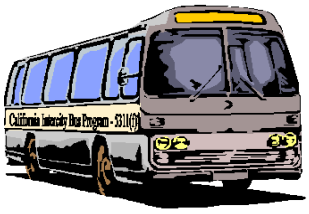

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF RAIL AND MASS TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
SECTION 5311(F) – INTERCITY BUS PROGRAM

Federal Fiscal Year 2015 Guidelines

PROJECT TIMELINE

Electronic Application Submittal Deadline	May 1, 2015
Committee Final Evaluation	June 17, 2015
Award Announcement	June 30, 2015

Contact Information

Effective FY2015, all prospective applicants must complete the 5311(f) Pre-Application Checklist on our website and submit completed checklist electronically along with their application.

Email Applications and supporting documents in **PDF format** to Ronaldo_Hu@dot.ca.gov and cc: Katherine_Pongratz@dot.ca.gov.

Contact program staff:

- Ronaldo Hu: (916) 657-3955
- Kathy Pongratz (916) 654-9955

Website at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/5311.html

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program in California is designed to address the "intercity bus transportation needs of the entire state" by supporting projects that provide transportation between non-urbanized areas and urbanized areas that result in connections of greater regional, statewide, and national significance.

The purpose of the Section 5311(f) funding is to provide supplemental financial support to transit operators and to facilitate the most efficient and effective use of available Federal funds in support of providing rural intercity transportation services. Applicants are encouraged to work through their planning agencies to utilize all available (local and regional) funding opportunities.

A transit provider that has multiple trips may only receive funding for the scheduled trip that demonstrates the best meaningful connection[1] on an established intercity route as indicated in the California Intercity Bus Network. The goals of this Network are:

- Provide a seamless regional service.
- Interagency Coordination.
- Enhancing and expanding regional bus service.
- Marketing and Informational network.

Please see appendix XI for more detailed information on the goals of the California Intercity Bus Network.

II. FUNDING

Approximately **$3.0 million** will be available in federal funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2015. Operating projects receive up to 55.33% in federal funding. Capital projects are funded up to 88.53% in federal funding.

III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Public governmental authorities and transit providers.
- Private for profit organizations.
- Private non-profit organizations.
- Tribal Governments.

[1] Meaningful connection within two hours or less on either side of the rural transit provider's schedule [four hours total] to the National Network of Intercity Bus Service (i.e Greyhound, and/or Amtrak), and/or regional services (i.e. another 5311(f) provider).

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING GRANT APPLICATION

Applications will be evaluated based on projects that meet the following criteria, as described in the application announcement and program guidelines:

- Program Purpose.

- National Objectives.

- Emphasis Areas.

It is important that each applicant take special care in completing and providing the information as requested in the application, as this will be the basis of the project application evaluation. In order to ensure that your project application receives a comprehensive and thorough review by the Evaluation Committee, all relevant information should be provided under each specific application section. Additional pages may be added if needed to provide complete project information. Please provide complete information within the application and do not refer to external documents for project information. Additional documents may accompany your application as reference only, but they should not be the basis of your application.

V. PROGRAM PURPOSE, NATIONAL OBJECTIVES, AND EMPHASIS:

The purpose of the FTA Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus program is to help provide an intercity bus transportation system designed to address the intercity bus transportation needs of the entire state by providing financial assistance for operating, capital, and/or planning grants that support the three (3) National objectives:

- OBJECTIVE #1: To support the connection between non-urbanized and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service.
    - State Emphasis:
        - Provide a meaningful connection where intercity bus stations/intermodal terminals should be a primary destination or a designated stop on a public street immediately adjacent to the station.

- OBJECTIVE #2: To support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in non-urbanized areas.
    - State Emphasis:
        - Maintaining a focus on establishing a meaningful connection and connectivity to other modes of transportation.
        - Meet broader transportation needs at other common locations (i.e. medical facility, shopping center).

- OBJECTIVE #3: To support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities.
    - State Emphasis:
        - Informational outreach marketing methods that enhance coordination, ridership, increase mobility, quality of service, and service efficiency.
        - Filling gaps in service on the California Intercity Bus Network[2], identified through planning and/or feasibility studies to include new service, routes, and/or public-private partnership that directly benefit the California intercity bus transportation network.

