

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 2025-2026 EDUCATIONAL SERIES

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Primary TxDOT Public Transportation Activities
- State Transit Grants
- Federal Transit Grants Available Through TxDOT
- Other Federal Transit Grant Programs
- Regional Planning
- Public Transportation Advisory Committee



Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT): Public website offering information and resources for drivers, businesses, government officials, and anyone interested in learning about TxDOT.



TxDOT 2025-2026 Educational Series: Focuses on key transportation issues affecting TxDOT and Texas.





OVERVIEW

Federal and state law requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to support and promote public transportation in partnership with local governments, nonprofit entities, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Funding for public transportation in Texas consists of state, federal, and local funds. Local funds may include a dedicated sales tax, in the case of transportation authorities, other local revenue sources including fares and revenues from partnerships with employers or educational institutions. Metropolitan Transit Authorities and Coordinated County Transportation Authorities receive federal funds directly from the Federal Transit Administration and are not eligible for state funding.

Federal law authorizes federal funds for a variety of transit programs, including the Urbanized Area Formula Grants program (Section 5307), the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula program (Section 5310), the Rural Formula program (Section 5311), the Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grant program (Section 5339), and the Metropolitan (Section 5303) and Statewide and Nonmetropolitan (Section 5304) Transportation Planning programs. TxDOT administers all federal funds distributed to the state for rural areas with a population of less than 50,000. Urbanized areas with populations that exceed 50,000 receive federal funding through the Urbanized Area Formula Grants program and Bus Facilities Formula Grant program directly from the FTA, in coordination with TxDOT. TxDOT administers other federal public transportation programs to benefit urban areas with a population of 50,000 to 200,000. TxDOT also administers the state public transportation grant programs for Rural Transit Districts and Urban Transit Districts.

PRIMARY TxDOT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITIES

TxDOT supports a network of mobility options that includes alternatives to driving. Goals to accomplish this include the following focused strategies:

- Distribute grant funds to support mobility and congestion relief programs — TxDOT administers federal and state transit grants, develops and processes grant applications, and coordinates the selection and development of bicycle and pedestrian projects statewide.
- Ensure compliance with funding program requirements — TxDOT implements a comprehensive and transparent compliance program that emphasizes technical assistance to meet federal and state requirements. The program includes providing drug and alcohol safety oversight to transit providers.
- Promote training, coordinated planning, partnerships, and best practices — TxDOT offers a comprehensive agency training program; funds and facilitates statewide public transportation planning efforts; provides technical assistance to grant program recipients; and monitors and sponsors research and development activities to enhance public transportation development.
- Perform required Federal Transit Administration Transit Safety Program functions — TxDOT implements and makes continuous improvements to the State Safety Oversight program on existing and developing rail passenger systems and oversees the development and approval of both rail and bus transit agency safety plans.

STATE TRANSIT GRANTS

The Texas Transportation Commission established by rule the formula that TxDOT uses to allocate state public transportation grant funds to rural and urban transit districts. Recipient transit districts may use these funds for any approved public transportation projects. State law prohibits the distribution of state funds to the seven Metropolitan Transit Authorities and one Coordinated County Transportation Authority in the larger metropolitan areas of the state. Metropolitan Transit Authorities and Coordinated County Transportation Authorities can levy taxes to help fund their programs and operations. These entities also receive federal funds directly from the Federal Transit Administration.

FEDERAL TRANSIT GRANTS AVAILABLE THROUGH TxDOT

FORMULA GRANTS FOR RURAL AREAS PROGRAM (SECTION 5311)

This program provides capital, planning, operating, and administrative grants to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. Furthermore, this program helps people in rural areas with access to healthcare, employment, education, religious services, shopping, and recreation. This program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Currently, 36 transit districts provide public transportation in rural areas and small non-urbanized area communities throughout the state.

FORMULA GRANTS FOR THE ENHANCED MOBILITY OF SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM (SECTION 5310)

This program provides funding for programs in rural and urban areas with populations of less than 200,000 and serves the special needs of transit-dependent senior citizens and disabled populations beyond traditional public transportation services, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The service is referred to as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Complementary Paratransit Service.

