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Welcome from the ODOT Office of Transit Administrator

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WELCOME TO THE NEWLY UPDATED….

…..ODOT Office of Transit Rural Transit Manual! Every effort has been made to ensure that the resources and references you will need in the successful operation of your Rural Transit system have been included.

As you page through the new Rural Transit Manual, it may seem different to you, and that’s because it is! Often, manuals of this type become outdated soon after they are published because of ever-changing rules, regulations, and policies. In this edition of the Rural Transit Manual, documents and guidance that tend to change are included in the Manual as an electronic “link” thus ensuring that you will be accessing the most current information available.

The Manual is organized similar to the previous version, but with some additions. Following the introduction in Chapter I, which also contains a Glossary of terms and definitions used throughout the Manual, Chapter II contains an overview of all ODOT-administered transit programs. You will also find separate chapters for both Federal (Chapter III, Federal Compliance) and State (Chapter IV, State Requirements) information. Chapter V is now Financial Management and covers all aspects of financial management from allowable costs, revenues and match requirements, and force account plans, to pricing service for contracting out and audits. Chapter VI, then, addresses capital and operating invoices and operating data requirements.

Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting, covers all aspects and types of procurement for services, vehicles, equipment, and property, including construction and renovation of facilities. Chapters VIII and IX, then cover “Vehicles and Equipment” and Construction and Facilities,” respectively, from initial planning through disposition.

Chapters X and XI are brand new chapters. Chapter X provides guidance to communities seeking to initiate new transit services. Chapter XI was written for new and existing rural transit managers to provide insight and guidance into the successful management of a rural transit system.

Chapters XII and XIII are also new. Chapter XII contains helpful references and resources, including a list of all website links used throughout the Manual. Chapter XIII contains training resources.

Finally, Chapter XIV is a compilation of the most frequently asked questions.

We believe that this Manual, used together with the many other documents and resources provided, will not be just another document to collect dust on a shelf, but a valuable tool in your day to day rural transit operation. However, as carefully as we have read and re-read the Manual, it is inevitable that something has been overlooked. And, because we view the Manual as a work in progress and one that will inevitably be in a continued state of improvement, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Marianne Freed
ODOT Office of Transit Administrator
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As with any project, the update of this Rural Transit Manual is the result of a team effort, many individuals who invested hours of research and review time to make this Manual a useful and valuable tool for the implementation and administration of the ODOT Rural Transit Program. A sincere thank you goes to ODOT Office of Transit staff Marianne Freed, Office Administrator; Tony Lococo, Project Manager; Skip Dunkle; Brett Harris; Rena Puckett; and Dave Seech; Pam Garland, Public Transportation Director, City of Greenville/Greenville Transit; Roger Stivison, Transportation Services Manager, Hocking-Athens-Perry Community Action (HAPCAP); and RLS staff Julie Schafer, Lorretta Frenton, Claire Helmers, Zach Kincade, and Rosamary Amiet.
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CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION AND GLOSSARY

PURPOSE OF THE RURAL TRANSIT MANUAL

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Office of Transit has assembled the information contained in the Rural Transit Manual to provide the necessary tools to new and existing rural transit systems to successfully and efficiently administer public transportation service in Ohio. Each Chapter begins with a general introduction of the topic followed by various sections/subsections containing specific guidance for grantees, governing boards, and third party contractors. This Manual, when viewed in its entirety, provides the necessary guidance for providing rural transit service in compliance with all applicable Federal and State requirements. It is set in an electronic environment to permit a content search. Links to all applicable Federal regulations, circulars, guidance, and other resources are also provided in each chapter. You should use these links to ensure that you have accessed all of the information needed for your full compliance with Rural Transit Program requirements.

The Manual table of contents contains a detailed listing of all topics addressed, permitting the reader to easily choose his or her topic of interest. The Manual is organized into 14 chapters:

♦ Chapter I Introduction and Glossary
♦ Chapter II Overview of ODOT Programs
♦ Chapter III Federal Compliance
♦ Chapter IV State Requirements
♦ Chapter V Financial Management
♦ Chapter VI Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data
♦ Chapter VII Procurement and Third Party Contracting
♦ Chapter VIII Vehicles and Equipment
♦ Chapter IX Construction and Facility Projects
♦ Chapter X Designing a New Transportation Program
♦ Chapter XI Managing Your Rural Transit Program
♦ Chapter XII Reference Materials
♦ Chapter XIII Workshop Materials
♦ Chapter XIV Frequently Asked Questions

ODOT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex or age, and prohibits discrimination in employment or provision of services. This document is available in accessible formats upon request. Paper copies as well as information regarding these accessible formats may be obtained by calling the ODOT Office of Transit at (614)466-8955.

Disclaimer: This Manual provides guidance on how ODOT meets all applicable Federal and State requirements and is not a replacement of the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA’s) circulars and regulations. Links to all of these documents are provided throughout the Rural Transit Manual and should be referred to as necessary. Every effort has been made to ensure that the electronic links are active and correct. In the event you have difficulty accessing a link, contact the ODOT Office of Transit at (614)466-8955.
BACKGROUND

The Federal Surface Transportation Act of 1978 amended the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 and provided operating assistance to rural and small urban transportation systems. Prior to 1978, operating assistance was available only to urbanized areas (areas of 50,000 in population or more). The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) changed the name of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 to the Federal Transit Act. Operating and capital assistance to rural transportation systems is financed by Section 5311, Formula Grant for Other than Urbanized Areas (formerly Section 18) as re-authorized in 2005 under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU) and codified in 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53. In Ohio, the Program is simply referred to as the "Rural Transit Program."

The program's financing concept presumes that all three government levels, Federal, State, and local, will share the cost of the transportation service.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) delegated to each State the administrative program responsibility. In Ohio, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is the State agency designated as the State administering agency. The ODOT Office of Transit prepares and submits to FTA a State Management Plan, outlining the agency’s administrative responsibilities for Ohio’s Rural Transit Program.

RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the Rural Transit Program are:

1. To enhance the access of people in rural areas to shopping, health care, employment, public services, education and recreation;
2. To assist in the development, maintenance, improvement, and use of public transportation; and
3. To encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all Federal and State funds used to provide public transportation in rural areas through the coordination of programs and services.

USING THIS MANUAL

This Manual can be read from beginning to end to get a full picture of the responsibilities associated with the operations of a rural transit system. Individually, Chapters can be used as discrete documents to answer questions or provide background.

The Manual is meant to serve as a reference for the day-to-day operation of a transit system. When questions arise, managers should refer to the Manual first, which also includes other resources such as relevant research or training documents, publications, or websites. Additional information and/or clarification can also be obtained from your ODOT Rural Transit Representative.
Each Chapter of this Manual contain links to other documents and websites. As those documents and websites are updated, it is anticipated the electronic links will continue to provide the most recent requirements. In the event a link does not display the pertinent information, please contact your ODOT Rural Transit Representative so the link can be reset.

**Manual Updates**

From time to time, Federal compliance and State requirements are re-tooled. It is expected that as these areas are updated, the information contained in this Manual will reflect those changes. However, because of the electronic nature of the Manual, these updates should be minimal.

**Ohio Transit Providers/ODOT District Offices**

A list of Ohio’s urban and rural transit provider is available at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OhioTransitAgencies.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OhioTransitAgencies.aspx). Click on the system name for a short description of each transit system.

All administrative responsibilities for the Rural Transit Program are conducted by the Office of Transit located at ODOT Headquarters in Columbus, Ohio. However, from time to time, ODOT’s 12 District Offices across the State provide assistance and support for the Program. See [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/districts/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/districts/Pages/default.aspx) for a map of the ODOT District Offices.
GLOSSARY

INTRODUCTION

The following terms and definitions are defined as they relate to ODOT’s Rural Transit Program. (Where terms have been quoted directly from another resource, such as the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), etc., this is noted in parentheses directly following the definition.)

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ACCESSIBILITY: 1) A measure of mobility, and 2) A measure of the ability of public transportation users to access transit modes. Accessibility includes not only how transit vehicles can be accessed but how the transit service as a whole is accessed, e.g., access to schedules and other service information.

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION: The extent to which facilities are barrier-free and usable by people with disabilities, including those using wheelchairs. (Source: American Public Transportation Association (APTA))

ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE: 1) A vehicle equipped with an accessibility package which allows passengers using wheelchairs to enter, exit, and ride in the vehicle. 2) A transportation vehicle that does not restrict access and is useable and provides allocated space and/or priority seating for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

ACCIDENT REPORT: The report(s) a driver must complete and submit to management when involved in an accident, regardless of the severity. Each transportation provider should keep an accident package in each vehicle so that the driver can easily open and follow the directions in the event of an accident. This package should include, but is not limited to, who to call, blank forms for written statements from each passenger describing the accident, blank forms for written driver statement, and written information on what to do immediately following the accident (e.g., make sure each passenger is safe, how to assist all passengers to exit the vehicle, and other pertinent information that may assist the driver and make the situation as stress free as possible for all involved.)

ACCRUAL ACCOUNTING: A method of financial accounting where revenues are recorded when earned; the revenue does not have to be received in the same reporting period. Similarly, expenditures are recorded as soon as they result in liabilities for benefits received; the payment of the expenditure does not have to be made in the same reporting period (NTD).

ADA ELIGIBLE: Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES: The cost to administer a project including, but not limited to, wages and fringes (director, secretary, bookkeeper, etc.), office supplies, administrative office space, and utilities.
**ADVOCATE**: A person or a group that speaks in a supportive manner on behalf of a person or group of people. Transportation advocates speak in support of transportation services for the general public, low-income individuals and families, older adults, and/or those with intellectual and physical disabilities.

**ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLE**: Class of vehicles powered by fuels other than gasoline or diesel, such as compressed natural gas (CNG).

**AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION (APTA)**: A national professional association, headquartered in Washington, D.C., whose membership works to expand and strengthen public transportation. APTA is an international organization that represents the transit industry, including bus, rapid transit and commuter rail. See [www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com) for further information.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**: Passed by Congress in 1990, this act mandates equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, communications and public accommodations. Under this Act, most transportation providers are obliged to purchase lift-equipped vehicles for their fixed route services and must assure system-wide accessibility of their demand response services to persons with disabilities. Public transit providers also must supplement their fixed route services with complementary paratransit services for those persons unable to use fixed route service because of their disability. For more information, see [http://www.ada.gov/](http://www.ada.gov/).

**BASE FARE**: The price charged to one adult for one transit ride; excludes transfer charges, zone charges, express service charges, peak period surcharges and reduced fares. (APTA)

**BRANDING**: The marketing of a specific name, logo, slogan, and design scheme for a specific service. In transportation services, a logo and slogan or tag line is established and used in all printed materials, vehicle lettering, and radio advertisements.

**BROKERAGE**: A method of providing transportation where riders are matched with appropriate transportation providers through a central trip request and administrative facility. The transportation broker may centralize vehicle dispatch, record keeping, vehicle maintenance and other functions under contractual arrangements with agencies, municipalities and other organizations. Actual trips are provided by a number of different vendors.

**BYLAWS**: The policies that govern the internal affairs of the transportation system.

**CANCELLATION**: A trip that was scheduled by a service consumer that was later cancelled prior to the vehicle being dispatched to the pickup location.

**CAPITAL ASSISTANCE**: Financial assistance available from Federal, State, or local governments for transit capital expenses (not operating costs); such aid may originate with Federal, local or State governments. (APTA)
CAPITAL COSTS: 1) The cost of equipment and facilities required to support transportation systems, including vehicles, radios, shelters, etc. 2) Costs of long-term assets of a public transit system such as property, buildings, vehicles, etc. (APTA)

CCAM: Acronym for the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. The CCAM is a Federal interagency council established by President George W. Bush by Executive Order in 2004. The CCAM oversees activities and makes recommendations that advance the goals of the Order: simplify customer access to transportation, reduce duplication of transportation services, streamline Federal rules and regulations that may impede the coordinated delivery of services, and improve the efficiency of services using existing resources. Chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, the Council is composed of the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Interior and Justice as well as the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration and the Chairperson of the National Council on Disability. The United We Ride initiative was started by the CCAM. For further information, see http://www.unitedweride.gov/1_3_ENG_HTML.htm.

CHARTER SERVICE: Transportation provided for a group of people who, pursuant to a common purpose, under a single contract, at a fixed charge for the vehicle or service travel together under an itinerary either specified in advance or modified after having left the place of origin. Charter service is closed door service, i.e., no other passengers may be boarded during the provision of service to the chartered group. Rural Transit Program grantees are only permitted to provide incidental charter service and must meet all requirements of the FTA Charter Bus regulations. See ODOT’s Charter Manual for complete guidance at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx.

CLEAN AIR ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1990 (CAAA): Legislation which renews and expands upon previous clean air legislation aimed at reducing air pollution. It requires that all new vehicles purchased for public transportation service meet very stringent clean air requirements.

COMMERCIAL DRIVER’S LICENSE (CDL): The standardized driver’s license required of bus and heavy truck drivers in every State. Covers drivers of any vehicle manufactured to seat 15 or more passengers (plus driver) or more than 13 tons gross vehicle weight. The CDL was mandated by the Federal government in the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION: The coordination of transportation resources within a community, in an efficient and effective manner to provide safe and reliable transportation services for all citizens.

COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSPORT: Paratransit service that is required as part of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which complements, or is in addition to, already available fixed-route transit service. ADA complementary paratransit services must meet a series of criteria designed to ensure they are indeed complementary.
CONSOLIDATED HUMAN-SERVICE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM: Consolidation is the most comprehensive type of coordination and is formally defined as the joining or merging of transportation resources for the benefit of all participants. It usually requires one of the participants in the coordinated effort to take on a lead role for either 1) providing the transportation service directly via contract with the local human service agencies or other purchasers of transportation, or 2) administering the overall system and contracts for service with the local human service agencies or other purchasers of transportation as well as the service contract with a private for profit provider that actually provides the service.

CONTRACT FARES: Contract service is over and above general public service in that it requires additional work in developing contracts, scheduling, recordkeeping and invoicing. Contract rates may be based on a per passenger, per mile, per vehicle hour basis or any combination of these factors, but they must be the fully allocated cost of providing transit service. The revenue from contracts may be used as local match.

CONTRACT REVENUE: Contract revenue is generated through a written contract to provide service for a third party at the fully allocated cost. Contract revenue may include administrative fees, capital replacement costs, and other costs included in the fully allocated cost.

CONTRACT SERVICE: The transportation of a group of people for a specified cost scheduled and paid by a third party, e.g., Title XX group transportation, Title III-B trips etc. and considered to be premium service because the service is guaranteed. Contract service must be open-door, available to the general public, offered during regular service hours, cannot interfere with the overall general public service, and must be operated in compliance with FTA charter regulations. A rate higher than the regular fare is negotiated with the contracting agency to cover the costs incurred in developing and monitoring contracts, scheduling, record keeping, and invoicing, and which takes into account the fully allocated cost of providing the service.

COORDINATION: A cooperative arrangement among transportation providers and/or purchasers which is aimed at realizing increased benefits and cost-effective services through the shared management and/or operation of one or more transportation related functions including shared trips, dispatching, cooperative purchases, or training classes. In its most basic form, coordination is cooperation in the delivery of transportation services.

COORDINATED HUMAN-SERVICE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM: Human service agencies and/or transit systems cooperating to coordinate some aspect of transportation, such as passenger trips, the sharing of vehicles, schedules, personnel, and maintenance facilities. May also include the consolidation of services, (as appropriate).

COST ALLOCATION: The act of allocating costs among entities, divisions, or departments within an organization. In cost allocation, the objective is typically to allocate a known cost among several offices based on the cost per unit of resource.

COST EFFECTIVENESS: The ratio of the cost of a transit system to the level of service provided. Various measures may be used to determine cost effectiveness including cost per passenger trip.
**COST EFFICIENCY**: The amount of transportation services produced for the community in relation to the resources expended.

**CURB-TO-CURB SERVICE**: A common designation for demand response transit services. The transit vehicle picks up and discharges passengers at the curb or driveway in front of their home or destination. In curb-to-curb service the driver does not assist the passenger along walks or steps to the door of the home or other destination.

**CTAA**: Community Transportation Association of America. A national professional association of those involved in community transportation, including operators, vendors, consultants, and Federal, State, and local officials.

**CTAP**: The Community Transportation Assistance Program (CTAP) created by CTAA through a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Health and Human Services. CTAP is intended to provide human service organizations, planners, funders, and individuals with expertise, training, and support. The CTAP Peer Network, CTAPnet, is an online community of community transportation practitioners and experts where you can ask questions to, and engage in conversations with, other transit professionals.

**CTB**: A county transit board as established under Chapter 306 of the Ohio Revised Code.

**DBE**: A disadvantaged business enterprise is a small business concern which is at least 51% owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, or in the case of any publicly-owned business, at least 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals; and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

**DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCE**: A funding source, which by law, is available for use only to support a specific purpose and cannot be diverted to other uses, e.g., the Federal gasoline tax can only be used for highway investments and, since 1983, for transit capital projects.

**DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE**: 1) A transportation service characterized by flexible routing and scheduling of relatively small vehicles to provide point-to-point transportation. These services usually require advance reservations and can be curb-to-curb or door-to-door. Can also be referred to as paratransit or dial-a-ride service. 2) Passenger cars, vans or motor buses operating in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who then dispatches a vehicle to pick up the passengers and transport them to their destinations. A demand-response operation is characterized by the following: first, the vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule except, perhaps, on a temporary basis to satisfy a specific need; and secondly, the vehicle typically may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations and may even be interrupted en route to these destinations to pick up other passengers. (FTA)
DEVIATED FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE: A transportation service operating along a fixed route path with designated stops at generally fixed times, but may deviate from the fixed route path to either pick-up or drop-off passengers who requested the deviation.

DIAL-A-RIDE: Another name for "demand responsive." (APTA)

DIRECTLY OPERATED (DO): Transportation service provided directly by a transit agency, using their employees to supply the necessary labor to operate the revenue vehicles. This includes instances where an agency’s employees provide purchased transportation services to the agency through a contractual agreement (NTD).

DISABLED: Any person who by reason of illness, injury, age, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability are unable without special facilities to use the local transit facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected.

DISPOSITION CRITERIA: Criteria established by ODOT for determining when a vehicle, purchased with Federal and/or State funds, has met its useful life and can be disposed.

DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICE: A form of demand response service which includes passenger assistance between the vehicle and the door of his or her home or other destination. A higher level of service than curb-to-curb, yet not as specialized as door-through-door service (where the driver actually provides assistance within the origin or destination).

DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor.

ELDERLY: For the purpose of the Ohio Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program, elderly is defined as people age 65 and older. For the purpose of the Specialized Transportation Program(Section 5310) elderly is defined as people age 60 and over.

ELDERLY AND DISABLED (E&D) TRANSPORTATION/TRIPS: Elderly/Disabled trips are trips provided to individuals 65 years of age or older or individuals with a mental or physical impairment limiting one or more major life functions and pay a reduced fare.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANT: For the Rural Transit Program, a county, municipality, CTB, or RTA or locally designated private nonprofit corporation.

ELIGIBLE OPERATING EXPENSE: The sum of the operations expenses and administration expenses.

FARE: The designated payment for a one-way trip on a passenger vehicle, such as cash, tokens, transfer, coupon, or pass or other acceptable means as established by the transportation provider.

FAREBOX: A device that accepts coins, bills, tickets, and tokens given by passengers as payment for trips.
FAREBOX REVENUE: Revenue collected from passengers or third party agents at the advertised general public or elderly and disabled fares is reported as farebox revenue. Fares may be collected through bulk sale of tickets, tokens, passes, etc. or collected in cash at the time the passenger boards the vehicle.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA): A component of the U.S. Department of Transportation which provides funding to State and local governments for highway construction and improvements including funds which must be used for transit. FHWA also regulates the safety of commercial motor vehicle operations (vehicles which require a CDL-licensed driver). FHWA is the lead agency in Federal intelligent transportation activities and regulated interstate transportation. For more information, see http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA): A component of the U. S. Department of Transportation which administers the Federal program of financial assistance to public transit (formerly known as the Urban Mass Transportation Administration or UMTA). For more information, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/.

FINANCIAL DATA: A full disclosure of a transportation system’s (public, private, or coordinated) financial income/expenses when accompanied by a discussion of significant events that have affected the financial picture of the system. Financial data includes, but is not limited to, the charges and costs of providing services (operating and capital), revenues generated from services (farebox and contract revenues), and revenues from other sources (grants and local match).

FIXED ROUTE: Transportation service operated over a set route or network of routes generally on a regular time schedule.

FIXED ROUTE WITH POINT DEVIATION: Transportation services that operate on a fixed route, but will, on demand, deviate from the route to meet the passenger’s needs.

FORCE ACCOUNT: Any construction work performed by the grantee; does not include project administration activities.

FOUR YEAR CAPITAL AND OPERATING PLAN: A four year schedule of capital purchases and operating expenses, required by and submitted to ODOT, which a grantee anticipates will be necessary for effective operation.

FULLY ALLOCATED COST: The total cost of providing a specific transit service including both fixed and variable costs.

GENERAL PUBLIC SERVICE: A service open to the general public on a regular basis using vehicles designed to transport more than one person when a general public fare is collected. The fare may be paid with cash, a ticket, token, or pass by either the passenger or a third party. (NOTE: The revenue collected from tickets, tokens and passes sold in bulk, at the public fare price, is reported as farebox revenue NOT contract revenue.)
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL: Any person who is either elected to an office or is employed by a government entity and serves as its representative at meetings, conferences, workshops, or other gatherings. Person can represent a division, department, service, or branch of a local, State, or Federal government entity.

GRANTEE: A recipient of government funds or equipment purchased in whole or part with government funds.

GUARANTEED RIDE HOME: A program that encourages employees to carpool, use transit, bike or walk to work by guaranteeing them a ride home in case they cannot take the same mode. (CTAA)

HUMAN-SERVICE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM: A transportation system, which provides transportation services exclusively to the clients of human-service agencies.

IN-KIND MATCH: The capital or human resources provided for the operation of the transit system by the local jurisdiction. Allows a grantee to substitute labor or equipment in lieu of cash in return for services.

INTERCITY BUS PROGRAM: The Intercity Bus program is prescribed in accordance with 49 USC Section 5311(f) and requires that 15% of the 5311 annual apportionment be used to support intercity bus transportation. The intercity bus program was created to provide funding for service connections between nonurbanized areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service, e.g. Greyhound service. These funds may also be used for building or purchasing intermodal facilities and for marketing and planning assistance for the support of the intercity network system. See the most current version of FTA Circular 9040 for further guidance http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html.

JOBLINKS: A demonstration program of the Federal Transit Administration, operated by CTAA. The JOBLINKS program tests new ways of providing employment transportation to unemployed and underemployed people through local partnerships between transportation providers and human service agencies. For more information go to http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=17&z=37.

JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE PROGRAM (Section 5316): Job Access grants are intended to provide new transit service to assist welfare recipients in getting to jobs and training. Reverse Commute grants are designed to develop transit services to transport workers to suburban job sites. Assistance includes capital and operating costs of equipment, facilities, and associated capital maintenance items. For the FTA Circular on this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12349.html.

JOINT USE ARRANGEMENT: A joint use arrangement occurs when one or more of the resources of the coordinated transportation system participants are available for use by other participants. The resources could be vehicles, staff time, staff knowledge, or facilities.

LARGE URBANIZED AREA: An urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or more.
LISTSERV: An automatic mailing list used by an email account. When email is addressed to a LISTSERV mailing list, it is automatically broadcast to everyone on the list and is only available to those individuals. A listserv can be used to send out newsletters, meeting notices, urgent messages, or other information that must be distributed in a timely and less-costly manner.

LOCAL ASSISTANCE: Under the Rural Transit Program revenue received from service agreements with either local or State human service agencies can be considered as eligible local match even if the original source of this revenue may be from another Federal program. Certain restrictions apply. In addition there are several categories of Federally–apportioned funds that may be used as eligible local match for the Program. Examples of these funds are, CDBG, Title III, and Title XX. Nonfederal sources of eligible match may include local or State appropriations, donations or dedicated tax revenues.

LOCAL MATCH: The State or local funds required by the Federal government to complement Federal funds for a project. For example, in the case of public transportation, the Federal government may provide 80 percent of the necessary funds for the purchase of a vehicle if the State or local government matches 20 percent. A match may also be required by States in funding projects which are a joint State and local effort.

MARKETING: A comprehensive process to induce greater usage of transit services by determining the needs or demands of the community and potential consumers, developing and implementing service on the basis of these needs, pricing the services, promoting the services, and evaluating the services as implemented in relation to consumer needs and marketing goals.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO): The area wide agency charged with overseeing the urban transportation planning process. Together with the State, it carries out the planning and programming activities necessary for Federal funding. There are currently 17 MPOs in the State of Ohio.

MOBILITY MANAGER: The individual charged with facilitating the implementation of the mobility management process as a means to implement coordinated transportation services as defined by a community.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT: A process of managing a coordinated community-wide transportation service network comprised of the operations and infrastructures of multiple trip providers in partnership with each other (the National Center for Human Transportation Coordination).

NTD: National Transit Database.

NET PROJECT COST: The Eligible Operating Expense less any farebox or other revenues.

NON-FORCE ACCOUNT: Any construction work that is not performed by the grantee and is contracted out.
NONURBANIZED AREA: Any small urban or rural area not included in an Urbanized Area.

NO SHOW: Term used to describe a scheduled trip that was not cancelled by the passenger but when the driver arrived to pick up the passenger, he or she was not available for the trip.

ODOT: The Ohio Department of Transportation. For more information, see www.dot.state.oh.us.

OEDTFAP: The Ohio Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program (E&D), the State's General Revenue funded program administered by the ODOT Office of Transit which provides funding to transit systems offering reduced fares to elderly and disabled transit passengers.

OPTGP: The Ohio Public Transportation Grant Program, the State's General Revenue funded program administered by the ODOT Office of Transit which provides matching funds for approved Federal transit grants, including Rural Transit Program capital and operating assistance grants.

OTAP: The Ohio Transit Assistance Program, the State’s counterpart to the national RTAP program. Through OTAP, the ODOT Office of Transit provides technical assistance and training as well as scholarship to transit-related conferences, training, and other events.

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE: Refers to the percent of scheduled trips that were provided within the pickup window (usually 15 – 30 minutes before or after the scheduled pickup time).

OUTREACH: Efforts by the individual members of the CTAC, the governing board, or its agents to share ideas or practices with other organizations, groups, specific audience and the general public. Outreach includes the education of its audience about the benefits of transportation services for all segments of the population. It also includes listening to feedback to assure services are meeting the transportation needs of the community.

OFFICE OF TRANSIT: The Office within the Ohio Department of Transportation which administers ODOT’s Federal and State transit programs. For more information, see http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/default.aspx.

OHIO PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION (OPTA): A professional organization, headquartered in Columbus, comprised of transit system representatives, vendors and others affiliated with the transportation field whose purpose is to expand and strengthen public transit. See www.ohiopublictransit.org.

OPERATING COST: The recurring expenses associated with the daily operations of a transportation service, including items such as fuel, drivers’ and dispatchers' wages, maintenance, insurance, and vehicle registration.

