

## Illinois Rural Public Transit Glossary of Terms

**Accessible Vehicle:** A revenue vehicle that does not restrict access, is usable, and provides allocated space and/or priority seating for individuals who use wheelchairs.

**ADA Complementary Paratransit Service:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees people with disabilities the same access to public transportation as people without disabilities. People with disabilities who cannot use the fixed route buses can use designated ADA Complementary Paratransit Service designed to operate the same days and hours as the fixed route service available in the area, and at a minimum must operate within three quarters of a mile of fixed routes services. Passengers usually ride with others who are traveling in the same general direction, and drivers may stop to pick up or drop off passengers en route.

**Advisory Board or Council:** An elected or appointed group of public transportation system stakeholders who provide input to the governing body on policies to enhance service and/or boost efficiency. The group is composed of a cross-section of ages, interests, and backgrounds to provide input on service quality and design. In general, advisory boards have significant roles in representing the consumer. Advisory boards can make their wishes known to the legal entity (governing board) and can be the public watchdog, but generally cannot enact policy. When advisory and governing boards work together in supportive roles, the transit system matures and improves in both its quality and quantity of service. When these two types of boards see themselves as competing entities, the organization suffers.

**Alternative Fuels:** Low-polluting fuels used to propel a vehicle instead of high-sulfur diesel or gasoline. Examples include methanol, ethanol, propane or compressed natural gas, liquid natural gas, low-sulfur or "clean" diesel and electricity.

**American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO):** An engineering oriented interest group based in Washington, D.C. involved in research, advocacy, and technical assistance related to transportation solutions.

**American Public Transportation Association (APTA):** A national organization represented by a collective membership of public transportation users, operators, elected officials, and advocates while serving as one of the principal and leading forces in advancing public transportation.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** This law, signed on July 26, 1990, is a civil rights act that designed to ensure equal access to employment, public accommodations, telecommunications and transportation for people with disabilities. Under the Act, persons with disabilities receive equal access to public transportation services.

**Apportionment:** A federal budgetary term that refers to a statutorily prescribed division or assignment of funds, based on prescribed formulas in the law and consists of dividing authorized obligation authority for a specific program among transit systems.

**Authorization:** Basic, substantive legislation which establishes or continues the legal operation of a federal program or agency, either indefinitely or for a specific period of time, or which sanctions a particular type of obligation or expenditure within a program. An authorization may set appropriation limits.

**Average Vehicle Ridership (AVR):** The ratio of all people traveling by any mode in a given area during a given time period to the number of cars on the road.

**Base Fare:** The price charged to one adult for one transit ride; excludes transfer, zone, and express service charges, peak period surcharges and reduced fares.

**Bus, Charter:** A bus transporting a group of persons who, pursuant to a common purpose, and under a single contract at a fixed price, have acquired the exclusive use of a bus to travel together under an itinerary.

**Bus, Transit:** A bus with front and center doors, normally with a rear-mounted engine, low back seating, and without luggage compartments or restroom facilities for use in frequent-stop service.

**Bus Shelter:** A building or other structure constructed near a bus stop, to provide seating and protection from the weather for the convenience of waiting passengers.

**Bus Stop:** A place where passengers can board or alight from the bus, usually identified by a sign.

**Capacity:** Number of passengers or vehicles that can travel in one or both directions over a specified time period.

**Capital Assistance:** Financial assistance for transit capital expenses (not operating costs); such aid may originate with federal, state or local governments.

**Capital Cost:** Expenditures, as defined by FTA guidelines, related to long-term assets of a public transit system such as property, buildings, and vehicles.

**Capital Funds:** Used to finance infrastructure needs such as new construction, rehabilitation of existing facilities, and purchase of rolling stock and equipment.

**Capital Investment:** Money used to induce development and investment in communities surrounding transit projects by funding transit projects.

**Charter Service:** Exclusive service for a group from a single origin to a single destination, for a single event, and not under the usual terms of and conditions of the demand response system for individuals. Transit providers should report these services to the charter registration web site. Please refer to **Demand Response Service vs. Charter Service**.

**Commute:** Regular travel in the main flow of traffic between home and a fixed location (usually work).

**Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA):** National organization committed to removing barriers to accessible transportation and improving mobility for all people.

**Commuter:** A person who travels regularly between home and work or school.

**Complementary Paratransit Service:** See **ADA Complementary Paratransit Service.**

**Consolidated Services:** Local agencies with vehicles collaborate to form an independent entity to provide transit services. The participating agencies “give” their vehicles to the new entity and pay the new entity for transporting their clients.

**Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP) Program:** State program which provides vehicles to non-profits and certified public bodies, competitively awarded through the HSTP process.

**Contract Authority:** A federal budgetary term; refers to a form of budget authority permitting obligations to be incurred in advance of appropriations.

**Coordinated Services:** Local human service agencies that own and operate vehicles, work together to develop local service delivery plans to create operational efficiencies, and also may pool purchases of fuel and maintenance services.

