

MVRPC 5310 Allowable Project Categories, Regional Funding Priorities, and Financial Obligations

In the Miami Valley, the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) was named the Designated Recipient of 5310 funds by the Governor of the State of Ohio. In that capacity, MVRPC oversees the distribution of 5310 funds in our Region. The FAST Act (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) allows each Region to determine how to best use 5310 funds to enhance access to the community for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This is done with the cooperation of the Human Services Transportation Coordination Council (HSTC). The majority of funding from this fiscal year is proposed to be used to purchase vehicles to be operated by local non-profits or transit agencies.

1. Allowable Project Categories

Below are the four categories of projects recommended for funding through the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5310 program. A detailed breakdown of specific projects and requested funding amounts is available in the Program of Projects, also available on this website.

Accessible Vehicles: A variety of non-profit agencies in the Miami Valley, including senior centers and agencies which provide services to individuals with disabilities, operate accessible vehicles to provide transportation to medical appointments, job opportunities, grocery stores and other programs and services. The 5310 program was historically designed to support the vehicle needs of these agencies to make the community more accessible to seniors and individuals with disabilities. There are many agencies in our Region which have demonstrated that they provide safe and dependable transportation for these target groups.

At least 55% of the regional allocation is required by federal statute to be used for "traditional projects" which includes acquiring vehicles to be operated by non-profits or local government agencies. Vehicles are an eligible capital expense funded at 80% by the FTA with a 20% local match that will be the responsibility of the operating agency. Specific vehicle requests are described in the program of projects and the proposed locations of requested vehicles are shown on the accompanying map.

Operating Expenses: Expenses for new public transportation services and alternatives beyond those required by the ADA, designed to assist individuals with disabilities and seniors are allowable with a 50% federal match. At this time project funding for Operating Expenses has not been requested.

Mobility Management: Section 5310 can provide support for mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. Mobility management techniques may enhance transportation access for populations beyond those served by one agency or organization within a community. Mobility management is intended to build coordination among existing

public transit providers and other transportation service providers with the result of expanding the availability of service. Mobility Managers also provide individual transportation planning and counseling to transportation disadvantaged individuals and can provide travel training to individuals and groups. Mobility management is an eligible capital cost funded at 80% by the FTA. Currently, Mobility Management activities are being carried out by GDRTA and Greene CATS. These funds will be used to extend these mobility management activities as needed, or to develop new mobility management programs.

Project Administration: As the Designated Recipient of this funding, MVRPC receives 10% of the regional allocation to administer the 5310 program.

These responsibilities include:

- Convening the Regional Transportation Coordination Council
- Updating the Coordinated Plan to include new providers and projects
- Conducting the solicitation for funding and evaluating requests for funding
- Monitoring and reporting on the use of vehicles purchased with these funds
- Ensuring participating agencies meet the requirements of the program, including driver training, vehicle maintenance, and other requirements as identified by the FTA.

Administrative funds are funded at 100% by the Federal Transit Administration

Additional information about allowable expenses can be found at the FTA's Website, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>.

2. Regional Section 5310 Funding Priorities

The Designated Recipient (MVRPC), in consultation with the Greater Dayton RTA, the Direct Recipient, has established the following priorities for allocating section 5310 funds:

Priority 1: Capital Expenditures to maintain or improve access to the community for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

- a) *Replacement of 5310 vehicles for current 5310 agencies in good standing.** Vehicles which have outlived their useful life will be replaced on a regular basis to maintain the safety and reliability of service. Documentation that a current vehicle has met, or will soon meet, the useful life criteria will be required when applying for replacement vehicles. When an agency is replacing a vehicle currently titled to ODOT, evidence will be required that the agency has applied, or will soon apply, to ODOT for disposition of the current vehicle. Agencies can choose to continue operating the vehicle being replaced or to dispose of it an appropriate manner.

Agencies requesting replacement vehicles will need to document that their current fleet is being well-utilized in terms of mileage and passenger trips. The agency must also be an active participant in the coordination process as demonstrated by participation in the

HSTC Council and responsiveness to requests for information. All replacement vehicles will be selected from the vehicle options available during that fiscal year. Priority 1 requests also include preventive maintenance, in-vehicle communication, dispatching and tracking equipment such as radios, mobile data terminals, GPS and vehicle monitoring systems for both new and existing 5310 vehicles.

- b) *Infrastructure enhancements which improve access to fixed route transit when those enhancements go beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.* This can include sidewalk completion and repair, addition of curb cuts, accessible pedestrian signals, pedestrian refuge islands and other improvements that make fixed route a better option for people with disabilities. 5310 funds cannot be used when the improvements are required ADA components of a larger project. NOTE: There is a separate application process for infrastructure projects. Please contact Kim Lahman at 937.531.6531 if interested.