OPERATING DEFICIT: Total operating expenses minus total operating revenue.
**OPERATING RECOVERY RATIO:** Total farebox revenue plus contract service revenue divided by total operating expenses.

**OPERATING REVENUE:** Total revenue earned by a transit system through its transit operations. It includes passenger fares, contract revenue, advertising, investment income, and other revenue.

**PARATRANSIT:** Types of passenger transportation that are more flexible than fixed-route transit but more structured than the use of private automobiles. Paratransit is a broad term that may be used to describe any means of shared ride transportation other than fixed-route. Paratransit services usually require advance-reservation for demand-responsive service that is either curb-to-curb or door-to-door. Paratransit services that are provided to accommodate passengers with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route service and that meet specific service equivalency tests are called ADA complementary paratransit services. (CTAA)

**PASSENGER FARE:** The designated payment for a ride on a passenger vehicle, whether cash, tokens, transfer, coupon, electronic media or pass.

**PASSENGER MILES:** Total number of passengers carried by a transit system multiplied by the number of miles traveled.

**PASSENGER TRIP:** Passenger trips are always reported as "one way." If a person travels from home to shopping, then from shopping to home, two trips should be counted. A system may use actual ridership counts or a suitable sampling method (approved by ODOT) to determine passenger trips. Systems must report all data for contract service (including incidental charter service) as well as information for general public service.

**PEAK PERIOD:** The hours during a day (typically 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) when the maximum amount of travel occurs. Other peak periods may be established depending on an individual system's experience.

**PEAK SERVICE:** The operation of the maximum number of vehicles during the Peak Period.

**PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS/COMPANIONS:** Persons eligible under ADA regulations must be allowed a personal care attendant (PCA) that is traveling with the eligible rider. A PCA is someone designated or employed specifically to help the eligible individual meet his or her personal needs. In addition to a PCA, the regulations require that service be provided to one companion accompanying an eligible rider. Other persons accompanying the rider are to be accommodated on a space available basis. Persons are considered to be accompanying the eligible rider if they are picked up and dropped off at the same locations as the eligible rider. Companions must be charged the same fare as the eligible rider, and the PCA must ride free.

**POINT DEVIATION:** Transportation service in which the transit vehicle is required to arrive at designated stops in accordance with a prearranged schedule but is not given a specific route to
follow between these stops. It allows the vehicle to provide curbside service for those who request it.

**PREVENTION, RETENTION AND CONTINGENCY (PRC):** Ohio’s PRC program allows county departments of job and family services (DJFS) considerable latitude to direct Federal TANF funds in support of transportation, child care, counseling, case management, peer support, child care information and referral systems, transitional services, job retention, training for job advancement and a variety of other services for low income families who are not eligible for cash assistance. Parents with minor children are potentially eligible for support through PRC, including non-custodial parents.

Individual counties devise their own PRC plans and have the authority to establish their own income eligibility standards. As welfare rolls decline, PRC is increasingly used in support of parents in low income jobs. Transportation assistance for employed parents does not count as TANF “assistance” and therefore does not exhaust any lifetime welfare benefits.

**PROVIDER SIDE SUBSIDY:** The sum paid directly to operators for supplying transportation services. Subsidy is usually based on expenses less farebox revenue.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** A public hearing is a formal meeting held to set aside time for public testimony on a particular subject matter for which a notice was published in the official newspaper or a common website of the region. It is a mandatory meeting as required by a funding source and must meet State public access laws, if applicable. Examples of public hearings are: 1) public transportation service changes or 2) a grant application comment period.

**PUBLIC MEETING:** A public meeting is held to notify the public of a new service or happening within the coordinated transportation program. A public meeting is held to notify the public about a change that comes about as a result of a public hearing. These meetings must meet State public access laws, if applicable.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:** Transportation service that is available to any person upon payment of the fare and which cannot be reserved for the private or exclusive use of one individual or group. "Public" in this sense refers to the access to the service, not the ownership of the system providing the service. Public transportation service must be open door. Public transportation must provide a shared-ride on a regular basis. Shared ride means two or more passengers in the same vehicle who are otherwise not traveling together. Every trip does not have to be a shared ride but the general nature of the service must include shared rides.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PTMS):** ODOT’s system to compile and maintain a comprehensive list of transit assets including inventory and condition information.

**PURCHASING AGENCY:** An organization or human service agency that purchases transportation services from a third party for its clients.
RIDERSHIP CHANGES: Changes in the level of passengers transported within a measurable time period. Changes are usually measured as either increases or decreases.

RTA: A regional transit authority as established under Chapter 306 of the Ohio Revised Code.

RTAP: Rural Transit Assistance Program. A program of the Federal Transit Administration, with both a National component and a State component (see OTAP, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx), dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and free training and other transit industry products. See www.nationalrtap.org.

RIDESHARE/RIDEMATCH PROGRAM: A program that facilitates the formation of carpools and vanpools, usually for work trips. A database is usually maintained for the ride times, origins, destinations and driver/rider preferences of users and potential users. Those requesting to join an existing pool or looking for more riders are matched by program staff with other appropriate people. (CTAA)

RISK MANAGEMENT: An element of a transit system's safety management program. It includes identification and evaluation of potential safety hazards for employees, passengers and the public.

ROAD CALL: Any situation which requires assistance from the maintenance department while the vehicle is in revenue service. The assistance requires a mechanic or support personnel to meet the vehicle on route or at a layover point. Examples: Switch vehicle on route, replace headlight, low tire pressure, or malfunctioning passenger ramp/door.

RURAL TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE: The ODOT Office of Transit staff person assigned to a specific Rural Transit system to provide technical assistance and oversight pertaining to the Rural Transit Program requirements.

SAFETEA-LU – Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. SAFETEA-LU is the acronym used to reference the Federal legislation funding and encouraging the coordination of transportation services.

SCOPING PROCESS: The process ODOT uses as part of the capital application process to assess the viability of any major capital project, including, but not limited to, major vehicle and equipment purchases, facility purchases, new construction, and facility rehabilitation. The process is conducted after an application for funding is submitted and must be completed before any funding decisions are made.

SECTION 504: The section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which states, in part, that no disabled individual shall be denied the benefits of any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. See Chapter III, Federal Compliance, of this Manual for further information.
SECTION 5307, URBAN TRANSIT PROGRAM: The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes grants to public transit systems in urbanized areas. Funds authorized through Section 5307 can be awarded to States or directly to transit systems in urbanized areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000 for transit service in those areas. Transit systems in urbanized areas with populations greater than 200,000 receive their funds directly from FTA. For the FTA Circular 9030 for this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.htm.

SECTION 5309, CAPITAL PROGRAM: The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes discretionary grants to public transit systems for capital projects such as buses, bus facilities and rail projects. For the FTA Circular 9300.1B for this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12349.html.

SECTION 5310, SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM: Authorized under 49 USC Section 5310, a Federal program administered by ODOT to provide small buses and vans to eligible agencies which provide transportation services to elderly and disabled persons. For the most recent version of FTA Circular 9070 for this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.htm.

SECTION 5311, RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM: Authorized under 49 USC Section 5311, a Federal program administered by ODOT to provide operating and capital assistance to public transit systems in rural areas. For the most recent version of FTA Circular 9040 for this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.htm.

SECTION 5316, JOB ACCESS/REVERSE COMMUTE PROGRAM: FTA’s JARC Program provides grants for competitively selected projects to improve access to transportation services to employment, job training and important activities for eligible low income individuals. The program requires coordination of federally assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of available resources. For the most recent version of FTA Circular 9050.1 for this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.htm.

SECTION 5317, NEW FREEDOM PROGRAM: The New Freedom Program is authorized in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) to support new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those require by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) that assists individuals with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services. For the most recent version of FTA Circular 9045.1 for this program, see http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.htm.

SERVICE PROVIDER: A private nonprofit or for-profit agency providing all or a portion of the transit service under contract to a Rural Transit grantee.

SMALL URBANIZED AREA: A municipality with a population of at least 5,000 but less than 50,000 and which is not a part of an existing Urbanized Area.

SPARE RATIO: A set percentage or number of vehicles based on fleet size set aside to be used to replace (or back-up) vehicles which are out of service. FTA guidelines for spare ratios are 2
vehicles for fleets of up to 10 vehicles; 20% for vehicle fleets of 11 and over. Spare ratios must include vehicles which are wheelchair-lift accessible.

**STANDING ORDERS:** Used in demand response services where passengers are required to call in advance to place a request for service, a standing order is a scheduling practice that allows passengers to request the same service, i.e., a reoccurring trip, for several days or weeks without having to call each day or week to schedule. For example, a person that has a medical appointment every Monday afternoon might call at the beginning of each month to schedule all of his or her Monday afternoon trips for that month. The person would call back only if a trip were to be cancelled. Standing orders, as any other request for service, are subject to a transit system’s no show and cancellation polices. **NOTE:** ODOT recommends that standing orders not be scheduled for more than one month at a time so the service can be evaluated to ensure it is in compliance with the ADA.

**SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:** Transportation service provided under advanced arrangements and according to prearranged conditions, e.g., hours, days, specific routing. The service may be paid for by an individual, group of individuals, or company. This is the only time an individual or group of individuals may be billed for service. Service is guaranteed, usually arranged for an extended period of time, e.g., six months, one year, etc., and is paid for regardless of whether anyone rides the service. Subscription service does not necessarily need to be fully allocated. Subscription service differs from contract service in that under subscription service the individuals, routes, and destinations never change for the duration of the subscription, and revenue collected from subscription service is counted as farebox revenue. Subscription service is open to the public.

**TAC:** Transportation Advisory Committee — A committee established to advise the transportation service governing board.

**TANF:** Temporary Aid to Needy Families. Created by the 1996 welfare reform law, TANF is a program of block grants to States to help them meet the needs of families with no income or resources. It replaces AFDC, JOBS, Emergency Assistance and some other preceding Federal welfare programs. Because of TANF-imposed time limits, States are using TANF to place recipients in jobs as quickly as possible, often using program funds to pay for transportation, child care, and other barriers to workforce participation. For more information about TANF, see [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/tanf/about.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/tanf/about.html) or [http://jfs.ohio.gov/owf/plan_new.stm](http://jfs.ohio.gov/owf/plan_new.stm).

**TOTAL PASSENGERS:** The total number of all revenue passengers, including general service, elderly and disabled, contract, and free ride passengers. Transfers are counted separately.

**TOTAL PROJECT COST:** The total administration expenses and operations expenses.

**TRANSFERS:** Any trip with a single origin and single destination which requires getting off one vehicle and onto another involves a transfer. The trip is recorded as one passenger trip and one transfer. If the passenger gets off the bus at one destination (store A) then gets back on the bus at a later time to ride to a different destination (store B), it is recorded as two passenger trips.
**TRANSIT DEPENDENT:** A person who does not have immediate access to a private vehicle or because of age or health reasons, cannot drive and must rely on others for transportation.

**TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER:** An organization, company, human service agency, or other entity that provides transit services for its clients and/or the general public either on a donation or fare basis.

**TCRP:** Transit Cooperative Research Program. The TCRP is a key instrument for carrying out research for public transportation systems in the United States to expand their services and improve their efficiency. The TCRP is funded by the public, through the Federal Transit Administration and is governed by an independent board – the TCRP Oversight and Project Selection (TOPS) Committee. For more information, see [http://www.tcrponline.org/whatistcrp.shtml](http://www.tcrponline.org/whatistcrp.shtml).

**TRB:** Transportation Research Board - A resource to the transportation community worldwide, TRB provides a vast array of useful information regarding transportation. For more information, see [http://www.trb.org/Main/Home.aspx](http://www.trb.org/Main/Home.aspx).

**TRIP:** A trip is made by one person from one origin to one destination. Many transit statistics are based on passenger trips, which refer to individual one-way trips made by individual riders.

**TRIP DENIAL:** In a demand response system, a trip denial occurs when a passenger’s trip request cannot be accommodated due to capacity constraints. Trip times can be negotiated with the passenger as long as the new trip time does not go beyond one hour prior or one hour past the requested time. Even if the trip can be accommodated outside of this “window,” it is a trip denial. Rural Transit Grantees are required to report these trip denials on their operating data form.

**TRIP GENERATOR:** A place that generates a demand for frequent travel is called a trip generator. Trip generators may be origins or destinations. For example, a trip generator could be a residential area, employment area/business park, shopping and retail areas, or recreational area.

**TRIP REFUSALS:** Trip refusals are trips requested outside the systems service hours or service area and the transit system is unable to provide the service.

**TRIP TURNDOWNS:** Trip requests that are refused by a passenger. For example, a passenger requests an 8:00 a.m. pick-up time and the system cannot provide it. However, the system is able to provide a later trip and offers an 8:30 a.m. pick-up time. If the passenger declines the 8:30 a.m. trip, the trip is documented as a turndown. This is a turndown because the system is able to provide the trip within the one hour window required by ADA.

**UNITED WE RIDE (UWR):** The Federal CCAM interagency initiative aimed at improving the availability, quality, and efficient delivery of transportation services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. For more information, see [http://www.unitedweride.gov/](http://www.unitedweride.gov/).
USEFUL LIFE: The term used to define how long a vehicle or equipment can be expected to be operated or used. Usually expressed in years or miles operated and varies with the type of vehicle.

USER-SIDE SUBSIDY: The sum or discount paid or applied directly to the rider's fare. Individuals can purchase tokens at designated sale sites and present the token to a service provider in exchange for a trip which is worth more than the actual cost of the token.

VANPOOL: A prearranged ridesharing service in which a number of people travel together on a regular basis in a van. Vanpools may be publicly operated, employer operated, individually owned or leased.

VEHICLE REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE: The scheduled replacement of vehicles based on a vehicle's expected useful life.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA): State legislation which coordinates the employment and training services of eleven major Federal programs. The State WIA Board sets policy for all county WIA Boards. For more information regarding WIA, see http://www.doleta.gov/programs/factst/wialaw.cfm or http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wia/index.stm.

PLEASE NOTE: Many terms in this glossary are defined in more detail within the narrative of the appropriate chapter and, in many cases, pertain specifically to ODOT policies and procedures for administering the Rural Transit (Section 5311) Program in Ohio. Transit glossaries are also available through these websites: http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc and http://www.apta.com/info/online/glossary.htm.
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CHAPTER II – OVERVIEW OF ODOT OFFICE OF TRANSIT PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The ODOT Office of Transit is responsible for the development, implementation, and administration of various state and Federal transit grant funding programs. In this capacity, 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.

Following is a brief summary of each of the Programs administered by the Office, along with links to regulatory resources, program criteria, and compliance requirements for each Program.

NEW FEDERAL TRANSIT FUNDING RE-AUTHORIZATION: MAP-21

The Federal highway and transit re-authorization bill, “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act” or MAP-21, was passed by Congress in the Summer of 2012 and will become effective October 1, 2012. It makes substantial structural changes in state-administered FTA programs. The full impact of the changes and how it will affect ODOT’s administration of these programs is not yet known. We do know that the Section 5316, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program and Section 5317, New Freedom Program, have been eliminated and rolled into the Section 5311 and Section 5310 Programs, respectively. Once FTA has issued guidance and revised circulars for the Section 5311 Program, this Manual will be updated accordingly. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding MAP-21, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM (SECTION 5311)

Title 49 U.S.C. 5311 authorizes a formula assistance program for the support of public transportation services in non-urbanized areas. Specifically, the intent of the Section 5311 program is to: (1) enhance the access of people in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation; (2) assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in non-urbanized areas; (3) encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all transportation funds used to provide passenger transportation in non-urbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services; (4) assist in the development and support of intercity bus transportation; and (5) provide for the participation of private transportation providers in non-urbanized transportation.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) apportions funds annually to each State for these services. This program, commonly referred to as the Section 5311, or Rural Transit, Program, is administered in Ohio by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

ODOT annually prepares and submits to FTA a program of projects, a listing of all projects for which ODOT is requesting. Eligible sub-recipients include Counties, Municipalities, Villages,
Townships, Regional Transit Authorities, County Transit Boards, Private Nonprofit Corporations
designated by a county or municipality and a County or Municipal department on behalf of a
County, Municipality, Village, or Township. Projects include operating (e.g., salaries, fringes,
fuel costs, maintenance, rent, etc.) and capital (purchase of vehicles and related equipment,
facilities, etc.). States can also use up to 10 percent of its Section 5311 program funds to provide
administration, planning, and technical assistance to their sub-recipients. Finally, the State must
use at least 15 percent of its annual apportionment to support intercity bus service, unless the
Governor certifies, after consultation with affected intercity bus providers, that the intercity bus
needs of the State are being met adequately (see the Rural Intercity Bus Program section of this
Chapter).

For more information regarding the Federal requirements of the Section 5311 Rural Transit
Program, refer to the most recent edition of FTA Circular 9040 on the FTA website at
http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html or on the ODOT website at
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx. Each FTA/ODOT
requirement for the Rural Transit Program is also further explained in the remaining sections of
this Manual and other documents as noted throughout.

RURAL INTERCITY PROGRAM (SECTION 5311(F))

Title 49 U.S.C. 5311(f) also requires each State to spend 15 percent of its annual Section 5311
apportionment “to carry out a program to develop and support intercity bus transportation,”
unless the Governor certifies that “the intercity bus service needs of the State are being met
adequately.” Before such a certification can be made, Title 49 U.S.C. 5311(f) requires a State to
consult with intercity bus providers. The required percentage applies only to the amount of the
Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA’s) annual apportionment of Section 5311 funds to the
State. The required percentage does not apply to any funds the State subsequently transfers to its
non-urbanized area formula program from another program.

Ohio’s Rural Intercity Bus Program (Section 5311(f)) is designed to address the intercity bus
transportation needs of the entire State by supporting projects that provide transportation
between non-urbanized areas and intercity services and which result in connections of greater
regional, statewide, and national significance.

Section 5311(f) 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 public transportation operations
and intercity bus carriers.” Capital assistance may be provided to purchase vehicles or vehicle
related equipment such as wheelchair lifts for use in intercity service. Charter and tour services
are not eligible for assistance under this program.

For more information regarding the Ohio’s Rural Intercity Program, go to
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/RuralIntercityBus.aspx. Additional
ODOT requirements for the Rural Intercity Program may be further addressed in the remaining
sections of this Manual, as applicable.
**Ohio Public Transportation Grant Program (OPTGP)**

The Ohio Public Transportation Grant Program (OPTGP), as authorized under Section 5501.07 of the Ohio Revised Code, includes state funds to urban and rural areas but this section will focus on urban areas with a population 50,000 and greater. It is administered by the ODOT Office of Transit.

The OPTGP grants may be issued to county transit boards, regional transit authorities, regional transit commissions, counties, municipal corporations, and private nonprofit organizations that operate or will operate a public transportation system and must be used to match a Federal grant.

Any criteria established by the ODOT Director for the distribution of such grants shall be consistent with the requirements of the United States department of transportation, or any administration in the department, including, but not limited to, the Federal Transit Administration. The Director may designate in the criteria certain dates after which applications for specified portions of the appropriations made for this purpose will not be accepted. The Federal Acts or Programs shall include, but are not limited to, programs authorized under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, (SAFETEA–LU), enacted on August 10, 2005, as codified at 49 U.S.C. 5307, as amended.

OPTGP funds are allocated by category and then sub-allocated to individual systems within each category using a formula which incorporates system data and performance measures based on ridership, revenue service miles, revenue hours and farebox revenue.

Only capital and operating projects are eligible. The Federal share of eligible capital costs may not exceed 80% of the net cost of the project. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating costs of the activity. State participation varies based on Federal and local participation. The remaining funds must come from local or non-U.S. Department of Transportation Federal funding sources.

Further information, including criteria and instructions, for the Ohio Public Transportation Grant Program is provided at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Urban.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Urban.aspx).

**Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance (E&D)**

The Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program is authorized under Section 5501.07(B) of the Ohio Revised Code and provides reimbursement to public transportation systems that offer reduced fares to elderly and disabled passengers. The ODOT Office of Transit annually allocates funding to each public transportation system by formula. No application is required.

Further information for the Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program is provided at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/ElderlyDisabled.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/ElderlyDisabled.aspx). Additional ODOT requirements for this Program may be further explained in the various sections of this Manual, as appropriate.
JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE (JARC) PROGRAM (SECTION 5316)
(SEE PREVIOUS NOTE IN THIS CHAPTER REGARDING MAP-21)

The JARC program is authorized under the provisions set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, (SAFETEA–LU), enacted on August 10, 2005, as codified at 49 U.S.C. 5316. These provisions authorize the Secretary of Transportation to make grants for access to jobs and reverse commute projects. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 5316(c), JARC funds are apportioned to designated recipients in urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 or more; and to the individual States for 1) urbanized areas with a population of less than 200,000 and 2) other than urbanized areas.

The goal of the JARC program is to improve access to transportation services to employment and employment-related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low income individuals and to transport residents of urbanized areas and non-urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the Federal agency responsible for providing the funding for JARC for transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the transportation needs of eligible low-income individuals, and of reverse commuters, regardless of income. The program requires coordination of Federally-assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources. To this end, projects must be competitively selected from locally-developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans and must include services to improve transportation access to employment, job training and to support activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals. More information regarding ODOT’s requirements for locally developed plans may be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx; the Federal guidelines for these plans may be found at http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/49C53.txt.

Capital and operating projects are eligible. The Federal share of eligible capital costs may not exceed 80% of the net capital costs of the project. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating cost of the activity. The remaining funds must come from local sources or eligible non U.S. Department of Transportation funding sources. Further information, including application forms and directions, for the JARC Program is provided at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/JARC.aspx. Federal guidance can be found in FTA Circular 9050.1 available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html. Additional ODOT requirements for the Program may be further explained in the various sections of this Manual, as appropriate.

NEW FREEDOM PROGRAM (SECTION 5317)
(SEE PREVIOUS NOTE IN THIS CHAPTER REGARDING MAP-21)

The New Freedom Program is authorized under the provisions set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, (SAFETEA–LU), enacted on August 10, 2005, as codified at 49 U.S.C. 5317. The Secretary of Transportation may make grants to recipients for new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), that assist individuals with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 5317(c), New
Freedom funds are apportioned to designated recipients (as defined in section 5307(a)(2)) for urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 and to individual States for 1) urbanized areas with a population of less than 200,000, and 2) other than urbanized areas.

The goal of the New Freedom formula grant program is to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society. Funds can be used for capital and operating expenses by State and local governments, non-profit organizations and local transportation providers. Projects selected for funding must be derived from locally-developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans. More information regarding ODOT’s requirements for locally-developed plans may be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx; the Federal guidelines for these plans may be found at http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/49C53.txt.

Capital and operating projects are eligible. The Federal share of eligible capital costs may not exceed 80% of the net capital costs of the project. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating cost of the activity. The remaining funds must come from local sources or eligible non U.S. Department of Transportation funding sources. Further information, including application forms and directions, for the New Freedom Program is provided at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/NewFreedom.aspx. Federal requirements are contained in FTA Circular 9045.1 available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html.

Additional ODOT requirements for the Program may be further explained in the various sections of this Manual, as appropriate.

**SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (SECTION 5310)**

(see previous note in this Chapter regarding MAP-21)

Title 49 U.S.C. 5310 authorizes a formula assistance program for the special needs of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities. FTA refers to this formula program as the Section 5310 program; it is implemented in Ohio as the Specialized Transportation Program. FTA, on behalf of the Secretary of Transportation, apportions the funds appropriated annually to the individual States based on an administrative formula that considers the number of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in each State. Funds are appropriated annually.

Eligible applicants are 1) private non-profit organizations, providing that existing public transportation service in the area is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate; or 2) a governmental authority approved by the State as a lead agency to coordinate services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities or that has certified that there are no non-profit organizations within their jurisdiction for the provision of elderly and disabled transportation services.

Eligible projects include capital purchases used to support transportation services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities in urbanized, small urban, or rural areas. The Federal Transit Administration provides 80% of the cost of capital items; the remaining 20% must be provided
by local funding which can include funds from Federal programs other than the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) programs or from DOT’s Federal Lands Highway Program.

The ODOT Office of Transit administers the statewide program, including the development of vehicle specifications and the conduction of the procurement process. The State’s seventeen Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have certain responsibilities for projects within their respective urbanized areas.

The program requires coordination with other Federally-assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources. To this end, all projects in Ohio must be reflected in a locally-developed public transit human services coordinated transportation plan. More information regarding ODOT’s requirements for locally developed plans may be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx; the Federal guidelines for these plans may be found at http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/49C53.txt.

Further information, including application forms and instructions for the Specialized Transportation Program is provided at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Specialized.aspx. Federal requirements are contained in FTA Circular 9070.1F available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html.

RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RTAP)/OHIO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (OTAP)

In addition to funding several programs for operating and capital assistance, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) funding to each State for the provision of training, technical assistance, and other support services. RTAP funding is authorized under Title 49 U.S.C. 5311(b)(3) and is specifically intended for services in other than urbanized areas.

Each State is responsible for developing and implementing its own State RTAP program for providing training and technical assistance. Ohio’s program, the Ohio Technical Assistance Program (OTAP), is administered by the ODOT Office of Transit.

RTAP
National RTAP is a program dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and training. Since 1987, National RTAP has developed and distributed training materials, provided technical assistance, generated reports, published best practices, awarded scholarships, conducted research, and offered peer assistance with the goal of improved mobility for the millions of Americans living in communities with populations under 50,000. Training and technical assistance are provided at no charge. Because National RTAP staff work with transit systems all over the country, they may not be up to date on the specific State rules and requirements for all rural transit systems. Systems are encouraged, therefore, to coordinate their National RTAP assistance with their ODOT Rural Transit Representative. For more information, go to the National RTAP website at http://www.nationalrtap.org.
OTAP
OTAP is the state counterpart to National RTAP. OTAP assistance is typically provided in three major categories: technical assistance, training, and scholarships. While as indicated previously FTA’s RTAP funding is specifically for transit providers serving non-urbanized areas, ODOT uses other State and Federal administrative funds to support this program and to open the assistance to all ODOT grantees, including those in urbanized areas. In some cases, local match may be required for OTAP assistance. Each OTAP category of assistance is further discussed below:

Technical Assistance
OTAP technical assistance is tailored to a grantee’s needs and specific State issues. It can be provided one-on-one by request of individual grantees resulting in a specific product, e.g., service or contract rate analysis or an operating service plan. It can also be used to conduct a project, training, or presentation that has statewide significance. Examples of this include "FTA's Charter Regulations: A Compliance Guide for Ohio's Rural Public Transit Systems” and subsequent workshops on this topic.

An important subcategory of this technical assistance is the Rural Circuit Rider assistance. ODOT provides the Circuit Rider assistance to provide technical assistance to Rural Transit public transit providers and managers to ensure continued compliance with State and Federal requirements. Through close collaboration with the ODOT Office of Transit and transit system personnel, the Circuit Rider assesses the public transit system, develops an action plan, identifies necessary corrective actions, develops timelines for implementation, works with the system through at least the early stages of implementation, and provides follow-up assistance and guidance, as needed.