VI. INTERCITY BUS SERVICE DEFINITION

- **Regularly scheduled bus service, available to the general public, operating on fixed - routes to more distant points[3]**
    - **Making limited stops** – At *transit gateways*[4] that may include an Intermodal facility, a station/terminal such as Greyhound, and/or Amtrak, and no more than three additional stops at major activity centers such as a medical facility or shopping center.
    - **Connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity** – Close proximity is defined as communities located within a distance greater than fifteen (15) miles apart of each other.
    - **Capacity for transporting baggage** – An area within the bus (i.e. racks above the seating area, or as designated in an outer compartment) where luggage can be carried safely.
    - **Provide meaningful connections and reasonable lay-over times** – A meaningful connection is that which allows connectivity at a designated physical location serviced by intercity bus carriers, either directly, or on the street immediately adjacent to the facility, allowing transfers for both outbound and inbound passengers within a two-hour time frame upon either side of the rural service schedule (four hours total).

VII. BASE APPLICATION AND PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

The applicant will be required to complete one main application for all project types. Each project is supported by a sub-application organized by category as indicated in Table One.

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[2] Reference page 11, map.
[3] Distant points means destination greater than fifty-miles (50) from the point of origin.
[4] Transit Gateway means location where one or more modes of transportation meet with supporting services (i.e. ability to purchase tickets, restrooms, food/drink vendors) for customers/passengers to make trips safely and as seamless as possible

Table One

Project Type	Category	Application Title	Maximum Percent Federal Share	Maximum Project Period (Months)	Maximum Award Limit*
Operating Assistance	1	Operations	55.33%	12	$300,000
Capital Assistance	2	Bus Purchase	88.53%	24	$300,000
		Bus Related Equipment	88.53%	12	$200,000
	3	Transit Infrastructure	88.53%	15	$200,000
	4	Planning and Marketing Studies	88.53%	15	$100,000

Category 1: Operating Assistance

- Operating assistance may be provided for new, expansion, or continuation of service. The applicant should describe their route and its functional relationship to the California intercity bus network and the National Intercity Bus Service. Each proposal shall describe how your system connects *directly/indirectly* with other transit service providers and/or modes of transportation to support meaningful connections and connectivity including layover time(s).

- Each proposal should include activities such as marketing, production of route maps and/or schedules, information delivery, website development, and advertising.

Category 2: Vehicle Purchase/Bus Related Equipment

- Application pertaining to vehicle purchase should demonstrate that it will address a designated route in the Intercity Bus Network, see page 13. The vehicles purchased must have the capacity to carry luggage. The application may include, but not limited to:

    - Vehicles for new service, existing, and/or expansion.

    - Computers; Hardware and Software (i.e. scheduling, routing).

    - Intelligent Transportation System (ITS).

Category 3: Transit Infrastructure

- The application request for transit infrastructure must be part of the Intercity Bus Program route. Project may include, but not limited to:

    - Bus shelters/Benches/Signage.

    - Safety and Security features (i.e. lighting, camera).

    - Support items such as trash containers.

- ADA requirements and/or enhancements.
- Informational or scheduling structures.

Category 4: Planning and Marketing Studies

- Application for projects under this category must demonstrate the functional relationship to the California Intercity bus network. Proposals may include, but not limited to:
  - Planning Study (i.e. system-wide connectivity, improved service effectiveness, ridership forecast/survey, transit coordination).
  - Marketing Research and Innovation.
  - Development and implementation of strategic marketing.

