



Oklahoma Public Transit Policy Plan
Appendix E
Peer Review

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Appendix E Peer Review

Research was conducted on the public transit programs of specific peer states to serve as resources moving forward. The peer review is intended to assist in the development of Oklahoma's transit program by providing examples of how other states have approached their policies, programs, and issues. A list of states with similar demographics and numbers of transit program subrecipients was developed, and five states were selected to represent a variety of program issues based on project team and Steering Committee input.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Governance and Funding

In Arizona, the administration of federal and state funding is provided by the Arizona DOT (ADOT) Multimodal Planning Division (MPD). The MPD serves as the State Safety Oversight (SSO) agency. MPD currently administers FTA sections 5305, 5310, 5311, 5329 (State Safety Oversight), and 5339 programs in Arizona. ADOT MPD administers and provides oversight for FTA programs, as well as the RTAP and other federal grant programs such as Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds that have been "flexed" to support Arizona's transit programs. The UZA formula funding program funds (5307 funds) are allocated to the state of Arizona but are passed by ADOT to the agencies that are direct recipients of FTA funds.

Duties of ADOT MPD include assistance throughout the grant processes as well as subsequent monitoring of successful applicants. MPD also provides information, oversight, and technical assistance to Arizona communities, transportation planning agencies, transit agencies, and intercity carriers. As stated in the SMP, the vision and mission of the MPD include:

Our Vision: Moving Arizona to become the most reliable transportation system in the nation.

Our Mission: Connecting Arizona. Everyone. Every Day. Everywhere.

ADOT's MPD oversees the transit programs within ADOT. Management responsibility is delegated to the Transit Programs section of the department. MPD's transit staff coordinates closely with other divisions within ADOT to provide the financial and civil rights oversight that FTA requires. MPD has multiple functions, including the following FTA grant administrative responsibilities:

- Administering federal transit programs which provide local transit systems with capital and operating assistance.
- Providing technical assistance and expertise to local transit agencies and decision makers.
- Coordinating and funding transit planning efforts in rural and urban areas.
- Serving as the SSO for light rail.
- Ensuring a multi-modal approach in addressing problems of mobility, congestion, and air quality throughout the state.

Organization

The MPD provides transportation research, plans, and programs to the public. Much of the external coordination and communication is through collaboration with the MPOs and COGs. Arizona's transportation planning efforts are guided at the regional level by councils of governments for rural areas, and MPOs for urban areas. As entities governed by local elected officials, each COG employs full-time planning staff to prepare and implement a comprehensive transportation work program. COGs perform a variety of transportation services for their constituent partners, which may include local tribes.

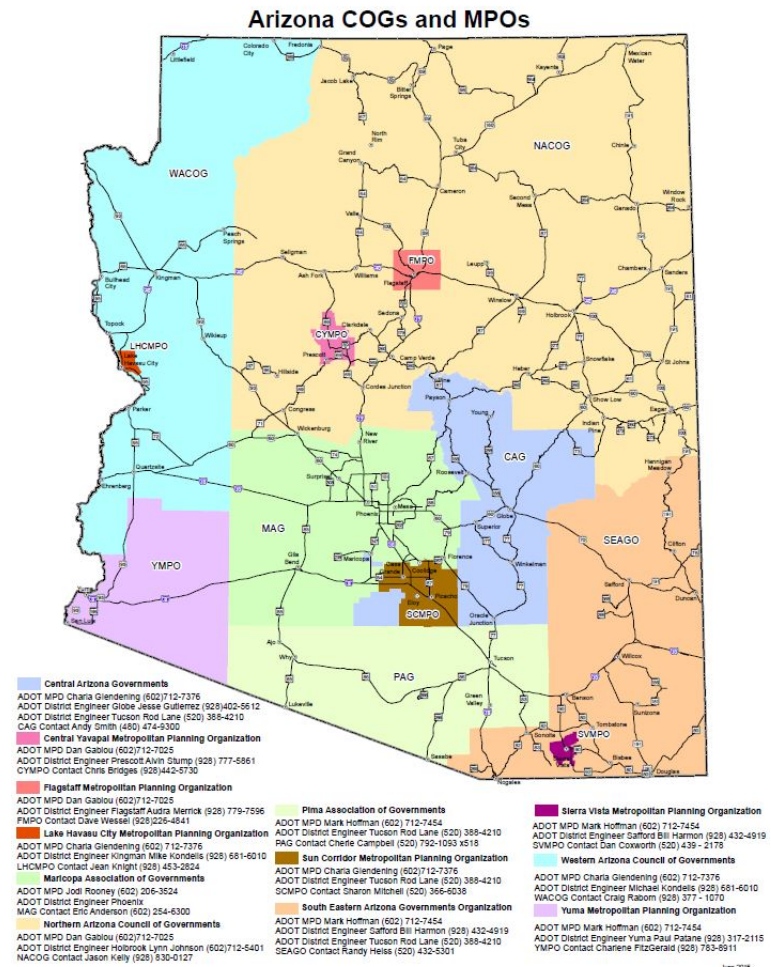
These services consist of providing technical assistance and training to support communities and transit agencies in applying for state and federal transportation grants, conducting data collection and projections, developing a TIP, implementing human services transportation, public transit planning and coordination, and providing a forum for public input and review. Overall, the COGs serve as an intermediary between local and regional stakeholders and state and federal transportation agencies. Figure E-1 depicts the regional transit planning areas within the state.

ADOT distributes federal transportation funds to COGs to meet specific goals and deliverables set forth in an annual work program developed each year by ADOT's MPD. In addition to the items outlined above, these additional responsibilities may include data collection and reporting, public involvement and consultation, project management, and coordination of transit through mobility management. The work program provided by Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) is illustrative of the roles and responsibilities performed by COGs in meeting regional rural transportation goals. An overarching theme of the work program is to meet the priorities of the federal STBG, which include supporting economic vitality, increasing safety and security for all users, promoting accessibility and mobility, and enhancing connectivity.

The central objective of the ADOT MPD is to help identify current significant transportation issues in Arizona and improve existing systems. Beyond the administration of FTA grant programs, MPD engages in several other transportation related activities:

- Systems and regional planning
 - Manages transportation studies for the state highway system and actively participates in planning activities with regional planning partners.
 - Staff of 70 professionals that manage:
 - Arizona tribal transportation
 - Bicycle and pedestrian program
 - Freight program
 - Planning assistance for rural areas
 - Transportation consultation with rural official's policy

Figure E-1 Arizona Transit Planning Regions

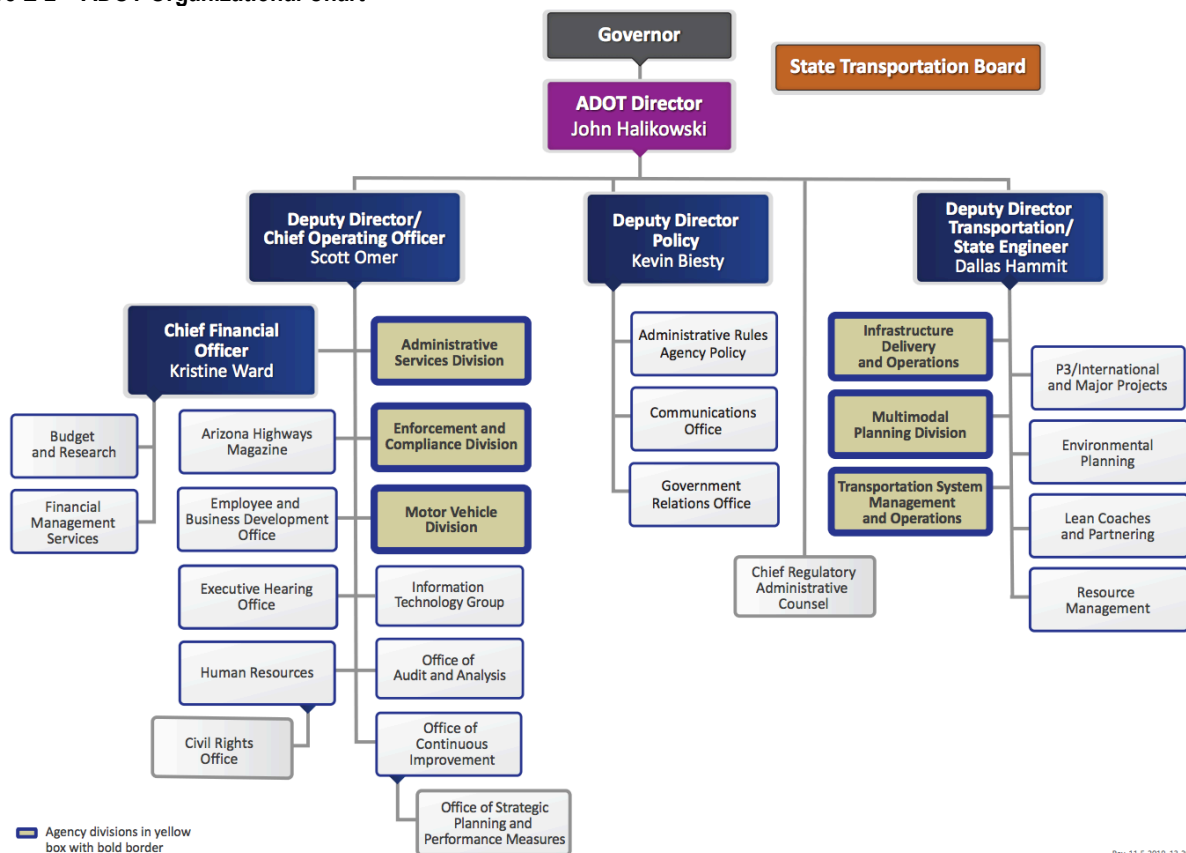


- Transportation programming
 - ADOT Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program for Highways and Airports
 - State Transportation Improvement Program
 - State Implementation Plan
- Transportation plans
 - Long-Range Transportation Plan
 - Arizona State Rail Plan
- Transit programs and grants
 - Public Transportation SMP
- Sustainability
- Transportation research center

Staffing

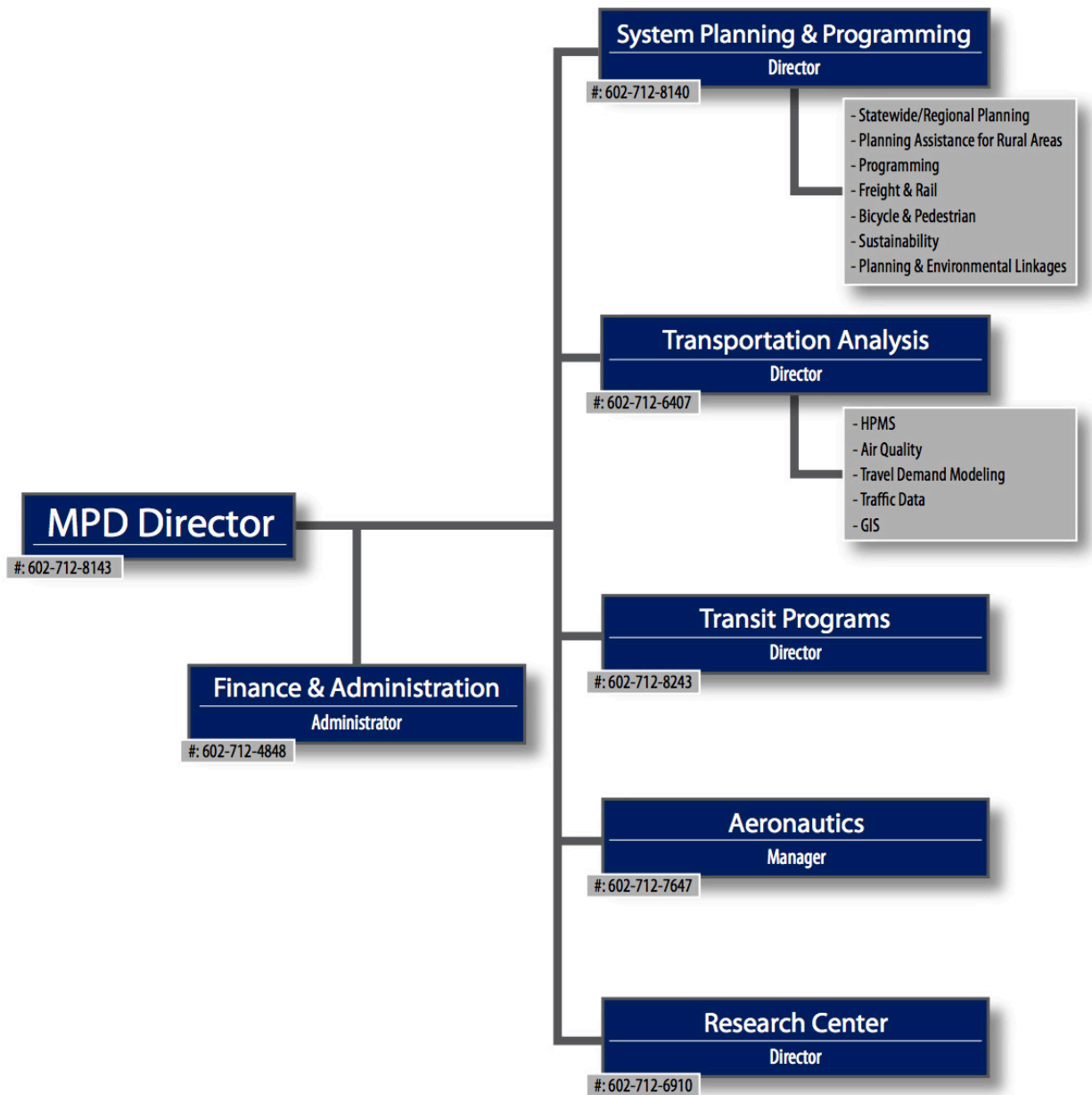
The Transit Group Manager reports to the Division Director of the ADOT MPD and oversees the Transit Programs and Grants unit. Program managers oversee the FTA funded programs. The MPD has additional staff including planners, management analysts, and others. The Administration Unit provides accounting and contract support to FTA programs. An overall organizational chart for ADOT is available as Figure E-2. Figure E-3 displays the organizational chart for the MPD.

Figure E-2 ADOT Organizational Chart



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Figure E-3 Multimodal Planning Division Organizational Chart



Transit Funding Application and Approval Process

FTA Section 5310 Program

The FTA provides ADOT formula funds and STBG funds for small urban and rural areas annually through the capital assistance program. Program funds are used for capital assistance, the purchase of vehicles, related equipment, and operating funds statewide. In addition, mobility management awards are available to assist agencies and communities with their coordination efforts. Eligible recipients include private non-profit and public agencies that provide transportation to the elderly and disabled. Examples include senior centers and programs for the physically, mentally [including seriously mental ill (SMI)] and developmentally disabled (DD) populations. The utilization of special transportation includes:

Appendix E: Peer Review

- Medical appointments
- Nutrition appointments
- Adult day care facilities
- Education and training
- Service appointments, such as banking, social services
- Shopping trips
- Employment

The 5310 program has private non-profit (PNP) agencies and human service agencies that participate. Public agencies may function as grant recipients where no PNPs exist to provide the service, or the state determines such funding is in the best interest of coordination in the region. Tribal communities have been very active in the program.

Successful applications are initially adjudicated through a regional application evaluation and screening process, which includes ADOT and non-ADOT transportation and human service professionals. The 5310 program utilizes the assistance of COG and MPO planning offices to screen applicants within the state's nine planning regions. ADOT then makes the final decision regarding awards based on the evaluation and screening process, as well as the available budget. Reviewers score proposals based on several evaluation factors, including expressed need for service and/or equipment, population served, financial capability to support funding, existing fleet inventories, coordination efforts, and previous performance.

All projects funded under the 5310 program must be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation planning process. Coordination is a key element required for all FTA programs. To be awarded grant assistance, successful applicants must be included in the Regional Coordination Plan for their jurisdictional area and have participated in related activities such as coordination meetings. Applicants who receive a vehicle from ADOT are mandated to follow all requirements listed in the program guidebook. ADOT requires annual inspection of all vehicles awarded through the 5310 program. Vehicles may be scheduled for inspection by ADOT Equipment Services group, or a mechanic who completes the Inspection Form to be returned to ADOT.

Eligible projects include:

- Capital funding: 80% federal and 20% local match
 - Vehicle purchases
 - Capital purchases
- Operating assistance: 50% federal and 50% local match
- Mobility management

Application process:

- Mobility management activities must be identified in the coordination plans
- Upload application and documents on e-grants application
- Assign an agency organization administrator role

FTA Section 5311 Program

The FTA section 5311 grant program goals are to address the mobility needs of Arizona's rural population by enhancing access to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and recreation, and assisting local communities in building effective transit services in rural areas.

The ADOT MPD manages the FTA section 5311 grant program. Funding is provided to counties, cities, towns, and tribal entities to operate transit systems at the local level. Approximately 3.1 million miles of transportation service are provided annually to more than 968,000 passengers. More than 190,000 hours of service are provided by FTA section 5311.

Funds may be used for public transit services operating:

- Within small urban and rural communities
- Among small urban and rural communities
- Between small urban and rural communities and UZAs (cities of 50,000 or more)

Funds are distributed annually through a competitive application process. The application process begins with a series of workshops and webinars providing guidance on the process occurring in the fall. Applications are submitted in December and awards are generally announced in July of each year. The program renews every federal fiscal year (which begins on October 1).

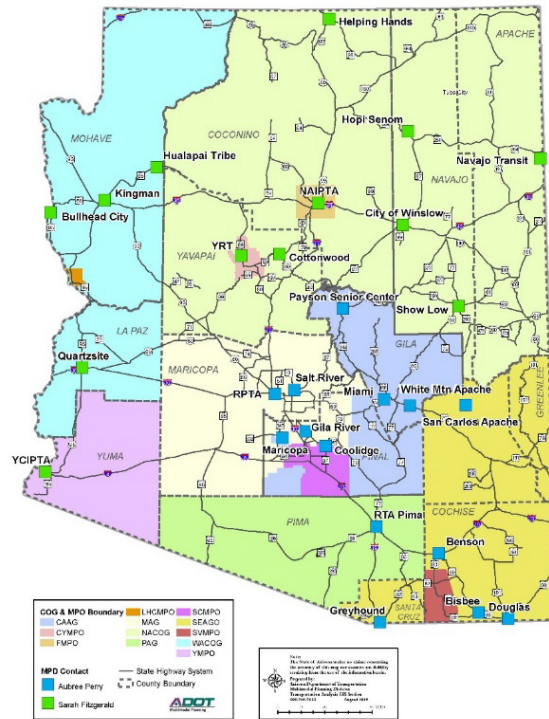
To provide 5311 recipients with the most responsive customer service, as well as work toward the growth of the rural transit program across the state, ADOT has a regionally focused approach to managing the 5311 program. This approach has resulted in distinct regions in the state, each with its own project manager: northwest and southeast (Figure E-4).

