STATE MANAGEMENT PLAN

PREPARED BY DIVISION OF INTERMODAL
Transit Program

December 2017
(Draft for Public Review and Comment)
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ATTACHMENT A – Glossary of Transit Terms
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The State Management Plan (SMP) is a document that describes how the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) administers the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) programs in the State of Georgia. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), provides federal financial assistance to local governments, transit authorities, regional commissions, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other organizations involved in the planning and delivery of public transit services to address the mobility needs of people living in the State of Georgia. GDOT, through the Transit Program of its Division of Intermodal, administers the FTA grant programs at the state level and provides grant management oversight to the subrecipients of the FTA grants.

1.1. Purpose

All states are required to have an FTA-approved SMP for the FTA programs administered at the state level. FTA gives GDOT the maximum discretion allowable by law in designing and managing the FTA programs to meet the needs of public transit customers. In Georgia, the Department is the entity named as the Designated Recipient for administering FTA funds under the programs listed in Table 1. Some FTA formula programs, such as Section 5303 and 5304 planning funds are automatically apportioned to GDOT by virtue of the type of funding (i.e., some formula funds are only apportioned to State DOTs.) FTA formula funds received directly by other Designated Recipients (e.g., large urban transit systems in the State of Georgia) are not administered by the Department and are not subject to the policies described in this SMP.

Table 1. GDOT’s Federal Transit Grant Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49 USC 5303, 5304 and 5305</td>
<td>Section 5303, 5304 and 5305 – Metropolitan and Statewide Planning and Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning</td>
<td>These Formula Funds are incorporated together in a single program by FTA for planning purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 USC §5307</td>
<td>Section 5307 - Urbanized Area Transit Assistance Section 5307(h) – Ferry Boat Grants</td>
<td>Formula Competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 USC §5311</td>
<td>Section 5311 - Rural Area Transit Section 5311(b)(3) - Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) Section 5311(c)(2)(B) - Tribal Transit Assistance Section 5311(f) - Intercity Bus Program Section 5311 - Appalachian Development</td>
<td>Formula Formula Formula Formula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 USC §5324</td>
<td>Section 5324 - Emergency Relief Program</td>
<td>Formula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 USC §5329</td>
<td>Section 5329 - Public Transportation Safety Program – State Safety Oversight</td>
<td>Administered through Intermodal Division/ Rail Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The purpose of the SMP is to serve as the basis for federal and state-level management reviews of FTA’s federal assistance programs and to provide public information on the State’s administration of FTA’s programs. The SMP provides:

- An overview of FTA programs administered by GDOT
- General responsibilities of GDOT staff when administering FTA grants
- General responsibilities of GDOT subrecipients of federal funds
- Policy, programmatic and regulatory information for each program

The SMP is supported by various guidance documents, including *Standard Operating Procedures* (SOPs) that describe GDOT’s transit program management activities in more detail.

Note: The SMP is a regulatory document required by FTA. GDOT’s internal guidance, instructions to FTA subrecipients and SOPs are specific to the GDOT transit program and serve as a tool to help transit program staff efficiently deliver FTA’s transit programs in the State of Georgia.

### 1.2. Applicable Federal Programs

The SMP describes GDOT’s policies for administering the state-managed portions of FTA and USDOT financial assistance programs authorized in federal law as outlined in Table 1. Furthermore, Georgia Code, Title 32, Chapter 9, *Mass Transportation*, further grants the Department the authority to enter into contracts and provide financial assistance for public transportation services.
In addition to the federal transit funds administered by GDOT, the Governor of Georgia has designated the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) as the state agency for administering funds authorized by 49 USC §5310 (FTA Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program) and received by the State of Georgia. DHS is responsible for the SMP documentation for that program. Where applicable, this SMP incorporates the DHS-prepared SMP and the DHS Application Package for Transportation of Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities by reference only.

GDOT’s SMP describes the policies regarding management, oversight, compliance, and close-out of all federal assistance programs listed in Table 1. It was prepared in accordance with FTA Circulars 9030.1E (Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program) and 9040.1G (Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas), and which may be accessed through FTA’s website at https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/final-circulars. GDOT is required to have an approved SMP on file with the FTA Region 4 office based in Atlanta, Georgia, and is required to update it regularly to incorporate any changes in program management or new FTA program requirements. GDOT is also required to provide an opportunity for agency review and public comment of the SMP when a new plan is developed or when GDOT significantly revises the existing plan. The details on the process for updating the SMP, including coordinating with subrecipients, potential service providers, other state agencies, and state and professional transportation associations can be found in Section 1.7 of this SMP.

The SMP is a vital tool for FTA, GDOT and subrecipients of GDOT. This SMP includes GDOT’s goals, policies, and references to procedures and administrative requirements for the federal financial assistance programs listed in Table 1. This SMP is intended to facilitate both GDOT management and compliance activities and FTA oversight by documenting policies for administering the federal financial assistance programs for transit in the State of Georgia. The step-by-step procedures that GDOT’s subrecipients should follow for administering and managing transit programs with federal financial assistance are described in more detail in supporting GDOT transit SOPs.

1.3. GDOT’s Mission Statement and Goals

According to GDOT’s FY 2013-2017 Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (Summer 2016), the mission statement for GDOT is:

Georgia DOT provides a safe, connected, and environmentally sensitive transportation system that enhances Georgia’s economic competitiveness by working efficiently and communicating effectively to create strong partnerships.

GDOT has set four broad, long-term goals:

- Making Georgia DOT a better place to work will make Georgia DOT a place that works better;
- Making safety investments and improvements where the traveling public is most at risk;
- Taking care of what we have, in the most efficient way possible; and
- Planning and constructing the best set of mobility-focused projects we can on schedule.
1.4. GDOT’s Transit Program Goals and Objectives

The goal of this SMP is to communicate to all of the participating agencies in Georgia’s federal- and state-funded transit programs, and to the public, the overall management framework, policies, and processes used to meet the federal requirements in carrying out these programs. It also describes the State of Georgia’s requirements, policies, and goals for these activities. Additionally, this document serves as an educational and training resource for GDOT transit program staff and its subrecipients.

The State’s transit program goals are linked to the broader goals and objectives of both national transportation policy and the State of Georgia’s policies outlined in the Georgia Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP), which is a federally-mandated document, and the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, which is a state-mandated document. Program administration by GDOT follows all FTA requirements including those contained in FTA Circulars, “Dear Colleague” Policy Letters, the Federal Register, and other significant guidance. Ongoing and recurring training opportunities are an effective way to ensure that the outcome of each federal assistance program is met. GDOT uses a variety of methods to provide training for its transit staff and subrecipients and has developed specific guidance for rural and urban transit subrecipients. It also actively communicates on available on-line transit training resources developed by others (i.e. Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), and others). GDOT’s subrecipients are also encouraged to consult applicable training and other program materials on FTA’s website in support of their transit systems.

The most recent federal transportation reauthorization bill entitled “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation” (FAST) Act was signed into law on December 4, 2015. It is the current five-year federal surface transportation authorization that realigns several federal transit programs, provides significant funding increases specifically for bus and bus facilities, creates several new discretionary programs, and changes several program requirements. The FAST Act continues and expands FTA authority to strengthen the safety of public transportation systems throughout the U.S. This SMP reflects changes in law and administrative guidance implementing the FAST Act, as amended.

1.5. Roles and Responsibilities

This section of the SMP describes the roles and responsibilities of each entity in delivering federal assistance transit programs across the State, the process for establishing and tracking program goals, and how the transit program is integrated into the State’s process for long-range planning.

1.5.1 Federal Transit Administration

The FTA Headquarters Office (in Washington, D.C.) is responsible for providing overall policy and program guidance; apportioning funds annually to the states; developing and implementing financial management procedures; initiating and managing program support activities; and conducting national program reviews and evaluations.

The FTA Region 4 Office in Atlanta, Georgia has the day-to-day responsibility for administration of FTA’s programs in collaboration with states. The Region 4 Office activities include (1) reviewing and approving state grant applications; (2) obligating federal transit funds; (3) overseeing the management of grants; (4) overseeing the state’s implementation of its annual transit program and compliance activities according to federal requirements (5) reviewing programs of projects submitted by FTA recipients, including their revisions, (6) receiving state certifications, (7) reviewing and approving SMPs, (8)
providing technical assistance and guidance to the states as needed, and (8) performing state management and triennial reviews of recipients every three years, or enhanced reviews as circumstances warrant. Additionally, GDOT works closely with FTA on the financial management of all its federal grants, including (1) establishment of FTA grants in GDOT’s accounting system using requirements from FTA’s TrAMS system; (2) review of GDOT drawdowns using the FTA ECHO system; and (3) the financial reviews associated with FTA interim, state management, and triennial reviews.

1.5.2 State of Georgia

The Governor of the State of Georgia, pursuant to provisions of Title 49 USC, has designated the GDOT Division of Intermodal as administrator and recipient of the federal assistance received by the State for programs that require a Designated Recipient letter. This designation gives GDOT the legal authority to enter contractual agreements with eligible subrecipients including public entities and private non-profit organizations for transit capital, operations and planning activities on behalf of the State.

Within GDOT, the Division of Intermodal leads the four separate program offices of Transit, Aviation, Rail, and Ports and Waterways (see organizational chart below). Through its Transit Program, the Division of Intermodal leads all efforts that are transit-related and coordinates all activities of the transit subrecipients across the state of Georgia.

With regard to administering FTA (federal) grants, the GDOT Transit Program has the primary responsibility for the following activities:

- Working closely with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and regional commissions in Georgia on transit planning activities, including assistance in the development of MPO Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs), Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs), Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), and related transportation planning activities;
- Ensuring adherence to federal program guidelines by all subrecipients through ongoing monitoring and oversight;
- Notifying eligible and/or potential local entities of the availability of programs and funding;
- Developing project selection criteria consistent with FTA requirements;
- Ensuring fair and equitable distribution of program funds;
• Supporting the maximum feasible coordination of transit resources at both the state and local levels;
• Preparing for and facilitating FTA Triennial Review and State Management Review processes;
• Ensuring a process whereby private transit and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) contractors are provided an opportunity to participate to the maximum extent feasible;
• Providing technical assistance and training opportunities to MPOs, regional commissions, and local governments involved in transit system planning, development, and service delivery.
• Informing and soliciting prospective subrecipient(s) and existing subrecipients of the FTA funding opportunities through announcements of FTA funding opportunities;
• Awarding available FTA funding to eligible subrecipients;
• Administering FTA grant programs in compliance with FTA grant administration guidelines by soliciting, reviewing, and evaluating applications, monitoring quarterly reports and project progress, and conducting compliance reviews;
• Preparing FTA electronic grant applications and grant and budget revisions for funded projects, using FTA’s Transit Award Management System (TrAMS);
• Holding periodic workshops, listening sessions and/or training sessions to assist local areas with questions on program-specific issues and requirements;
• Preparing guidance to assist the local agencies through the grant process from application through successful project completion and closeout;
• Executing grant agreements with FTA and project agreements with subrecipients;
• Including all rural and urban transit projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the appropriate Program of Projects (POP) for all federally-funded transit activities administered by GDOT;
• Developing and apply evaluation criteria to select projects for funding;
• Processing reimbursement payment requests from subrecipients and preparing requests for FTA (federal) reimbursement;
• Overseeing the compilation and analysis of transit-related data in compliance with federal requirements for the National Transit Database (NTD);
• Carrying out the vehicle procurement activities on behalf of the rural and intercity public transit systems as appropriate in Georgia;
• Managing the State’s transit vehicle fleet, including rural transit vehicles, the State’s over-the-road coach vehicles, and leased transit vehicles, as appropriate;
• Developing and maintaining the State’s transit asset management program;
• Monitoring and evaluating the local delivery of transit services under FTA programs, including data collection and compilation, reporting to the FTA, and ensuring compliance with the state and federal regulations by subrecipients and any third-party transit service operators;
• Ensuring transit activities are conducted with vehicles in a state of good repair and that training opportunities are provided for transit personnel;
• Ensuring safety and risk management remain top priorities in the oversight of subrecipient transit programs;
• Preparing for and completing any additional enhanced review audits from the FTA as needed.

In addition to its transit program responsibilities, GDOT also carries out planning responsibilities, including the development and maintenance of Georgia’s Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for all areas of the State. The STIP is a statewide prioritized listing of federally funded transportation projects covering a period of at least four (4) years that is developed in cooperation with
local officials, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and rural transit planning agencies and transportation providers. It is consistent with the State’s long-range statewide transportation plan, metropolitan transportation plans, and metropolitan Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). The STIP, which is required for projects to be eligible for funding under Title 23 U.S.C. and Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, is discussed further in Section 1.6.4. Also see the discussion of metropolitan Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) in Section 1.5.3.

A list of rural transit projects is also included in the STIP. The projects included in the STIP must be consistent with the Statewide Transportation Plan, be financially constrained; contain all capital and non-capital transportation projects; and in non-attainment areas, conform to federal and state regulations.

GDOT must notify the MPOs, local jurisdictions, federal land agencies, and if applicable, all Native American and Indian tribal governments when projects under their jurisdiction are included in the STIP. By GDOT policy, GDOT coordinates the development of the STIP and statewide transportation plans with the Association of County Commissions (ACCG) and the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). The State’s MPOs each prepare a TIP (see Section 1.5.3), which are incorporated into the STIP after approval by each MPO’s Board and by the Governor or his designee. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the FTA review the STIP for consistency with federal regulations and, if acceptable, jointly approve the STIP.

The GDOT Transit Program is responsible for ensuring that subrecipients, third party contractors, and lessees adhere to the applicable federal and state regulations pertaining to public transit. GDOT develops and implements effective systems for monitoring and ensuring compliance with statutory and program requirements. GDOT subrecipient monitoring includes:

- Risk assessments,
- On-site compliance reviews;
- Ongoing program and project monitoring and site visits;
- Asset management oversight of vehicle, equipment, and facility monitoring;
- Development of training resources and workshops for subrecipients;
- FTA Reporting requirements (e.g., Milestone Progress Reports, Federal Financial Reports, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting; Single Audit Reporting; US Department of Labor (DOL) reporting, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Uniform Reporting, National Transit Database Reports (Section 5311 rural systems only), Drug and Alcohol Management Information System Reports, and Performance Measure Reports; and
- Coordination meetings and/or conference calls as needed.

Information from these monitoring activities is used by the GDOT Transit Program to evaluate the performance of individual subrecipients’ services and/or deliverables which are compared with agreed-upon scopes of work included with contracts between GDOT and the subrecipient. Any concerns resulting from the inspection or analysis of data, such as under-utilized equipment, safety issues, potential misuse of equipment, delays in project activities or milestones, improper compliance with FTA requirements, delayed or missing required reports, etc. are analyzed for follow-up with the subrecipient. GDOT will advise the subrecipient of these issues and will work closely with the subrecipient to take the appropriate actions to resolve any issues to ensure federal program compliance. In the case of significant, on-going or recurring issues, GDOT will notify the subrecipient(s) of program deficiencies and
institute a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) along with deadline to address deficiencies. At the Department’s discretion, a notification letter to the subrecipient’s Board of Directors or governing body, if warranted, will be sent. Follow-up compliance site visit(s) will be scheduled, if needed, to confirm resolution of deficiencies outlined in CAP.

Failure to correct deficiencies within a specified, reasonable period of time may result in the escalation of actions by the Department including, but not limited to:

- Meeting with GDOT and transit system leaders to discuss the identified deficiency(ies);
- Requesting agreed-upon procedures (AUP) audit of transit system management and operations;
- Disallowing or temporarily withholding reimbursement payments pending correction of the deficiency(s) by the subrecipient;
- Wholly or partially suspending the current award for the subrecipient projects;
- Terminating the current award for the subrecipient project and/or removing the project equipment from the subrecipient; and/or
- Other actions as appropriate.

FTA conducts comprehensive reviews of GDOT’s Transit Program every three years. FTA conducts a Triennial Review (TR) of the GDOT Transit Program which documents the findings and deficiencies associated with the state’s administration of the Section 5307 program (Formula Funding for Urbanized Areas - small urban areas only). In addition, FTA conducts a State Management Review (SMR) of the Transit Program due to its role as a FTA Designated Recipient. The SMR documents the findings and deficiencies associated with the State’s administration of its Section 5311 program (Rural). These reviews are typically held as a combined review, i.e. conducted in conjunction with one another to minimize the impact to the GDOT Transit Program staff.

1.5.3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

A metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is a federally-mandated and federally-funded transportation policy-making organization for each of the urbanized areas in the U.S. that is made up of representatives from local government and governmental transportation authorities, including transit agencies. In 1962, the United States Congress passed legislation that required the formation of an MPO for any urbanized area (UZA) with a population greater than 50,000. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through the MPO planning process. The U.S. Congress created MPOs in order to ensure that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. Metropolitan transportation and statewide planning processes are governed by federal law (23 USC § 134–135). As of the completion of the 2010 Census, there are 16 MPO’s in Georgia (see Figure 1):

- Albany – Dougherty Area Regional Transportation Study (DARTS)
- Athens – Madison–Athens-Clarke-Oconee Transportation Study (MACORTS)
- Atlanta – Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)
- Augusta – Augusta Regional Transportation Study (ARTS)
- Brunswick – Brunswick Area Transportation Study (BATS)
- Cartersville – Bartow MPO
- Chattanooga – Chattanooga Urban Area Transportation Study (CUATS)
- Columbus – Columbus - Phenix City Transportation Study (CPCTS)
- Dalton – Dalton MPO
- Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO)
- Hinesville – Hinesville Area MPO
- Macon – Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS)
- Rome – Floyd-Rome Urban Transportation Study (FRUTS)
- Savannah – Coastal Region MPO (CORE MPO)
- Valdosta – Valdosta-Lowndes MPO (VLMPO)
- Warner Robins – Warner Robins Area Transportation Study (WRATS)

The role of the MPO includes:

- Establishing a local forum for transportation decision making;
- Evaluating transportation alternatives;
- Developing and updating the Long-Range Transportation Plan;
- Developing and maintaining a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); and,
- Creating a public involvement plan to engage the general public.

All MPOs are responsible for conducting planning activities that comply with 49 U.S.C. Section 5303, Metropolitan Transportation Planning, as well as subpart C of 23 CFR part 450, Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming, for a specified metropolitan planning area. In that role, where necessary:

- MPOs within large urbanized areas are responsible for the creation of the formula for distributing FTA funds to large urban transit systems within their UZA defined MPO areas with populations greater than 200,000 persons; and,
- MPOs within large urbanized areas must undergo a Planning Certification Review (PCR) every four years completed by the FTA and the Federal Highway Administration.

MPO areas with populations between 50,000 and 199,999 persons have responsibilities, including, but not limited to the development of Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs), Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs), and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). MPOs within this population range may elect to apply for and receive Section 5303 planning funds through the GDOT Transit Program to carry out transit planning activities.

In accordance with federal regulations, the MPOs establish their project priorities and consult with GDOT in the programming of projects. Individual TIPs are prepared by each MPO. GDOT, through its Office of Planning and Division of Intermodal (Transit Program) works in cooperation with the MPOs in developing their TIPs. Like the STIP, the TIP is a prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four (4) years that is developed and formally adopted by an MPO governing board as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process. The TIP must be consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan and is required for projects to be eligible for funding under Title 23 U.S.C. and Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.
Figure 1. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in Georgia
1.5.4 Regional Commissions

Regional Commissions (RC) are transportation partners with GDOT in the planning and development of safe and reliable multimodal transportation services for the state’s residents and visitors living in non-metro areas of Georgia. Each of the state’s RCs serves Georgia’s city and county governments within their established jurisdiction by functioning as focal points for regional issues concerning local governments. The RCs serve as resources in a variety of specialized areas, including multi-county planning and development services. In addition, Georgia’s RCs are involved in a broad range of activities including:

- Coordinated and comprehensive planning;
- Land-use and development;
- Economic development;
- Historic preservation;
- Aging services;
- Business retention and development;
- Affordable housing;
- Tourism;
- Workforce development;
- Planning and/or delivering rural transit, mobility management activities, and human services transportation (in some RC areas);
- Geographic information systems and other data gathering and development services, such as annual employment and population data;
- Emergency response planning;

There are twelve Regional Commissions in Georgia as depicted in Figure 2. RCs receive a variety of funding sources from state and federal agencies including assistance for the implementation of mobility services for elderly and disabled individuals through FTA’s Section 5310 program which is administered through the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS), assistance for transit planning through FTA’s Section 5303 program, and delivery of rural transit services supported with FTA Section 5311 funding. Some RCs are subrecipients to GDOT for Section 5304 (planning) and Section 5311 (rural transit) programs. Each RC has a main office located in the following cities listed in alphabetical order:

- Athens (Region 5: Northeast Georgia);
- Atlanta (Region 3: Atlanta Regional Commission);
- Augusta (Region 7: Central Savannah River Area);
- Camilla (Region 10: Southwest Georgia);
- Columbus (Region 8: River Valley);
- Darien (Region 12: Coastal);
- Eastman (Region 9: Heart of Georgia Altamaha);
- Gainesville (Region 2: Georgia Mountains);
- Griffin (Region 4: Three Rivers);
- Macon (Region 6: Middle Georgia);
- Rome (Region 1: Northwest Georgia); and
- Valdosta (Region 11: Southern Georgia).

