

## Glossary of Transit Terms

### A

**Above Grade** — The location of a structure or transit guideway above the surface of the ground (also known as elevated or aerial).

**Accessible Service** — Buses operating in regular service with wheelchair lifts, kneeling functions or other devices that permit disabled passengers to use the service.

**Accessibility** — (1) The extent to which facilities are barrier free and useable by disabled persons, including wheelchair users. (2) A measure of the ability or ease of all people to travel among various origins and destinations.

**Activity Center** - An area with high population and concentrated activities which generate a large number of trips (e.g., Central Business District, shopping centers, business or industrial parks, recreational facilities (also known as trip generator).

**Advanced Design Bus** - See Bus, Advanced Design

**Advanced Public Transportation Systems (APTS)** - Intelligent Vehicle Highway Systems (IVHS) technology that is designed to improve transit services through advanced vehicle operations, communications, customer service and market development.

**Alight** — To get off a transit vehicle. Plural: “*alightings*”.

**Alignment** — The horizontal and vertical ground plan of a roadway, railroad, transit route or other facility.

**Alternative Fuel** — A liquid or gaseous nonpetroleum fuel, used to power transit vehicles. Usually refers to alcohol fuels, mineral fuels, natural gas, and hydrogen.

**AM Peak (or PM Peak)** — The morning or evening commute period, about three hours, in which the greatest movement of passengers occurs, generally between home and work; the portion of the morning or evening service period where the greatest level of ridership is experienced and service provided.

*Synonyms: AM Rush, Early Peak, Morning Peak, Morning Rush, PM Rush, Late Peak, Evening Peak, Evening Rush, Peak Period*

**American Public Transportation Association (APTA)** - The national, nonprofit trade association representing the public transit industry. APTA members include more than 400 public transit systems, as well as state and local departments of transportation and planning agencies, manufacturers and suppliers of transit equipment, consultants, contractors and universities.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) — The law passed by Congress in 1990 which makes it illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities in employment, services provided by state and local governments, public and private transportation, public accommodations and telecommunications.

Arterial Street — A major thoroughfare, used primarily for through traffic rather than for access to adjacent land, that is characterized by high vehicular capacity and continuity of movement.

At Grade — The location of a structure or transit guideway at the same level as the ground surface.

Auto Restricted Zone (ARZ) - An area in which normal automobile traffic is prohibited or limited to certain times, and vehicular traffic is restricted to public transit, emergency vehicles, taxicabs and, in some cases, delivery of goods.

Automated Guideway - An electric railway operating without vehicle operators or other crew on board the vehicle.

Automatic Fare Collection System (AFC) - A system of controls and equipment that automatically admits passengers on insertion of the correct fare in coins, tokens, tickets or farecards; it may include special equipment for transporting and counting revenues.

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) — A system that senses, at intervals, the real-time location of transit vehicles carrying special electronic equipment that communicates a signal back to a central control facility, locating the vehicle and providing other information about its operations or about its mechanical condition.

## B

Backup Bus – Buses available to fill in for buses that experience mechanical failure. *See Spare Bus*

Base Period - The period between the morning and evening peak periods when transit service is generally scheduled on a constant interval. Also known as "off-peak period."

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.

Board — To go onto or into a transit vehicle. Plural: “*Boardings*”.

Branch — One of multiple route segments served by a single route.

Bus (Motorbus) - A rubber-tired, self-propelled, manually-steered vehicle with fuel supply carried on board the vehicle. Types include articulated, charter, circulator, double

deck, express, feeder, intercity, medium-size, sightseeing, small, standard-size, subscription, suburban, transit and van.

Bus, Articulated - A bus usually 55 feet or more in length with two connected passenger compartments that bend at the connecting point when the bus turns a corner.

Bus, Charter - A privately-owned bus transporting a group of persons who, pursuant to a common purpose, and under a single contract at a fixed price, have acquired the exclusive use of a bus to travel together under an itinerary.

Bus, Circulator - A bus serving an area confined to a specific locale, such as a downtown area or suburban neighborhood with connections to major traffic corridors.

Bus, Commuter – A bus with front doors only, normally with high-backed seats, and with or without luggage compartments or restroom facilities for use in longer-distance service with relatively few stops.

Synonym: *Commuter Coach*.

Bus, Double Deck - A bus with two separate passenger compartments, one above the other.

Bus, Express - A bus that operates a portion of the route without stops or with a limited number of stops.

Bus, Feeder - A bus service that picks up and delivers passengers to a rail rapid transit station or express bus stop or terminal.

Bus, Medium-Size - A bus from 29 to 34 feet in length.

Bus, Sightseeing - A bus adapted for sightseeing use, usually with expanded window areas.

Bus, Small - A bus 28 feet or less in length.

Bus, Standard-Size - A bus from 35 to 41 feet in length.

Bus, Subscription - A commuter bus express service operated for a guaranteed number of patrons from a given area on a prepaid, reserved-seat basis.

Bus, Transit - A bus with front and center doors, normally with a rear-mounted engine, low-back seating, and without luggage compartments or restroom facilities for use in frequent-stop service.

Bus, Trolley - An electric, rubber-tired transit vehicle, manually steered, propelled by a motor drawing current through overhead wires from a central power source not on board the vehicle. Also known as "trolley coach" or "trackless trolley."

(Bus), Van - A 20-foot long or shorter vehicle, usually with an automotive-type engine and limited seating normally entered directly through side or rear doors rather than from a central aisle, used for demand response, vanpool, and lightly patronized motorbus service.

Bus Bay — Bus berthing area in a facility such as a transit center or rail station.