**Deadhead:** The movement of a transit vehicle without passengers aboard; often to and from a garage or to and from one route to another.

**Demand Response Service:** Any non-fixed route system of transporting individuals that requires advance scheduling by the customer. Passenger trips are generated by 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. Typically, the vehicle could be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations. Rural demand response services essentially provide paratransit service to everyone.

Demand response service may be provided in the following ways:

- Curb to Curb
- Door to Door
- Door through Door

**Demand Response vs. Charter Service:**

- Charter service is exclusive, whereas demand response service is shared-ride.
- Charter service is to a group, whereas demand response service is to individuals. Service to individuals can be identified by a vehicle trip that includes multiple origins, multiple destinations, or both.
- Charter service is for a specific event or function, whereas demand response service is regular and continuing.

- Demand response service many also include trips that are exclusive, for a group, from a single origin to a single destination, and that reoccur on a less-frequent basis than once per month, so long as these trips are arranged and operated under the same terms and conditions as the demand response system for individuals. These terms and conditions include advance notice requirements service windows for pick up and drop off, and price.
- **Service that is exclusive for a group, from a single origin to a single destination, for a single event, and not under the usual terms of and conditions of the demand response system for individuals should be considered to be charter service. Transit providers should report these services to the charter registration web site.**

**Disabled persons:** Any person who by reason of injury, age, illness, or other incapacity or disability is unable to use local transit facilities and services to the same extent as persons who are not disabled without specific modifications.

**Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE):** A business owned and operated by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. Socially and economically disadvantaged individuals include African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Pacific Americans or Asian Indian Americans and any other minorities or individuals found to be disadvantaged by the Small Business Administration (SBA) under Section 8 (a) of the Small Business Act.

**Downstate Capital Needs Assessment:** A comprehensive report of Downstate (both rural and urban) Illinois transit capital ten-year investment needs, produced annually by RTAC. Surveys are normally distributed to Section 5311 and Section 5307 grantees in September. A final report is produced in January, used for planning purposes by IDOT DPIT and for advocacy purposes by IPTA.

**Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP):** Administered by IDOT DPIT, a program that supports a portion of the administrative and operating costs of public transit systems in Downstate Illinois. The funds are based on a percentage of sales tax generated in the service area and are available to cities, counties, villages, rural and urban transit districts or systems, and towns. DOAP funding provides up to 65% reimbursement of eligible operating expenses.

**Downtime:** A period during which a vehicle is inoperative because of repairs or maintenance.

**Facilities:** Include administration, maintenance and storage buildings.

**Fare Box Recovery Ratio:** Measure of the proportion of operating expenses covered by passenger fares; found by dividing fare box revenue by total operating expenses for each mode and/or systemwide.

**Fare Box Revenue:** Value of cash, tickets, tokens and pass receipts given by passengers as payment for rides; excludes charter revenue.

**Fare Elasticity:** The extent to which ridership responds to fare increases or decreases.

**Fare Revenue Collection Equipment:** Include turnstiles, fare boxes (drop), automated fare boxes and related software money changers and fare dispensing machines (tickets, tokens, passes).

**Fare Structure:** The system set up to determine how much is to be paid by various passengers using a transit vehicle at any given time.

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA):** Division of the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for administering federal highway transportation programs. Major program areas include the Federal-Aid Highway Program, which provides federal financial assistance to the States to construct and improve the National Highway System, urban and rural roads, and bridges. The FHWA also manages a comprehensive research, development, and technology program.

**Federal Railroad Administration (FRA):** Division of the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for setting federal rules and standards that railroads must abide by, including vehicle safety. FRA employs safety inspectors to monitor railroad compliance with federally mandated safety standards including track maintenance, inspection standards and operating practices. The FRA conducts research and development tests to evaluate projects in support of its safety mission and to enhance the railroad system as a national transportation resource.

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA):** Division of the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for planning and programming of transit related projects and programs throughout the nation. In providing financial, technical and planning assistance, the agency provides leadership and resources for safe and technologically advanced local transit systems while assisting in the development of local and regional traffic reduction. The FTA maintains the National Transit library (NTL), a repository of reports, documents, and data generated by professionals and others from around the country. The NTL is designed to facilitate document sharing among people interested in transit and transit related topics.

**Fiscal Year (FY):** The yearly accounting period for government. The federal fiscal year begins October 1 and ends on the following September 30. The state fiscal year begins July 1 and ends on the following June 30. The fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends.

**Fixed Cost:** An indirect cost that remains relatively constant, irrespective of the level of operational activity.

**Fixed Route:** Service provided on a repetitive, fixed-schedule basis along a specific route with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations; each fixed-route trip serves the same origins and destinations.

**Flexible Funding:** Unlike funding that flows by a rigid formula, this is money that can be invested on a range of transportation projects. Examples of flexible funding programs

include the Surface Transportation Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement, and Flexible Congestion Relief.

