MPA) during the next one-or two-year period. At a minimum, a

UPWP includes a description of the transportation planning work and resulting products, the organization that will be responsible for performing the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.

Urbanized Area (UZA)

An area encompassing a population of not less than 50,000 people that has been defined and designated in the most recent decennial census as an “urbanized area” by the secretary of the Department of Commerce. The annual amount of Section 5307/5340 funding dedicated to each urbanized area is determined by their population.

Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)

The miles that vehicles are scheduled to or travelled while in revenue service.

FEDERAL TRANSIT FUNDING PROGRAMS

Federal Transit Administration issues guidance circulars to provide grantees and recipients with direction on program specific issues and statutory requirements. The follow funding programs are the seven (7) transit funding programs that will be focused upon in-depth in the transit education initiative.

These are the primary federally-supported grant programs that funds multimodal and transit-related planning, operational, capital, fleet acquisition and replacement for transit agencies and related organizations.

FTA Section 5303

5303 provides funding and procedural requirements for multimodal transportation planning in metropolitan areas and states. The planning must be cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive, resulting in long-range plans and short-range programs reflecting transportation investment priorities.

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2007-title49/pdf/USCODE-2007-title49-subtitleIII-chap53-sec5303.pdf>

FTA Sections 5307 & 5340

5307 is provides federal resources available to related agencies in urbanized areas of 50,000 or more for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning.

https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/funding/grants/37961/fast-act-section-5307-fact-sheet_0.pdf

[https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/Visio-5340 Apportionment Flowchart %282%29 0.pdf](https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/Visio-5340%20Appportionment%20Flowchart%200.pdf)

FTA Section 5310

5310 provides formula funding to states and transit-related agencies for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/funding/grants/37971/5310-enhanced-mobility-seniors-and-individuals-disabilities-fact-sheet.pdf>

FTA Section 5311

5311 provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/funding/grants/40621/5311-rural-program-fact-sheet-fast.pdf>

FTA Section 5337

5337 is the State of Good Repair Grants funds are available for capital projects that maintain a fixed guideway or a high intensity motorbus system in a state of good repair, including projects to replace and rehabilitate fleet vehicles and related infrastructure including tracks, signals, operational equipment, etc.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/funding/grants/38011/5337-state-good-repair-fact-sheet.pdf>

FTA Section 5339

5339 is competitive program titled the Low or No Emission program provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/5339%20Bus%20and%20Bus%20Facilities%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

FEDERAL TRANSIT GRANT PROGRAMS

The following table is a summary of the programs for formula and competitive grants for multimodal transit-related planning, buses and bus facilities, innovative transportation coordination, workforce training, and public transportation research activities. Title, a brief description of each program and activities, and grant program type is provided in the table below. A full description of each federal program is located at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/grants>.

Title	Description	Type
Accelerating Innovative Mobility	Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM) will highlight FTA's commitment to support and advance innovation in the transit industry.	Competitive
Access and Mobility Partnership Grants	This program provides competitive funding to support innovative capital projects for the transportation disadvantaged that will improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation services.	Competitive
Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Grants Program (formerly TIGER)	US DOT's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program funds investments in transportation infrastructure, including transit.	Competitive
Capital Investment Grants - 5309	Provides funding through a multi-year competitive process for transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, and bus rapid transit. Federal transit law requires transit agencies seeking CIG funding to complete a series of steps over several years to be eligible for funding.	Competitive
Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310	Formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities.	
Flexible Funding Programs - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program - 23 USC 149	CMAQ provides funding to areas in nonattainment or maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide, and/or particulate matter. States that have no nonattainment or maintenance areas still receive a minimum apportionment of CMAQ funding for either air quality projects or other elements of flexible spending. Funds may be used for any transit capital expenditures otherwise eligible for FTA funding as long as they have an air quality benefit.	Formula

Title	Description	Type
Flexible Funding Programs - National Highway Performance Program - 23 USC 119	Provides support for the condition and performance of the National Highway System (NHS), for the construction of new facilities on the NHS, and to ensure that investments of Federal funds in highway construction are directed to support progress toward the achievement of performance targets established in a State's asset management plan for the NHS.	Formula
Flexible Funding Programs - Surface Transportation Block Grant Program - 23 USC 133	Provides funding that may be used by states and localities for a wide range of projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance of surface transportation, including highway, transit, intercity bus, bicycle and pedestrian projects.	Formula
Formula Grants for Rural Areas - 5311	Provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations.	Formula
Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program - 5339(a)	Provides funding to states and transit agencies through a statutory formula to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. In addition to the formula allocation, this program includes two discretionary components: The Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program and the Low or No Emissions Bus Discretionary Program.	Formula
Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program	Provides funding through a competitive allocation process to states and transit agencies to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. The competitive allocation provides funding for major improvements to bus transit systems that would not be achievable through formula allocations.	Competitive
Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone Program	What's New U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao announced during a transit industry call on March 26 that deadlines for current FTA competitive grant programs will be extended for 30 days amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The deadline for the Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone (HOPE) Program Notice of Funding Opportunity is now June 3.	Competitive
Human Resources & Training - 5314 (b)	Provides for grants or contracts for human resource and workforce development programs as they apply to public transportation activities.	Formula
Integrated Mobility Innovation	FTA's Integrated Mobility Innovation (IMI) Program funds projects that demonstrate innovative and effective practices, partnerships	Competitive

