

Glossary

This glossary contains technical terms that may appear in the 2011 Minnesota Transit Report. Many of these terms have multiple definitions; therefore, these terms are defined as they are used in the context of this report.

Accessible vehicle – A public transportation vehicle that does not restrict access, is usable and provides allocated space and/or priority seating for individuals who use wheelchairs.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in July 1991 gave direction to local transit agencies to ensure full access to transportation for persons with disabilities.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) – Federal legislation enacted in 2009 that provided additional capital funding for transit.

Base fare – The price charged to one adult for one transit ride-excludes transfer charges, zone charges, express service charges, peak period surcharges and reduced fares.

Bus Rodeo – An annual competition in which transit bus drivers demonstrate skills, such as emergency stops and maneuvers.

Capital cost – The cost of equipment and facilities required to support transportation systems: vehicles, radios, shelters, etc.

Carpool – See ridesharing.

Charter service – Transportation service offered to the public on an exclusive group basis. It is provided with a vehicle that is licensed to render charter service and engage at a specific price for the trip or a period of time, usually on a reservation or contractual basis.

Commercial Driver's License (CDL) – A special operating license for drivers of certain types of vehicles based on the weight and seating capacity.

Commuter service – Express transit service generally connecting residential areas and activity centers via a high speed, non-stop connection.

Coordination – A cooperative arrangement among transportation providers and/or purchasers, which is aimed at realizing increased benefits through the shared management and/or operation of one or more transportation-related function.

Cost effectiveness – The ratio of the cost of a transit system to the level of service provided. Various measures may be used to determine cost effectiveness, as an example, cost per passenger trip.

Dedicated funding source – A funding source, which by law, is available for use only to support a specific purpose and cannot be diverted to other uses; e.g., the federal gasoline tax can only be used for highway investments and, since 1983, for transit capital projects.

Demand response/ dial-a-ride service – A transportation service characterized by flexible routing and scheduling of relatively small vehicles to provide door-to-door or point-to-point transportation at the user's demand.

Fare – The payment for a ride on a passenger vehicle, whether cash, tokens, transfer or pass.

Fare box – A device that accepts coins, bills, tickets and tokens given by passengers as payment for rides.

Fare box recovery ratio – Total fare revenue divided by the total operating cost.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – An operating administration within the United States Department of Transportation that administers the federal programs providing financial assistance to public transit.

Fixed route – Transportation service operated over a set route or network of routes on a regular time schedule.

Flexible fixed route – See route deviation.

Funding classification – Greater Minnesota transit services are categorized according to the following classifications in Minnesota Statutes 174.22:

- **Rural** – A county or multi-county transit system serving a geographic area primarily with populations under 2,500 or a stand alone transit system within a city of less than 2,500 people.
- **Small Urban** – A stand alone transit system within a city of between 2,500 and 50,000 people.
- **Urbanized** – A transit system within a metropolitan area with populations greater than 50,000.
- **ADA complementary paratransit** – Described in Minnesota State Statutes as Elderly and Disabled. Demand Response service for persons with disabilities in geographic areas where fixed route services are provided.

Intercity bus service – Transportation between metropolitan areas and rural areas, traveling over long distances, via an over-the-road coach with luggage space.

Light rail transit (LRT) – A metropolitan electric railway system characterized by its ability to operate single cars or short trains along exclusive right-of-way at ground level, on aerial structures or in subways.

Marketing – A comprehensive process to induce greater usage of transportation services by determining the needs or demand of the community and potential customers, developing and implementing service on the basis of these needs, pricing the services, promoting the services and evaluating the services as implemented in relation to customer needs and marketing goals.

Motor vehicle sales tax (MVST) – A source of revenue for Minnesota public transit. The percentages of this revenue source designated for metropolitan area and Greater Minnesota transit are defined in Minnesota Statutes, Section 297B.09.

Operating expenditures – The recurring costs of providing transit service; e.g., wages, salaries, fuel, oil, taxes, maintenance, depreciation, insurance, marketing, etc.

Operating deficit – Total operating expenditures minus total operating revenue.

Operating revenue – The total revenue earned by a transit agency through its transit operations. It includes passenger fares, advertising and other revenue.

Total operating cost – The total of all operating costs incurred during the transit system calendar year, excluding expenses associated with capital grants.

Paratransit – A flexible form of public transportation service that is not provided over a fixed-route; it is a demand responsive service.

Park and ride facility – A common location; e.g., parking lot, for individuals to park their personal vehicle and board a high occupancy travel mode such as a commuter train or bus.

Pass – A means of transit payment, usually a pre-paid card that is displayed to a bus driver in lieu of cash for the fare.

Peak period – The hours when traffic or passenger demand is the greatest.

Public transportation – Transportation service that is available to any person upon payment of the fare either directly, subsidized by public policy, or through some contractual arrangement, and which cannot be reserved for the private or exclusive use of one individual or group. “Public” in this sense refers to the access to the service, not to the ownership of the system that provides the service.