**Formula Funds:** Funds distributed or apportioned to qualifying recipients on the basis of formulas described in law; which are distributed to each state based on the state's percentage of national rural population.

**General Revenue Funds (GRF):** Operating funds used to account for all financial resources and normal recurring activities for the state except those accounted for in a dedicated fund.

**Governing Board:** An elected or appointed group of stakeholders charged with creating organizational policy, approving the budget, monitoring operational and fiscal performance, and overseeing legal contracts for a public transportation system. Governing boards assure that policy, finance, and service performance are delivered in a business-like method that ensures long term stability, and is normally the final authority on all business conducted by the organization. When governing and advisory boards work together in supportive roles, the transit system matures and improves in both its quality and quantity of service. When these two types of boards see themselves as competing entities, the organization suffers.

**Headway:** Time interval between vehicles moving in the same direction on a particular route.

**Highway Trust Fund:** The federal trust fund established by the Highway Revenue Act of 1956; this fund has two accounts -- the Highway Account and the Mass Transit Account. Trust fund revenues are derived from federal highway-user taxes and fees such as motor fuel taxes; trust fund uses and expenditures are determined by law.

**Human Service Transportation:** Transportation available to people who have trouble utilizing forms of transportation because of age, disability, poverty, or some other form of disadvantage. In 2011 the Government Accountability Office (GAO) identified 80 federal programs funding transportation services for the transportation-disadvantaged. The GAO was unable to track the actual amount but reported that billions of dollars are spent annually on public and client (various federally supported medical, workforce, education, or other social services programs) transportation. The FTA allows revenue from these client transportation services to be used as a portion of the non-federal share of project costs. Section 5311 and 5310 grantees serve clientele of human service programs and rely on financial involvement from those programs to meet necessary project expenses. Please refer to **Transportation Coordination**.

**Human Service Transportation Plan (HSTP):** Provision of highway bill that requires the establishment of a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for all FTA programs that target underserved populations. Without an HSTP, direct recipients of FTA monies cannot access their allocated money.

**Human Service Transportation Plan (HSTP) Coordinators:** Please refer to **Illinois Human Service Transportation Plan**.

Illinois Rural Transit Glossary

**Illinois Department of Transportation Office of Intermodal Project Implementation (IDOT OIPI):** Supports multimodal transportation throughout Illinois by providing technical support and financial resources to local governments, transit operators and rail operators. Main functions are: Develop and recommend policies and programs; Implement and administer operating, capital, and technical programs; Coordinate and participate in statewide planning and programming activities; Conduct technical studies and engineering reviews of transit projects and planning studies; and maximize the amount of federal funds received in Illinois for transit and rail projects. These functions are provided by four Bureaus: Freight Rail Management, Passenger Rail Corridor Management, Transit Capital, and Transit Operations.

**Illinois Department of Transportation Office of Planning and Programming (IDOT-OPP):** Support multimodal transportation throughout Illinois by coordinating planning and program efforts for all modes of transportation.

**Illinois Human Service Transportation Plan (HSTP):** Developed as part of the Human Service Transportation Plan (HSTP) coordination requirement under the highway bill, IDOT DPIT adopted 11 rural planning regions across the state to implement coordinated plans for public transportation projects. HSTP coordinators, housed at regional planning councils and commissions, are charged with developing and implementing those plans. Developed plans will have a focus on service coordination for projects specifically receiving funds under the Federal Transit Administration program Section 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities.

**Illinois Public Transportation Association (IPTA):** Represents the legislative interests of public transportation operators throughout the state, and promotes a positive image of public transportation in Illinois. IPTA promotes research and investigation toward the improvement and professionalism of public transportation.

**Illinois Rural Public Transportation Mobility Index:** A multi-factored document, prepared by RTAC, which provides a snapshot assessment of Section 5311 grantee performance via operational and funding data. The Index measures productivity, efficiency, and the level of engagement (coordination) with human service transportation funding streams. It can be used to evaluate performance levels via peer comparison, analyze trends, assess the degree of non-DOAP local match development, and identify technical assistance needs.

**Interagency Coordinating Committee on Transportation (ICCT):** Established in 2003 by the State of Illinois through Public Act 93-0185, the ICCT worked to address ways to broaden coverage and reduce duplication of transportation services to help disadvantaged citizens of Illinois get to work, work-related services, and other life-sustaining activities for health and well-being.

The ICCT Clearinghouse based at the Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC) worked directly with communities to improve coordination of community-based transportation programs, and deliver a technical assistance program that address critical gaps in

Illinois Rural Transit Glossary

transportation services. The ICCT Clearinghouse provided technical assistance and support only; it did not fund projects. The ICCT disbanded in 2017.

