



A Resource Guide

Federal Funding for Transportation Programs Serving Older Adults and People with Disabilities

This Resource Guide provides an inventory of federal grants that may be used to serve the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

Introduction

The need for affordable, reliable and accessible transportation is increasing as the population of older adults and people with disabilities continues to grow. Funding to develop and expand community transportation options remains an ongoing and critical need. This Resource Guide focuses on federal funding resources that may be used to support transportation programs that meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

Primary federal funding sources that support transportation for older adults and people with disabilities

Transportation programs typically use a variety of funding options to support growing community transportation needs. According to the [NADTC National Survey of Transportation Providers](https://www.nadtc.org/wp-content/uploads/KRC-NADTC-Survey-Report-24June2020.pdf)¹, published in 2020 based on data collected in 2019, transportation providers serving older adults and people with disabilities use a patchwork of as many as eleven sources of funding. The primary sources of transportation funding identified by the providers who responded to the survey are the United States Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) and funds from the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) that are administered by the Administration on Aging (AOA) in the Administration for Community Living (ACL) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Additional major federal funding sources used by these programs are FTA's Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program (Section 5311), which provides funding for public transportation to rural areas, and the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which funds non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) for Medicaid beneficiaries.

¹ National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, National Survey of Transportation Providers, <https://www.nadtc.org/wp-content/uploads/KRC-NADTC-Survey-Report-24June2020.pdf>.

Federal funding for transportation may be categorized as either formula or competitive grants, defined as follows:

- **Federal formula grants:** Allocations of federal funding to states, territories, or local units of government determined by distribution formulas in the authorizing legislation and regulations. To receive a formula grant, the entity must meet all the eligibility criteria for the program, which are pre-determined and not open to discretionary funding decisions.
- **Federal competitive or discretionary grants:** A grant (or cooperative agreement) for which the federal awarding agency generally may select the recipient from among all eligible recipients, may decide to make or not make an award based on the programmatic, technical, or scientific content of an application, and can decide the amount of funding to be awarded.²

Federal Transportation Funding Options

The list of federal transportation funding options that may support programs that serve older adults and people with disabilities discussed in this guide is thorough but not all-inclusive. The guide identifies the federal programs most often used by local communities to target their services to older adults and people with disabilities. A more comprehensive listing, the [CCAM Program Inventory](#)³, was published by the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) in 2019.

Local Match

Most federal funding programs have a match requirement. The more well-known sources of allowable monetary match, including state or local appropriations, private donations and tax revenues, may not be sufficient or available in some communities that are seeking federal transportation funding. However, transportation programs may also use non-U.S. Department of Transportation federal funds to meet match requirements. Federal fund “braiding” allows grant recipients to use funds from one federal program to meet the match requirements of another. A [Federal Fund Braiding Guide](#)⁴ from the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility provides valuable information on acceptable federal fund “braiding” arrangements that may be used for transportation-related projects.

Funding Options

Each program listed below includes a brief description and link to the relevant website where additional information may be found. With noted exceptions, funding options are listed in alphabetical order.

² Grants.gov, Grant Terminology, <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grant-terminology.html>.

³ Federal Transit Administration, CCAM Program Inventory, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/ccam/about/ccam-program-inventory>.

⁴ Federal Transit Administration, CCAM Federal Fund Braiding Guide, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/ccam/about/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility-ccam-federal-fund>.

I. U.S. Department of Transportation Formula Funding Programs

Federal Transit Administration

Transportation programs funded by the Federal Transit Administration in the Department of Transportation. In this section, programs are listed in order based on the U.S.C. code.

- **Urbanized Area Formula Grants**⁵ (49 U.S.C. 5307) provides funding to urbanized areas (population of 50,000 or more) and to governors for public transportation capital, operating assistance and transportation planning in urbanized areas.
- **Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities**⁶ (49 U.S.C. 5310) program provides formula funding to states to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit and improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options in all areas—large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000).
- **Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program**⁷ (49 U.S.C. 5311) provides capital, planning and operating assistance to states and federally recognized Indian tribes to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000. Funds are apportioned to states based on a formula that includes land area, population, revenue vehicle miles and low-income individuals in rural areas.
- **Tribal Transit Formula Grants**⁸ (49 U.S.C. 5311(c)(1)(B)) provides funding to federally recognized Indian tribes to provide public transportation services on and around Indian reservations or tribal lands in rural areas. FTA apportions Tribal Transit funds to Indian tribes by a statutory formula using the National Transit Database (NTD) and U.S. Census Bureau data.
- **Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program**⁹ (49 U.S.C. 5339(a)) makes federal resources available to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities. Funding is provided to states and transit agencies through a statutory formula.