ADOT strongly encourages coordination of services to facilitate the most efficient use of federal, state, and local resources. The goal is to support the development of a statewide, multimodal transportation system that is economically efficient and environmentally sound.

Eligible projects:

- Administration expenses: 50% federal and 50% local match
 - Salaries for project director, transit manager, and secretary
 - Marketing expenses
 - Insurance premiums
 - Office supplies
 - Facilities and equipment rental
 - Alcohol and drug testing

Figure E-4 5311 Subrecipients and Planning Regions



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- Capitalized maintenance expenses: 80% federal and 20% local match
 - Buses
 - Vans
 - Radios and communication equipment
 - Vehicle rehabilitation
 - Wheelchair lifts and restraints
 - Passenger shelters
 - Engine overhauls and special maintenance tools
 - Operational support
 - Minor construction or rehabilitation of transit facilities

Application process:

- Uses e-grants online system for application
 - Organization administrator
 - Authorized official
 - Financial officer
 - Grant writer
 - View access
 - Attorney
- Workshops and webinars for guidance

FTA Section 5339 Program

FTA section 5339, Bus and Bus Facilities Program, funds are available through the ADOT competitive pool process to fund capital projects. ADOT administers the state's section 5339 program, where small urban-designated UZAs are considered eligible and for the statewide portion, 5311 rural programs may also be eligible for capital projects. FTA section 5307 funds unclaimed by small UZAs without transit programs are included in the pool of funds and distributed with the FTA section 5339 funds during the application process. FTA sections 5307 and 5339 funds are managed by FTA direct recipients within the UZAs. FTA section 5339 funds awarded to rural 5311 transit agencies that are not direct recipients would follow detailed guidance outlined in the ADOT grant agreement and are overseen by ADOT as subrecipients.

The 5307 and 5339 programs provide funding for capital transit projects in the Small Urban and Rural Transit Services. ADOT MPD also administers the FTA section 5339 program to provide capital funding to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities.

Rural Transit Assistance Program

The RTAP provides funding support to assist in implementation of training and provides technical assistance to meet the specific needs of FTA sections 5311 and 5310. The mission of the Arizona State RTAP is to:

- Enhance and develop the skills and abilities of persons involved in providing passenger service in rural Arizona.
- Promote the safe and effective delivery of training for FTA section 5311 and FTA section 5310 grantees.
- Improve the quality of information through the development of training and technical assistance resource materials.

The RTAP Scholarship Program assists FTA section 5311 and 5310 grantees in their efforts to further the development of management skills and encourage professional networking. Scholarships are available to agencies for transit related courses, workshops, seminars, driver training, and conferences with subject matter applicable to rural transportation and appropriate to the level of expertise of the persons attending. To be eligible, requestors must be an active ADOT Transit grantee/subrecipient supporting rural transit. FTA funded tribal transit grantees may also request RTAP scholarships. Agencies are limited to five scholarship training events per year. Attendance is typically limited to two individuals per event.

Grant Administration

Before awarding a subrecipient a grant for a new project, an evaluation scoring matrix is applied for both new applications and ongoing projects. Past financial capacity/performance is reviewed and taken into consideration. The regional coordination plans prioritize the 5310 projects applied for and determine if an existing project should remain or if a new one should take its place. Subrecipients' budgets and capital requests are reviewed prior to the award of new funds. This ensures that duplicate requests are not being entered in the Program of Projects for the current grant request.

After the review panel meets to determine a ranking of projects, Program Managers make the initial assignment to grants with the Transit Manager reviewing the awards prior to approval. Other ADOT staff may participate in reviewing and approving these projects prior to finalizing the awards.

As part of the development of the annual Program of Projects, the state looks at available funds in existing grants before applying for new funds. Older grant funds are reviewed to determine what funding can be utilized first, prior to obligation of newer funds. Grant status (including open dates, expected closing dates, and any delays) is coordinated with the grant close-out team.

Compliance

The MPD has the responsibility to ensure that transit systems receiving federal funding administered by ADOT comply with all civil rights and FTA requirements. In this effort, the MPD oversees:

- Financial capacity and management: ADOT programs are subject to an audit and in any given year ADOT or federal auditors may choose to review financial records of subrecipients. These actions are designed to ensure tighter budget-process control, asset inventory management, and enhanced ADOT-FTA reporting capability.
- Procurement: Procurement procedures used by ADOT MPD and its subrecipients comply with applicable state law and federal requirements. Every year, ADOT MPD ensures that the most recent federal clauses and certifications from FTA are included in every solicitation and contract.
- Asset management: ADOT program guidance and federal guidance specify how property acquired using federal funds must be utilized and disposed of.
- Maintenance: ADOT MPD ensures that subrecipients are aware of and comply with the requirement that vehicles and other equipment purchased with federal funds are maintained in a good state of repair and cleanliness.
- Insurance: ADOT communicates and verifies that recipients are responsible for acquiring and maintaining current, appropriate insurance on their capital equipment.
- ADA: All ADOT subrecipients must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.
- Title VI: ADOT has an FTA-approved Title VI plan on file. This plan can be accessed via ADOT's website at: <https://www.azdot.gov/business/civil-rights/title-vi-nondiscrimination-program/fta->

[subrecipient-programs](#). ADOT is required to ensure that all subrecipients receiving federal funds are in compliance with the regulations detailed in this plan.

- Drug and alcohol standards: ADOT requires all transit grant recipients to comply with FTA drug and alcohol program standards identified in ADOT guidelines.

Planning

Arizona supports regional coordination plans which are managed individually by the state's COGs and MPOs with oversight by ADOT. All projects funded under the Coordinated Mobility Program must be included in a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan developed and approved by the following agency representatives and local constituents:

- Seniors
- Individuals with disabilities
- Public, private, and non-profit transportation and human service providers
- Other members of the public

If applying for a project that is consistent with the Coordination Plan, but not specifically described or prioritized in the text, projects need to be listed in the annual amendment to the plan containing the current project list in order to be considered eligible for funding.

The state of Arizona is divided into twelve planning regions shown in Figure E-1. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans are developed for one or more regions of the state. Coordination Plans meeting all standards are approved for four years, with an annual update that includes eligible projects prioritized for funding in the upcoming Coordinated Mobility Program grant cycle.

Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Planning

Projects identified in the coordination planning process and selected for FTA funding must be: incorporated into both the TIP and STIP in UZAs with populations of 50,000 or more; and incorporated into the STIP for rural areas with populations of less than 50,000.

Technical Assistance to Subrecipients

Arizona Transit Association (AzTA)

Beyond the RTAP functions in the state described earlier, Arizona has a strong public transit association. AzTA is a statewide not-for-profit association that represents the public and private sectors in the education and advocacy for public transportation services and programs. AzTA assists RTAP in providing training and resources to transit agencies in the state. In addition, the association hosts conferences and educational functions with the following goals:

- Establish a permanent statewide transit funding source.
- Prepare and promote a legislative program that supports AzTA membership at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Provide proactive communications with members/partners and develop public educational materials to support AzTA's advocacy for transit funding and legislation.
- Broaden both member- and partner-bases by actively recruiting and working together to establish collaborative opportunities in support of AzTA's mission.
- Host, with partners, statewide forums that provide educational opportunities for members/partners and broaden outreach.

Capital Needs

TAM Plans

Any agency that owns, operates, and manages capital assets used to provide public transit, and receives federal financial assistance, is required to develop a TAM Plan in order to meet federal requirements. The MPD develops the TAM Plan to provide guidance on how the state and the subrecipients will achieve and maintain SGR for all public transit assets. The final TAM Plan includes:

- Asset management objectives
- Summary description of the condition of State Highway System (SHS) and National Highway System (NHS) pavements and bridges
- Asset management performance measures and state DOT targets for asset condition
- Performance gap analysis
- Risk management analysis
- Network life cycle planning
- Financial plan
- Investment strategies

Mobility Management

ADOT, in addition to the regional coordinated planning efforts, works with the state COGs and MPOs in administering mobility management functions throughout the state. There are 10 Mobility Managers in the state: nine funded by ADOT and one funded by the city of Phoenix.

Arizona defines Mobility Management as "short-range planning and management activities and projects for improving coordination among public transit and other transportation service providers." It is an innovative, customer-driven approach for managing and delivering coordinated transportation services. Helping customers includes older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes to gain mobility and get where they need to go. Changes in demographics, shifts in land-use patterns, and the creation of new and divergent job markets require new approaches for providing transportation services, particularly for customers with special needs. Mobility management focuses on coordinating services and transit agencies to achieve a more efficient transportation service delivery system. It encompasses a potentially broad range of planning activities and related equipment (e.g., software and hardware to promote and support coordination efforts). It can also be a staff position (e.g., mobility manager, travel coordinator) within a centralized planning organization operating in a region or locality.

The 10 Mobility Managers in Arizona work closely with the COGs, MPOs, and ADOT to facilitate these efforts in each individual region of the state.

Support for Intercity and Regional Services

Utilization of FTA Section 5311(f) for Intercity Services

ADOT awards 15% of its FTA section 5311 formula funds to intercity services per FTA guidelines. As a result, the state has eight feeder services which are run primarily by rural operators and connect to the national network of intercity services (primarily Greyhound services along I-40 and I-10).

Arizona identifies intercity service as regularly scheduled bus service for the general public which: operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in proximity; and has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers. Package express service may be included if

incidental to passenger transportation. Commuter service (service designed primarily to provide daily work trips within the local commuting area) is excluded from the definition.

While much of the public transit service provided under FTA section 5311 covers large distances, not all long-distance trips are included in the definition of intercity service because of the nature of the areas served. Similarly, service that only stops at an intercity bus facility at either end of a route that covers a long distance, without regard to scheduled connections, is eligible for FTA section 5311 assistance as public transit, but is not an intercity feeder service.

A public entity operating or contracting for intercity bus service is not required to provide complementary paratransit service for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route intercity bus service.

Intercity bus service is a vital link between otherwise isolated rural communities in Arizona and the rest of the nation. In recent years, the major intercity carriers have abandoned many less productive routes. Patronage generated in rural areas, however, appears to be important to the continuing viability of remaining intercity routes. One objective of the FTA section 5311 funding for intercity bus service is to support meaningful connections between non-UZAs and more distant locations. Another objective is to support services that meet the intercity travel needs of residents in non-UZAs.

Tribal Transit

ADOT has a strong working relationship with tribal communities in Arizona, with the state recognizing the needs of tribal communities through funding, technical assistance, and respect for tribal sovereignty.

ADOT efforts to address Arizona tribal transportation are based on the following major factors:

- There are 22 federally-recognized Indian Tribes, Communities, and Native Nations in Arizona with tribal land encompassing approximately 27,736,000 acres or 28% of the state land base.
- There are seven tribes located out-of-state with aboriginal and ancestral interests in Arizona.
- The state highway system includes 6,785 centerline miles, of which 1,237 traverse tribal land.
- There are 14 tribal airports and five tribal public transit systems situated within tribal communities throughout Arizona.
- Both state and tribal governments have the common goal of providing efficient transportation systems for the safety and welfare of the traveling public.

The tribal communities in Arizona are direct recipients of FTA Tribal Transit grant funds, however many of these communities compete for FTA section 5310 and 5311 funding as well. In order to assist these communities, MPD has two Tribal Liaisons who are both members of tribes within Arizona. These liaisons assist tribes with starting, sustaining, and improving transit services in their communities as well as navigating the applicable state and federal regulations and guidelines attached to transit funding. This has resulted in significant success in improving mobility for tribal communities across Arizona.

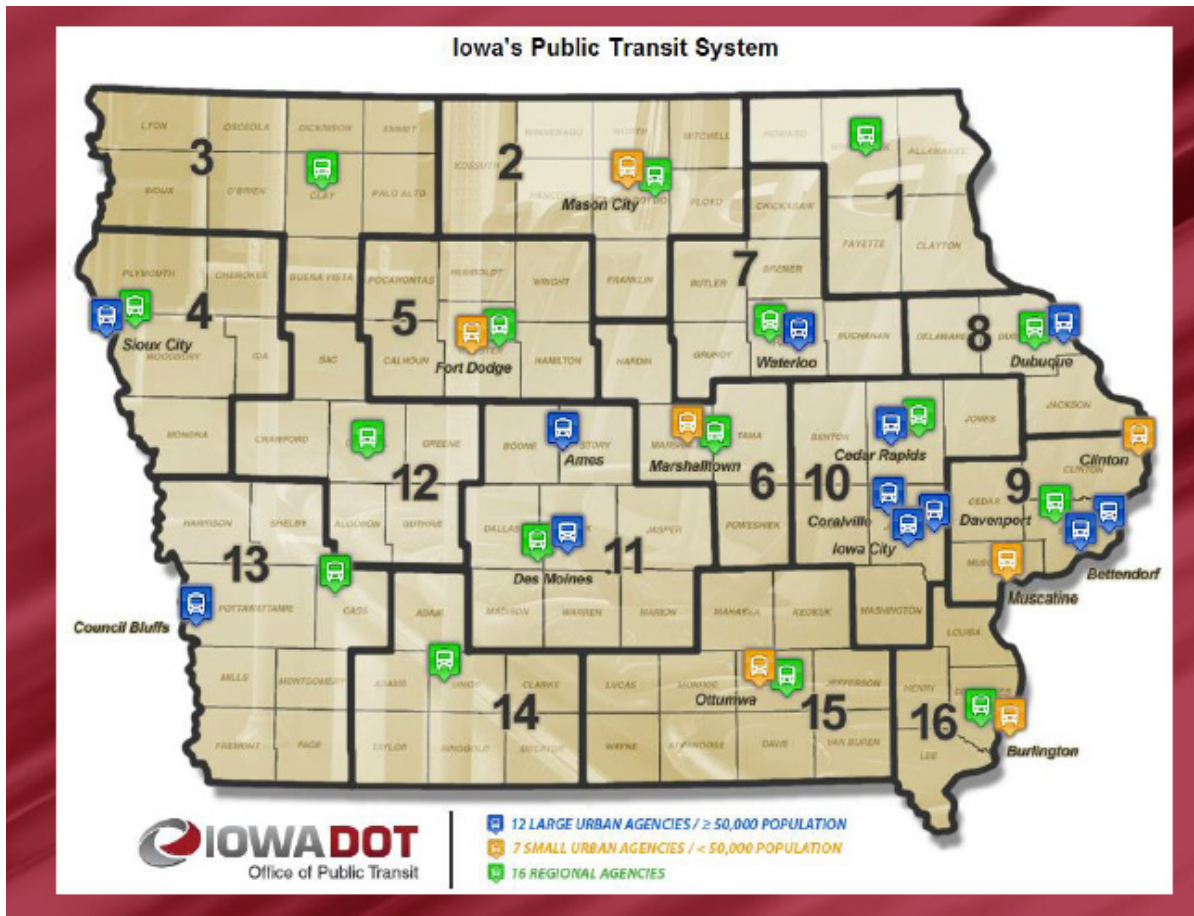
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - PUBLIC TRANSIT BUREAU

Governance and Funding

The mission of the Iowa DOT Public Transit Bureau is to “advocate and deliver services that support and promote a safe and comprehensive transit system in Iowa to enhance access to opportunities and quality of life.”

In this effort, the Public Transit Bureau administers state and federal transit grants and provides technical assistance to Iowa's 19 urban public transit systems and 16 regional public transit systems. Every county in Iowa, as shown in Figure E-5, is served by a regional transit system.

Figure E-5 Iowa's Public Transit System



As outlined in the Iowa DOT SMP, the Public Transit Bureau administers the following federal programs:

- Formula grants for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (FTA section 5310)
- Formula grants for Rural Areas Program (FTA section 5311)
- RTAP (FTA section 5311(b)(3))
- Intercity Bus Assistance Program (FTA section 5311(f))
- Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Program (FTA section 5339)
- Funds flexed to the FTA 5311 Program from the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Program (CMAQ) Program
- STBG

The Iowa DOT Public Transit Bureau also administers the following FTA programs:

- Metropolitan Transportation Planning (FTA section 5303)
- Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Transportation Planning (FTA section 5304)

- UZA Formula Grants (FTA section 5307)

The goal of the Public Transit Bureau is to maximize the benefits that the people of Iowa receive through these federal transit assistance programs. The SMP notes that, to this end:

- The Public Transit Bureau has integrated the administration of these programs as much as possible, while remaining true to the separate goals established for each program at the federal level.
- The department has committed to pass all program funds on to the subrecipient transit systems/planning agencies/intercity bus operators and to pay for state level administrative costs through other sources.
- The department has also sought to partner with Iowa's transit industry in order to develop a cooperative approach that serves Iowa's citizenry, whether they live in cities or rural areas. While these federal funding programs each have specific purposes, Iowa has added the requirement to all federal and state public transit funds disbursed that all services must be open to the general public.

The Public Transit Bureau also administers state funding programs:

- State Transit Assistance Program: By rule, the bulk of the funding through this program is provided by formula to designated public transit systems. The program allows for \$300,000 that is set-aside each year for special projects to improve transit in the state and for individual special projects with the purpose of supporting startup of new coordination activities.
- Operating projects are eligible for funding up to a maximum of 80% state participation for the first year and 50% state participation for the second year. Capital projects are eligible for funding up to a maximum of 85% state participation. Priority is given to projects that include a contribution from human service agencies.
- Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG) Program: This program includes new construction, renovation, and relocation of facilities. Projects may include:
 - Facilities for the administration of public transit operations
 - Facilities for servicing public transit vehicles
 - Maintenance or storage of public transit vehicles
 - Transit vehicle fueling facilities
 - Passenger waiting facilities
 - Reconstruction/major renovations or relocation of existing administrative facilities
 - Maintenance facilities to correct violations of safety or design standards
 - Projects may include all associated design, land acquisition, grading and foundation work

Organization

The Public Transit Bureau is located within the Planning, Programming, and Modal Division. This division is responsible for coordinating planning activities with MPOs and regional planning affiliations, developing transportation system plans, and conducting public involvement efforts.