**Intermodal:** More than one means of transportation. For example, an intermodal trip could be a passenger walking to the train station, taking the train to a bus station and then taking the bus to a destination

**Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program:** Formula program that provided funding for local programs to transport welfare recipients and low income individuals to and from jobs and to develop transportation services for residents of rural, suburban, and urban areas to suburban employment opportunities. JARC is now part of the Section 5311 program.

**Joint Development:** Public-private partnerships for development of land around transit stations or stops.

**Urbanized Area, Large:** An urbanized city, town or region with population over 200,000.

**Layover time:** Time built into a schedule between arrival at the end of a route and the departure for the return trip, used for the recovery of delays and preparation for the return trip.

**Linked trip:** One-way trip on public transit with one or more transfers.

**Local Matching Funds:** The stipulation set by a grant funding body that the recipients of a grant raise a certain percentage of the money they require. All transit federal funding streams require a local or state match. Rural transit grantee local match funds can be provided by, but not limited to, Downstate Operating Assistance Program appropriations; service contracts with non-profit local or state human service organizations; local appropriations, donations or dedicated revenues; and in-kind services.

Regarding service contracts with non-profit local or state human service organizations, Section 5311 systems are allowed to use revenue from providing these client transportation services to be used as local match toward drawing down their federal and state operating assistance funds. Among the most common sources of local match are Title III-B and Title XX funding for transportation for seniors, DHS rehabilitative funding for transportation for individuals with disabilities, Medicaid-funded non-emergency medical transportation, and a large variety of local and state human service transportation funding programs derived from the over 80 federal programs.

**Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP):** Plan for regional or statewide transportation networks that every MPO and state must develop. The plan looks at least 25 years ahead and is revised every five years.

**Low-Income:** A household or family whose annual gross income does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area (adjusted for family size). Another frequently used measure is 200% of the annual federal poverty guidelines.



**Mass Transit:** Transportation by bus, rail or other vehicles, providing service to the public on a regular and continuing basis.

**Mass Transit District (MTD):** A governmental agency created for the sole purpose of providing public transportation within a specific area.

**Mass Transit Account:** The federal account into which a designated portion of motor fuel taxes is placed.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):** A federally required transportation planning body responsible for development of the area's respective long-range transportation plan (LRTP) and transportation improvement program (TIP) in its region.

**Minority Business Enterprise (MBE):** A business owned and operated by one or more individuals who are defined as minorities under U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. See also "disadvantaged business enterprise."

**Mobility:** The ability to be moved from place to place.

**Mobility Management:** An approach to service development and management that focuses on individualized customer markets and involves establishing a variety of services tailored to meet the needs of those markets, providing access to a family of transportation services. It could include developing technologies to increase travel options and traveler convenience and using a one-call center to provide information and access to all travel options.

**Motor Fuel Tax:** A tax on gasoline, gasohol, or diesel fuel collected for operating a motor vehicle. A percentage of the money is transferred to municipalities for transportation projects and programs.

**Multimodal:** Refers to the availability of multiple transportation options, especially within a system or corridor. A multimodal approach to transportation planning focuses on the most efficient way of getting people or goods from place to place, whether by truck, train, bicycle, automobile, airplane, bus, boat, foot or even a computer modem.

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):** Agency responsible for reducing deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. Sets and enforces safety performance standards for motor vehicles and equipment, and through grants to state and local governments enables them to conduct effective local highway safety programs.

**National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP):** A program of the FTA administered by the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association. The National RTAP mission is to improve mobility in all rural, small urban, and tribal communities across the country through technical assistance and training for transit providers. Since 1987 the National RTAP has developed and distributed materials,

provided technical assistance, generated reports, published best practices, conducted research, and provided peer assistance.

**New Freedom (NF) Program:** Federal grant program that provided capital (in Illinois) and operating funds to address the transportation needs of person with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. New Freedom is now part of the Section 5310 funding stream.

**New Starts:** Competitive federal grant program that provides funding for capital investment projects. This allows transit agencies to purchase or construct bus facilities, rail transit systems, buses, and other transit related vehicles and infrastructure.

**Non-fixed-Route Service:** Transit service not provided on a repetitive, fixed-schedule basis along a specific route to specific locations.

**Non-Urbanized Area:** The Section 5311 program funds public transportation services for non-urbanized areas. The FTA derives a state's non-urbanized populations and non-urbanized land area by subtracting the urbanized area population and land area from the state's total population and land area. Any incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more (designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census) is an urbanized area.

**Northeastern Illinois:** Six-county region surrounding Chicago that includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties.

**Obligation:** A federal budgetary term that refers to a binding agreement that will result in an outlay; an agreement by the federal government to pay for goods or services immediately or at some future time when the goods or services are delivered; also known as a "commitment."

**Obligation Limitation:** A federal budgetary term that refers to a limit placed in appropriations bills on the amount of federal assistance that may be obligated during a specified time period. It does not affect the scheduled apportionment or allocation of funds; it just controls the rate at which these funds may be used.