VIII. REQUIREMENTS

- Intercity service providers crossing State lines must be in compliance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations. Information on the FMCA regulations can be accessed at http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/rules-regulations.htm
  - Rural transit providers operating feeder service with destinations across State lines are required to comply with FMCSA regulations. If applicable, provide proof of compliance.
  - Interstate feeder service may also trigger compliance with FMCSA regulations if inter-lining is involved (issuing a single ticket for the feeder service and the trip provided by an interstate carrier). If entering into an agreement, provide a copy with the 5311(f) application.
- Intercity Bus Service providers are required to provide their schedule to be published in one or more of the following methods:
  - Publish in Russell's Motor Guide. Email address: Charlotte Bonar, Editorial, cbonar@russellsprinting.com.
  - Maintain an active link to California Transit website. http://www.catransit.com/.
  - Participate in the Greyhound Rural Feeder Program. PDF Handbook: http://extranet.greyhound.com/revsup/rfs/rfs-handbk.pdf
  - Register in Google Transit through their website: http://www.google.com/transit
- Application must include information on regional coordination with project proposals highlighted in the following documents:
  - Long-Range Transportation Plans (i.e. Regional Transportation Plan).
  - Local or Short-Range Transit Plans.
  - Overall Work Program.

- Public Transportation-Human Services Transportation Coordinated Plan

- Milestone Progress Reports: Quarterly Reports will now be known as Milestone Progress Report (MPR). All successful applicants of 5311(f) funds must submit to Caltrans Milestone Progress Reports. These reports should include, where applicable, such reporting data as operating costs, farebox and revenues, net project costs, averages and comparisons of the above items, total vehicle miles and costs (by mile or hour), total ridership (linked and unlinked), and compliance for capital projects. MPR are to be submitted to Caltrans DMT within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. The reporting periods for these reports are:

  - **Capital Projects: Semi-annual; due July 31 <u>and</u> January 31**

  - **Operating Projects: Annual; due January 31**

  Completed reports are to be submitted by email, fax, or mail using the address/contact information provided at the bottom of page 1 of this document.

- Preliminary Environmental Survey, and/or Assurances for Real Property Acquisition and Relocation Requirement forms will be required for capital projects including bus shelters, sign posts, facility constructions, access to facilities and parking lot, etc.

- Successful applicants must report 5311(f) intercity bus program activities annually to the National Transit Data Base http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/ using form 2007_RU-20_Spreadsheet_Intercity (appendix one). The reporting period is from July to June, with the report due to Caltrans by September 30 each year. Items to include are:

  - Bus Vehicle Revenue Miles.

  - Bus Unlinked Passenger Trips.

  - 5311 grants for planning and capital expenses.

  - 5311 grants for operating and provision of trips.

- If applying for a new service, the applicant must provide an intercity transit and/or feasibility study that directly relates to the proposed project. If such a study does not exist, the applicant is encouraged to apply for a study or supply other documents supporting the Intercity Bus Grant request.

- The applicant is required to make diligent progress toward completing the approved project and assumes responsibility for managing the project consistent with the project scope, schedule, budget and financial summary in the approved application. Project activities must begin within four months from the date of the award announcement. Although external factors may cause changes to the project scope, schedule or cost, only minor project amendments will be considered and must be approved by the Rural Transit and Intercity Bus Branch.

- Requests for appeals (regarding application or awards) must be received, in writing, by the Rural Transit and Intercity Bus Branch Chief within 15-days of notification of an award decision.

- Demand-responsive service (Dial-a-Ride) will only be considered for service that feeds directly, and primarily, into the intercity transportation network. Such services must provide meaningful connections and established reasonable layover times.

- Charter, tour, and commuter services are not eligible.

IX. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Applicant is responsible for:

- Submitting a completed **Pre-Application Checklist** (on website) along with the application.

- Email electronic application in **PDF Format** to ronaldo_hu@dot.ca.gov and cc: Katherine_pongratz@dot.ca.gov

- Demonstrating the fiscal and managerial capability to manage the funds being requested in the application.
- Securing local funding commitments to complete the project.

- Providing contract agreement including encumbrance of local program funds.

- Maintaining an accounting system consistent with accepted general accounting principles, per federal requirements as referenced in OMB Circular(s) A-87 and/or A-133.

- Reporting on a semi-annual or annual basis as applicable on the status of the project.

- Complying with federal regulations and contractual requirements.

Regional Agency is responsible for:

- Working with applicant to ensure the project is consistent with the regional transportation plan.

- Local match certification and commitment of program funds.