Figure 2. Regional Commissions (RCs) in Georgia
1.5.5 Local Agencies and Jurisdictions/Subrecipients

In addition to MPOs and Regional Commissions, GDOT’s subrecipients of FTA transit funding also include city and county governments, regional transportation authorities, and non-profit organizations involved with providing public transit services. All of these entities enter into agreements which stipulate the FTA subrecipient responsibilities in carrying out their transit-related activities as well as citations on relevant federal rules and regulations pertinent to transit programs. Many of these local agencies and jurisdictions have long-established, ongoing relationships with GDOT. To carry out their service delivery responsibilities, these local agencies and jurisdictions work with their residents, local human service agencies, dialysis clinics, medical centers, workforce centers, education facilities, employers, public ridership, tourism agencies, Department of Human Services, and Department of Community Health, and other similar organizations to identify and address their transportation and mobility needs. The local jurisdictions entering into contracts with GDOT must also comply with all terms of the contract, applicable state and federal regulations, and reporting requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Maintain focus on fair and open transit service to the general public;
- Consideration of minority, elderly and disabled passenger needs;
- Identification and prioritization of new projects and additional revenue streams related to new ridership opportunities and local needs;
- Management/oversight of the delivery of transit services, including financial and operational aspects of the activities;
- Implementation of transit projects in accordance with the specific FTA program requirements addressing rolling stock and capital equipment acquisitions/procurement, public participation, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Title VI, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Drug-Free Workplace and Alcohol Program, and other related regulations, including FTA’s Super Circular and federal requirements associated with federal grants and audits;
- Provision of monthly National Transit Database (NTD) reporting data and other status reports on projects to GDOT’s Transit Program Manager regarding project activities, budget, schedule and scope;
- Submission in a timely fashion FTA quarterly reports, reimbursement requests, project closeout letters, and other reports/requests in accordance with other state and federal requirements;
- Inclusion of transit projects in the area’s rural TIP or MPO TIP for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), to ensure the projects are eligible for program funding; and
- Acceptance of and compliance with the terms of the most recent FTA certifications and assurances as published.

1.6. Planning and Coordination

This section of the SMP describes how GDOT coordinates with other agencies at the state level, and encourages and enhances coordination of transit services at the project level. This includes a description of state-level coordinating mechanisms, legislation, review boards, and state policies that encourage coordination at the local level.
1.6.1 Statewide Coordination

GDOT is organized into divisions, offices, and districts. There are seven (7) GDOT districts across the state (see Figure 3). Each district helps support statewide transportation system planning and the development of the multimodal systems, including transit, rail, aviation, and ports and waterways, through GDOT’s Division of Intermodal. The GDOT Planning Division manages the statewide transportation planning process and GDOT’s Planning Director reports directly to the Governor.

The GDOT Planning Office manages Georgia’s transportation planning program, in addition to developing the Statewide Transportation Plan (SWTP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This office has the responsibility for the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP), the Congestion and Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) coordination and the Scenic Byways Program, among other initiatives.

As described previously, GDOT’s Transit, Ports and Waterways, Rail and Aviation Programs are all included in the Intermodal Division. The Division of Intermodal, through its Transit Program, is responsible for developing a statewide transit plan, assessing statewide transit needs, setting policies, formulating, organizing and administering all major statewide public transportation programs for the development of a comprehensive transportation system. The Transit Program is responsible for the FTA program oversight for planning, small urban transit systems (in areas under 200,000 in population), and rural transit systems. The Intermodal Division manages Georgia’s planning and operations programs in support of the transit, rail, port, waterway and aviation systems. As of December 2017, GDOT works closely with approximately 115 transit subrecipients which includes approximately 23 metropolitan and rural planning agencies, seven (7) small urban transit systems, and 85 rural transit entities.

It is GDOT’s policy to coordinate all statewide planning efforts with the Association of County Commissions in Georgia (ACCG) and the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) through the provision of information, presentations to their memberships (as needed), and coordination of technical activities through their respective staffs.

1.6.2 Coordination with the Georgia Department of Human Services

GDOT supports and coordinates with the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Coordinated Transportation System which manages the State’s FTA Section 5310 funding program. The DHS Coordinated Transportation System is administered by the Transportation Services Section within the DHS Office of Facilities and Support Services. The system is designed to provide transportation services to customers of DHS, many of whom are elderly, disabled or clients of programs for low income households.

The new Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), is a participant in DHS’s human service transportation system along with services to the Division of Aging (DAS), Division of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS), Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) customers and the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.
(GVRA). All of the DHS funding used for transit or mobility services are client-specific rather than open to the public as GDOT’s rural and small urban transit systems are.

**Figure 3. GDOT Districts**

The coordinated system operates through a series of purchase of service contracts within each of DHS’s 12 regions. Service providers are a mix of governmental entities, for-profits, and private non-profits. The
majority of these providers are transit systems operated with FTA Section 5311 funds administered by GDOT. In many regions, DHS establishes a prime contractor, such as a Regional Commission, which provides overall contract management and subcontracts with additional entities (i.e. service providers) to deliver the transportation services. Section 5310 projects must be included in a coordinated human services transportation plan or “locally coordinated plan” (LCP). GDOT and DHS coordinate with each other through meetings, conference calls, and regular communications to share data and information on their respective programs.

Georgia currently has four (4) regional rural transit systems that serve multiple counties (See Figure 4). These systems provide open-door public transit services using FTA funding provided through GDOT as well as transport specific clients using funding obtained through Georgia DHS.

1.6.3 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The STIP is a statewide prioritized listing of transportation projects covering a period of at least four (4) years that is developed by the State in cooperation with local officials and rural transit providers and incorporates the TIP from each of the State’s 16 MPOs. The STIP is the outcome of the State’s comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation planning process and it serves as a budgeting and scheduling tool. The applicable State funding sections for the federal assistance programs are included in the STIP that is submitted to the federal funding agencies (FTA and FHWA) annually. Both FTA and FHWA review and approve the STIP. The STIP is updated every four (4) years in accordance with federal requirements but can be amended at any time according to GDOT/FHWA/FTA STIP protocols and procedures.
Figure 4: Regional Rural Transit Systems in Georgia

Regional Transit Systems in Georgia
- Coastal Georgia Regional Commission (10 counties)
- Heart of Georgia Community Action Council, Inc. (8 counties)
- Mountain Area Transportation System (4 counties)
- Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (14 counties)

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)
Date: 10/28/16
1.6.4 SMP Updates and Revisions

GDOT is required to have an SMP approved by FTA on file with the FTA Region 4 office. The approved SMP remains valid until one of the following occurs:

- FTA approves a later plan submitted by the state;
- An FTA state management review results in a specific request to GDOT by FTA for a revised SMP; or
- FTA announces significant new program changes.

GDOT’s SMP was revised in 2017 to serve as a policy-level document describing how the Department plans and manages its state transit responsibilities. GDOT has utilized administrative guides for individual transit programs to describe the detailed administrative and management processes, procedures, and tools to carry out GDOT’s federal transit responsibilities.

As required by FTA rules, when GDOT proposes significant revisions to the SMP, GDOT will give its transit subrecipients, potential service providers, other state agencies, local jurisdictions, state and professional transportation associations, ACCG, GMA, and the public an opportunity to comment on the changes. GDOT will inform stakeholders and the public of the opportunity to provide comments through email announcements, posting on GDOT’s website, and placing of draft documents at the Customer Service Area of the GDOT General Office in Atlanta and in its seven district offices. GDOT will provide an electronic file copy of the draft SMP to FTA, pending final revisions based on public input. GDOT will incorporate revisions, where appropriate to the draft SMP, and submit it to FTA for approval and posting on GDOT’s Transit webpage so that all transit stakeholders across the state can access it. The review period for the draft SMP for interested parties to submit comments to GDOT is 45 calendar days.

2.0. OVERVIEW OF GDOT TRANSIT PROGRAMS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

FTA provides federal financial assistance that is administered by GDOT to serve the mobility needs of Georgians. The eligibility criteria, services and service areas vary by program. This section of the SMP describes the federal funding programs in generalized terms. Supplementary guidance posted on FTA’s website (https://www.transit.dot.gov) the most up-to-date information on FTA programs managed by GDOT, including eligibility, funding requirements, etc. Procedures for applying for particular types of transit funding and managing program funds can be obtained from GDOT.

2.1. Metropolitan, Statewide Planning and Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning Programs (Sections 5303, 5304 and 5305)

FTA Sections 5303, 5304, and 5305 all support cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning for making transit/transportation investment decisions in Georgia. GDOT provides Section 5303 planning funds to MPOs to carry out transportation system planning activities that comply with the established USDOT planning factors as listed below.

- Support for the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
• Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
• Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
• Promote efficient system management and operation; and
• Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

FTA planning funds are apportioned annually by FTA through a formula to State DOTs that includes consideration of each State’s urbanized area population in proportion to the urbanized area population for the entire nation as well as other factors. These funds are sub-allocated by State DOTs to MPOs by a formula that considers each MPO’s urbanized area population, their individual planning needs, and a minimum distribution. For more information, please refer to the Joint Planning Regulations at 49 CFR parts 613, FTA Circular 8100.1, and the Final Rule on Statewide and Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Metropolitan Transportation Planning. The Final Rule on Statewide Transportation Planning and Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Metropolitan Transportation Planning can be accessed through FTA’s website at: https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/final-rule-statewide-and-nonmetropolitan.

In urbanized areas (with a population of 50,000 or more), federal planning law (49 U.S.C. 5303) calls upon local officials to cooperate with states and public transportation providers in undertaking a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative multimodal transportation planning process. Well-organized, inclusive transportation planning can help a region meet current needs while preparing for future challenges. The FAST Act continues the Metropolitan Planning program. The Program establishes a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas. The main focus areas for MPO transportation planning relate to the development of (1) its Unified Planning Work Program; (2) the region’s long-range transportation plan and (3) its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

GDOT develops a statewide LRTP with a minimum 20-year planning horizon for all areas of the State. The LRTP provides for the development and implementation of the intermodal transportation system of the State. The statewide LRTP has many similarities with a regional or metropolitan LRTP but generally is geared towards broader policies and priorities for the State, whereas regional and metropolitan area LRTPs tend to deal with specific projects and corridors. The statewide LRTP will address the transportation plans for each metropolitan area in the State in cooperation with the MPOs. For non-metropolitan areas, the statewide LRTP is developed in consultation with affected RCs, non-metropolitan officials with responsibility for transportation planning, ACCG and GMA. The ACCG, GMA, and RCs are included as part of the SSTP’s Stakeholder Advisory Committee and participate through the SSTP planning process, which integrates the statewide LRTP and LRTPs developed by each of the State’s MPOs. For each area of the State under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribal government, the statewide transportation plan shall be developed in consultation with the tribal government and the Secretary of the Interior.

Georgia Senate Bill 200 (SB 200), as passed during Georgia’s 2009 legislative session, required the creation of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP). State legislation requires a transportation investment plan with specific investment strategies identified to advance economic growth in the State (O.C.G.A section 32-2-411). The SSTP serves as the State’s official comprehensive intermodal, fiscally-constrained transportation plan which includes projects, programs, and other activities to support
implementation of the State’s strategic transportation goals and policies, including the State’s transit programs. The SSTP sets the strategic direction and makes the business case for increased transportation investment within the State and is integrated with the statewide long-range transportation plan (LRTP) and LRTPs prepared by the State’s 16 MPOs. Georgia’s current SSTP has a horizon year of 2040 and is updated every two (2) years as required by SB 200.

The SSTP outlines existing conditions for public transportation in the State and outlines investment needs for public transit systems in Georgia. The SSTP also outlines an implementation plan and consultation process for MPOs and non-metropolitan areas, including the establishment of a SSTP Stakeholder Advisory Committee. GDOT’s Public Involvement Consultation Process (in accordance with 23 CFR 450.212(b)) requires the formation of the SSTP Stakeholder Advisory Committee, which comprises the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG), Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), and the State’s RCs. A rural transportation focus group was also created to give local government officials an opportunity to participate in the SSTP planning process. The SSTP Stakeholder Advisory Committee and the rural transportation focus group work with GDOT in an advisory role to provide continuous feedback on the SSTP products and tasks and meet a minimum of three (3) times per year. Additionally, for the non-urban or rural parts of Georgia, GDOT provides a portion of its Section 5304 statewide transit planning apportionment to regional commissions for transportation/transit planning based on their rural area population as a percentage of the total rural area population of Georgia.

The responsibility for carrying out the process for developing the statewide plan and the transportation improvement program belongs to the GDOT Office of Planning. The GDOT Transit Program provides technical assistance on transit matters related to the statewide transportation plan and the STIP. The process provides for consideration of all modes of transportation and is a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive process as required by federal law.

In carrying out planning under this section, GDOT considers the concerns of affected local officials with responsibility for transportation, Indian tribal governments, and Federal land management agencies that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the State. GDOT coordinates transportation plans, the transportation improvement program, and planning activities with related planning activities being carried out outside of metropolitan planning areas and between States. In Georgia, to facilitate statewide planning efforts, GDOT partners with the Association of County Commissions of Georgia (ACCG) and The Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to disseminate information and receive feedback from local jurisdictions.

In developing the program, GDOT provides citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, port authorities, private providers of transportation, providers of freight transportation services, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, the elderly, low-income populations, minority populations, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed program. The GDOT Intermodal Division (Transit Program) is responsible for the FTA oversight of Sections 5303, 5304, and 5305 activities carried out by its subrecipients.

Under FTA Section 5305, the FTA can award grants to States to develop transportation plans and programs, designs, evaluations, a public transportation project, and conduct technical studies relating to public transportation. Eligible activities include the following:
2.2. **Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307)**

The Urbanized Area Formula Program makes federal funding available to urbanized areas and to the Governor for transit planning, capital, and operating assistance in urbanized areas. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the Bureau of the Census. For urbanized areas (UZAs) with a population of 200,000 or more, Urbanized Area Formula Program funds are apportioned and flow directly to a designated grantee(s) selected by the Governor to apply for and receive Federal funds. In addition, documentation of concurrence in the selection of the designated recipient by the providers of publicly owned public transportation service in the UZA and an appropriately certified resolution of the MPO concurring in the designation must be documented.

For urbanized areas under 200,000 in population, the funds are apportioned to the Governor of each State for distribution, unless such an area has been designated as a transportation management area at the request of the Governor and the MPO. These areas also receive apportionments directly from FTA. GDOT is the designated recipient for urbanized areas under 200,000 in the State of Georgia. Guidance for the Section 5307 program is found in FTA Circular 9030.1E, which can be found at [www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov). To be eligible for funding under this program, projects must emanate from the applicable transportation planning process and be contained in a local Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Atlanta, Augusta, Savannah and Columbus UZAs have populations of over 200,000, and all four receive FTA funds directly. The Department may also provide UZAs up to one half the non-federal matching share for capital projects in these areas, when state funding is available as determined by GDOT.

2.3. **Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310)**

As stated previously, DHS administers the FTA Section 5310 Program for the State of Georgia. The Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program was established by the FTA (49 USC §5310) for meeting the transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The purpose of the FTA Section 5310 Program is to provide federal grant assistance to private non-profit corporations, private companies, or public agencies to provide safe, efficient and coordinated transportation services for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities for whom public transportation is otherwise unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. It allows for the procurement of accessible vans and buses, communication equipment, computer hardware and software, and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) equipment for eligible applicants.

2.4. **Non-Urbanized (Rural) Area Formula Program (Section 5311)**

The FTA Section 5311 Program provides formula funding to States and Indian tribes for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000. GDOT administers the 5311 Program for the State of Georgia. FTA apportions Section 5311 funding proportionally by a statutory formula.
based on each State’s non-urbanized area population, population density, and low-income individuals factors as well as transit service levels reported to the National Transit Database (NTD).

Projects proposed for Section 5311 funding must be a product of the transportation planning process. On an annual basis, GDOT prepares a Program of Projects (POP) that provides for the fair and equitable distribution of FTA 5311 funds within the State, including Indian reservations, as well as maximum feasible coordination with transportation services assisted by other Federal sources. The Section 5311 program also includes: the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP); the Appalachian Development Public Transportation Assistance Program (ADTAP); and the Tribal Transit Program.

GDOT is the designated recipient of FTA Section 5311 funds within the State of Georgia. Eligible subrecipients of these funds include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service. Eligible program activities include planning, capital, operating, job access and reverse commute projects, acquisition of public transportation services, and State administration expenses. The Section 5311 program supports both the maintenance of existing public transportation services and the expansion of those services through the following program goals:

- Enhancing access in rural areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation;
- Assisting in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in rural areas;
- Encouraging and facilitating the most efficient use of all transportation funds used to provide passenger transportation in rural areas through the coordination of programs and services;
- Providing financial assistance to help carry out national goals related to mobility for all, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals;
- Increasing availability of transportation options through investments in intercity bus services making meaningful connections to and from rural areas;
- Assisting in the development and support of intercity bus transportation;
- Encouraging mobility management, employment-related transportation alternatives, joint development practices, and transit-oriented development; and
- Providing for the participation of private transportation providers in rural public transportation.

GDOT has established several specific objectives designed to meet the Section 5311 program goals. These objectives are:

- Facilitate cooperative working relationships among local, regional and private sector agencies and promote adequate cost effective rural public transportation services.
- Meet the needs of rural public transportation for the general public by providing resources to increase capacity and frequency of rural transit services where appropriate.
- Coordinate rural transit services and ensure that all program recipients comply with all federal program guidelines and regulations.
- Improve service quality and encourage promotion of rural transit services through public information programs designed to improve ridership and revenue.
- Coordinate other transportation services, where feasible, to expand mobility opportunities for the general public.
• Enhance connections between rural communities and larger cities and regions in Georgia in order to access important educational and medical facilities, and job opportunities.

2.4.1 Section 5311 (b)(3) – Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)

The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) (49 USC §5311(b)(3)) provides grants to states for transportation research, technical assistance, training, and related support services in rural areas. The Georgia RTAP provides a source of funding to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance projects and other support services tailored to meet specific needs of transit operators in rural areas of Georgia. This training concentrates helping subrecipients comply with federal program requirements through the provision of technical assistance. The program goals are:

• Promote the safe and effective delivery of public transportation in rural areas and more efficient use of public and private resources.
• Foster the development of State and local capacity for addressing the training and technical assistance needs of the rural transportation community.
• Improve the quality of information and technical assistance available through the development of training and distribution of technical assistance resource materials.
• Facilitate peer-to-peer self-help through the development of local networks of transit professionals.
• Support the coordination of public, private, specialized, and human service transportation services.
• Support the National Transit Database on the rural segment of the public transportation industry.

The Georgia RTAP activities below are designed to meet the State and federal program objectives:

• Scholarships for training opportunities (for tuition and expenses, including travel costs), for qualified individuals to attend workshops, training courses, conferences, and bus safety rodeos, as appropriate, that support the growth of the State’s transit program;
• Technical assistance and training for Annual Program Compliance Reporting Data (Drug and Alcohol, National Transit Database (NTD), Title VI, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for rural operators;
• Asset management workshops;
• Financial management oversight requirements;
• Announcement of training opportunities to benefit rural transit systems;
• Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program;
• Substance Abuse Compliance Program Assistance for rural transit operators;
• Grant application development assistance;
• Procurement related activities;
• Project delivery related activities;
• Assistance with vehicle inspections and condition assessments for facilities and equipment;
• Best Practices information on transit planning, operations, and management.

2.4.2 Section 5311(f) – Intercity Bus Program

The Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program in Georgia (49 USC §5311(f)) provides funding to improve intercity bus connectivity between rural areas and urban areas, to end the isolation of rural areas that are increasingly underserved by bus and transit services, and also to “expend funds for the support of intercity
bus transportation to the extent required by law.” The Intercity Bus Program is designed to address the “intercity bus transportation needs of the entire State” by developing projects that support one or more of the national objectives and State goals. The objectives of the Intercity Bus Program are to provide a vital link between otherwise isolated rural communities and the rest of Georgia. One objective of the funding for intercity bus service under Section 5311, therefore, is to support the connection between rural areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service. Another objective is to support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in rural areas. A third objective is to support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities. FTA encourages states to use the funding under Section 5311(f) to support these national objectives, as well as priorities determined by the state.