Ridership – The total of all revenue passengers, transfer passengers on second/successive rides and free ride passengers.

Total passengers – See ridership.

Passenger trip – A measure for one person making a one-way trip from origin to destination. One round trip equals two passenger trips.

Ridesharing – A form of transportation, other than public transit, in which more than one person shares the use of a vehicle, such as a van or car, to make a trip. Variations include carpooling or vanpooling.

Revenue hours – The number of transit vehicle hours when passengers are being transported. Calculated by taking the total time when a vehicle is available to the general public and there is an expectation of carrying passengers. Excludes deadhead hours, but includes recovery/layover time.

Route deviation – Transportation service operating on a standard route along a public right-of-way, from which it may deviate from time to time, in response to a demand for its service or to take a passenger to a destination, after which it returns to its standard route.

Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that provides funds for training, technical assistance, research and other support services for rural transit providers.

SAFETEA-LU – The federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, which was signed into law in August 2005. SAFETEA-LU addresses transportation challenges such as improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity and protecting the environment.

Section 5303 (Metropolitan Planning Program) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that provides financial assistance to metropolitan planning organizations that are responsible for conducting planning activities and technical assistance for public transit services. The program is expected to support the basic transportation planning process underway in urbanized areas, including capital planning, financial planning and operations-related planning essential to the provision of transit services.

Section 5304 (State Transportation and Planning Program) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that provides financial assistance to the states for purposes of planning, technical studies and assistance, demonstrations, management training and cooperative research activities.

Section 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula Program) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that authorizes grants to public transit systems in urban areas with populations of more than 50,000 for both capital and operating projects. Based on population and density figures, these funds are distributed directly to the transit agency from the FTA.

Section 5309 (Capital Program) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that authorizes discretionary capital assistance for major capital needs, such as fleet replacement and construction of transit facilities.

Section 5310 (Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Capital Program) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that provides grant funds for the purchase of accessible vehicles and related support equipment for private non-profit organizations to serve elderly and/or disabled people, public bodies that coordinate services for elderly and disabled, or any public body that certifies to the state that non-profits in the area are not readily available to carry out the services.

Section 5311 (Non-urbanized Area Formula Program) – The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that authorizes grants to public transit systems in non-urbanized areas (fewer than 50,000 population). The funds initially go to the governor of each state. In Minnesota, MnDOT administers these funds.

Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute - JARC) – A formula-based federally funded program established under SAFETEA-LU and administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The goal of the JARC grant program is to improve access to transportation services to employment and employment-related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to transport residents of urbanized areas and non-urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities.

Section 5317 (New Freedom - NF) – A formula-based federally funded program established under SAFETEA-LU and administered by the Federal Transit Administration . The goal of the New Freedom grant program is to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the workforce and full participation in society.

Service area – The geographic area that coincides with a transit system’s legal operating limits; e.g., city limits, county boundary, etc.

Service hours – See revenue hours.

Service span – The duration of time that service is made available or operated during the course of the service day; e.g., 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Special transportation services (STS) – Transportation provided by a carrier on a regular basis designed to serve individuals who are elderly, handicapped or disabled and are unable to use regular types of transportation. In Minnesota, carriers must be certified by the Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations before providing transportation. Terms and conditions for STS service are in MnDOT’s Special Transportation Service Rules, Parts 8840.5100 through 8840.6300.

Subscription service – Transportation service in which routes and schedules are prearranged to meet the needs of riders who sign up for the service in advance.

TIGER – The TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) multimodal discretionary program was included in the ARRA program to support major capital infrastructure investments for highways, transit, aviation and ports.

TIGGER – The TIGGER (Transportation Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction) discretionary grant program was included in ARRA to assist in reducing the energy consumption or greenhouse gas emissions of public transportation systems.

Transit – Transportation by bus, rail or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, that provides general or special service on a regular and continuing basis. The term includes fixed-route and paratransit services as well as ridesharing. Also known as mass transportation or mass transit.

Transit dependent – A description for someone who does not have immediate access to a private vehicle, or because of age or health reasons cannot drive and must rely on others for transportation.

Vanpool – See ridesharing.

Vehicle Classification – MnDOT classifies transit vehicles according to the following categories:

- **Class 300** – A small-size light-duty transit bus approximately 16-22 feet long with a raised roof/single or dual rear wheels (up to 12,500 gross vehicle weight rating).
- **Class 400** – A medium-size light-duty transit bus approximately 20-30 feet long with a raised roof/dual rear wheels (12,300-16,000 gross vehicle weight rating).
- **Class 500** – A medium-size medium-duty transit bus approximately 25-40 feet long (17,000-24,000 gross vehicle weight rating).
- **Class 600** – A medium-size heavy-duty transit bus approximately 25-40 feet long (21,000-32,000 gross vehicle weight rating).
- **Class 700** – A large-size heavy-duty transit bus/over-the-road bus approximately 30 feet and longer with a rear mounted engine.