



US Federal Government Public Transport Program



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- **Program structure, roles and responsibilities**
- **Sources and uses of funds**
- **Metropolitan planning, programming**



The Problem

- Big, complicated, rapidly growing country
 - About 300 million people
 - 50 very different states
 - 375+ very different metropolitan areas with >50,000 population
 - 50+ complex metropolitan areas with >1,000,000 population
- Increasingly immobile



Federal system

- U.S. Federal Government responsibilities include:
 - Defense, foreign policy
 - Interstate commerce, etc.
- States responsible for anything not specifically given to Federal Government, e.g.,
 - Transportation
 - Social welfare



Why is US Government Involved?

Preamble to Federal Transit Act

12 -It is in the interest of
13 the United States, including its economic interest, to fos-
14 ter the development and revitalization of public transpor-
15 tation systems that—
16 “(1) maximize the safe, secure, and efficient
17 mobility of individuals;
18 “(2) minimize environmental impacts; and
19 “(3) minimize transportation-related fuel con-
20 sumption and reliance on foreign oil.”.



Federal Highway Program

- Role of Federal Government ramped up after WW II
- Interstate Highway System and Federal Highway Trust Fund Created in 1956
 - Financed by dedicated gasoline tax
- Grew with the addition of categorical programs (e.g., Federal-aid secondary roads, traffic operations and safety) and more \$ over time
- Partnership among Federal and state (and, to a much smaller degree, local) governments



Federal Transit Program

- Dates from 1964
- Began as modest research/“demonstration,” suburban rail loan program
- Modeled on much older Federal highway program
- Partnership among Federal, state and local governments
- Strongest relationships between USDOT and regional public transport authorities



Nature of Partnership

Projects and all systems planned, developed, implemented and owned by:

- State DOT's
 - Highways, some transit
- Local governments, regional agencies
 - Most transit, portion of street/road/highway system



Nature of Partnership

- Federal Government shares in cost of capital projects, usually 80%
- Uses a variety of means to ensure consistency with Federal program goals, objectives and policies



Program Structure: Funds Largely Allocated by Formula

- Main formula allocation factors
 - Highway program:
 - Miles of systems, including National Highway System
 - Urban, Rural Population
 - Area



Program Structure: Funds Largely Allocated by Formula

- Main formula allocation factors
 - Transit:
 - Population
 - Population density
 - Current “fixed guideway” (i.e., rail transit) route miles
 - Revenue vehicle miles of service
- “Discretionary” program for new mass rapid transit systems and extensions



Program Size (Approx.)

- Highway program: Approx. \$40B/yr.
(3,000 FHWA employees)
- Transit program: Approx. \$9B/yr.
 - Formula:
 - Basic, general purposes: \$4.5b
 - Mass rapid transit modernization \$1.5b
 - Planning \$60m
 - Discretionary
 - Large bus projects \$1.0b
 - New mass rapid transit \$1.5b
 - Research, administration \$100M
(500 FTA employees)



Federal Funds

- 18 cents/gallon gasoline and other minor taxes (e.g., tires) into highway trust fund, Interest earnings
- General Federal Government revenue for some parts of public transport program
- Federal Highway Program totaled Approx. \$40B in 2007
- Federal Transit Program Approx. \$10B in 2007
- Both under 50% of total PT and highway expenditures



Recipients of Funds

- Highway and flexible funds (i.e., could be used for either highway projects or public transport): all go to or to/through the states
- Transit: Go mostly to regional public authorities, some local governments; some funds go to/through the states



Eligible Public Transit Activities

- Capital expenditures
 - Vehicle fleet expansion, replacement, rehabilitation
 - New facilities and facility restoration
 - Depots, passenger stations and terminals
 - Administrative buildings
 - New infrastructure and restoration
 - Mass Rapid Transit (BRT, LRT, Metros)
 - Suburban Rail
 - Busways/transitways, bus-only streets and malls
 - Major maintenance activities
- Planning and research, engineering
- Technical, management studies



How to insure consistency with Federal transportation goals and objectives and guarantee maximum return from Federal investments?



Not Project By Individual Project Reviews!!

- Require integrated state and metropolitan planning and programming *processes* consistent with Federal goals and objectives
 - Inclusive, transparent
 - Broad array of factors and alternatives considered
 - Ongoing
- *Link use of infrastructure funds for any purpose to project being part of financially constrained plan and priority program*



Metropolitan Planning Organization “MPO”

- Membership, structure, voting procedures agreed to by State Governor and local officials in each metropolitan area
- Members typically include local mayors and representatives from:
 - Local councils
 - State DOT
 - Regional transit agency (board, staff)
 - Citizens advisory committee
 - Feds. Ex officio



“MPO” Adopts (Approves) Three Documents

- Long Range Regional Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Unified Planning Work Program



Planning Documents

Document	Time Horizon	Contents	Update Cycle
Long Range Plan	20 Years	Future Strategies, Projects	Every 5 years
Transportation Improvement Program	3 Years	Transport Investments	Every 2 years
Unified Planning Work Program	1-2 Years	Planning Studies	Annually



Requirements for Long Range Plan

- Cover entire metropolitan area
- Multi-modal
- Basis for spending of Federal funds by all agencies and authorities in area
- *Financially constrained*
- Emphasis on long-range capital investments but includes operations management strategies
- Sustainable land-use, environmental, equity and economic development objectives



Requirements for Transport Improvement Program

- Derived from long range plan
- Cover entire metropolitan area
- Multi-modal
- Basis for spending of Federal funds by all agencies and authorities
- Financially constrained
- Development process usually reflects readiness of projects, cost-effectiveness and geographic equity