GDOT distributes the FTA Section 5311 (f) funds within the State through a competitive process. States are required to expend at least 15 percent of their annual FTA Section 5311 apportionment to support intercity bus service unless the Governor certifies, after consultation with affected intercity bus service providers, that the state’s intercity bus service needs are adequately met. The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP) planning process includes consultation with MPOs and non-metropolitan areas of the State to determine the intercity bus needs. Eligible applicants include a state or local governmental authority, a nonprofit organization, or an operator of public transportation or intercity bus service that receives federal transit program grant funds indirectly through a recipient. All eligible applicants must demonstrate project eligibility for existing intercity bus services within Georgia and any proposed expansions.

GDOT consults with intercity bus providers through the following activities:

- Includes intercity bus service providers’ participation in scheduled meetings, such as the State agency transit meetings, and public transit conferences such as the annual Georgia Transit Association conference;
- Contact with individual intercity bus service providers periodically through email blasts and newsletters, and other multi-recipient communication techniques;
- Notification of the availability of funds for the current year’s intercity bus program through public announcements.

2.4.3 Appalachian Development Public Transportation Assistance Program (ADPTA)

This new program, created under MAP-21 and perpetuated through the FAST Act, is funded with a portion of the Section 5311 program to provide additional funding to states in the Appalachian region. FTA apportions the funds to designated states, including Georgia, for purposes eligible under Section 5311; including capital, operating, planning and reverse commute projects along with administrative costs. Under this program, FTA allocates funds to Georgia to deliver safe, reliable public transportation services to rural areas in the Appalachian Region. FTA coordinates with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) on this program and expects that ADPTA will enhance existing transportation services and create new services in order to decrease isolation within the region and encourage economic development. The following Georgia counties are in Appalachia and are eligible for ADPTA funding: Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Dade, Dawson, Douglas, Elbert, Fannin, Floyd, Forsyth, Franklin, Gilmer, Gordon, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Haralson, Hart, Heard, Jackson, Lumpkin, Madison, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, Walker, White, and Whitfield.
2.4.4 Tribal Transit Program

The Tribal Transit Program provides funding to federally recognized Indian tribes to provide public transportation services on and around Indian reservations or tribal land in rural areas. Funding is provided as a set-aside from the Formula Grants for Rural Areas program consisting of a $25 million formula program and a $5 million discretionary grant program subject to the availability of appropriations. A 10-percent local match is required under the discretionary program, however, there is no local match required under the formula program. Although only Federally-recognized tribes are eligible recipients under the Tribal Transit Program, tribes that are not federally recognized remain eligible to apply to the State as a subrecipient for funding under the State's apportionment. State recognized tribal organizations are:

The Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee  
P. O. Box 607  
Dahlonega, Georgia 30533

The Lower Muscogee Creek Tribe  
Route 2, Box 370  
Whigham, Georgia 31797

The Cherokee of Georgia Tribal Council  
Saint George, Georgia 31646

The United Creeks of Georgia  
565 Warwick Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30316

Federally and state recognized tribes may use the funding for capital, operating, planning, and administrative expenses for public transit projects that meet the growing needs of rural tribal communities. Examples of eligible activities include: capital projects; operating costs of equipment and facilities for use in public transportation; and the acquisition of public transportation services, including service agreements with private providers of public transportation services.

2.5 Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (formerly Section 5316)

This program was repealed by the U.S. Congress, and there are no new awards under the Section 5316 program. Funding for similar, eligible services is now available under both the Sections 5307 and 5311 programs. GDOT will continue to administer this program (Section 5316) until all funds awarded under MAP-21 are expended.

2.6 New Freedom Program (formerly Section 5317)

This program was repealed by the U.S. Congress, and there are no new awards under the Section 5317 program. Funding for similar, eligible services is now available under the Section 5311 program. GDOT will continue to administer this program for funds awarded under MAP-21 until they are expended.
2.7 Bus and Bus Facilities Programs- Section 5339

Section 5339 provides funding to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. This program consists of a formula apportionment, 5339(a) and two discretionary components, 5339(b) and 5339(c). 5339(a), through a statutory formula allocation, provides funding to states and transit agencies to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. The Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program, 5339(b), makes discretionary federal funding resources available to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations and competitive grants.

All components of this program requires up to a 20% local match. Eligible recipients under this subsection are: (1) subrecipients that operate fixed route bus service or that allocate funding to fixed route bus operators; or (2) State or local governmental entities that operate fixed route bus service. A subrecipient that receives a grant under this subsection may allocate amounts of the grant to public agencies or private nonprofit organizations engaged in public transportation, including those providing services open to a segment of the general public, as defined by age, disability, or low income. Funds for subrecipients of GDOT are allocated based on the request of the subrecipients and the availability of funds. Funds are eligible to be transferred by the State to supplement urban and rural formula grant programs (5307 and 5311, respectively). Eligible applicants may apply for Section 5339 bus grants on behalf of private non-profit agencies, private providers of public transportation services, and public subrecipients.

2.7.1 Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program – Section 5339(c)

FTA’s “Low No” Program provides funding through a competitive process to States and transit agencies to purchase or lease low or no emission transit buses and related equipment, or to lease, construct, or rehabilitate facilities to support low or no emission transit buses. The program provides funding to support the wider deployment of advanced propulsion technologies within the nation’s transit fleet. The main purpose of the Low No Program is to deploy the cleanest and most energy efficient U.S.-made transit buses that have been largely proven in testing and demonstrations but are not yet widely deployed in transit fleets.

2.8 Local Match Requirements

Table 2 illustrates generalized funding assistance and match requirements by project type in Georgia. All funding is subject to availability. In cases in which GDOT cannot provide the State match, it is the subrecipient’s responsibility to pay the State share percentage as local match. Note that because of federal regulations, the non-federal share percentages differ from operating costs to capital costs within the same program (e.g., Section 5307 non-federal match differs for capital and operating projects).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Type</th>
<th>Federal Share</th>
<th>State Share*</th>
<th>Local Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Operating Assistance (FTA Sections 5307, 5311)</td>
<td>Up to 50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50% or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Capital Assistance (FTA Section 5307 and 5311)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Planning Assistance (FTA Sections 5303, 5304, 5305)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Capital Assistance (FTA Section 5311(f))</td>
<td>Up to 80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Capital Assistance for Bus and Bus Facilities (FTA Section 5339)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Capital Assistance for Related to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects Requesting Capital Assistance for Clean Air Act (CAA) Related Projects</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This funding is based on availability of State of Georgia funds. If GDOT cannot provide the State match, it is the subrecipient’s responsibility to pay the State share percentage. GDOT does not provide a State share for operating costs or for projects under FTA’s Section 5311(f) and Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities programs.
State of Georgia general appropriations are usually the source of the State share for matching federal transit funds. Operating assistance must be funded through local sources, such as general revenues, local sales tax or other revenues. In certain cases, where Transportation Investment Act (TIA) funding has been approved locally, Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) funds may be used for transit operating assistance. All local share percentages must come from non-DOT sources, except for Federal Lands Highway Program funds. Federal law permits the use of the following sources for the local share of FTA projects:

- Cash (or in-kind contribution as approved by FTA);
- Non-Federal funds;
- Contract revenue from state, local or private social service organizations;
- Non-farebox revenues from transit operations (e.g. advertising and concession revenues);
- Real property integral to the project;
- Local SPLOST revenue; and
- Medicaid revenues.

State policy does not permit the use of transportation development funds (formerly referred to as toll credits) to be used for local matching funds in Georgia.

Farebox revenue cannot be used as local match, but must be used to reduce the net operating cost of a project before federal assistance can be requested and applied to the transit service. No FTA program funds can be used as a source of local match for other FTA programs, even when used to contract for service. Non-FTA purchase of service revenue and other revenues associated with the transit project must be used as either local match (if needed) or to offset the operating cost of transit services. Any available purchase of service or other revenue generated by the transit system are treated as program income and must be used for transit-related purposes (capital or operating assistance) as specified under FTA regulations. Non-FTA federal funds for the purpose of a transportation project can be used as a local match funding source.

### 3.0. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION/SELECTION AND FAIR AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

This section of the SMP describes the state’s criteria for selecting projects and distributing funds fairly and equitably among various applicants for funding, including tribal governments and other entities serving Native American populations.

#### 3.1. Statewide Planning Consultation

Projects must be identified through GDOT’s ongoing planning processes, which incorporate urban and non-urban planning processes across Georgia, and emphasize the maintenance, safety, and improvement of existing transportation facilities and public transportation systems. GDOT consults with all necessary parties including the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) and the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), local jurisdictions, transportation advocacy groups, and the general public in identifying and selecting funded projects. The projects must support GDOT’s mission to provide a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia’s economy and is sensitive to its citizens and environment.

GDOT conducts a comprehensive public outreach and involvement program associated with the development of its STIP. Public meetings are held in each GDOT district and formal presentations are made to Georgia’s MPOs and regional commissions as requested during the STIP development process.
Special attention is focused on inviting all state-level and local elected and appointed officials to these sessions, including hundreds of various stakeholder organizations, including business and community leaders, representatives of elderly, disabled, and low income populations, advocacy groups working on transportation and mobility, educational institutions, major employers, workforce development agencies, human services providers, emergency management agencies, economic development entities, and community-based and faith-based organizations, among others.

Additionally, GDOT presentations to local civic organizations on GDOT plans and programs throughout the year, including presentations on public transit programs. The focus of these discussions is obtaining input from communities across Georgia on project selection and funding opportunities.

During periods when GDOT’s Statewide Transportation Plan and Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan are being updated or revised, similar open house meetings are held across Georgia to obtain input on transportation project funding priorities and preferences.

GDOT uses the following considerations in making transportation project/program investment decisions, including funding transit system improvements in Georgia:

- There must be a demonstrated need for the project. Plans, needs assessments, and other documentation indicating a need for improved facilities and/or services are used to indicate transportation/transit needs.
- The proposed applicant must be able to demonstrate its financial and managerial capability to carry out the project. Examples of items that may be used to demonstrate the capability include audited financial statements and letters of support from local governmental jurisdictions, and the status of current awards and performance on previous awards to the subrecipient, etc.;
- Evidence of need as shown in applicable MPO plan or STIP;
- Products of inclusive public and stakeholder outreach activities, including activities targeted to environmental justice communities and underserved individuals, such as elderly, low-income, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, and zero-car households;
- Implementation of services and projects identified in regional and local plans; and
- Program-specific requirements for each funding program listed in Table 1.

Project selection criteria for each project are developed and customized according to the FTA program-specific goals and objectives and quantitative and qualitative assessments conducted by the GDOT Transit Program in consultation with MPOs, RCs, and others. All GDOT project/program funding is consistent with FTA program requirements.

3.2 Fair and Equitable Distribution of Funds

Funding decisions across all FTA programs managed by GDOT are made using the following criteria and considerations described for each program in annual grant application packages:

- Indication of interest from an eligible subrecipient for funding assistance to support an eligible FTA project activity;
- Identification of the project funding in an approved or soon-to-be-approved MPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) if located in an urbanized area;
Letters or other expressions of support, such as resolutions, etc. from local jurisdictions served by the proposed project;

- Apportionment levels for specific FTA programs as communicated to GDOT by FTA;
- Presence of lapsing formula FTA funds apportioned to particular area(s) for transit purposes;
- Local support for transit-related investments, including the commitment of local matching funds for the transit system capital and operating requirements.

Each year in late September, GDOT advises its subrecipients of the availability of FTA funds, including apportioned funds to specific areas, and announces a call for projects for the subsequent year. The deadline for submitting funding requests (applications) is on or about November 30th of each year. Once all applications are received, the GDOT Transit group assesses the funding requests based on the following factors:

- Previous year’s planning, capital, or operating assistance amount and end-of-the-year expenditure of contracted funds;
- Recent growth in transit-related costs (i.e. fuel, personnel, insurance, etc.)
- Performance of the subrecipient on FTA compliance activities;
- Demonstrated need for capital funding, including current and/or project odometer readings for transit vehicles, age of transit vehicles, replacement needs for damaged or permanently out of service vehicles, opportunity for system expansion and need for additional vehicles, and other relevant factors;
- Growth in system ridership that demonstrates the need for more vehicles and/or equipment;
- Recent catastrophic events requiring the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of transit-related assets;
- Proposed work program for requested funds and their relationship to the local transit system;
- Other local issues as identified by letters of support from community leaders;
- Subrecipient’s track record for successfully delivering funded transit system improvements in a timely manner consistent with FTA regulations.

For FTA Section 5303 and 5304 planning funding and for Section 5307 funding for small urban transit systems, GDOT notifies potential subrecipients, such as MPOs, regional commissions, transit agencies, etc. about the availability of FTA funding and requests a letter in writing stating whether the organization intends to apply for and use the FTA funding in the upcoming fiscal year. If the subrecipient intends to utilize the requested funding, the GDOT Transit Program includes this subrecipient’s funding in the appropriate FTA grant application and prepares to enter into the contracting process with the subrecipient. In cases where subrecipients with apportioned transit funds choose not to utilize the available funding for the upcoming fiscal years, GDOT redistributes the available funding to other eligible transit activities proposed by other subrecipients.

In order to distribute the unused FTA funds in an equitable manner, the following factors are used. The redistribution process is described in an SOP used by the Transit Program for this purpose. The funds are generally distributed based the respective shares of the current population in each area receiving the redistributed funds.

- Presence of a significant operating fund shortfall for one or more subrecipients;
- Level of transit ridership growth in the past year in the receiving subrecipient’s area;
• The need to fully fund a needed transit activity (vs. not fully funding a complete activity);
• Record of past program/project delivery;
• Level of local support as expressed by the level of local matching funds for transit, letters of support, or other information provided by the receiving subrecipient.

All proposed subrecipient projects that meet the FTA transit project eligibility guidelines, are properly documented in funding requests (i.e. completed applications); are included in the appropriate STIP or TIP; and pledge the commitment of the appropriate level of local matching funds will be considered for funding by GDOT up to the level justified by their actual capital and operating expenses. GDOT may provide up to ten percent (10%) of the cost of capital projects with state funds (general revenue, taxes, and legislative appropriation), subject to annual availability. However, state matching funds for operating assistance and FTA Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facility program activities are not available. In these cases, if GDOT cannot provide its share of the non-federal matching funds (10%), therefore, it is the subrecipient’s responsibility to pay the full 20% non-federal share of the proposed project.

4.0. ANNUAL PROGRAM OF PROJECTS

This section describes the process and timetable for soliciting, reviewing, and approving applications for local projects to be included in the Transit Program of Projects (POP) for all FTA programs administered by GDOT. GDOT’s Program Administrative Guides (PAGs) for its Section 5307 and Section 5311 Programs (now being revised), describe the process used to develop the POP based on information from the subrecipients and the specific needs of FTA’s transit programs.

4.1. General Planning Requirements

Under 23 USC 135 and 49 USC 5304, all federal funds programmed for transit projects must be included in the State of Georgia’s STIP. GDOT also prepares a program-specific Program of Projects (POP) for each of its FTA programs, including Sections 5303, 5304, 5305 (as applicable), 5307, 5311, and 5339. Each FTA application references a project that appears in the Program of Projects (POP) developed through a statewide planning effort that incorporates local recipient needs across all FTA programs administered by GDOT.

GDOT receives applications from potential subrecipients and reviews them, including the budget for projects and all required supporting documentation as requested in the application procedures for the particular FTA funding program. The applications from individual subrecipients are then used to confirm the program-specific POP to be included in GDOT’s grant application to FTA and submitted electronically to the FTA’s award management system, TrAMS. There are numerous activities and processes that must be completed in order for GDOT to receive a grant award from FTA. GDOT and its subrecipients are responsible for careful execution of certain pre-award and post-award procedures. More specific information on the pre-award and post-award processes can be found at FTA’s website located at [https://www.transit.dot.gov](https://www.transit.dot.gov).

Where FTA Section 5311 (rural transit) projects are being proposed within an MPO’s current planning/study area boundaries, or when a project may include areas expected to become urbanized within 20 years, the proposed project to be funded by FTA Section 5311 funds must be included in the MPO’s TIP where it is then incorporated into the STIP (see Sections 1.5.3 and 1.6.4).
4.2. Application Procedures

The application procedures for each FTA funding program administered by GDOT are outlined in GDOT’s annual call for projects which references the individual FTA program information which can be found on-line as described previously. GDOT utilizes the most recent announcement of federal apportionments published in the Federal Register as the basis for its upcoming transit grant application cycle. Application requirements include some provisions which apply to all FTA funding programs as well as program-specific application procedures. The procedures for applying for funding for each type of FTA transit project overseen by GDOT are included in the annual notification of funding availability (i.e. call for projects) that is sent to each eligible subrecipient in the State, posted on the GDOT Transit webpage, and distributed to MPOs, RCs, the ACCG, and GMA, among other organizations. GDOT’s annual transit grant application cycle begins on or about September 30th and ends on or about November 30th of each year.

4.3. Evaluation and Approval Process

The evaluation and approval process for applications and funding decisions is described in the respective GDOT Administrative Guide for each program (now in the process of being revised). The GDOT Transit Program team, consisting of the Transit Program Manager and members of the General Office and district office transit team, are involved in the review of each application for funding. The responsible GDOT District Public Transportation Coordinator and the respective Transit Planner/Project Manager (for Section 5303, 5304, 5305, 5307, and 5339 projects) review the grant applications and provide a summary assessing the application against prior year metrics and information, if available. New projects are summarized as well. A similar process is used for Section 5311 grant applications, involving the Transit Program Manager, Rural Transit Group Lead, and the District Public Transportation Specialists.

The program funding request summaries are prepared in advance of a joint meeting of GDOT Transit team members to review the funding requests and compares them to annual program benchmarking data, i.e. ridership, capital costs, operating costs, planning costs, cost-effectiveness metrics, productivity metrics, level of federal, state, and local funding, etc. Using this data, the group reviews the overall approach to making funding decisions for each FTA program area (i.e. Section 5303, 5304, 5307, 5311, and 5339). District and General Office team members are encouraged to ask questions, provide local knowledge of the transit system’s performance, and provide feedback on funding requests and issues.

The evaluation process focuses on a technical scoring methodology based on past performance of compliance with program requirements for FTA programs (including schedule adherence), demonstrated needs, and consistency with adopted transportation plans. Once the need for the project and its consistency with adopted transportation plans are confirmed, the application is evaluated and a funding decision is made. The results of the evaluation session are documented along with the process for arriving at the final funding amounts. The group also considers the current year spending patterns and history of unused funding, if any. The subrecipient’s proposed budget is then incorporated into GDOT’s grant application to FTA. Section 3.2 describes the process for ensuring the fair and equitable distribution of FTA funds.

GDOT expects that awards to subrecipients under a specific program of projects to be completed within a reasonable, specified time frame, generally two years. Capital projects are allotted two years
to be completed in the GDOT project contract with its subrecipients. Operating funds are allotted for a full fiscal year starting on July 1st of each state fiscal year through June 30th of the same state fiscal year (12 months).

5.0 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This section of the SMP describes the planning resources and technical and management assistance the State makes available to local areas. It also describes how the State uses FTA Section 5311 funds within the 10 percent (10%) limitation for administration, planning, technical assistance, and research.

5.1. Program Management and Administrative Requirements

This section describes the responsibilities of GDOT's Division of Intermodal and its subrecipients to assure that the general requirements of the FTA programs listed in Table 1 are met. The requirements for the FTA programs are defined by 49 USC Chapter 53 and are detailed by the program circulars and the FTA Master Agreement, which is the agreement between GDOT and the FTA describing how the FTA program funds are to be administered by GDOT. There are additional requirements that may apply to subrecipients, depending on the type of services provided and the type of organization providing the transit services. These requirements may not be specifically defined by the FTA but may be required by other federal laws, rules, and policies.

The Triennial Review and State Management Review of GDOT programs is designed to assess management practices and program implementation of FTA Sections 5303, 5304, 5305, 5307, 5311 and 5339, and GDOT’s remaining FTA Section 5316 and 5317 program funds. GDOT must demonstrate its capacity to manage FTA funded programs in accordance with comprehensive management practices, applicable laws and regulations, and in conformance with its own established written procedures for grant applications and agreements. Details regarding these requirements as well as GDOT’s compliance of these requirements are defined in the following sections. Subrecipients must comply with all applicable requirements. Additional requirements that apply to specific programs are located in the respective Administrative Guides for the Section 5307 and Section 5311 Programs. A complete list of the program references and requirements is found in each of the FTA circulars.

