

Mission Statement

The mission of the Public Transit Division is to plan, develop, implement and administer sustainable transportation programs, projects and plans that promote the most effective and efficient allocation of state, federal and local resources throughout the state.

Goals

- Improve the availability and accessibility of public and specialized transportation resources for rural and small urban areas through a collaborative planning process and increased investments.
- Improve the level of coordination of transportation resources that are available through State Agencies, local Community Action Agencies, other public bodies and the private sector.
- Incorporate technology solutions in public and specialized transportation programs to increase safety efficiency and effectiveness.
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive transportation information data base.



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“Serving our Communities”

601-359-7800

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MDOT's Public Transit Division

Through the Office of Intermodal Planning, MDOT is committed to coordinated planning and the collaborative allocation of local, state and federal resources to develop, implement and sustain transportation programs and projects.

The Public Transit Division has as its primary responsibility the development and administration of general public and specialized transportation program grants and contracts. These programs include service delivery, technical assistance, and training components. The Division administers U.S. Department of Transportation funds on behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for rural and small urban areas of the state.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

MAP-21 furthers several important goals, including safety, state of good repair, performance, and program efficiency. MAP-21 gives FTA significant new authority to strengthen the safety of public transportation systems throughout the United States. The act also puts new emphasis on restoring and replacing our aging public transportation infrastructure by establishing a new needs-based formula program and new asset management requirements. In addition, it establishes performance-based planning requirements that align Federal funding with key goals and tracks progress towards these goals. Finally, MAP-21 improves the efficiency of administering grant programs by consolidating several programs and streamlining the major capital investment grant program known as "New Starts." These, and other important changes, are summarized below:

Rural Area Formula Grants (5311)

This program provides administration, capital, planning, and operating assistance to support public transportation in rural areas, defined as areas with fewer than 50,000 residents. Activities eligible under the former Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, which provided services to low-income individuals to access jobs, are now eligible under the Rural Area Formula program. In addition, the formula now includes the number of low-income individuals as a factor. Funds may be used for planning, capital purchases, administration planning and operating expenses, and require a local match. Eligible recipients include local public bodies, non-profit organizations and state agencies.

Intercity Bus Program

This program meets a federal requirement for assistance to bus operators in providing connecting services between non-urbanized areas and larger regional or national bus routes.

Appalachian Development Public Transportation Assistance Program

This program provides funding to support public transportation in the Appalachian region of the state. Funds may be used for planning, capital purchases, administration planning and operating expenses, and require a local match.

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (5310)

Grants are made by the MDOT to private non-profit organizations (and certain public bodies) to increase the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. The former New Freedom program (5317) is folded into this program. The New Freedom program provided grants for services for individuals with disabilities that went above and beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Activities eligible under New Freedom are now eligible under the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program. Eligible capital costs include buses, vans, radios, computers, engines, and transmissions. Using these funds for operating expenses requires a 50 percent local match while using these funds for capital expenses (including acquisition of public transportation services) requires a 20 percent local match. At least 55 percent of program funds must be spent on the types of capital projects eligible under the former section 5310. The remaining 45 percent may be used for new freedom related program requirements. Projects must be included in a coordinated human service transportation plan.

Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants (5339)

This program provides funds to assist eligible recipients described in subsection (c)(1) in financing capital projects (1) to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses

and related equipment; and (2) to construct bus-related facilities. Eligible recipients under this section are designated recipients that operate fixed-route bus service or that allocates funding to fixed route bus operators. A designated recipient that receives a grant under this section may allocate amounts of the grant to sub-recipients that are public agencies or private non-profit organizations engaged in public transportation. This is a capital grant which requires 20 percent local match.

Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)

RTAP funds are used by the Division to provide training, and technical assistance, support research or demonstration projects, and enable contractors to promote transit as a mobility alternative.

Transit Asset Management (5326)

This program establishes new requirements for transit asset management by FTA's grantees as well as new reporting requirements to promote accountability. The goal of improved transit asset management is to implement a strategic approach for assessing needs and prioritizing investments for bringing the nation's public transit systems into a state of good repair. All FTA grantees and their sub-recipients are required to develop transit asset management plans that include, at a minimum:

- capital asset inventories and condition assessments
- investment prioritization.

Public Transportation Emergency Relief Program (5324)

This program helps states and public transportation systems pay for protecting, repairing, and/or replacing equipment and facilities that may suffer or have suffered serious damage as a result of an emergency, including natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes. Eligible Recipients include: States and governmental authorities, including public transportation agencies. Emergencies are defined as natural disasters affecting a wide area or as catastrophic failures resulting from an external cause, and as a result, the governor of a state has declared as an emergency and the Secretary of Transportation has concurred, or the President has declared a major disaster. The federal share for capital and operating costs is 80%, with a 20% non-federal share, although FTA may waive the local match. The grants are only for expenses that are not reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).