BUS AND BUS FACILITIES PROGRAM (SECTION 5339)

This capital program provides funding, through formula allocations and competitive grants, to states, designated recipients, and local governments that operate fixed route bus service to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. TxDOT administers the program for rural transit districts. Any urban transit district serving areas with populations of 50,000 to 199,999 must apply directly to the Federal Transit Administration for these program funds.

STATEWIDE AND NONMETROPOLITAN (POPULATIONS LESS THAN 200,000) TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAMS (SECTION 5304)

This program provides funding and sets the procedural requirements to ensure that multimodal transportation planning in each state is cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive, resulting in long-range plans and short-range programs of transportation investment priorities. This program provides financial assistance to states for statewide transportation planning and other technical assistance activities, including supplementing the technical assistance program and planning support for non-urbanized areas. The Federal Transit Administration provides planning grants directly to states as the designated recipient of the program.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING PROGRAM (SECTION 5303)

This program provides funding managed by TxDOT to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and sets the procedural requirements to ensure that multimodal transportation planning in metropolitan areas is cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive, resulting in long-range plans and short-range programs of transportation investment priorities. To help streamline the administration of the metropolitan planning programs, the Federal Transit Administration combines the metropolitan planning program funds with a similar program administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), to be administered at the federal level. Regardless of funding source, the metropolitan planning process includes public transportation, highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and other modes in considering the transportation needs for metropolitan areas.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM (SECTION 5324)

This program provides funding in case of a declared emergency or natural disaster. Public transit entities may use these emergency funds to reimburse expenses due to the emergency or disaster or to help reduce the negative impacts of future emergencies and disasters. Congress appropriates emergency relief funds after the president makes a formal federal disaster declaration, making public transit entities in the declared emergency area eligible for funds.

VARIOUS DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAMS

The United States Department of Transportation administers various discretionary funding programs that award funds to projects on a competitive basis. There are several federal grant opportunities for public transportation projects. Two of the largest ones include the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant program, and the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE), program. Program specifics vary with each funding call, however, typically a state may apply for funds on behalf of rural transit districts.

STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL PLANNING

STATEWIDE MULTIMODAL TRANSIT PLAN

The Texas Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan 2050 is a long-range plan that envisions a safe, universally accessible, and integrated network of transit mobility options that connects people seamlessly, both locally and across the state, to support an improved quality of life and a resilient and vibrant economy by 2050 and beyond. This strategic planning document identifies transit challenges, needs, and gaps, as well as actions necessary to increase transit mobility and connectivity through current and emerging forms of public transportation. This plan supports economic development and addresses congestion in regional and intercity corridors over the next 25 years. The Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan builds upon existing local, regional, and statewide plans, and is focused on the goals of safety and security, asset preservation, local mobility, local and interregional connectivity, economic competitiveness, and stewardship.

OTHER FEDERAL TRANSIT GRANT PROGRAMS

URBANIZED AREA FORMULA GRANT PROGRAM (SECTION 5307)

This program provides grant funding to urbanized areas for public transportation capital, planning, and administration expenses and covers operating expenses in small, urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 to 199,000. This program reflects the federal government's core investment in the enhancement and revitalization of public transportation systems in the nation's urbanized areas and helps to improve mobility and reduce congestion. While TxDOT does not administer this program, TxDOT authorizes the allocation of program funds to eligible small, urbanized areas.



REGIONAL COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Consistent with federal and state requirements, TxDOT facilitates the statewide development of locally-developed, coordinated public transit and human services transportation plans in each of the 24 state planning areas. These plans identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. The plans provide strategies for meeting those local needs and prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation. Plans include the review of current public transportation planning and programming practices within metropolitan, suburban, and rural areas, with a focus on enhancing service delivery, customer satisfaction, efficiency, and effectiveness.