Staffing

The Public Transit Bureau is currently staffed by the following positions:

Grant Program Administrator

This position is responsible for the oversight of all transit programs, development of the STIP transit element, administration of the federal grants application process, and administration of the Public Transit Equipment and Facilities Management System (PTMS).

Transit Programs Administrator / Statewide Mobility Coordinator

This position serves as the administrator for 18 of Iowa's 35 transit agencies. It also manages a network of urban and rural mobility coordinators throughout the state and serves as a resource where local coordinators are not present.

Compliance and Training Officer

This position is responsible for conducting compliance reviews of Iowa's public transit systems, providing identified training needs to transit systems and staff, reviewing passenger transportation plans, and serving as chair of the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council.

Grants Manager

This position is responsible for post-award management of the department's FTA grants and monitoring and implementation of state grants. This position serves as the office specialist on the FTA Drug and Alcohol Testing Program and the transit Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

Transit Programs Administrator

This position provides technical assistance and oversight of awarded projects, issues payments and ensures compliance during the contract period, oversees the Intercity Bus Assistance Program, and serves as a Procurement Specialist.

Technology and Research Manager

This position is responsible for implementing special projects, preparing discretionary bus grant proposals, reviewing and monitoring legislative issues, conducting research on transit specific topics, managing the Iowa Rideshare program, maintaining vendor relations, and evaluating the most current technologies available for use in public transit.

Administrative Support Position

This position is responsible for the administration of the Iowa Public Transit Fellowship Program, state transit training assistance, contract issuance and tracking, and general office support.

Legislation

Iowa has long emphasized the need for coordination of publicly funded passenger transportation services to maximize the transportation benefits that can be achieved with limited resources. In order to accomplish this:

- State law requires all agencies providing or purchasing publicly funded passenger transportation services to coordinate such services and funding through urban or regional transit systems designated by local officials in accordance with Chapter 324A of the Code of Iowa.
- Each designated transit system is responsible for coordination of all publicly funded passenger transportation, thereby making all transit systems eligible for funding under the FTA 5310 program.
- All services provided by Iowa transit systems, with the support of state or federal transit assistance, are required to be open to the general public. For this purpose, complementary ADA paratransit is a required part of fixed-route service.
- Chapter 324A provides that the Iowa DOT is responsible for designating the state's urban transit systems, while the counties within each region are responsible for designating an entity to serve as the regional transit system.
- Iowa Administrative Code 761-910.3(2) established the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council (ITCC). The ITCC's codified purpose is to assist in determining if local agencies are complying with the coordination mandate of Chapter 324A. More information on the ITCC is provided in the Advisory Groups section.

Urban Transit Systems

The administrative rules implementing Chapter 324A provisions on the designation of urban transit systems require each urban transit system to serve a community of at least 20,000 people:

- Nineteen urban transit systems have been designated, with four of these being in UZAs over 200,000 population, eight in UZAs between 50,000 and 199,999 population, and seven in small urban areas of between 20,000 and 49,999 population.
- Collectively, the urban systems serving all or part of a UZA are referred to herein as “large urban transit systems,” while those outside UZAs are termed “small urban transit systems.”

It should be noted that (in the bullets on the previous page) these are Iowa program definitions¹.

Regional Transit Systems

Chapter 324A divided the state’s 99 counties into 16 multi-county public transit regions, and provided that a single agency should be designated by the counties within each region to be responsible for the administration and provision of all transit services in that region not performed by one of the 19 designated urban transit systems.

Consolidated Transit Funding Application

Iowa’s Consolidated Transit Funding Application serves as the single multi-part application for funding by subrecipient transit systems under Iowa’s statewide CMAQ and FTA sections 5310, 5311, and 5339 grants. Iowa’s Consolidated Transit Funding Application is used by all transit agencies to apply for both STA and federal funding. The application packets are posted online each December and are due to the Public Transit Bureau by the first business day of May each year. If significant balances of funding remain uncommitted in any of the statewide funding programs for which the Iowa DOT has responsibility, a midyear solicitation is made for additional applications to ensure that eligible agencies can use the funding available.

The consolidated application requests information on expected direct-funded federal transit assistance grants for large urban transit systems under the FTA section 5307 program, along with the 5310 program for transit systems serving areas with a population greater than 200,000.

Small urban and regional transit systems, along with the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) which is a rural provider in Polk County, use this process to apply for state administered federal transit assistance under the FTA section 5311 program.

Any individual projects from the FTA section 5339 capital program for all transit systems are included in the consolidated transit funding application process. Individual earmarks for capital projects for all transit systems are also included.

Federal Funding: Project Selection Criteria and Method of Distributing Funds

Each year 70% of the FTA section 5310 apportionment to Iowa is sub-allocated to Iowa’s large urban transit operators, using the same formula as is used for the 5311 program. Each system can use these funds for any eligible project. The remaining 30% of the annual apportionment is administered in conjunction with the state’s FTA section 5311 funding, meaning that the combined funds are sub-allocated using a single formula.

¹ FTA program definitions use the Census designation of UZAs with populations between 50,000 and 200,000 as Small Urban systems, and those over 200,000 as Large Urban systems—all funded under the section 5307 program. There is no FTA funding program designation of “small urban transit systems” under 50,000 population—all transit programs outside of UZAs are categorized together as eligible for funding under the section 5311 program.

- The formula to distribute FTA section 5310 funding takes annual ridership and revenue miles into account, assuring an equitable distribution of the funds based on past performance. The transit systems may each select any eligible project on which to use their allocation. For convenience of administration, the 5310 funds involved are focused on as few systems as possible and are programmed to support contracted services for brokered operations which indicated a desire to use their funds for support of service costs.
- Funds for public transit projects are allocated among Iowa's regional and small urban transit systems using a performance-based formula, which takes the statistics from the last completed fiscal year. The formula calculations are based on the total FTA section 5311 funding going to public transit projects.
- The Public Transit Bureau determines which type of funds each transit system receives, based on the nature of the projects programmed. FTA section 5310 funds are targeted to systems that purchase services from sub-providers, and FTA section 5311 funds are targeted first to systems that provide their services directly. Each subrecipient makes their own selection of eligible projects toward which funds are to be programmed.

STA Program Funding: Project Selection Criteria and Method of Distributing Funds

The rules for Iowa's STA program stipulate that the bulk of the funding goes out by formula to the designated public transit systems. The program allows for \$300,000 to be set aside each year for special projects to improve transit in the state and for individual special projects with the purpose of supporting startup of new coordination activities. This is in addition to the continuing use of these funds for statewide or emergency projects, and funds not needed for special projects can still be moved into the formula portion of the program.

Special projects are intended to help transit systems respond to needs identified by human service agencies, with preference given to projects with matched funding coming from the human services side. Projects must involve open-to-the-public services. Projects would allow start-up funding, until the services have a chance to be reflected in the STA formula. Applications are reviewed with the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council and may be submitted anytime during the year.

PTIG Program Funding: Project Selection Criteria and Method of Distributing Funds

Transit systems designated under Iowa Code Chapter 324A are eligible to apply for public transit infrastructure projects. State share is up to 80% with a maximum of 40% of the total state appropriation. Combined state and federal funds cannot exceed 80% of the total transit cost. Local participation is considered when prioritizing projects. Both new and rehabilitation projects will be funded each year. Projects must be obligated within six months of contract execution and completed in 18 months.

Advisory Groups

Public Transit Advisory Council

The Public Transit Advisory Council (PTAC) represents Iowa transit agencies regarding all of Iowa public transit funding and policy issues. The PTAC meets quarterly during the year.

Council membership includes public transit professionals from regional, small urban (20,000 to 49,999 population), urban (50,000 to 199,999 population), and large urban (200,000+ population) transit systems.²

² These classifications are based on Iowa statute definitions under Iowa Code Chapter 324A, not FTA program funding classifications.

Members are appointed by the Public Transit Bureau (with vacancies filled using recommendations from current PTAC members) and serve a term of three years with no more than four terms.

Iowa Transportation Coordination Council

In 1976 the Iowa Legislature adopted the first-in-the-nation coordination law, with a compliance review process added to the legislation in 1984. The Iowa Transportation Coordination Council (ITCC) was created in 1992 with original members including the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Iowa Department of Human Services, and the Iowa Department of Elder Affairs. The ITCC mission is to provide statewide leadership on transportation coordination to improve the mobility of Iowans.



Subsequently the ITCC was expanded, and now includes membership from statewide organizations, state departments, and federal groups. Today, the ITCC's membership consists of many state level agencies and non-profit groups, all with an interest in the coordination of transportation in Iowa.

Chaired by the Public Transit Bureau, the ITCC meets bi-monthly to discuss such issues as mobility management, accessibility of transportation in Iowa, STA Special Project Proposal applications pertaining to coordination, and the encouragement of state and local agencies' involvement in the passenger transportation planning process.

Compliance

The Public Transit Bureau has the responsibility to ensure that transit systems receiving federal funding administered by the bureau comply with civil rights requirements. In this effort the Public Transit Bureau oversees the following procedures:

- Joint participation agreements with FTA-funded subrecipients contain assurance clauses that transit agencies sign to verify compliance.
- Each FTA section 5310 or 5311 transit system must file, on a one-time basis, a signed and dated standard DOT Title VI assurance and update it as necessary when changes occur.
- FTA section 5310 and 5311 transit systems must annually submit a local civil rights assurance. This is included as part of the annual grant application.

FTA section 5310/5311 transit agencies are required to report any civil rights complaints or pending lawsuits related to FTA funded activities along with the outcome, as part of the annual funding application. All contracts with sub-providers and other contractors must also include nondiscrimination clauses.

The Transit Manager's Handbook and Policy Manual provided by the Public Transit Bureau (discussed in the later Technical Assistance section) includes a chapter that details the civil rights requirements for federal subrecipients.

Planning

The Transit Manager's Handbook and Policy Manual includes a chapter on planning, noting the importance of the transit planning process to determine a community's or region's current and future needs and to choose the best match between those needs and the available resources. This document provides extensive information on the legislated intermodal transportation planning processes. It notes that the best planning

processes also integrate transit planning with human services planning, as well as planning for other community services.

The Public Transit Bureau recognizes that the way the planning process is carried out and how successful it can vary regionally. However, a basic structure and set of elements that are common to transportation planning in Iowa are detailed in the Transit Manager's Handbook and Policy Manual and include the role of MPOs and Regional Planning Affiliations (RPAs) in the planning process.

Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)

Any projects utilizing FTA section 5310 funding must be derived from a coordinated human service and passenger transportation planning process. In Iowa, that coordinated plan is called the PTP. Iowa's MPOs and RPAs are responsible for this process and the writing of the PTP. While not all transit systems in Iowa are eligible to receive FTA section 5310 funding, the PTP is required of all planning agencies that are in cooperation with their local public transit and human service agencies, as there are benefits to coordinating passenger transportation no matter the funding source. PTP updates are due every five years. To assist with developing and updating PTPs, the Public Transit Bureau provides specific guidance, available at:

[https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/pr_guide/Passenger percent20Transportation percent20Plan/PTPguidance.pdf](https://iowadot.gov/systems_planning/pr_guide/Passenger%20Transportation%20Plan/PTPguidance.pdf)

Technical Assistance to Subrecipients

Transit Manager's Handbook and Policy Manual

The Public Transit Bureau provides local transit managers with a handbook that offers an overview of public transit in Iowa, and how to conduct business with Iowa DOT and the Public Transit Bureau. The handbook is intended as a tool to assist with navigating the many policies, procedures, and requirements of state and federal government. The handbook can also be used to provide orientation for new personnel; to help clarify the relationships and required procedures for existing personnel; and to provide easier accessibility to regulations and procedures.

The handbook includes sections on:

- Funding programs
- Planning
- Reporting requirements
- Procurement
- Capital management
- Vehicle operations
- Civil rights compliance
- Drug and alcohol regulations

The handbook is available at: <https://iowadot.gov/transit/handbook/TMHandbookBinder.pdf>

Rural Transit Assistance Program Administration

The Public Transit Bureau administers Iowa's RTAP, which provides various resources, sponsors fellowships, and conducts or coordinates transit training sessions for the transit community. Iowa RTAP features:

- Marketing and advocacy assistance to help transit systems in their effort to increase public awareness and boost ridership. Assistance includes brochures and marketing materials.

- Training seminars ranging from mini workshops to multi-day courses on issues such as customer service, management, ADA, drug and alcohol program compliance, procurement, and planning. All sessions are offered to Iowa public transit systems and transit planning agencies free of charge or for a nominal registration fee.
- A Lending Library through which public transit systems in Iowa may access training videos purchased using RTAP funds. These videos aid transit managers and their staff in the development and refinement of specific tasks or skills required to effectively operate a rural transportation system.
- The Iowa Transit Training Fellowship Program that sponsors training for identified Iowa transit agencies or planning agencies. Transit-related training may be in-person at conferences, courses, or seminars or the training may be online through e-learning and webinar opportunities.

Iowa Public Transit Association (IPTA)

IPTA's mission is to unify, advocate, and advance the interests of Iowa transit systems to influence and gain support from government agencies, legislators, and other entities. Their mission is also to support the professional development of members and their systems by providing industry information, training, technical assistance, and other opportunities for networking, collaboration, and sharing of ideas and best practices.

IPTA/Iowa DOT Transit Training Conferences

Iowa DOT contracts with the IPTA to hold a minimum of three transit training conferences each year, which are open to all Iowa public transit systems—urban and rural. These conferences are funded by RTAP and State Transit Assistance with no or minimal registration fees. Sessions are offered on a variety of topics to meet the interest of all systems, large and small. At least once each year, an expo is included in the training sessions which offers an exhibition of vendors and manufacturer representatives.

IPTA/Iowa DOT Transit Rodeo

The Iowa DOT and IPTA sponsor an annual Transit Rodeo to promote and recognize safe driving skills by Iowa's public transit vehicle operators. Transit operators from around the state meet at the current year's host site to compete and demonstrate their safe driving skills. Each operator performs a series of maneuvers that represent many of the actual situations they face as they carry out their daily duties. Funding for the Rodeo is provided through RTAP and STA.

Capital Needs

TAM Plans

The Public Transit Bureau is the TAM Group Plan sponsor for 23 Iowa public transit systems that are all recipients of FTA section 5311 funding.³ Sixteen of these are regional agencies that primarily serve Iowa's rural population, and seven are small urban systems that serve areas with a population of less than 50,000.

The Public Transit Bureau, through this planning process, periodically assesses the current condition of capital assets for each group participant, determines the condition and performance of its assets, identifies unacceptable risks, and provides guidance and technical assistance to group participants in order to decide how to best balance and prioritize reasonably anticipated funds towards improving asset condition.

³ Iowa prepares TAM Plans for 23 of the state's 35 agencies that are FTA section 5311 recipients. The remaining 12 agencies prepare their own TAM Plans.

The Public Transit Bureau is also responsible for setting annual performance targets on behalf of group plan participants and submitting to FTA and to the NTD. Transit agencies can choose to decline group plan participation and develop their own TAM plan and performance targets.

The Iowa DOT TAM Group Plan is available at:

<https://iowadot.gov/transit/publications/TransitAssetManagementGroupPlan.pdf>

Procurement

The Public Transit Bureau is responsible for ensuring that all state and federal requirements pertaining to public transit procurement are followed when using funds administered by the Iowa DOT. Transit systems may conduct their own procurement to allow greater flexibility to meet local needs, but the Public Transit Bureau verifies that all certifications being used in the solicitation are current and accurate.

Iowa DOT conducts bids on behalf of Iowa's 35 designated transit agencies, state of Iowa governmental agencies, and state board of regents. Currently, state contracts are available for local transit systems to procure the following capital items:

- Public Transit Vehicle/Shelter Advertising (one available vendor)
- ADA Accessible Van/Light Duty/Medium-Duty Vehicles (five available vendors)
- ADA Accessible Heavy-Duty Vehicles (four available vendors)

Mobility Management and Coordination

Iowa has a long history of transportation coordination beginning in 1976 and now legislated through Iowa Code Chapter 324A and overseen by the ITCC. Current ITCC membership reflects a blend of state agencies, statewide human service interests, public transit, and planning representatives. In addition to the Public Transit Bureau, the ITCC includes:

- Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning
- Iowa DOT Motor Vehicle Division
- Iowa Department on Aging
- Iowa Department of Human Services
- Iowa Public Transit Association
- Iowa Medicaid Enterprise
- Iowa Department of Corrections
- Iowa Department of Public Health
- Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council
- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Iowa's MPOs and RPAs
- Iowa Mobility Manager's Network
- AARP Iowa
- Access2Care
- American Cancer Society
- Bureau of Refugee Services
- Epilepsy Foundation Iowa
- Public transit advocates and consumers

The ITCC reviews the required biennial report submitted to the Iowa General Assembly and Governor. The report is due in December of even-numbered years and recommends methods to increase transportation coordination and improve the efficiency of federal, state, and local government programs used to finance public transit services and may address other topics as appropriate. The 2016 report is available at: http://www.iowadot.gov/transit/regulations/Transportation_Coordination_2016.pdf

ITCC agendas, meetings, and projects are developed by Iowa DOT staff as part of their regular job duties and paid for as part of their regular salaries. No special funding is set aside for ITCC work.

Mobility Coordinators

As noted in the staffing for the Public Transit Bureau, a Statewide Mobility Coordinator position manages a network of urban and rural mobility coordinators throughout the state. Mobility Coordinators focus on meeting individual transportation needs by identifying transportation options and service providers, while offering education on how to use public transit. They also educate local communities, enhance awareness of available mobility options, and play an important role in travel training.