Priority 2: Expansion vehicles for current 5310 agencies in good standing

- If adequate funding is available after funding all qualified Priority 1 requests, currently participating agencies in good standing may be awarded expansion vehicles to address unmet needs which have been identified and documented by the agency or by the HSTC Council. Agencies requesting expansion vehicles will have to document their current vehicles are meeting mileage and passenger targets and that the agency is an active participant in the coordination process.

Agencies will have to demonstrate they have the administrative capacity and operating resources to expand services and that the need for additional service has been documented. A service plan outlining how the expansion vehicle will be used and how many additional clients will be served will be submitted at the time of the request. Projections of additional one-way rides must be included in the request. Service expansion can include geographical expansion, service to a new or growing eligible client group, and expansion of hours and/or days of operation.

Priority 3: Replacement or expansion vehicles for agencies not currently participating in the 5310 program, but which are already providing transportation to the target populations.

- Qualified nonprofit agencies or certain local government entities not currently participating in the 5310 program can also apply for vehicles. These vehicles can be either replacements for non-5310 vehicles which are currently providing service to the target population, or they can be expansion vehicles to meet an identified need that is not currently being met (a need such as a geographic area, specific population, or a time period not currently being adequately served.) New agencies must demonstrate that they have the financial resources and administrative capacity to provide the proposed service and that they have an operational plan to deliver the service. New applicants must be active participants in the HSTC Council. New applicants must become familiar with and

agree to follow all Federal Transit Administration guidelines relating to the Section 5310 program.

Priority 4: Expansion vehicles for agencies not currently providing transportation to target populations, but which have identified a gap in service that they believe they can fill in an efficient and effective manner.

These agencies must become active members of the HSTC Council. Agencies must also be willing to become knowledgeable of the 5310 process and the challenges and expenses involved in providing transportation to the target populations. New applicants must plan well ahead before requesting funding. Agencies will need to attend quarterly coordination meetings for at least one year before applying. An agency representative will participate in site visits, ride alongs, vehicle inspections and become familiar with reporting and record keeping requirements before, or in parallel with, making a request for funding.

Any award would be based on an operational plan, including descriptions of the target population and target geography, types and numbers of trips, etc. to ensure adequate usage and coordination of efforts. A compelling case must be made that the new entity is in the best position to fill the identified gap in service.

All **Priority 1** funding requests will be considered before **Priority 2** requests are considered. If adequate funding is available after all qualified **Priority 1** projects are funded, **Priority 2** requests will be considered for funding. Consideration will then be extended to **Priority 3** and **Priority 4** projects, in that order. If adequate funding is not available to fill all qualified requests within Priority 2, 3, and 4, the projects in each priority category will be competitively ranked against each other until all available funding is expended.

***In Good Standing Status: Currently Participating Agencies**

The following criteria will be used to determine the Good Standing status of agencies:

1. The agency is a registered 501c3 in the state of Ohio, or a local government entity.
2. The agency is an active member of the HSTC Council, having consistent representation at quarterly meetings of that body.
3. The agency can demonstrate adequate usage in terms of riders and mileage for the vehicles currently serving Section 5310 target populations (seniors and/or people with disabilities).
4. The agency has submitted all required reporting.
5. Records of adequate preventive maintenance on any currently operating 5310 vehicles are available.
6. Records of an adequate driver screening and training process are kept on all active drivers. Agencies can choose to participate in driver screening and training offered through the coordination process, or can purchase equivalent services elsewhere.

3. Financial Obligations and Arrangements

Agencies which are awarded vehicles will provide a 20% local match in advance of the placed order. The agency will enter into a use agreement with GDRTA, and the 20% local share will represent payment in full for the life of that agreement. The receiving agency will operate the vehicle to meet the goals of the 5310 program in accordance with guidance provided by the Federal Transit Administration:

https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/C9070_1G_FINAL_circular_4-20-15%281%29.pdf .

All operating agencies are required to maintain adequate levels of insurance on vehicles. The recipient Agency must continue to provide vehicle insurance, with the Greater Dayton Transit Authority named as the additional insured. The Agency must furnish GDRTA with a Certificate of Insurance yearly, specifically noting the vehicle covered.

Agencies must maintain the vehicles appropriately. Adequate preventive maintenance will be documented and records kept for all maintenance done on program vehicles. These records must be made available if requested by the GDRTA, the MVRPC, or the FTA. Physical inspections of the vehicles will be required no less than annually. Inspections may take place at a GDRTA maintenance facility or at the operating agency's place of business. Location of inspections will be at GDRTA's discretion.