Any ODOT Office of Transit grantee may request OTAP assistance throughout the fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. There is no formal application period, although ODOT does develop a potential list of projects each April. Applications are evaluated on appropriateness and availability of funding. For further information regarding OTAP, including how to request funding, please go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx.

Scholarships
ODOT also uses its RTAP funding to provide scholarships to Rural Transit grantees to attend transit events and training. Scholarship funds may be requested by submitting an application to the ODOT Office of Transit on its RTAP Scholarship form available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural%20Transit%20Manual/Rural Trans%20Scholarship%20Form-FINAL04.10.12.pdf

You may view and process the scholarship application form over your local printer or complete and submit the form electronically on-line. If you choose to complete it electronically, it must be done in one session - you cannot begin, save, and then return later to complete it.
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CHAPTER III - FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

INTRODUCTION

As a subrecipient of funding under 49 U.S.C. § 5311, ODOT’s Rural Transit grantees must comply with a number of FTA-specific and other Federal requirements. This Chapter of the Rural Transit Manual provides an overview of the major compliance requirements and provides citations and/or links to the actual statutory or regulatory text for each requirement. **Please note that the award and continued receipt of Rural Transit funding is contingent upon a Rural Transit grantee achieving and maintaining compliance with each of these requirements.**

Rural Transit grantees should use this document along with FTA’s “Master Agreement” and the current fiscal year “Certifications and Assurances” that Rural Transit grantees must sign annually in their grant contracts. The Master Agreement and the Certifications and Assurances represent each Rural Transit grantee’s legal affirmation to abide by FTA and other Federal requirements that are applicable to the grant programs.

A Rural Transit grantee’s compliance with these requirements is affirmed in the Rural Transit Program Application and contract and monitored by ODOT through the Technical Assistance Review (TAR) process.

An additional resource tool to assist Rural Transit grantees with compliance issues is the Rural Transit System Technical Assurance Review Document (TAR) located at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/TAR.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/TAR.aspx). Also, specific TAR sections and categories are referenced where appropriate throughout this Chapter for easy reference.

In the sections that follow, ODOT addresses:

♦ ADA and Section 504
♦ Buy America
♦ Commercial Driver’s License Requirements (CDL)
♦ Charter Service/School Bus Regulations
♦ Drug and Alcohol
  o Drug Free Workplace Act
  o Drug and Alcohol Program
    ▪ Testing
    ▪ Record Keeping
    ▪ Links To Forms and/or Training Materials
♦ Civil Rights/Title Vi/EEO
♦ DBE
♦ OSHAA Bloodborne Pathogens (49 CFR 51.361)
♦ Debarment /Suspension/Restrictions On Lobbying
♦ Safety and Security
♦ Planning
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND SECTION 504

Topic Coverage
These requirements stipulate that each ODOT grantee must agree to comply, and assures the compliance of each third party contractor and each subrecipient at any tier of the Project, with the applicable laws and regulations on nondiscrimination on the basis of disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act provides broader coverage to all public and private entities. This law imposes specific obligations on transportation providers.

Statutory References
(1) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), as amended (29 U.S.C. 794)


The U.S. Department of Transportation regulations for Section 504 are addressed with its ADA regulations found at http://fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12325.html.

(2) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, prohibits discrimination against qualified people with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services of governmental authorities, as well as imposes specific requirements on public and private providers of transportation.

The text of the ADA can be found at: http://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm.


Section – Service Delivery, Categories – Scheduling, Type of Service, Public Participation Policy, Marketing and Public Relations, System Brochure
Section – System Safety, Security and Vehicle Reliability, Categories – Seatbelts, Vehicle Safety Equipment, OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens

(3) U.S. DOT regulations, “Transportation Services for Individuals with Disabilities (ADA),” 49 CFR part 37

The U.S. DOT regulations specify accessibility requirements for the design and construction of new transportation facilities; require that vehicles acquired (with limited exceptions) be
accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, including people using wheelchairs; require governmental authorities, including a private non-profit entity “standing in the shoes” of the State as a subrecipient providing fixed route service, to provide complementary paratransit service to people with disabilities who cannot use the fixed route service; and include service requirements intended to ensure that people with disabilities are afforded equal opportunity to use transportation systems.

These regulations can be found at: [http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12325.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12325.html).

(4) U.S. DOT regulations, “Transportation Services for Individuals with Disabilities (ADA),” 49 CFR part 38.

The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) has issued regulations to implement the employment and accessible facility design features of the ADA (this component includes all transit vehicles). These regulations can be found here: [http://www.access-board.gov/ada/](http://www.access-board.gov/ada/).

**TAR Reference:**

Section – Financial Management, Category – Vehicle Purchases  
Section – Fleet Management, Category – ADA Required Maintenance  
Section – Regulatory Compliance, Category – Americans with Disabilities Act  
Section 504

In addition, recipients of any FTA funds should be aware that they also have responsibilities under Titles I, II, III, IV, and V of the ADA in the areas of employment, public services, public accommodations, telecommunications, and other provisions, many of which are subject to regulations issued by other Federal agencies.

**Additional Resources**

FTA has prepared additional guidance for transit systems on how to meet compliance obligations on the following topics:

- Equipment Maintenance
- Stop Announcements and Route Identification
- Eligibility for ADA Paratransit
- Telephone Hold Time in ADA Paratransit
- Origin to Destination Service in ADA Paratransit
- On-Time Performance in ADA Paratransit
- No-Show in ADA Paratransit

This guidance can be found at: [http://www.dredf.org/ADAtg/index.shtml](http://www.dredf.org/ADAtg/index.shtml).
BUY AMERICA/ PRE-AWARD AND POST-DELIVERY REVIEWS/ NEW BUS TESTING

Topic Coverage
Section 5323(j) provides that, with exceptions, Federal funds may not be obligated for mass transportation projects unless steel and manufactured products used in such products are produced in the United States.

Procurements for vehicles, other than sedans or unmodified vans, must be audited in accordance with FTA’s Pre-Award and Post-Delivery Audits of Rolling Stock Purchases.

Any new bus models must be tested at the FTA-sponsored test facility in Altoona, Pennsylvania before Federal funds can be expended to purchase them. This provision applies to all vehicles, except unmodified vans (including vans with raised roofs or lifts installed strictly to OEM guidelines).

Note that ODOT is responsible for Buy America compliance for all purchases under the ODOT Cooperative Purchasing Program. Additional guidance is available in the Rural Transit Manual, Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting, and at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/VehicleTermContracts.aspx.

FTA cautions that its Buy America regulations that apply to FTA-assisted third party procurements, published at 49 CFR Part 661, differ from Federal Buy American Act regulations that apply to direct Federal procurements, published in the FAR at 48 CFR Chapter 1, Subparts 25.1 and 25.2. FTA strongly recommends that the recipient review FTA’s Buy America regulations before undertaking any FTA-assisted procurement.

Statutory References
Buy America regulations are contained in 49 CFR 661, while guidance for Pre-Award and Post-Delivery Audits of Rolling Stock Purchases is contained in 49 CFR 663, http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12921.html.

TAR Reference: Section – Regulatory Compliance, Category – Pre-Award/Post-Delivery Audit & Buy America

COMMERCIAL DRIVER’S LICENSE REQUIREMENTS (CDL)

Topic Coverage
All drivers of vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, must have a commercial driver’s license (CDL). Mechanics that drive commercial vehicles must also have a CDL.

Requirements for having a Commercial Driver’s License are part of a broad series of regulations known as Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). These statutes, laws, and regulations are administered by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), another modal administration under the U.S. Department of Transportation.
The purpose of the CDL regulations is to help reduce or prevent truck and bus accidents, fatalities, and injuries by requiring drivers to have a single commercial motor vehicle driver's license and by disqualifying drivers who operate commercial motor vehicles in an unsafe manner. These regulations:

- Prohibit a commercial motor vehicle driver from having more than one commercial motor vehicle driver's license;
- Require a driver to notify the driver's current employer and the driver's State of domicile of certain convictions;
- Require that a driver provide previous employment information when applying for employment as an operator of a commercial motor vehicle;
- Prohibit an employer from allowing a person with a suspended license to operate a commercial motor vehicle;
- Establish periods of disqualification and penalties for those persons convicted of certain criminal and other offenses and serious traffic violations, or subject to any suspensions, revocations, or cancellations of certain driving privileges;
- Establish testing and licensing requirements for commercial motor vehicle operators;
- Require States to give knowledge and skills tests to all qualified applicants for commercial driver’s licenses which meet the Federal standard;
- Set forth commercial motor vehicle groups and endorsements;
- Set forth the knowledge and skills test requirements for the motor vehicle groups and endorsements;
- Set forth the Federal standards for procedures, methods, and minimum passing scores for States and others to use in testing and licensing commercial motor vehicle operators; and
- Establish requirements for the State issued commercial license documentation.

**Statutory References**
The regulations can be found at:


**TAR Reference:** Section – Human Resources, Category – Driver Requirements

**Additional Resources**
The Ohio Department of Public Safety/Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles administers the CDL program in Ohio. More information on requirements can be found here:

[http://bmv.ohio.gov/cdl.stm](http://bmv.ohio.gov/cdl.stm)

Ohio regulations on this topic are codified here:

[http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4506.01](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4506.01)
**Charter Bus Regulations**

**Topic Coverage**
Title 49 U.S.C. 5323(d) places limits on the charter services that Federally-funded public transportation operators may provide. Charter Service means transportation using buses or vans, or facilities funded under the Acts of a group of persons who pursuant to a common purpose, under a single contract, at a fixed charge (in accordance with the carrier’s tariff) for the vehicle or service, have acquired the exclusive use of the vehicle or service to travel together under an itinerary either specified in advance or modified after having left the place of origin. This definition includes the incidental use of FTA-funded equipment for the exclusive transportation of school students, personnel, and equipment.

FTA’s Charter regulations are complex and can be challenging to understand and implement. To assist Rural Transit grantees, ODOT has prepared the ODOT Charter Manual that provides a step by step guide to implementation of the FTA charter regulations. This Manual can be found at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx), click on “Charter Manual.”

There are several exceptions to FTA’s charter rules which are covered in detail in the ODOT Charter Manual. Charter service provided under one or more of FTA’s exceptions must be reported quarterly to ODOT. More information can be found in ODOT’s Rural Transit Program Requirements, found at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf) and in the operating data instructions portion of Chapter VI, Invoice Instructions and Operating Data, of the Rural Transit Manual.

**Statutory References**
FTA’s charter regulations (49 CFR part 604) can be found at [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr604_main_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr604_main_02.tpl).

**TAR Reference:** Section – Regulatory Compliance, Category – Rural Transit Program TAR Federal Regulatory Compliance Chart, Charter.

**School Bus Regulations**

**Topic Coverage**
Section 5323(f) prohibits the use of FTA funds for exclusive school bus transportation for school students and school personnel. The implementing regulation, 49 CFR part 605, does permit regular service to be modified to accommodate school students along with the general public. For the purpose of FTA’s school bus regulation, Head Start is considered a social service, not a school program.
Statutory References
FTA’s school bus regulations (49 CFR part 605) can be found at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr605_main_02.tpl.


Additional Resources
FTA has prepared an informational brochure on school bus transportation that is intended to help transportation providers understand those limitations, as well as the permissible use of public transportation for school students. These guidelines can be found at:


DRUG AND ALCOHOL

Topic Coverage

There are separate and distinct compliance items under the FTA drug and alcohol testing program (49 CFR parts 655 and 40) that are applicable to transit systems. These items are explained in the individual codes.

Statutory References


(2) Drug and Alcohol Testing Program

The purpose of the FTA drug and alcohol testing program is to help prevent accidents, fatalities, and injuries resulting from misuse of alcohol or the use of prohibited drugs by employees who perform safety-sensitive functions. Section 5311 grant recipients must also certify annually that they are in compliance with the U.S. DOT and FTA regulations concerning drug and alcohol testing. Compliance with the regulations is a condition of FTA funding.
These regulations require that FTA recipients follow the drug and alcohol testing procedures found in applicable FTA (49 CFR part 655) and DOT (49 CFR part 40) regulations. The regulation applies to “employers,” defined as “a recipient (of FTA funding) or other entity that provides public transportation service or which performs a safety-sensitive function for such recipient or other entity.” The term includes subrecipients, operators, and contractors. The direct recipient of FTA funding, however, remains responsible to FTA both for carrying out the regulations and for ensuring that any person or organization performing a safety-sensitive function on its behalf is in compliance with FTA regulations.

ODOT’s Drug and Alcohol page on the ODOT Office of Transit’s website provides links and information on required compliance with the FTA program by Rural Transit grantees. This information is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/DrugAlcohol.aspx.

FTA’s drug and alcohol testing program regulations can be found at:  

U.S. DOT regulations on Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs (49 CFR part 40) can be found at:  

(3) Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Recordkeeping

Each subrecipient, operator, and subcontractor that represents an employer as defined in the regulations is responsible for several elements associated with testing records and recordkeeping. Each entity must, after obtaining an employee’s written consent, request information on the drug and alcohol testing history from any prior DOT-regulated employer for any employee who is seeking to begin performance of safety-sensitive duties for the ODOT grant recipients for the first time (e.g., a new hire, or if an employee transfers into a safety-sensitive position). This information must be requested of any DOT-regulated employers who have employed the individual during any period during the two years before the date of employee’s application or transfer to the safety-sensitive position. Section 5311 subrecipients must maintain copies of the applicant consent form and all letters requesting drug and alcohol testing information.

Additionally, each Section 5311 Rural Transit grantee, operator, or subcontractor must maintain records on program administration. These records include the results of all tested individuals. These records are required to be maintained in a secure location with controlled access.
(4) Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Reports

Each recipient of Section 5311 funds must prepare, maintain, and submit on line annual MIS reports for itself and all subcontractors that summarize drug and alcohol program testing results. These reports must be maintained on file for five years.

The report forms are standardized and must be used “as-is.” The report must be filled out completely and be submitted each year in accordance with ODOT established deadlines, typically in early February (see the ODOT calendar at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

MIS forms and instructions can be found at:


MIS reporting guidance can be found at:


TAR Reference: Section – Regulatory Compliance, Categories Rural Transit Program TAR Federal Regulatory Compliance Chart, Drug and Alcohol, Drug and Alcohol Program Requirements, Subcategories – Administration, FTA Drug and Alcohol Policy, Current Certifications on File, Pre-employment, Random Testing, Post Accident, Collection Site Reviews.

Additional Resources
Additional documents summarizing the Federal guidelines include FTA’s “Implementation Guidelines for Drug and Alcohol Regulations in Mass Transit” (April 1994) and all issues of the FTA Drug and Alcohol Regulation Updates Newsletters.


Technical assistance on FTA’s drug and alcohol program can be found at http://transit-safety.fta.dot.gov/DrugAndAlcohol/TechnicalAssistance/default.asp.

And finally, quarterly issues of the Drug & Alcohol Regulation Updates can be found at:

CIVIL RIGHTS

Topic Coverage
The compliance category covers a wide range of individual laws and Executive Orders that have been issued by the Federal government. These elements include:

- Nondiscrimination
- Environmental Justice
- Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)

Because of the unique nature of DBE requirements, ODOT has addressed this compliance element in a separate section topic in this Chapter of the Manual.

A key element associated with most civil rights is that failure to comply can result in immediate suspension or termination of FTA funding, and the grantee may be subject to both civil and administrative penalties.

Statutory References
(1) Nondiscrimination - General

All recipients of FTA funds must agree to comply, and assure the compliance of each third party contractor at any lower tier under the Project, with the provisions of 49 U.S.C. § 5332. These provisions prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age, and prohibit discrimination in employment or business opportunity.

A recipient of FTA may not exclude a person from “participating in, denied a benefit of, or discriminated against under, a project, program, or activity receiving financial assistance under this chapter because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age.” In this case, a “person” includes a governmental authority, political subdivision, authority, legal representative, trust, unincorporated organization, trustee, trustee in bankruptcy, and receiver.

The legislation implementing this provision (49 U.S.C. § 5332) can be found at https://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/coord/titlevi.php.

Nondiscrimination – Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is landmark legislation that provides that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. The Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation has issued regulations (49 CFR part 21) that govern all DOT-assisted programs.

This regulation can be found at https://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/coord/titlevi.php.
The FTA issued a program circular on Title VI compliance. While this Circular addresses specific requirements for large urbanized areas and State DOTs, there are general obligations that must be met by all FTA recipients, including:

- Filing the requisite Title VI certification and assurance with each application.
- Developing procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against them and make these procedures available to members of the public upon request.
- Preparing and maintaining a list of any active investigations conducted by entities other than FTA, lawsuits, or complaints that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. This list must include:
  - The date of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint was filed;
  - A summary of the allegation(s);
  - The status of the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint; and
  - Actions taken by the recipient or subrecipient in response to the investigation, lawsuit, or complaint.

All lawsuits and complaints must be reported to ODOT.

FTA recipients must also notify the public regarding their Title VI obligations and apprise members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI.

Additionally, first time applicants have additional requirements, including:

- Filing information regarding their Title VI compliance history if they have previously received funding from another Federal agency. This must include a copy of any Title VI compliance review activities conducted in the last three years. The summary should include:
  - The purpose or reason for the review;
  - The name of the agency or organization that performed the review;
  - A summary of the findings and recommendations of the review;
  - A report on the status and/or disposition of such findings and recommendations. This information should be relevant to the organizational entity actually submitting the application, not necessarily the larger agency or department of which the entity is a part.

This FTA Title VI Circular can be found at:


(2) Nondiscrimination – Environmental Justice

In April 1995, the U.S. Department of Transportation issued its Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations to fulfill the environmental justice policy objectives laid out in Executive Order 12898. The central objective of the order is to ensure that all Federally-funded transportation-related programs, policies, or activities having the potential to adversely affect human health or the environment involve a planning and programming process that explicitly considers the effects on minority populations and low-income populations.

(3) Nondiscrimination – Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons

The U.S. Supreme Court, in Lau v. Nichols, interpreted Title VI regulations promulgated by the former Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to hold that Title VI prohibits conduct that has a disproportionate effect on LEP persons because such conduct constitutes national origin discrimination.

Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency,” directs each Federal agency to examine the services it provides and develop and implement a system by which LEP persons can meaningfully access those services. Federal agencies were instructed to publish guidance for their respective recipients in order to assist them with their obligations to LEP persons under Title VI. The Executive Order states that recipients must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons.

The Executive Order can be found at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2000_register&docid=fr16au00-137.pdf.

(4) Nondiscrimination – Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

FTA funding recipients must agree to comply, and assure the compliance of each third party contractor and each subrecipient at any tier of the Project, with all Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e), and 49 U.S.C. 5332 and any implementing requirements FTA may issue.

Special EEO provisions apply to FTA funding recipients that meet the following criteria:

- Employ 50 or more transit-related employees, and
- Receives capital or operating assistance in excess of 1 million; or
- Receives planning assistance in excess of $250,000.


TAR Reference: Section – Regulatory Compliance, Category – Rural Transit Program QAR Federal Regulatory Compliance Chart, Civil Rights/ADA, Civil Rights/EEO, Civil Rights /Title VI, Civil Rights/Limited English Proficiency
Section – Human Resources, Categories – Training, Required ADA Policies, Required ADA Documentation

Additional Resources

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE)

Topic Coverage
The Department of Transportation’s (DOT) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program seeks to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of DOT-assisted contracts in the Department’s highway, transit, and airport financial assistance programs and to create a level playing field on which DBEs can compete fairly for DOT-assisted contracts.

Statutory References
All FTA funding recipients must make “good faith” efforts to ensure that DBEs have opportunities to compete for third party contracts.

FTA recipients receiving planning, capital, or operating assistance who will award prime contracts exceeding $250,000 in FTA funds in any single Federal fiscal year must also prepare a DBE program. All programs must be submitted on an annual basis, if applicable. A DBE program consists of four parts:

♦ The program document;
♦ A description of the DBE goal setting methodology;
♦ A description of how the recipient will provide monitor and oversight of its procurement activities; and
♦ File periodic reports with ODOT.

With respect to this last requirement, the ODOT Office of Transit's Section 5311 grantees must submit semi-annual progress reports to ODOT on October 31 and April 30 of each calendar year. If significant changes have been made to the individual grantees' DBE Programs, during any given year, their DBE Programs must then be updated and submitted to ODOT for submittal to FTA by July 15.

The semi-annual report form is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/DBE.aspx.

FTA’s DBE regulations 49 (CFR part 26) can be found at http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/dbe/civil_rights_5263.html.

Additional Resources
FTA’s DBE resource page can be found at:


Additionally, ODOT maintains an extensive resource website on DBE. This guidance can be found here:

http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/DBE.aspx.

Bloodborne Pathogens

Topic Coverage
This compliance standard is generated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The standard’s requirements state what employers must do to protect workers who are occupationally exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM), as defined in the standard. The standard protects workers who can reasonably be anticipated to come into contact with blood or OPIM as a result of doing their job duties. Transit employees may be subject to such hazards.

Statutory References
In general, these standards (29 CFR part 1910.1030) require employers to:

- Establish an exposure control plan;
- Employers must update the plan annually to reflect changes in tasks, procedures, and positions that affect occupational exposure, and also technological changes that eliminate or reduce occupational exposure;
- Implement the use of universal precautions;
- Identify and use engineering controls;
- Identify and ensure the use of work practice controls;
- Provide personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, gowns, eye protection, and masks;
- Make available hepatitis B vaccinations to all workers with occupational exposure;
- Make available post-exposure evaluation and follow-up to any occupationally exposed worker who experiences an exposure incident;
- Use labels and signs to communicate hazards;
- Provide information and training to workers; and
- Maintain worker medical and training records.

**TAR Reference:** Section – Human Resource Management; Category – Training
Section – System Safety, Security, and Vehicle Reliability, Categories – Vehicle Safety
Equipment, OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens

**Additional Resources**
OSHA’s resource page on this topic area can be found here:


**DEBARTMENT/SUSPENSION/RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING**

**Topic Coverage**
All FTA grant recipients must ensure that Federal funds are not provided to anyone who has been debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in Federally-assisted transactions. These determinations are typically made by the U.S. Department of Justice and are typically referred to as the “integrity” regulations that are common in all Federal grant activity.

**Statutory References**
This compliance requirement is associated with grantee procurement activity. There are thresholds for when these requirements apply:

- Any third party contracts or lower tier agreement estimated to be $25,000 or more (at any tier);
- Any third party contract (regardless of amount) for Federally required audit services (e.g., an A-133 audit); and
- Third party contracts or subagreements requiring official FTA approval.

U.S. DOT regulations, “Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement),” require disclosure of the status of persons and entities participating in affected procurements.

Participants conducting procurements at any tier are expected to assure the status of persons participating in submitting responses to your procurements. This can occur in one of three methods:

- Checking the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) maintained by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and available at [https://www.epls.gov/](https://www.epls.gov/);
- Collecting a certification from the prospective vendor; or
- Adding a clause or condition to the third party contract or subagreement with that vendor.
ODOT recommends that its grantees use the first approach in all covered procurement transactions.

U.S. DOT debarment and suspension regulations (49 CFR part 29) can be found at http://www.dot.gov/ost/m60/Financial_Assistance_Management_Home/Suspension_Debarment_Program.htm.


Section – Regulatory Compliance, Category – Rural Transit Program TAR Federal Regulatory Compliance Chart, Debarment And Suspension

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Topic Coverage
FTA’s authority in the area of transit safety is set forth in Title 49 U.S.C. 5329. Under this Section, FTA may conduct investigations into safety hazards and security risks associated with a condition in equipment, a facility, or an operation financed under the Federal Transit Act in order to establish the nature and extent of the condition and how to eliminate, mitigate, or correct the safety hazard and/or security risk. FTA may also require local jurisdictions to submit a plan for eliminating, mitigating, or correcting the deficiency. FTA may also withhold further financial assistance from any grantee that fails to correct any safety and security deficiency.

Statutory References

Section - Regulatory Compliance, Category – Rural Transit Program TAR Federal Regulatory Compliance Chart, FMCSA, Ohio State Highway Patrol Mandatory Bus Inspections.

Additional Resources
ODOT has a number of useful guides, templates, and other materials to assist local transit agencies address this compliance requirement. This guidance can be found at:

http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/SafetyandSecurity.aspx
PLANNING

Topic Coverage
Three Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula programs – Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316), and New Freedom (Section 5317) – require that projects must be derived from a locally developed, public transit-human services transportation plan. In addition, ODOT requires that all public transit systems funded under the Section 5311 formula program to participate in the local planning process for coordinated public transit-human service transportation in those areas applying for funds under Sections 5310, 5316, or 5317.

The Section 5311 program also requires coordination with transportation assistance under other Federal programs. ODOT must certify annually that the Section 5311 program of projects must provide, “the maximum feasible coordination of public transportation service with transportation assisted by other Federal sources.”

Statutory References
A locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan (“coordinated plan”) identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. Local plans may be developed on a local, regional, or statewide level.

The requirements for maximum feasible coordination in the Federal Transit Act (Section 5311(b)(2)(c)(ii)) and are further described in the most recent FTA Section 5311 Circular 9040, Chapter IV, Program Requirements, http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html.

For more information on the State’s guidelines for locally developed plans, please go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx.

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CHAPTER IV – STATE REQUIREMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The ODOT Office of Transit is responsible for the development, implementation, and administration of various State and Federal transit grant funding programs. In this capacity, 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.

Rural Transit grantees must comply with a number of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and ODOT requirements. ODOT cannot be less restrictive than FTA, but can establish additional requirements as it deems necessary. All of these requirements are compiled in the document entitled Rural Transit Program Requirements available on the ODOT website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf. For your convenience, the specific State requirements are summarized in this Chapter:

♦ Rural Transit Program Calendar
♦ Technical Assistance Reviews (TARs)
♦ Service Options
♦ Review of D&A Collection Site
  o Requirements
  o Checklist
♦ Planning/Four-Year Capital and Operating Plans
♦ Authorizing Resolutions
♦ Local share
♦ Brochures
♦ Transit System Actions that Require Written ODOT Compliance

RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM CALENDAR

There are a number of dates and deadlines for submission of various Rural Transit Program documents. For example, quarterly invoices are due the 15th of the month following the end of the quarter, April 15, July 15, October 15, with the fourth quarter operating invoice due February 28. Four-Year Capital and Operating Plans are due annually, typically in March, although the date can fluctuate. Each of the deadlines and dates for the Rural Transit Program as well as deadlines for associated submissions (DBE, JARC, New Freedom, etc.) can be accessed on the ODOT website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REVIEWS (TARs)

As the administrator of the Rural Transit Program, ODOT must assure FTA that all grantees are complying with the various Federal regulations. A TAR provides ODOT, as the administering
and funding agency, the opportunity to learn more about the rural transit system’s operation, ensure local compliance with Federal and State requirements and thus assure FTA of that compliance, and to provide technical assistance in an effort to improve and enhance the rural transit program, both locally and statewide.

ODOT’s goal is to conduct a TAR for each system approximately once every four years. The reviews are conducted by ODOT staff.

For the example TAR format and other documents related to the ODOT TAR process, go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/TAR.aspx.