Support for Intercity and Regional Services

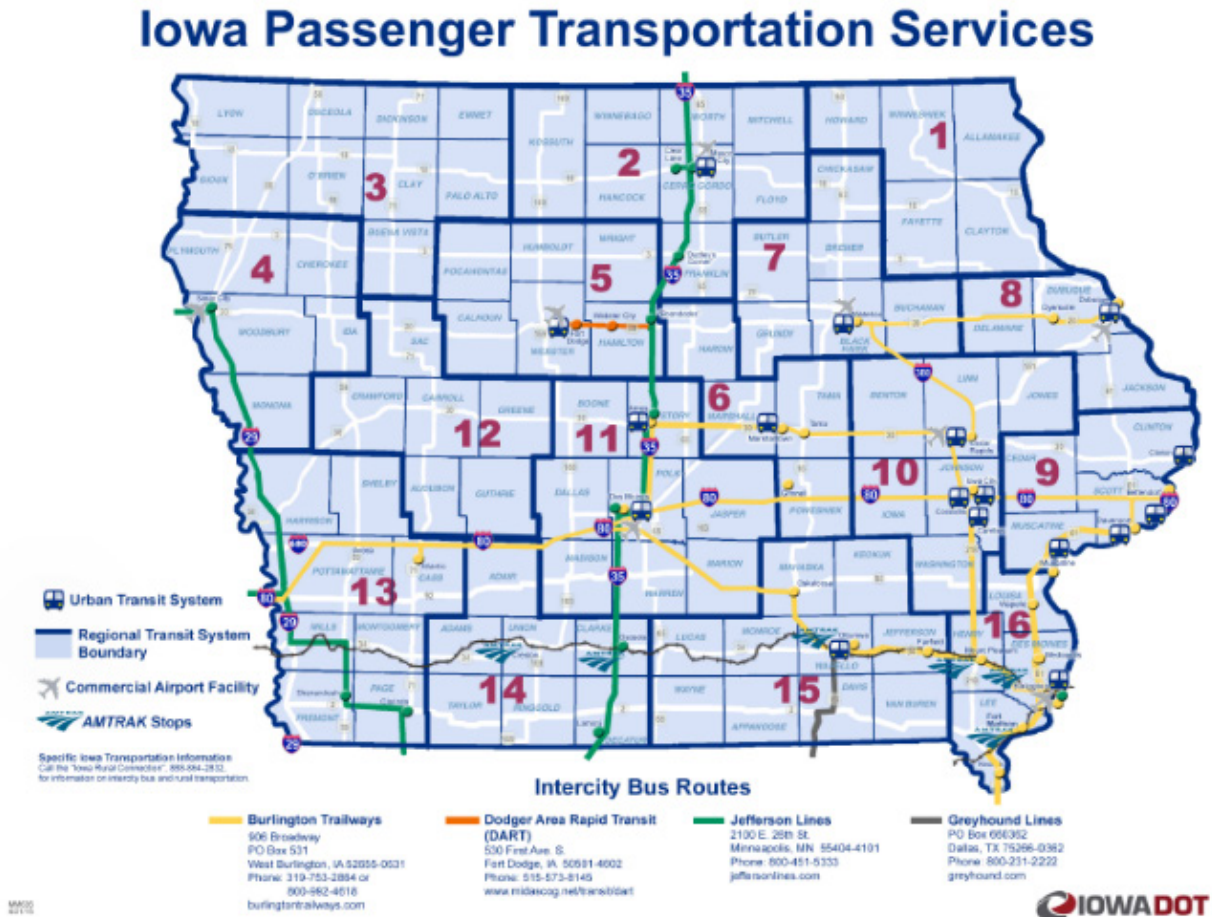
Iowa Intercity Bus Assistance Program

The Public Transit Bureau administers the federally funded Iowa Intercity Bus Assistance Program. The intent of the program is to maintain the viability of intercity bus service in the state of Iowa. A map of the current intercity bus system is shown in Figure E-6.

The Iowa Intercity Bus Assistance Program's purpose is to:

- Provide support for the existing intercity bus routes that tie Iowa to the rest of the country.
- Provide assistance for new feeder routes in order to give smaller communities not served by existing routes access to stops along those routes.
- Increase public awareness of the intercity connections that are available through a targeted intercity bus marketing program.
- Help transit agencies to upgrade equipment and facilities, including adding accessibility features required by the ADA.

Figure E-6 Iowa's Intercity Bus Routes



The Iowa Intercity Bus Assistance Program addresses these elements within the context of the federal program guidance that defines intercity bus service.

Eligibility

The Iowa Intercity Bus Assistance Program is open to:

- Private intercity bus companies.
- Firms wishing to start intercity bus service.
- Transit agencies either operating or proposing to operate intercity bus services or terminals.
- Local communities wishing to support intercity bus connections to their community.

Joint public and private applications are encouraged. If identical proposals are received from public and private providers, the private sector proposals shall generally be considered more favorably.

Proposed projects must directly support the provision of intercity bus services in Iowa. Eligible routes must serve Iowa intercity bus terminals connected to the nationwide intercity bus network and include stops in non-UZAs.

Project Priority

The following funding categories have been established for the Iowa Intercity Bus Program. These categories are listed in priority order:

Priority 1 - Provide a base level of funding support to preserve the existing intrastate system:

- Funding will be approximately 20 cents per revenue mile based primarily on preventive maintenance and insurance costs.
- Funding will be allocated based on existing miles of Iowa intercity service.
- To qualify for these funds, carriers must provide quarterly reports noting the number of Iowa passenger trips by route, miles of revenue service, and total cost per revenue mile.
- Eligible carriers must serve Iowa intercity bus terminals connected to the nationwide intercity bus network.

Priority 2 - Provide support for the development of new connector/feeder service:

Funding assistance shall be up to 50 cents per mile based primarily on preventative maintenance and insurance costs. Funding for new routes that duplicate existing route shall be limited to 50 cents per mile.

- New service projects are eligible for funding for three years.
- To qualify for these funds, carriers must provide quarterly reports noting:
 - Number of Iowa passenger trips by route
 - Miles of revenue service
 - Total cost per revenue mile
- Eligible carriers must serve Iowa intercity bus terminals connected to the nationwide intercity bus network.
- New intercity bus service must be ADA accessible and each route must include service to nonurban population centers.

Priority 3 - Provide funding assistance for route specific marketing projects:

- Marketing of new services will have the highest priority for this category of funding.
- Marketing of new routes will be funded at 80% federal and 20% non-federal, with a federal cap of \$12,000 per route.
- New marketing of existing service will be funded at 80% federal and 20% non-federal, with a federal cap of \$7,500 per carrier.
- Joint project development between cities, intercity carrier terminal managers, and operators is encouraged.
- Funding will be limited to external non-labor costs only.
- Applicants should include a systemwide overview of their current marketing efforts.
- Applicants with unused marketing funds may have their marketing funding requests reduced or eliminated unless proper justification is provided. Justification should include reasons why funding is unspent plus a plan that assures the balance and any additional funding will be spent in a timely manner.

Priority 4 - Provide support for vehicle and bus terminal improvements:

- Vehicles required to support new services for Iowa will have the highest priority for funding, and terminal improvements will have the next highest priority.

- Terminal improvements shall require commitments to continue service for a period of years,⁴ based on useful life of facility. All improvements must meet ADA accessibility standards.

Matching Funds

The non-federal share of projects is to come from resources other than passenger revenues from intercity bus services. This can include advertising or parcel revenues, interest income, state or local public funds.

Funding Distribution

All project funds are paid on a cost reimbursement basis. Costs and funding sources must be documented for work performed before payment can be requested. Mileage-based projects shall require documentation of service mileage and cost per mile for preventive maintenance (per FTA definition), insurance or other specifics as noted in the project.

Technology

In the past Iowa DOT has developed a transit intelligent transportation system (ITS) plan, intended to provide a means for local transit systems in the state to utilize ITS applications that support transit operations. This plan assesses current conditions regarding technology, discusses the potential costs and benefits, and provides potential ITS strategies.

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - OFFICE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Governance and Funding

In Kansas, the administration of federal and state transit funding is provided by the Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) Office of Public Transportation. This office is situated in KDOT's Division of Planning and Development. The mission of the Kansas Department of Transportation is to "provide a statewide transportation system to meet the needs of Kansas."

To accomplish its mission, the Office provides financial and technical assistance to public transit systems, local governments, and human service agencies throughout the state for the planning, establishment, and operation of public transportation systems. As the agency designated to administer the FTA sections 5310, 5311, and 5339 programs in Kansas, KDOT is responsible for allocating the funds to urbanized and non-UZAs of the state in a fair and equitable manner, as well as ensuring compliance with federal regulations during all phases of the application and funding processes. KDOT annually submits a program to FTA with projects for FTA section 5310, 5311, and 5339 which are revised as needed.

Organization and Staffing

The MPD (part of the Division of Planning and Development) oversees public transportation grant administration and compliance in the state. This group has the Public Transit Manager (Assistant Bureau Chief) and five staff members: three Program Consultants, a Transit Planner, and a Public Service Administrator. The Office is also supported by other units within KDOT:

- Office of Contract Compliance
- Nondiscrimination

⁴ Exact time period is not defined in the regulations. The time period may vary in the agreement with the carrier.

Appendix E: Peer Review

- Title VI
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and Equal Employment Opportunity
- Bureau of Fiscal Services
- Financial accounting and reporting
- Payroll processing
- Vendor payment processing
- Project accounting and federal-aid billing
- Procurement
- Inventory oversight
- Contract audits
- Implementation of new funds

The state legislature established 10 Coordinated Transit Districts (CTDs), which serve as the administrative structure across the state for the purpose of providing financial and administrative assistance to transportation systems. In order to receive state and/or federal transit funds, recipients are required to become part of a CTD. A map of the coordinated transit districts is shown in Figure E-7. An organization chart for the Office of Public Transportation is shown in Figure E-8.

Figure E-7 KDOT Coordinated Transit Districts and Transit Agencies

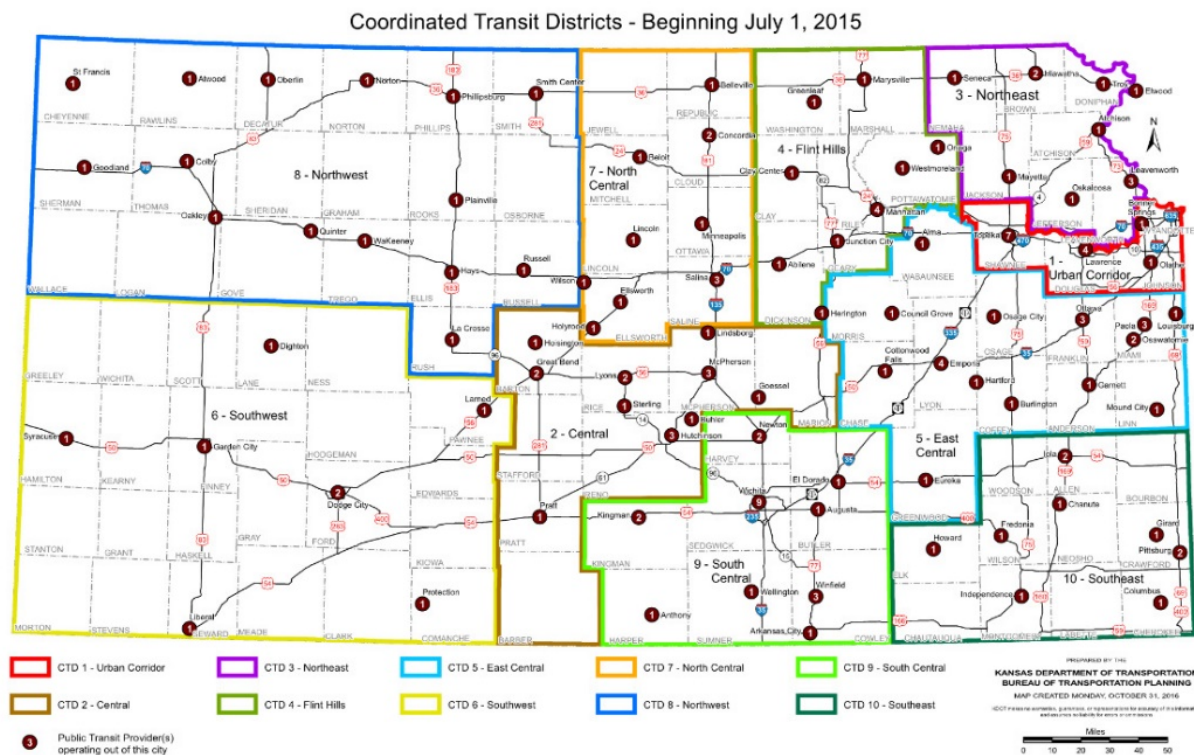
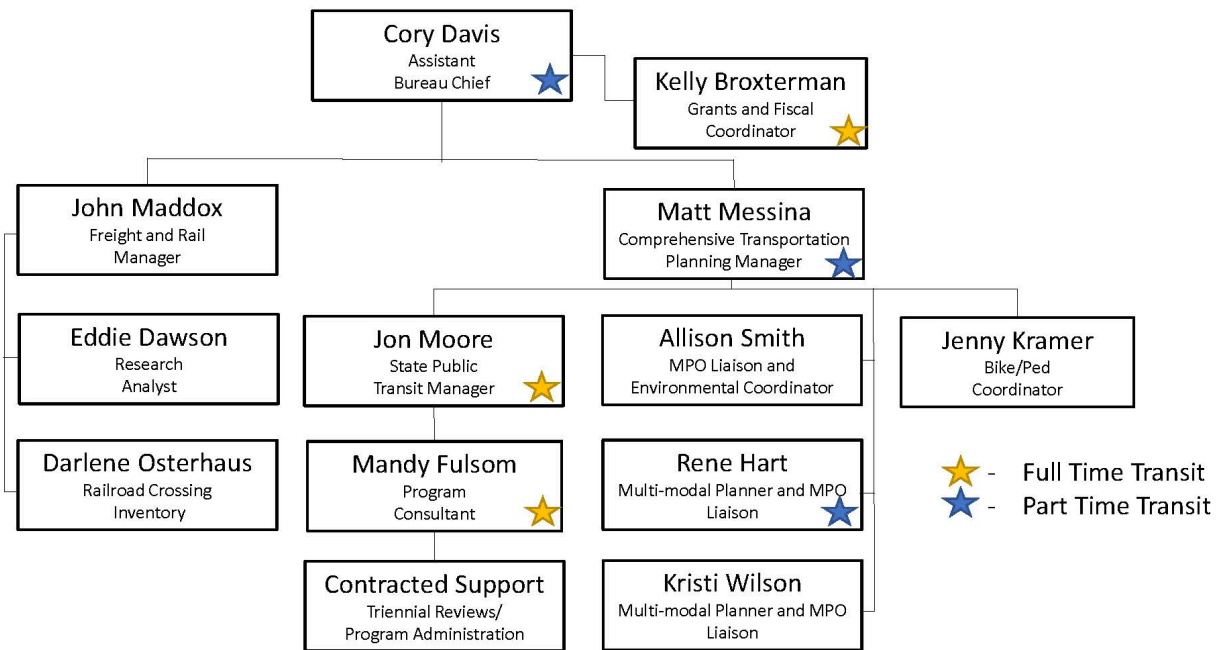


Figure E-8 Multimodal Planning Division Organizational Chart



Funding Administration and Allocation Process

The following section highlights key aspects of the KDOT oversight of federal and state transit funding programs.

Kansas Access, Innovation, and Collaboration Program

Kansas has a state transit funding program designed to give recipients more flexibility and innovative approaches than possible through the sole use of FTA grant programs. The goal is to broaden the range of possible projects using state funding. The program includes bus replacement, rehab and purchase, bus related equipment, bus facilities, and pilot programs and limited operations. Eligible applicants include local governments, transit agencies, tribal nations, and non-profits.

KDOT's stated goals of the project include:

- Expanding influence on mobility.
- Supporting urban and rural needs.
- Enhancing user experience.
- Streamlining the application process for a range of potential projects with one application.
- Enhancing infrastructure and allowing for improved access to transit.
- Investing in innovative technology including autonomous transit and electric vehicles.
- Expanding efforts in working with private providers and erasing the gap between urban and rural systems.

FTA Section 5310 Program

Recipients of FTA section 5310 federal grants must be members of a CTD. All applicants are encouraged to explore the possibilities of coordination with other transit agencies in the area, who may best be able to provide the needed transportation services in order to make use of existing resources. For new applicants,

Appendix E: Peer Review

KDOT must prove that existing services in the service areas are either unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. Private non-profit organizations and local governments are eligible to apply for section 5310 funding. Eligible capital expenses include transit vehicles and associated equipment (e.g., wheelchair lifts, ramps, restraints). Eligible operating expenses (up to \$10,000 per recipient annually for systems under 10 vehicles and \$20,000 for systems over 10 vehicles):

- Drivers
- Dispatchers
- Fuel
- Oil
- Tires
- Repairs
- Vehicle license tags
- Insurance

The capital vehicle purchase matching requirement is 80% KDOT and 20% local match. The operating expense matching requirement is 70% KDOT and 30% local match.

FTA Section 5311 Program

Similar to the 5310 program, recipients of FTA section 5311 federal grants must be members of a CTD. Here too, all applicants are encouraged to explore the possibilities of coordination with other transit agencies in the area, who may best be able to provide the needed transportation services, in order to make use of existing resources. Eligible applicants include county governments, non-urban (under 50,000 population) city governments, Native American Indian reservations, and private non-profit corporations. Eligible capital expenses include transit vehicles and associated equipment (e.g., wheelchair lifts, ramps, restraints). Eligible operating expenses include:

- Drivers
- Dispatchers
- Fuel
- Oil
- Tires
- Repairs
- Vehicle license tags
- Insurance

The capital vehicle purchase matching requirement is 80% KDOT and 20% local match. For operating expenses, the maximum federal share provided through KDOT is 50% of the net operating deficit, and of the remaining 50% local share KDOT provides 30% and the local entity is required to provide 20%. The state share of operating expenses for the 5311 program is provided at the rate of 20% of the total operating deficit, while sub-recipients are responsible for providing 30% of the total operating deficit.

FTA Section 5339 Program

Eligible activities include:

- Bus replacement, rehabilitation, or purchase
- Purchase of bus related equipment
- Bus facility rehabilitation, purchase, or construction

Because of the complexity of bus facility projects, environmental documentation is required prior to the purchase of property and development of final design plans. Documentation includes site selection, design specifications, traffic analysis, and other locally driven and federally required factors. Eligible applicants include all local governments, transit agencies, tribal nations, and non-profit organizations. The maximum federal funding share is 80%, while 20% of the funding will come from local match. The application form includes:

- Agency name

- Key contact information
- Project information
- Detailed description of the need for the project
- Detailed description on how the project will support KDOT's business model objectives
- Evidence that the applicant can provide the local cash match
- Description of the technical, legal, and financial capacity of the applicant
- Detailed project budget
- Explanation of the scalability of the project
- Details on the local matching funds
- Detailed project timeline
- Submitted package of certifications and assurances

Project Selection and Criteria for Distribution of Funds

The Kansas Coordinated Transit District Council (KCTDC), with KDOT's concurrence, reviews all applications that are received to ensure all program requirements are met. When the project proposal and documentation are acceptable, applications are approved and an opportunity for a public hearing is presented. Applicants must offer the opportunity for public comment as a part of their application. An implementation plan for the program of projects is submitted electronically by KDOT to FTA. The plan includes a schedule of project milestones, with estimated completion dates for each milestone and for the project in its entirety. Any revised schedules are submitted with annual program status reports. Assurances that the applicant will meet federal regulations are then submitted to KDOT. Subsequently, contractual agreements are executed, and funds are encumbered.