- Supporting private carrier's service routes when such cross-jurisdictional boundaries form the contiguous jurisdictions.

Caltrans (Headquarters) is responsible for:

- Establishing and administering program procedures.

- Assessing project proposals based on program definition, goals and objectives.

- Preparing and executing Standard Agreement(s) with the successful applicant.

- Providing project monitoring and oversight.

- Reporting to FTA for program compliance.
- Providing program guidance and technical assistance.

Department District Transit Representative (DTR) is responsible for:

- Disseminating program information and material to potential applicants.
- Providing guidance and technical support to applicant and regional agency.
- Reviewing reimbursement requests to ensure accuracy.
- Providing program monitoring and reporting.

Evaluation Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing and evaluating applications.
- Providing final approval on project selection and project award.

X. SELECTION PROCESS

1. TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

The Rural Transit and Intercity Bus Branch staff will conduct a technical assessment of all submitted applications. Applications and supporting documents are assessed based on 5311 program requirements, the 5311(f) program definition, goals, objectives, and State Emphasis addressed on page 4 of this document. Applications that do not meet the above criteria will be rejected and returned to the applicant.

2. COMMITTEE EVALUATION AND SCORING

Funding for projects will be based on the merits of the proposal and will be limited to a maximum FTA award as stated in Table One, page 5 of this document. Emphasis will be placed on an established intercity route as indicated in the California Intercity Bus Network that currently exist or added as a result of a new service with a focus on the single trip(s) that best overall obtain a meaningful connection. In this regard, a transit provider that has multiple trips may only receive funding for a single trip, or limited to those that establish connectivity with the National Intercity Bus Network.

An independent broad-based selection committee comprised of Caltrans staff and external participants (e.g., transportation agencies, non-transit providers, and/or community-based organizations) will score each application that meet all the program requirements. Projects selected would be based on the highest score as determined by the Evaluation Committee.

XI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further guidance for the Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program can be found in
http://www.apta.com/gap/fedreg/Documents/Proposed_Circular_-_FTA_C_9040_1G_-

_Formula_Grants_for_Rural_Areas_Program_Guidance_and_Application_Instructions.pdf Chapter VIII. For a complete listing of all eligible capital and operating expenses see FTA Circular 9040.1G, Chapter III, Section 8.

XII. APPENDIX - CALIFORNIA INTERCITY BUS NETWORK.

The California Intercity Bus Network is a series of individual Section 5311(f) funded intercity bus routes – that supports the existing National Intercity Bus Network. The goals of the California Intercity Bus Network are:

- Provide a seamless interregional service
  - Coordinated schedules, routes, and information of the 5311(f) bus services with National and Regional Bus service(s).
  - Bus network planning.
  - Service implementation.
  - Changes to bus routes, bus stops, schedules, bus fleet, fare structures, marketing and other areas of operations.
  - Feeder bus systems are being planned to connect people to future transit gateways[5].
- Interagency Coordination
  - Work with partners and stakeholders to adjust the bus route capacities to better fit new demand.
  - Identify each jurisdiction's goals as related to the overall route.
  - Provide a detailed list of existing public transit service routes along the corridor, including levels-of-service (LOS), and corridor travel times.
  - Work with partners and stakeholders; provide information to be used in station planning and design, including bus stop/bay capacities and station site provisions for facilitating transfers.
- Enhancing and expanding regional bus service by:
  - Adding service to existing routes.
  - New service in the smallest of communities of any given region.
  - Forecasting transit ridership and estimating operating costs.

[5] Physical location where one or more modes of transportation meet with supporting services (i.e. ability to purchase tickets, restrooms, food/drink vendors) for customers/passengers to make trips safely and as seamless as possible

- Avoid duplicate or redundant service along transit corridors.
- Coordinated to serve all modes of transportation providing connectivity and meaningful connections.

- Marketing and informational network
  - Develop specific route and schedule changes for bus services.
  - Assist in identifying funding for the services.
  - Simplified transfer policies.
  - New interagency, multimodal methods of data gathering, accounting, and revenue attribution.
  - Coordinate these and other related activities.
  - Provide for and support a network-wide marketing and public information strategy.