Title	Description	Type
	and technologies to enhance public transportation effectiveness, increase efficiency, expand quality, promote safety and improve the traveler experience.	
Low or No Emission Vehicle Program - 5339(c)	Provides funding through a competitive process to states and transit agencies to purchase or lease low or no emission transit buses and related equipment, or to lease, construct, or rehabilitate facilities to support low or no emission transit buses. The program provides funding to support the wider deployment of advanced propulsion technologies within the nation’s transit fleet.	Competitive
Metropolitan & Statewide Planning and Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning - 5303, 5304, 5305	Provides funding and procedural requirements for multimodal transportation planning in metropolitan areas and states. Planning needs to be cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive, resulting in long-range plans and short-range programs reflecting transportation investment priorities.	Formula
Mobility for All Pilot Program Grants	This funding opportunity seeks to improve mobility options through employing innovative coordination of transportation strategies and building partnerships to enhance mobility and access to vital community services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people of low income.	Competitive
Mobility on Demand (MOD) Sandbox Demonstration Program - 5312	Funds projects that promote innovative business models to deliver high quality, seamless and equitable mobility options for all travelers.	Competitive
Pilot Program for Expedited Project Delivery - 3005(b)	The Pilot Program for Expedited Project Delivery allows FTA to select up to eight capital transit projects for expedited grant awards.	Competitive
Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning – Section 20005(b)	Provides funding to local communities to integrate land use and transportation planning with a transit capital investment that will seek funding through the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program.	Competitive
Positive Train Control Grants Program	Authorized by the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Section 3028), the fiscal year 2017 Commuter Rail Positive Train Control Grant Program offers funding to states, local governments and transit agencies that operate commuter rail systems to install positive train control systems required under 49 U.S.C. 20157 (Implementation of positive train control systems).	Competitive

Title	Description	Type
Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program - 5324	Helps states and public transportation systems pay for protecting, repairing, and/or replacing equipment and facilities that may suffer or have suffered serious damage as a result of an emergency, including natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes. It provides authorization for Section 5307 and 5311 funds to be used for disaster relief in response to a declared disaster.	Formula
Public Transportation Innovation - 5312	Provides funding to develop innovative products and services assisting transit agencies in better meeting the needs of their customers.	Competitive
Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Program; Tribal Transit Program	The Tribal Transit Program is a set-aside from the Formula Grants for Rural Areas program consisting of a \$30 million formula program and a \$5 million discretionary grant program subject to the availability of appropriations. A 10-percent local match is required under the discretionary program, however, there is no local match required under the formula program.	Competitive
Redesign of Transit Bus Operator Compartment to Improve Safety, Operational Efficiency, and Passenger Accessibility (Bus Operator Compartment) Program	This program supports research projects to develop transit bus operator compartment designs that improve bus operator and public safety as well as bus operator access to vehicle instruments and controls without hindering the accessibility of passengers.	Competitive
Rural Transportation Assistance Program - 5311(b)(3)	Provides funding to states for developing training, technical assistance, research, and related support services in rural areas. The program also includes a national program that provides information and materials for use by local operators and state administering agencies and supports research and technical assistance projects of national interest.	Formula
Safety Research and Demonstration Program	The Safety Research and Demonstration (SRD) Program is part of a larger safety research effort at the U.S. Department of Transportation that provides technical and financial support for transit agencies to pursue innovative approaches to eliminate or mitigate safety hazards. The SRD program focuses on demonstration of technologies and safer designs.	Competitive
State of Good Repair Grants - 5337	Provides capital assistance for maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation projects of existing high-intensity fixed guideway and high-intensity motorbus systems to maintain a state of good repair. Additionally, SGR grants are eligible for developing and implementing Transit Asset Management plans.	Formula

Title	Description	Type
Technical Assistance & Standards Development - 5314(a)	Provides funding for technical assistance programs and activities that improve the management and delivery of public transportation and development of the transit industry workforce.	Formula
Transit Cooperative Research Program - 5312(i)	Research program that develops near-term, practical solutions such as best practices, transit security guidelines, testing prototypes, and new planning and management tools.	Competitive
Tribal Transit Formula Grants - 5311(c)(1)(B)	Provides funding to federally recognized Indian tribes to provide public transportation services on and around Indian reservations or tribal land in rural areas. Funding is provided as a set-aside within of the Formula Grants to Rural Areas program and allocated both by statutory formula and through a competitive discretionary program.	Formula
Urbanized Area Formula Grants - 5307	Provides funding to public transit systems in Urbanized Areas (UZA) for public transportation capital, planning, job access and reverse commute projects, as well as operating expenses in certain circumstances.	Formula
Additional Section 5307 Program: Passenger Ferry Grant Program	Provides competitive funding to public ferry systems in urbanized areas.	Competitive
Zero Emission Research Opportunity (ZERO)	On November 22, 2016, FTA announced the opportunity for nonprofit organizations to apply for funding to conduct research, demonstrations, testing, and evaluation of zero emission and related technology for public transportation applications.	Competitive