II. U.S. Department of Transportation Competitive Funding Programs

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

FTA occasionally releases competitive grant opportunities. The programs profiled here may be of interest to transportation programs that serve older adults and people with disabilities. To learn about new grant opportunities as they become available, sign up for alerts on the [FTA's website](#)¹⁰

5 Federal Transit Administration, Urbanized Formula Grants - 5307, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/urbanized-area-formula-grants-5307>.

6 Federal Transit Administration, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>.

7 Federal Transit Administration, Formula Grants for Rural Areas - 5311, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/rural-formula-grants-5311>.

8 Federal Transit Administration, Tribal Transit Formula Grants - 5311(c)(1)(B), <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/tribal-transit-formula-grants-5311c1b>.

9 Federal Transit Administration, Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program - 5339(a), <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/busprogram>.

10 Federal Transit Administration, Funding, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding>.

to be notified when grant opportunities are released or visit the [Federal Grant Opportunities](#)¹¹ on NADTC's website.

- [Accelerating Innovative Mobility \(AIM\)](#)¹² program provides funding to transit agencies to improve transit financing, system design and service to enhance the rider experience. This initiative supports innovative approaches to promote accessibility and equitable transit.
- [Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone \(HOPE\)](#)¹³ program supports projects that will address the transportation challenges faced by rural areas of persistent poverty (an area of persistent poverty is a county with 20 percent or more of the population living in poverty over the 30 years preceding the date of enactment of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020). Awards are made to improve transit services or facilities in areas of persistent poverty through planning, engineering, technical studies, or financial plans.
- [Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants \(ICAM\)](#)¹⁴ provide competitive funding to support innovative transportation projects for the transportation disadvantaged that will improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation services. Competitive funding to support innovative transportation projects for the transportation disadvantaged will improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation services.
- [Integrated Mobility Innovation \(IMI\)](#)¹⁵ program supports projects that demonstrate innovative and effective practices, partnerships and technologies to enhance public transportation effectiveness, increase efficiency, expand quality, promote safety and improve the traveler experience.
- [Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Program; Tribal Transit Competitive Program \(TTP\)](#)¹⁶ (Section 5311(c) (1)(A)) provides funding to federally recognized Indian Tribes to provide public transportation services on and around Indian reservations or tribal land in rural areas. The TTP is a set-aside from the Formula Grants for Rural Areas program subject to the availability of appropriations. FTA apportions Tribal Transit funds to Indian tribes by a statutory formula using the National Transit Database (NTD) and the Census Bureau data.

III. U.S Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging

The programs described below may include transportation among a broader array of supportive services funded under the Older Americans Act.

11 National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, Federal Grant Opportunities, <https://www.nadtc.org/grants-funding/other-federal-grant-opportunities>.

12 Federal Transit Administration, Accelerating Innovative Mobility, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/AIM>.

13 Federal Transit Administration, Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/HOPE>.

14 Federal Transit Administration, Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/grant-programs/access-and-mobility-partnership-grants>.

15 Federal Transit Administration, Integrated Mobility Innovation, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/IMI>.

16 Federal Transit Administration, Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Program, Tribal Transit Competitive Program, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/tribal-transit>.

- **Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III-B**¹⁷ authorizes AAAs to provide a range of home and community-based services (HCBS) to older adults, including transportation services, which is an optional service. For AAAs, Title III-B is often their primary source of funding for transportation services. These funds are flexible and can be used for both medical and nonmedical transportation. The Administration for Community Living allocates Title-III B funds to state aging and disability agencies based on their proportion of the population aged 60 and older. Each state agency then awards funds to local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).
- **Older Americans Act (OAA) Title VI**¹⁸ supports the delivery of home and community-based services (HCBS), including nutrition services, support for family and informal caregivers and transportation. These supportive services are targeted to elders of Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Tribal organizations. To be eligible for funding, Tribal organizations of federally recognized Tribes must represent at least 50 Native American elders aged 60 and over. Formula grants for the Services for Native Americans programs are allocated to Tribal organizations based on their share of the American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian population aged 60 and over in their services area.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Medicaid funds may be used to provide transportation to Medicaid beneficiaries as specified below.

- **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)**¹⁹ program provides funding through the Medicaid program for non-emergency medical transportation to and from medical services (including doctor's appointments, dialysis and chemotherapy) for beneficiaries. Medicaid is jointly financed by CMS and state funds. Beneficiaries are older adults, people with disabilities and individuals with low income. States may also choose to cover transportation as an optional service provided under a Medicaid 1915(c) home and community-based services waiver.

IV. AmeriCorps

- **AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP**²⁰ provides grants to qualified agencies and organizations for the dual purpose of engaging persons aged 55 and older in volunteer service to meet critical community needs. RSVP Competition grants are awarded on a cost-reimbursement basis. Funding is subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

17 Administration for Community Living, Older Americans Act, <https://acl.gov/about-acl/authorizing-statutes/older-americans-act>.