5.1.1 Transit Program Organization

The Transit Program, established within GDOT’s Division of Intermodal, is responsible for the overall management and compliance oversight for Georgia’s approximately 24 planning subrecipients, 85 rural, and seven (7) small urban (under 200,000 in population) transit systems, as well as program activities related to two intercity bus carriers, Greyhound Bus Lines and Southeastern Stages, operating in Georgia. Transit activities carried out by the large urban transit systems in Georgia (i.e. Metro Atlanta, Savannah, Columbus, and Augusta) are coordinated directly by them with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

To handle its responsibilities, the Transit Program has professional staff members stationed either in its General Office in Atlanta or in one of the six (6) districts having rural transit systems, including District 1 (Gainesville), District 2 (Tennille), District 3 (Thomaston), District 4 (Tifton), District 5 (Jesup), and District 6 (Cartersville). At the present time, the District 2 Public Transportation Coordinator is based in Augusta, Georgia.
The group is led by the Transit Program Manager based in the General Office. In May, 2017, the Transit Program was reorganized with new positions added to the program to better align its management and oversight responsibilities as well as to make the most efficient use of available federal and state transit resources and enable improved customer service across the state. As of May, 2017, there are four groups reporting to the Transit Manager as follows. A total of 17 full-time positions are assigned to this group with 11 of them based in the Atlanta office and six (6) of them based in GDOT District Offices. Two new positions have been approved for the Transit Program; however, their locations have not yet been finalized.

- **Compliance and Transit Asset Management**

As mentioned previously, one of the primary responsibilities of the Transit Program is to oversee federal and state compliance by all of the subrecipient organizations receiving federal and/or state transit funds for planning, capital projects, including facilities, transit system operations, and/or mobility management. In 2017, there were approximately 115 transit subrecipients within Georgia. This group is responsible for developing and maintaining the Transit Program’s standard operating procedures to carry out the state’s transit program in compliance with state and federal regulations and maintaining documentation on the performance of the subrecipients with respect to FTA program compliance. At the current time, this group also manages contractors (i.e. consultants and an educational institution) to assist in the program compliance activities. All of these resources are used to enable GDOT to maintain its federal compliance responsibilities in the areas of grant management, Civil Rights (Title VI), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), and the FTA Drug and Alcohol Program, among others. This group is also responsible for responding to questions and formal reviews by FTA, various state audits, and other related activities.

The team members assigned to Transit Asset Management and GDOT transit fleet management activities are based in Atlanta. This subgroup is responsible for the development and maintenance of GDOT’s Small Group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan and its related activities. The Small Group TAM Plan is being developed by GDOT on behalf of all the state’s rural transit systems and the small urban transit systems in areas of less than 200,000 population.

With approval from FTA, other urban systems operating less than 50 vehicles may be included in the GDOT Small Group TAM Plan. To date, two large urbanized systems located in the Augusta-Richmond County area and the Columbus-Phenix City, Alabama region have requested to join the GDOT Small Group Plan with FTA’s concurrence. In addition to the TAM activities, this group is also responsible for the analysis of transit vehicle needs for the small urban and rural transit systems, activities related to the procurement of transit vehicles for the rural systems, and activities related to the Department’s transit vehicle leasing and vehicle surplus programs. This group coordinates its activities and works with the assistance of the district personnel located around the state.

- **Transit Planning**

This group is based in the General Office in Atlanta and includes transit professionals who focus on working with the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and regional commissions (RCs)
on transit planning activities funded with FTA programs (currently, the Section 5303, 5304, and 5305 programs). This group provides technical assistance to these planning agencies and is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the grant applications from the planning organizations, assisting with funding allocation decisions, and preparing information and data needed for FTA grant submission. This group is also responsible for monitoring FTA compliance for the subrecipient organizations receiving FTA planning funds, including MPOs and RCs. This group is also responsible for reporting the progress on planning activities to FTA using the agency’s automated grant management system (TrAMS).

At the present time, this group is also responsible for providing technical assistance to the small urban transit systems in preparing and submitting their grant applications for capital, operating, and planning activities (currently funded with FTA Section 5307 and 5339 funds). This group also serves as project managers or liaisons between the Transit Program and the individual small urban transit systems in the areas of review and approval of procurement actions, review and approval of reimbursement requests, conducting risk assessments and on-site compliance reviews, and addressing program management and compliance issues as they arise. They are the primary contact persons for the small urban systems. They monitor the progress of approved activities included in the various grants funded with FTA urban transit funds, including reporting on the progress of the activities in TrAMS. As the Transit Group grows and evolves over time, this responsibility will shift to the Transit Program Delivery unit.

- **Grants and Contracts**

Within the GDOT Transit Program Office in Atlanta, a unit focused on submitting and managing FTA grants and initiating, executing, and monitoring contracts with subrecipients has been established. At the present time, there are approximately three (3) full-time equivalents (FTEs) currently assigned to this function; however, in the near future, an additional position may be assigned in this group.

As a designated recipient of FTA funds, GDOT is responsible for initiating, managing, and closing out the grants process for applicable federal transit programs including determination of eligibility, oversight of the selection process, providing technical assistance, determining technical, managerial and financial capacity of subrecipients, securing signed certifications and assurances from subrecipients, monitoring the progress of contracted work, and timely closeout of grants. There are four major stages in accomplishing these responsibilities:

- Pre-Award
- Award
- Post-Award
- Closeout

Another function of this group is to maintain databases on GDOT’s portfolio of federal transit grants, individual contracts with subrecipients included in these grants, and the financial status of the grants and contracts throughout their life. Included in this group are staff members responsible for developing and processing funding contracts between GDOT and its subrecipient organizations, supplemental agreements, and other related documents.
Pre-award requirements for planning and applications procedures tend to be program specific, and are spelled out in detail in the individual program manuals. Pre-award requirements relating to certifications and assurances, Title VI submissions, authorizing resolutions and technical, financial and legal capacity are defined herein.

Similarly, most of the requirements and procedures in the award, post-award and closeout stages are common to all programs. Therefore, to reduce duplication and redundancy, these stages are contained herein. To accommodate the occasional exception to this organizational structure, the individual program manuals contain a single heading for the Award, Post-Award and Closeout stages with program-specific requirements (where applicable) and references to the SMP for common requirements.

Under each of these major stages are a number of activities and processes that must be completed in order to award grants to eligible recipients and to administer these grants according to federal regulations. Requirements and procedures common to all of the GDOT programs are defined in the following sections. Program-specific requirements are described in the Program Management Manual. The Award stage includes two activities – Obligation/Award and Execution. This stage serves as the basis for how the post-award activities are defined and carried out. Once a completed grant application receives final concurrence from FTA and the funds are reserved, grant funding is then obligated to GDOT and the grant is executed. GDOT then develops and executes the Grant Obligation and Award.

**Program Delivery**

This group has members based in the General Office (Atlanta) as well as in each of the six (6) districts, excluding the GDOT District 7 which serves the Metro Atlanta area. This group’s primary responsibility is to provide technical assistance to the state’s subrecipient organizations in delivering transit services to Georgia’s citizens in compliance with federal and state regulations. The District personnel in this group assist rural transit subrecipients in developing and preparing their grant applications, comply with the federal requirements for the National Transit Database (NTD) reporting, review and approve reimbursement requests (consistent with their executed funding contracts), and other related activities. Among the activities performed by the GDOT District personnel are periodic site visits, annual vehicle inspection activities, annual on-site drug and alcohol program inspections, subrecipient risk assessments, and other activities that may arise. The District personnel are also responsible for populating the Department’s transit management system (RMIS) with data on vehicle odometer readings and other metrics. The District personnel are also responsible for assisting with transit-related activities associated with the small urban systems and planning organizations receiving FTA and/or state funds. In the future, this group will expand its area of responsibility to providing technical assistance, where appropriate to GDOT’s planning and small urban subrecipients.

The transit professionals located in the headquarters office (Atlanta) are responsible for the overall coordination of the program delivery activities occurring in the districts, including monitoring the progress and overall efficiency of program activities and taking corrective actions, if needed. They also are responsible for providing technical assistance and guidance to district personnel, when needed.
All four groups are monitored by the Transit Program Manager, who in turn, coordinates the Transit Program activities with the Division Director of Intermodal and two Assistant Division Directors. The Division reports to the Chief Engineer, who, in turn, reports to the GDOT Commissioner.

5.1.2 Technical Assistance

GDOT through its Atlanta office, District offices, workshops and seminars provides technical assistance in the preparation of funding requests, program compliance and monitoring, financial management, program delivery and operations, and administration and management. The Department utilizes up to 10 percent of its Section 5311 apportioned funds for administration, planning and technical assistance to support these programmed activities. Additional technical assistance for rural transit systems is provided using FTA Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP). Other eligible assistance categories under RTAP include research, training, professional development and any support services. At the present time, no state management assistance funding from FTA is currently provided for small urban or planning programs.

Technical assistance is provided to subrecipients through the general office (GO) personnel, district personnel and Atlanta headquarters office staff. Technical assistance is provided directly to the subrecipients under several different program activities. Training is provided through various conferences, transit training opportunities (courses) throughout the year, and special meetings/sessions held by GDOT to convey guidance and information on FTA programs.

Training guidance and course announcements are distributed via email to GDOT’s subrecipients. GDOT partners with the National Transit Institute (NTI), through contracted training programs, and/or other curriculums to deliver courses including mandatory training for Drug and Alcohol, Title VI, and DBE programs. GDOT also endeavors to host training programs in its Atlanta and Macon office locations to facilitate attendance by subrecipients in Georgia. The National Rural Transportation Assistance Program and its associated resources related to FTA compliance and oversight are excellent resources for smaller transit systems and their use is actively encouraged by GDOT. These resources have been developed at no cost and are accessible through the National RTAP website.

5.2 Grant Management and Administration

5.2.1 Grants Status Management and Oversight

The Division of Intermodal is required to assure that subrecipients comply with federal and state requirements. This is accomplished through project management and monitoring performed by GDOT’s Transit Program staff with the assistance of its contractors. The goal of oversight is to assure that the agency (GDOT) and the grant recipients have appropriate, adequate internal controls to assure that the subrecipient is meeting the terms and conditions of the grant award(s).

- The Transit Program Manager maintains a Grant Status list of all open grants with pre-award, appropriation authority, and critical date history.
- Each Transit Planner maintains a list of all open grants, any pending revisions or amendments, close outs in progress and priority of work. Each list is updated as needed and resides on GDOT’s common network directory so the lists can be shared among Transit Planners and PTC’s to better manage the
projects/programs. Regular Grant Status Review meetings are held and include Transit and support staff.

- The GDOT Fiscal Services section (not housed within the Division of Intermodal) will reconcile all internally produced financial sheets (FAS and People Soft) with TrAMS. On a regular basis, the Transit Program Manager, Transit Planner, Division leaders, and the fiscal services group as appropriate meet to review the reconciliation, grant balances, and other related issues.

When a monitoring activity identifies an issue related to capacity, eligibility or compliance, the GDOT Transit Program staff member assigned to the subrecipient works with that entity to confirm the nature of the activity and to develop a corrective action plan to address the issue.

5.2.2 On-Site Compliance Reviews and Risk Assessments

The Division of Intermodal also conducts full compliance on-site visits at least every three years for subrecipients that are considered low risk. GDOT monitors the activities of its subrecipients through risk assessment activities. These risk assessment activities include desk reviews and site visits, where appropriate, at interim points. Agencies that are high risk will be reviewed at a minimum of every year, or more frequently as needed. Risk Assessment Checklist forms are used (for the appropriate FTA program) by Transit Program team members in conducting the assessments. For rural transit subrecipients, the District PTSs complete the forms, which are then reviewed by their supervisor and Transit Program Manager. When deficiencies are discovered during the risk assessment or site visit, a Corrective Action Plan (CAPs) is developed and monitored by the assigned member of the Transit Program staff. After all CAP actions are completed, the assigned Transit Program team member initiates “close out” of the CAP, including obtaining signatures from the responsible executive of the subrecipient organization and the GDOT Division of Intermodal.

During the formal compliance on-site visit, the Transit Planner or District PTS, or other assigned team member will review each area of FTA compliance and using the review checklist for that program, complete the review and document the results of the on-site visit.

In addition to the full compliance on-site visits conducted every three years, subrecipients may receive a full compliance review based on the agency’s risk level as determined by GDOT. Risk levels are determined by the factors below:

- Pattern of management that is non-compliant with FTA and/or GDOT requirements
- History of poor performance, e.g., delayed required reports, incomplete reports, etc.
- Evidence or patter of financial instability
- Prior oversight findings
- High dollar amount awards
- Percentage of award(s) to subrecipient’s total budget
- Inexperienced subrecipients or staff; new staff, insufficient attention to functional areas of responsibility
- Relative organization expertise compared with complexity of program requirements
- Negative press coverage and/or complaints regarding an operational or fiscal issue(s)
- Single audit findings and corrective action plans
- High profile programs, i.e., with significant public interest, or interest of Congressional delegation or Georgia Legislature
Based on the assessment, the Transit Program will prepare a compliance review schedule for a 36-month period and review it annually and adjust it, if necessary. Once the schedule is established, the agencies to be reviewed will be notified. On-site review materials will be sent to the agencies. GDOT Transit Program on-site reviewers will use a standard form (checklist) compliance review questionnaire that includes major compliance areas, and areas of interest to GDOT. The Compliance Review Checklist will be easily accessible to GDOT’s subrecipients, including an annual e-mail distributions and posting on GDOT’s Transit webpage. Transit subrecipients are encouraged to use the Compliance Review Checklist to perform a self-assessment prior to the official GDOT compliance on-site visit.

The on-site compliance reviews shall include all FTA-required programs in the following major areas. Similarly, the desk-level risk assessments will cover these same FTA-require compliance areas, depending on program requirements:

- Legal
- Financial
- Technical
- Satisfactory Continuing Control
- Maintenance
- Procurement
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- Buy America
- Suspension/Debarment
- Lobbying
- Planning/Program of Projects
- Civil Rights (Title VI)
- Public Participation Process for Fare and Service Changes
- Half Fare Policy and Management
- Americans with Disability Act (ADA)
- Charter Bus
- School Bus
- National Transit Database
- Safety and Security
- Drug Free Workplace
- Drug and Alcohol Program
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture
- GDOT Contract Compliance

For further information on specific requirements in these areas, refer to the FTA Grants Management Workbook – New Grantee Workbook at: https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices/region-4/new-grantee-handbook
In addition to compliance on-site visits, the Division of Intermodal, through its Transit Program, will also conduct periodic risk assessments to monitor the level of overall risk related to its subrecipients. The Transit Program will utilize a risk assessment checklist to review each of the FTA compliance areas to identify current and/or potential concerns. The level of detail for the risk assessment will be less than for a full compliance on-site visit; however, all FTA areas of compliance will be assessed by the Transit Program. If any weaknesses, areas of concern, or FTA deficiencies are identified, the assigned risk assessment/reviewer will document the results of the risk assessment, sign it, obtain his/her supervisor’s signature and the signature of the Transit Program Manager. Should any issues, concerns, or deficiencies require a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), the assigned Transit Program team member will work closely with the subrecipient to develop the CAP, take the appropriate actions to address the concerns, then close out the CAP by both the subrecipient and Division of Intermodal.

5.2.3 Oversight of Capital Projects

The GDOT Transit Program is also responsible for the oversight and management of transit facility projects under their programs. FTA offers two documents, “Project and Construction Management Guidelines” and the “Construction Project Management Handbook” for detailed guidance on the development and management of construction projects.

Management of progress payments is a key component in the oversight of construction projects. To encourage compliance, GDOT Transit Project Managers should promptly reject all invoice submittals that do not adhere to the contract requirements.

The GDOT Transit Program will contract with or otherwise assign GDOT work group(s) or firms to carry out the oversight activities for construction projects undertaken by GDOT’s transit subrecipients. GDOT will be responsible for holding its contractors accountable to the terms of their contracts. This oversight is achieved by monitoring:

- Initial Procurement Activities
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements
- Title VI Equity Analysis requirements
- Project Scope
- Project Budget
- Progress Payments
- Project Schedules
- Subsystem inspection and testing
- Quality assurance
- Documentation of construction and design (as-built drawings, Quality Control Inspections, Deficiency lists)
- Compliance with FTA, USDOT, Davis-Bacon Act, and other federal laws

In the event that disputes or lawsuits arise as a result of construction issues, the Transit Program Manager or the Assistant Director of the Division of Intermodal must notify the FTA Regional office of such occurrences immediately via phone, email, submission of FTA Milestone/Progress Reports, or through separate correspondence, where applicable.
5.2.4 Contract and Grant Closeouts

The Division of Intermodal requires all transit subrecipients to submit a final reimbursement and have the contract ready for closeout within 90 days of the contract/budget expiration. For a contract to be closed, all necessary reimbursements must have been submitted and payments made against the contract. Requests for contract/budget close-out must be noted on the invoice coversheet (marked as “Final”) and submitted to GDOT. Any remaining funds on the subrecipient contract will be returned to the original grant, if allowed by FTA. The GDOT Transit Program is responsible for taking timely action to close FTA grants as soon as possible after all grant-funded activities are completed by its subrecipient(s). The closure of FTA grants is periodically reviewed (at least quarterly) by the Division of Intermodal leadership and the Transit Program Manager.

6.0 FTA PROGRAM COMPLIANCE REVIEW AREAS

This section describes the FTA compliance areas for which GDOT and its subrecipients have various responsibilities.

6.1 Private Sector Participation

This section of the SMP describes the state’s policies and procedures for providing for maximum feasible participation by private providers of public transportation. GDOT is committed to the involvement of private for profit organizations in the provision of public transit services. GDOT encourages subrecipients to appropriately use private sector contractors. Subrecipient applicants must provide reasonable notice to private sector transportation providers regarding proposed services and opportunities for their participation in such services.

To ensure that all interested persons, businesses, and agencies have been notified of a subrecipient’s intention to provide transportation services and that they have adequate opportunity to comment, the subrecipient must issue a public notice describing its proposed services during the Annual Application process. The notice should invite interested private operators within the service area to comment or request a public hearing on the proposed services by written notice to the subrecipient. A minimum of 15 days response time must be provided. Private sector participants are also encouraged to participate in the locally Coordinated Planning process.

6.2 Civil Rights

This section of the SMP describes the manner in which GDOT meets federal civil rights requirements and monitors subrecipients to ensure compliance with the requirements of Title VI, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE). The GDOT Civil Rights officer oversees all EEO, DBE and Civil Rights requirements and procedures.

Several laws and administrative requirements apply to all federal grant programs and, therefore, are applicable to the various FTA funding programs. Compliance features for some of these requirements have been further defined by the Federal Transit Administration, inclusive of several unique provisions applicable to all FTA grant assistance programs. GDOT uses a combination of quarterly and annual reports, desk audits, site visits, compliance reviews, operating statistics, project invoicing and other means to monitor compliance with federal and state rules and regulations.
6.3 Title VI

GDOT is committed to ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. GDOT assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex or sexual orientation, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259) be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. GDOT further assures every effort will be made to ensure non-discrimination in all of its programs, whether or not those programs and activities are federally funded. GDOT will take necessary steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency, including interpretation services, if needed. Submission of certain information to determine compliance with Title VI constitutes a Title VI Program. G’OT’s Title VI Program is administered by the GDOT Equal Employment Opportunity Office. Specific requirements are summarized below. FTA Circular 4702.IB provides additional information and guidance. 
https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA_Title_VI_FINAL.pdf

All subrecipients must provide a Title VI Plan that includes the public notification of their Civil Rights under Title VI. The statement must include a nondiscrimination policy, procedures to request more information, and complaint procedures. This information must also be available in other languages as per the LEP plan within the Title VI Plan. Subrecipients are required to submit their Title VI assurance as part of their annual Certification and Assurance submission to FTA. GDOT will submit the assurances as part of its standard submission of completed Certifications and Assurances.

6.3.1 Complaints

GDOT has developed procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against them and makes their procedures for filing a complaint available to members of the public upon request (FTA Office of Civil Rights Complaint Form). GDOT’s Compliance Coordinator is tasked with tracking any complaints, responding to those complaints and providing any required reporting to the FTA Regional Civil Rights Officer.

