



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Bicycles and Transit



The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) does not have one specific program focusing on bicycle transportation, however, many of its programs support bicycling and bicycle infrastructure improvements which lead to greater access to public transportation. Linking bicycles and transit together is a win-win proposition. Bicycle friendly transit provides cyclists with increased options for travel, and it also expands transit ridership. Together, bicycles and public transportation can help establish more livable communities. Across the country, enhancing bicycle access to transit is a key ingredient for achieving goals for improved mobility, livability, and transit service.

Funding bicycle and pedestrian facilities that provide access to public transportation is an important way for FTA to foster livable communities. According to Secretary LaHood, “[l]ivable communities are mixed-use neighborhoods with highly-connected streets promoting mobility for all users, whether they are children walking or biking to school or commuters riding transit or driving motor vehicles. Benefits include improved traffic flow, shorter trip lengths, safer streets for pedestrians and cyclists, lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduced dependence on fossil fuels, increased trip-chaining, and independence for those who prefer not to or are unable to drive.

Providing safe, secure parking and other amenities for bicycles and cyclists at public transportation stops or stations can be much less expensive than providing parking for automobiles. Access to public transportation allows bicyclists the opportunity to make longer trips. Where physical conditions prevent a continuous bicycle trip, public transportation can provide a link to previously inaccessible destinations.

The Federal share of transit enhancement grants linking bicycles and transit can be up to 95%. While non-bicycle related transit enhancement grants receive the usual 80%.

One percent of Urbanized Area Formula program funds apportioned to urbanized areas with populations of at least 200,000 are set aside for transit enhancements. Eligible transit enhancement projects include pedestrian access and walkways, bicycle access, including bicycle storage facilities and installing equipment for transporting bicycles on public transportation vehicles. As an added incentive, the Federal share of transit enhancement grants covers 90 percent of the cost of the project. If the project involves providing bicycle access to public transportation, the grant or portion of that grant may be at a Federal share of 95 percent.

For purposes of determining whether a pedestrian or bicycle improvement has a physical or functional relationship to public transportation, regardless of whether it is funded as a capital project or public transportation enhancement, all pedestrian improvements located within one-half mile and all bicycle improvements located within three miles of a public transportation stop or station shall have a de facto physical and functional relationship to public transportation. According to a test of activity and use, pedestrian and bicycle improvements beyond these threshold distances may be eligible for FTA funding if the improvement is within the distance most people can be expected to safely and conveniently walk or bicycle to use that particular transit service.

Capital Improvements for Bicycle Access

Federal Transit Law at 49 U.S.C. § 5302 provides support for key bicycle and pedestrian provisions. Within the capital project definitions, it states, “A public transportation improvement including...pedestrian and bicycle access to a public transportation facility” eligible for FTA funding.

This means FTA capital programs can fund planning for bicycle-transit integration, access to a public transportation station or stop, sidewalks and multi-use paths, bike parking at a public transportation station or stops, bicycle storage facilities, bike storage on transit vehicles, and/or bike hooks on trains, bike racks on buses, etc.

Projects that improve bicycle access to public transportation services, facilities and/or vehicles are eligible for funding from programs administered by FTA. FTA’s principal funding programs are the Urbanized Area Formula Program and the Formula Program for Non-Urbanized Areas.

Under these programs many activities which support bicycling can be pursued through Transit Enhancements, including, but not limited to:

- Bicycle access, including bicycle storage facilities and installing equipment for transporting bicycles on mass transportation vehicles;
- pedestrian access and walkways;
- historic preservation, rehabilitation, and operation of historic mass transportation buildings, structures, and facilities (including historic bus and railroad facilities and canals);
- bus shelters;
- landscaping and other scenic beautification;
- public art.