**DESIGNATED GRANTEES**

**Introduction**

The Ohio Department of Transportation administers the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 (Rural Transit) Program for small urban and rural areas in Ohio. Eligible applicants under this program include municipalities, county boards of commissioners, townships, villages, regional transit authorities, and county transit boards. In addition, each of these eligible applicants may choose to designate a private nonprofit corporation, an agency in the State of Ohio with 501(c)(3) status, as the grantee for the jurisdiction which will apply directly to ODOT for the Section 5311 funding.

**Definitions**

For benefit of this document, the following definitions are used:

**Eligible Applicant**: Under the Rural Transit (Section 5311) Program, municipalities, boards of county commissioners, townships, villages, county transit boards (CTBs), regional transit authorities (RTAs), or private nonprofit agencies, which have been designated as part of the ODOT Designated Grantee process.

**Eligible FTA Recipient**: A municipality, board of county commissioners, regional transit authority, or county transit board currently receiving funding through either the FTA Section 5311 or 5307 Program.

**Pass Through Agreement**: An agreement executed between an eligible applicant and an eligible FTA recipient for purposes of passing through Section 5311 funding for the operation of rural transit service.

**Public Entity**: Municipalities, boards of county commissioners, departments of county governments, regional transit authorities, county transit boards, townships, and villages.

**Private Nonprofit Agency**: An agency incorporated in the State of Ohio with 501(c)(3) status.

**Designated Grantees**

If an eligible applicant desires to have public transit service in its jurisdiction but wishes to neither directly administer nor operate the service even through a third party contract, the
eligible applicant can designate a private nonprofit corporation as the grantee. In these cases, the eligible applicant must follow a selection process consisting of the following steps:

1. Develop a general scope of service outlining the Rural Transit project to be implemented.

2. Advertise and hold a public hearing to offer interested private nonprofit corporations the opportunity to comment on the proposed service and to indicate their interest in the grantee designation. The advertisement must be published at least 30 days prior to the public hearing; a 30-day comment period must follow. Anyone who requests information in writing must be provided with the general scope of service.

3. Request each private nonprofit corporation attending the public hearing, or which did not attend the meeting but indicated its interest in writing to the eligible applicant, to submit an information package consisting of specific financial and operating information as outlined in the Guidelines for Designating Rural Transit Grantees on the Office of Transit website, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

4. Review all information received from prospective agencies and selects the agency that will best meet local transportation needs, according to both local and ODOT criteria.

5. Submit the recommendation for selection, information received from all prospective agencies, a description of the local selection procedures and the name, address, telephone number, contact person and e-mail address for the agency selected to ODOT. ODOT will review all information submitted and notify the eligible applicant in writing of its decision regarding confirmation of the selected agency. ODOT reserves the right to disallow any designation if ODOT believes the selection will not be in the best interest of the area and citizens directly affected by the designation. Rejection can result from the proposed designee having a history of 1) documented poor performance in other State, Federal, or local projects or programs, or 2) repeated noncompliance with the requirements of Federal, State, or local grant programs. If ODOT rejects a grantee’s proposed designation, another agency must be selected according to the same criteria used to make the original designation.

6. Grantee designations must run concurrent with the Rural Transit contract, which is on a calendar year basis unless another time period is approved in writing by ODOT.

7. The original designation of a grantee may remain in effect for a period of up to three (3) years. Once a designated grantee has been selected, except as described in subparagraph 9 below, the designation can continue, if the eligible applicant so chooses, for an additional three year period, subject to a satisfactory performance review of the selected agency.
a. Satisfactory performance must be evaluated by the eligible applicant on the basis of the same criteria used in making the initial designation. As in the original submission, ODOT must concur in the re-designation.

b. If for any reason during the tenure of the designation the eligible applicant or ODOT determines that the designated grantee no longer meets one or more of the criteria set forth in the Guidelines for Designating Rural Transit Grantees available as noted previously on the ODOT website, the designation can be revoked and a new designated grantee selected, or if it so chooses, the eligible applicant may assume direct operation of the services.

See below for the grantee re-designation process.

8. During the length of the designation period, the designated grantee assumes responsibility for adhering to all Federal and State requirements of the Rural Transit Program including but not limited to the requirements for filing applications, executing contracts, local share, accounting, and finance, ADA, Civil Rights, and FTA Drug and Alcohol Testing. A list and description of all requirements can be found in the FTA Master Agreement http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/18-Master.pdf. (Note the number listed in this web address will change with the current version of the Master Agreement.)

9. If after the three (3) year designation period or any subsequent renewal periods, the original eligible applicant wishes to provide its services directly, it may do so regardless of the past performance of the designated grantee.

10. The eligible applicant may review its designation and/or disallow the grantee designation at any time during the designation period for poor performance or repeated non-compliance with Federal and State requirements.

A suggested time frame for conducting the designated grantee process as well as recertification is contained in the Guidelines for Designating Rural Transit Grantees on the ODOT website, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

Eligible applicants may also use this process for designating eligible applicants other than private nonprofit corporations, if they so choose.

**Grantee Re-Designation**

Following the initial three-year designation period, the eligible applicant may re-designate a grantee for continuing three year periods. The eligible applicant must submit a letter of intent to renew the designated grantee in writing to ODOT no later than 30 days prior to the expiration of the designation, along with a resolution indicating that:

- a. The eligible applicant is satisfied that the designated grantee has satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of the designated grantee;

- b. The designated grantee will continue to meet all Federal, State, and local requirements and regulations of the Section 5311 Rural Transit Program;
c. The designated grantee continues to have the requisite financial, administrative, and operating capacity for the Section 5311 Program.

d. The period (not to exceed three years) for which the re-designation will remain in effect, subject to regular review by the eligible applicant.

A sample letter of intent is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

PLANNING

Although not required, a Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is an example of a useful short range planning tool. A TDP not only helps plan for capital and operating projects over a 3-5 year period, but it can also help an existing transit system to assess and evaluate its operations to ensure that the system continues to meet the needs of the community in an efficient and economically effective manner. For new systems, the TDP can serve as the implementation guide for initiating new service. For more information about a TDP, see Chapter X of the Rural Transit Manual or contact your Rural Transit Representative. Planning activities that are required by ODOT are described below.

Four Year Capital and Operating Tables
All 5311 Grantees are required to submit Four Year Capital and Operating Tables. The Four Year Capital and Operating Tables are an essential part of planning for the transit system and ODOT. The Tables provide the basis for ODOT’s application for Rural Transit Program funding to the FTA.

The capital tables address vehicle procurement and/or real property procurement or construction. Project planning must include justification, a timeline, proposed expenses, etc.

The operating tables must include all operating expenses, projected revenues, and local funding amounts.

Annual operating and capital budgets submitted with the Rural Transit application are compared to each system’s Four Year Capital and Operating Tables. If projects are included in the annual capital budget but were not identified in the Four Year Capital and Operating Tables, there is less chance of approval.

Each grantee must submit its Four Year Capital and Operating Tables by February 15 every two years on odd numbered years. Changes to the Four Year Capital and Operating Tables (deletion of items, changes to a type of vehicle, etc.) must be completed through the Four Capital and Operating Tables Amendment process. Amendments will only be accepted up to February 15 of each even numbered year in order to meet the FTA application deadline in July of each program year. Projects not included in a Rural Transit grantee’s Four Year Capital and Operating Tables may not be funded until the next application cycle.
Forms and Instructions for the Four Year Capital and Operating Tables may be found on the ODOT Office of Transit website at:

**Project Scoping Process**
Planning for the construction of a transit facility requires completion of a scoping process. The purpose of the Project Scoping Process is to determine project readiness before committing funding to a project. The process is used for major construction projects and large equipment purchases. The Office of Transit staff work directly with the applicants to clearly define and describe their projects using a Transit Project Scoping Form at an on-site scoping meeting. The process is used jointly by ODOT and the rural transit applicants to develop an objective assessment of the feasibility of the project and to determine whether milestone dates are realistic. The goal of the Process is to improve on-time project delivery and the efficient management of project funding. More information regarding the Project Scoping Process is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

**Authorizing Resolutions**
Current authorizing resolutions executed by the requisite governing board are required for the Rural Transit Program application. Please go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx for a sample authorizing resolution.

**Local Share Certifications**
Rural Transit Program grantees must submit a signed local share certification listing the sources and amounts of local share to be used for the Rural Transit Program. The most current Rural Transit Program guidelines and instructions can be found on the ODOT Office of Transit website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

**Brochures**
ODOT requires each grant recipient to develop a system brochure clearly describing the system name, it’s mission, service area, days/hours of service, fares, etc. Systems must also ensure that public information materials such as brochures, schedules and websites notify the public of its protection under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, how to obtain additional information on nondiscrimination obligations, and how to file a complaint. For complete brochure requirements, please see the Rural Transit Program Requirements available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf

The FTA Title VI Circular can be found at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.htm.

**Transit System Actions That Require Written ODOT Compliance**
A variety of actions require ODOT’s prior written concurrence, including but not limited to:
♦ Service and route changes.
♦ Fare increases.
♦ Designated grantee selections.
♦ Vehicle and equipment purchases, including specifications if not purchasing from ODOT Term Contracts.
♦ ODOT Term Contract purchases.
♦ Design and Construction specifications and plans, including architectural and engineering documents.
♦ Brochures, including all revisions.
♦ Vehicle and equipment disposition.
♦ Third party contract requests for proposals, award documents, contracts, etc.
♦ Budget revisions and amendments.
♦ Invoice extensions.
♦ Audit extensions
♦ Cost allocation and in-kind plans.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact your Rural Transit Representative.
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CHAPTER V – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

ODOT is responsible for providing oversight of Federal and State funds to ensure that funds are used appropriately, compliance with Federal and State guidelines, and compliance with the terms and conditions of Sections 5310, 5311, 5316, and 5317 contracts. ODOT monitors Rural transit systems’ financial management practices using three methods:

♦ Desk Inspections
  - Review of audit reports issued by the Auditor of State and Independent Public Accountants.
  - Reconciliation of schedule of expenditures of Federal awards.
  - Confirmation of receipt and recognition of Federal funds.
  - Identifying audit issues.
  - Follow-up on audit findings.
  - Report of significant or material issues.

♦ On site audits
  - 4 to 5 day visit to transit system.
  - Formal entrance and exit interviews.
  - Review, reconciliation, and verification of financial documents from a designated time period, typically one year. Review documents include, but are not limited to:
    - Financial statements
    - General ledger
    - Revenue transactions
    - Expense transactions
    - ODOT invoices

  ODOT will issue an audit report detailing any findings and a corrective action plan.

♦ Additional oversight includes:
  - Review of cost allocation plans.
  - Annual report data review and comparison
  - Providing financial management training and technical assistance.

Rural transit systems bear the burden of complying with Federal, State and ODOT contract requirements and must meet the standards for financial management as detailed in 49 CFR 18.20 of the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments


Rural transit systems must meet standards for:

♦ Financial reporting
♦ Accounting records
♦ Internal control
♦ Budget control
Allowable costs
Source documentation
Cash management

ODOT has developed the “Accounting Done Right for Rural Transit Systems” training with the ODOT auditing staff to assist systems with the development of comprehensive financial management systems, policies, and procedures. This PowerPoint training is available on the ODOT website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx.

ALLOWABLE COSTS/ELIGIBLE COSTS

The Federal Government has very clearly defined rules concerning what costs are allowable and what costs are not allowable. The specific items that can be charged to and, therefore, reimbursed from, any grant are based on the specifics of each grant agreement. It is not uncommon for each grant to have unique requirements as to what costs can be charged to the grant. However, the general guidelines for allowable costs are contained in OMB Circular A-122, http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004, for nonprofit organizations and in OMB Circular A-87 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004 for governmental bodies.

The basic underlying principle of Circular A-87 and A-122 is that all costs incurred must be reasonable and necessary to properly complete the grant project. The Circulars also contain a listing of specific cost items that are allowable and cost items that are not allowable. Rural transit system grantees and service providers should refer to the ODOT Chart of Accounts http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx for identified allowable costs.

A. Indirect Costs: Indirect costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant, contract, project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs. Costs like rent, utilities, and accounting services might be charged directly if these costs can be recorded at a level to allocate the specific units used and which can be attributed to each grant program. Practical difficulties preclude such an approach. Therefore, cost allocation plans or indirect cost rates are used to distribute those costs to the proper revenue sources.

B. Central service costs are those amounts expended by central service departments for overall administration of the grant program and for providing centralized services to grant program departments. These functions are necessary for operations and are centralized to provide efficient and consistent policy and services.

COST ALLOCATION PLANS

Grantees, or service providers who provide transportation in addition to their rural transit program services, are required to establish the Rural Transit Program as a separate
cost center and develop a cost allocation plan in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, “Cost Principles for State and Local Governments,”
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004 to equally distribute common (indirect) costs between the Rural Transit Program and other services. Private non-profit agencies, likewise, find corresponding guidance in OMB Circular A-122, “Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations” http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004 Instructions for completing a cost allocation plan are included in the training Accounting Done Right for Rural Transit Systems available at

Please note that all plans must be approved by a reciprocating Federal agency and/or ODOT before any indirect or in-kind costs can be charged to the Rural Transit Program. ODOT’s review is conducted by the ODOT Office of Accounting, therefore, these plans must be submitted to your ODOT Rural Transit Representative as early as possible to allow for this review and to ensure that your project is not delayed. No indirect costs will be allowed prior to the review and approval of your plan. Your Rural Transit Representative can provide samples of cost allocation plans to assist you in the development of your plan.

IN-KIND SERVICE PLANS

Rural Transit grantees and/or or direct providers of rural transit services may provide certain in-kind or contributed services. A few examples of in-kind services include rent, utilities, *staff time not charged as a direct cost, and accounting services. To use these contributed services as revenue, however, they must also be shown as expenses. If you wish to use in-kind as a supplement for local funds, then you are required to submit a well-documented in-kind plan for review and approval by ODOT staff before you may use the contributed services as local match. The use of such in-kind service must be reasonable, documented, and consistent with any other type of expense and revenue matching program. Eligible in-kind services are explained in the “Accounting Done Right for Rural Transit Systems” training available at

*Note: If any staff time is used as an in-kind donation, a time study to establish the amount of time spent for the rural transit program must be conducted and reviewed annually. Please contact your Rural Transit Representative for further guidance.

FORCE ACCOUNT PLANS

Force account is the use of one’s own labor force to carry out a capital grant project. Force account work may consist of design, construction, refurbishment, inspection, and construction management activities, if eligible for reimbursement under an FTA grant. Force account does not include grant or project administration activities which are otherwise direct project costs. A sample force account plan is available at
REVENUES AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS

ODOT requires all Section 5311 grantees to provide a local match to the State and Federal grants. These matching funds, or local share, are critical to the success of a rural transit system. The local share of an operating project is derived by calculating the total operating expenses and deducting the total farebox revenue collected, the eligible amount of Federal funds, and the eligible amount of State funds. Grantees must provide sufficient local share to cover, at a minimum, three months operating expenses.

Revenues eligible as local share for an operating project include:

- Advertising revenue;
- In-kind contributions;
- Local general revenue funds;
- Local dedicated funding such as sales, income, or property taxes;
- Contract revenues;
- Donations, grants (other than Rural Transit Program grants), and other contributions such as United Way (reported as Other revenue, line item 499);
- Other Federal programs (available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/STIP-TIP/Workshop/Transit%20TIP%20Table%20and%20TIP%20Amendment%20Instructions.doc); and
- Federal program funds which can be used as local match for Rural Transit Program Projects, lists Federal funding sources which can be used for local share. See http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/STIP-TIP/Workshop/Transit%20TIP%20Table%20and%20TIP%20Amendment%20Instructions.doc.

Passenger donations are typically reported as farebox revenue unless the transit system has designated another use for these donations. For example, some transit systems designate passenger donations as a capital replacement account. Other agencies and organizations may make cash donations to a transit system to help defray operating expenses, capital expenses, or to be used at the discretion of the transit system. These are all acceptable practices as long as the transit system established a consistent policy and procedure for tracking and reporting these revenues. See the Rural Transit Chart of Accounts for a listing of the revenue classes and account line items for reporting local share revenue http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

Typically, the term “local share” is used to refer to the sources of local share provided from local general revenue accounts, dedicated funding, or donations and grants such as United Way. It is important to note that only these sources of local share can be used as “plug” figures throughout the year to make up the difference between the total local share required and the amount of local share revenue available from all other sources from quarter to quarter. In other words, the amount of local cash reported from quarter to
quarter may vary depending on the amount of other local share generated from other sources, however, the other sources of local share (advertising, contract revenues, etc.) must be reported as they are earned and cannot be decreased or removed from the budget even if excess revenues are earned. It is extremely important to note, that the amount of local cash indicated as needed must be available. See Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, of this Manual and ODOT’s Operating Invoice and Instructions http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx for further information. For further clarification in calculating local share, please contact your Rural Transit Representative.

Additional revenue and match requirement information can be obtained in the Rural Transit Program Application Instructions and Forms http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

**Farebox Revenue:** Farebox revenue consists of the fare or designated payment for a trip on a passenger vehicle and includes cash fares and any revenue earned through the sale of tokens, tickets, and passes.


2. ODOT’s Established Fare Recovery Goals: ODOT has developed fare recovery performance measure goals for rural transit systems, see Operating Data and Performance Measure Instructions tab on the ODOT Operating Invoice http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

**Contract Revenue:** Contract revenue is the income from the transportation of a group of people for a specified cost scheduled and paid by a third party. A rate higher than the regular fare is negotiated with the contracting agency and takes into account the fully allocated cost of the service.

**Local General Revenue:** This revenue is the income generated locally that is not earmarked for any designated purpose and can be used at the discretion of the grantee, for example, county general revenue funds. Refer to ODOT’s Rural Transit Chart of Accounts for additional information http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

**Other Revenue:** Other revenues are any other sources of income not covered above and can include, but are not limited to, advertising revenue, administrative fees (e.g., fees charged for third party billing), income from maintenance or other services provided to a third party, vending machine proceeds, and Greyhound commission fees. For further information, contact your Rural Transit Representative.
MOTOR FUEL TAX REBATES

Rural transit systems are eligible for the State Motor Fuel Tax Rebates, based on the February 12, 2004 revision to the definition of transit buses by the Ohio Excise Tax Division. There are several requirements governing these rebates including the required purchase documentation and the minimum number of gallons for an individual claim (100 gallons). This rebate is shown as a credit on the ODOT quarterly operating invoice. All of the State requirements as well as guidance on how to report and claim these rebates on the ODOT Rural Transit invoice are contained in the ODOT “Accounting Done Right for Rural Transit Systems.” Go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx, click on Rural Accounting Done Right Presentation and search on Fuel Tax Rebates.


ACCRUAL V. CASH ACCOUNTING

ODOT requires rural transit grantees and service providers to use accrual accounting based on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and a uniform system of accounts (USOA). Accrual accounting is the most accurate financial reporting method and matches revenues and expenses to the period the revenue was earned or the expense incurred. Accrual accounting applies revenues and expenses for the period January 1 – December 31 to allow for better management of transit funds and to reflect the true cost of business for this period. By comparison, the cash accounting method is governed by cash flow. Expenses are recorded only when an expense is actually paid, and income is recorded only when actually received regardless of when the expense was incurred or the income earned. While many grantees may use some form of cash accounting, accrual accounting must be used for all Rural Transit Program accounting records. Please contact your Rural Transit Representative for further guidance.

PRICING SERVICE UNDER CONTRACT

ODOT strongly encourages all rural transit systems to develop and implement contract rate structures based on fully allocated costs. The issues surrounding contract service and the method for developing a fully allocated rate structure are summarized in Equitable Contract Rates for Rural Transit Systems http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx. ODOT also provides rural transit systems with a comprehensive cost allocation model tool http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx that allows systems to easily determine fully allocated cost per trip, per mile and per hour.

AUDITS/CLOSE-OUTS

Rural Transit Program grantees are subject to audit requirements pursuant to the Single Audit
Act of 1984, as defined in the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audit Procedures, available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133_compliance_supplement_2011. An annual audit is required of all Rural Transit Program grantees and their third party service providers and must be submitted to ODOT within 30 days following completion of the grantee’s audit, or within 7 days of receipt of the audit by the grantee from the auditor, whichever is earliest. The difference between an audit and a financial review is described below:

♦ Audit - An audit is more detailed and requires the most work by the auditor. An audit includes detailed tests of selected transactions and balances and is performed by an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) who provides an opinion that the financial statements are fairly presented. The audit is also the most expensive, but provides the most assurance that your records are prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

♦ Financial Review – A financial review provides only analytical tests and inquiries of management. This review does not have to be conducted by a CPA, but must be performed by an independent party such as a public accountant or a city or county auditor.

The cost of an audit or financial review should be reasonable and consistent with industry standards or 2-5% of the total program costs. The costs associated with these reports are eligible operating expenses.

To fully understand the level of audit required, ODOT has chosen to apply the same threshold requirements as applied under the Single Audit Act. The following Federal financial assistance thresholds are prescribed for State and local governments by the Act:

♦ If a Rural Transit grantee receives $500,000 or more a year in Federal financial assistance, an annual audit must be made in accordance with A-133.

♦ If a Rural Transit grantee receives less than $500,000 a year, the local government is exempt from A-133 and other Federal audit requirements, but shall be governed by audit requirements prescribed by State or local law or regulation. Therefore, using the above guidance, if a grantee passes through more than $300,000 in Federal funds to a service provider, a full financial audit must be prepared by an independent CPA firm. The audit must be prepared in accordance with A-133 and the Compliance Supplement for Single Audits of State and Local Governments (CSSASLG).

♦ When pass through funds total less than $500,000, a financial review must be prepared that includes at a minimum, (1) an income statement showing all revenues and expenses broken out and a total which matches Federal and State monies passed through to the contractor and (2) compliance with CSSASLG General Requirements.

After determining the type of audit to be performed, contact the State Auditor to see if a pass down audit can be performed during your agency’s Single Audit. The State
Auditor is the cognizant agent for performing A-133 audits and has, in many cases, provided these additional services at a reasonable cost.

Grantees that are audited only every two years because of the small amount of Federal funds received may also perform the pass through audit at the same time. This audit exclusion must be granted by the State Auditor in accordance with A-133 regulations. The only two instances when a grantee is not required to meet the established deadline is for an audit exclusion granted by the State Auditor or an extension granted by ODOT.
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CHAPTER VI – INVOICING INSTRUCTIONS & OPERATING DATA

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Rural Transit Program is a cost reimbursement program. Expenses must be incurred before payment can be made. FTA also requires that records of expenses, and associated program revenue, are maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP) and a prescribed chart of accounts following the requirements for a uniform system of accounts (USOA). Further, FTA requires the reporting of certain data associated with the operation of service through its National Transit Database (NTB), http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/.

ODOT has established a process for both the invoicing process, operating and capital, and the collection of operating data. Written processes for each of these has been documented and is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx, in the section entitled Rural Invoice Training Material.

All invoices must be submitted electronically. For operating invoices, there are occasions when grantees will actually have collected more local share (e.g., contract revenue) for the reporting period than is required. In these cases, unless other authorization has been given, a manual ‘push up’ process must be used to report these revenues as ‘farebox’ and reduce the Federal and/or State shares accordingly. Your Rural Transit Representative will work through this process and inform you of the required changes to your local share and to the amount of your State payment for that period.

Each Rural Transit grantee is assigned a Rural Transit Representative who reviews each grantee’s invoice for accuracy and against the approved project budget. Occasionally additional information may be needed, and in those cases, you will be contacted by your Representative. If changes are made to your invoice by your assigned Rural Transit Representative (e.g., in the ‘push up’ example noted above), you will receive a revised copy of the invoice for your files.

RURAL CHART OF ACCOUNTS

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires Rural Transit grantees/contract service providers to maintain accounting and financial records in accordance with the National Transit Database. Accounts are categorized by function within broad categories of capital, operating expenses, and administration expenses. The way service is provided, directly or under contract, will have an impact on the grantee’s accounting records. To access the ODOT Rural Chart of Accounts, go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

OPERATING & ADMINISTRATIVE INVOICE AND BUDGET VARIANCE ANALYSIS INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions to assist you with accurately completing the ODOT Office of Transit, Rural Transit Program Quarterly Operating and Administrative Invoice and Budget Variance Analysis is

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE OPERATING DATA REPORT FORM (ODRF)**

The ODRF covers four quarters and includes a cumulative column (year to date figures). It must be submitted to ODOT by the 15th of the month following the end of each quarter. The first quarter report is due by April 15th, and each report thereafter is due by July 15 and October 15, respectively, except for the final report which is due February 15. Complete instructions are available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx in the Rural Invoice Training Material section.

**CAPITAL REIMBURSEMENT INVOICE INSTRUCTIONS**

Capital reimbursement invoices are due upon receipt of the vendor invoice. Capitalized maintenance invoice due dates are due quarterly on April 15, July 15, October 15, and February 15 of each year. Detailed instructions are available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx in the Rural Invoice Training Material section.
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CHAPTER VII – PROCUREMENT AND THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING

INTRODUCTION

Rural transit grantees must follow certain local, State, and Federal requirements for all procurements and third party contracting. Procurements can include vehicles, office, garage, and vehicle equipment, software, professional services/architectural and engineering, construction, and other services, such as transit service. For example, rural transit grantees may choose not to operate a system themselves and, therefore, will contract out all or a portion of those services to a transportation provider (see Chapter X, Designing a New Transportation Program of this Manual for service options).

Other professional services may also be contracted out as will the purchase of vehicles and other large capital items. And, some grantees may undertake a major construction project to design and build a facility (see Chapter IX, Construction and Facility Projects). As such, Section 5311 grantees must be fully aware of the contracting and procurement requirements and regulations—Federal, State, and local—which govern these activities.

RESOURCES

There are several resources that will assist rural transit grantees with their procurements:

FTA Circular 4220
As a sub-recipient of funding under 49 U.S.C. § 5311, grantees are held to a number of FTA-specific and other Federal requirements. For third party contracting or significant capital purchases or facility construction or renovation, grantees must follow the guidance set forth in the most recent edition of FTA Circular 4220, which is available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html. Grantees which are local governmental entities may follow their own local procedures, provided that, at a minimum, the basic requirements in this circular are met. Designated grantees which are private nonprofit entities must follow FTA Circular 4220. (Note that this circular is periodically updated; as of the writing of this Manual, the current version is 4220.1F.)

Common Rule

Procurement Pro
National RTAP offers a free web-based application, Procurement Pro, that “walks” grantees through the steps needed to determine the Federal clauses and certifications that must be included in procurement documents for a Federally-funded project. In return you will receive a document that includes all required Federal clauses and certifications and other supporting
documentation, such as checklists and templates, to help you manage the procurement process. To access this application, go to http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx.

**FTA Best Practices Procurement Manual**
FTA has compiled a series of Federal and/or grantee procurement practices that have proven to be effective over the years and has published them in the *FTA Best Practices Procurement Manual*. The Manual presents these best practices for the assistance and guidance of the local grantee; procedures and practices presented in the Manual are not mandatory unless identified as such. These best practices are meant to be informative and helpful and are offered for the guidance and assistance. However, it is also recognized that there may be local, unique situations that precludes a grantee from adopting the procedures of another grantee in a certain area. Rural transit grantees are encouraged to refer to the Manual as they prepare documents for, and conduct, their procurements. FTA’s Manual is available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13054_6037.html.