Each GDOT subrecipient is required to develop a Title VI complaint investigation and tracking process as part of the Title VI plan submission. GDOT further requires each subrecipient to publish its complaint process and form on their individual website.

6.3.2 Investigations

GDOT has developed and maintains a list of any active investigations being conducted by entities naming the recipient and/or subrecipients that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin that includes 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 any complaints.
6.3.3 Access to Services by Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient. These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.

GDOT is taking reasonable steps to remove barriers for LEP individuals and it has developed a Language Implementation Plan pursuant to the recommendations in Section VII of the USDOT LEP Guidance. GDOT’s LEP outreach plan is determined on a case–by-case basis at the program level. Any LEP individual directly impacted or benefiting from GDOT programs, services, or activities should be offered translation services proactively.

In accordance with Executive Order 13166, the USDOT issued Policy Guidance Concerning Subrecipient’s Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons. DOT recipients are required to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons. The USDOT guidance outlines four factors recipients should apply to the various kinds of contacts they have with the public to assess language needs and decide what reasonable steps they should take to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons:

- The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the recipient or grantee.
- The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program.
- The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to people’s lives.
- The resources available to the recipient and costs.

The greater the number or proportion of eligible LEP persons; the greater the frequency with which they have contact with a program, activity, or service; and the greater the importance of that program, activity, or service, the more likely enhanced language services will be needed. Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are typically not expected to provide the same level of language service as larger recipients with larger budgets. The intent of DOT’s guidance is to suggest a balance that ensures meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue burdens on small organizations and local governments. After completing the above four-factor analysis, recipients and grantees can determine the appropriate “mix” of LEP services required.

Recipients and grantees have two main ways to provide language services: oral interpretation either in person or via telephone interpretation service and written translation. The correct mix should be based on what is both necessary and reasonable in light of the four-factor analysis.

6.3.4 Equity Analysis

A Title VI equity analysis is required for systems with 50+ buses in urban areas with over 200,000 people. Equity analyses are required regardless of whether proposed changes would cause positive or negative impacts to riders. Transit providers must conduct an equity analysis for all fare changes and for major service reductions and major service expansions. The Equity Analysis is completed during the planning stage to ensure the project will be completed without regard to race, color, or national origin. For siting of transit-related facilities, the Title VI equity analysis must compare the equity impacts of various siting
alternatives, and the analysis must occur before the selection of the preferred site. Service and facilities planning must take into consideration the potential impact on minority populations. Planned changes in services, facilities, and policy must not result in discrimination against any segment of the community protected under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The subrecipient must ensure that no person is discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin. The subrecipient is required to document the service changes and potential impacts in a Title VI Equity Analysis and to hold a public comment period and hearing once the Title VI Equity Analysis is released for public consumption.

All applicants for program funds must complete civil rights program information as required by FTA. Title VI updates must be submitted to the Transit Planner or Public Transportation Coordinator annually as part of the grant application process. Title VI resources and technical assistance products and GDOT Transit program personnel are available as a resource to assist subrecipients in compliance with Title VI requirements.

Title VI compliance is monitored through the use of Internal Audit spot audits with a subset of subrecipients, in addition to the comprehensive audit done every three years of all subrecipients by GDOT staff. These reviews follow the FTA SMR guidelines for Civil Rights.

Subrecipients shall provide an annual summary of the level of service provided to minority populations as compared to the total population. This information is an aggregation of data reported to GDOT on a monthly per-vehicle basis (refer to FTA Circular C 4702.1B). The subrecipient’s Title VI Compliance Checklist and Title VI Self-Survey should reflect the local subrecipient’s policy of planning and providing services in a manner that does not discriminate against any segment of the community protected under Title VI.

6.3.5 Notifying Beneficiaries of Their Rights Under Title VI

Georgia DOT has developed a statement for the provision of information to the public regarding their Title VI obligations and to apprise members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI. FTA delegates the dissemination of public information to GDOT. GDOT posts all Title VI Notices in a public fashion. Similarly, GDOT requires each subrecipient to display their Title VI notice to the public on their agency website and inside each revenue vehicle. GDOT and subrecipients must be able and equipped to submit additional information to the FTA, in writing, to help resolve concerns about possible noncompliance with Title VI.

6.3.6 Environmental Justice Analysis of Construction Projects

GDOT and subrecipients must integrate an environmental justice analysis into their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation of construction projects. Recipients are not required to conduct environmental justice analyses of projects where NEPA documentation is not required. Recommended components to be included in the environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) are listed in the Title VI Circular 4702.1B, Ch. 1, section 6. Additionally, FTA has developed policy guidance Circular (Circular 4703.1), “Environmental Justice Policy Guidance for Federal Transit Administration Recipients,” in order to provide recipients with a distinct framework to assist them as they integrate principles of environmental justice into their public transportation decision-making processes.
6.3.7 Inclusive Public Participation

As part of the department-wide plan Georgia DOT has developed activities for public outreach and involvement. Follow up responses to comments submitted during Georgia DOT’s public information hearings are mailed directly to the respondent from the appropriate office of responsibility (i.e. Right of Way, Planning, Urban Design, Intermodal, etc.). A detailed report involving all public outreach and involvement activities is submitted to the appropriate federal agency annually.

6.4 Equal Employment Opportunity

All subrecipients are required to submit to GDOT assurances indicating their compliance with FTA's Equal Employment Opportunity objectives, as detailed in FTA Circular 4704.1A at https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/civil-rights-ada/eeo-circular

If any subrecipient meets the threshold specified in that Circular (receipt of $1,000,000 or more in the previous federal fiscal year in capital or operating assistance or planning assistance in excess of $250,000, and 50 or more public transit related employees), they must submit an EEO program documenting their nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, or disability. These programs must include the Statement of Policy, dissemination plan, designation of personnel, assessment of employment practices, and a monitoring and reporting system. GDOT will review each subrecipient and evaluate whether the subrecipients meets the thresholds requiring submittal of an EEO program to GDOT. Those subrecipients that reach the EEO Program thresholds will be required to submit an EEO Program to the GDOT Transit Program. Additionally, their EEO Program will be revised by the GDOT Transit Program.

The Department has developed an EEO policy statement, signed annually by the GDOT Commissioner and published on display boards throughout the GDOT headquarters and district offices. GDOT’s Equal Employment Opportunity Office is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities and preparing all required reports.

6.5 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)

It is the policy of the GDOT to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of federally assisted contracts and to use Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms (DBEs) in federally-assisted contracting and procurement activities. It is the policy of GDOT to implement the provisions of 49 CFR Part 26 with the following objectives:

- Ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of FTA-assisted contracts in the DOT’s highway, transit, and airport financial assistance programs.
- Create a level playing field on which DBEs can fairly compete for DOT assisted contracts.
- Ensure that DOT’s DBE Program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law.
- Ensure that only firms that fully meets the eligibility standards specified in 49 CFR Part 26 are permitted to participate as DBE’s.
- Help remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in DOT-assisted contracts.
- Assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside the DBE Program.
FTA funded projects/contracts must comply with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s regulations on the participation of business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. The regulations are outlined in Participation of DBEs in DOT Programs, (49 CFR, Part 26) which became effective on March 4, 1999 (64 F.R. 5096). GDOT has developed a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program Plan that can be accessed at: http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/Business/DBE.

6.5.1 Unified Certification Program

GDOT has established a DBE program in accordance with USDOT regulations and objectives. The Georgia Unified Certification Program (GUCP) consists of GDOT and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) for one-stop certification of DBE status. Information concerning the certification program can be found in the Program Management Manual.

6.5.2 Transit Vehicle Manufacturers (TVMs) – DBE Program

Subrecipients of program grant funds will be required to make and document every reasonable effort to utilize DBEs in order to contribute to the GDOT’s attainment of its current FTA approved goal. GDOT requires each transit vehicle manufacturer (TVM), as a condition of being authorized to bid or propose on FTA-assisted transit vehicle procurement, to certify that the TVM has complied with the applicable federal requirements. GDOT’s DBE program, along with FTA regulations, requires that each TVM certify that they have complied with the TVM regulations.

Alternatively, GDOT may, at its discretion and with FTA approval, establish project-specific goals for DBE participation in the procurement of transit vehicles in lieu of the TVM complying with this element of the program.

6.5.3 DBE Goals

GDOT receives in excess of $250,000 annually in FTA federal funds, exclusive of funds for the purchase of vehicles. The Department is required to develop a three-year DBE goal and the methodology must be approved by FTA. The establishment of DBE goals for GDOT will be made in consultation with minority, women, and general contractor groups, community organizations, and other officials or organizations that could be expected to have information concerning the availability of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged businesses, the effects of discrimination on opportunities for DBEs, and efforts to establish a level playing field for the participation of DBEs.

Prior to revising its DBE goals, GDOT will publish a notice announcing the proposed overall goal, informing the public that the proposed goal and its rationale are available for inspection during normal business hours at its office for 30 days following the date of the notice. The agency may choose to accept comments for up to 45 days. GDOT will establish the Department DBE goal on a tri-annual basis and evaluate its progress annually. GDOT’s EEO office is responsible for estimating DBE goals for the Department, including the GDOT Transit Program.
7.0 ASSET MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This section of the SMP describes the GDOT asset management policies and maintenance plans and procedures required of subrecipients for vehicles and facilities, including maintenance of ADA accessibility features purchased with federal and state funds.

In 2012, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) mandated and in 2015 the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST) reauthorized FTA to develop a rule to establish a strategic and systematic process of operating, maintaining and improving public transportation capital assets effectively through their entire life cycle. FTA's National Transit Asset Management System (TAMS) Rule:

- Defines “state of good repair”
- Requires grantees to develop a TAM Plan
- Establishes performance measures
- Establishes annual reporting requirements to the National Transit Database


7.1 Transit Asset Management Plan

The FTA final rule requires States to develop a group Transit Asset Management Plan for all subrecipients under the FTA’s Section 5311 Rural Area Formula Program. The statute also requires States and direct recipients to develop group TAM Plans for their Tier II provider subrecipients. Tier II providers are those transit operators with one hundred (100) or fewer vehicles in revenue service and that do not operate rail fixed-guideway public transportation systems. Conversely, Tier I providers—those operators with one hundred and one (101) or more vehicles in revenue service or operators of rail fixed-guideway public transportation systems—must develop their own, individual TAM Plan.

The group TAM Plan approach is intended to reduce the burden on smaller transit providers of developing their own TAM plans and reporting to the National Transit Database (NTD). A group TAM Plan would be subject to the same requirements for individual TAM Plans. Under a Group TAM Plan, a Tier II provider and any subrecipient of FTA’s Section 5311 Rural Area Formula Program would remain responsible for carrying out transit asset management practices for its own public transportation system.

7.1.1 General Policy

All property purchased with GDOT-administered funds is the responsibility of the transit system. GDOT has asset management and maintenance management standards that apply to equipment, supplies, and rolling stock purchased with federal funds. Equipment, supplies, and rolling stock are to be used by the subrecipient for the purpose it was acquired as long as needed, or based on the useful life period as determined, whether or not the program or project continues to be supported by federal funds. GDOT retains title to all rolling stock until the vehicle is replaced. Subrecipients of funds administered by GDOT are required to certify that any property purchased with those funds is used for public transportation services within the subrecipient’s service area or other area described in the grant application. Subrecipients must meet the maintenance standards throughout the useful service life as defined in GDOT procedures outlined in program manuals.
7.1.2 Asset Inventory

Fixed assets must be tracked by the Transit group of the GDOT Intermodal Division and must be recorded as an asset by subrecipients in their own fixed asset accounting system. This procedure indicates the tasks to be completed for inventory, tracking, auditing, transferring, and disposing of fixed assets. Fixed assets also include security and other equipment for buses, computers, and software. For small urban systems administered by GDOT it also includes maintenance yards, buildings, terminals and stations, and buildings. In cases where real estate has been acquired for construction projects, fixed assets may also include real property.

7.1.3 Incidental Use

Equipment and real property may be incidentally used with FTA approval. Incidental use is defined as the authorized use of real property and equipment acquired with FTA funds for purposes of transit, but which also has limited non-transit purposes due to transit operating circumstances. Such use must be compatible with the approved purposes of the project and not interfere with intended public transportation uses of project assets. FTA encourages subrecipients to make incidental use of real property when it can raise additional revenues for the transit system, or at a reasonable cost, enhance system ridership. GDOT must approve any incidental use of FTA funded equipment or facilities in advance of its occurrence. Proceeds of incidental use are considered “program income” and must be returned to the transit system and must be used for a transit purpose.

7.1.4 Inventory Inspection and Monitoring

GDOT Transit staff and the PTCs shall conduct a vehicle inventory at least once every three years using GDOT’s vehicle inventory data as a benchmark for reconciliation to actual vehicles on location. The inventory includes the following information:

- GDOT assigned vehicle number
- Subrecipient’s name
- Vehicle identification number (VIN)
- Cost of vehicle and funding source breakdown
- Vehicle type
- Year of manufacture
- Seating capacity
- Date of purchase/delivery
- Vehicle Make
- Use and condition of vehicle
- Mileage
- Collision history, if applicable
- FTA Grant and/or contract number under which vehicle was purchased
- Date of inventory
- Signature of person(s) performing inventory
- Beginning date of service
- ADA-compliant or not
The GDOT Fixed Asset Inventory form includes:

- Description of the asset
- Source of property (the FTA grant number under which it was procured)
- Acquisition date
- Cost
- Percentage of Federal participation in the cost
- Location
- Use and condition
- Remaining useful life
- TAM useful life benchmark

### 7.1.5 Vehicle Maintenance

Subrecipients are required to maintain rolling stock at a high level of cleanliness, safety, and mechanical soundness. Each transit system must establish a maintenance program that, at a minimum, meets the equipment manufacturer's recommendations. Non-scheduled repairs must be made expeditiously while the vehicle is in revenue service and may not be permanently taken out of service in lieu of repairing. GDOT has the right and obligation to review the transit system's maintenance and safety programs and to conduct periodic reviews of equipment and facilities funded with state and federal funds and identify corrective actions by the subrecipient. Maintenance expectations are outlined in GDOT procedures. GDOT's staff or its designees will conduct annual vehicle inspections, including the categories defined in the Vehicle Inspection Form as outlined in GDOT's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

### 7.1.6 Purchases of Vehicles and Related Equipment

Vehicles may be purchased to replace existing transit vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life based on GDOT useful life standards, or for service expansion. GDOT and subrecipients must follow all applicable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. GDOT requires that systems have wheelchair-equipped vehicles in service to meet ADA requirements. GDOT also requires that each provider must meet the current demands of the disabled population, and if one or more lift-equipped vehicle is not sufficient to meet that demand, then additional lift-equipped vehicles are required.

GDOT and FTA encourage subrecipients and grantees to enter into State and local agreements for the procurement of common goods and services in order to foster greater economy and efficiency or to participation in “joint” or “consortium” consistent with FTA regulations. The latest FTA Best Practices Procurement Manual (BPPM) provides FTA policy and guidance on these procurement types. The following guidance is provided on these types of procurements.

- The solicitation and contract include an assignability clause that allows for the assignment of all or part of the specified deliverable items.
- The quantities to be ordered were included in the original bid and evaluated as part of the contract award decision. Note that “piggybacking” is not permissible when the action would call for an increase in quantities that were not originally bid on and not originally evaluated as
part of the contract award. Such an order for additional quantities would constitute a non-competitive procurement.

- The contract being accessed by the joint procedure contains the clauses required by Federal regulations. These clauses are discussed in the BPPM, Section 4.3.3–2 - Federally Required Submissions with Offers.
- The contractor has submitted the “Certifications” required by Federal regulations with its original bid/proposal. These “Certifications” are discussed in the BPPM, Section 4.3.3–2 - “Federally Required Submissions with Offers.”
- The procurement in other respects meets Federal requirements.

In general, public transit systems must purchase only accessible vehicles meeting the standards set forth in the ADA law (49 CFR Part 38). However, systems that offer only demand-responsive service may purchase non-accessible vehicles. According to 49 CFR Part 37, Transportation Services for Individuals with Disabilities, “if the system, when viewed in its entirety, provides a level of service to individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs, equivalent to the level of service it provides to individuals without disabilities, it may purchase new vehicles that are not readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.” Equivalent service is evaluated with respect to the following service characteristics:

- Response time
- Fares
- Geographic area of service
- Hours and days of service
- Restrictions on trip purpose
- Availability of information and reservations capability
- Capacity constraints

GDOT requires that subrecipients be able to provide equivalent service with their current level of fleet accessibility before allowing the subrecipient to order a non-lift-equipped vehicle. If a local applicant is requesting capital funding for the purchase of a non-accessible vehicle, they must demonstrate in writing compliance with the above requirement by signing the Certification of Equal Access for Persons with Disabilities, and attaching a completed GDOT Equivalency Analysis for Demand-Responsive Public Transportation as part of the application. GDOT makes these forms available with all applications for funding and non-program specific versions of these forms are available upon request.

### 7.1.7 Bus Testing

Any new model bus or ones with significant model changes must be tested at the FTA-sponsored test facility in Altoona, Pennsylvania before Federal funds can be used. Vehicles are tested for maintainability, reliability, safety, performance, structural integrity, fuel economy and noise. Bus testing is not required for unmodified, mass-produced vans. The vendor, prior to subrecipient’s concurrence, should provide the report on post-delivery certification forms upon acceptance of the vehicle(s) from the vendor.

### 7.1.8 Pre-Award and Post Delivery Inspection of Transit Vehicles

To comply with FTA regulations, under certain circumstances, GDOT must undertake reviews (inspections) of rolling stock before award of the bid, during manufacture, and following vehicle delivery. The reviews are
intended to ensure compliance with Buy America requirements, bid specifications, and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS). GDOT’s Transit Fleet Manager must review the manufacturer's Buy America certification and supporting documentation before a contract is awarded to purchase vehicles (pre-award audit). The documentation review should include vehicle sub-components (place of origin, cost and place of final assembly). The Transit Fleet Manager or contractor may conduct the reviews at GDOT’s discretion. Supporting documentation resulting from these reviews must be submitted to GDOT and a copy retained on file for future FTA inspections.

GDOT manages this requirement for the FTA Section 5311 program, but subrecipients that deliver transit services under other FTA programs listed in Table 1, such as FTA Sections 5307 and 5339, are responsible for managing this activity on their own and reporting to GDOT on their inspection activities as appropriate. Following vehicle delivery, a post-delivery audit must be performed after vehicles have been delivered. This post-delivery audit ensures that the manufacturer complied with Buy America, the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, and the subrecipient’s specifications. Subrecipients must complete the post-delivery audits before they accept the vehicles and pay the vendor. All documentation and certification must be submitted to GDOT prior to final payment to the subrecipient.

7.1.9 Transit Vehicle Use and Lease Agreements

GDOT requires subrecipients to retain direct control of their vehicles. Therefore, GDOT discourages placing vehicle under the control of other agencies (other than third-party transit management companies that have met FTA procurement requirements) and reserves the right to approve or disapprove all vehicle use agreements that involve items purchased with state or federal dollars. In order to maintain satisfactory continuing control of all FTA-funded equipment at all times, it is GDOT’s policy not to allow any FTA-funded property to be removed from its designated location without GDOT’s prior approval. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the denial of future funding by FTA and GDOT and may include denial of any reimbursement.

GDOT strongly recommends that subrecipients conduct pre-trip inspections using forms that require daily cycling of the ADA lift and other vehicle functions, such as lighting and other safety and security accessories. Both the GDOT compliance on-site visits and risk assessment reviews will include a review of these files for completed pre-trip inspections.

7.1.10 Transit Vehicle Replacement

Transit vehicles to be replaced should have achieved their minimum normal service life, and ideally surpassed their useful life benchmark (as established in the GDOT Small Group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan which is under development). The age of the bus is calculated as the number of years that it has been in service (travelled its first mile) through its end-of-service date. When a vehicle is taken out of service due to a major or catastrophic repair, the time out of service cannot count towards the vehicle’s useful life period. The replacement procedures vary by vehicle type and FTA standards.

- Early Disposition Policy – If a vehicle is replaced before it has reached its useful life benchmark, the subrecipient has the option of returning the federal interest to FTA or placing the remaining federal interest into the new vehicle (like-kind exchange policy), if approved by GDOT.
- Like-Kind Exchange Policy – Under this policy, the trade-in value or sales proceeds from a vehicle
replaced before the end of its useful life benchmark are not returned to FTA, but rather are applied towards the purchase of a “like-kind” replacement vehicle. Like-kind replacement is defined as a vehicle for a vehicle with a similar service life, if approved by GDOT.

