



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

Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Guidelines

PROJECT TIMELINE

Electronic Application Submittal Deadline	February 12, 2020, 2:00 p.m. PST
Committee Final Evaluation	April 20, 2020
Award Announcement	May 1, 2020

Contact Information

Submit FY2019-2020 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program Applications through the Black Cat Electronic Grant Management (EGM) Systems

For Black Cat Grants (BCG) Support Systems: **888-238-9707**

Website: <https://cadot.blackcatgrants.com>

For Program Assistance:

- Kathy Pongratz (916) 654-9955

Website: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail-and-mass-transportation/rural-transit-intercity-bus-fta-section-5311-and-5311f>

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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 connection¹ 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 **\$4.9 million** will be available in federal funding for Federal Fiscal Year 2019-2020. Operating projects receive up to 55.33% 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, 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.**
 - **Making limited stops** – At *transit gateways*² 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).
- **Definition of a Project** – Operating services from point A to point B, then from point B to point A (Round Trip).

VII. BASE APPLICATION AND PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

The applicant will be required to complete PROJECT DESCRIPTION in EGM. Each project is supported by a sub-application organized by category as indicated in application.

² 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

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).

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

- 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(f) grants for planning and capital expenses.
 - 5311(f) 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 electronic application in BlackCat Electronic Grants Management (EGM) system
- 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:

- 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(f) 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 gateways³.
- Interagency Coordination

³ 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.

- 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.
 - 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.

Scoring Criteria for Project

Criteria 1 (5 points): The project/service continues or expands an existing intercity bus project/service.

• All 5 points for Criteria 1 will be awarded to existing or expanding rural intercity projects/services.

• Evidence of an existing project/service include:

- Previous financial year recipients of 5311(f) funding from Caltrans DRMT.
- Performance, or other verifiable data of the project/service's operation/existence in the previous financial year can be provided if 5311(f) funding was not received. However, the applicant must also include evidence that the project/service met the definition of eligible intercity bus service

Criteria 2 (20 points): The project/service addresses a demonstrated community need.

• The number of points awarded for Criteria 2 will range from 1 to 20 and are based on the extent of evidence showing the project/service addresses an intercity community need.

• Examples of such evidence include:

- A project/service evaluation of need (survey, community outreach, or stakeholder feedback).
- A need identified in an unmet needs process.
- Identification in a Caltrans transit plan, including but not limited to the 2018 Statewide Rural Intercity Bus Study.
- Transit dependent population statistics.
- A project/service feasibility study.

Criteria 3 (20 points): Experience and/or expertise providing efficient transportation services as well as managing public transportation funding.

• The number of points awarded for Criteria 3 will range from 1 to 20 and are based on the extent of evidence showing the applicant has experience and/or expertise in providing efficient transportation projects/services as well as managing public transportation funding to undertake the project/service.

• Examples of such evidence include:

- Number of years of experience in providing transportation service/projects.
- Descriptions of relevant transportation service/project experience.
- Evidence of, or plan to acquire, adequate liability insurance levels.
- Description of transit grant administration experience, including:
 - Type(s) of grant funds.
 - Amount(s) awarded.
 - Agency completing and/or meeting intended outcome(s) of grant.
 - Type(s) of reporting requirements.
 - Capacity to provide service up-front and be reimbursed on a quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis.

Criteria 4 (20 points): Fiscal and administrative capacity as well as budget to undertake the project/service.

• The number of points awarded for Criteria 4 will range from 1 to 20 and are based on the extent of evidence showing the applicant has the fiscal and administrative capacity as well as budget to undertake the project/service.

• Examples of such evidence include:

- A project/service financial feasibility study.
- A project/service business plan.
- Financial benefit-cost analysis.
- A federal single audit and/or annual fiscal audit for the previous fiscal year (if applicable).

- Recent audited financial statements.
- A marketing plan if applying for new or expanding project/service.
- If a new or expanding project/service, capital and/or O&M costs to construct and/or operate project are identified.
- If existing project/service, capital and/or O&M costs to construct and/or operate project are reported.
- If an existing project/service, reported key performance measures or if it is a new or expanding project/service, estimated key performance measures. Examples include:
 - Farebox recovery ratio
 - Load factor
 - Net cost per passenger
 - A budget for the project/service, showing funds for the next fiscal year.

Criteria 5 (15 points): Coordination and integration with the service area’s transportation system.

• The number of points awarded for Criteria 5 will range from 1 to 15 and are based on the extent of evidence showing the applicant has undertaken to coordinate the proposed project/service with other public, nonprofit, and for-profit transportation providers and agencies in the service area.

• Examples of such evidence include:

- The project/service’s connectivity to a national or inter-regional intercity bus station or intermodal terminal at the primary destination.
- The project/service’s connectivity to a designated stop on a public street immediately adjacent to an intercity station or intermodal terminal.
- The project/service’s connectivity to other key rural regional services/locations (i.e. medical facilities, educational centers, shopping centers).
- Outreach and marketing efforts that will/have enhanced coordination, ridership, mobility, quality and/or efficiency of project/service.
- If it is a new project/service, identified gaps it fills in the intercity bus network.
- Letters of support from other transportation providers in the service area.
- Description of efforts to coordinate with existing/planned transportation projects/services. (Including out-of-state actors if appropriate).

Criteria 6 (10 points): Support for the project, financial and otherwise, on the part of citizens and local government.

• The number of points awarded for Criteria 6 will range from 1 to 10 and are based on the extent of evidence showing support for the project/service, financial and otherwise, on the part of citizens and local government.

• Examples of such evidence include:

- Description of efforts to seek funding and/or secured funding resources from other local, state, and federal sources. (Including out-of-state actors if appropriate).
- Description of project/service involvement and/or support by other local, state, and federal agencies and other stakeholders in the service area. (Including out-of-state actors if appropriate).
- Letters of support from local elected officials, local government agencies, stakeholder groups, and citizens in the service area.

Criteria 7 (10 points): The applicant demonstrates alignment & support transit policies.

• The number of points awarded for Criteria 7 will range from 1 to 10 and are based on the extent of evidence showing the project/service’s alignment with local, state and federal transit and transportation plans.

• Examples of such evidence include:

- Description of its support to the objectives of the 5311(f) program, which may include: Connection with inter-regional or national system of intercity bus, rail, and air service.
- Connection with key rural regional services/locations.
- Contribution to the intercity bus/rail/air network infrastructure.

- The project/service's inclusion in local coordinated plan(s).
- The project/service's identification in an unmet need process(es).
- The project/service's inclusion in local short-range transit plan(s).
- The project/service's inclusion in local regional transit plan(s).
- Description of the project/service's alignment with Caltrans transit and transportation plans, including but not limited to: The Statewide Rural Intercity Bus Study
- The State Rail Plan
- The California Transportation Plan (CTP)