**FTA Buy America Regulations**
FTA’s Buy America requirements apply to construction contracts and acquisition of goods or rolling stock (valued at more than $100,000). Specific requirements for pre-award and post delivery audits apply to the purchase of rolling stock. ODOT awards all vehicle term contracts in compliance with FTA’s Pre-Award/Post-Delivery Requirements. Grantees conducting direct purchase of vehicles are responsible for complying with all Buy America provisions. Refer to http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12921.html for more information.

**PROCUREMENT POLICY REQUIREMENTS**
There are general standards and requirements which apply to all recipients of Section 5311 funding. All Rural Transit Program grantees must follow a written procurement process. Grantees must submit their written procurement process, including any periodic revisions or updates, to ODOT for approval. In the case of a municipality or county or other governmental entity, that entity’s written procurement process may be followed, assuming that it contains the required Federal components. The guidelines and descriptions of procurements as well as the basic elements for a written procurement process are all contained in FTA Circular 4220, http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html.

**METHODS OF PROCUREMENT**
Procurements are typically categorized as micro purchases; small purchases; or competitive procurements. Each method of procurement is briefly described below; however, this does not relieve Rural Transit Grantees of the responsibility of reading, understanding, and complying with all applicable State and Federal purchasing guidelines.

**Micro Purchases**
Procurement by micro-purchase is typically for those purchases under $3,000. Purchases below that threshold may be made without obtaining competitive quotations if the grantee determines that the price is fair and reasonable. Such purchases are exempt from Buy America requirements. There should be equitable distribution among qualified suppliers (in the local area); splitting of
procurements to avoid the micro purchase threshold is prohibited. The Davis-Bacon Act applies to construction contracts over $2,000, regardless if it is a micro purchase. Minimum documentation is required that includes a determination that the price is fair and reasonable and how this determination was derived.

**Small Purchases**
Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that cost more than $3,000 but do not cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. Part 403 (11) currently set at $100,000. If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources. *NOTE: Based on the current provisions of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), bidding is not required for individual items costing less than $25,000. If local limits are more restrictive (i.e. many Cities must bid items over $10,000), those limits would apply. A grantee may not, however, follow its own procedures if its procedures are less restrictive than the ORC. You must check your local and State guidelines for specific purchasing thresholds and requirements for cities, counties, and Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs).*

Grantees must obtain quotes from three separate sources for any items to be purchased but which do not meet the threshold for bidding. The quotes must be recorded as part of the purchasing file and submitted to ODOT with the request for authorization to award.

In order for a Rural Transit grantee to support cost allowability (e.g., as part of an audit), it is essential that adequate documentation be maintained for all purchases involving Rural Transit Program funds. Rural Transit Program grantees are not required to submit documentation, except as required as part of the grantee’s Federal and State reimbursement request, for micro- or small purchases. However, this documentation must be maintained in the grantee’s procurement files for submission upon request or for review during an ODOT Technical Assistance Review (TAR).

**Competitive Purchases**
Purchases that do not qualify as micro or small purchases must undergo competitive procurement. These procurements can include software purchases, transportation services, vehicles and other capital equipment, professional services, including architectural and engineering, and facility construction.

Competitive procurements are typically classified as sealed bids/invitations for bid (IFB) and requests for proposals (RFP). Each of these is described in detail in Chapter VI of the FTA Circular 4220, [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html).

Note that all competitive procurements must receive ODOT’s prior review and approval of all bid, proposal, award, and contract documents. In all, ODOT will conduct three reviews. First, ODOT must review and approve all plans and specifications, the invitation for bid and/or request for proposal prior to the advertisement of the bid or proposal. Second, ODOT must review a copy of each bid/proposal submitted, the bid/proposal evaluation, and the award recommendation. Finally, ODOT must review the proposed contract between the Rural Transit
grantee and the contractor before it is executed. ODOT’s review is to ensure that all applicable State and Federal laws and guidelines have been followed as required by FTA.

**ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES (A&E)**

If contracting for A&E services, the grantee must use competitive proposal procedures based on the Ohio Revised Code and the Brooks Act as defined in 40 U.S.C. part 541. Other types of services considered A&E services include program management, construction management, feasibility studies, preliminary engineering, design, surveying, mapping, and services which require performance by a registered or licensed architect or engineer. The Brooks Act requires that:

- An offeror’s qualifications are evaluated;
- Price must be excluded as an evaluation factor;
- Negotiations must be conducted with only the most qualified offeror; and
- Failing to agree on price, negotiations are then conducted with the next most qualified offeror until a contract award can be made to the most qualified offeror whose price is fair and reasonable to the grantee.

This “qualifications based procurement method” can only be used for the procurement of A&E services. This method of procurement cannot be used to obtain other types of services even though a firm that provides A&E services is also a potential source to perform other types of services. These requirements apply to the extent any State has adopted by statute a formal procedure for the procurement of A&E services. The State of Ohio has adopted formal procedures with the Brooks Act under Ohio Revised Code (ORC) sections 153.65-71. This procedure is known as the Qualification Based Selection (QBS) methodology and can be found in *How to Comply with Ohio’s Design Professional Selection Law* available at [http://www.acecohio.org/aws/ACEC/asset_manager/get_file/39212/complyguidele.t.pdf](http://www.acecohio.org/aws/ACEC/asset_manager/get_file/39212/complyguidelet.pdf)

**Noncompetitive Proposals (Sole Source)**

Sole source procurements are accomplished through solicitation or acceptance of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate. A contract amendment or change order that is not within the scope of the original contract may also be considered a sole source procurement. A detailed cost analysis to support the procurement is required and ODOT must review and approve all sole source procurements. For assistance with sole source procurements, go to [http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx](http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx).

**OPTIONS**

Grantees may include options in contracts. Allowable options and the process for including those are addressed in Procurement Pro at [http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx](http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx).

**Contract Cost and Price Analysis for Every Procurement Action**

Grantees must perform a cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action, including contract modifications. The method and degree of analysis is dependent upon the facts...
surrounding the particular procurement situation, but as a starting point, grantees must make independent estimates before receiving bids or proposals of the anticipated cost of the procurement.

**Cost Analysis**
A cost analysis must be performed when the offeror is required to submit the elements (i.e., labor hours, overhead, materials, etc.) of the estimated cost, e.g., under professional consulting and A&E services contracts. A cost analysis is necessary when adequate price competition is lacking and for sole source procurements, including contract modifications or change orders, unless price reasonableness can be established on the basis of a catalog or market price of a commercial product sold in substantial quantities to the general public or on the basis of prices set by law or regulation.

**Price Analysis**
A price analysis may be used in all other instances to determine the reasonableness of the proposed contract price.

**Profit**
Grantees must negotiate profit as a separate element of the price for each contract in which there is no price competition and in all cases where cost analysis is performed. To establish a fair and reasonable profit, consideration will be given to the complexity of the work to be performed, the risk borne by the contractor, the contractor’s investment, the amount of subcontracting, the quality of its record of past performance, and industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work.

**Federal Cost Principles**
Costs or prices based on estimated costs for grant contracts will be allowable only to the extent that costs incurred or cost estimates included in negotiated prices are consistent with Federal cost principles. Grantees may reference their own cost principles that comply with applicable Federal cost principles.

**Cost Plus Percentage of Cost Prohibited**
The cost plus a percentage of cost and percentage of construction cost methods of contracting are unallowable. See the Pricing Guide for assistance in performing cost and price analysis, located at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx)

**Bonding Requirements**
To encourage greater contractor participation in FTA-assisted projects, FTA does not require the recipient to impose bonding requirements on its third party contractors other than construction bonding specified by the Common Grant Rules and FTA Circular 4220, [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html). FTA discourages unnecessary bonding because it increases the cost of the contract and restricts competition, particularly by disadvantaged business enterprises. Bond companies exercise their discretion and assure their profits primarily by declining to undertake excessive risks. Consequently many bidders have limited “bonding capacity.” Unnecessary performance bonding requirements reduce a prospective bidder’s or offeror’s capability
to bid or offer a proposal on bonded work. Small businesses with short histories may have particular difficulty obtaining bonds as may be specified.

Nevertheless, even though bonding can be expensive, FTA recognizes that a recipient might find bid, performance, or payment bonds to be desirable. Because bonding requirements can limit contractor participation, FTA expects the recipient’s bonding requirements to be reasonable and not unduly restrictive. FTA, however, will not challenge State or local bonding requirements as unreasonably restrictive of competition, even though they might exceed Federal requirements. Nevertheless, FTA will not participate in procurements where the recipient’s bonding policies result in such “excessive bonding” that it violates the Common Grant Rules as restrictive of competition.


**PAYMENT PROVISIONS IN THIRD PARTY CONTRACTS**

**Advance Payments**
FTA does not authorize and will not participate in funding payments to a contractor prior to the incurrence of costs by the contractor unless prior written concurrence is obtained from FTA.

**Progress Payments**
Grantees may use progress payments provided the following requirements are followed:

- Progress payments are only made to the contractor for costs incurred in the performance of the contract; and
- When progress payments are used, the grantee must obtain title to property (materials, work in progress, and finished goods) for which progress payments are made. Alternative security for progress payments by irrevocable letter of credit or equivalent means to protect the grantee’s interests in the progress payments may be used in lieu of obtaining title.

**Liquidated Damages Provisions**
A grantee may use liquidated damages if it may reasonably expect to suffer damages (increased costs to the project) from late completion and the extent or amount of such damages would be difficult or impossible to determine. The assessment for damages shall be at a specific rate per day for each day of overrun in contract time, and the rate must be specified in the third party contract. Any liquidated damages recovered shall be credited to the project account involved unless otherwise determined by ODOT and FTA.

**CONTRACT AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT**

For contract award announcement requirements, go to http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx.
CONTRACT PROVISIONS

For all applicable contract revisions and requirements, go to http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx.

STATUTORY AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

A current, comprehensive list of statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to grantee procurements is provided as part of Procurement Pro at http://www.nationalrtap.org/WebApps/ProcurementPro.aspx.

VEHICLE PROCUREMENT

ODOT State Term Contracts/Cooperative Purchasing Program
ODOT has established several State term contracts for the purchase of vehicles. Typically, the types of vehicles offered under these contracts include minivans, modified minivans, converted vans, and light transit vehicles with a wide range of available optional equipment and with and without wheelchair lifts. ODOT’s cooperative purchasing program is administered by the ODOT Office of Contracts, Purchasing Services. Complete instructions and guidance for participating in the Program is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/VehicleTermContracts.aspx, click on Cooperative Purchasing Program. (Note: Designated Grantees must refer to the next section below).

ODOT awards all term contracts in compliance with FTA’s Pre-Award/Post-Delivery Requirements as required by FTA’s Buy America regulations. Although ODOT personnel perform brief inspections at most manufacturing plants for specification compliance, if ten or more of the same revenue service modified vans or buses are purchased using FTA funds, the grantee (not ODOT) is required to perform the "Resident Inspection" and keep on file the required documentation. Refer to http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12921.html for further guidance regarding Buy America.

In order to offer term contracts which run for up to two years, a price increase clause is added to the procurement to allow the vendor to increase the price if the vehicle manufacturer has "closed out" the current model year production and next year's model must be ordered. The price may only be increased with ODOT's concurrence. Grantees should contact your Rural Transit Representative or refer to the ODOT Office of Contracts Purchasing Program, at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/ContractAdmin/Contracts/Lists/PurchaseCurrentContracts/CoOp.aspx to determine if the price for a particular vehicle, as stated, is still valid. The delivery time may also vary during these "close-out" periods. A penalty clause for late delivery is included in the contracts. If vehicle delivery exceeds the stated delivery time, it is up to the Rural Transit grantee to impose the penalty clause. You may also contact ODOT for further assistance. Vendors are required, under this contract, to demonstrate the wheelchair lift or ramp and the proper use of all wheelchair securement devices for all accessible vehicles, furnish the recipient with the title upon delivery, and supply 30 day license tags on the vehicle.
The contract allows the vendor to invoice the recipient 30 days prior to delivery. This provides the grantee time to invoice ODOT so payment (check or EFT) can be made upon delivery when final acceptance of the vehicle is approved and the proper title has been received. Please note that grantees are responsible for invoicing ODOT and ensuring Federal and State funds are available for payment. See Final Purchase Procedures for State Term Contracts at Final Purchase Procedures for State Term Contract Purchases for the procedures related to payment, delivery, and warranty issues. ODOT Invoicing procedures are contained in Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, of this Manual.

**NOTE:** It is the grantee’s responsibility to monitor and enforce all contract requirements, to notify its assigned Rural Transit Representative of any problems with the contract or the vehicle(s), and provide copies of all correspondence to ODOT.

**Designated Grantee Vehicle Procurement Procedure for State Term Contracts**
Private non-profit agencies that are designated grantees must specify in the appropriate portion of their annual Rural Transit Program grant application their intent to purchase vehicles through ODOT’s Cooperative Purchasing Program. Upon receiving an executed ODOT contract for the vehicle(s), a written request specifying the type of vehicle and all required equipment must be submitted to ODOT. Upon notification, ODOT will make the purchase on behalf of the non-profit agency. Contact your Rural Transit Representative for further payment processing details.

**NOTE:** Private non-profit designated grantees are required to list ODOT as first lienholder and submit the original title and security agreement to ODOT. The necessary paperwork and instructions for this transaction will be provided to the designated grantee by ODOT.

**Direct Agency Procurement Invitation for Bids (IFBs) or Request for Proposals (RFPs)**
Direct agency procurements involve the individual transit system sending out IFBs or RFPs directly to the vendors (See Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting, of this Manual). Grantees must create their own specifications and submit them for review and approval by ODOT. If a grantee desires a more customized vehicle or equipment, direct agency procurement is the only way to acquire the vehicles or equipment. Grantees must also adhere to all Buy America provisions, including Pre-Award and Post Delivery Inspections, for all procurements (refer to Chapter III, Federal Compliance, Buy America for further guidance). Buy America provides that Federal funds may not be obligated for transportation projects unless steel, iron and manufactured products used in such projects are produced in the United States. Some exceptions apply. For example, small purchases of $100,000 or less are exempt from Buy America provisions. Vehicle purchases, however, are not considered small purchases and, therefore, all Buy America provisions apply.

**Consortium Purchases**
In certain cases ODOT will recommend joint or consortium purchases of vehicles and equipment, for example, two or more grantees requesting the same type of light transit vehicle, fareboxes, etc. Consortium purchases may result in a better price as well as save time and effort for ODOT and its grantees. In consortium purchases, one grantee could purchase several vehicles for itself and on behalf of other grantees, or ODOT could conduct the purchase on behalf of several grantees.
Consortium purchasing steps are similar to Direct Agency Procurement purchasing, but payment procedures may vary depending on the grantee's purchasing process. Contact your Rural Transit Representative if you are contemplating a consortium purchase. After the Consortium Purchase Procedure has been completed, the grantee must follow the Final Purchase Procedures located at Final Purchase Procedures for State Term Contract Purchases.

“Piggyback” Purchases
There may be situations where one rural transit grantee wishes to take advantage of a procurement conducted by another grantee. In these cases, a grantee may assign contractual rights, commonly known as “piggybacking” to the vehicles and equipment being purchased to other grantees if 1) the original contract contains appropriate provisions to transfer or assign rights to purchase and 2) the grantee has the appropriate purchasing authority. FTA has strict guidelines for these types of purchases. Refer to FTA Circular 4220, http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html.

In order for a Rural Transit grantee to “piggyback” from another agency’s or State’s purchase, the grantee must request and receive ODOT approval in writing. All original bid documentation must be provided to ODOT for review and approval before a grantee can enter into a contract.

To grant approval, ODOT must be able to clearly review the assignability clause and determine if the grantee can actually piggyback off of the intended purchase. The grantee must also send to ODOT all Federally-required clauses and signed certifications, including Buy America.

Equipment and Other Purchases

All other items approved as part of a Rural Transit grantee’s capital grant (e.g., office and garage equipment) must be purchased following the appropriate method described earlier in this Chapter. For further guidance, contact your Rural Transit Representative.
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CHAPTER VIII – VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Rural Transit grantees may request FTA Section 5311 funding to purchase vehicles and equipment for their rural transit service. The number and types of vehicles operated vary by system, but typically most rural transit systems, in Ohio and across the country, operate similar types of vehicles, typically mini-vans, modified standard vans, and light transit vehicles. The ODOT Cooperative Purchase Program which will be discussed in detail later in this Chapter, offers a variety of the most commonly operated transit vehicles in rural and small urban transit service. This Chapter will cover the procedures available for selecting the proper vehicle for a rural transit service; procedures and requirements necessary for operating and maintaining the vehicles; and inventory and disposition requirements.

CHOOSING VEHICLES

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, ODOT offers its Vehicle Selection Guide. This Selection Guide contains the range of vehicles and optional vehicle equipment available through ODOT’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 ODOT’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, contact your Rural Transit Representative for assistance. The Vehicle Selection Guide is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/Specialized/Catalog/2010-2011%20Vehicle%20Selection%20Guide.pdf.

SPARE RATIO AND ADA COMPLIANCE

When choosing vehicles, Rural Transit grantees must consider the acceptable spare ratios for the Rural Transit Program. Grantees with a peak-hour operating requirement of 1 to 10 vehicles are allowed a spare ratio of two back-up vehicles; grantees with a peak-hour fleet of 11 or more are allowed a spare ratio of 20% of their fleet. Also, 50% of the grantee's fleet must be wheelchair accessible and must include back-up vehicles. For more information, please see the Rural Transit Program Requirements at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf.
VEHICLE USE AND PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

Rural transit grantees are required to 1) operate all vehicles and equipment acquired through the Rural Transit Program for the purposes described in their Rural Transit Program application, and 2) properly maintain all vehicles and equipment in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommended maintenance schedule. For the latter, FTA requires grantees to have a written vehicle maintenance plan. These plans should describe a system of periodic inspections and preventive maintenance to be performed at certain defined intervals.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

Preventive maintenance (PM) is an essential element of every effective maintenance program to ensure maximum vehicle reliability, longevity, and passenger safety. Preventive maintenance entails performing regularly scheduled maintenance in order to prevent breakdowns, rather than simply making repairs when something goes wrong. It also involves performing necessary repairs promptly to prevent further damage and maintain vehicle safety. While preventive maintenance may be more expensive in the short run, it reduces overall operation and maintenance costs over the life of the vehicle.

All transportation providers must develop and implement a written preventive maintenance (PM) program. Each vehicle manufacturer provides a checklist for preventive maintenance for their respective vehicles which is the first step in any PM program. ODOT’s Preventive Maintenance Guide has been designed to help ensure vehicles receive proper maintenance, sustain accurate maintenance records, and lower total repair and related operating costs. The Guide also includes suggested PM checklists and is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/Specialized/Preventive%20Maintenance%20Guide.PDF.

INVENTORY AND DISPOSITION

It is each Rural Transit grantee’s responsibility to properly manage the State and Federal investment in its transit system. The grantee must ensure that the proper inventory and disposition procedures are followed by all administrators, service providers and/or contractors. All grantees should read this section to familiarize themselves with ODOT’s required inventory and disposition procedures.

Project Inventory – Public Transportation Facilities and Equipment Management System (PTMS)

ODOT’s Operating and Capital Assistance Grant Contract requires grantees to maintain vehicle, office and garage equipment, and real property inventories. All equipment, including vehicles, office and garage equipment, must be assigned an inventory number which is then used to track and monitor the equipment for its useful life. Grantees may establish a local inventory numbering process. Many grantees will use a combination of the year the equipment is purchased with a sequential number. For example, a vehicle purchased in 2025 and which is the 10th vehicle to be added to the fleet, would be inventory number 25-10. Inventory numbers cannot be reassigned. Therefore, even if the above vehicle 25-10 is purchased to replace an
existing vehicle with the inventory number 10-05, it would receive the new inventory number. All grantees must submit annually, through Ohio’s Public Transportation Facilities and Equipment Management System, or PTMS, an inventory of vehicles, and office and garage equipment that is used to provide public transportation and meets the following criteria:

- Purchase price of $1,000 or greater;
- A useful life of at least one year; and
- Must be an item that can be inventoried (i.e., not a consumable item such as fuel or lubricants).

In addition to the above listed criteria, all computer equipment and radios must be inventoried and reported as equipment in PTMS, whether or not it was purchased with Rural Transit funds.

Also, every three years, grantees must also submit PTMS for real property. To access the instructions and procedures for PTMS, go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

Approximately December 1 of each year, grantees will receive printouts from ODOT listing all vehicles and equipment reported in PTMS. Every three years, the listing will include all real property. Grantees must review and return to ODOT this list no later than February 28 the following year unless otherwise determined by ODOT. Changes necessary to accurately report vehicles, equipment, and real property (i.e. add new vehicles and equipment, correct serial number, date placed into service, etc.) used to provide public transportation must be noted on the printouts in addition to updating the condition and mileage (vehicles only) information.

**Disposition**
The most recent edition of FTA Circular 9040, http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html, requires States to establish useful life standards for all vehicles acquired under the Rural Transit Program. There are also certain disposition cases where ODOT must follow the most recent edition of FTA Circular 5010, Grants Management Requirements, http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html. All other ODOT disposition guidance and requirements are presented in the following sections.

**Useful Life Standards**
Grantees may request disposition of vehicles, equipment, and real property after the useful life standard has been met or prior to the end of useful life when extraordinary circumstances are involved. **Inadequate or improper maintenance will not be considered extraordinary circumstances.**

ODOT has developed useful life standards which will be used to review and approve disposition requests. ODOT’s current Useful Life Standards are available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

**Disposition Requests, Review, and Approval**
All disposition requests for authorization to dispose of any vehicle, equipment, or real property on the inventory must be submitted in writing to ODOT using ODOT’s Disposition Request

Disposition requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests that meet useful life requirements will be processed within 30 days.

A grantee’s request to retain a disposed vehicle in its fleet must meet the allowable Rural Transit Program spare ratio (see Spare Ratio earlier in this Chapter or the Rural Transit Requirements http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf) and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you have any questions, please contact your Rural Transit Representative.

Disposition Denials
In all requests for disposition, ODOT reserves the right to deny disposition at its discretion. If ODOT does not believe that the vehicle, equipment, or real property has been used effectively, it will offer the grantee three options:

♦ Repay a prorated amount of the Federal and State shares of the vehicle, equipment, or real property based on the original purchase price;
♦ Require the agency to continue to operate or use the vehicle, equipment, or real property;
♦ Transfer the vehicle, equipment, or real property to another grantee (if another grantee is willing to assume the items). Contact your Rural Transit Representative if you are contemplating this option.

Reporting and/or Reimbursement of Funds
Once ODOT grants disposition, the proceeds from the sale of the vehicles and equipment may be used as local share in the Rural Transit Program. These proceeds are considered as an asset and, therefore, are not reported on the quarterly reconciliation invoice.

There are situations where Rural Transit grantees may be required to reimburse Federal or State funds, for example, when vehicles are disposed prior to meeting their useful life standards and/or a vehicle is not longer needed for rural transit purposes. In these cases, ODOT will provide specific instructions as to how the reimbursement is to be made. Contact your Rural Transit Representative for further guidance.

Requests For Disposition Before Useful Life Has Been Met
Requests for disposition for vehicles or equipment that do not meet the minimum useful life criteria must be accompanied by supporting documentation to justify the request. Contact your Rural Transit Representative for guidance.

Disposition Due to Accidents or Other Unforeseen Events
Disposition requests for vehicles or equipment due to an accident, vandalism, or other circumstances beyond the Rural Transit grantee’s control, such as acts of God, including but not limited to landslides, storms, floods, and lightning, before its useful life period is reached will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the age of the vehicle or equipment at
the time of the event. Any insurance proceeds must be applied to the purchase of the replacement vehicle or equipment. If for any reason the vehicle or equipment is not replaced, then the Federal and State shares of the insurance settlement must be reimbursed based on the fair market value of the vehicles or equipment. No action for disposition or refund remittance should be initiated without prior contact with ODOT. Disposition requests in these situations must be supported with the insurance claim and police report, if applicable.

**Service and Inventory Changes**

Until disposition is granted, grantees may not remove vehicles or equipment from permanent service or from its inventory until disposition is approved by ODOT. If disposition is being requested due to safety issues, break down, theft, or other damage, the vehicle or equipment should be removed from service, but retained on the grantee’s inventory until disposition is requested and approved. No interim submission of ODOT’s PTMS inventory is required, but the vehicle or equipment should be removed from the next required submission.
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CHAPTER IX – CONSTRUCTION AND FACILITY PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

The purchase of real estate and construction of new or renovation of existing facilities are eligible for Rural Transit Program funding. The actual acquisition guidelines are addressed in Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting, of this Manual. This Chapter outlines the requirements for determining the need for, implementation, use, maintenance, and operation of a transit facility.

FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDIES

After programming a facility project on the required Four Year Capital and Operating Tables (see Chapter IV of this Rural Transit Manual), but prior to the preparation of a Rural Transit Application for the construction, purchase, or renovation of a transit facility grant application, it may be necessary to prepare a Facility Feasibility Study. ODOT has provided a Facility Study Outline available at Facility Feasibility Study Outline. The Study would be used to determine whether the project is warranted, the type of project (construction or acquisition of a new facility or renovation of an existing facility) and other project details. Preliminary estimates will be developed. This type of Study could be conducted as part of a city comprehensive plan or comparable plan. Many of the questions that will be answered with the conduct of such a study will be necessary for ODOT to begin the scoping process (refer to the ODOT Scoping Process at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx) and further discussed in this Chapter. However, feasibility of the project is also part of the Scoping Process. Early consultation with your Rural Transit Representative is strongly recommended for all construction and facility projects to determine whether or not a separate feasibility study is necessary for the project.

FACILITY COST CONSIDERATIONS

While transit systems may do a good job of the planned purchase or construction of a new transit facility, often the impacts to operating budgets are overlooked or under estimated. An unexpected heating/air conditioning bill that is double or triple the amount paid in the previous location can spell disaster to an already tight budget. Some of the expenses that may increase in a new facility include:

♦ Increased utility costs
  o Heating/air conditioning
  o Electricity and/or gas utility
  o Additional phone lines
  o Water/sewer costs
♦ Increased housekeeping and maintenance costs
  o Increased staffing or use of a janitorial/maintenance company
  o Increased supply costs (rest room facility supplies, cleaning supplies, etc.)
  o Maintenance services
♦ Miscellaneous Inspections and/or Tests
  o Sprinkler systems
  o Alarm system tests/monitoring
  o Backflow tests
♦ Increased deadhead time if facility is a considerable distance from the first stop or pick-up (even an additional 10 miles per day for 10 vehicles over the course of a year is an additional 2,500 extra miles on a vehicle; for a fleet of 10 vehicles, 25,000 additional miles.) Deadhead miles are important for two reasons:
  o Deadhead miles must be considered in a fully allocated cost rate and could significantly affect your rates.
  o Additional miles could mean additional maintenance costs and earlier replacement of vehicles.

This issue is an excellent one to discuss as part of ODOT’s Scoping Process (discussed below). Take advantage of “lessons learned” from other transit systems that have been through this process.