- **Georgia DOAS Surplus Vehicles** – Subrecipients may also purchase vehicles through the Georgia DOAS surplus vehicle program. Procedures for purchasing DOAS surplus vehicles are published by Georgia DOAS.

### 7.1.11 Transit Vehicle Maintenance and Rebuilding Policies

GDOT requires that each subrecipient have a written maintenance plan approved by its governing board for FTA-funded rolling stock (revenue) vehicles. The maintenance plan should identify the goals and objectives of a maintenance program, which may include vehicle life, frequency of road calls, and maintenance costs compared to total operating costs. The maintenance plan should establish the means by which the subrecipient will meet its goals and objectives. These plans should describe a system of periodic inspections and preventative maintenance to be performed at defined intervals consistent with the manufacturer’s maintenance policies. Plans should be updated with the purchase of new rolling stock to account for new technology and/or new manufacturer’s recommended maintenance intervals and programs, and incorporate actions to maintain each vehicle type and model on a specific cycle. These actions should be designed to ensure proper care and maximize vehicle longevity. All preventive maintenance programs should also address any FTA-funded on-board security systems.

During the subrecipient compliance on-site visits and risk assessments, GDOT will examine the subrecipient’s vehicle maintenance plan(s) and/or program(s), documentation, and maintenance checklists. While on site, GDOT will review the recommended maintenance procedures and updates of the manufacturer. When performing a review of a transit system’s vehicle maintenance activities, GDOT will compare the interval for the change of engine oil and filters in the grantee’s maintenance plan and checklists with the maximum interval specified in the engine manufacturer’s maintenance manual. One-hundred percent (100%) compliance is expected for meeting these intervals. GDOT will also review and ensure maintenance records for wheelchair lifts and other accessibility features are in place and being adhered to similar to the normal vehicles maintenance records.

Transit vehicles to be rebuilt should be nearing the end of their useful lives and in need of major structural or mechanical rebuilding. The age of the bus is its years of service at the time the rebuilding work begins.

- **Rehabilitation** – Rehabilitation efforts are focused on mechanical systems and vehicle interiors. The goal for standard, heavy-duty transit coaches is to provide at least five years of additional service through rehabilitation. For smaller transit vehicles, the proposed rehabilitation should extend the normal service life by at least 40 percent.

- **Remanufacturing** – Main emphasis is placed on structural restoration of a standard, heavy-duty transit coach in addition to the rehabilitation described above. Eight years of additional service life should be provided through this remanufacturing process.

Federal capital assistance of up to 20% of annual vehicle maintenance is eligible for vehicle overhaul work. This eligibility also applies to leasing and contracted service. Subrecipients must maintain and
submit an asset file for each FTA federally-funded asset, including vehicles, facilities and equipment. This asset file should include information such as the following information:

- Make and model of the vehicle;
- Acquisition date;
- Cost;
- Funding source;
- Vehicle identification number (VIN) and fleet number for vehicle;
- Serial number for equipment;
- Maintenance records with date and vehicle mileage; and,
- Asset inspection sheets.

### 7.1.12 Spare Ratio

The number of spare buses in the active fleet for subrecipients operating 50 or more revenue vehicles should not exceed 20% of the number of vehicles operated in maximum revenue service. This applies to both rural and urban subrecipients receiving FTA funds from FTA funding programs in Table 1 of this Plan.

A spare ratio is defined as the number of designated spare vehicles divided by the vehicles required for annual maximum service. This will vary based on the subrecipient’s service levels and local circumstances may be considered in determining a reasonable spare ratio for individual grantees.

### 7.1.13 Contingency Fleet

Vehicles may be placed in an inactive contingency fleet, or “stored” in preparation for emergencies. No vehicle may be placed in this inactive contingency fleet unless the vehicle has reached the end of its minimum useful life. Vehicles held in a contingency fleet must be properly stored, maintained, and documented in a contingency plan, updated as necessary, to support the continuation of a contingency fleet.

A contingency plan is not required as part of an FTA grant application; however, FTA may request information about the contingency fleet when reviewing federal funding requests. Contingency plans are also subject to review during FTA’s oversight reviews, including the triennial reviews required for recipients of the Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 USC 5307). Any rolling stock not supported by a contingency plan will be considered part of the active fleet. Since vehicles in the contingency fleet are not part of the active fleet, they do not count in the calculation of spare ratio.

### 7.1.14 Vehicle Incident, Accident, or Casualty Reports

Subrecipients must report a vehicle incident, accident, or casualty to GDOT within 48 hours of the occurrence. The elements identified in the FTA Alert Bulletin should be completed in accordance with FTA Order 1920.1A. Vehicles that are damaged, but repairable must be repaired to the same or better condition prior to the incident.
7.1.15 Final Disposition

Once the vehicle title for replacement has been released by GDOT, the subrecipient may proceed with local disposition of the vehicle. Specific procedures are available upon request to GDOT. Pertaining to the final disposition, it is noted that FTA is entitled to its share of the remaining federal interest upon disposition of federally assisted property before the end of its useful life or for a value greater than $5,000 after the useful life has been met. The federal interest that the recipient is required to return to FTA is the greater of FTA’s share of the unamortized value of the remaining useful life per unit, based on straight line depreciation of the original purchase price or the federal share of the sales price.

7.1.16 Emergency Response

FTA-funded vehicles based within any subrecipient’s jurisdiction may be put out of regular passenger service for support with emergency response in areas across the state that have been declared by the President as a Federal Disaster Area, named by the Governor as a disaster area or for areas where a disaster is imminent and evacuations are needed, to secure the health and safety of individuals who rely on transit service for their mobility needs. Subrecipients are responsible for reporting to the GDOT Transit Program using specified protocols established by FTA and/or the State during periods of emergency response.

7.1.17 Transit Facilities

Transit facilities constructed, purchased, renovated or improved utilizing federal and/or state funds shall retain federal interest for the expected life of the facility for as long as the facility is used for transportation purposes. FTA’s current useful service life requirement for facilities is forty years. If for any reason the facility is no longer needed for the purposes of public transit, the provisions of State statutes pertaining to the disposition of real property, provisions on facility ownership and use, and the FTA Circular 5010.1, Grant Management Guidelines, as amended or revised, shall apply.

FTA will provide capital grant assistance for building facilities that support transit operations and provide passenger amenities, such as park-and-ride lots. FTA also supports facilities that are transit-related and will participate in those portions of facilities physically or functionally connected to transit. FTA will participate on a pro-rata basis in intermodal facilities, based on the transit portion of the project.

FTA’s general policy regarding facility size is to provide assistance for facilities that are adequate for the grant applicant’s present needs and that will realistically meet future needs. Applicants must be able to fully describe the project and estimate the cost of the facility. There must be a planning basis for every project, therefore, appropriate planning studies should be undertaken in support of projects to acquire, install, or construct major transit facilities. A commitment to maintain a state of good repair for the facility is also required; therefore, the facility must be cross-referenced in the applicable TAM Plan, which may be a group plan that includes the subrecipient, as applicable. The GDOT Small Group TAM Plan, now under development provides more detailed information on facility assets.

All subrecipients are required to develop a Facilities Maintenance Plan. The plan should include facility equipment checklists that are submitted to GDOT on a regular basis to ensure proper maintenance has occurred. The program should contain the responsible party for facility and equipment maintenance, a
listing of inspections and routine maintenance designed to ensure care and maximize the life of facilities and equipment and a system of maintenance records for buildings and equipment.

GDOT shall conduct on-site compliance inspections at a minimum of every three years of all state and federally-funded facilities, whether new construction, renovation or expansion of existing facilities. Procedures for developing a Facilities Maintenance Plan and state of good repair thresholds are available upon request from the GDOT Transit Program.

7.1.18 Other Equipment and Real Property

Any transit capital equipment purchased with federal or state funds administered by GDOT must be inventoried, and information updated within the time period specified in GDOT procedures. This includes small capital items, such as desktop computers, tablets, maintenance equipment, and other equipment.

An annual inventory update for equipment and real property is required by GDOT from all subrecipients for vehicles, facilities, equipment and real property purchased with federal and state funds. GDOT’s standard operating procedures (SOPs) and future Small Group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan will detail expectations and requirements.

Computers (desk top, tables, laptops, etc.), copiers, and other office equipment are eligible items for capital funding to the extent that they are used for support of the recipient’s public transit program. Subrecipients that may be multi-purpose agencies (cities, counties, etc.) must either affirm that the equipment will be dedicated to public transit use or prepare a cost allocation proposal to account for multiple user groups. Equipment such as computers, radios, and fareboxes purchased with state or federal dollars must also be managed for their intended use.

7.1.19 Records Retention and Management

The permanent vehicle file for vehicle(s) and other major capital items purchased in part or in whole with GDOT administered funds are routinely reviewed during full compliance on-site visits and desk-level risk assessments. Equipment records must be maintained for the life of the asset plus five years after disposition.

8.0. CHARTER RULE, SCHOOL BUS RULE, AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS

This section describes GDOT’s policies for complying with the charter rule (49 CFR Part 604). This section describes the process used to ensure subrecipients are in compliance with the charter rule and policies regulating incidental use of federally-funded equipment.

Subrecipients of FTA programs listed in Table 1, including their contractors, are prohibited from using federally-funded equipment and facilities to provide charter service except on an incidental basis and when one or more of applicable exceptions for urban and rural areas set forth in the charter service regulation at 49 CFR Part 604 applies. GDOT does not allow its subrecipients to provide charter services.

As a condition for continuous FTA funding, subrecipients are required to annually sign a certification of no intent to provide charter services with their applications. This prohibition applies to bus and van services provided by direct recipients, subrecipients, or Third Party Operators (TPOs) that provide bus or van services funded by FTA grants administered by GDOT.
8.1 Definition of Charter Service

Charter service refers to transportation provided by a recipient or subrecipient at the request of a third party for the exclusive use of a bus or van for a negotiated price. Charter service is not demand response transit services to individuals. The following features may be characteristics of charter service:

- A 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 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 the 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
  - A premium fare is charged that is greater than the usual or customary fare.
  - The service is paid for in whole or in part by a third party.

The only allowable exception would be in cases where a transit provider has to provide transit services to or transport governmental official(s), such as local government staff and elected officials. Such services or transportation must be reported to GDOT and also to FTA using the Charter Reporting Tool. The transit services and all transportation provided to government or elected officials must not exceed 80 hours in a given year (for more information on charter service, please refer to 49 CFR Part 604).

8.2 Emergency Leases between Systems

If emergency situations arise and a vehicle will be out of service for an extended period of time (one or more months), a subrecipient may lease another vehicle to replace the “out-of-service” vehicle through GDOT if such vehicle is available for the subrecipient’s use or a vehicle may be leased short-term from another transit system to maintain service. GDOT should be notified of any pending lease agreement made between two subrecipients. Any lease must be approved by GDOT in advance and a copy kept on file by GDOT with the original titles for all vehicles operated by subrecipients. Subrecipients must report the need for an emergency lease to GDOT through their District Transit Program representative or to the Transit Program Office.

8.3 School Bus Service

Subrecipients are prohibited from providing exclusive school bus service unless the service qualifies and is approved by the FTA Administrator under an allowable exemption. Federally funded equipment or facilities cannot be used to provide exclusive school bus service. School tripper service that operates and is branded like all other regular service and provides service to the general public in addition to students is allowed.

8.4 Other Incidental Use

Vehicles and equipment purchased with state and federal transit funds are based on use for general public transportation. FTA and GDOT allow incidental use of vehicles and equipment under the following conditions:

- The incidental use does not interfere with the public transit services for which it was originally obtained,
Incidental use may include meal and parcel delivery,
The incidental use does not exceed 20 percent of the total use of a vehicle, and
Proceeds (revenues) from incidental use must be returned to the transit program for transit purposes.

9.0 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) REQUIREMENTS

This section of the SMP describes the state’s policies and general methods for monitoring subrecipients’ compliance with ADA-related regulations and for processing the plans, reports, and certifications submitted to it under the provisions of those regulations.

9.1 ADA Policy

It is the policy of GDOT to enforce Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (Section 504), as amended (29 USC 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap by recipients of federal financial assistance. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended (42 USC 12101 et seq.), affords equal opportunity for employment, transportation, telecommunications, and places of public accommodation for people with disabilities. FTA Circular 4710.1 offers new ADA guidance. Subrecipients must comply with 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38 implementing the ADA and Section 504. These provisions must:

- Prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities;
- Specify accessibility requirements for the design and construction of new transportation facilities;
- Require that vehicles acquired be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals using wheelchairs or complete an equivalent service certification annually for the useful life of the vehicle;
- Require governmental authorities, including a private nonprofit entity “standing in the shoes” of the State as a subrecipient operating fixed route transit, must have complementary paratransit plans on file; and
- Ensure compliance in the areas of employment, public services, public accommodations, telecommunications, complaint procedures and other provisions.

As a condition of FTA funding, subrecipients must demonstrate compliance with ADA and all other FTA and applicable regulations. Agencies will demonstrate compliance through their day-to-day operating procedures, their planning and management of transit services, public involvement and information, vehicle procurement and other activities. Subrecipients are required to immediately notify GDOT of ADA-related complaints or issues.

9.2 ADA Requirements

Each transit agency will have written policies and procedures designed to meet the requirements. For example, the vehicle maintenance policy will include maintenance of the ADA-accessible features, such as lifts and other vehicle accessories; the employee-training plan will include ADA topics. If the agency contracts out any or all of the service, the agency must be knowledgeable about how the contractor maintains compliance. ADA compliance is not a one-time effort and compliance must be consistently maintained by the agency over time. New employees or changing services are not an excuse for lack of compliance.
GDOT Transit Program staff will routinely evaluate each subrecipient program for compliance to the ADA. Oversight will include site reviews, desk audits, review of policies and procedures, information from substantive complaints, and other means. GDOT Transit Program staff will also provide technical assistance upon request.

The regulation is divided into compliance areas primarily associated with the following types of transit service: Public, Private, Fixed-Route and Demand-Response. Public is defined as any state or local government and any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of one or more state or local governments. Private means any entity other than a public entity. Fixed route system means a system of transporting individuals (open to the public) on which a vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule. Demand responsive system means a system of transporting individuals where there are not prescheduled routes with vehicles operating on a fixed schedule (open to the public). Service is dispatched at various times and locations as requested during specified service times.

Third-party operators delivering services under contract to the subrecipient must comply with the same ADA requirements as the subrecipient itself. The only exception is where a public entity (subrecipient) receives funds on behalf of a private non-profit entity. When the public entity on its own would not operate the transit service, and the service design, implementation and management is entirely the responsibility of the other entity, then the relationship between the two is defined as “pass-through” and the ADA compliance does not apply. The service provision requirements are defined in the following subsections.

9.3 ADA Service Provisions
Public and private subrecipients providing either fixed-route or demand responsive services must comply with the following service provisions. A full listing of the ADA service requirements for all types of transit services can be found in 49 CFR Part 37, Subpart G. Some of the features of ADA service include, but are not limited to the following features:

- Maintenance of accessible features
- Procedures to ensure lift availability
- Lift and wheelchair securement use
- Announcements on vehicles of stops on fixed routes
- Vehicle identification systems
- Service animals
- Use of accessible features
- Public information/communications
- Lift deployment at any designated stop
- Service to persons using respirators or portable oxygen
- Adequate time for boarding and disembarking
- Training
- Information materials for riders with disabilities

Receipt of FTA Section 5307 funds require that entity to provide complementary paratransit service if the transit system has fixed route service.
Prior to initiation of fixed route service operated by a federal grant award, subrecipients will submit to their assigned Transit Planner or District Public Transportation Specialist written documentation of compliance that addresses each of the service provisions.

9.3.1 Requirements for Public Providers

The ADA has separate sets of requirements for public fixed-route and public demand-responsive services.

- **Fixed-Route** – Public operators of fixed-route services open to the general public are required to provide “complementary paratransit service” to persons with disabilities that is comparable to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed-route system. However, commuter bus service is not required to provide complementary paratransit service. Commuter bus service is defined as “fixed-route bus service, characterized by service predominantly in one direction during peak period, limited stops, use of multi-ride tickets, and routes of extended length, usually between the central business district and outlying areas”. Commuter bus service may also include other service characterized by limited route structure, limited stops and a coordinated relationship with another mode of transportation.

Service design strategies such as route-deviation, point-deviation, or point-to-point (and other hybrid strategies) are by definition “demand-response” only if they deviate to pick up the general public. If the service limits its deviations to specific individuals, including persons with disabilities, the service does not meet the intent of the demand-response definition and the service must conform to fixed-route rules.

GDOT requires, as a condition of funding, that each new or revised public fixed-route service have written documentation that discusses how comparable service that meets the requirements of 49 CFR 37.123 – 37.133 will be delivered. Documentation will include descriptions of:

- The planned service delivery;
- Each of the defined service criteria;
- Eligibility criteria and processes, and;
- Public participation and outreach activities.

Full conformance to the ADA regulations on the first day of service to the public is required by federal law. ADA service documentation must be submitted to the GDOT Transit Program for review prior to service startup, if the project is funded in any part through GDOT-source (FTA or state source) funds.

Paratransit compliance documentation must be approved by the operator’s governing board, reviewed regularly and amended as needed. When new services requiring complementary paratransit planning impact existing service through overlapping or contiguous boundaries, it is the responsibility of the new service provider to coordinate the development of an ADA strategy that provides for coordinated paratransit services with neighboring jurisdictions.
• **Demand Response** – Public operators of demand responsive services must conform to requirements defined as “equivalency service standard,” §37.77 (a) – €. Equivalency means that the system when viewed in its entirety, provides equivalent service if the service available to individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs, is provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the individual and is equivalent with respect to the following service characteristics. These characteristics are in addition to the service provisions. Equivalent Service Standards for public demand responsive systems:

  • Response time;
  • Fares;
  • Geographic area of service;
  • Hours and days of service;
  • Availability of schedule and rider information;
  • Reservations capability (if the system is demand responsive);
  • Any constraints on capacity or service availability; and
  • Restrictions on priorities based on trip purpose.

Service strategies that are designed as route-deviation, point-deviation, or point-to-point (and other hybrid strategies) are by definition “demand-response” only if they deviate to pick up members of the general public.

### 9.3.2 Requirements for Private Service Providers

Per §37.105, private providers must conform to requirements defined as “equivalency service standard”. The equivalency service standard applies whether the service is fixed-route or demand responsive. Private providers with a fixed-route system are not required to provide complementary paratransit. In this instance, private providers are distinguished from those private operators that are acting in as a sub-contractor to a public agency.

Equivalency means that the system when viewed in its entirety, provides equivalent service if the service available to individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs, is provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the individual and is equivalent with service provisions. Equivalent Service Standards for private demand responsive or fixed route systems address:

  • Schedules/headways (if the system is fixed-route);
  • Response time (if the system is demand-responsive);
  • Fares;
  • Geographic area of service;
  • Hours and days of service;
  • Availability of information;
  • Reservations capability (if the system is demand responsive);
  • Any constraints on capacity or service availability; and
  • Restrictions on priorities based on trip purpose (if the system is demand responsive).

Private operators are divided into two subgroups by the ADA: Private not-primarily in the business of transportation and private primarily in the business of transportation.
• **Private not primarily in the business of transportation:** Fixed route systems with vehicles over the capacity to serve 16 passengers or more plus the driver must have accessible vehicles. Fixed route systems with vehicles having a capacity of under 16 persons must have accessible vehicles unless the system when viewed in its entirety meets the standard for equivalent service provisions.

• **Private primarily in the business of transportation:** Fixed route systems with vehicles having the capacity of over eight passengers (excluding over-the-road vehicles) must ensure that the vehicles are accessible.

### 9.3.3 ADA Requirements for University Services

Federal law (49 CFR 37.25) specifies that “university transportation systems” are defined as those operated by public or private institutions of higher education. Most transit operators are not institutions of higher education and, by definition, would therefore not be operating “university service.” In order for routes operated by a transit provider to be covered by this provision, an institution of higher education must have a formal arrangement (i.e. a written contract) with the transit operator. In some cases, the FTA grantee may provide funding directly to an institution of higher education for purposes of providing university transportation service. The FTA grantee must ensure that services described as commuter or university service provided by subrecipients have the characteristics specified in the USDOT ADA regulations. These systems must also be open to the public and not operated for exclusive use by University visitors, students, faculty, and employees.