KDOT has established a policy whereby support for existing systems and new systems within unserved areas have highest priority for funding under FTA sections 5310, 5311, and 5339. Applications received from areas with existing programs are required to coordinate with existing programs.

KDOT will review and may or may not concur with the KCTDC on their selection of transit agencies to receive 5310 funds on a discretionary basis. If there are existing transit agencies in the area, then any new entity desiring to provide services in that area is referred to the CTD for possible service coordination with a member or members of the CTD. KDOT will, in general, not allow the use of FTA section 5310 funds to replace vehicles that are less than five years old or less than 100,000 miles. Replacement vehicles are given priority in the distribution of these funds. Fleet expansion is given consideration only if excess funds are available or if the service expansion is deemed necessary and appropriate by KDOT staff.

The FTA section 5311 monies continue to remain constant, but the demand for operating subsidies continues to increase. At present, almost all the federal monies in this program are being made available for operating and capital expenses.

CTDs are required to make a request for the following year's operating grant funds. KDOT then allocates the FTA section 5311 funds to each CTD based on their members' past expenditure experience. Request for increases in the allocation are given consideration if there are federal funds to cover the increases and if the increases are judged to be needed.

Any applicant may be denied funding because of facts presented in a public hearing, non-coordination with other agencies in the CTD area, lack of local match money, or failure to meet the program requirements such as failure to allow ridership under FTA section 5311 to the general public, not providing the required reports, duplication of service, poor vehicle maintenance history, lack of ridership, or failure to meet the ADA and drug and alcohol testing requirements.

If a project is denied funding, the applicant may appeal to the KDOT Office of Public Transportation. KDOT would then examine all documentation and base its decision on facts presented by the KCTDC and the project. If the requirements are still not met, the project sponsor can ask for a hearing before the Secretary of Transportation according to the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act.

Compliance

The KDOT Division of Planning and Development has the responsibility to ensure that transit systems receiving federal funding administered by KDOT and the KCTDC comply with civil rights requirements. In this effort the KDOT oversees:

- Certifications, planning, mobility management, and assurances required by the FTA for all grantees.
- Required training for transit agencies and their staff.
- Procurement of vehicles, vehicle replacement, and annual inspections for safety and compliance.

FTA sections 5310 and 5311 transit agencies are required to report any civil rights complaints or pending lawsuits related to FTA funded activities along with the outcome, as part of the annual funding application. All contracts with sub-providers and other contractors must include non-discrimination clauses.

The Transportation Policy Manual details the compliance regulations and guidelines for transit agencies.

Planning

KDOT has placed an emphasis on statewide, regional, and local coordination and planning. The Kansas Legislature mandated in 1992 states that all FTA sections 5310 and 5311 subrecipients must be part of a CTD. The purpose of the CTDs is to enhance coordination and management of all state and federal public transportation funds.

Some of the responsibilities of the CTDs are:

- Contracting with KDOT for receipt of state and federal funds which will enhance transportation coordination among the transit agencies in each district.
- Providing transportation services or subcontracting with eligible agencies.
- Monitoring the provisions of transportation services in the districts to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations and laws.

In addition to establishing CTDs, KDOT continues to meet regularly with the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, Kansas Department for Children and Families, and the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns to discuss issues germane to providing transportation services to elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and the general public.

With their applications, FTA section 5310 projects in UZAs submit copies of notifications to any area MPOs and a statement of their intent to apply for capital assistance for inclusion on the TIP.

Each CTD has developed a local coordinated human service transportation plan and will begin to implement the plan in the next year with goals being set to be accomplished in the next three years. These plans will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect the changes in the communities and the changes within the regulations of the programs. KDOT develops an executive summary of statewide coordinated planning efforts once all CTDs have completed their plans.

Federal funds to be used for transit projects must be included in a STIP, which generally covers three program years. Examples of areas for planning include vehicle acquisition, transportation services, operating assistance, intercity bus projects, facility construction, state administration, and training and technical assistance. MPOs are responsible for planning and programs in metropolitan areas. Coordination

must occur between the MPOs and local transit agencies when servicing areas. KDOT will consider coordination efforts when approving projects. Potential FTA section 5310, 5311, and 5339 projects that are being proposed within the MPO's current planning area boundary, which may include areas that are currently non-urbanized, must be included in the MPO's TIP and subsequently in KDOT's STIP.

Technical Assistance to Subrecipients

Rural Transit Assistance Program

The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) is managed by the University of Kansas Transportation Center. Funds are used for non-urbanized transit activities related to training, technical assistance, research, and related support services. There are both state and national support components that provide assistance. The state program provides funding for training and technical assistance, while the national program provides for the development of resources by the local transit agencies and state administering agencies.

One function of the Kansas RTAP is to ensure all transit agencies receiving FTA grant funding through the KDOT Office of Public Transportation are consistently receiving quality training so they can provide safe, reliable, and equitable transportation to all Kansans.

Kansas RTAP has a trainer on staff who travels to agencies and locations across the state to train drivers. Kansas RTAP has developed a core curriculum of three courses offered multiple times each year: Defensive Driving, Passenger Assistance, and Evacuation Procedures. Additional courses are offered based on recommendations of the Kansas RTAP staff trainer, KDOT, or as requested by the Coordinated Transit District administrators and agency managers. The courses offered by Kansas RTAP are supplemented by training from approved trainers at agencies across the state through the Kansas Approved Trainer program.

The RTAP program, in cooperation with KDOT and a local host agency, hosts the annual Kansas Bus Rodeo. The Rodeo is an opportunity for drivers that have already attended all required trainings to hone their skills, meet their peers, and compete for the winning title against drivers from across Kansas. The Rodeo is considered a training event, but it does not count toward the required trainings every driver needs unless they have already taken all necessary RTAP trainings.

Kansas Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)

The Kansas LTAP services are developed primarily for local public works agencies and their employees, and for consultants and contractors who provide services for local governments. Program services include a newsletter, in-person and webinar training, a video and public resource library, and technical assistance. Kansas LTAP receives support from the FHWA, KDOT, and the University of Kansas.

Capital Needs

TAM Plans

Agencies that own, operate, and manage capital assets used to provide public transit, and that also receive federal financial assistance, are required to develop a TAM Plan in order to meet federal requirements. KDOT develops a TAM Group Plan, which includes all FTA section 5311 program subrecipients in Kansas, as well as the FTA section 5310 program-funded specialized transportation systems that provide public transportation.

The Kansas TAM Group Plan includes discussion on the inclusion of an asset management system into existing project selection matrixes. The TAM Group Plan includes a section that discusses the need for a Group Plan to decrease the burden of reporting for smaller transit agencies.

Procurement

For capital purchases, the Kansas CTDC, in collaboration with KDOT, prepares vehicle specifications for each type of vehicle. The KCTDC distributes a Notice to Bid to all vendors on a comprehensive vendor mailing list. Bids are tabulated and a low bid is accepted if all requirements are met. The KCTDC and KDOT assist subrecipient agencies in preparing purchase orders for the vehicles. Vehicles are delivered to the provider, where a post-delivery inspection is performed by the provider. Payment of the vehicles (federal/state share) is in the form of a check made out jointly to the grantee and the manufacturer. KDOT does not order or purchase vehicles. The subrecipient orders and purchases all vehicles using the costs from the courtesy bid, which are incorporated by reference on the purchase orders. The manufacturers have agreed to the KCTDC that they will abide by their courtesy bids. Vehicle vendors must submit all certifications as part of their bid submittal and meet all requirements as set forth by the FTA. Subrecipients are responsible for pre-award and post-delivery audits. Pre-award audits are conducted by the KCTDC on behalf of the subrecipients. Subrecipients are responsible for maintaining all supportive documentation in their files.

Mobility Management and Coordination

KDOT has begun to develop a network of Mobility Managers to assist the CTDs, local organizations, transit agencies, and the general public in promoting transit service in their respective region. This program is quite new in Kansas and the DOT is still developing performance measures, scope, and work products for successful management.

KDOT has placed a Mobility Manager in each of the 10 CTDs across the state. Each CTD must agree to support a Mobility Manager, and an agency in that CTD must offer to be that Manager's host agency before KDOT will consider placement. Funding for the first year of a CTD's Mobility Manager is covered 100% (KDOT covers the local match for the first year). Thereafter, the Mobility Manager is responsible for ensuring that there are enough local funds to match for year two, and every year thereafter.

KDOT plans for a board of directors to be created and comprised of those member jurisdictions that financially back the Mobility Manager for their region. This board will be responsible for developing the position description, scope of work, budget (which must be approved by KDOT annually), and ongoing guidance for the Mobility Manager.

Mobility Managers are required to submit an annual report to KDOT outlining their work activities, achievements, performance measures, and containing a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. This data, both qualitative and quantitative, will be used to develop a data source to track progress over time.

Support for Intercity and Regional Services

Utilization of FTA Section 5311(f) for Intercity Services

Under FTA section 5311(f), the state of Kansas has set aside 15% of the 5311 apportionments for the development and support of intercity bus transportation.

KDOT is involved in identifying rural intercity transportation issues in the state, and in developing a program implementation strategy based on the anticipated resources to support rural intercity service enhancement. KDOT consults with intercity bus providers and other interested parties to determine intercity transportation needs and potential interested parties. KDOT advertises availability of funds for the FTA section 5311(f) program utilizing the same sources that are used for the FTA sections 5310, 5311, and 5339 programs. KDOT ensures that intercity bus providers are made aware of open applications and potential priority intercity corridors.

The KDOT consultation process is as follows:

- KDOT staff identifies potential intercity bus providers in Kansas.
- KDOT staff consults with potential providers through summits and written communication.
- KDOT provides a call for applications for potential intercity bus providers.
- Results of the KDOT Intercity Assessment Plan are used to determine if intercity needs are being met.
- KDOT staff identifies potential services to serve unmet demand as identified in the Assessment Plan.

Eligible Activities

Assistance under FTA section 5311(f) must support intercity bus service in rural and small urban areas. FTA section 5311 specifies eligible intercity bus activities to include "planning and marketing for intercity bus transportation, capital grants for intercity bus shelters, joint-use stops and depots, operating grants through purchase-of-service agreements, user-side subsidies and demonstration projects, and coordination of rural connections between small transit operations and intercity bus carriers." This listing does not preclude other capital and operating projects for the support of rural intercity bus service. Capital assistance may be provided to purchase vehicles or vehicle related equipment such as wheelchair lifts for use in intercity service.

Examples of ways in which to use these funds are used include: improvements to existing intercity terminal facilities for rural passengers, modifications to transit facilities to facilitate shared use by intercity bus and rural transit operators, operating assistance to support specific intercity route segments, and applications of ITS technology for coordinated information and scheduling.

Eligible Recipients

FTA section 5311(f) authorizes KDOT to provide funds to private intercity bus operators in a subrecipient relationship. In some instances, certain intercity bus providers may prefer to maintain a contractual relationship in order to isolate the remainder of their operations from federal requirements related to a grant. KDOT is authorized to use either mechanism to assist private operators with intercity bus service. In either case, a merit-based selection process is used to ensure that the private operator is qualified, will provide eligible service, can comply with federal and state requirements, and is the best or only provider available to offer service at a fair and reasonable cost.

Technology

As discussed above, the Access Innovation Collaboration Program funded and administered by the state has a focus on technology for transit systems. While the program is being used for a variety of funding opportunities, two projects are currently focused on technology:

The Flint Hills Area Transportation Agency applied for and received funding through the Bus and Bus Facilities program for multiple projects in 2019. The agency received funding for surveillance cameras, new transit vehicles, a maintenance vehicle, a four-post lift, and bus stop amenities.

Johnson County Transit developed a pilot program and is securing funding through the program for a microtransit service.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - OFFICE OF TRANSIT

Governance and Funding

In Ohio, the administration of federal and state transit funding is provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation's (Ohio DOT) Office of Transit. This office is situated in Ohio DOT's Division of Planning. The mission of the Office of Transit is to "advocate and support safe and reliable personal mobility by coordinating and funding public transportation, which is viewed as a vital element of Ohio's transportation system."

To accomplish its mission, the Office of Transit provides financial and technical assistance to public transit systems, local governments, and human service agencies throughout the state for the planning, establishment, and operation of public transportation systems.

Organization

The Office of Transit is led by an Office Administrator, with three direct reports who manage the three sections of the department—Program Management, Compliance and Oversight, and Financial Management.

Program Management staff members handle primary responsibilities and activities for:

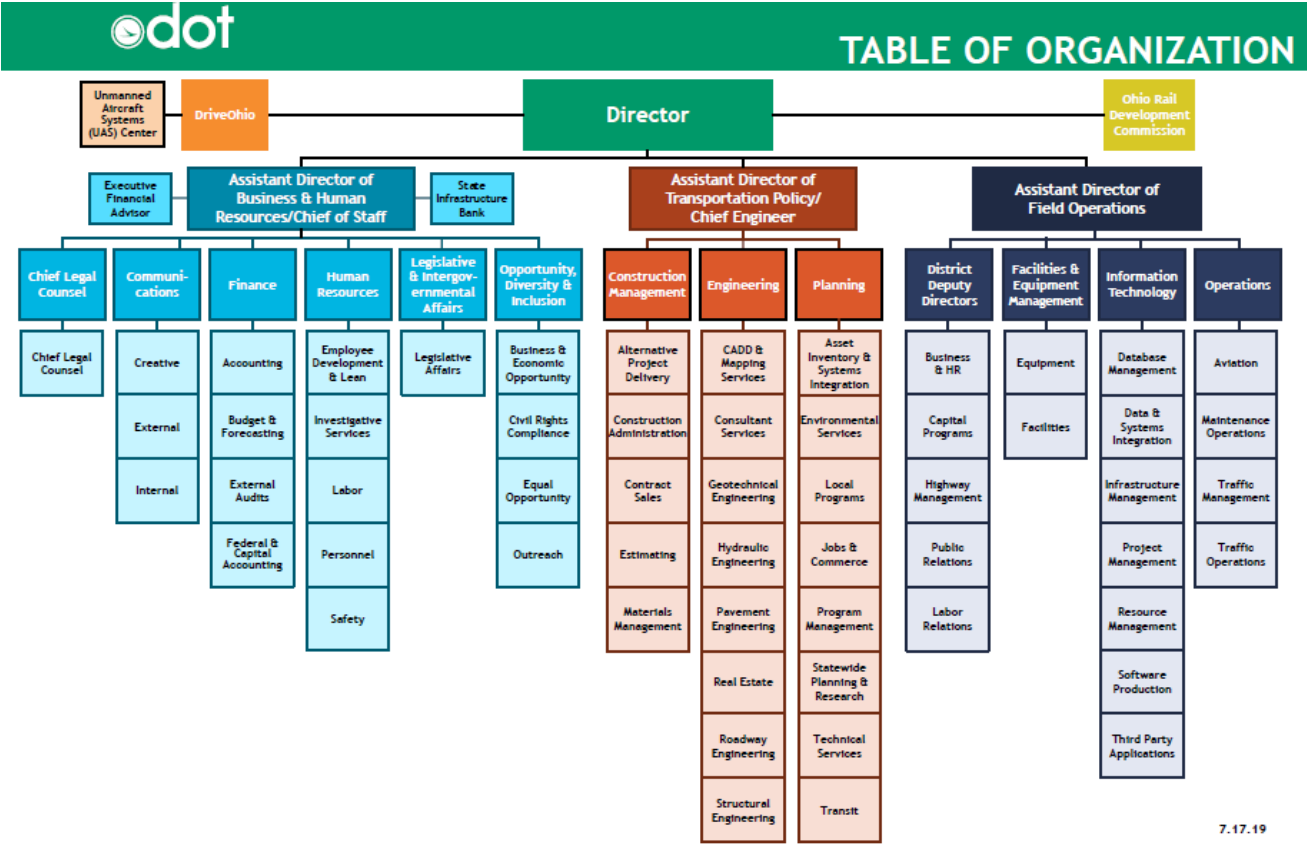
- Ohio Urban Transportation Grant Program (FTA section 5307)
- Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Program (FTA section 5310)
- Rural Transit Grant Program (FTA section 5311)
- RTAP (FTA section 5311 (b)(3))
- Rural Intercity Bus Program (FTA section 5311 (f))
- Bus and Bus Facilities Program (FTA section 5339)
- Ohio Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program
- Ohio Coordination Program
- Ohio Technical Assistance Program
- State Planning Research Program

Compliance and Oversight staff members handle primary responsibilities and activities for:

- Technical Assistance Reviews
- Development of all office publications and reports
- Management of transit data including TAM data, agency safety plan data, and performance targets and measures
- Administration of the Ohio Technical Assistance Program
- Ohio DOT transit vehicle term contracts with procurement oversight
- Administration of the Rail SSO Program
- Rail Fixed Guideway SSO Program (FTA section 5329)
- Subrecipient and Ohio DOT compliance with federal and state regulations, including reporting into the NTD
- Financial Management staff members handle all FTA and state grants management activities including financial tracking, management, budgeting, and financial controls.

An organization chart for Ohio DOT is provided in Figure E-9, and the Office of Transit is shown in Figure E-10.