**PROJECT SCOPING**

The purpose of the Project Scoping Process is to determine project readiness before ODOT commits funding to a project. The Process is used for major construction projects and large equipment purchases. The Office of Transit staff work directly with Rural Transit systems to clearly define and describe their projects using a Transit Project Scoping Form at an on-site scoping meeting. The Process is used by ODOT and the applicants to develop an objective assessment of the feasibility of the project and determine whether milestone dates are realistic. The goal of the Process is to improve on-time project delivery and the efficient management of project funding. The ODOT scoping process is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

**ACQUISITION**

Where property purchase is necessary and a suitable building or parcel of land has been found, the grantee must have an appraisal conducted by an ODOT approved appraiser. The appraisal listing can be obtained through the ODOT Office of Real Estate at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Engineering/Consultant/Consultant/prequal-row.pdf. ODOT reserves the right to inspect any potential property purchase to ascertain its appropriateness for the designated purpose.

If real property is being purchased, the capital application may be prepared concurrently with obtaining and reviewing property appraisals. The application budget must, however, reflect the fair market value determined from the appraisal process. Construction projects must contain
separate line items for the architectural and engineering costs, relocation and demolition. It must also list all other items to be included in the project. The application should include any Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act modifications which will be necessary for accessibility by the disabled.

An environmental assessment is required for all property acquisition and construction projects and must be given special attention since it requires prior FTA concurrence before the project can proceed. Please note this can take several weeks or months to obtain, depending on the complexity of the Environmental Review. An environmental checklist is included in the Rural Transit Program Application and Forms at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

The Rural Transit grantee, or its agent, must contact the appropriate officials in order to complete the checklist (e.g., Ohio Historic Preservation Office, etc.). If demolition of any structures is included, it must be stated.

Upon grant approval, the grantee can initiate the acquisition process. The grantee will handle the negotiations with the property owner and complete the process through the closing. The ODOT Office of Real Estate may review the process, if necessary. The Office of Real Estate will handle any relocation work required. Approximately one month prior to the closing, the grantee may submit an invoice for the property to ODOT.

A plat map and property description must be included with the invoice as documentation. The deed will be titled to, and retained by, the Rural Transit grantee. As soon as possible following the closing, the grantee must file an application for tax-exempt status for the property with the appropriate agency.

**Facility Projects**

Once it has been determined through the planning, programming, and application processes (Four Year Capital and Operating Plan, Facility Feasibility Study, if applicable, Scoping Process, and Rural Transit Application), the following steps must be followed for each type of project. A series of flowcharts have been developed to take you from project development thru design and architectural services to construction and detail all of the necessary steps to meet applicable State and Federal requirements. These flowcharts are available at:

In addition, a more detailed narrative of all of these steps is included in the ODOT handout “Facility Design, Construction, and Rehab/Renovation Process available at Process for Facility Design, Construction, and Rehab.

**Construction Process**
If construction is to take place, a determination must be made if any work will be done by force account (in-house personnel). Force account work can include site preparation, utility work, etc., but must be well documented, receive prior ODOT approval, and will be reviewed by ODOT during the process on a case-by-case basis. All non-force account work must be competitively bid. An architectural or engineering firm should be retained, through the Qualifications Based Selection Process (QBS), to prepare the plans to be used in the bidding specifications. The QBS method can be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/State%20Management%20Review/Procurement/9b%20Ohio%20QBS%20manual.pdf.

Architectural fees are limited, with few exceptions by the FTA, to 6 percent of the estimated construction cost. ODOT must approve the:

- QBS process for an architectural/engineering firm;
- Contract and selection for the architectural/engineering firm;
- Preliminary building design;
- Final design and bid package; and
- Final construction award.

In each of these five items, the grantee must provide its recommendation plus that of the architectural/engineering firm once the firm is engaged.

Guidance on contract requirements and necessary language for bid packages is discussed in Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting. It is the grantee's responsibility, either directly or through an architectural/engineering firm, to prepare the specifications and the bid package, award the contracts, obtain necessary permits, and provide construction oversight and management. Construction oversight and management includes:

- Providing continuous administrative direction to project operations;
- Providing, directly or by contract, adequate technical inspection and supervision, by qualified professionals, of all work and progress;
- Assuring conformance to plans, specifications, contract requirements, applicable codes, ordinances, and safety standards;
♦ Maintaining the work schedule and constantly monitor the performance under grant-supported activities to assure the time schedules are being met, projected work units by time periods are being accomplished, and other performance goals are being achieved. This review shall be made for each program, function, or activity of each grant as set forth in the approved Rural Transit application; and

♦ Keeping expenditures within the approved project budget.

Please note that the person or company responsible for construction oversight and management must be someone who is representing the grantee’s interests and ensuring that the project is completed according to design, on time, and within budget. Choosing a representative of either the A/E design firm or the general contractor may not always be the best choice to ensure that objective decisions are made in the best interest of the grantee and project. FTA and ODOT reserve the right to inspect the site, construction, and procedures being followed as necessary.

Please note that FTA does have Buy America regulations that apply to FTA-assisted third party procurements. These regulations are published in 49 CFR Part 661 http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr661_main_02.tpl and are further discussed in Chapter VII Procurement and Third Party contracting. It is important to note that FTA’s Buy America regulations differ from the Federal Buy American Act regulations that apply to direct Federal procurements. Buy American regulations are published in CFR Chapter 1, Subparts 25.1 and 25.2 but do not apply to the procurements discussed in this Manual.

Invoices may be submitted at the end of the project or routinely as work progresses. Appropriate documentation must accompany each invoice. The final invoice requires the grantee's signature on the project summary to indicate the close of the project. The construction process is a long and involved process. From project inception to finish, the process can take 3-5 years. See Steps for Facility Construction and Sample Construction Timeline located at Steps for Facility Construction and Sample Construction Timeline for further guidance.

THE RENOVATION PROCESS

Renovations to an existing facility, either newly purchased or presently owned, follow much the same process as for new construction, depending on the magnitude of the renovations. Plans and designs for minor renovations may be best handled by your local city or county engineer or can be contracted to an A/E firm (see preceding section in the Construction Process). Only in special cases can minor renovations be performed in-house by force account, and in each case ODOT must grant prior approval. Major renovations must follow the steps outlined in the Construction Process previously outlined in this Chapter.

FORCE ACCOUNT PLANS

Force account is the use of one’s own labor force to carry out a capital grant project. Force account work may consist of design, construction, refurbishment, inspection, and construction management activities, if eligible for reimbursement under an FTA grant. Force account does
not include grant or project administration activities which are otherwise direct project costs. A sample force account plan is provided at

**FACILITY USE, MAINTENANCE, INVENTORY, AND DISPOSITION**

Rural Transit Grantees must demonstrate satisfactory continuing control over all FTA-funded facilities to ensure that such facilities are continued to be used for transit and are maintained in good working order in compliance with FTA Circular 5010 http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html. This includes the development of a written facility maintenance plan describing a system of regular, periodic inspections and an inventory through ODOT’s PTMS system and following disposition guidelines.

**Facility Maintenance Plans**
FTA requires grantees to have a written facility/equipment maintenance plan. These plans should describe a system of periodic inspections and preventive maintenance to be performed at certain defined intervals.


**Project Inventory – Public Transportation Facilities and Equipment Management System (PTMS)**
ODOT's Operating and Capital Assistance Grant Contract requires grantees to maintain an inventory of all real property. Every three years, grantees must submit PTMS information for real property. To access the instructions and procedures for PTMS, go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

**Disposition of Real Property**
For real property facilities and land acquired through the Rural Transit Program, but which are no longer needed for their original purpose, grantees must follow one of the three disposition alternatives outlined below in Disposition Requests, Review and Approval. In special cases, facilities and land no longer needed for transit can be assumed for use by other Federal programs. If disposition of property is anticipated, contact your Rural Transit Representative at once.

**Disposition Requests, Review and Approval**
All disposition requests for authorization to dispose of any real property on the PTMS inventory must be submitted in writing to ODOT using ODOT’s Disposition Request form and sample letter of request available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/FormsTemplates.aspx.

Disposition requests for real property will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests that meet established useful life requirements will be processed within 30 days. Once ODOT grants
disposition, the proceeds from the sale of the real property following ODOT disposition may be used as local share for the Rural Transit Program.

In all requests for disposition of real property, ODOT reserves the right to deny disposition at its discretion. If ODOT does not believe that the real property has been used effectively, it will offer the grantee three options:

♦ Repay a prorated amount (based on fair market value established through independent appraisal) of the Federal and State shares;
♦ Require the agency to continue to use the real property; or
♦ Transfer the real property to another grantee (if another grantee is willing to assume the items). Contact your Rural Transit Representative if you are contemplating this option.

**Reimbursement of Funds**
Grantees may be required to reimburse Federal or State funds in situations where the real property does not meet useful life standards. Contact your Rural Transit Representative at once if disposition of real property is being considered.

**Disposition Due to Unforeseen Events**
Disposition requests for real property due to an accident, vandalism, or other circumstances beyond the grantee’s control, such as acts of God, including but not limited to landslides, storms, floods, and lightning, before its useful life period is reached will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the age of the property at the time of the event. Any insurance proceeds must be applied to the replacement or renovation of the property. If for any reason the property is not replaced or renovated, then the Federal and State shares of the insurance settlement must be reimbursed based on the fair market value of the property. No action for disposition or refund remittance should be initiated without prior contact with ODOT. Disposition requests in these situations must be supported with the insurance claim and police report, if applicable.

**Inventory Changes**
Until disposition is granted, grantees may not remove real property from its inventory until disposition is approved by ODOT. No interim submission of ODOT’s PTMS inventory is required, but the property should be removed from the next required submission.
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CHAPTER X – DESIGNING A NEW RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Office of Transit administers the Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Rural Transit Program for areas of Ohio under 50,000 in population. Eligible program applicants include municipalities; county boards of commissioners, townships, villages, regional transit authorities, and county transit boards. This Chapter outlines the considerations of and requirements for a new rural transit program.

RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM (SECTION 5311) FUNDING FOR NEW APPLICANTS

Rural Transit Program funding for new applicants is limited, and planning for a new rural transit system can take up to two years. If your community is considering initiating new rural transit service and requesting Rural Transit Program funding, you should contact ODOT immediately at (614) 466-8955.

For further information and guidance on the Rural Transit Program, see the ODOT Office of Transit website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

There are many State and Federal requirements for Rural Transit grantees. Before going too far in the process, ODOT recommends you review the Rural Transit Program Requirements at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf which sets forth the Federal and State requirements for Ohio’s rural public transit systems receiving funding through the Section 5311 Rural Transit Program. This document also includes a list and description of all required reports, with links to additional information. Eligible applicants should first become familiar with this document to understand the requirements of the Rural Transit Program.

PLANNING

Community needs must always be considered to ensure program success. Considering those needs as part of short and long range planning and service evaluations is an essential part of the administration, management, and operation of a rural public transit system. Input from a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), guidance from a Governing Board, and technical assistance from ODOT can play important roles in on-going planning efforts. A system’s self-evaluation takes place annually through the use of performance measures. For more information, please refer to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx for the ODOT Rural Operating Data Form with Performance Measures.
Transportation Development Plans
A planning tool to consider when planning new rural transit service is the Transportation Development Plan (TDP), a 3-5 year short range planning document that can be used as a guide for developing and initiating transit service.

There are six (6) basic elements included in a TDP:

♦ **Study Overview** – Brief explanation of the background and purpose of the TDP and how the information was gathered (i.e. previous TDP, community input through either stakeholder meetings or interviews, and public input).
♦ **Description of Service Area** – Describe terrain, population, history of area to provide the reader with a clear picture of the area.
♦ **Public Participation/Outreach Plan** – Describe how information was collected from outside interests to include in the plan, such as public meetings, surveys, etc. If public meetings held, include copies of meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, and meeting minutes here or in an appendix.
♦ **Service Analysis of Existing Conditions** – Description of current service, comments received during public participation, observations from staff, and any other sources that add to the analysis of the transit system as a whole.
♦ **Service Alternatives & Capital Needs** – List and describe the desired improvements or enhancements discovered during the planning process. Do not limit to what the current budget can support, though improvements should be reasonable for the community size and location. For example, a monorail system may not be feasible for a rural community.
♦ **Recommended Improvements/Implementation** – List and describe those service alternatives that are recommended by the plan. This list should include potential funding sources. Include a disclaimer in the opening paragraph that, because of funding constraints, the Plan may be implemented as funding becomes available. This section of the TDP may include the transit system’s Four Year C&O Tables (as required by ODOT, see [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx)).

A TDP can be a full, comprehensive document covering all aspects of a rural transit system as outlined above or can be targeted to specific areas or timeframes (service alternatives and capital needs; capital needs only, a shorter timeframe, i.e., 1-2 years, etc.).

Assistance to develop a full or targeted TDP can be requested through the ODOT Ohio Technical Assistance Program (OTAP); however, funding may be limited. Please refer to [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx) for more information on OTAP. Contact ODOT to discuss local planning further.

Locally Developed Coordination Plans
ODOT requires that Rural Transit programs participate in the local planning process for coordinated public transit-human service transportation systems as required in SAFETEA-LU for Sections 5310, 5316, or 5317 funding. As you are developing your new rural transit program and service, ODOT strongly recommends that you review the locally developed plan for your area (see website below for a listing of locally developed plans).
Further, the most recent edition of FTA Circular 9040, [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html), requires coordination with transportation assistance provided under other Federal programs. Since ODOT must certify annually that the Section 5311 projects submitted to FTA for funding have provided “the maximum feasible coordination of public transportation service with transportation assisted by other Federal sources,” participation in these locally developed plans supports this coordination requirement.

For more information and a listing of locally developed plans, please refer to [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx).

**GRANTEE TYPE**

Applicants can directly provide its services, contract with a third party operator, choose a designated nonprofit corporation, or develop a pass through agreement with another eligible FTA applicant. Each grantee type is further defined below.

**Direct Provider**

A direct provider applies to ODOT for the Section 5311 funding for the transit services in their jurisdiction and directly operates the transit service. The applicant employs all office staff, drivers, mechanics, and bus washers needed to provide the transit services to the community. More information is available in Chapter IV, State Requirements, of this Manual.

**Contract with Third Party**

Rural Transit applicants may apply to ODOT for the Section 5311 funding for the transit services and contract with a third party to provide those services. A contract must be awarded through competitive solicitation in compliance with the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) most recent edition of Circular 4220 “Third Party Contracting Procedures.” (See [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html). Rural Transit applicants intending to contract with third parties are responsible for the transit services provided, all ODOT reporting requirements, and completion of the ODOT Rural Transit Application for funding. Chapter VII of this Manual provides detailed information on contracting requirements.

**Designated Grantee**

If an eligible applicant desires to have public transit service in its jurisdiction but does not wish to directly administer or operate the service even through a third party contract, the eligible applicant may designate a private nonprofit corporation as the grantee. In these cases, the eligible applicant must follow the designated grantee selection process available at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx). During the designation period (three years), the designated grantee assumes responsibility for adhering to all Federal and State requirements of the Rural Transit Program.

Following the initial three year designation period, the eligible applicant may re-designate a grantee for continuing three year periods by submitting a letter of intent to renew the designated grantee to ODOT no later than 30 days prior to the expiration of the designation. The letter must contain a resolution from the eligible applicant authorizing the re-designation. For a sample...
letter and resolution go to

**Pass Through Recipients**
Many of Ohio’s rural counties are located adjacent to other rural areas or to urbanized areas, served by public transit systems. In these cases, ODOT encourages both the rural and urban systems to coordinate to the maximum extent feasible by coordinating schedules, routes, bus stops, fares, etc. to facilitate transportation within the region.

In addition to the options set forth previously in this document, an eligible applicant for the Rural Transit Program may apply for and “pass through” Rural Transit funds to another eligible Federal Transit Administration (FTA) applicant. These eligible applicants may be located in either a rural or an urbanized area, and may operate all or a portion of the operations of the Rural Transit service in the eligible applicant’s service area if it is determined that this arrangement best meets its transportation needs. Additional information for Pass Through Recipients is available at Sample Pass Through Agreement.

**Advantages/Disadvantages of Each Grantee Type**
It is advisable to review the advantages and disadvantages of each grantee type prior to making that decision. Advantages and disadvantages vary for each community based upon its location, terrain, population base, and community needs. Make a list of the advantages and disadvantages in your community and use those, in conjunction with the list below, to make an informed decision regarding the grantee type for your community. Regardless of the decision, the eligible applicant must support the decision and provide the foundation for success by ensuring the process of establishing the services is completed. Exhibit 1 on the following page compares advantages and disadvantages of each grantee option.
Exhibit 1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Grantee Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Provider</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Applicant retains full control</td>
<td>● May lack transit expertise in some matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Services provided as Applicant desires</td>
<td>● Local funds (to match grant) must be identified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Contract with Third Party</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Transit expertise of contractor</td>
<td>● Lose some control to contractor but still responsible to ODOT for reporting and grant applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Daily operations are responsibility of contractor</td>
<td>● Must monitor contractor to ensure compliance with all regulations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Designated Grantee</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● No responsibility except to appoint designated grantee</td>
<td>● Designated grantee assumes control of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Community receives services without burden to eligible applicant</td>
<td>● Potential issues if designated grantee does not perform as anticipated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pass Through Recipients</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Community transit services without responsibilities</td>
<td>● No control in management or type of services provided in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Local funds may not be required</td>
<td>● Limited services to community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOVERNING BOARD

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 306 describes three different governing boards under which transit services can be provided: 1) Board of County Commissioners; 2) County Transit Board; or 3) Regional Transit Authority. Please note that no county transit board can be appointed nor any county transit system established in any county which is included in whole or in part in a regional transit authority.

In addition, municipalities and villages as well as townships are also government structures under the ORC through which transit services can be provided (ORC 733 and 505, respectively).

Board of County Commissioners
If a Board of County Commissioners wishes to operate and assume all duties and powers to provide transit services, it must follow the ORC 306 provisions 306.04, 306.06, 306.08, 306.09, 306.10, 306.12, and 306.13.

County Transit Board
If a Board of County Commissioners wishes to establish a separate board that will operate and assume all duties and powers to provide transit services for its county residence, it can do so by establishing a County Transit Board (CTB) as described in ORC 306.01. A CTB must follow ORC 306.01 through 306.13 and 306.99.

Regional Transit Authority
Any county, or any two or more counties, municipal corporations, or townships, or any combination of these, may create a regional transit authority (RTA) by the adoption of a resolution or ordinance by the board of county commissioners of each county, the legislative authority of each municipal corporation, and the board of township trustees of each township which is to create or to join in the creation of the RTA (ORC 306.32). The responsibilities, duties, and provisions of a RTA are found in ORC 306.30 through 306.53.

All information for the referenced ORC citings for Counties, CTBs, and RTAs, may be found at http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/306.

Municipalities, Villages, and Townships
In addition to the three Governing Board structures described above, duly formed municipalities, villages, and townships under the ORC, Chapters 733 (municipalities/villages) and 505 (townships) are also eligible Rural Transit Grantees. The Governing board responsibilities described in the following sections would apply to the City Council, Village Council, and Township Trustees, respectively. Citings for these ORC references can be found at http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/733 and http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/505.

Governing Board Duties
Members of a governing board have duties and responsibilities to ensure the transit system is operating under the regulations and rules established by the Federal and State government. The board is responsible for policymaking while Transit Directors and employees are responsible for
the day-to-day management to implement those policies. A governing board must work in concert with the system management team and employees to ensure compliance in areas of operations, maintenance, financial, and asset management.

Basic duties of a governing board include:

♦ Establish bylaws and update as needed.
♦ Keep the transit system’s mission statement current. Ensure that it is aligned with the needs of the community.
♦ Recruit and employ the Transit Director to lead the transit system effectively and efficiently.
♦ Fiduciary duty to act reasonably, competently and in the best interest of the transit system.
♦ Participate in strategic planning and monitor progress. Update as needed.
♦ Preserve and protect the fiscal integrity, including all assets, of the transit system.
♦ Conduct board business in compliance with Ohio Sunshine Laws.
♦ Be familiar with the requirements of the Ohio Ethics Commission.

Ideally, Governing Board members should take an oath of office and sign an Ethics acknowledgement as suggested by the Ohio Ethics Commission. A sample Ethics Policy can be found at [http://www.ethics.ohio.gov/OhioEthicsLaw.html](http://www.ethics.ohio.gov/OhioEthicsLaw.html).

At minimum, a governing board should expect operations and financial reports at its monthly meetings and an opportunity to question items that appear on those reports. Anticipated service changes should also be discussed at length and the reasons for the proposed changes. Additional detailed information on the role governing board members play can be found in the documents developed by the Transit Cooperative Research program such as the Public Transit Governance Guidebook, Publication No. 85, [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_85.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_85.pdf), and Public Transit Board Effectiveness, Publication No. 104, [http://bussafety.fta.dot.gov/uploads/resource/2977_filename](http://bussafety.fta.dot.gov/uploads/resource/2977_filename).

**Training**

ODOT Office of Transit offers training for Governing Boards to assist its membership to perform their roles in an informed manner. Other ODOT-sponsored training opportunities throughout the year to Rural Transit Program grantees may also be useful to Governing Board members. Training dates and topics are published on the ODOT calendar at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx).

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

A Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) (and sometimes referred to as Transportation Advisory Boards or TABS) serves as an advisor to the transit service governing board and its management team. It functions as a citizen’s advocacy group dedicated to improving and expanding the public transit system. It provides a platform for public and special-needs transportation users and stakeholders as well as the overall community. Although not required, ODOT strongly recommends the formation of a TAC.
**Structure**
A TAC committee is made up of people living in the transit system’s service area and should reflect the diversity of the area. Members can be residents, businesses, and stakeholders interested in transit service offerings and improvements.

TAC members may be appointed by the governing board or other entities as approved by the board. Regularly scheduled meetings advertised and open to the public should be held on a regular basis to promote input from the traveling public to improve the overall transit services.

It is advisable that bylaws be written and approved by the governing board to establish membership and prevent misunderstandings regarding the duties and authority of the TAC.

**Duties**
The TAC should provide input to the governing board on matters that affect transportation for all citizens, regardless of their age, disability or income levels. While a TAC does not have authority, it has the obligation to bring matters of importance to the governing board for consideration.

TAC duties can include, but are not limited to:

- Make recommendations to the governing board regarding public transit policies and procedures;
- Make recommendations to the governing board regarding necessary changes to existing transit services;
- Communicate to the governing board issues brought to it by the public to promote service improvements and clarifications.

Rural transit grantees should notify their Rural Transit Representative of all TAC meetings and submit copies of meeting minutes.

**Type of Services**
Public transportation services are provided in a variety of manners. Service area population density, environment, and destination locations help to define the type of service that best suits your community. Once a service type is established, it is advisable to periodically re-visit service types to ensure the most cost effective method is provided.

**Demand Response**

A demand response operation possesses three characteristics. First, the vehicles are only dispatched when a call is placed to the transit service describing the origin and destinations of each passenger. Secondly, vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule except, except on a temporary basis to satisfy a specific need. Finally, vehicles are dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations and may even be interrupted en route to these destinations to pick up other passengers.

Typically demand response operations are provided in areas with sparse populations, where the distance between origins and destinations is far, or the terrain does not permit shorter trips between stops. Rural areas consisting of farmlands and mountains with low populations usually benefit from demand response services.

There are various levels of demand response services. The most commonly provided services include curb-to-curb, door-to-door, and deviated route service. Assistance is provided as needed. Examples include maneuvering a wheelchair or other mobility device on and off the vehicle or lending support for those with walkers or visual impairments. These services are further explained below.

**Curb-to-Curb**

Curb-to-curb service is a demand response service that provides assistance to the passenger from the trip origin curb to the trip destination curb. The driver will leave the vehicle and assist the passenger as needed at both the origin and destination of the trip. For this type of service, however, the passenger must be able to get from his or her house to the vehicle and/or from the vehicle to the medical facility, grocery store, etc.

**Door-to-Door**

Unlike curb-to-curb service described previously, door-to-door is demand response service that provides assistance to the passenger from the door of the trip origin (e.g., the passenger’s home) to the door of the trip destination (e.g., the door of the medical facility). Drivers assist passengers at both the origin and destination of the trip.

**Deviated Route Service**

Deviated route service is transit service operating on a scheduled route with scheduled stops, but which may deviate from the route to pick up or drop off passengers who have requested deviation. Request for deviations are made in advance by calling the transit service dispatch office. Typically there is a limitation on how far a vehicle will deviate from a route. For ADA purposes, deviated route service is considered demand response.

Note: All of the above types of services meet FTA’s requirement for demand response and as such do not require a Complementary Paratransit Plan. FTA’s requirements for complementary paratransit address curb-to-curb and door-to-door service as it relates to FTA’s requirement that complementary paratransit service for ADA paratransit eligible persons must be “origin-to-destination” service. This requirement, which does not apply to demand response service, is further addressed below in the Complementary Paratransit discussion.
**Fixed Route**
Fixed route service is transit service operating on fixed routes and schedules. The transit vehicles travel the fixed route, regardless of whether a passenger actively requests a vehicle. Priority seating must be provided on all vehicles for passengers with disabilities, although disabled passengers cannot be required to use this seating.

Fixed route services are usually provided in densely populated areas, where the origins and destinations are within close proximity to each other. Cities and villages may be best suited for a fixed route system.

**ADA Complementary Paratransit**
Fixed route services are required to develop an ADA complementary paratransit plan and complementary paratransit service component. Complementary paratransit is comparable transportation services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act for people with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route transportation system because of their specific disability. Complementary paratransit service must be comparable to fixed route service based on service area, response time, fare structure, trip purpose, days and hours of service, and capacity constraints.

The Department’s ADA regulation, 49 CFR §37.129(a), provides that, with the exception of certain situations in which on-call bus service or feeder paratransit service is appropriate, “complementary paratransit service for ADA paratransit eligible persons shall be origin-to-destination service.” This term was deliberately chosen to avoid using either the term “curb-to-curb” service or the term “door-to-door” service and to emphasize the obligation of transit providers to ensure that eligible passengers are actually able to use paratransit service to get from their point of origin to their point of destination. However, this does not mean that each trip must meet the “origin to destination” criteria. FTA has indicated that in the local paratransit planning process, it would be consistent with this provision for a transit provider to establish either door-to-door or curb-to-curb service as the basic mode of paratransit service. Where the local planning process establishes curb-to-curb service as the basic paratransit service mode, however, provision should still be made to ensure that the service available to each passenger actually gets the passenger from his or her point of origin to his or her destination point. To meet this origin to destination requirement, service may need to be provided to some individuals, or at some locations, in a way that goes beyond curb-to-curb service.

However, this is not intended to require drivers to, for lengthy periods of time, have to leave their vehicles unattended or lose the ability to keep their vehicles under visual observation, or take actions that would be clearly unsafe (e.g., back a vehicle down a narrow alley in specific circumstances that would present a direct threat to safety). These activities would come under the heading of “fundamental alteration” or “undue burden.”

This particular criteria is explained further on the FTA website at [http://www.fta.dot.gov/12325_3891.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/12325_3891.html). You should read this information thoroughly to know what is required for your system to meet ADA compliance in this area.