18 Administration for Community Living, Older Americans Act, <https://acl.gov/about-acl/authorizing-statutes/older-americans-act>.

19 Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services, Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT), <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare-Medicaid-Coordination/Fraud-Prevention/Medicaid-Integrity-Program/Education/Non-Emergency-Medical-Transport>.

20 AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP, <https://www.americorps.gov/partner/how-it-works/ameri-corps-seniors-rsvp>.

V. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

- [Highly Rural Transportation Grant \(HRTG\)](#)²¹ provides transportation programs for veterans in counties with fewer than seven people per square mile. There is no cost to participate in the program for veterans who live in an area where HRTG is available. The program helps veterans travel to Veterans Administration (VA) or VA-authorized health care facilities. Funds are allocated to veterans' transportation programs in counties with fewer than seven people per square mile

Additional Transportation Funding Resources

The Grants and Funding section of the NADTC website (www.nadtc.org/grants-funding-resources) provides additional information on current and recent grant opportunities. NADTC works to ensure that our website offers comprehensive and up-to-date information on funding opportunities to support transportation targeted to older adults and people with disabilities, Funding information is organized under these specific topics:

- NADTC Grants
 - Current Funding Opportunities
 - Past Opportunities
 - Awarded NADTC Grants
- Section 5310
- Federal Grant Opportunities:
 - Current Opportunities
 - Recently Closed Opportunities
 - Resources
- Non-Federal Grant Opportunities
 - Current Opportunities
 - Recently Closed Opportunities

21 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Highly Rural Transportation Grants (HRTG), https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vtp/highly_rural_transportation_grants.asp.

Organizations funded by the federal or state government and nonprofit organizations may provide support for transportation programs that address the needs of older adults and people with disabilities. For example, the [National Aging and Disability Transportation Center](#)²², [National RTAP](#)²³ and the [National Center for Mobility Management](#),²⁴ technical assistance centers funded by the Federal Transit Administration, award community grants to organizations that meet specific criteria. These grant opportunities may be available annually or less often, depending on the availability of funding. [AARP Community Challenge Grants](#)²⁵ program offers small competitive grants to community organizations to deliver a range of transportation and mobility options.

Additional Resources

- 1) [Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility \(CCAM\) Federal Fund Braiding Guide](#)²⁶
- 2) [CCAM Program Inventory](#)²⁷ identifies programs that may provide funding for human services transportation for older adults, people with disabilities and/or individuals of low income
- 3) [Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Funding Programs at USDOT](#)²⁸
- 4) [NADTC-Grants and Funding](#)²⁹
- 5) [Section 5310 Funding: An Application Checklist](#)³⁰
- 6) 2018 Trends Report Topic Spotlight: [Innovative Approaches to Section 5310 Funding Match](#)³¹

22 National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, NADTC Grants, <https://www.nadtc.org/grants-funding/nadtc-grant-opportunities>.

23 National RTAP, Community Rides Grants, <https://www.nationalrtap.org/News/Community-Rides-Grants>.

24 National Center for Mobility Management, NCMM Grants and Opportunities, <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/ncmm-grants>.

25 AARP, Community Challenge, <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/info-2022/2022-challenge.html>.

26 Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility, CCAM Federal Fund Braiding Guide, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/ccam/about/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility-ccam-federal-fund>.

27 Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility, CCAM Program Inventory, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/ccam/about/ccam-program-inventory>.

28 U.S. Department of Transportation, Applicant Toolkit for Competitive Funding Programs at USDOT, <https://www.transportation.gov/rural/grants/toolkit>.

29 National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, Grants and Funding, <https://www.nadtc.org/grants-funding>.

30 National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, Section 5310 Funding: An Application Checklist, https://www.nadtc.org/wp-content/uploads/Checklist-for-Applying-for-5310_-8.19.20-.pdf.

31 National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, 2018 Trends Report Topic Spotlight: Innovative Approaches to Section 5310 Funding Match, <https://www.nadtc.org/resources-publications/resource/2018-trends-report-topic-spotlight-volunteer-transportation-programs-2-2>.



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Who We Are

Established in 2015, the NADTC is a federally funded technical assistance center administered by Easterseals and USAging based in Washington, DC.

The **National Aging and Disability Transportation Center** is funded through a cooperative agreement of Easterseals, USAging, and the U.S Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

USAging is the 501(c)(3) national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Our members help older adults and people with disabilities throughout the United States live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities. USAging is dedicated to supporting the success of our members through advancing public policy, sparking innovation, strengthening the capacity of our members, raising their visibility and working to drive excellence in the fields of aging and home and community-based services. www.usaging.org

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