Figure E-9 Ohio DOT Organizational Chart

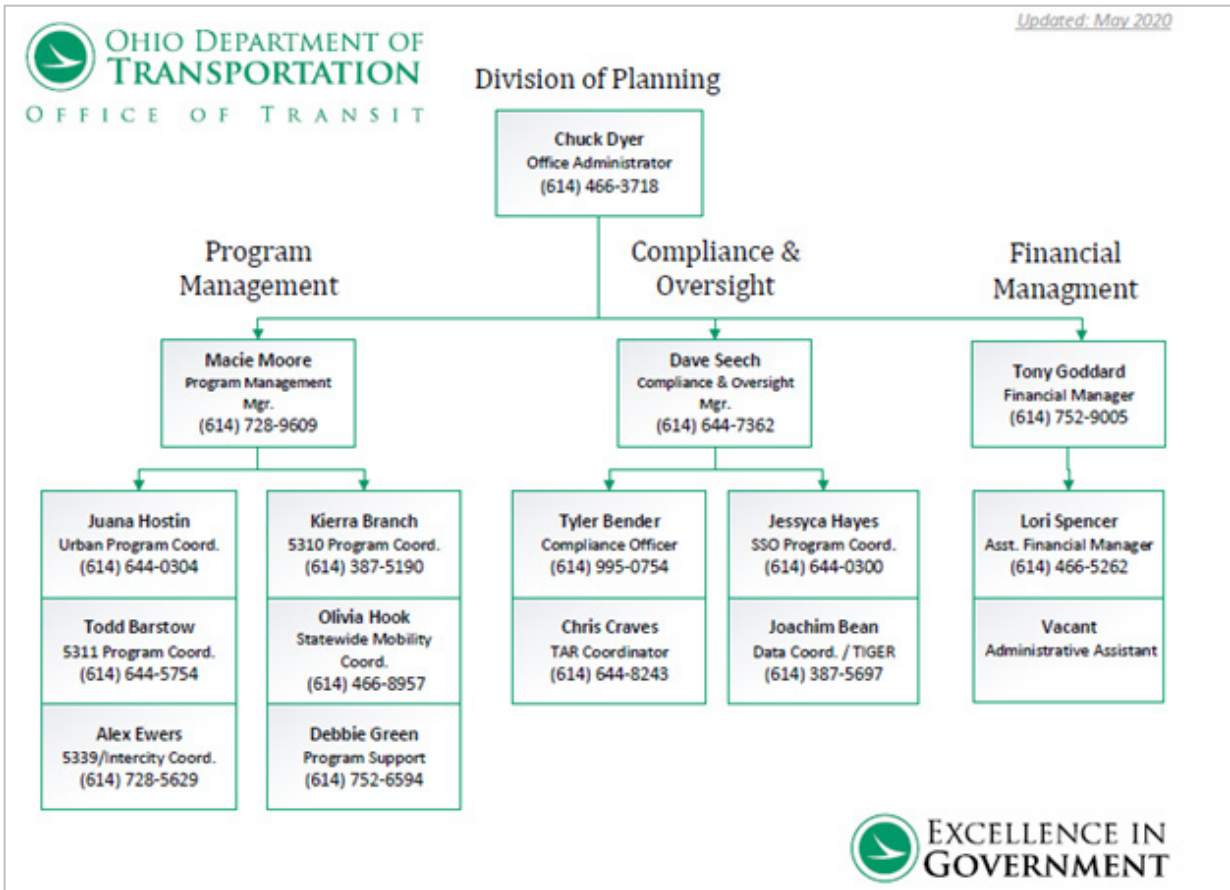


Staffing

As shown in Figure E-10, Program Management administers FTA programs, with specific positions that coordinate funding through different programs. This section of the Office of Transit also includes two program support staff and a Statewide Mobility Manager (discussed further in the Mobility Management and Coordination section).

In addition to the staff person who manages Compliance and Oversight, this component of the Office of Transit includes four staff members. They are responsible for Ohio DOT compliance with FTA requirements and reviews of subrecipients to ensure they are meeting these requirements through Technical Assistance Reviews (discussed in the Compliance section).

Figure E-10 Office of Transit Organizational Chart



Funding Administration and Allocation Process

This section highlights key aspects of the Ohio DOT Office of Transit’s oversight of federal and state funding programs.

FTA Section 5310 Program

The Office of Transit administers FTA section 5310 program funds for the small urbanized and rural areas of Ohio through their Specialized Transportation Program. Like other states, the program provides capital funding for vehicles through 80% federal funds and a 20% local match.

In Ohio, there is an emphasis on preventive maintenance for FTA section 5310 funded vehicles to increase their useful life. Preventive maintenance is also funded through 80% federal funds, with the 20% local match requirement.

Mobility management is a focal point of the FTA section 5310 Program funding. The Ohio Mobility Management Program provides 80% of the total cost of eligible expenses, and the remaining 20% must be provided locally. More than 20 local or regional mobility managers are currently funded through the FTA section 5310 program. More information is provided in the Mobility Management and Coordination section of this profile.

FTA Section 5311 Program

The Office of Transit administers FTA section 5311 program funds through their Rural Transit Program. Federal and state funds are used to assist with operating and capital expenses in the provision of general public transportation services in rural and small urban areas. Like other states, FTA section 5311 funds can be used for up to 50% of the net project cost of operating expenses and up to 80% of the cost of capital projects. Unique in Ohio is that State General Revenue funds, through the Ohio Public Transportation Grant Program, are also available to provide up to 30% of eligible operating costs and up to 10% of the costs of capital projects.

Through the annual application process for FTA section 5311 program funding, existing grantees submit a proposal to request federal and state operating funds. These funds are based on the transit systems needs and are evaluated in relation to state performance standards for a percent of general public ridership, passenger trips per hour, cost per vehicle mile, and cost per passenger trip. Capital funds are discretionary and are approved based on a system's Four-Year Capital and Operating Plan.

FTA Section 5339 Program

The Office of Transit administers FTA section 5339 program funds through their Bus and Bus Facilities Program. The goals of the Bus and Bus Facilities Program are:

- To assist eligible recipients in replacing, rehabilitating, and purchasing buses and bus-related equipment.
- To renovate and construct bus-related facilities.
- To ensure that public transit systems in Ohio have vehicles, equipment, and facilities of sufficient quality and quantity.
- To ensure that public transit systems can provide safe, efficient, and effective public transportation to the people of the state.
- To maximize use of the FTA section 5311 program for operations, the Office of Transit funds vehicle replacement and expansion vehicles eligible for that program through the FTA section 5339 program.

The Office of Transit's selection process for funding through FTA section 5339 involves:

- Funding projects based on both scores and program priorities
- Prioritizing based on program goals and statewide needs
- Preservation rather than expansion

The priority of preservation is based on program goals and the desire to ensure that SGR is maintained for fleets and assets. Expansion projects are eligible but are a lower priority for 5339 program funds. There is a higher priority for expansion projects in the OTP2 application (described in next section). Funding is also awarded to ensure statewide distribution.

Ohio Transit Partnership Program

Ohio DOT instituted the Ohio Transit Partnership Program (OTP2) to provide state funds to rural and urban transit systems in Ohio, beginning in FY 2020. The program purpose is to facilitate the most efficient and effective use of state funds in the provision of public transportation services, while meeting transit system needs, improving economic conditions, and providing a quality-of-life environment for the state of Ohio.

OTP2 is a discretionary program, with projects selected on a competitive basis between two tiers:

- Tier I projects focus on preservation, or working to maintain, sustain, or keep in a good sound state the transit systems in Ohio.
- Tier II projects focus on innovation in the areas of regionalization, coordination, technology, service expansion, workforce initiatives, and healthcare initiatives.

Public transit systems operating in Ohio that receive FTA section 5307 or 5311 funds are eligible recipients of OTP2 funds. The eligible Tier I and Tier II projects are detailed in Figure E-11.

Figure E-11 Ohio Transit Partnership Program Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects: Tier I

TIER I PROJECTS - approximately 60% of available funding	
Preservation	
Capital Replacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Vehicle (revenue) replacement➤ Fixed guideway modernization replacement and rehabilitation
Facility Upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Building renovation➤ Building rehabilitation➤ Parking lot paving
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Bus equipment➤ Support vehicles➤ Garage equipment
Preventive/Capitalized Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Servicing➤ Repairs➤ Inspections for vehicles
Operating Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Operating assistance to maintain existing services

Eligible Projects: Tier II

TIER II PROJECTS - approximately 40% of available funding	
Capital (Facilities & Fleet)	
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New multimodal facility ➤ New transit hub ➤ Park and ride facility
Vehicle (Revenue) Expansion	Vehicles used to expand existing fleet vehicles
Technology / Equipment	
Alternative Fuels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Compressed natural gas (CNG) ➤ Battery electric vehicles ➤ Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles
Fueling Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CNG ➤ Battery charging stations ➤ Hydrogen fuel cell generators
Smart Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ride scheduling apps for smart phones ➤ Online trip scheduling ➤ Wi-fi equipped buses ➤ Electronic fareboxes ➤ Mobility service apps to use multiple modes of public or private transportation
Dispatching and Scheduling Software	Purchasing dispatching and scheduling software, including purchases intended for use by multiple counties or transit agencies
Planning	
Feasibility Study	Creation of new routes, adding fixed route service, funding sustainability
Service Evaluation	Efficiency of service, routes
Plans	Creation of Transit Development Plan, Long Range, TAM Plan, Locally Developed Humans Services Coordinated Transportation Plan
Pilot Projects	
New/expanded Service	Test or demonstration of new or expanded service that addresses program goals
New/expanded Program	Test or demonstration of new or expanded program that addresses program goals
Operating Assistance	
Service Expansion	Extending the service area, service days, or service hours in coordination with multiple counties or agencies

The selection of projects for OTP2 funding is through the following evaluation process:

- Projects are categorized for funding in Tier I or Tier II. Tier I projects do not compete with Tier II projects.
- For both Tier I and Tier II projects, 20% of program funds are set aside for rural transit operators. If there are not enough viable rural projects, funds will be reallocated to urban projects.
- Both Tier I and Tier II projects are scored against a set of criteria, with a maximum of 100 points per project. Criteria includes project readiness, ridership impact, and collaboration with other agencies. Priority is for projects that demonstrate capacity to spend funds in the application fiscal year.
- No local match is required. However, the funding program prioritizes projects that leverage or maximize other available funding sources and are developed in partnership with other agencies and organizations.

Urban Transit Program

The Urban Transit Program (UTP) encompasses funding administered by the Office of Transit for transit service in Ohio's UZAs with populations of 50,000 or greater. The program goal is to facilitate the most efficient and effective use of state funds in the provision of transportation services. There are 26 urban transit agencies in Ohio.

Ohio DOT allocated \$16.6 million for FY 2021. The sources of funds for this program are from Ohio's General Revenue Funds passed by the Ohio General Assembly for the 2020-2021 biennium. UTP funds are formula-based and allocations are determined by both the FTA funds received and the percentage of federal funds received in Ohio.

Rural Transit Assistance Program and Ohio Technical Assistance Program

Along with their annual allocation of RTAP funding, the Office of Transit uses other state and federal administrative funds to support the Ohio Technical Assistance Program (OTAP). Through OTAP, Ohio DOT provides technical assistance and services tailored to subrecipient's needs and state issues. Most assistance is provided one-on-one by request of individual subrecipients and results in a specific product, such as a service or contract rate analysis, and an operating service plan.

Ohio DOT has used OTAP to conduct projects of statewide significance, e.g., the development of the "Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services" and "Guide for the Implementation of Coordinated Transportation Systems," "FTA's Charter Regulations: A Compliance Guide for Ohio's Rural Public Transit Systems," and "A Guide to Preventive Maintenance."

A portion of the RTAP funds are used to support Ohio DOT's scholarship program, which is made available to subrecipient transit agencies including FTA sections 5310 and 5311 subrecipients. An agency can apply for scholarship funding to supplement or support the financial cost of professional education opportunities. Scholarships are reviewed and awarded on a competitive basis. These opportunities include attending conferences and training programs not offered by OTAP.

Compliance

As part of their responsibility for conducting oversight of FTA funding, the Office of Transit conducts Technical Assistance Reviews (TAR) of subrecipients of FTA sections 5310 and 5311 grants. The Office of Transit conducts a full TAR on each FTA section 5311 subrecipient on a biennial basis. Additionally, Ohio DOT conducts specialized reviews, including Drug and Alcohol program reviews (conducted on each subrecipient at least every three years by an Ohio DOT consultant).

The Office of Transit has established a detailed TAR process for FTA section 5311 subrecipients that includes:

- Scheduling a one to two-day site visit (two full days are typically needed only for transit agencies with fixed route service and multiple compliance issues).
- Distributing a 28-page TAR questionnaire approximately six weeks before the site review, with a due date to respond approximately three weeks prior to the site review.
- Conducting a desk review of the questionnaire, documents submitted in advance by the subrecipient, and documentation in Ohio DOT's grants management files (including the most recent grant application and local procurements conducted in the past three years) to determine which areas are compliant and which areas need to be reviewed more closely during the site visit. The TAR Coordinator meets with the Office of Transit Program Coordinator for the transit system regarding updates on whether invoices and applications are submitted in a timely manner, if extensions are requested before due dates, and accuracy of invoices.
- Conducting the TAR site visit, following the structure of the questionnaire with the transit agency director and staff as appropriate. Additionally, the site review includes:
 - Touring the facility, including dispatch and maintenance areas.
 - Visually inspecting public and employee bulletin boards to verify that required public and labor notices are posted.
 - Visually inspecting several Ohio DOT-funded vehicles to verify presence of required equipment and review cleanliness.
 - Reviewing maintenance files and facility maintenance documentation.
 - Financial review of randomly selected invoices.
 - Conducting wrap-up discussion to review all requirements and recommendations with the transit agency director and determine the timeline for fixing the requirements.

Following the site visit, a TAR Final Report is developed along with an Executive Summary and an Action Plan. The Office of Transit Program Coordinator is then responsible for monitoring completion of the Action Plan, with periodic updates to the TAR Coordinator documenting dates when requirements are fully implemented along with action steps. Assistance monitoring/reviewing corrective action responses is provided by the Compliance section of the Office of Transit.

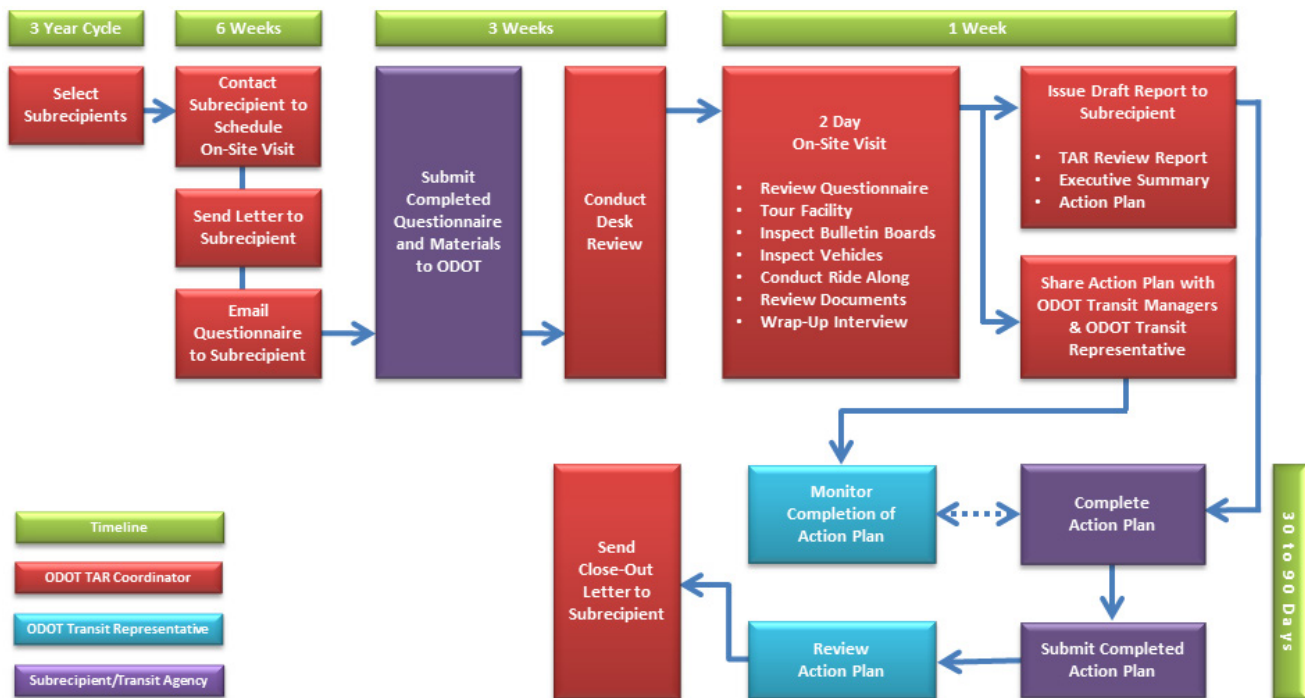
Upon completion of all requirements in the Action Plan, the Office of Transit sends an official close-out letter to the rural transit agency and the grantee, advising them that all issues are deemed complete and satisfactory and the review is closed.

Procedures for the TAR process are outlined in several documents, including the Ohio DOT *Technical Assistance Review Field Guide*. This guide provides comprehensive, detailed guidance on conducting reviews, and is used internally by Ohio DOT staff as a reference manual, particularly with the desk review portion of the compliance review. Additional TAR procedures and guidelines include a TAR Process Task List and the TAR Action Plan Completion Documentation and Close-out Procedure.

The TAR process for FTA section 5310 subrecipients is like the FTA section 5311 process, although the questionnaire and site review are scaled back to reflect the requirements specific to the FTA section 5310 program. FTA section 5310 TARs typically need only one day on site.

Figure E-12 presents a flowchart of TAR process.

Figure E-12 TAR Flowchart



Planning

In January 2015, the Office of Transit completed an Ohio Statewide Transit Needs Study, providing a statewide assessment of public transportation needs. The study included analysis and consideration of statewide needs, spanning Ohio's urban and rural areas, including those counties in Ohio with no public transportation services. The goal of the study was to document how well Ohio's current network of public transportation services match current needs, and what types of systems, services and investments would be needed to meet future need. The study was intended as a long-term strategy to guide transit service development, including transit policy and funding, over the 10-year period between 2015 and 2025.

While the Office of Transit does not require any entity to produce a coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan, the office is responsible for the selection of projects to be funded through FTA section 5310, which requires projects be derived from these plans. Since FTA coordinated transportation planning guidelines require that FTA section 5310 projects be derived from coordinated plans, the Office of Transit encourages coordinated plans to go beyond the requirements of FTA section 5310 funding. The plans should include analysis of needs and development projects to address the mobility needs of the general public, and provide a variety of resources to assist lead agencies in the development of these plans, such as:

- Coordinated Plan Template that is an editable document and helps to ensure that all required plan elements are included in the plan.
- Coordinated Plan Guidance that discusses the role of the lead agency, provides tips on conducting needs assessments and developing strategies, and details the adoption process.
- Coordinated Plan Review Checklist that reviews the items that should be included in the plan.
- Coordinated Plan Toolbox that provides additional resources with the development of Coordinated Plans.

Technical Assistance to Subrecipients

Beyond the RTAP discussed earlier, the Office of Transit provides a variety of resources to their subrecipients. These resources are discussed in detail in this section.

Rural Transit Manual

The Ohio DOT Office of Transit has assembled information that provides the necessary tools to new and existing rural transit systems to successfully and efficiently administer public transportation service in Ohio.

