



## Glossary of Key Terms

- AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials)** - A nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. It represents all five transportation modes: air, highways, public transportation, rail, and water.
- Alternative Modes of Transportation** - Forms of transportation other than single-occupant automobiles. Examples include rail, transit, carpools, bicycles, and walking.
- Capacity** - A transportation facility's ability to accommodate a moving stream of people or vehicles in a given time period.
- Comprehensive Plan** - An official document adopted by a local or regional government that describes the general, long-range policies on how the community's future development should occur; typically covers land use, transportation, and community facilities.
- Corridor** - A broad geographical band that follows a general directional flow connecting major sources of trips that may contain a number of streets, highways, and transit route alignments.
- Department of Transportation (DOT)** - When used in conjunction with a State name, refers to the state agency responsible for planning, building, and maintaining all state roads.
- Design-build** - A procurement or project delivery arrangement whereby a single entity (a contractor with subconsultants, or team of contractors and engineers, often with subconsultants) is entrusted with both design and construction of a project. This contrasts with traditional procurement where one contract is bid for the design phase and then a second contract is bid for the construction phase of the project.
- Environment** - Used alone, refers to both the natural and man-made elements of our surroundings.
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** - Report developed as part of the National Environmental Policy Act requirements, which details any adverse economic, social, and environmental effects of a proposed transportation project for which Federal funding is being sought. Adverse effects could include air, water, or noise pollution; destruction or disruption of natural resources; adverse employment effects; injurious displacement of people or businesses; or disruption of a desirable community or regional growth.
- Environmental Justice (EJ)** - Environmental justice assures that services and benefits allow for meaningful participation and are fairly distributed to avoid discrimination. There are three fundamental environmental justice principles: (1) to avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations; (2) to ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and (3) to prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** - The Federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing Federal environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and others.
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** - A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the Federal-Aid Highway Program and provides financial assistance to States to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges. It administers the highway transportation programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation under pertinent legislation.
- Fixed-Route Service** - Term applied to transit service that is regularly scheduled and operates over a set route; usually refers to bus service.
- Fixed Guideway** - A mass transportation facility using and occupying a separate right of way or rail for the exclusive use of mass transportation vehicles or other high-occupancy vehicles.



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- Geographic Information System (GIS)** - Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information. GIS can display attributes and analyze results electronically in map form.
- High-Occupancy Toll Lane (HOT Lane)** - A vehicle lane reserved for high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs), but may be used by low- or single-occupancy vehicles upon payment of a toll.
- High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)** - Vehicles carrying two or more people. The number that constitutes an HOV for the purposes of HOV highway lanes may be designated differently by different transportation agencies.
- Infrastructure** - In the transportation planning context, physical structures that serve as transportation facilities.
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)** - The application of advanced technologies to improve the efficiency and safety of current and future transportation systems.
- Intermodal** - The ability to connect, and the connections between, modes of transportation.
- Land Use** - Refers to the manner in which portions of land or the structures on them are used, i.e., commercial, residential, retail, and industrial.
- Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** - A document resulting from regional or statewide collaboration and consensus on a region or state's transportation system, and serving as the defining vision for the region's or state's transportation systems and services. In metropolitan areas, the plan indicates all of the transportation improvements scheduled for funding over a minimum of the next 20 years.
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** - Regional policy body, required in urbanized areas with populations over 50,000, and designated by local officials and the governor of the State. Responsible for cooperating with the State and other transportation providers for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning requirements of Federal highway and transit legislation.
- Mode** - A specific form of transportation, such as automobile, subway, bus, rail, or air.
- Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)** - A group of persons from diverse professions and viewpoints, organized to represent a range of interests and to combine skills to produce a plan or project.
- Multimodal** - The availability of transportation options using different modes within a system or corridor.
- NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act)** - Legislation passed in 1969 that established a national environmental policy requiring that any project using Federal funding or requiring Federal approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects of proposed and alternative choices on the environment before a Federal decision is made.
- Non-attainment Area** - Any geographic area that has not met the requirements for clean air as set out in the Clean Air Act of 1990.
- Paratransit** - A variety of smaller, often flexibly scheduled-and-routed transportation services using low-capacity vehicles, such as vans, to operate within normal urban transit corridors or rural areas. Services usually cater to the needs of persons for whom standard mass transit services would serve with difficulty or not at all. Common patrons are the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Project Development** - The phase a proposed project undergoes once it has been through the long-range planning process. The project development phase is a more detailed analysis of a proposed project's social, economic, and environmental impacts and various project alternatives. After a proposal has successfully passed the project development phase, it may move to preliminary engineering, design, and construction.
- Protected Population** - A group listed for consideration under environmental justice guidelines.



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**Public Participation** - The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and programs.

**Public Transit** - Passenger transportation service, usually local in scope, that is available to any person who pays a prescribed fare. It operates on established schedules along designated routes or lines with specific stops and is designed to move relatively large numbers of people at one time.

**Regional Planning Organization (RPO)** - An organization that performs planning for multijurisdictional areas. MPOs, regional councils, economic development associations, and rural transportation associations are examples of RPOs.

**Rural Planning Organization (RPO)** - An agency given the mandate to conduct transportation planning and programming for rural areas.

**SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users)** - The Federal surface transportation legislation that authorizes programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for 2005-2009.

**Stakeholders** - Person or group affected by a transportation plan, program, or project. Person or group who believes they are affected by a transportation plan, program, or project. Residents of affected geographical areas.

**Transportation Decision Making** - General term for the various institutions and processes that plan, design, and build transportation facilities and systems.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM)** - Programs designed to reduce demand for transportation through various means, such as the use of transit and alternative work hours.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** - A document prepared by a metropolitan planning organization that lists projects to be funded with FHWA/FTA funds for the next one- to three-year period.