Additional information regarding the overall requirements for complementary paratransit service is located in the ODOT Rural Transit Requirements, Section K- ADA, Fixed Route systems
Intercity
The Ohio Rural Intercity Bus Program (Section 5311(f)) is designed to address the intercity bus transportation needs of the entire State by supporting projects that provide transportation between non-urbanized areas and urbanized areas that result in connections of greater regional, statewide, and national significance.

The purpose of the Section 5311(f) funding is to provide supplemental financial support to transit operators and to facilitate the most efficient and effective use of available Federal funds in support of intercity bus service in rural areas.

Section 5311(f) 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 public transportation operations and intercity bus carriers.” Additional information on the Intercity Program can be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/RuralIntercityBus.aspx.

Policies/Procedures

ODOT strongly recommends that every Rural Transit System develop and maintain standard policies and procedures for the administration and operations of its rural transit service. Policy and procedure topics to be covered include personnel, safety, passenger rights and requirements, maintenance, and more. ODOT has developed a Policies and Procedures Manual that contains model policies/procedures that can be modified for each specific transit system. This Manual is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx. Policies that are required are noted in bold in the Manual.

It is advisable, though not required, that all employees become familiar with the personnel policies as well as the operations policies of the transit system. Sharing this information will reduce the misunderstanding of what services are provided and how they are provided among employees.

Training

ODOT is committed to supporting its grantees in matters of training and offers “New Manager Training.” When a new manager is hired, or your community is considering public transportation services, contact ODOT to find out when the next New Transit Manager training is scheduled. There is also a variety of training available for all rural transit system staff. Check the ODOT calendar at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx or contact your Rural Transit Representative for a list of upcoming training.
SUMMARY

Again, if your community is considering the initiation of new rural transit service, you should contact the ODOT Office of Transit immediately at (614)466-8955. As indicated previously, Rural Transit Program funding is limited, and planning for a new rural transit system can take up to two years. For further information and guidance on the Rural Transit Program, see the ODOT Office of Transit website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/default.aspx. Further information that may be beneficial to new systems is also contained in Chapter XI, Managing Your Rural Transit System, of this Manual.
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CHAPTER XI – MANAGING YOUR RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

(NOTE: All of the requirements for the successful management and implementation of a Rural Transit System are contained in ODOT’s Rural Transit Manual, the ODOT Rural Transit Requirements, the ODOT Rural Transit Application Instructions and Forms and other documents referenced throughout the ODOT Rural Transit Manual. This individual Chapter is provided as a summary of the different aspects and components that a Rural Transit Manager will need to address as part of his or her day to day management responsibilities. It should not to be used in place of the other chapters of the Manual nor any other ODOT or FTA documents referenced in the Manual.)

Managing a successful transportation program requires the combined efforts of your governing board, input from the community and/or your Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), a trained staff, comprehensive policies and procedures, strong grants management, and short and long-term planning. This Chapter provides information for you to build a structure to ensure a strong and on-going transit management program.

TRANSIT MANAGEMENT

Transit system management entails to equally important components: administration and operations. Administratively, transit managers must work with their local governing boards and the community, hire (and fire) personnel, conduct training, develop and implement policies and procedures, conduct planning, market their services, manage grants, and much, much more.

WORKING WITH GOVERNING BOARDS

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 306 describes three different governing boards under which transit services can be provided: 1) Board of County Commissioners; 2) County Transit Board; or 3) Regional Transit Authority. Please note that no county transit board can be appointed nor any county transit system established in any county which is included in whole or in part in a regional transit authority.

In addition, municipalities and villages as well as townships are also government structures under the ORC through which transit services can be provided (ORC 733 and 505, respectively).

Board of County Commissioners
If a Board of County Commissioners wishes to operate and assume all duties and powers to provide transit services, it must follow the ORC 306 provisions 306.04, 306.06, 306.08, 306.09, 306.10, 306.12, and 306.13. This information is available at http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/306.
**County Transit Board**

If a Board of County Commissioners wishes to establish a separate board that will operate and assume all duties and powers to provide transit services for its county residence, it can do so by establishing a County Transit Board (CTB) as described in ORC 306.01. A CTB must follow ORC 306.01 through 306.13 and 306.99 as available at [http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/306](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/306). Membership is limited to seven members, of which no more than four can be of the same political party (ORC 306.02).

**Regional Transit Authority**

Any county, or any two or more counties, municipal corporations, or townships, or any combination of these, may create a regional transit authority (RTA) by the adoption of a resolution or ordinance by the board of county commissioners of each county, the legislative authority of each municipal corporation, and the board of township trustees of each township which is to create or to join in the creation of the RTA (ORC 306.32). The responsibilities, duties, and provisions of a RTA are found in ORC 306.30 through 306.53 at [http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/306](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/306). The number of Members appointed to the RTA Board of Trustees is described in ORC 306.32(E), 306.33, and 306.331.

**Municipalities, Villages, and Townships**

In addition to the three Governing Board structures described above, duly formed municipalities, villages, and townships under Chapters 733 (municipalities/villages) and 505 (townships) are also eligible Rural Transit Grantees. The Governing board responsibilities described in the following sections would apply to the City Council, Village Council, and Township Trustees, respectively.

**Governing Board Duties**

Members of a governing board have duties and responsibilities to ensure the transit system is operating under the regulations and rules established by the Federal and State government. The board is responsible for policymaking while Transit Directors and employees are responsible for the day-to-day management to implement those policies. A governing board must work in concert with the system management team and employees to ensure compliance in areas of operations, maintenance, financial, and asset management.

Basic duties of a governing board include:

- Establish bylaws and update as needed.
- Keep the transit system’s mission statement current. Ensure that it is aligned with the needs of the community.
- Recruit and employ the Transit Director to lead the transit system effectively and efficiently.
- Fiduciary duty to act reasonably, competently and in the best interest of the transit system.
- Participate in strategic planning and monitor progress. Update as needed.
- Preserve and protect the fiscal integrity, including all assets, of the transit system.
- Conduct board business in compliance with Ohio Sunshine Laws.
- Be familiar with the requirements of the Ohio Ethics Commission.
Ideally, Governing Board members should take an oath of office and sign an Ethics acknowledgement as suggested by the Ohio Ethics Commission. A sample Ethics Policy can be found at http://www.ethics.ohio.gov/OhioEthicsLaw.html.

At a minimum, a governing board should expect operations and financial reports at its monthly meetings and an opportunity to question items that appear on those reports. Anticipated service changes should also be discussed at length and the reasons for the proposed changes. Additional detailed information on the role governing board members play can be found in the documents developed by the Transit Cooperative Research program such as the Public Transit Governance Guidebook, Publication No. 85, http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_85.pdf, and Public Transit Board Effectiveness, Publication No. 104 http://bussafety.fta.dot.gov/uploads/resource/2977_filename.

**Training**
The ODOT Office of Transit offers specific training for Governing Boards to educate and assist board members in the performance of their roles. ODOT offers various training opportunities throughout the year to Rural Transit Program grantees that may also be useful to Governing Board members. Training dates and topics are published on the ODOT calendar at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx. Or, contact ODOT for a list of upcoming training.

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

A Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) (and sometimes referred to as Transportation Advisory Boards or TABS) serves as an advisor to the transit service governing board and its management team. It functions as a citizen’s advocacy group dedicated to improving and expanding the public transit system. It also provides a platform for public and special-needs transportation users and stakeholders as well as the overall community.

**Structure**
A TAC committee is made up of people living in the transit system’s service area and should reflect the diversity of the area. Members can be residents, businesses, and stakeholders interested in transit service offerings and improvements.

TAC members may be appointed by the governing board or other entities as approved by the board. Regularly scheduled meetings advertised and open to the public should be held on a regular basis to promote input from the traveling public to improve the overall transit services.

It is advisable that bylaws be written and approved by the governing board to establish membership and prevent misunderstandings regarding the duties and authority of the TAC.

**Duties**
The TAC should provide input to the governing board on matters that affect transportation for all citizens, regardless of their age, disability or income levels. While a TAC does not have
authority, it has the obligation to bring matters of importance to the governing board for consideration.

TAC duties can include, but are not limited to:

♦ Make recommendations to the governing board regarding public transit policies and procedures;
♦ Make recommendations to the governing board regarding necessary changes to existing transit services; and
♦ Communicate to the governing board issues brought to it by the public to promote service improvements and clarifications.

Rural transit grantees should notify their Rural Transit Representative of all TAC meetings and submit copies of meeting minutes.

PLANNING

Short and long range planning and service evaluations are essential parts of the administration, management, and operation of a rural public transit system. Input from a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and technical assistance from ODOT can play important roles in ongoing planning efforts. For more information on the technical assistance ODOT can provide, see Chapter II, Overview of ODOT Office of Transit’s Programs, the Ohio Technical Assistance Program.

Four Year Capital and Operating Tables
All Section 5311 Grantees are required to submit Four Year Capital and Operating Tables. The Four Year Capital and Operating Tables are an essential part of planning for the transit system and ODOT. The Plans provide the basis for ODOT’s application for Rural Transit Program funding to the FTA.

The capital portion of the Plan address vehicle procurement and/or real property procurement or construction. Project planning must include justification, a time line, proposed expenses, etc.

The operating portion must include all operating expenses, projected revenues, and local funding amounts.

Annual operating and capital budgets as part of the Rural Transit Application are compared to each system’s Four Year Capital and Operating Tables. If projects are included in the annual capital budget but were not identified in the Four Year Capital and Operating Tables, there is less chance of approval.

Each grantee must submit its Four Year Capital and Operating Tables by February 15 every two years on odd numbered years. Changes to the Four Year Capital and Operating Tables (deletion of items, changes to a type of vehicle, etc.) must be completed through the Four Capital and Operating Tables Amendment process. Amendments will only be
accepted up to February 15 of each even numbered year in order to meet the FTA application deadline in July of each program year. Projects not included in a grantee’s Four Year Capital and Operating Tables or the Federal application may not be funded until the next application cycle.

Instructions and further guidance for the Four Year Capital and Operating Tables information is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx, or contact your Rural Transit Representative.

Transportation Development Plans
The purpose of a Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is to assess the operations of the transit system to ensure the system meets the needs of the community in an efficient and economically effective manner. A TDP is a 3-5 year planning document that systems can use as a guide for developing and initiating transit service.

There are six (6) basic elements included in a TDP:

- **Study Overview** – Brief explanation of the background and purpose of the TDP and how the information was gathered (i.e. previous TDP, community input through either stakeholder meetings or interviews, and public input).
- **Description of Service Area** – Describe terrain, population, history of area to provide the reader with a clear picture of the area.
- **Public Participation/Outreach Plan** – Describe how information was collected from outside interests to include in the plan, e.g., surveys, public meetings, etc. If public meetings were held, include copies of meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, and meeting minutes here or in an appendix.
- **Service Analysis of the Existing Conditions** – Description of current service, comments received during public participation, observations from staff, and any other sources that add to the analysis of the transit system as a whole.
- **Service Alternatives & Capital Needs** – List and describe the desired improvements or enhancements discovered during the planning process. At this time, do not limit projects to what the current budget can support, though improvements should be reasonable for the community size and location. For example, a monorail system may not be feasible for a rural community.
- **Recommended Improvements/Implementation** – List and describe those service alternatives that are recommended by the plan. This list should include potential funding sources. Include a disclaimer in the opening paragraph that, because of funding constraints, the Plan may be implemented as funding becomes available. This section of the TDP may include the transit system’s Four Year C&O Tables (as required by ODOT, see http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx).

TDPs can be a full, comprehensive document covering all aspects of a rural transit system as outlined above or can be targeted to specific areas or timeframes (service alternatives and capital needs; capital needs only, a shorter timeframe, i.e., 1-2 years, etc.).
Assistance to develop a full or targeted TDP can be requested through the ODOT Ohio Technical Assistance Program (OTAP); however, funding may be limited. Please refer to [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx) for more information on OTAP. To discuss local planning further, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

**Locally Developed Coordination Plans**

ODOT requires that Rural Transit programs participate in the local planning process for coordinated public transit-human service transportation systems as required in SAFETEA-LU for Sections 5310, 5316, or 5317 funding. Further, the most current edition of FTA Circular 9040, [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html), requires coordination with transportation assistance provided under other Federal programs. Since ODOT must certify annually that the Section 5311 projects submitted to FTA for funding have provided “the maximum feasible coordination of public transportation service with transportation assisted by other Federal sources,” participation in these locally developed plans supports this coordination requirement.

For more information regarding locally developed plans, please refer to [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx).

**GRANTS MANAGEMENT**

Section 5311 Rural Transit Systems operate on a joint funded concept where local, State, and Federal funding are used to support transit system operations. Local funds may be local cash contributed by the grantee/governing board, donations, contract revenue, advertising revenue, etc. State transit funding in Ohio comes from the ODOT-administered Ohio Public Transportation Grants Program (OPTGP) and the Ohio Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program (E&D). Federal funds are provided through the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Section 5311 program. In addition, there are other allowable Federal sources of funding that can also be used as match.

Securing each of these funding sources is just the beginning, since each comes with its own set of rules and requirements for which you, the transit manager, are responsible for ensuring are met, either directly or indirectly through the oversight of transit staff. Effective grants management is a balancing act of time and resources to ensure that your obligations to each funder are met.

For each grant and/or funding source, make sure that you have carefully read all requirements and understand what is required. If you have any questions, contact the funding representative you have been assigned (i.e. for ODOT, your Rural Transit Representative) and clarify any issues you may have. Compile a list of all invoicing requirements, reports, or other forms and documents that are due along with their due dates. Consider who among the staff will be responsible for meeting these requirements and make sure they are adequately trained. And finally, if you are lucky enough to have multiple staff managing different programs, develop a task management oversight file so that you are following-up regularly to ensure that all program requirements are being met.
PERSONNEL/HUMAN RESOURCES

Personnel are your most valuable resource. In typical rural transit systems, staff have multiple assignments and responsibilities including driving, dispatching, accounting, invoicing, and more. It is vital that you maintain a balanced composition of staff (appropriate number of administrative and operations employees) and ensure that they are adequately trained to do their jobs.

Staff Composition
Positions common to most rural transit systems include a manager, operations manager/supervisor, dispatch/scheduler, bookkeeper/accountant, maintenance staff, and drivers. For example job descriptions, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

Staff Training
Rural Transit Program grantees typically operate within a limited budget, requiring all staff members to be proficient in performing their assigned duties. This may involve various levels of training to be knowledgeable of changes in Federal, State, and local policies as well as to retain required certifications. Governing Board members to hostlers must receive some level of training during their tenure to ensure the transit services provided comply with Federal and State regulations. A description of training requirements is described below. The ODOT Office of Transit offers various training sessions throughout the year and can be found by checking the ODOT website calendar at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx or by contacting your Rural Transit Representative.

Transit Manager and Management Staff Training
ODOT hosts various levels of mandatory and other training opportunities throughout the year. This training includes, but is not limited to:

♦ New Transit Manager Training
♦ Drug and Alcohol Training
♦ Rural Roundtables.
  o Offered periodically, these roundtables cover a variety of topics:
  o Financial
    ▪ Vehicle Management
    ▪ Facility Management
    ▪ Operational
    ▪ State and Federal regulations, including changes

ODOT is constantly researching and developing new training opportunities for transit managers. Check the ODOT website ODOT website calendar at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx or contact your Rural Transit Representative.

The Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) is a great source for peer-to-peer networking opportunities in all areas of transit management. OPTA is a non-profit organization serving
Ohio's transit industry. OPTA provides a variety of technical and professional services to its members and assures strong representation in the State legislature.

Fiscal staff may require additional training beyond that offered by ODOT. Local vocational schools, universities or community colleges offer financial courses. Additional resources or training opportunities may exist with the Ohio Auditor of State by visiting their website at http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/.

More details and available training can be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx. In addition, you will want to check the “What’s New” Section of the website regularly as upcoming training will be noted there as well.

If you have questions regarding training requirements or opportunities, please contact your Rural Transit Representative.

**Operations (Managers, Drivers & Dispatchers) Training**

All operations staff should be familiar with the following ODOT Rural Transit Program driver training requirements and ensure the employees operating vehicles during revenue hours receive the listed training. Some require annual or bi-annual re-certifications. Proof of training (usually certificates are issued upon completion of training) must be maintained in the employee’s personnel file and tracked to guarantee all training requirements are current and up to date.

♦ First Aid  
♦ CPR  
♦ Defensive Driving Course  
♦ DRIVE Training or Passenger Assistance Techniques  
♦ Bloodborne Pathogens  
♦ Wheelchair securement training  
♦ Drug and Alcohol Training

Training must be completed no later than six (6) months after hire or sooner as prescribed by the training requirement. Refresher courses must be completed prior to the expiration for current employees.

Additional training includes:

♦ Passenger Relations  
♦ Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Requirements (including Pre and Post Trip Inspections)  
♦ Radio Procedures  
♦ Document Requirements  
♦ Weather Condition Policies  
♦ Vehicle Familiarization  
♦ Basic Operations and Maneuvering  
♦ Vehicle Evacuation
♦ Pre and Post Trip Inspections

POLICIES/PROCEDURES

ODOT strongly recommends that every Rural Transit System develop and maintain standard policies and procedures for the administration and operations of its rural transit service. Policy and procedure topics to be covered include personnel, safety, passenger rights and requirements, maintenance, and more. ODOT has developed a Policies and Procedures Manual that contains model policies/procedures that can be modified for each specific transit system. Policies and procedures which are required for Rural Transit systems are noted in bold. This Manual is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

It is advisable, though not required, that all employees become familiar with the personnel policies as well as the operations policies of the transit system. Sharing this information will reduce the misunderstanding of what services are provided and how they are provided among employees.

SAFETY AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Emergencies can and do happen. Being ready for any situation requires planning and attention to safety. Rural transit systems are required to have and periodically review and update a System Security Emergency Preparedness Plan, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/FormsTemplates.aspx. In addition, the appropriate policies and procedures should be developed and routinely reviewed with transit staff to ensure that they are familiar with the transit system’s policies and procedures and understand their role. Transit systems should also be part of their Local Emergency Management Plan. If you are not already a part of your local Plan, contact your local Emergency Management Agency to see how you can be involved.

MARKETING AND ADVOCACY

Marketing and advocacy are vital to the overall health and success of your transit system and are the responsibility not only for the transit manager and board, but all transit employees. To ensure that you are taking advantage of all marketing and advocacy opportunities, it is beneficial to have a written marketing plan. A marketing plan takes your system mission statement and objectives and translates those into a strategy for ensuring that you are not only fulfilling your mission, but building advocacy and support within your community. Beyond media advertising, the marketing plan should address the use of the local Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, and other events, county and other local fairs, to share the message of transit. As noted previously, all transit system employees have a role in marketing and advocacy, and should be aware of their “marketing potential” to the public. Drivers, in particular, are on the front-lines of service and are often the only transit representative that many passengers will see or meet. Drivers that are well trained and schooled in customer service can be the best marketing tool that a transit system has.
Although not required by ODOT, the development of a marketing plan will assist Rural Transit systems in developing and maintaining a positive image in the community. For examples of a marketing plan, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

**TYPE OF SERVICES**

Public transportation services are provided in a variety of means. Service area population density, environment, and destination locations help to define the type of service that best suits your community. Once a service type is established, it is advisable to periodically re-visit service types to ensure the most cost effective method is provided.

Regardless of the type of transit services provided, all service provisions must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA). Information on how to meet ADA service requirements can be found in the ODOT Rural Transit Requirements, Section J-Civil Rights, ADA


**Demand Response**

A demand response operation possesses three characteristics. First, the vehicles are only dispatched when a call is placed to the transit service describing the origin and destinations of each passenger. Secondly, vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule except, except on a temporary basis to satisfy a specific need. Finally, vehicles are dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations and may even be interrupted en route to these destinations to pick up other passengers.

Typically demand response operations are provided in areas with sparse populations, where the distance between origins and destinations is far, or the terrain does not permit shorter trips between stops. Rural areas consisting of farmlands and mountains with low populations usually benefit from demand response services.

There are various levels of demand response services. The most commonly provided services include curb-to-curb, door-to-door, and deviated route service. Assistance is provided as needed. Examples include maneuvering a wheelchair or other mobility device on and off the vehicle or lending support for those with walkers or visual impairments. These services are further explained below.

*Curb-to-Curb*

Curb-to-curb service is a demand response service that provides assistance to the passenger from the trip origin curb to the trip destination curb. The driver will leave the vehicle and assist the passenger as needed at both the origin and destination of the trip. For this type of service, however, the passenger must be able to get from his or her house to the vehicle and/or from the vehicle to the medical facility, grocery store, etc.
**Door-to-Door**
Unlike curb-to-curb service described previously, door-to-door is demand response service that provides assistance to the passenger from the door of the trip origin (e.g., the passenger’s home) to the door of the trip destination (e.g., the door of the medical facility). Drivers assist passengers at both the origin and destination of the trip.

**Deviated Route Service**
Deviated route service is transit service operating on a scheduled route with scheduled stops, but which may deviate from the route to pick up or drop off passengers who have requested deviation. Request for deviations are made in advance by calling the transit service dispatch office. Typically there is a limitation on how far a vehicle will deviate from a route. For ADA purposes, deviated route service is considered demand response service.

Note: All of the above types of services meet FTA’s requirement for demand response and as such do not require a Complementary Paratransit Plan. FTA’s requirements for complementary paratransit address curb-to-curb and door-to-door service as it relates to FTA’s requirement that complementary paratransit service for ADA paratransit eligible persons must be “origin-to-destination” service. This requirement, which does not apply to demand response service, is further addressed below in the Complementary Paratransit discussion.

**Fixed Route**
Fixed route service is transit service operating on fixed routes and schedules. The transit vehicles travel the fixed route, regardless of whether a passenger actively requests a vehicle. Priority seating must be provided on all vehicles for passengers with disabilities, although disabled passengers cannot be required to use this seating.

Fixed route services are usually provided in densely populated areas, where the origins and destinations are within close proximity to each other. Cities and villages may be best suited for a fixed route system.

**ADA Complementary Paratransit**
Fixed route services are required to develop an ADA complementary paratransit plan and complementary paratransit service component. Complementary paratransit is comparable transportation services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act for people with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route transportation system because of their specific disability. Complementary paratransit service must be comparable to fixed route service based on service area, response time, fare structure, trip purpose, days and hours of service, and capacity constraints.

The Department’s ADA regulation, 49 CFR §37.129(a), provides that, with the exception of certain situations in which on-call bus service or feeder paratransit service is appropriate, “complementary paratransit service for ADA paratransit eligible persons shall be origin-to-destination service.” This term was deliberately chosen to avoid using either the term “curb-to-curb” service or the term “door-to-door” service and to emphasize the obligation of transit providers to ensure that eligible passengers are actually able to use paratransit service to get from their point of origin to their point of destination. However, this does not mean that each trip must meet the “origin to destination” criteria. FTA has indicated that in the local paratransit
planning process, it would be consistent with this provision for a transit provider to establish either door-to-door or curb-to-curb service as the basic mode of paratransit service. Where the local planning process establishes curb-to-curb service as the basic paratransit service mode, however, provision should still be made to ensure that the service available to each passenger actually gets the passenger from his or her point of origin to his or her destination point. To meet this origin to destination requirement, service may need to be provided to some individuals, or at some locations, in a way that goes beyond curb-to-curb service.

However, this is not intended to require drivers to, for lengthy periods of time, have to leave their vehicles unattended or lose the ability to keep their vehicles under visual observation, or take actions that would be clearly unsafe (e.g., back a vehicle down a narrow alley in specific circumstances that would present a direct threat to safety). These activities would come under the heading of “fundamental alteration” or “undue burden.”

This particular criteria is explained further on the FTA website at http://www.fta.dot.gov/12325_3891.html. You should read this information thoroughly to know what is required for your system to meet ADA compliance in this area.


**Subscription Service**

Transportation service provided under advanced arrangements and according to prearranged conditions, e.g., hours, days, specific routing is considered subscription service. The service may be paid for by an individual, group of individuals, or company. This is the only time an individual or group of individuals may be billed for service. Service is guaranteed, usually arranged for an extended period of time, e.g., six months, one year, etc., and is paid for regardless of whether anyone rides the service. Subscription service does not necessarily need to be fully allocated. Subscription service differs from contract service in that under subscription service the individuals, routes, and destinations never change for the duration of the subscription, and revenue collected from subscription service is counted as farebox revenue. Subscription service is open to the public.

**Contract Service**

Contract service is typically defined as transportation of a group of people for a specified cost scheduled and paid by a third party, e.g., Title XX group transportation, Title III-B trips, etc. and considered to be premium service because the service is guaranteed. Contract Service must be open-door, available to the general public, offered during regular service hours, cannot interfere with the overall general public service, and must be operated in compliance with FTA charter regulations. A rate higher than the regular fare is negotiated with the contracting agency to cover the costs incurred in developing and monitoring contracts, scheduling, record keeping, and invoicing, and which takes into account the fully allocated cost of providing the service. ODOT has specific requirements governing the provision of contract service. Please refer to the ODOT Rural Transit Requirements available at
Charter Service
Charter service is defined as “Transportation provided by a recipient at the request of a third party for the exclusive use of a bus or van for a negotiated price. The following features may be characteristic of charter service:

♦ Third party pays the transit provider a negotiated price for the group;
♦ Any fares charged to individual members of the group are collected by a third party;
♦ The service is not part of the transit provider’s regularly scheduled service, or is offered for a limited period of time; or
♦ A third party determines the origin and destination of the trip as well as scheduling; or
♦ Transportation provided by a recipient to the public for events or functions that occur on an irregular basis or for a limited duration and:
  o A premium fare is charged that is greater than the usual or customary fixed route fare; or
  o The service is paid for in whole or in part by a third party.

Revisions to the Charter regulations now provide for both exemptions and exceptions to the regulations. FTA excludes from charter regulation coverage recipients of four funding programs (Section 5310, Section 5311, Section 5316, and Section 5317) if the service is considered for “program purposes.” FTA defines this term as: "...transportation that serves the needs of either human service agencies or targeted populations (elderly, individuals with disabilities, and or low income individuals).”

There are also several exceptions under which charter service can be provided. A quarterly exception report must be submitted to ODOT for service provided under any of these exceptions. Please see the operating data report section of Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, as well as the ODOT Charter Manual available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx. The FTA Charter Regulations are available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12922.html.

Exclusive School Bus Service
Rural transit systems are prohibited from providing exclusive school bus transportation for school students and school personnel. Systems can, however, modify existing service to accommodate school students along with the general public. FTA-funded equipment cannot be modified to accommodate school safety equipment (lights, arms, etc.) nor can bus stops be located on school property.

InterCity
The Ohio Rural Intercity Bus Program (Section 5311(f)) is designed to address the intercity bus transportation needs of the entire State by supporting projects that provide transportation between non-urbanized areas and urbanized areas that result in connections of greater regional, statewide, and national significance.
The purpose of the Section 5311(f) funding is to provide supplemental financial support to transit operators and to facilitate the most efficient and effective use of available Federal funds in support of intercity bus service in rural areas.

Section 5311(f) 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 public transportation operations and intercity bus carriers.”

Additional information on the Intercity Program can be found at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/RuralIntercityBus.aspx.