**Off-Peak Period:** Non-rush periods of the day when travel activity is generally lower and less transit service is scheduled; also called "base period".

**Operating Assistance:** Financial assistance for transit operating expenses (not capital costs); such aid may originate with federal, local or state governments.

**Operating Costs:** The sum of all costs associated with the maintenance and operation of a transportation system. Generally includes interest paid on loans for capital equipment, property taxes on capital items and depreciation on plant and equipment when applicable.

**Operating Deficit:** The sum of all operating expenses minus operating revenues.

**Operating Expenses:** Monies paid by a transit operator or system provider to operate vehicles, settle claims, rent equipment and facilities and maintain equipment.

**Operating Funds:** Provides income for operational expenses.

**Operating Revenue:** Receipts derived from or for the operation of transit service, including fare box revenue, revenue from advertising, interest and charter bus service and operating assistance from governments.

**Paratransit:** Specialized, door-to-door transport service for individuals with disabilities and others who are unable to use fixed-route public transportation. Fixed route services provide complementary paratransit, which requires riders to be certified to use that service. Rural demand response and deviated route services essentially provide paratransit service to everyone.

**Passenger Miles:** The total number of miles traveled by passengers on transit vehicles. Revenue passenger miles are the total number of miles traveled by paying passengers.

**Passenger Transport (PT):** The weekly newspaper of the transit industry, published by the American Public Transit Association (APTA).

**Passenger Vehicle:** A vehicle used to carry passengers in transit service.

**Peak Period:** Morning and afternoon time periods when transit riding is heaviest

**Peak/Base Ratio:** The number of vehicles operated in passenger service during the peak period divided by the number operated during the base period.

**Program Compliance Oversight Monitor (PCOM):** Because each Section 5311 grantee has primary responsibility to IDOT and the FTA for compliance with all applicable federal and state requirements as may be set forth in statutes, regulations, and the agreement for the project, each grantee must designate a PCOM.

The PCOM must be an employee of the grant, an employee of a unit of local government with who the grantee has entered into an intergovernmental agreement for rural transit service, or a shared employee between two grantees with contiguous service areas. A mass transit district may appoint its director to be the PCOM.

Among other duties, the PCOM will be responsible for developing a public transportation service plan; monitoring and analyzing grant performance, conditions, and compliance; complaint procedures; monitoring the Public Transportation Account (PTA); and compiling reports to be submitted to IDOT DPIT.

**Public Transit System:** An organization that provides transportation services owned, operated, or subsidized by any municipality, county, regional authority, state, or other governmental agency, including those operated or managed by a private management firm under contract to the government agency owner.

**Public Transportation:** Transportation by bus, rail, or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, which provides to the public general or special service on a regular and continuing basis. Also known as “mass transportation” “mass transit” and “transit.”

**Public Transportation Account (PTA):** Each Section 5311 grantee must create a separate, interest-bearing bank account at a federally insured bank or trust company to allow tracking of grant funds. All grant payments from IDOT and other funds provided for or otherwise received, and all funds generated from the project, project facilities, and transit system(s), must be deposited into this account. The coordination of human service transportation and leveraging of local resources should establish a cash flow that enables increased capacity, which creates an effective rural public transportation system.

**Rail, Commuter:** Local and regional passenger train operations between a central city, its suburbs and/or another central city. It may be either locomotive-hauled or self-propelled, and is characterized by multi-trip tickets, specific station-to-station fares, railroad employment practices and usually only one or two stations in the central business district. Also known as "suburban rail."

**Rail, High Speed:** A rail transportation system with exclusive right-of-way which serves densely traveled corridors at speeds of 124 miles per hour (200 km/h) and greater.

**Rail, Light:** An electric railway with a "light volume" traffic capacity compared to heavy rail. Light rail may use shared or exclusive rights-of-way, high or low platform loading and multi-car trains or single cars. Also known as "streetcar," "trolley car" and "tramway."

**Regional Transportation Authority (RTA):** Created in 1974 upon the approval of a referendum by the residents of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties in northeastern Illinois, the RTA is a special purpose unit of local government and a municipal corporation of the state of Illinois. The RTA is responsible for financial oversight and serves as the regional planning body for the three public transit operators in northeastern Illinois: the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra commuter rail and Pace suburban bus.

**Rehabilitation:** The rebuilding of revenue vehicles to original specifications of the manufacturer. Rebuilding may include some new components but has less emphasis on structural restoration than would be the case in a remanufacturing operation, focusing on mechanical systems and vehicle interiors.

**Revenue Vehicle:** A vehicle in the fleet that is available to operate in revenue service, including spares and vehicles temporarily out of service for routine maintenance and minor repairs.

**Reverse Commuting:** Movement in a direction opposite the main flow of traffic, such as from the central city to a suburb during peak periods.

