

## *Chapter 5 Planning Issues for Federal Transit Administration Programs*

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### **Introduction**

Chapter 5 focuses on Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs that are key to funding a coordinated transportation network. Preparation of this Public Transit/Human Services Coordination Plan is one requirement for accessing these funds and FTA planning requirements provide an important part of the framework for developing an action plan. The FTA views the programs it funds as the “public transit” in the Public Transit/Human Services Coordination Plan. As such, all FTA-funded programs are expected to participate in the coordination efforts.

With the approval of MAP-21 both section 5316 JARC/Job Access Reverse Commute and section 5317 New Freedom were transformed from being distinct funding programs to becoming eligible activities in other FTA funding pools. JARC-type projects are now eligible for funding under rural section 5311 and urban section 5307. New Freedom-type projects will be allowable under section 5310.

This plan focuses on these programs which most directly impact coordination efforts:

- **Section 5307: Urbanized Area Formula Program**
- **Section 5310: Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities**
- **Section 5311: Rural Transit Assistance Program**

The requirements for other FTA programs funding general public transit (Section 5307 in the urban area and Section 5311 in the rural area) are not addressed in detail, but they are considered the “public transit” in the “Coordinated Public Transit/Human Service Transportation Plan.”

This chapter begins with an overview of the programs, and then describes the requirements and recommendations in more detail for each area.

### **Section 5307: Urbanized Area Formula Grant**

The largest of FTA's grant programs, this program provides grants to urbanized areas to support public transportation. Funding is distributed by a formula that takes into account the population and population density of an area, and the vehicle revenue miles and passenger miles generated by the local transit service agencies. FTA 5307 funds do not typically fund mobility management activities; however, MAP-21 consolidated the FTA 5316 (JARC) program with the FTA 5307 program with the intention to provide 25% of the available funding for services that would have been funded through the original JARC program. The focus of JARC activities was to “improve access to transportation services to employment & employment related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals” FTA 5307 funds comprise a large portion of operating funds for the transit agencies in the TMA.

### **Section 5310: Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities**

This program focuses on funding capital projects for programs serving the elderly and people with disabilities. With MAP-21 the allocation was changed from a statewide allocation to a formula-based allocation for the Fort Collins TMA. Both counties are eligible for FTA 5310 funds however, the funding comes from the City of Fort Collins for the entities located within the TMA or from CDOT in the Greeley-Evans area. The Larimer and Weld County regions has typically received about \$200,000 each year for vehicle replacements, and with MAP-21 the funding amounts will increase by approximately 30%.

The FTA 5310 program provides funding to increase the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. Funds are apportioned based on each state's share of the targeted populations and are now apportioned to states (for all areas under 200,000) and large urbanized areas (over 200,000).

MAP-21 designates 55% of FTA 5310 funds for capital and 45% for services. The variety of projects that are eligible for funding covers a broad spectrum from purchasing vans to providing targeted transit services to public education regarding available services.

### **Section 5311: Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program**

This program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to support public transportation in rural areas, defined as areas with fewer than 50,000 residents. Funding is based on a formula that takes into account land area, population, and transit service.

#### **General Program Requirements**

Each of these programs supports efforts to coordinate transportation networks and to move towards mobility management by permitting expenses such as:

- Mobility management and coordination programs;
- Supporting local coordination policy bodies; and,
- Developing and operating one-stop transportation call centers to coordinate information on travel modes and manage eligibility requirements for customers.

Mobility Management is treated as a capital item and funded at an 80% Federal/20% Local matching rate. An important change in the matching requirements is Federal funds (from other than FTA programs) can be used in lieu of local match. In the FTA 5316 and 5317 programs, all of the local match may be from eligible sources of federal funds.

#### ***Small Urban and Rural Area Programs***

The Greeley/Evans Urbanized area and the rural portions of Weld and Larimer counties fall into this category. CDOT administers the FTA 5310 & 5311 funding that is allocated to these areas. Strong competition for these funds is anticipated as projects in rural Weld and Larimer counties have to compete with projects from rural regions across the state. Annual appropriations for the two funding programs in FY 2013 are anticipated to be \$980,000 for FTA 5310 and \$3,000,000 for FTA 5311.

Projects for Greeley, a small urban area, compete with proposals from the other small urban areas such as Pueblo, Boulder, Louisville/Lafayette, Longmont and Grand Junction. CDOT evaluation criteria for these programs are listed in the table below.