### 9.4 ADA Requirements for Passenger Facilities

Facilities that are built using federal funds must meet ADA regulations for accessibility. Facilities that are altered using federal funds must meet ADA regulations for accessibility unless the cost of making the facility accessible is disproportionate to the overall cost of the project. Disproportionate is defined as the cost to make the facility accessible exceeds 20% of the total cost of alteration. Failure to make the facility ADA-accessible as required may cause GDOT and/or FTA to require the subrecipient to make the modifications to bring the facility into compliance. Failure to make the required modifications will result in repayment of grant funds. Subrecipients must maintain the accessible features of FTA-funded vehicles and facilities. The accessible features must be inspected, kept in operating condition, and repaired promptly. Any modifications of ADA vehicles or equipment that cause transit service disruptions must be reported to GDOT immediately.

Passenger facilities include, and are not limited to, passenger waiting areas, shelters and transfer stations. The guidelines for the accessibility of facilities are provided by the United States Access Board, [http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/final.pdf](http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/final.pdf). Additional detailed guidance on ADA-related design features and specifications for FTA transit facilities are available upon request.

• **Bus Stops** - Where new bus stop pads are constructed in areas where a lift or ramp is to be deployed, they will have a firm, stable surface. The stop will have a minimum clear length of 96 inches (measured from the curb or vehicle roadway edge) and a minimum clear width of 60 inches (measured parallel to the vehicle roadway) to the maximum extent allowed by legal or site constraints; and will be connected to streets, sidewalks or pedestrian paths by an accessible route.
• **Shelters** - Where bus shelters are provided, the shelter shall be installed or positioned to permit a wheelchair or mobility aid user to enter from the public way and to reach a location, having a minimum clear floor area of 30 inches by 48 inches, entirely within the perimeter of the shelter. An accessible route will connect the shelter to the boarding area.

• **Intercity Bus Facilities** - Newly constructed facilities, including joint use stops and depots for intercity bus transportation, must comply with ADA accessibility standards. Subrecipients must maintain in operative condition those features of facilities and vehicles that are required to make vehicles and facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. These features include, but are not limited to, lifts and other means of access to vehicles, securement devices, elevators, signage and systems to facilitate communications with persons with impaired vision or hearing. Accessibility features shall be repaired promptly if they are damaged or out of order. Reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate individuals with disabilities when an accessibility feature is out of order. ADA equipment should be maintained based on the manufacturer’s suggested maintenance guidelines at a minimum.

• **Accessible Route** - At least one accessible route will be provided from public transit stops, accessible parking, and accessible passenger loading zones, and public streets or sidewalks to the accessible building entrance they serve. The accessible route will, to the maximum extent feasible, coincide with the route for the general public so that wayfinding signage and ingress and egress points to passenger zones can be coordinated.

• **Pedestrian Facilities** - If a subrecipient project includes pedestrian facilities, the facility must provide pedestrian access for persons with disabilities in compliance with ADA Title II. Federal, State and local governments must provide pedestrian access for persons with disabilities whenever a pedestrian facility exists in compliance with Section 504 standards.

• **Communications and Passenger Information Systems** - Where necessary to ensure that communications with individuals with hearing, vision, or speech impairments are as effective as communications with others, the public entity must provide appropriate auxiliary aids. Unlike Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Action of 1973, which only covers programs receiving Federal financial assistance, Title II extends to all the activities of State and local governments whether or not they receive Federal funds.

### 9.5 ADA-Related Complaints and Grievances

The subrecipient will ensure compliance with the ADA as found in the Title II ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Title II regulation covers “public entities”. Public entities include any State or local government and any of its departments, agencies, or other instrumentalities.

Any individual who believes that he or she is a victim of discrimination prohibited by the regulation may file a complaint. Complaints on behalf of classes of individuals are also permitted. Complaints should be in writing, signed by the complainant or an authorized representative, and should contain the complainant’s name and address and describe the public entity’s alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be sent to: Disability Rights Section - Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, P.O. Box 66738, Washington, DC 20035-6738.

Subrecipients, who are made aware of any ADA-related complaints, should report them to the GDOT Transit Program Office. Complaints may also be sent to agencies designated to process complaints under the regulation, or to agencies that provide Federal financial assistance to the program in question.
10.0 FTA CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

All FTA recipients must annually certify that they are in compliance with federal transit regulations as well as other federal cross-cutting requirements. This is completed through the annual Certifications and Assurances process. Before FTA may award federal funding, the recipient must PIN the Certifications and Assurances required by federal laws and regulations. Each federal fiscal year FTA is required to publish the certifications in the Federal Register and highlighting any changes or additions from the previous year. This process is completed through the FTA TrAMS system by authorized users of the TrAMS system (i.e. GDOT Transit and Division of Intermodal personnel).

Subrecipients are required to submit their signed certification and assurance annually through their grant submitted to GDOT. If a subrecipient is operating fixed route transit, the subrecipient must have an approved ADA Complementary Paratransit Services Plan. This plan should be transmitted to GDOT upon request and updates made as appropriate. GDOT agrees to the following provisions through annual Certifications and Assurances as well as the FTA Master Agreement. Each provision is incorporated by reference in each contract with subrecipients.

- Lobbying
- Procurement and Procurement Systems
- Private Sector Participation
- Rolling Stock Reviews and Bus Testing
- Demand Response Service
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Interest and Financial Cost and Acquisition of Capital Assets by Lease
- Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan, Public Transportation Safety Program, and State Safety Oversight Requirements
- Rural Area and Appalachian Development Programs
- Tribal Transit Programs (Public Transportation on Indian Reservation Programs)
- State Safety Oversight Grant Programs
- Public Transportation Emergency Relief Programs
- Expedited Project Delivery Pilot Project
- Infrastructure Finance Programs
- Alcohol and Drug Program and Testing
- Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants Program
- State of Good Repair Program
- Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities and No Low Emission Vehicle Deployment Grants
- Urban Area Formula Grant Programs and Passenger Ferry Grant Program
- Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program
- Construction Hiring Preferences
- Section 5333(b) Labor Protection
- Environmental Review requirements (NEPA)
- Buy America requirements
- Prohibition of exclusive school bus services
- Drug-Free Workplace
- Certification of Local Share
- Civil Rights requirements
• Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Reporting requirements
• Compliance with Federal Laws and regulations

The Triennial Review and State Management Reviews are both independent audits conducted on the programs administered by GDOT to determine if the recipient (GDOT) and its subrecipients have met the program’s requirements and certifications. These audits are done to ensure that the recipient is carrying out its program in compliance with federal statutory and administrative requirements. Triennial reviews, in particular, of the recipient performance allow FTA to determine if the recipient is complying with the certifications it has made.

11.0. NATIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE (NTD) REPORTING

This section of the SMP describes the state’s policy and general method for collecting and reporting the data elements specified in the annual NTD reporting mandate, as required by 49 USC 5335(b). Detailed reporting requirements for subrecipients are provided in the individual program manuals for these programs (currently under revision).

The NTD is the primary source for information and statistics on the transit systems of the United States. GDOT Intermodal Division (Transit Program Office) is responsible for the annual submission of service and financial statistics for the state’s rural transit systems to the FTA. GDOT collects and sends the required data electronically directly to the NTD for each of Georgia’s approximately 85 rural transit subrecipients each year. The three reporting exceptions are:

• Federally recognized Indian Tribes that report directly to NTD.
• Urbanized area subrecipients that report directly to NTD.
• Subrecipients operating in an urban /rural environment must also report directly to NTD with guidance from GDOT.

GDOT submits the NTD data for Georgia’s rural transit subrecipients in accordance with the schedule established by FTA which is usually September through November of each year.

12.0. STATE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

This section describes how the State administers its program management responsibilities in such areas as FTA grant management, procurement, financial management, property management, vehicle use, maintenance and disposition, accounting systems, subrecipient compliance, audit, and closeout. The generalized descriptions of state procedures for project management oversight, financial reviews and project monitoring and on-site inspections and compliance reviews are outlined in this document. More detailed information on these topics can be found in the Administrative Guides for each of the FTA programs administered by GDOT (which are in currently being revised). Information on the Transit Program organizational structure can be in Section 5.1.1.

12.1 Grant Management

GDOT is responsible for the FTA grant management and oversight for all grants awarded to support Georgia’s rural transit and small urban (under 200,000 population) transit systems. GDOT’s general grant management responsibilities include:
• Review and evaluation of all grant applications submitted by subrecipients for FTA 5303, 5304, 5305, 5307, 5311, and 5339 programs, as amended;
• Compilation of all federal grant application documents for FTA approval, along with any required budget revision, grant amendment, and grant closure submittals.
• Response to FTA questions and comments pertaining to pending, active, and closed out grants.
• Oversight of subrecipient activities related to approved FTA grants.
• Management of the financial aspects of all FTA grants, including establishing project budgets using FTA scope and activity line item (ALI) codes; review of subrecipient requests for reimbursement, preparation of documentation for FTA drawdowns (in FTA’s Electronic Clearinghouse (ECHO) system), periodic financial reports, participation in audit and/or review activities by FTA, and Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting, among other activities. For more information, see Section 12.3.
• Reporting on grant activities at least quarterly through FTA’s TrAMS system on project milestones, status of projects, and progress toward closing out active grants, when appropriate.

A key part of GDOT’s grant management responsibilities include overseeing the actions of its subrecipients so that they are compliant with all FTA rules and regulations.

12.2 Procurement

All GDOT subrecipients of FTA funds are required to follow 2 CFR 200.318 (General Procurement Standards) through 200.326 (Contract Provisions). Subrecipients are required to have written procurement policies and procedures that comply with FTA Circular 4220.1F to include protest procedures. Subrecipient procurement activities are monitored by GDOT staff through the pre-award review and post-award reimbursement process, as well as during compliance on-site reviews and risk assessments. GDOT’s Transit SOPs (now under revision) provide more detailed guidance to ensure subrecipient compliance with FTA procurement requirements. GDOT, as a state agency, follows state procurement procedures and FTA procedures when procurement activities involve FTA funds. It is GDOT’s policy, consistent with FTA regulations, to provide full, fair and open competition that complies with the following statutory requirements:

• Applicable federal and state laws regarding selection of professional services:
  • 23 U.S. Code 112 (b)(A) - Letting of contracts
  • 40 U.S. Code 1101-1104 - “Brooks Act” – QBS
  • Title 49 CFR Part 18.36(d)(3)(v) - Procurement Methods to be Followed
  • Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations Part 172 “Administration of Engineering and Design Related Service Contracts”
  • Official Code of Georgia 50-22-1 through 50-22-9 – “Managerial Control Over Acquisition of Professional Services”
• Compliance with 2 CFR 200.322 (Procurement of Recovered Materials)
• Inclusion of all applicable FTA clauses in procurements exceeding the micro-purchase limit and construction contracts over $2,000, including those required by 2 CFR 200.326 (Contract Provisions)
• Prohibition of geographic preferences (exception for Architectural and Engineering contracts involving the “Brooks Act”)
• Provision of DBE opportunities and “Good Faith Efforts” outreach
• Compliance with the five- and seven-year limitation on purchases of rolling stock or replacement parts contracts
• Awards only to responsible and responsive bidders
• Compliance with Buy America for procurements greater than $150,000 and for rolling stock procurements which require pre-award and/or post-delivery audits
• Provisions for in-plant inspection for rolling stock purchases when more than 20 vehicles (for Section 5311 or Section 5307 grants) are ordered in areas with populations less than 200,000
• Compliance with debarment and suspension and verification of excluded parties not participating
• Compliance with restrictions on lobbying
• Compliance with cost/price analysis requirements
• Analysis of any potential conflicts of interest
• Provision of adequate prequalification criteria during solicitation process
• Provision of “Sole-source” justification in event of single bid
• Establishment of written procedures for ensuring most efficient and economic purchase
  • Preparation of independent cost estimate (ICE) prior to solicitation for all procurement activity
  • Provision of “liquidated damages” language in solicitation (if being used) which is referenced in the contract
  • Establish a ceiling price in all time and materials contracts
  • Proper use of joint or consortium procurements
  • Inclusion of the Altoona Bus Test Report in all rolling stock purchases
• Establishment of an effective contract administration system related to change orders
• Maintain all documentation of FTA-funded procurement activities,
• Compliance with all FTA contracting guidance, including contracts with third party operators.

The FTA third party contracting guidance can be found at: https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/third-party-contracting-guidance.

12.3 Financial Management

As primary recipient of FTA funds and as the State agency designated to administer such funds for certain public transit activities in Georgia, GDOT manages the financial elements of these programs in accordance with its existing GDOT and other state procedures, state and federal law, FTA guidelines, and other applicable federal regulations.

In its role as the FTA designated recipient of Section 5303, 5304, 5305, 5307, 5311, and 5339 funds, as amended, the grantee (GDOT) must demonstrate the ability to match and manage FTA grant funds, cover cost increases, as appropriate, cover maintenance and operational costs for FTA-funded facilities and equipment as appropriate, and conduct and respond to applicable audits. The grantee must resolve any Government Accountability Office (GAO), Office of Inspector General (OIG), State Office of Audits (SOA) internal, state and local audit findings and carry out any correction actions, as specified.

All GDOT subrecipients are required to establish and maintain an adequate cost accounting system to record transportation-related costs and revenues. These accounting systems must mirror the grant, be clearly identified, easily tracked, and substantially documented. This is intended to simplify reporting and increase accountability through a simplified invoice (GDOT reimbursement) structure.
subrecipients must submit an annual budget with all grant applications along with clear justification and basis for the funding request as well as all required FTA certifications and assurances. This documentation must be maintained and readily available for review as requested. Any subrecipient that desires to charge indirect costs as part of their project must provide a current approved cost allocation plan to GDOT and obtain approval prior to the submission of any funding request that includes the indirect costs.

GDOT maintains a financial management system of financial reporting, accounting records, internal controls, and budget controls subject to standards specified in the state laws, enforced by the State Auditor and the State Budget Office. All systems and procedures for financial management are in compliance with 49 CFR Part 18, the “Common Rule.”

12.4 Audits and Closeouts

GDOT subrecipients that expect to receive $750,000 or more in a year in Federal funds from all sources must provide to the GDOT Office of Audits their single audit, except when they elect to have a program-specific audit conducted. Subrecipients are responsible for conducting and submitting an annual audit under the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended, following the guidelines set forth in OMB Circular A-133 (A-133). The Circular can be accessed at: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/07/14/2015-17236/audits-of-states-local-governments-and-non-profit-organizations-omb-circular-a-133-compliance. The audit must be completed within nine months of the end of GDOT’s fiscal year (June 30th of each year).

The GDOT Transit Program must verify that each subrecipient receives an A-133 audit by an independent auditor and submits audit results to GDOT. The annual single audit must be performed by an independent auditor who is required to determine and report on whether the subrecipient organization has internal control systems that reasonably assure it is managing Federal assistance programs in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The audit should include:

- A report of Federal financial assistance
- The auditor’s report on the study and evaluation of internal control systems
- Compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- A report of any findings or questioned costs

The subrecipient has nine (9) months to file notice of corrective action it has taken upon notification of any findings or questioned costs from the A-133 audit.

GDOT is required to determine whether subrecipients are spending Federal assistance funds in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The GDOT Office of Audits is responsible for making the final determination on issues related to the expenditure of Federal assistance funds in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The GDOT Transit Program is also responsible for participation in state audit reviews from time to time related to A-133 audits.

12.5 Subrecipient Oversight

The GDOT Transit Program maintains an active subrecipient oversight program. Each subrecipient receives complete oversight review, including an on-site visit, at least once every three years and interim risk assessments as determined by the GDOT Transit Program. The oversight program is documented through a formal reporting system and follow-up is performed for any deficiencies found during the
oversight process, including written documentation of deficiencies to be addressed in a written Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) that is submitted to GDOT and reviewed and approved with close coordination with the subrecipient. All CAPs must be signed and approved by appropriate Transit Program staff and the GDOT Transit Program Manager. Issues not resolved in the CAP are addressed by the Division of Intermodal, the GDOT Office of Audits, or others, as appropriate.

12.6 Reporting

The GDOT Transit Program prepares and submits the following reports to FTA:

- Milestone Progress Reports for each open grant (quarterly)
- Federal Financial Reports for each open grant (quarterly and at grant closure)
- Semi-Annual DBE Reports (June 1 and December 1 of each year)
- Charter Reports (quarterly when there has been charter activity)
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Reporting (continuous)
- NTD reports (annually)

GDOT subrecipients are required to provide the following reports to the GDOT Transit Program Manager:

- Semi-Annual Vehicle Utilization Data (5311)
- Quarterly Operating Report with software documentation
- Quarterly DBE Reports
- Quarterly Charter Reports
- Other reports as requested by the Transit Program

13.0 OTHER PROVISIONS

This section of the SMP describes the process by which GDOT complies with other federal requirements such as the employee protection provisions of Section 5333(b); the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal environmental laws, regulations, and executive orders; Buy America provisions; pre-award and post-delivery reviews; prohibition of exclusive school transportation; and drug and alcohol testing, other FTA certifications and assurances and GDOT’s requirements for monitoring subrecipient program compliance.

In addition, all requirements included in the annual FTA certification and assurances and the FTA Master Agreement flow down to subrecipients as part of the GDOT grant application process, subrecipient agreements, and oversight activities.

13.1 Section 5333(b) Labor Protection

Compliance with fair labor practices is required all FTA programs. All applicants must agree in writing to accept the standard terms and conditions of the special Section 5333(b) Labor Warranty. Though FTA has incorporated the Labor and Protection Certification and Assurances into their comprehensive certification and assurance documentation required by all FTA grant applicants, the Department of Labor (DOL) still requires that the labor protection documents be signed and be reported to their Department before a contract is executed. These labor protection documents provided by DOL are obtained by the FTA during the grant submission process prior to their approval.
13.2. Environmental Review Requirements

The NEPA Act requires evaluation of potential environmental impacts and identification of mitigation actions for all federally supported programs and projects. NEPA establishes an “umbrella” process for coordinating compliance with the federal and state environmental laws through the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Environmental Assessment (EA), or Categorical Exclusions (CE) under the guidance of a Federal Lead Agency. For GDOT’s subrecipients, FTA serves as the Federal Lead Agency for most projects. The process for complying with NEPA and federal surface transportation statutes is defined in the Joint Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration’s Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771) which can be found on-line at: https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/NEPA_reg_clean.pdf.

As the designated recipient of the FTA programs outlined above, GDOT is responsible for taking the lead as the project sponsor of the NEPA process for FTA-funded projects rather than the subrecipient. Therefore, subrecipients should not initiate the NEPA process for any project prior to contacting and fully discussing the project with GDOT. GDOT is responsible for coordinating with FTA Region IV, who will make a determination on the appropriate class of action and documentation level expected for the project. The assigned GDOT Transit Program project manager will work with the subrecipient, other GDOT divisions and offices, including the GDOT Office of Environmental Services (OES) and state and federal agencies in the development and approval of all required NEPA studies.

GDOT Transit Program staff must also ensure that the subrecipient fully complies with the requirements of NEPA and the Georgia Environmental Policy Act (GEPA) for projects using federal funds. GEPA compliance is required when a project uses state-aid funds only. For GDOT’s basic responsibilities for compliance under NEPA and GEPA, refer to the GDOT Environmental Procedures Manual at http://www.dot.ga.gov/PS/DesignManuals/EnvironmentalProcedures. FTA may require additional evaluations to comply with NEPA for FTA-funded projects.

13.3. Buy America

Federal “Buy America” provisions are federal regulations referring to the extent of “domestic content” in manufactured goods, including transit vehicles, equipment, and materials used for transit facilities. Buy America provisions affect vehicles, equipment purchases, and construction contracts valued at $150,000 or more. FTA’s Buy America requirements at 49 CFR part 661 differ from Federal Buy American regulations at 48 CFR part 25. The former applies to third party contracts funded by FTA. The latter applies to direct Federal procurements.

With certain exceptions, FTA may not obligate funds for a public transit project unless the steel, iron, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the U.S. (49 CFR part 661). Exceptions to the requirement include that the steel, iron or goods are not produced in a sufficient and reasonably available amount or are not of a satisfactory quality.

With certain exceptions, FTA’s Buy America requirements prevent FTA from obligating funds for the purchase of rolling stock unless (1) the cost of components and subcomponents produced in the U.S. is more than 60% of the cost of all components for the rolling stock, and (2) final assembly of the rolling stock has occurred in the
U.S. When procuring rolling stock, which includes train control, communication, traction power equipment, and rolling stock prototypes, the cost of the components and subcomponents produced in the U.S. must be more than:

- 60% during FY 2016 and FY 2017
- 65% during FY 2018 and FY 2019
- 70% for FY 2020 and beyond

FTA reviews requests for waivers of the Buy America requirements on a case-by-case basis. If a waiver is required, the appropriate time for a subrecipient to seek FTA approval is after bids have been accepted, but before the bid has been awarded. GDOT staff will receive requests for Buy America waivers and forward them to FTA. The process for seeking a waiver is set forth in 49 CFR Part 661.