For more information, please see:
<http://www.fta.dot.gov/>



Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Program & Bicycle Related Funding Opportunities

Program Name	Statute (Title 49)	Funding Type	Eligible Recipients	Program Purpose	Eligible Bicycle Activities	Federal Share for Bicycle Activities
Metropolitan & Statewide Planning	5303, 5304, 5305	Formula	State Departments of Transportation & Metropolitan Planning Organizations	Statewide and metropolitan coordinated transportation planning.	Planning for bicycle facilities in a state or metropolitan transportation network.	Not specified.
Urbanized Area Formula Program	5307	Formula	Transit Authorities and state DOTs, with funding for operators of eligible services	Capital and planning for public transportation in metropolitan areas with over 50,000 residents.	Bicycle routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	Bicycle projects receive a 95% federal share for the first 1% of program funds in large urban areas. Additional projects receive a 90% federal share.
Clean Fuels Grant Program	5308	Discretionary	Same as above	Supports the use of alternative fuels in areas with air quality below federal standards	None	None
Major Capital Investments (New Starts & Small Starts)	5309	Discretionary	Same as above	Major capital investments in new fixed guideway systems, such as rail or bus rapid transit	Bicycle routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	Bicycle projects receive a 90% federal share.
Fixed Guideway Modernization	5309	Formula	Same as above	Support for maintaining and enhancing existing fixed guideway transit systems	Bicycle routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	Bicycle projects receive a 90% federal share.
Bus and Bus Facilities	5309, 5318	Discretionary	Same as above	Support for maintaining and enhancing existing bus transit systems	Bicycle routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	Bicycle projects receive a 90% federal share.
Transportation for Elderly Person and Persons with Disabilities	5310	Formula	Transit Authorities and state DOTs, with funding for operators of eligible services	Transportation services for older adults and persons with disabilities	Bicycle improvements that provide access to an eligible public transportation facility.	Bicycle projects receive an 80% federal share.
Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas	5311	Formula	States, local governments, and providers of rural transit services	Capital and operating expenses to support rural transit service	Bicycle routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	Bicycle projects receive a 90% federal share.
Rural Transit Assistance Program	5311(b)(3)	Formula	States, local governments, and providers of rural transit services	Training, technical assistance, research, and support for rural transit services.	Technical assistance in improving bicycle access to rural transit services.	None
Public Transportation on Indian Reservations	(5311(c))	Discretionary	Federally-recognized tribes	Capital and operating expenses for public transit service for tribal areas.	Bicycle routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	Bicycle projects receive a 90% federal share.
Over-the-Road Bus Program	Pub. L 109-059	Discretionary	Private firms operating intercity and over-the-road tour bus services	Installation costs of accessibility equipment on over-the-road buses.	None	None
National Research & Technology Program	5314	Discretionary	Varied recipients	Research and development of nationally-significant public transportation technology.	None	None
Job Access and Reverse Commute Program	5316	Discretionary	Transit Authorities and state DOTs, with funding for operators of eligible services	Public transportation for low income individuals to and from jobs and for reverse commute	Bicycle improvements that provide access to an eligible public transportation facility.	Bicycle projects receive an 80% federal share.
New Freedom Program	5317	Discretionary	Transit Authorities and state DOTs, with funding for operators of eligible services	Public transportation services for the disabled, beyond American with Disabilities Act requirements	Bicycle improvements that provide access to an eligible public transportation facility.	Bicycle projects receive an 80% federal share.
Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program	5320	Discretionary	Federal land management agencies and state, local or tribal governments	Alternative transportation in National Parks, Forests and other federal recreation lands.	Bicycle facilities that provide alternatives to private vehicle use in federal lands	Alternative transportation projects, including bicycle facilities, receive up to a 100% federal share.
Alternatives Analysis	5339	Discretionary	State DOTs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other planning agencies	Planning for major capital investments	Consideration of bicycle factors for major capital investments	Not specified.
University Transportation Centers Program	TEA-21 5505	Discretionary	Research Universities	Public transportation research and education	Research may address bicycle access and integration with public transportation.	Not specified.
TIGGER Program	Pub. L. 111-68	Discretionary	Transit Authorities, states, and tribes responsible for public transportation service	Capital investments to reduce transit energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions	None	Not specified.