**Ridership:** The number of rides taken by people using a public transportation system in a given time period.

**Ridesharing:** A form of transportation in which more than one person shares the use of the vehicle.

**Rolling Stock** The vehicles used in a transit system, including buses and rail cars.

**Route or Point Deviation:** A service which operates along a prescribed route and keeps to a timetable, but deviates from the route for pre-arranged pick-ups or drop-offs. Rural deviated route services essentially provide paratransit services to everyone.

**Route Miles** The total number of miles included in a fixed route transit system network.

**Rural Area:** Please refer to **Non-Urbanized Area**.

**Rural National Transit Database (NTD):** The FTA system used to collect data required by US DOT to run its transportation programs.

**Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC):** Created in 1990, operates under an inter-agency agreement with IDOT DPIT to deliver the Illinois Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). Each state is required to have an RTAP to provide training, technical assistance and research, and to promote public and specialized transportation in rural areas. RTAC also serves as the clearinghouse for the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Transportation, created by Public Act 93-0185 “to encourage the coordination of public and private transportation services, with priority given toward services directed toward those populations who are currently not served or are underserved by existing public transportation.”

### **Section 5307 – Funding for Urban Areas**

This program makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to Governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Eligible purposes include planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement of buses, overhaul of buses, rebuilding of buses, crime prevention and security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. All preventive maintenance and some Americans with Disabilities Act complementary paratransit service costs are considered capital costs.

For urbanized areas with 200,000 population and over, funds are apportioned and flow directly to a designated recipient selected locally to apply for and receive Federal funds. For urbanized areas under 200,000 in population, the funds are apportioned to the Governor of each state for distribution. A few areas under 200,000 in population have been designated as transportation management areas and receive apportionments directly.

For urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or more, operating assistance is not an eligible expense. In these areas, at least one percent of the funding apportioned to each area must be used for transit enhancement activities such as historic preservation, landscaping, public art, pedestrian access, bicycle access, and enhanced access for persons with disabilities and the Clean Air Act. The Federal share may also be 90 percent for projects or portions of projects related to bicycles. The Federal share may not exceed 50 percent of the net project cost of operating assistance.

Funding is apportioned on the basis of legislative formulas. For areas of 50,000 to 199,999 in population, the formula is based on population and population density. For areas with populations of 200,000 and more, the formula is based on a combination of bus revenue vehicle miles, bus passenger miles, fixed guideway revenue vehicle miles, and fixed guideway route miles as well as population and population density.

The Federal match share is not to exceed 80 percent of the net project cost. The Federal share may be 90 percent for the cost of vehicle-related equipment attributable to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Clean Air Act. The Federal share may also be 90 percent for projects or portions of projects related to bicycles. The Federal share may not exceed 50 percent of the net project cost of operating assistance.

#### **Section 5310 - Funding for the Elderly and Disabled**

FTA structured program that provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each State's share of population for these groups of people.

Funds are obligated based on the annual program of projects included in a statewide grant application. The State agency ensures that local applicants and project activities are eligible and in compliance with Federal requirements, that private not-for-profit transportation providers have an opportunity to participate as feasible, and that the program provides for as much coordination of federally assisted transportation services, assisted by other Federal sources. Once FTA approves the application, funds are available for state administration of its program and for allocation to individual subrecipients within the state. Please refer to **Vehicle** section for types of vehicles awarded.

#### **Section 5311- Funding for Rural and Non-urbanized Areas**

The FTA structured program (49 U.S.C. 5311) provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas of less than 50,000 population. It is apportioned in proportion to each State's non-urbanized population. Funding may be used for capital, operating, State administration, and project administration expenses. Each state prepares an annual program of projects, which must provide for fair and equitable distribution of funds within the states, including Indian reservations, and must provide for maximum feasible coordination with transportation services assisted by other Federal sources.

Funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative assistance to state agencies, local public bodies, and nonprofit organizations (including Indian tribes and groups), and operators of public transportation services. The state must use 15 percent of its annual apportionment to support intercity bus service, unless the Governor certifies that these needs of the state are adequately met. Projects to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects, may be funded at 90 percent federal match. The maximum FTA share for operating assistance is 50 percent of the net operating costs. The goals of the nonurbanized formula program are:

- Enhance the access of people in nonurbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation;
- Assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in rural and small urban areas;
- Encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all Federal funds used to provide passenger transportation in nonurbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services;
- Assist in the development and support of intercity bus transportation; and
- Provide for the participation of private transportation providers in nonurbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible.

Eligible Recipients include state and local governments, non-profit organizations (including Indian tribes and groups), and public transit operators.

Eligible Purposes of funding include capital, operating, and administrative purposes.

The allocation of Funding is defined by a statutory formula that is based on the latest U.S. Census figures of areas with a population less than 50,000. The amount that the state may use for state administration, planning, and technical assistance activities is limited to 15 percent of the annual apportionment. States must spend 15 percent of the apportionment to support rural intercity bus service unless the Governor certifies that the intercity bus needs of the state are adequately met.