### 13.4. Lobbying Restrictions

Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any Federal department or agency, a member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a member of the U.S. Congress in connection with obtaining a federal grant, cooperative agreement, or any other federal award. Contracts, grants and cooperative agreements using federally appropriated funds are actions covered by restrictions on lobbying. For example, activities such as submitting grant applications, status inquiries, and professional and technical services are not lobbying and do not need to be disclosed. Efforts to influence Federal officials about specific grants and contracts or to ask Congressional representatives for support of a particular application must be disclosed. Lobbying restrictions do not apply to activities that might influence policy issues.

GDOT must certify annually that they have not and will not use federally appropriated funds for lobbying. Subrecipients certify annually to GDOT that they have not and will not use federal grant funds for lobbying. GDOT and subrecipients must impose lobbying restrictions on their third-party contractors and must obtain certifications. The regulations are found in 49 CFR Part 20. Subrecipient responsibilities include:

- Sign an annual certificate of compliance pertaining to lobbying activities;
- Where third party contractors are involved, subrecipients must obtain a signed certification of compliance from the contractor;
- If non-federal funds have been used to support lobbying activities in connection with a grant and the subrecipient receives federal grants exceeding $100,000, the subrecipient must fill out Standard Form-LLL and submit it to the GDOT Transit Program Office;
- If contractors received more than $100,000 in federal funds and used non-federal funds to support lobbying, subrecipients must obtain the completed Standard Form-LLL from the contractor and submit it to the GDOT Transit Program Office.

### 13.5. Drug and Alcohol Testing Program

The *Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991* mandated the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations to combat prohibited drug use and alcohol misuse in the transportation industry. For that portion of the transportation industry having to do with the provision of and service to the public of “mass transportation,” the FTA is the agency delegated with the authority and responsibility for issuing these implementing rules. These rules are encompassed in 49 CFR Part 655 as Amended, *Prevention of Alcohol Misuse*

GDOT has a zero tolerance drug and alcohol testing policy and requires each subrecipient to have either a Zero Tolerance or Second (2nd) Chance Policy. Georgia’s Drug-Free Workplace Act can be found in the Georgia State Codes 50-42-1 to 50-24-6. The state code includes requiring contractors and subcontractors to enforce a drug-free workplace, as well as notification of employees. Consequently, subrecipients are required to maintain a drug-free workplace for all employees and to have an anti-drug policy and awareness program. This includes, among other things, a written policy statement, notification to all employees of the program, and an ongoing awareness program. The GDOT Transit Program provides Drug and Alcohol Awareness training opportunities for its subrecipients periodically. Subrecipients are required to attend a Drug and Alcohol training course for Drug and Alcohol Program Management (DAPM) and Reasonable Suspicion at least once every two years.

GDOT provides a template for subrecipients to use when drafting and approving their drug and alcohol policy documents. Subrecipients are responsible for having the drug and alcohol testing program in place. Subrecipients must establish programs designed to prevent accidents and injuries resulting from misuse of alcohol or the use of prohibited drugs by employees who perform safety-sensitive functions, either directly or under contract to the subrecipient. Two regulations have been published: one for drugs and one for alcohol, which contain the details of the program requirements. Each regulation requires that FTA recipients follow the drug and alcohol-testing procedures found in the USDOT regulation, 49 CFR Part 40.

Per the guidance of 49 CFR 655.72, GDOT and all subrecipients of FTA funding must prepare and maintain a summary of its Drug and Alcohol testing program. This report is to be submitted annually to GDOT for submission to the FTA which covers the calendar year, January through December. To ensure GDOT maintains compliance with the Drug and Alcohol Testing Program, GDOT is responsible for performing the following activities:

- Performance of regular reviews (at least annually) of each transit agency’s Drug and Alcohol Program Policy and provide technical assistance to correct any deficiencies;
- Provision of technical assistance related to the development of the subrecipient’s Drug and Alcohol testing program; and,
- Carrying out regular on-site reviews to review all sections of the Drug and Alcohol testing program (every three years or at interim periods, if determined by GDOT).

13.6. Other Program Provisions

From time to time as the FTA-funded transit program in Georgia evolves, it is necessary to provide additional guidance on FTA and GDOT processes and procedures to carry out new and/or revised activities, including actions necessary for GDOT to oversee subrecipient compliance. As described previously, GDOT will document detailed processes and procedures for carrying out the respective roles and responsibilities for FTA-funded transit activities, including those by FTA, GDOT, and GDOT’s subrecipients in the GDOT Administrative Guides for each program. These Administrative Guides will focus on the following FTA-assisted transit programs: Section 5303, Section 5304, Section 5305, Section 5307, Section 5311, and Section 5339. If needed, new Administrative Guides will be developed by GDOT.
13.7. **Revisions to the State Management Plan**

From time to time, it may be necessary to revise portions of all of the GDOT State Management Plan (SMP) due to significant changes in the policies associated with GDOT’s responsibilities to carry out the FTA-assisted transit program activities. Should this be necessary, GDOT will prepare a revised State Management Plan, publicly announce the opportunity for transit subrecipients and other stakeholders to participate in the review and comment period, and circulate the draft document widely for public comment. GDOT will employ a 45-day (business day) review period prior to submitting the revised SMP to FTA for final approval.
APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TRANSIT TERMS

Administrative Amendment: A minor change in a Grant Agreement normally initiated by FTA to modify or clarify certain terms, conditions, or provisions of a grant.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities.

Appalachian Region: The term “Appalachian Region” has the same meaning as in Title 40 USC 14102. Appalachian region means an area of the eastern United States consisting of several counties from the following states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Authorizing Federal Legislation: Legislation authorizing the funding for FTA’s programs that amends Chapter 53 of Title 49 of the U.S. Code. The Fixing Americas Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is the current authorizing legislation for surface transportation programs, including transit programs funded by FTA, through Fiscal Year 2020;

Budget Amendment: Any change within the scope that has impact on budget allocations and results in an amendment of the original grant. This is a procedure for requesting supplemental funds to cover unanticipated expenses related to a contract, usually for operating assistance.

Budget Revision: Any change within the scope that has impact on budget allocations of the original grant. A budget revision may be a transfer of funds within a project scope or between existing activity line items (ALIs) within an approved FTA grant. It could also include the addition or deletion of an ALI.

Capital Asset: Facilities or equipment with a useful life of at least one year, which are eligible for capital assistance.

Capital Investment Grant (CIG): Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program provides funding under FTA’s Section 5309 program for fixed guideway investments such as new and expanded rapid rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit, and ferries, as well as corridor-based bus rapid transit investments that emulate the features of rail. There are several categories of eligible projects under the CIG program: New Starts, Small Starts and Core Capacity.

Capital Investment Project: A project eligible under 49 USC 5309 (FTA Section 5309 program), including new fixed guideway systems and extensions to existing fixed guideways; fixed guideway modernization; replacement, rehabilitation and purchase of buses and related equipment and the construction of bus-related facilities; and corridor improvements.

Capital Lease: Any transaction whereby the recipient acquires the right to use a capital asset without obtaining ownership.

Categorical Exclusion (CE): A category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by a Federal agency in implementation of these regulations (Sec.1507.3) and for which, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.
**Clean Diesel Bus:** A passenger bus with a diesel engine certified to meet the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) heavy-duty engine emissions standards for model years 2007 and later.

**Clean Fuel Bus:** A passenger bus used to provide public transportation that is powered by compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas, biodiesel fuels, batteries, alcohol-based fuels, hybrid electric, fuel cell, clean diesel (to the extent allowed under 49 U.S.C. 5308), or other low or zero emissions technology that the Administrator of EPA has certified sufficiently reduces harmful emissions.


**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ):** A federal program to provide federal funding for transportation projects to improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion in counties classified as air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas for the federal criteria pollutant ozone.

**Contract:** A legally binding agreement between the Department of Transportation and a local sponsor of a transportation project, defining a project and the Department’s participation. Contracts are typically established for one year but may be for multiple years at the discretion of the Department.

**Core Capacity:** Capital Investment Grant (CIG) projects that are substantial corridor-based capital investments in existing fixed guideway systems that increase capacity by not less than 10 percent in corridors that are at capacity today or will be in five years. Core capacity projects may not include elements designed to maintain a state of good repair.

**Department of Labor (DOL):** The administrative agency of the federal government that enforces and administers laws and regulations affecting employees at work.

**Designated Recipient:** State government agency or entity appointed by the governor to receive federal funds for transit program on behalf of the State of Georgia. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is the designated recipient for all of Georgia’s state transit funds identified in Table 1 of the State Management Plan, excluding FTA Section 5310 program. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is the designated recipient for FTA Section 5310 program funds.

**Direct Recipient:** Any entity that directly receives funds from FTA.

**Discretionary Funding:** Grant funds distributed at the discretion of the agency as distinct from formula funding.

**Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE):** A for-profit small business concern that is at least 51 percent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged or, in the case of a corporation, in which 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more such individuals; and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own it.

**Drug and Alcohol (D&A):** FTA policy on Prevention of Alcohol Misuse and Prohibited Drug Use in Transit Operations.
**ECHO Control Number (ECN):** A control number assigned and used by FTA for submission of data.

**Elderly Persons And Persons With Disabilities:** Those individuals who by reason of illness, injury, age, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability, including persons using wheelchairs and those with semi-ambulatory capabilities, are unable, without special facilities or special planning or design, to utilize mass transportation facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected.

**Electronic Clearing House Operation (ECHO):** A personal computer (PC) based application that processes draw down requests from and makes payments to FTA and FAA grantees.

**Eligible Applicant:** Any entity that is allowed to apply for federal financial assistance for transit projects through the Georgia Department of Transportation.

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):** The Federal Transit Laws, 49 U.S.C. 5332(b), provide that "no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or age be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any project, program or activity funded in whole or in part through financial assistance under this Act." This applies to employment and business opportunities and is considered to be in addition to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Equipment:** An article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the governmental unit for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. This includes rolling stock and all other such property used in the provision of public transit service.

**Expanded Service:** Adding a new service to an already existing system.

**Facilities:** All or any portion of a building or structure including roads, walkways, and parking lots.

**Feeder Service:** The coordination of rural connections between small transit operations and intercity bus carriers may include the provision of service that acts as a feeder to intercity bus service, and which makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points. The feeder service is not required to have the same characteristics as the intercity service with which it connects.

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA):** An agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation, FHWA carries out the Federal highway programs in partnership with the State and local agencies to meet the nation’s transportation needs.

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA):** An operating administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation, the FTA provides stewardship of combined formula and discretionary programs totaling more than $10B to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the United States.
Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Government: The governing body or a governmental agency of any Indian tribe, band, nation or other organized group or community certified by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for the special programs and service provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Financial and Accounting System (FAS): A legacy application, the FAS system tracks contracts, invoices and other administrative actions required by Federal and State clients.

Financial Capability: This refers to the stability and reliability of revenue sources needed to meet future annual capital and operating and maintenance costs.

Financial Condition: This includes historical trends and current experience in the financial ability of the grantee to operate and maintain its transit system at present levels of service.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI): A document that is issued when environmental analysis (EA) and interagency review during the EA process find a project to have no significant impacts on the quality of the environment. The FONSI document is the EA modified to reflect all applicable comments and responses.

Fixed Asset: All tangible, nonexpendable, personal property that has a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that exceeds $1,000 per unit. Includes rolling stock and all other such property used in the provision of public transit service. While FTA allows a $5,000 threshold for Fixed Assets, in order to better control GDOT’s resources and maximize the items eligible as grant funded capital assets, GDOT has elected to use a $1,000 threshold.

Fixed Guideway: Any transit service that uses and occupies a separate right-of-way or rails for the exclusive use of public transportation and other high occupancy vehicles, or uses a fixed catenary system and a right-of-way usable by other forms of transportation. The term includes, but is not limited to, heavy rail, commuter rail, rapid rail, light rail, trolleybus, streetcars, aerial tramway, inclined plane, cable car, automated guideway transit, ferryboats, that portion of motor bus service operated on exclusive or controlled rights-of-way, and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Fixed-Route System: Public transportation service provided in vehicles operated along predetermined routes according to a fixed schedule.

Formula Funding: Grant funding allocated using factors that are specified in the law, or in an administrative formula developed by FTA.

GDOT Control Number: Number assigned by the District once a vehicle has been purchased, received and titled to the recipient with the Department of Transportation as the first lien holder.

Government Accountability Office (GAO): An independent, nonpartisan agency that works for the U.S. Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars.

Grant: An award of financial assistance, including cooperative agreements, in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, by the Federal Government to an eligible grantee or recipient. Used interchangeably with Grant Agreement.
Grant Amendment: The modification of a grant that includes a change in scope and/or change in Federal funds.

Grant Scope: The broad purpose or objectives of a grant. The scope of a grant may encompass one or more specific projects identified by FTA scope codes in each grant project budget.

Grantee: An entity to which a grant is awarded directly by FTA to support a specific project in which FTA does not take an active role or retain substantial control, as set forth in 31 U.S.C. 6304.

Incurred: Commitment or obligation to spend funds for goods to be received or services to be rendered.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS): ITS refers to the use of electronics, communications, or information processing used as a single component or in combination to improve efficiency or safety of a transit or highway system.

Intercity Bus Service: Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled local bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.

Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) (Section 5316): was a formula grant program for projects that improve access to employment-related transportation services for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals, and that transport residents of urbanized and rural areas to suburban employment opportunities. This program was repealed by MAP-21. There are no new awards, however, funds that were granted under this program previously will continue to be spent until exhausted.

Joint Development: Public transportation improvements that enhance economic development or incorporate private investment and that otherwise meet the statutory terms found at 49 USC 5302(a)(1)(G). A Federal Register notice (72 FR 5788, Feb. 7, 2007) covers this topic in detail.

Local Match: Match required from the subrecipient to meet the needs specified in grant applications for any federal funds received for transit service or transit project implementation.

Local Sponsor: A county, city or vendor/consultant sponsoring the contract providing local match requirements. The Federal match for planning and/or capital assistance generally is 80% of the net project cost. The Federal match for operating assistance will not exceed 50% of the net operating cost.

Maintenance Area: Any geographic region of the United States that EPA previously designated as a nonattainment area for one or more pollutants pursuant to the Clean Air Act (CAA) Amendments of 1990, and subsequently re-designated as an attainment area subject to the requirement to develop a maintenance plan under Section 175A of the CAA, as amended (42 USC 7401 et seq).

Master Agreement: The official FTA document containing FTA and other crosscutting Federal requirements applicable to the FTA recipient and its project. The Master Agreement is typically revised annually in October. The Master Agreement is incorporated by reference and made part of each FTA grant, Cooperative Agreement, and amendment thereto.
Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA): The geographic area determined by agreement between the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the metropolitan area and the Governor, for which the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): Regional planning entity responsible for transportation planning and approval of federal transportation funding for the region.

National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS): Those standards established pursuant to Section 109 of the Clean Air Act (42 USC 7401 et seq).

National Transit Database: The NTD is FTA’s primary source for information and statistics collected from transit systems that receive FTA funding. Public transportation systems receiving funds from these programs are required by statute to report to the NTD.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): A regulation requiring federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions.

New Fixed Guideway Capital Project: A capital project for a new fixed guideway system or extension to an existing fixed guideway system.

New Freedom Program (Section 5317): A formula grant program that provided funding for capital and operating expenses to support new public transportation services beyond those required by ADA and new public transportation alternatives designed to assist individuals with disabilities with accessing transportation services. The Section 5317 New Freedom Program was repealed under MAP-21; similar projects are eligible under the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula Program.

New Service: A first time applicant starting a new service.

Non-Ambulatory: A person who has mobility impairment that prevents him/her from being able to walk or move about freely.

Non-profit Organization: A corporation or association determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described by 26 USC 501(c) which is exempt from taxation under 26 USC 501(a); or one which has been determined under State law to be non-profit and for which the designated State agency has received documentation certifying the status of the non-profit organization.

Non-Urbanized Area: The area outside of a designated urbanized area. An urbanized area is defined as a core area and the surrounding densely populated area with a population of 50,000 or more, with boundaries fixed by the United States Census Bureau or extended by State and local officials.

Office of Inspector General (OIG): An investigative agency reporting to the Secretary and to Congress, established to protect the integrity of Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs, as well as the health and welfare of the beneficiaries of those programs.
Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST): Part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, OST oversees the formulation of national transportation policy and promotes intermodal transportation.

One-Way Passenger Trips (OWPT): The movement of a person or a vehicle from a point of origin to a destination. The return trip is considered a second one-way trip. Together, these two one-way trips comprise one round trip.

Oversight Tracking System (OTRAK): The official record system for FTA’s oversight program. OTRAK is designed to assist in planning, tracking and monitoring the follow-up activities for post-award reviews on FTA recipients.

Piggyback Procurement: Piggyback procurement occurs when one entity assigns contracted purchasing rights to another entity under an assignability clause in the purchasing contract.

Preventive Maintenance: All maintenance costs related to vehicles and non-vehicles. Specifically, it is defined as all the activities, supplies, materials, labor, services, and associated costs required to preserve or extend the functionality and serviceability of the asset in a cost effective manner, up to and including the current state of the art for maintaining such an asset.

Program of Projects (POP): A list of projects to be funded in a grant application submitted to FTA by GDOT. The program of projects lists the subrecipients and indicates whether they are private non-profit agencies, public bodies, or private providers of transportation service, designates the areas served (including Congressional Districts), and identifies any tribal entities. The program of projects also identifies intercity and TIP projects. In addition, the program of projects includes a brief description of the projects, total project cost and the Federal share for each project, and the amount of funds used for program administration from the fifteen percent (15%) allowed. The program of projects shall indicate whether the employees of a subrecipient are represented by a union and if so by which union.

Project: For the purposes of the FTA program, public transportation improvement activities funded under an executed grant.

Public Agency: An authority, commission, committee, council, department, division, bureau, board, section or any other unit or entity of the state or of a town, city, municipality, county or other local governing body.

Public Transportation: A mode of surface transportation by a conveyance that provides regular and continuing general or special transportation to the public, but does not include school bus, charter, or intercity bus transportation or intercity passenger rail transportation provided by AMTRAK. The terms transit, mass transportation and public transportation are used interchangeably in transit law.

Public Transit: The transporting of people by conveyances or systems of conveyances, traveling on land or water, local or regional in nature, and available for use by the general public. Public transit specifically includes those forms of transportation commonly known as "paratransit" characterized by their nonscheduled, non-fixed route nature.

Recipient: As used in this circular, recipient includes any entity that receives funds from FTA, whether as a designated recipient, eligible applicant, or subrecipient.

Recurring Applicant: An applicant for Federal Assistance who applies every year.
Rural Area: An area encompassing a population of less than fifty thousand people that has not been designated in the most recent decennial census as an “urbanized area” by the secretary of Commerce.

Scope and Activity Line Item (ALI) Codes: The Scope and Activity Line Item (ALI) Tree contains an inventory of Scope Codes and their associated ALIs available in TrAMS for application development. The TrAMS Scope and ALI Tree are available on the FTA website at: https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grantee-resources/teamtrams/federal-transit-administration-scope-codes-activity-line-items.

Small Urbanized Area: As used in the context of FTA formula grant programs, small urbanized areas are urbanized areas with a population of at least fifty thousand but less than two hundred thousand.

Shared Use: Those instances in which a project partner, separate from the transit agency or recipient, occupies part of a larger facility and pays for its pro rata share of the construction, maintenance, and operations costs. Shared uses are determined at the time of the grant award.

Small Start: Capital Investment Grant (CIG) projects that are new fixed guideway projects, extensions to existing fixed guideway systems, or corridor-based bus rapid transit projects with a total estimated capital cost of less than $300 million and that are seeking less than $100 million in Section 5309 CIG program funds.

Subrecipients: A state or local governmental authority, a non-profit organization, or operator of public transportation or intercity bus service that receives Federal transit program grants funds indirectly through a recipient.

Transit Award Management System (TrAMS): Web-based application used to apply for, administer, and manage FTA grants. TrAMS replaced the formerly used TEAM platform.

Urbanized Area: A core area and the surrounding densely populated area with a population of 50,000 or more, with boundaries fixed by the Census Bureau.

Useful Life: The expected lifetime of project property, or the acceptable period of use in service. Useful life of revenue rolling stock begins on the date the vehicle is placed in revenue service and continues until it is removed from service.