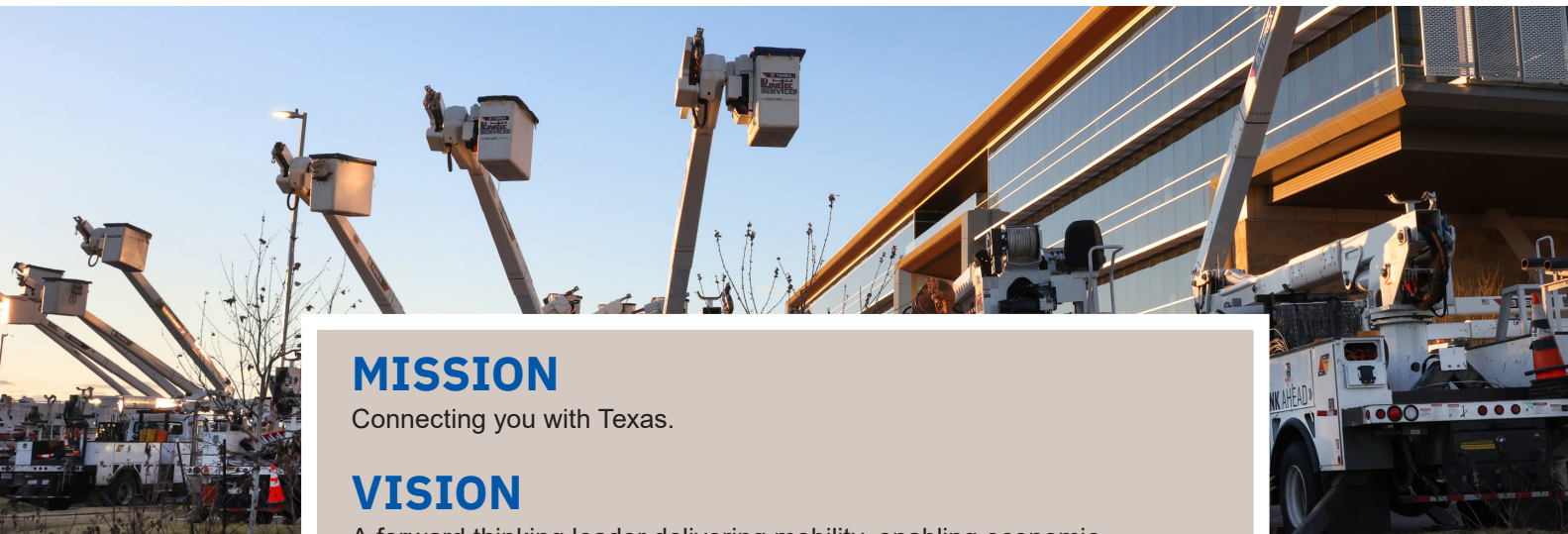
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Texas governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the House of Representatives appoint the nine members of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee, which include representation of transportation users, providers, and the public. The Public Transportation Advisory Committee advises the Texas Transportation Commission on the needs of the state's public transportation providers and the allocation of public transportation funds. The committee also provides comments on Texas Transportation Commission and federal rules involving public transportation. The Public Transportation Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public to participate virtually or in-person.



Public Transportation Advisory Committee

<https://www.txdot.gov/about/advisory-committees/public-transportation-advisory-committee.html>



MISSION

Connecting you with Texas.

VISION

A forward thinking leader delivering mobility, enabling economic opportunity, and enhancing quality of life for all Texans.



VALUES

People

People are the Department's most important customer, asset, and resource. The well-being, safety, and quality of life for Texans and the traveling public are of the utmost concern to the Department. We focus on relationship building, customer service, and partnerships.

Accountability

We accept responsibility for our actions and promote open communication and transparency at all times.

Trust

We strive to earn and maintain confidence through reliable and ethical decision-making.

Honesty

We conduct ourselves with the highest degree of integrity, respect, and truthfulness.



PRIORITIES

Safety

Design, build, operate, and maintain our transportation system with safety as our #1 priority.

Delivery

Responsible program execution throughout the transportation life cycle (planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operations).

Innovation

Forward-thinking, technology-focused, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Stewardship

Professional, responsible stewards of resources.