The maximum Federal Match for capital and project administration is 80 percent (except for projects to meet the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects, which may be funded at 90 percent.) The maximum Federal share for operating assistance is 50 percent of the net operating costs. The local share is 50 percent, which shall come from an undistributed cash surplus, a replacement or depreciation cash fund or reserve, or new capital.

**Seniors:** Individuals who are 60 years of age or older.

**Service Animal:** Animal trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities such as guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks.

Service animals are working animals, not pets.

A service animal is an extension of the traveler and is a crucial component of the individual's trip. A vehicle operator can ask two questions:

1. Is that a service animal?
2. What task does the animal perform?

The operator must accept whatever response the passenger provides. The operator cannot ask for any type of proof of service animal status or demonstration of the task.

**Service Area:** The area covered and populations served by a transit provider, as determined by the reporting transit agency.

**Service Contract:** A formal agreement between the public transportation grantee and any group or agency needing transportation for its clients. In exchange for transporting its clients, the agency gives the public transportation grantee resources they would normally use to transport clients. This might be vehicles or staff, but normally is money. The agency and public transportation grantee come to a mutual agreement on the number of rides and their cost.

Service contracts provide two functions:

- Revenue from contracts with non-profit agencies are a source for local match.
- The open seats on the new routes increase the system's transit capacity to provide more general public ridership.

It is important to balance service contract development with the needs of the general public. Service contract rides should be provided in addition to general public rides, instead of supplanting them.

**Shuttle:** A public or private vehicle that travels back and forth over a particular route, especially a short route or one that provides connections between transportation systems, employment centers, etc.

**Urbanized Area, Small:** An urbanized city, town or region with population between 50,000 and 200,000.

**State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):** Statewide list of transportation projects that covers at least a three year period.

**Station:** A passenger boarding/alighting facility with a platform, which may include stairs; elevators; escalators; passenger controls; canopies; wind shelters; lighting; signs; buildings with a waiting room, ticket office or machines, restrooms, or concessions.

**Supplemental Appropriation** An act appropriating funds in addition to those in an annual appropriation act because the need for funds is too urgent to be postponed until enactment of the next regular appropriation act.

**Surface Transportation Program (STP):** Allows for more varied and equitable transportation opportunities by giving local and state agencies authority to decide how best to spend transportation funding.

**System-generated Revenue:** Fare box revenue plus funds from other sources (e.g., advertising and freight railroad contributions).



**Taxicab:** A vehicle that serves primarily as a demand-responsive public passenger vehicle for hire.

**Taxi Coupon Models:** Coupon programs are a type of voucher model. Individuals receive coupons from a sponsoring agency that can be used only for a local taxi service. The traveler's destination may or may not be restricted, depending on the funding agency's policy.

**Transfer Center:** A fixed location where passengers interchange from one route or vehicle to another.

**Transit Center:** A fixed location where passengers interchange from one route or vehicle to another that has significant infrastructure such as a waiting room, benches, restrooms, sales outlet, ticket or pass vending machines, and/or other services.

**Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP):** An FTA (Section 5313) established program promoting operating effectiveness and efficiency in the public transportation industry by conducting practical, near-term research designed to solve operational problems, adopt useful technologies from related industries, and introduce innovation that provides better customer service.

**Transit Mode:** The system for carrying transit passengers described by specific right-of-way, technology and operational features. Transit data are generally collected by mode.

**Transportation Coordination:** The process of communication, cooperation, and collaboration among community stakeholders (human service agencies, medical and healthcare agencies, employment and job training representatives, elected officials, transportation users, transportation providers, and others) with the intent of melding human transportation funding streams via a single-entity transit delivery system, to:

- Avoid transportation service gaps
- Avoid transportation service duplication
- Encourage the efficient use of limited resources

Coordination of transportation services can lead to economic benefits, such as funding, flexibility, reduced costs or greater efficiency, and increased productivity, as well as improved customer service and enhanced mobility.

Public transportation providers bear a large part of the responsibility for reaching out to human service agencies in order to adequately identify community transportation needs. In addition, human service agencies also bear the responsibility of working with the local HSTP Coordinator and public transportation providers to ensure that resources are being utilized as efficiently as possible prior to making request for additional assets.

Funding is sparse and demand is increasing, requiring a greater effort with smaller resources. Cooperation from all agencies, public and private, is essential to the successful use of limited resources. Overcoming the obstacles faced by transportation providers requires a willingness to cooperate, openness to alternative transportation solutions, and an eagerness to engage one another in the search for viable solutions.

**Transportation Disadvantaged:** People who are unable to purchase transportation or transport themselves due to income status, age or disability.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):** A program of intermodal transportation projects, to be implemented over several years, growing out of the planning process and designed to improve transportation in a community. This program is required as a condition of a locality receiving federal transit and highway grants.

