Section 5311 Rural Program and Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program

Marianne Stock
Rural Program Manager
Outline

• Trends in Rural Programs
• MAP-21 Changes and New Eligibility
• Intercity Bus Program
• Technical Assistance Resources
What is rural?
What is transit?
Rural Transit Program Purpose

- **5311**: Provides funding to States for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas including funding for Tribal, Appalachian region, Intercity Bus and technical assistance programs and services.

- **5311(f)**: Provides funding to carry out a program to develop and support intercity bus transportation.
Trends in Rural Programs

• Over 1300 rural and small urban communities have public transit service supported by the 5311 program
• Over 154 million trips per year are provided
• 75 million Americans live in rural communities
• Primary trip purposes for rural transit users:
  – Work and work related activities: 29 %
  – School/church: 20%
  – Vacation and other social/recreational: 17%
  – Medical/dental: 7%
## Formula Grants For Rural Areas

### Section 5311

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY 2014</th>
<th>FY 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formula Grants for Rural Areas*</td>
<td>$618.4 M</td>
<td>$617.5 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Technical Assistance</td>
<td>$12.2 M</td>
<td>$12.2 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appalachian Formula Program</td>
<td>$20.0 M</td>
<td>$20.0 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Transit Program</td>
<td>$30.0 M</td>
<td>$30.0 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$680.6 M</strong></td>
<td><strong>$679.7 M</strong></td>
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*Includes Section 5340 Growing States apportioned in rural areas*
MAP-21 Changes to Rural Program

• Modified the Rural Formula Program
  – Low income factor
• Eligibility:
  – Job access and reverse commute projects
  – Planning
• State Administration dropped from 15% to 10%
• Established an Appalachian Development Transportation Assistance Program (ADTAP)
• Tribal Transit Program - Discretionary and Formula
• New Intercity Bus Pilot Program - Codified
New Eligibility

• Job access and reverse commute projects are eligible under this program.

• Projects must be for the “development and maintenance” of transportation services designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and employment-related activities.

• No set-aside or cap under MAP-21 for job access and reverse commute projects funded under this section.

• Planning is also now eligible.
Program Circular – 9040.1F

• Updated to incorporate new set-asides, new eligibility, and other changes per MAP-21
• More than half of the comments were about intercity bus in-kind match calculation
• Two noteworthy changes to circular in response to comments:
  – Alternative method for calculating allowable amount for intercity in-kind match provision to include unsubsidized operating expenses
  – Clarified Job Access project eligibility (maintenance of projects)
FTA Tribal Transit Program

• **Program Purpose**
  
  – To provide direct funding to federally recognized tribes for the purpose of providing public transportation services that allow tribal members to access needed services such as health care, employment, education, and recreation

• **Eligible Applicants**
  
  – Federally recognized Indian tribes or Alaska Native villages, groups, or communities as identified by the US Dept. of Interior
Intercity Bus Program

- Each State must spend no less than 15 percent of its annual apportionment for the development and support of intercity bus transportation, unless it can certify, after consultation with affected intercity bus service providers, that the intercity bus service needs of the State are being adequately met – *No change*

- Must have intercity bus connection, but OK to fund improvements / modifications to terminal facilities to facilitate shared use by other modes to include intercity rail

- State Administered; documented in State Management Plan
Intercity Bus Program – Eligible Activities

• 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
• Coordination of rural connections between small transit operations and intercity bus carriers
• Operating assistance for the direct operation of intercity bus service
• Capital assistance to purchase vehicles or vehicle related equipment for use in intercity bus service
Intercity Bus Program – Eligible Subrecipients

• Operators of intercity bus service are eligible subrecipients for Section 5311 funding.

• A state may choose to provide assistance to operators of intercity bus service using a contractual relationship instead.

• In either case, the state should use a merit-based selection process to ensure the best and most appropriate service operator is selected.
Intercity Bus In-kind Match Provision

- MAP-21 codified the “Intercity Pilot Match Program” established in March 2007 [49 U.S.C. 5311(g)(3)(D)]
- For projects that include feeder service to unsubsidized intercity bus service, local match “may be derived from the costs of a private operator for the unsubsidized segment of intercity bus service as an in-kind match for the operating costs of connecting rural intercity bus feeder service funded under 5311(f).”
- The project must be defined as including both the feeder service and an unsubsidized segment of the intercity bus network to which it connects.
- The private operator must agree in writing to the use of the costs of the private operator for the unsubsidized segment of intercity bus service as an in-kind match.
Excess or Insufficient In-Kind Match

• Excess in-kind match cannot be used to increase the federal share above the actual operating deficit of the project
• If there is not enough in-kind match to equal the Section 5311(f) funds needed to cover the operating deficit for the project, the state or local agency would have to provide the difference in cash.
Documentation Requirements for In-Kind Match

- To use in-kind match, the state must provide the following supplemental information with its Section 5311 grant application:
  - A description of the feeder service and the connecting service, identifying the locations served by each, and the connections between the two services.
  - Itemize the total and net costs of each segment used in the project description, using place names and level of service. Document the costs incurred by the private operator for the connecting service.
  - Include documentation that the private operator has consented to the arrangement.
  - Document availability of additional cash match if necessary.
Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

Section 5310 Program Purpose: Enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services.
Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreements

- **National RTAP** – grant partner Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association
- **National Center for Mobility Management** – grant partners Easter Seals, Inc., APTA, CTAA
- **New Center: National Aging and Disability Transportation Center** – grant partners Easter Seals, Inc. and n4a
# FTA TA Center Key Functions

| Training          | • Webinars & Online Courses  
|                   | • In-Person Trainings        |
| TA/I&R            | • Quick, or In-depth Assistance  
|                   | • Peer Networking            |
| Outreach          | • Information Sharing        
|                   | • Best Practice Dissemination |
| Local Grants*     | • Building Connections       
|                   | • Supporting Innovation      |

*When funding permits*
Apps in the Cloud
Training Products
Briefs and Toolkits
Best Practices
Rural Public Transit Success Story

• Roaring Fork Transportation Authority, Lakewood CO
  – Began in 1983 in the City of Aspen and Pitkin County.
  – Using approximately $1 million in Section 5311 funding and a fleet of 127 transit vehicles, the system provides Ladders of Opportunity for individuals and supports the economic growth of the region.
  – Service extends over a 70-mile corridor, enabling low-income workers to live in affordable housing and access jobs in the high-growth City of Aspen.
Contact Information

Rural Program Manager:
Marianne Stock
Marianne.stock@dot.gov
202-366-2677
Federal Transit Administration
www.fta.dot.gov