The manual includes:

- Overview of Ohio DOT programs
- Federal compliance
- State requirements
- Financial management
- Invoicing instructions and operating data
- Procurement and third party contracting
- Vehicles and equipment
- Construction and facility projects
- Managing your rural transit program

Rural Ohio Transit eLearning

Developed in conjunction with Ohio DOT's LTAP, this online course is intended for new rural transit managers and anyone wanting to learn more about the Ohio Rural Transit Program. It includes 11 modules that cover everything from the requirements of the program to operating a rural transit system. The overall purpose of LTAP is to assist local governments in managing a safe, cost-effective, and environmentally sound transportation system by providing training and technical assistance in the areas of safety, workforce development, infrastructure management, and organizational excellence.

Capital Needs

TAM Plans

Agencies that own, operate, and manage capital assets used to provide public transit and which also receive federal financial assistance, are required to develop a TAM plan in order to meet federal requirements. The Ohio Office of Transit develops a TAM Group Plan, which includes all FTA section 5311 subrecipients in Ohio, as well as the FTA section 5310 funded specialized transportation systems that provide public transportation and are not covered by a plan provided by the MPO or RTPPO.

The Office of Transit TAM planning process involves:

- Establishing, via BlackCat (the grants reporting tool currently being used by Ohio DOT), the Projected Performance Targets for the optional coming year.
- Working with local transit agencies that fall under its coverage to name an Accountable Executive who is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the reporting to NTD/BlackCat is complete and accurate. The Accountable Executive is required to submit certification each year that the information contained therein is accurate to the best of their knowledge.
- Using data from the TAM Group Plan to establish an investment prioritization plan that is consistent with its plan goals and objectives throughout the horizon period of the plan. In the case of Ohio

DOT, it is the intent of the program to update the plan and program standard every two years with the update of the STIP.

Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan

The Office of Transit is responsible for the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTSASP) that includes all public transportation systems that receive federal assistance under FTA sections 5310 and 5311. Small transit agencies are defined as recipients that have 100 or fewer vehicles in peak revenue service and do not operate a rail fixed guideway public transportation system.

Cooperative Purchase Program

The Ohio DOT Cooperative Purchase Program offers a variety of the most commonly operated transit vehicles in rural and small urban transit service. Rural Transit grantees must choose vehicles that are of the size and capacity and with the appropriate optional equipment for their individual service and community.

To make this choice easier, Ohio DOT offers its Vehicle Selection Guide. This Selection Guide contains the range of vehicles and optional vehicle equipment available through Ohio DOT's state term contracts. The guide also provides guidance to select the proper vehicle to match a grantee's service requirements. The guide should be used regardless of whether a grantee plans to purchase vehicles through Ohio DOT's state term contracts or conduct the procurement itself. The vehicles offered in this guide are of the size and type most commonly used by human service organizations in the provision of transportation to the elderly and individuals with disabilities; small urban and rural general public transit systems; and large urban transit systems offering complementary paratransit service. Research has been conducted on the equipment, options, and seating arrangements to provide a wide variety of vehicles to meet most agencies' needs.

If for any reason the vehicles offered in this guide do not meet a grantee's needs, they are instructed to contact their Program Coordinator for assistance.

Mobility Management and Coordination

Ohio Mobility Management Program

The purpose of the Ohio Mobility Management Program is to increase access to mobility for Ohioans by increasing understanding and awareness of transportation needs, coordination of transportation options to meet needs, and building sustainable and healthy communities by integrating transportation into planning and programs.

The goals of the Ohio Mobility Management Program are to:

- Increase understanding and awareness of community transportation needs.
- Increase awareness of current community transportation options and programs.
- Ensure that transportation considerations are included in local and regional planning activities.
- Increase local capacity for transportation services.
- Assist individuals with accessing all community transportation options.

The Ohio Mobility Management Program is overseen by the Statewide Mobility Coordinator position located in the Office of Transit. This position was created in 2017, and job functions include:

- Overseeing 28 local and regional mobility management programs funded through Ohio DOT that serve 57 Ohio counties. Local and regional mobility management activities are funded primarily through the FTA section 5310 program, and as noted earlier, projects are derived from a

coordinated transportation plan. In the past, a typical mobility management project has had a total cost of \$80,000.

- Conducting quarterly in-person meetings with local and regional mobility managers that provide training sessions, as well as the opportunity for mobility managers to share experiences and ideas.
- Coordinating platforms for providing resources to mobility managers and to share documents and resources.
- Developing the Ohio Mobility Management Program Guide that includes information on the program purpose, goals, potential coordination strategies, and other resources to enhance and support improved coordination of human service and public transportation.
- Implementing an online mobility manager training program that includes current topics such as:
 - *Welcome to Mobility Management in Ohio*, which provides new mobility managers with key information and resources as they begin their new position.
 - Guidance with coordinated transportation planning (six modules).
 - Identifying opportunities to support and expand a mobility management program.
 - Implementing a one-call center.

The Statewide Mobility Coordinator also facilitates the development of statewide marketing and outreach efforts that include:

- A brochure that describes mobility management services in the state and is used to educate and inform stakeholders outside Ohio DOT on the impact and importance of the program.
- Mobility Management Stories that provides specific examples of how the program improves access to mobility, expands coordination of transportation options to meet needs, and builds sustainable and healthy communities by integrating transportation into planning and programs.

Support for Intercity and Regional Services

Utilization of FTA Section 5311(f) for Intercity Services

Ohio has long used the FTA section 5311(f) program to support the provision of connected intercity bus service linking rural Ohio with the national intercity bus network. Under the FTA section 5311(f) program, states are required to spend at least 15% of their overall section 5311 allocation on intercity bus services unless the Governor certifies to the FTA that there are no unmet rural intercity needs. Such a certification must be supported by the results of a consultation process involving the intercity bus operators, other stakeholders, and an analysis of existing service and potential service needs. A partial certification is possible if a state determines that less than 15% is required. If the state certifies no (or partial) unmet needs, it may reprogram the intercity set-aside to support other rural public transportation needs. Ohio has not certified that there are no unmet needs for many years, and it utilizes the full 15% allocation (\$4,057,687 in FY 2020) to support the operation of a statewide network that is branded as GoBus.

Consultation and Planning

Ohio addresses the need for intercity bus services periodically through a planning study that includes the consultation process. The most recent study, the *Ohio Intercity Bus Study Update-Final Report* was completed in May 2019. It included an analysis of demographic data to identify areas of high need, potential markets and destinations, a complete inventory of existing intercity services, identification of unserved areas or markets, a public outreach process (including onboard surveys, carrier interviews, and public meetings), performance evaluation of existing state supported services, identification of unmet service needs, development of alternatives and recommendations.

Use of In-Kind Match

Ohio is prohibited from providing assistance directly to the private for-profit firms that operate the services, so the state provides its section 5311(f) funding as a grant to a private non-profit organization (which is eligible), the Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action Program (HAPCAP), that manages the FTA section 5311(f) program for the state. Greyhound provides the local match through the value of unsubsidized connecting service, providing the documentation to HAPCAP. No state funding has been used for match; HAPCAP collects a ticketing fee on tickets they sell, which goes to support the program administration.

HAPCAP issues RFPs for the services, and contracts with private bus companies that operate the services. HAPCAP program administration annual cost is approximately \$450,000 per year, the remaining \$3.6 million in FTA section 5311(f) funding is used to contract for service. There are two contracted carriers that provide the service under contract to HAPCAP, Barons Bus and Miller Transportation. The carriers own or lease the vehicles, and those costs are included in the contract operating rate.

Statewide Branding for Intercity

HAPCAP has led the development of a statewide brand for the FTA section 5311(f) services, GoBus. There is a GoBus website <https://ridegobus.com/>, a staffed information/service assistance desk, and a GoBus ticketing system. HAPCAP performs required FTA compliance oversight and ensures that the contracted carriers meet all requirements such as ADA accessibility. The buses of both contracted carriers are fully wrapped with GoBus branding. User surveys reveal that the GoBus riders see the service as very high quality (bike racks, onboard wi-fi, on time service), and there is public desire for more routes and services—but Ohio is already utilizing the full 15% set-aside, which means that expansion can only come from reducing lower performing GoBus schedules and shifting funds to higher performing routes, or going above the 15% level mandated by FTA.



Technology

Through a federal 2015 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) VII competitive grant program, Ohio DOT was awarded \$6.839 million in federal dollars to improve the communications, scheduling and dispatching of Ohio's rural transit operators and to expand broadband into areas of Ohio with insufficient access. These funds were administered by the Office of Transit.

The project focus was on transit systems across the state that are challenged with a wide array of scheduling and dispatching approaches and operating in areas with limited or no cellular service. The objective was to improve customer satisfaction by providing more efficient on-time demand responsive and fixed route operations. In addition, improved scheduling and dispatching will lead to more efficient operation of vehicles, lower costs for transit agencies and clients, and more economical use of transit vehicles. Reliable communications would permit rural transit operators to respond to emergency situations more rapidly and drivers to remain with their vehicles when involved in an emergency or an incident, thereby improving safety.

T2O Project

The goals of the T2O (Transit Tech Ohio) project are to provide a minimum set of standards for scheduling and dispatching software by supplying capital funds for software and hardware to help align and streamline these systems and eliminate base to vehicle communication gaps by improving broadband access in areas of the state with limited or no broadband connectivity. Capital funds will be provided to broadband companies to improve broadband services in these designated areas.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSIT DIVISION

Program Role

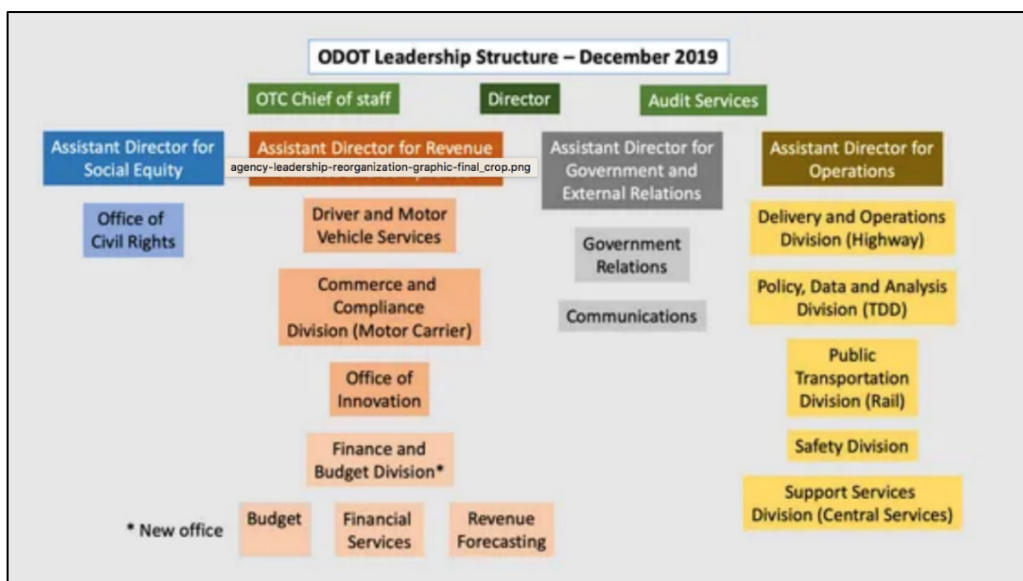
In Oregon, the Rail and Public Transportation Division (RPTD) in the Oregon DOT oversees the administration of FTA sections 5311, 5310, 5339, and 5303-5304 programs, along with two major state transit programs: the Special Transportation Fund (STF) and the Statewide Transit Improvement Fund (STIF). RPTD is also responsible for the Transit Capital Program and for the Transit Network Program, which includes three directly operated services: Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail service, POINT intercity service, and Columbia Gorge Express.

In the 2019-2021 biennium (RPTD awards grants on a two-year cycle) there were 35 FTA section 5311 subrecipients and 42 FTA section 5310 subrecipients. In addition, there are six small urban FTA section 5307 UZA transit programs which are direct recipients of funding from FTA; RPTD oversees the state funding program for them as well as the programs managed by RPTD.

According to the SMP for Public Transportation Programs (July 2015), Oregon DOT's mission is to provide a safe, efficient, and multimodal transportation system that supports economic opportunity and livable communities for Oregonians.

In December 2019, Oregon DOT announced a departmental organization based on a functional approach that has placed RPTD under the Assistant Director for Operations, depicted in the departmental organization chart in Figure E-13.

Figure E-13 Oregon DOT Organizational Chart



Currently there is no organization chart finalized for the new Public Transportation Division. Many of the rail safety functions are being moved to the ODOT Safety Division, but the state's rail passenger program will remain in Public Transportation along with the other services that are directly operated (contracted) by the state including the POINT intercity bus routes and the Columbia Gorge Express. The Bicycle Pedestrian Program, Transportation Options and Safe Routes to School Program will also move into the new Public Transportation Division, along with the Transportation Options (TDM/ridesharing) programs.

The Public Transportation Division includes six Regional Transit Coordinators, one for each of the Departmental Districts (the same as the highway program)—these are stationed in their respective districts, not at headquarters. This shift to a regional model was implemented in 2012 as part of an effort to get the state program closer to the agencies delivering the service. The headquarters functions currently include another 22 staff members in the Public Transit Section, focusing on policy and administration. This includes oversight of the Capital Program, compliance oversight, the training program, the statewide Transit Network, and programmatic guidance. The directly operated statewide services: Amtrak Cascades rail passenger service, POINT intercity services, and Columbia Gorge Express, are also managed by staff at headquarters. Budgets, funding drawdowns, and processing project reimbursements (grants management) are also a function of Operations staff at headquarters.

This reorganization is the latest in a series that have marked the division's shift from a grants management focus to one of active involvement in ensuring statewide mobility and connectivity. A 2006 challenge to improve leadership and the direction of the program began with a realization that divisional organization based on federal programs had created management silos that hampered the ability to provide a coordinated transit system.

This led to a 2009 reorganization, which coincided with a substantial increase in funding for transit, particularly the FTA section 5310 recipients. This funding came from two sources—use of flexed FHWA STBG funds for transit vehicle capital and a state-funded Special Transportation Fund (STF). At the same time, the state took on an expanded role in providing planning tools, and in identifying and filling gaps in the statewide transportation network. This led to the creation of the FTA section 5311(f) funded POINT program of contracted intercity bus routes, the Amtrak Cascades rail passenger service, and the Columbia Gorge Express bus service. The state funded the creation and maintenance of GTFS data for all transit operators and has a statewide REMIX license for all transit operators to use these planning tools.

Other agencies within Oregon DOT assisting RPTD in grant and program management include: Internal Audit, Civil Rights, Financial Services, Procurement, Planning, Highway, and Region offices.

Other partners include the School of Business at Oregon State University (for the TNExT access and mobility assessment tool), and the Ride Connection and Cascades West COGs for Passenger Assistance training.

Oregon DOT's main policy body is the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) which is responsible for approving the overall operations and budgets of Oregon DOT. OTC members are appointed by the Governor. The transit program takes policy advice from a Public Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC). The PTAC provides advice to both the RPTD and OTC on policy and funding areas that impact public transit users and transit agencies. The committee serves as a forum for discussing and identifying issues and solutions. The committee was created by the OTC in 2000. It consists of 21 members and meets every other month. Meetings are open to the public and time is available for public comment. Members are appointed by the Oregon DOT Director and include representatives from:

- General transit agencies in urban areas over 200,000
- General transit agencies in urban areas 50,000-200,000
- Small communities under 50,000
- Private for-profit intercity bus companies

- Indian tribal governments
- The Association of Oregon Counties
- The League of Oregon Cities
- The Statewide Independent Living Council
- The Transportation Options Group of Oregon
- The Oregon Department of Human Services—Vocational Rehabilitation
- The Oregon Disabilities Commission
- The Governor’s Commission on Senior Services
- The Oregon Passenger Rail Advisory Council
- A citizen at large

Of note is the role of the PTAC in setting strategic directions for transit in the state, focusing on the implementation of the recent Oregon Public Transportation Plan.

In addition to the PTAC, Oregon transit agencies participate in the regional Area Commissions on Transportation (ACT) advisory bodies around the state, though they have a primarily highway orientation—they provide another forum for public input on transportation needs and issues.

Finally, the RPTD works closely with the Oregon Transit Association, which is a private non-profit organization of transit agencies, suppliers to the transit industry, and advocacy groups. The RPTD Administrator is a voting member of the Oregon Transit Association Board. RPTD pays dues, registrations for staff at the conferences, and provides a Technical Assistance Program grant to the Oregon Transit Association for assistance with the annual conference

RPTD will also be implementing the Transportation Options (TO) program for the state, which is also known as the Transportation Demand Management program. For several years, this has been managed by the Oregon DOT Planning division, but it is returning to the transit division. The TO program is funded by STBG funds allocated to the Division. It provides technical assistance and contract oversight for the TO rideshare programs, supporting the regional staff and local communities. Four of Oregon’s TPM programs are partially funded by the TO program. A statewide TO marketing program called Drive Less Save More promotes TO and Drive Less Connect is a TO supported statewide interactive ride-match service that also reaches into Washington and Idaho.

Figure E-14 PTAC Vision and Role and Primary Objectives

PTAC Vision and Role

PTAC provides a forward thinking, strategic view of public transportation for the state of Oregon. PTAC focuses on the dual roles of addressing the realities of the current state transportation paradigm as well as providing direction on the future of public transportation.

To address current issues, PTAC will concentrate on state needs and provide recommendations to the OTC and the Rail and Public Transit Division (RPTD) of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The Committee will focus on policy and funding areas that impact both users and providers.

To keep Oregon at the forefront of public transportation innovation, PTAC will identify a strategic public transportation vision for Oregon. The Committee will provide tactical guidance for progress towards that vision and inform other planning efforts at ODOT and the OTC. This strategic vision and guidance will exist as a living document and will be continuously updated on a regular basis.

PTAC Primary Objectives

- To lead statewide efforts implementing the *Oregon Public Transportation Plan* vision and goals throughout the state.
- To provide recommendations to ODOT and the OTC regarding public transportation policies, rules and funding strategies.
- To anticipate, receive and respond to issues raised by providers, users and advocates of the statewide public transportation system.

State Transit Funding

Oregon has two major state transit funding programs, each of which is under separate legislation (though there is an effort underway to consolidate them). The older of the two state programs is the Special Transportation Fund (STF), and the more recent program is called the Statewide Transportation Improvement Funds (STIF).