**Large Urban Area Program – TMA**

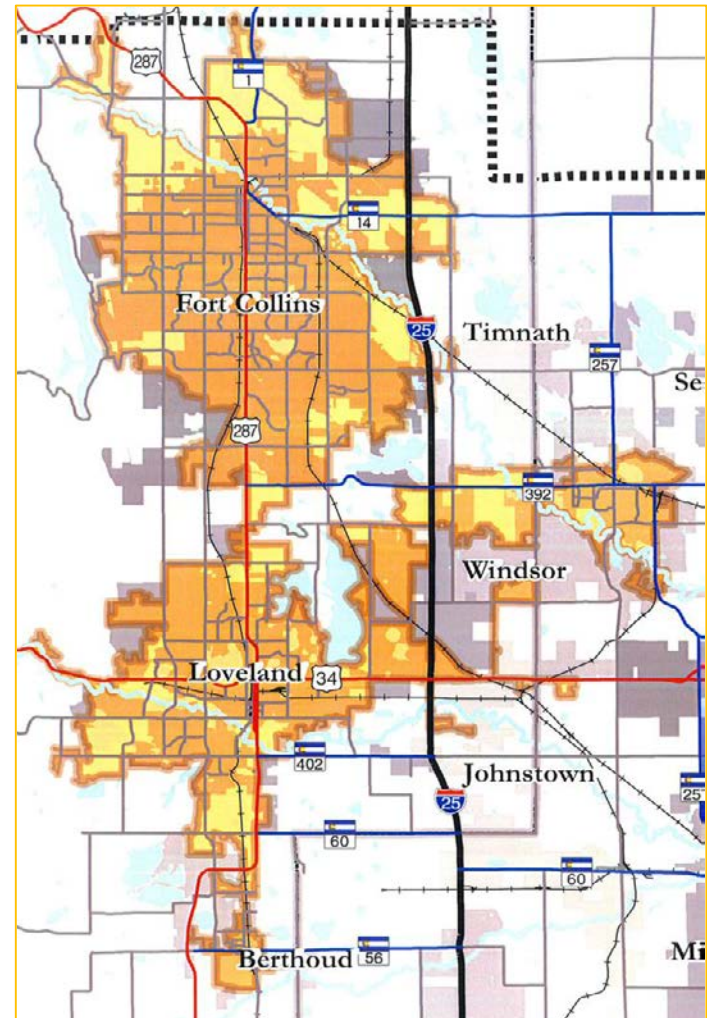
The Fort Collins/Loveland /Berthoud Transportation Management Area (TMA), as a large urbanized area, follows the guidelines in this section. The TMA applies directly to the FTA for the 5307 and 5310 programs.

The TMA must identify both a lead planning agency and designated recipient (DR) to carry out these programs. The lead Planning Agency is the North Front Range MPO and the City of Fort Collins is the DR for FTA 5307 and FTA 5310 funds. The table below shows the amounts projected to be available in FY 2013 and FY 2014 in the TMA area.

Allocation of 5307 & 5310 in TMA	FFY 2013*	FFY 2014*
<b>5307</b>	\$1,900,000	\$2,100,000
<b>5310</b>	\$310,000	\$318,000

\* Estimated per each year.

**Fort Collins TMA**



## Lead Planning Agency

The NFRMPO is responsible for comprehensive, coordinated and continual transportation planning in the TMA. One of the organization's goals is: "To foster regional coordination, cooperation and transportation system continuity".

This plan recommends a regional approach to specialized and rural transit services, with the NFRMPO incubating this function until there is another agency to which the function can be transferred.

The Lead Planning Agency undertakes the following for the Coordinated Plan:

- Prepares the Coordinated Plan that
  - Identifies services
  - Assesses needs
  - Identifies goals and strategies
  - Sets priorities for funding
- Identifies how the coordinated plan will be integrated into the regional planning process and implemented.
- Selects project evaluation criteria

## *Project Evaluation Criteria*

To facilitate the evaluation of projects that cross urban and rural boundaries, the NFRMPO has adopted the same Project Evaluation Criteria that CDOT uses for similar programs, as listed in the table on the next page.

## Funding Evaluation Criteria: Seniors, Low-Income Employment Transportation and ADA Enhancements

Criteria	Description
<b>Collaboration:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Was the project developed based on collaboration with others in the community?</li> <li>- Did the project grow out of a locally derived coordination plan?</li> <li>- Have agencies serving low-income riders such as the Work Force Center and area employers been consulted?</li> <li>- Have agencies that serve the disabled been consulted?</li> <li>- Are there sufficient local matching funds available?</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How will the project coordinate with other organizations in the actual delivery of services?</li> <li>- Does the project use existing resources such as vehicles, dispatching, bus facilities, etc.?</li> <li>- Has applicant developed contracts or agreements with other cooperating agencies?</li> </ul>
<b>Identification of Need:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has the need been specified?</li> <li>- Is the financial need justified?</li> <li>- Have the existing services been identified as inadequate and does the project clearly meet these identified needs?</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness of Strategy:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How likely is it that the program will be a success?</li> <li>- To what degree does the project support the goals?</li> <li>- Is it likely to serve a waiting clientele?</li> </ul>

The Mobility Councils participated in the selection process with the FTA 5316 and 5317 funding, however MAP-21 legislation has changed the process. How the Mobility Councils will participate in the consolidated FTA 5307 and 5310 selection process has yet to be determined. The Coordinated Plan remains the central document for determining which projects are selected for FTA 5316 and 5317-type of project activities.

### **Summary**

There are significant differences in the travel needs of residents of the urbanized and rural areas in the North Front Range. However, the critical factor is the need for mobility between rural and urbanized areas.

As such, a regional approach to planning and development of mobility coordination projects is essential. The recommendation that the NFRMPO continue to take an active role as the lead planning agency, in cooperation with the City of Fort Collins as the designated recipient for the Fort Collins TMA and the City of Greeley as the small urban provider, recognizes the importance of developing a regional approach to administering these program