**Transportation Planning Group (TPG):** A partnership of all transit interested parties in a region that should consist of a wide range of stakeholders including public transportation users, community leaders, employers, public officials, humane service representatives, regional entities, business owners, religious leaders, consumer advocates, local government officials, healthcare providers, education groups, etc.

**Trip:** One-way movement of a vehicle or person between two points.

**Trip, Average Cost:** The sum of all system expenses (administrative and operating) divided by the total number of trips.

**Trust Funds:** Funds collected and used by the federal government for carrying out specific purposes and programs according to terms of a trust agreement or statute, such as the Social Security and highway trust funds. Trust funds are administered by the government in a fiduciary capacity and are not available for the general purposes of the government.

**United States Department of Transportation (DOT):** The cabinet level department of the federal government that is responsible for administration of federal transportation programs including public transportation, highways, railroads, air transportation, shipping and the Coast Guard.

**Unlinked Passenger Trips:** the number of passengers who board public transportation vehicles. Passengers are counted each time they board vehicles no matter how many vehicles they use to travel from their origin to their destination.

**Urbanized Area:** U.S. Bureau of Census designated area of 50,000 or more inhabitants consisting of a central city or two adjacent cities plus surrounding densely settled territory, but excluding the rural portion of cities.

**Urbanized Area, Large:** An urbanized city, town or region with population over 200,000.

**Urbanized Area, Small:** An urbanized city, town or region with population between 50,000 and 200,000.

**User-side subsidy service:** A transportation arrangement where the rider's cost of transportation is partially subsidized by the transit agency. The user is the rider who pays a reduced fare. A typical user-side subsidy program is operated through taxicab operators

or a brokerage system which may charge a per-ride fee for handling the rider's transportation arrangements.

**Vanpool:** An arrangement in which a group of passengers share the use and cost of a van in traveling to and from pre-arranged destinations together.

**Variable Cost:** A cost that varies in relation to the level of operational activity.

**Vehicle, Paratransit, Light-Duty:** Designed to carry 12 passenger seats or up to 4 wheelchair positions, constructed on a commercial cut-away van chassis, approximately 22 feet in length. Interior flooring is flat with no wheel well protrusions. The operator of this vehicle is not required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

**Vehicle, Paratransit, Medium-Duty:** Designed to carry 14 passenger seats or up to 5 wheelchair positions, constructed on a commercial cut-away van chassis, approximately 24 feet in length. Interior flooring is flat with no wheel well protrusions. The operator of this vehicle is not required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

**Vehicle, Paratransit, Minivan:** Designed to carry 5 ambulatory adults (with center passenger seat flipped down), or 2 passengers in mobility aid devices (with front passenger seat removed), based on a standard production minivan with the floor lowered to permit easy access for wheelchairs and other mobility aids. The operator of this vehicle is not required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

**Vehicle, Paratransit, Super Medium-Duty:** Designed to carry 26 passenger seats, or up to 7 wheelchair positions, approximately 33 feet in length. Constructed on a commercial chassis designed for heavy-duty service, and can be used for fixed route service if fixed route options are purchased. The operator of this vehicle is required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

**Vehicle Hours:** The hours a vehicle travels from the time it pulls out from its garage to go into revenue service to the time it pulls in from revenue service. It is often called platform time. For conventional scheduled services, it includes revenue time and deadhead time.

**Vehicle Miles:** The miles a vehicle travels from the time it pulls out from its garage to go into revenue service to the time it pulls in from revenue service. It is often called platform miles. For conventional scheduled services, it includes revenue miles and deadhead miles.

**Vehicle Revenue Hours:** The hours traveled when the vehicle is in revenue service (i.e., the time when a vehicle is available to the general public and there is an expectation of carrying passengers). These passengers either directly pay fares, are subsidized by public policy, or provide payment through some contractual arrangement. Vehicles operated in fare-free service are considered in revenue service. Revenue service excludes school bus service and charter service. For conventionally scheduled services, vehicle revenue hours are comprised of 2 elements; running time and layover/recovery time.

**Vehicle Revenue Miles:** The miles traveled when the vehicle is in revenue service (i.e., the time when a vehicle is available to the general public and there is an expectation of carrying passengers). These passengers either directly pay fares, are subsidized by public policy, or provide payment through some contractual arrangement. Vehicles operated in fare-free service are considered in revenue service. Revenue service excludes school bus service and charter service. For conventionally scheduled services, vehicle revenue miles are comprised of running miles only.

**Voucher models:** Voucher models provide resources directly to individuals with disabilities who then purchase their own transportation. There are no restrictions on destination, but individuals must arrange their own rides. A sponsoring agency may help participants develop personalized transportation plans that identify transportation providers such as public transit, taxi services, agency providers, and volunteer drivers; sometimes called “user-side subsidies.”

**Zone Fare:** Fare determined by the length of the trip measure in terms of zones.

**Sources for this glossary include a variety of national, state, and local governmental agencies and public transportation-related entities.**