Special Transportation Fund

The state statutes creating this fund designated 42 counties, transit districts, and Indian tribes to receive STF funding. They are designated as “coordinating entities” for the FTA section 5310 program and as lead agencies for adopting the locally developed coordinated public transit-human service plans required by FTA for FTA section 5310. The STF agencies in turn identify projects for funding and oversee implementation of the local projects.

STF funds come from the cigarette taxes, sale of ID cards, non-auto gas taxes and the state’s General Fund. The total amount available for each biennium varies with the revenues from these sources, including an estimate of General Fund revenues. The STF total provides 10% of the funds for state administration, 75% for formula distribution to the 42 agencies, and 25% is discretionary. The formula funding allocation is based on the percentage of the state’s population in each district, after each of the 42 agencies receives a

minimum amount (currently \$100,000). The estimated funding for the 2019-2021 period was \$21.9 million for formula funding. No local match is required.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Funds

The STIF program was passed by the Oregon legislature in 2018. It is a new dedicated fund to support public transportation. It is funded by a 1/10 of 1% state payroll tax, intended to generate about \$115 million annually. Ninety percent of the funds are distributed on a formula basis to “qualified entities”, basically the same 42 designated agencies. Five percent of the funds are distributed on a competitive grant process, and 4% are used for a discretionary program (under the Transit Network/Intercity program) to provide transportation between two or more communities. One percent is used to support a new Technical Resource Center in RPTD to assist rural areas with training, technical assistance/planning and information technology (and to fund administration). The formula funds are distributed based on each entity’s share of the statewide employee payroll.

There are efforts underway to combine the STF and STIF programs. A requirement was included in the most recent Oregon DOT budget bill.

Funding Allocation

As noted above, the formula STF funds are distributed to a defined list of 42 entities based on the total population in the service area of each entity, while the formula STIF funds are distributed based on the percentage of each entity’s share of the statewide payroll. Note that the 42 designated entities may act as pass-throughs to multiple transit agencies in their service area.

FTA section 5311 formula funding is distributed using an updated formula that provides a base amount for each of the 35 eligible entities (private for-profits are not eligible), plus a formula amount using rides and miles from NTD. This formula was developed by a PTAC work group. Local match required is currently 43.92% for operating projects and 10.27% for capital projects.

FTA section 5310 formula funding is distributed to the 42 lead agencies defined by the STF legislation, with amount based on a formula that uses total population of senior and disabled persons. These lead agencies can then allocate funds to priority projects based on their coordinated plans. Technically, all 5310 projects are capital, but that includes mobility management, capitalized maintenance, and purchase of service. Match ratios for the federal dollars require a 20% local match, and for the STBG portion of the funding 10.27%. Oregon DOT includes the small urban portion of the 5310 funding in its solicitation—there is also a discretionary element (\$2 million) for the federally designated rural-only lead agencies.

It should be noted that Oregon supplements the federal 5310 funds with flexed FHWA STBG funding, and in recent years the STBG portion has been as much as 88% of the total—\$25 million in the most recent biennium.

Planning

RPTD administers the FTA section 5305 planning funds, which are provided on a formula basis to Oregon’s MPOs to implement the elements of their UPWPs, including the LRTPs and TIPs.

In addition, RPTD uses FTA section 5304 funding to support statewide transit planning and to support local systems with planning. Planning projects are identified through the biennial Discretionary Grant Program, and local entities can be funded to perform, or contract for, many different types of planning programs. These include system design plans, ADA paratransit plans, marketing plans, environmental justice plans and local coordination plans.

The Oregon Public Transportation Plan was adopted in September 2018 as the transit element of the Oregon Transportation Plan. It is the vision and policy direction for Oregon's transit programs, encompassing recommendations in many areas including funding requirements to achieve different levels of vision, integrated transit planning, performance measurement, and the state role.

RPTD has devoted a significant amount of technical assistance to local systems in support of TDPs, including the development of a guidebook and training sessions. There is no requirement for local systems to have periodic TDPs, but 5310 funding is based on local coordination plans (which are required), and STIF formula funding requires a plan as well.

The recently enacted STIF funding source also includes a specific planning requirement. Qualified eligible applicant entities must complete a plan that specifies what percentage of their allocation will be spent on increased service and reduced fares for low-income households, service improvements between communities, and buses powered by natural gas or electricity in areas over 200,000 in population. The STIF requirement for local planning looks for evidence that there is a locally developed coordination plan and a TDP. Project plans for the STIF funding are supposed to come out of these plans, and address specific goals in the legislation, particularly improved access for low-income households. STIF plans must demonstrate the role of the project in supporting improved access for low-income households.

RPTD supports local planning by providing supportive technology. RPTD requires all transit fixed routes to be included in a statewide GTFS data bank, including private for-profit, intercity, private non-profit and public transit. The state has an on-going contract with a firm to develop and maintain the GTFS files. The state also has funded a statewide REMIX license. Using the GTFS data any operator can bring its routes into REMIX for service planning, and efforts are underway to develop GTFS-Flex for demand response systems. Having the GTFS data available, operators can provide it to Google for use in Google Transit and other similar systems to allow users to discover and use the entire network.

Oversight/Compliance Monitoring

RPTD has the responsibility for oversight and monitoring of its subrecipients. The division contracts with outside consultants to perform compliance reviews. As part of the FY 2019-2021 Biennium, RPTD has added a Risk Assessment Tool to its grant applications to evaluate applicants based on factors including financial stability, quality of management, performance history, and findings from previous reviews. The subrecipients are evaluated based on answers on the funding application, as well as other performance indicators kept by RPTD. Each subrecipient is given a risk assessment classification of high, medium, or low. Moderate and high-risk agencies will receive a targeted training and supervision plan. This can include additional scrutiny of invoices, scheduled communication with Regional Transit Coordinators, specialized training, or scholarships for training. Intervals between on-site compliance reviews may also be based on the risk classification.

RPTD utilizes grants management software called OPTIS, which is the basic web-based software that the Public Transit Section uses to manage grants. It automates and standardizes many transactions and serves as the system of record. A new formula program grant application tool called Cognito Forms is now being used, and ZoomGrants is used for discretionary grant applications. These are both online web-based systems and are used for the application processes.

Technical Assistance and Training

RTAP (49 U.S.C. 5311(b)(3)) provides a source of funding to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance projects and other support services tailored to meet the needs of transit operators in non-UZAs.

RPTD uses RTAP funding for training. The training program has a dedicated state staff manager, and it provides training opportunities through scholarships, training at the annual transit conference, and driver training. The RTAP funds support these activities for rural, intercity, and special needs programs, while state funds and other sources support these activities for the urban operators.

Recent training has included contracted in-person training provided by the Ride Connection and the Oregon West Cascades COGs on topics including Passenger Assistance, Advanced Mobility Device Securement, Defensive Driving, Dialysis Transportation, Defensive Driving, Adult CPR/First Aid, and Blood Borne Pathogen Certification. The Best Ride Training and National RTAP/MTAP training on writing vehicle specifications is also scheduled, along with the state transit conference.

The newly formed Technical Resource Center (TRC) is funded by 1% of the state STIF funding. The TRC is focusing its provision of resources on three areas:

- Planning
- Technology
- Training

It provides links to a wide variety of technical resources, including reports, demonstrations, and websites to provide support in these areas.

Capital Needs

As required by FTA, Oregon has developed a TAM Group Plan for its Tier II systems. Fifty-three systems are included, including all the tribal transit systems. All systems included are either recipients or subrecipients of FTA 5311 funds who own, operate or manage public transportation capital assets used in the provision of public transportation or FTA section 5310 funds providing transportation to the general public or a “segment of the general public” according to age, disability or income. It should be noted that most FTA section 5310 awards are for purchase of service, so the vehicles required to provide FTA section 5310 trips may not actually be owned and operated by the 5310 grant recipients. The plan’s performance targets for improvement to reach SGR were set initially when the TAM Group Plan was completed in September 2018, but with the increase in state transit funding from the STIF program there have been subsequent revisions in those performance targets. Most capital purchases come from FTA section 5310, FTA section 5339 and the STIF funding. The Tier I systems have their own TAM Plans.

RPTD has a dedicated staff member for capital, known as the Capital Program Coordinator. This role includes overseeing the TAM Group Plan/State of Good Repair progress. In addition, the Coordinator works with each system as they must use the Oregon Department of Administrative Services state price agreement contracts for vehicle procurement (or the Washington State DOT contracts) if they are using funding from RPTD. These state price agreement contracts include multiple vendors and a wide variety of vehicles ranging from heavy-duty transit buses to minivans, with options for alternative fuels. RPTD has produced technical assistance on electric buses to aid systems in considering that option. Once an operator has navigated the DAS system, the Capital Program Coordinator must approve the purchase before it is completed. The Coordinator also keeps track of vehicle disposal records.

FTA Section 5310, Mobility Management and Coordination

FTA Section 5310

As noted above in discussing funding and organization, FTA section 5310 is a major part of the Oregon program. The initial expansion of the transit program at the state level came as state legislation (the Jobs and Transportation Act) flexed funds from the STBG to FTA section 5310 to greatly expand the program.

Along with that expansion came program revisions that shifted the program from vehicle purchase alone to use of the of flexibility provisions that federal changes allowed—use of funds to purchase service, use of funds for capitalized maintenance, and use of funds for mobility management. Many of these options rely on coordination at the local level, and Oregon requires a local coordination plan every three years. The implementation of the state’s STBG program of state funding further enhanced this coordination structure, as the STBG legislation designated 42 agencies (including eight tribes) as the lead agencies receiving allocations—the FTA section 5310 program now designates the same agencies. These lead agencies are responsible for the local coordination plans, and for conducting a local solicitation for projects that are funded out of the allocated amount. In the 2019-2021 biennium the 42 agencies were allocated a total of \$24,001,169, of which 3.6% was for vehicles, 3.9% for vehicle replacement, 18.5% for mobility management, and 59% for purchase of service.

PTAC

While some states have state-level coordinating committees that bring together representatives of the various human service and transit agencies to coordinate, in Oregon this is largely the function of the PTAC, which includes representatives of agencies that fund primary consumers of transit service.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

NEMT is managed by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) through the state’s Coordinated Care Organizations, each of which has its own district.

The website <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/OHP/Pages/NEMT.aspx> presents a map and list of the brokers serving each district. Within each district, transportation is provided in several ways—some have brokerages (private for-profit, private non-profit, and transit agencies), and the brokers may contract with transit agencies and other contractors to actually provide the trips. Under the OHA program the brokers/transit agencies are paid on a per trip basis for approved trips, rather than the capitated rate model used in some states.

Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant Program

The Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant Program is a partnership between the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs and Oregon DOT Public Transportation Division. Funding is being offered for FY 2021. The purpose of the program is to fill service gaps and address barriers for veterans living in rural areas needing to access their veterans’ healthcare benefits. Eligible recipients include the 42 STF agencies with service areas featuring rural census tracts (as defined by Rural-Urban Commuter codes 4 through 10) that are not presently served by the Highly Rural Veterans Transportation program through the VA. All nine of Oregon’s federally-recognized tribes are eligible, irrespective of rurality. The total amount available is \$500,000 for the year, with a minimum award of \$10,000 and a maximum award of \$50,000. No local match is required.

Support for Intercity and Regional Services

One of the other unique features of the Oregon program is a focus on providing regional and intercity connections to support travel outside of localities. In Oregon, this is included in the SMP and in funding programs as the Transit Network Program. It began with the FTA section 5311(f) program. States are required to utilize a minimum of 15% of their annual FTA section 5311 apportionment to support rural intercity bus services, unless the Governor certifies that there are no unmet rural intercity needs—in which case the funding can be utilized to meet other rural transit needs. Any such certification must follow a consultation process involving the operators of intercity services and other stakeholders, and if it identifies needs, and the state elects to certify it, then it must document the reasons for its decision. In Oregon, the

effort to identify unmet needs began by looking at the network provided without subsidy by private for-profit intercity carriers. The analysis also looked at the long-distance trips provided by local public transit and found that there were gaps in the network.

These gaps were addressed in two ways. One followed the model developed in Washington, with its Travel Washington program. In this part of the program, Oregon DOT itself identified the needed services and contracted with private bus companies to fill gaps in the network not met by either the private carriers, Amtrak, or local transit. These gap-filling routes are designed to connect with the state-supported Amtrak Cascades services, and with local transit. They are collectively branded as the POINT (Public Oregon Intercity Transit) system and are interlined with Greyhound (who provides the in-kind match), and with Amtrak as Thruway bus routes. They are funded by a portion of the state's FTA section 5311(f) allocation. Only private for-profit firms can bid on these routes. They respond to an RFP and are third-party contractors to the state.

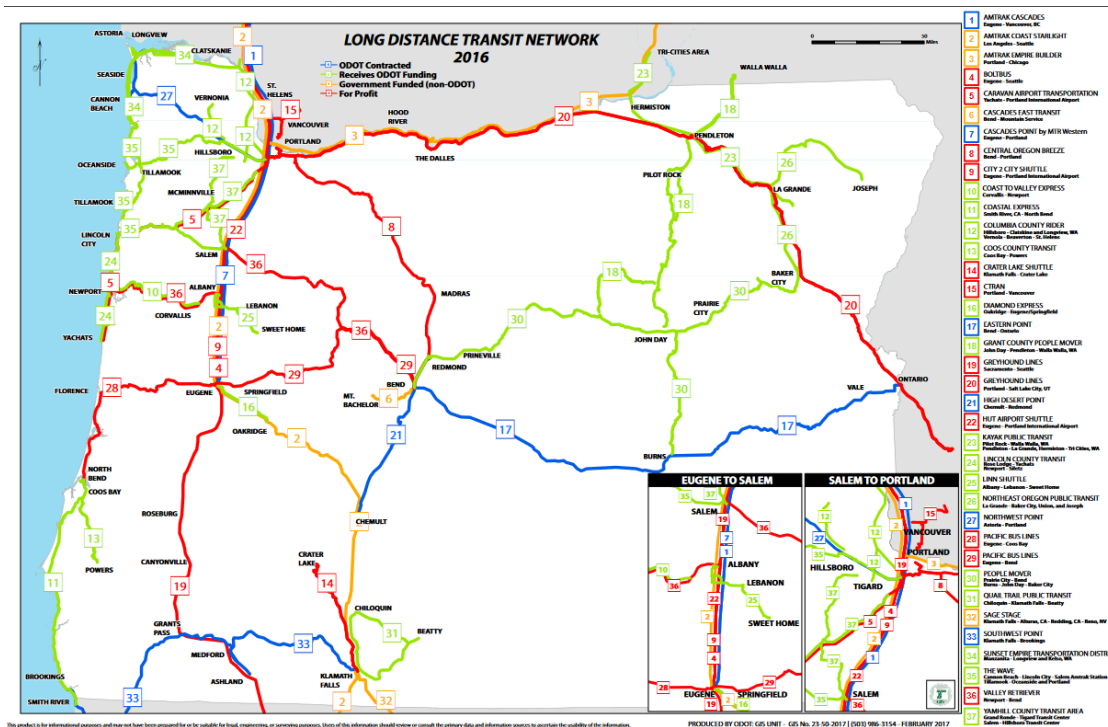
Another component of the regional/intercity service that began as an Oregon DOT initiative is the Columbia Gorge Express. It began as a pilot project by Oregon DOT operating on summer weekends in 2016 and 2017 between Portland, Rooster Rock, and Multnomah Falls, expanding to daily, year-round service in 2018, with added stops in Cascade Locks and Hood River. In late 2019, Columbia Area Transit (CAT) assumed service for the Columbia Gorge Express bus service between Portland, Multnomah Falls, Cascade Locks, and Hood River, with additional service to The Dalles. In summer 2020, Oregon DOT had planned to continue to operate a shuttle between Multnomah Falls and Rooster Rock State Park to accommodate the tourism demand.

The second means of addressing regional needs uses the remaining share of the FTA section 5311(f) funding for a discretionary grant program open only to public and private non-profit transit agencies for long distance connecting services. There are requirements for connecting to the network, but this allows for more local initiative in designing these services. The legislation for the new STIF funding program recognized the Transit Network concept by designating 4% of the total funds for the discretionary grant program element of the Transit Network.

In order to evaluate these proposals, and to define the gaps, Oregon DOT developed planning tools that are useful for many purposes. Oregon DOT requires and pays for every fixed-route service in the state to have available GTFS data allowing analysis of routes, schedules, and connecting points. It provides a statewide REMIX license for transit route planning. Finally, to combine the data for analysis, it has worked with Oregon State University to develop the TNExT analysis tool which brings together all the data in one system to allow analysis of gap and missed connections for any transit trip statewide. It can be used to evaluate the discretionary applications.

The result is a statewide network of local, regional, and intercity services, as seen in Figure E-15. The availability of these funding sources has allowed neighboring transit systems to develop and jointly operate regional connections that also connect to the intercity network of buses and trains. A widely reported model is the Northwest Connector program, in which several local rural systems connect with each other and with Greyhound and Amtrak to provide regional connections over a wide area. It demonstrates the possibility of creating regional services out of programs that are fundamentally focused on local transit or intercity connections.

Figure E-15 Oregon's Long-Distance Transit Network



Technology

In Oregon there is no statewide procurement for transit technology or software as is found in other states, nor is there any kind of statewide one-click, one-call technology system. However, as part of the Technical Resource Center activities, RPTD is currently conducting a Request for Information (RFI) to provide transit operators with information about available transit technology as a basis for ongoing assistance in this area. This assistance effort may include services such as evaluation, acquisition, and development of technologies and standards, as well as incorporating them into recommended procedures. It could also include research related to technology alternatives and additional methods available. The goal is for the TRC to be able to support transit agencies with technology coordination, focusing on small to midsize transit agencies who offer multiple modes of transit (fixed route, demand response, deviated fixed route). The TRC plans to offer technology procurement education and ongoing technology management tools and resources. A major objective of the RFI is to determine the capabilities of consultants to perform these functions.

Tribal Transit

Tribal entities by law are included in the state funded STF and STIF programs, and therefore are also eligible recipients for FTA section 5310 funding. There are nine tribal entities named in the state legislation as eligible recipients, and in general, they participate in the state transit program in the same way as other eligible subrecipients in terms of applications, requirements, and compliance. Several tribes also receive rural 5311 formula funds, and four receive FTA section 5311(c) Tribal Transit funding directly from FTA. The tribal transit systems play a significant role in rural public transportation, often as the primary general public provider in their service area.