TRANSPORT FARE STRUCTURES AND POLICIES

Rural transit system fares, the designated payment for a one-way trip on a passenger vehicle, usually include adult, elderly and disabled (senior), student as well as transfers and transit passes. Transit systems usually accept cash, tokens, transfers, coupons, and passes as payment. Fares are established at the discretion of the governing board. However, while most transit systems have an established fare structure, many do not have a fare policy, that is a policy which reflects the governing board’s philosophy and mission for the management and operation of the transit system that reflects the particular needs of the local community. For example, a governing board may have established as part of the transit system’s mission to make transit “affordable to everyone in the community, especially older adults.” Therefore, the transit system’s fare structure would offer a low regular adult fare and an even lower fare for older adults.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures are data used to measure and evaluate the performance of a transit system as it compares its data over the course of years (e.g., previous year to present) as well as to its peers. These measures can also be used to “indicate” the success and overall health of the transit system. ODOT requires that rural transit systems collect and report a variety of performance data on the quarterly Ohio Data Report Form (ODRF). These data are then compiled and reported annually in ODOT’s Status of Transit.

Transit systems should use this data routinely to evaluate performance on at least a quarterly and annual basis. Peer analysis is helpful as well and can be conducting using ODOT’s Status of Transit report that is published annually. To download this report, go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/StatusofPublicTransit.aspx. For assistance in determining appropriate peer systems, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

PASSENGER AND COMMUNITY SURVEYS

Passenger surveys are an excellent tool to gather information from transit system users. Surveys can provide information on transit usage, perceptions, and the unmet needs of your community.
Annual passenger surveys will keep your transit system in touch with community needs and providing the opportunity to adjust services to meet those needs.

Questions should be set up with multiple choices, with an “Other” response available with a blank line to add their answer if their response is not listed. Distribute surveys online through your website, to passengers as they board transit vehicles, mail to randomly selected addresses, or submit to human service agencies that represent segments of the traveling public.

Online survey companies, such as Survey Monkey, offer free online survey platforms. Visit Survey Monkey’s website at www.surveymonkey.com for more information. Or, search on online survey tools for other resources. Add a link to your system’s survey to your webpage for easy access to your community members.

Results from passenger surveys will provide an excellent tool to ensure the transit system is meeting the needs of the community. You must be aware that changes in the economy, fuel prices, and population demographics (i.e. the aging of America) can have a significant impact on passenger needs and transit system usage.

For a sample survey, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

SCHEDULING/DISPATCHING

For demand response service, including curb to curb, door to door, and deviated fixed route, as well as ADA complementary paratransit service, scheduling and dispatching functions are critical to the successful provision of this service. In demand response service, passengers call in to request and schedule a trip. The trip must be recorded and either assigned (or dispatched) immediately or scheduled for the next day (or week). Scheduling for decades was handled manually; some transit systems still perform this function manually today. However, many systems have turned to computer-aided scheduling/dispatching, for a number of reasons:

- The growth in demand for service.
- The need to manage and monitor large volumes of data.
- The need to ensure that service meet or exceed established quality standards.
- To improve the quality of service for customers.
- To gain efficiency, and as a result, control or lower costs.


Transit system managers should monitor their scheduling and dispatching functions closely to take advantage of all practical efficiencies are being taken advantage of. Peer system evaluation (systems that are providing relatively the same number of trips and operating the same number of hours and vehicles) is a good tool for monitoring and evaluating these functions. To determine your peer systems, contact your Rural Transit Representative.
**FACILITY USE, MAINTENANCE, INVENTORY, AND DISPOSITION**

Rural Transit grantees must demonstrate satisfactory continuing control over all FTA-funded facilities to ensure that such facilities are continued to be used for transit and are maintained in good working order in compliance with the most recent edition of FTA Circular 5010 [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html). This includes the development of a written facility maintenance plan describing a system of regular, periodic inspections and an inventory through ODOT’s PTMS system and following disposition guidelines.

**MAINTENANCE**

Transit Managers must develop and implement a comprehensive maintenance program for vehicles and equipment and facilities.

**Vehicles**

Transit managers are responsible for ensuring that adequate and proper vehicle maintenance is conducted on a regular basis. A formalized vehicle maintenance program is an essential part of any transit operation in order to safeguard equipment purchased with Federal funds. At a minimum, vehicles must be maintained according to the manufacturer’s recommendations. The overall vehicle maintenance program should include the following:

- A schedule for routine servicing and maintenance or a preventive maintenance program;
- Requirements for routine vehicle inspections;
- Procedures for implementing warranty work;
- A system for tracking a supplier’s performance;
- A method for determining whether or not to contract out maintenance work totally or in part or to conduct it onsite; and
- An adequate record-keeping system and clear chain of command.

As a part of the preventive maintenance program, transit systems must have a checklist in place for daily pre-trip vehicle inspections. The grantee is responsible for ensuring each driver conducts a daily pre-trip inspection of the vehicle prior to placing the vehicle in revenue service. At a minimum, the checklist must document the following: daily inspection and testing of wheelchair restraints, wheelchair lifts and/or access ramps, lights, windshield wiper/washers, emergency equipment, mirrors, and brakes. The driver must also check the interior of the vehicle and equipment within the vehicle to ensure it is cleaned and maintained in good working order.

ODOT has developed “A Guide to Preventive Maintenance” that provides all requirements and sample checklists needed for a preventive maintenance program. The Guide is available at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/Specialized/Preventive%20Maintenance/Guide.PDF](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/Specialized/Preventive%20Maintenance/Guide.PDF).

Vehicle maintenance can be provided directly by transit system (or governing board, i.e., County Garage) staff or by contracting out to a local garage. A cost analysis should be conducted to determine the most cost-effective method.
Further information is contacted in Chapter VIII, Vehicles and Equipment, of the Rural Transit Manual.

**Facilities**
Public transit facilities must also be adequately maintained. Further, FTA requires grantees to have a written facility/equipment maintenance plan. These plans should describe a system of periodic inspections and preventive maintenance to be performed at certain defined intervals.

A sample facility maintenance plan and annual building inspection checklist are available at [Sample Facility Maintenance Plan](#) and [Sample Annual Facility Checklist](#). Refer also to the most recent edition of FTA Circular 5010 at [http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/13718.html) and to Chapter IX, Construction and Facility Projects, of this Manual.

**Inventory and Disposition**
Rural Managers must maintain and submit the ODOT PTMS Inventory. Further, all vehicles and equipment purchased with FTA and ODOT funds cannot be disposed without following ODOT’s Disposition Requirements. Please refer to Chapters VIII and IX of the Rural Transit Manual for further information.

**REGULATIONS**
Rural Transit Managers are responsible for ensuring that all applicable Federal regulations are met as they apply to the provision of rural transit service, including but not limited to, ADA, Charter, DBE, Drug and Alcohol, EEO, FMCSA, Intercity, Title VI, and Bloodborne Pathogens. Please refer to Chapter III, Federal Requirements, of the Rural Transit Manual.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**
Rural Transit Managers must implement sound financial management procedures for the rural transit system, including but not limited to basic budgeting, accrual cost accounting, controlling (personnel and equipment) costs, and contract rate setting. Please read Chapter V, Financial Management, of the Rural Transit Manual and complete the ODOT training, “Accounting Done Right for Rural Transit Systems” available on the ODOT website at [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx).

**CONTRACTING/PURCHASING**
Management of a rural transit system will entail purchasing of and contracting for materials and equipment, both small and large purchases. Transit managers are responsible for the purchase, contracting out, invoicing, and reporting of all of these items. The procedures necessary for meeting all applicable FTA and ODOT requirements are contained in Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting, of this Rural Transit Manual.
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CHAPTER XII – REFERENCE MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

The ODOT Office of Transit offers a variety of reference materials to support Rural Transit Program grantees. A grantee should never have to “reinvent the wheel” for any project or activity. If you do not see the topic or type of material you are looking for addressed in this Chapter, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

OFFICE OF TRANSIT LENDING LIBRARY

The ODOT Office of Transit offers a Lending Library of relevant, transit-specific CD-ROMs, DVDs, publications, videos, and more that are available for loan. To access the Lending Library Catalog, please go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LendingLibrary.aspx. In addition, the ODOT Library may also contain transit publications of interest and can be accessed at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/SPR/Library/Pages/default.aspx. *For this link, an ODOT login window will appear. Click “cancel” to enter the site.*

STANDARD FORMS, REQUESTS, AND TEMPLATES

The ODOT website offers a central location for frequently used forms and other documents. A sample of the documents include:

♦ Request to Purchase from State Term Contract  
♦ Budget Amendment Request  
♦ Vehicle Disposition Request  
♦ Request for Proposal or Bid Approval Request  
♦ Safety and Security Emergency Preparedness Plan Template  
♦ RTAP Scholarship Form

For a complete list, go to http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/FormsTemplates.aspx.

5311 AND 5310 POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

The 5311 and 5310 Policy and Procedure Manual contains templates for the development of a variety of policies, procedures, and forms on topics from employee job descriptions, assorted personnel policies, and sample mission statements, to ADA compliance, no show and cancellation policies and procurement. The templates provided are meant to be a starting point; transit systems must customize each policy, procedure, or form to meet its individual requirements. Those policies required by ODOT are noted in bold on the Table of Contents. The Policy and Procedure Manual is available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx, click on “5311 and 5310 policy and Procedure Manual.
REFERENCES LISTED IN THIS MANUAL

Finally, a variety of reference materials have been cited throughout this Manual. Below is a summary of those references by Chapter. For the complete context of how these citings impact the Rural Transit Program, please refer to the specific Chapter.

Chapter I, Introduction and Glossary, References

♦ Ohio’s Rural Transit Systems, 


♦ American Public Transportation Association 
www.apta.com

♦ ADA 
http://www.ada.gov/.

♦ United We Ride 
http://www.unitedweride.gov/1_3_ENG_HTML.htm.

♦ Charter Manual 
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx.

♦ FHWA 

♦ FTA Circular 9040 


♦ ODOT 
www.dot.state.oh.us

♦ ODOT Office of Transit 
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/default.aspx.

♦ OPTA 
www.ohiopublictransit.org.
♦ National RTAP  
www.nationalrtap.org

♦ FTA Circular 9030, Section 5307 Program  

♦ FTA Circular 9300.1, Section 5309 Program  

♦ FTA Circular 9070, Section 5310 Program  

♦ FTA Circular 9040, Section 5311 Program  

♦ FTA Circular 9050.1, JARC Program  

♦ FTA Circular 9045.1, New Freedom Program  

♦ TANF  
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oia/tanf/about.html  

♦ Transit Cooperative Research Program  

♦ Transportation Research Board (TRB)  

♦ Workforce Investment Act (WIA)  
http://www.doleta.gov/programs/factsh/tawlaw.cfm  
http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wia/index.stm

Chapter II, Overview of ODOT Office of Transit Program, References

♦ FTA Circular 9040, Section 5311 Program,  

♦ ODOT Rural Transit Program,  

♦ ODOT Rural Intercity Program,  
♦ ODOT Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/ElderlyDisabled.aspx.

♦ ODOT locally developed plans, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx.


♦ ODOT JARC Program, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/JARC.aspx.


♦ ODOT Ohio Technical Assistance Program (OTAP), http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx.


**Chapter III, Federal Compliance, References**

♦ ODOT Technical Assistance Reviews (TARs), http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/TAR.aspx.

♦ U.S. Department of Transportation regulations for Section 504 are addressed with its ADA regulations found at [http://fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12325.html](http://fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12325.html).


♦ Ohio CDL regulations, [http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4506.01](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4506.01).


♦ ODOT implementation guidelines for FTA’s charter regulations, [http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Publications.aspx).

♦ FTA’s school bus regulations (49 CFR part 605), [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr605_main_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr605_main_02.tpl).


♦ ODOT Calendar, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.


♦ FTA’s EEO Circular,  

♦ LEP Implementation Guide,  

♦ FTA DBE regulations 49 (CFR part 26),  
http://www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/dbe/civil_rights_5263.html

♦ FTA DBE resource page  

♦ ODOT DBE website  
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/DBE.aspx.

♦ OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens regulations  

♦ OSHA Resource Page,  

♦ Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) for Debarment and Suspension maintained by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA),  
https://www.epls.gov/.

♦ U.S. DOT Debarment and Suspension regulations (49 CFR part 29),  
http://www.dot.gov/ost/m60/Financial_Assistance_Management_Home/Suspension_Debarment_Program.htm.

♦ FTA safety laws (49 U.S.C. § 5329),  

♦ ODOT Safety and Security Emergency Preparedness Plan Template,  

♦ Requirements for maximum feasible coordination in the Federal Transit Act (Section 5311(b)(2)(c)(ii)),  

♦ ODOT guidance for locally developed plans,  
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LocallyDevelopedCoordinatedPlans.aspx.
Chapter IV, State Requirements, References

♦ ODOT Calendar  
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

♦ ODOT TAR Process  
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/TAR.aspx.

♦ ODOT Rural Transit Application Process  

♦ FTA 4220 “Third Party Contracting Procedures,”  

♦ FTA Master Agreement,  

♦ Designated Grantee Guidelines,  
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

♦ Sample Designated Grantee Letter of Intent  
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

♦ Sample Pass Thru Agreement,  
Sample Pass Through Agreement.

♦ Drug and Alcohol Collection Site Checklist,  

♦ Four Year Capital and Operating Plan,  

♦ Project Scoping Process,  

♦ Sample authorizing resolution,  

♦ FTA Title VI Circular,  

Chapter V, Financial Management, References

♦ 49 CFR 18.20 of the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments  


♦ Other Federal programs, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/STIP-TIP/Workshop/Transit%20TIP%20Table%20and%20TIP%20Amendment%20Instructions.doc.

♦ Federal program funds which can be used as local match for Rural Transit Program Projects http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/STIP-TIP/Workshop/Transit%20TIP%20Table%20and%20TIP%20Amendment%20Instructions.doc.

♦ ODOT Chart of Accounts Definitions http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

♦ ODOT Operating Invoice and Instructions http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.


Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions & Operating Data, References


♦ ODOT processes for invoicing, operating and capital, and the collection of operating data http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.
♦ ODOT Rural Chart of Accounts
   http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx.

♦ ODOT Rural Transit Program Quarterly Operating and Administrative Invoice and Budget Variance Analysis

♦ ODOT Operating Data Report Form (ODRF) instructions

♦ ODOT Capital Reimbursement Invoice Instructions

Chapter VII, Procurement and Third Party Contracting, References

♦ FTA Circular 4220

♦ Common Rule

♦ National RTAP’s Procurement Pro

♦ FTA Best Practices Procurement Manual

♦ Buy America Regulations

♦ Qualification Based Selection (QBS) methodology/How to Comply with Ohio’s Design Professional Selection Law available at

♦ Pricing Guide

♦ ODOT State Term Contracts/Cooperative Purchasing Program

♦ ODOT Office of Contracts Purchasing Program, Current Contracts
Final Purchase Procedures for State Term Contracts

Final Purchase Procedures for State Term Contract Purchases

Chapter VIII, Vehicles and Equipment, References

♦ ODOT Vehicle Selection Guide

♦ ODOT Rural Transit Program Requirements

♦ ODOT Preventive Maintenance Guide
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Programs/Specialized/Preventative%20Maintenance/Preventive%20Maintenance%20Guide.PDF.

♦ PTMS Instructions and Procedures
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ FTA Circular 9040

♦ FTA Circular 5010, Grants Management Requirements

♦ ODOT Useful Life Standards
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ Disposition Request Form and Sample Letter of Request
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/FormsTemplates.aspx.

Chapter IX, Construction and Facility Projects, References

♦ ODOT Facility Study Outline
  Facility Feasibility Study Outline

♦ ODOT Scoping Process
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ ODOT’s “Rural Facility Prototype Report”
  Rural Facility Prototype Report
- ODOT Office of Real Estate Approved Listing of Appraisers

- Environmental Checklist as part of Rural Transit Program Application and Forms
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

- ODOT Facility Flowcharts

  Process for Facility Design, Construction, and Rehab

- Qualifications Based Selection Process (QBS)

- Buy America Regulations for FTA-assisted third party procurements.
  http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title49/49cfr661_main_02.tpl

- Sample Force Account Plan

- FTA Circular 5010 Grants Management Requirements

- Sample Facility Maintenance Plan/Annual Building Inspection Checklist
  Sample Facility Maintenance Plan and Sample Annual Facility Checklist

- ODOT PTMS Instructions and Procedures
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

- ODOT Disposition Request Form/Sample Letter of Request
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/FormsTemplates.aspx.
Chapter X, Designing a New Rural Transit Program, References

♦ ODOT Office of Transit website
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/default.aspx.

♦ ODOT Rural Transit Program Requirements
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit

♦ ODOT Rural Operating Data Form with Performance Measures
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ ODOT Four Year Capital & Operating Plan
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ FTA Circular 4220 Third Party Contracting Procedures

♦ Designated Grantee Selection Process
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ Sample Grantee Re-Designation Letter and Resolution
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ Pass Through Recipient Sample Resolutions
  Sample Pass Through Agreement

♦ ORC Citings for Counties, CTBs, and RTAs

♦ ORC Citings for Municipalities, Villages, and Townships
  http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/733 and http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/505


♦ Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Public Transit Governance Guidebook,

♦ TCRP Public Transit Board Effectiveness, Publication No. 104

♦ ODOT Calendar
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.
♦ ADA regulations

♦ ODOT Section 5311(f) Intercity Program

♦ FTA Complementary Paratransit Service, Origin to Destination,

Chapter XI, Managing Your Rural Transit Program, References

♦ ORC Citings for Counties, CTBs, and RTAs

♦ ORC Citings for Municipalities, Villages, and Townships

♦ Sample Ethics Policy

♦ Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Public Transit Governance Guidebook,

♦ TCRP Public Transit Board Effectiveness, Publication No. 104

♦ ODOT Calendar
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

♦ Four Year Capital and Operating Tables

♦ ODOT Ohio Technical Assistance Program (OTAP)
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/OTAP.aspx.

♦ ODOT Website Calendar
  http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

♦ Ohio Auditor of State
  http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/.

♦ ODOT Training page
Chapter XII, References Materials, References

♦ ODOT Office of Transit Lending Library Catalog
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/LendingLibrary.aspx.

♦ ODOT Library
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/SPR/Library/Pages/default.aspx.
♦ ODOT Forms and Templates
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/FormsTemplates.aspx.

♦ 5311 and 5310 Policy and Procedure Manual

Chapter XIII, Workshops and Training, References

♦ ODOT Office of Transit website
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/divisions/Planning/transit/Pages/default.aspx.

♦ Drug & Alcohol Manager Training

♦ ODOT training page at

♦ Federal Transit Administration

♦ Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)
www.ctaa.org.

♦ Transportation Safety Institute (TSI)

♦ National RTAP
www.nationalrtap.org.

♦ Ohio Public Transit Association
www.ohiopublictransit.org.

Chapter XIV, Frequently Asked Questions, References

♦ Rural Transit Requirements,

♦ Rural Transit Calendar
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

♦ ODOT “Equitable Contract Rates for Rural Transit Systems” available at
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx
♦ ODOT Comprehensive cost allocation model tool available at
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Transit/Pages/Rural.aspx

♦ What’s New of the ODOT Office of Transit website,
http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/default.aspx.

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CHAPTER XIII – WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

The ODOT Office of Transit sponsors workshops, training, and webinars throughout the year on a variety of topics. Links to various materials and events are included throughout this Manual (see Chapter XII for a complete list).

Rural Transit grantees and providers should check the ODOT Office of Transit’s website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/divisions/Planning/transit/Pages/default.aspx periodically for this and any other new materials or events which may be available.

WEBINARS AND LIVE STREAMING

Many ODOT-sponsored events are now live streamed as well as made available for viewing on the ODOT website following the event. One example is the Drug & Alcohol Manager Training presented at the ODOT Headquarters in Columbus, Ohio which can be viewed at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/DrugAlcohol.aspx. Check the ODOT Office of Transit Home Page for the most recent events that are available for viewing and/or download. For other webinars and training, be sure to regularly check the ODOT training page at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

PowerPoint presentations that have been used for ODOT training are also available on the ODOT training page, at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx. If you don’t see the training you are seeking, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

HANDOUTS

Often handouts used as part of ODOT-sponsored training are made available through the ODOT website. Some have been used as supporting documentation and are available in this Manual at various web links (See Chapter XII for a complete list). If you are looking for a specific document or tool that you do not readily see in this document or on the ODOT website, contact your Rural Transit Representative.

OTHER TRAINING RESOURCES

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CHAPTER XIV – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Summarized in this Chapter are a few of the most frequently asked questions (in bold) along with the ODOT responses, including references for where you can find further information (italics). If you don’t see your question and can’t find the answer in the Rural Transit Manual, don’t hesitate to call your Rural Transit Representative!

WHY WAS MY LAST PAYMENT DIFFERENT THAN MY INVOICE?

Occasionally, manual adjustments are necessary after your invoice is submitted, however, copies of the revised invoice are always mailed to you. Please refer to Chapter VI of the Manual and the Rural Transit Requirements on the ODOT website for further invoicing information. Or, contact your ODOT Rural Transit Representative for questions regarding specific invoices.

IS THERE A LIST OF ALL OF THE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RURAL TRANSIT PROGRAM?

Yes, refer to Chapter III, Federal Requirements, of this Manual.

WHO DO I NOTIFY ABOUT CHANGES TO MY SERVICE?


WHEN ARE INVOICES AND OPERATING DATA DUE?

Operating invoices and data are due quarterly except for the 4th quarter. Capital invoices may be submitted after items have been purchased. Capitalized maintenance invoices are due on a specific schedule. Refer to Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data. You may also refer to the Rural Transit Program Requirements on the ODOT website http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf and the Rural Transit Calendar http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY FEDERAL AND STATE PAYMENTS?

Federal payments are made monthly except for reconciliation months. State payments are made at various times. Refer to Chapter VI of this Manual and the Rural Transit Program Requirements Rural Transit Calendar.
HOW DO I DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF SPARE VEHICLES I SHOULD HAVE?


ARE THERE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LENGTH OF TIME WE MUST KEEP TRANSIT VEHICLES IN SERVICE?

Yes, vehicles purchased with Section 5311 Rural transit funding must follow the useful life standards set by ODOT. See Chapter VIII, Vehicles and Equipment of this Manual.

HOW DO I REPORT PASSENGER DONATIONS ON MY INVOICE?

Donations are reported under Other Revenue (line item 499) on the quarterly operating invoice. Refer to Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, of this Manual.

HOW DO I DETERMINE MY FULLY ALLOCATED COST FOR PRICING CONTRACT SERVICES?


MY GOVERNING BOARD WANTS TO CONSIDER DEVELOPING A FIXED ROUTE IN ADDITION TO OUR EXISTING DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE. WHAT REGULATIONS OR OTHER REQUIREMENTS WILL WE HAVE TO COMPLY WITH?

A service change, such as a new route, requires a public involvement process and prior written ODOT approval. In your justification for the new route you will need to address how the costs of the new service will be covered (e.g., contract revenue, additional local funds, local grants, etc.) In addition, fixed route service is subject to specific Americans with Disabilities requirements including the development of an ADA Complementary Paratransit Plan. Refer to Chapter III, Federal Compliance, and Chapter IV, State Requirements, of this Manual and the ODOT Rural Transit Program Requirements available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf
Our lease expense for our current transit facility is quite expensive, but we aren’t sure if purchasing an existing or constructing a new facility is the best choice. How can we be sure?

ODOT offers specific guidance and several helpful tools on the construction and purchase of facilities. Refer to Chapter IX, Construction and Facility Projects, of this Manual.

What if the vehicle approved in my rural capital contract costs more than I estimated?

Rural Transit grantees are responsible for any budget overruns, however, a budget amendment, requiring prior ODOT approval, may be possible. Refer to the Rural Transit Requirements available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf and contact your Rural Transit Representative.

What if I have more expenses on a line item than in my operating budget?

A budget revision may be necessary. Refer to Chapter V, Financial Management, of this Manual and contact your ODOT Rural Transit Representative.

Our system has lost a major service contract and as a result we now have significantly less revenues (i.e. local match) than originally projected. What can we do?

In the event of the loss of a service contract, the Rural Transit Grantee is still responsible for providing the required local match. Unfortunately, there are only a few options. You must either secure an additional source of local match to cover the loss (either from another service contract or other local funds) or decrease expenses to fit within your available match. If this decrease affects the level of service you offer, your governing board will have to make the decision on what services to cut. In these situations, you should immediately contact your Rural Transit Representative to apprise him or her of the situation. Refer to Chapter V, Financial Management, Revenues and Match Requirements, of this Manual for some suggested sources of local share.

When can I submit an invoice for Federal and State funds to pay for my new vehicle?

You may submit an invoice 30 days prior to the expected delivery date. Refer to Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, of this Manual.

There are many terms and acronyms in the Rural Transit Manual? Where can I find definitions or explanations?

Chapter I, Introduction and Glossary, of this Manual contains a glossary of the terms used throughout the Rural Transit Manual.
HOW DO I REPORT LOCAL CASH ON THE QUARTERLY RECONCILIATION INVOICE?

The Excel spreadsheet for the reconciliation invoice determines the amount of local cash required. Refer to Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, of this Manual.

HOW DO I DETERMINE VEHICLE HOURS OF SERVICE FOR THE OPERATING DATA REPORT FORM (ODRF)?

Vehicle hours are the number of revenue service hours multiplied by the number of revenue vehicles operated multiplied by the number of days operated. Refer to Chapter VI, Invoicing Instructions and Operating Data, of this Manual.

DOES ODOT HAVE A REQUIRED TRAINING PROGRAM FOR DRIVERS?

No. ODOT does not set driver training requirements but does offer many training classes and workshops which are appropriate for drivers. See Chapter XIII, Workshops and Training, of this Manual, the ODOT calendar, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Lists/PT%20Calendar/AllItems.aspx, as well as the “What’s New” section of the ODOT website, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/default.aspx.

HOW CAN I DEVELOP OR REVISE MY BROCHURE, AND HOW OFTEN SHOULD IT BE REVIEWED?

All transit system materials should be reviewed regularly, but at a minimum annually. You may choose to develop your brochure in-house or use outside assistance. Refer to Chapter IV, State Requirements, of this Manual as well as the ODOT Rural Transit Program Requirements at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Documents/Rural Transit Manual/Rural Transit Manual Revised 2012/Rural Transit Requirements.pdf.

WHAT TYPES OF TRAINING ARE AVAILABLE FOR MY STAFF AND ME?

ODOT offers a variety of training. Additionally there are many local, state, and national workshops and conferences offered on transit-related issues. Refer to Chapter XIII, Workshops and Training, of this Manual as well as the ODOT Office of Transit’s website at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Training.aspx.

WE RECENTLY EXPERIENCED AN ELECTRICAL FIRE IN ONE OF OUR NEWER VEHICLES. CAN THE INSURANCE PROCEEDS BE USED TO REPLACE THE VEHICLE?

The insurance proceeds from an accident or other incident resulting in the damage of a Rural Transit vehicle or equipment must be re-invested in a replacement vehicle unless other action have been approved by ODOT. See Chapter VIII, Vehicles and Equipment, of this Manual and report the incident to your Rural Transit Representative immediately.