Bus Discretionary Capital Federal funding granted under Section 3 of the Federal Transit Act (formerly known as the Urban Mass Transportation Act). These discretionary funds are used for bus-related construction projects or to replace, rehabilitate or purchase buses.

Bus Hours — The total hours of travel by bus, including both revenue service and deadhead travel.

Synonyms: *Vehicle Hours*

Bus Lane - A street or highway lane intended primarily for buses, either all day or during specified periods, but sometimes also used by carpools meeting requirements set out in traffic laws.

Bus Miles — The total miles of travel by bus, including both revenue and deadhead travel.

Synonyms: *Vehicle Miles*

Bus Shelter – A building or other structure constructed near a bus stop, to provide seating and protection from the weather for the convenience of waiting passengers.

Bus Stop – A place where passengers can board or alight from the bus, usually identified by a sign.

Bus Turnout — Cutout in the roadside to permit a transit vehicle to dwell at a curb.

Busway — A special roadway designed for exclusive use by buses. It may be constructed at, above, or below grade and may be located in separate rights-of-way or within highway corridors.

## C

Capital — Long-term assets, such as property, buildings, roads, rail lines, and vehicles.

Capital Assistance - Financial assistance for transit capital expenses (not operating costs); such aid may originate with federal, local or state governments.

Capital Costs — Costs of long-term assets of a public transit system such as property, buildings, vehicles, etc.

Capital Improvement Program — The list of capital projects for a five to seven year programming period.

Capital Project — Construction and/or procurement of district assets, such as transit centers, transit vehicles and track.

Captive Rider – Someone who must use public transportation for his/her travel.  
Synonym: *Transit Dependent*

Car Pool — An arrangement where people share the use and cost of a privately owned automobile in traveling to and from pre-arranged destinations.

Catenary - An overhead contact wire system which supplies power from a central power source to an electric vehicle (such as a trolley bus; see "Bus, Trolley").

Central Business District (CBD) — An area of a city that contains the greatest concentration of commercial activity, the “Downtown”. The traditional downtown retail, trade, and commercial area of a city or an area of very high land valuation, traffic flow, and concentration of retail business offices, theaters, hotels and services.

Charter Bus - See "Bus, Charter."

Choice Rider – A rider who chooses to ride public transit but could otherwise take another travel mode.

Circulator Bus - See "Bus, Circulator."

Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) - The comprehensive federal legislation which establishes criteria for attaining and maintaining the federal standards for allowable concentrations and exposure limits for various air pollutants; the act also provides emission standards for specific vehicles and fuels.

Commuter - A person who travels regularly between home and work or school.

Commuter Bus – See “Bus, Commuter.”

Commuter Rail - See "Rail, Commuter."

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) - An alternative fuel; compressed natural gas stored under high pressure. CNG vapor is lighter than air.

Conformity - The ongoing process that ensures the planning for highway and transit systems, as a whole and over the long term, is consistent with the state air quality plans for attaining and maintaining health-based air quality standards; conformity is determined by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT), and is based on whether transportation plans and programs meet the provisions of a State Implementation Plan.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) - Federal funds available for either transit or highway projects which contribute significantly to reducing automobile emissions which cause air pollution.

Contraflow Lane - Reserved lane for buses on which the direction of bus traffic is opposite to the flow of traffic on the other lanes.

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.

Crosstown - Non-radial bus or rail service which does not enter the Central Business District (CBD).

Crush Load — The maximum passenger capacity of a vehicle, in which there is little or no space between passengers (i.e., the passengers are touching one another) and one more passenger cannot enter without causing serious discomfort to the others.

## D

Deadhead — There are two types of deadhead or non-revenue bus travel time: (1) Bus travel to or from the garage and a terminus point where revenue service begins or ends; (2) A bus' travel between the end of service on one route to the beginning of another.

Synonyms: *Non-Revenue Time*

Deboard — To get on or into a transit vehicle.

Dedicated Funding Source - A source of monies which by law is available for use only to support a specific purpose, and cannot be diverted to other uses.

Demand Responsive - Non-fixed-route "curb-to-curb" service utilizing vans or buses with passengers boarding and alighting at pre-arranged times at any location within the system's service area. Also called "Dial-a-Ride."

Dial-a-Ride - See "Demand Responsive."

Disabled — With respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Discretionary — Subject to the discretion of legislators or an administrator. The federal Section 5309 New Starts Program is an example of a discretionary program.

Double Deck Bus - See "Bus, Double Deck."

Downtime - A period during which a vehicle is inoperative because of repairs or maintenance.

Dwell Time - The scheduled time a vehicle or train is allowed to discharge and take on passengers at a stop, including opening and closing doors.

## E

Earmark - A federal budgetary term that refers to the specific designation by Congress that part of a more general lump-sum appropriation be used for a particular project; the earmark can be designated as a minimum and/or maximum dollar amount.

Elevated (Railway) - See "Rail, Heavy."

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - A comprehensive study of likely environmental impacts resulting from major federally-assisted projects; statements are required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Ethanol - An alternative fuel; a liquid alcohol fuel with vapor heavier than air; produced from agricultural products such as corn, grain and sugar cane.

Express Bus - See "Bus, Express."

Express Service — Express service is deployed in one of two general configurations:  
(1) A service generally connecting residential areas and activity centers via a high speed, non-stop connection, e.g., a freeway, or exclusive right-of-way such as a dedicated busway with limited stops at each end for collection and distribution. Residential collection can be exclusively or partially undertaken using park-and-ride facilities.  
(2) Service operated non-stop over a portion of an arterial in conjunction with other local services. The need for such service arises where passenger demand between points on a corridor is high enough to separate demand and support dedicated express trips.  
Synonyms: *Rapids (1 or 2), Commuter Express (1), Flyers (1)*

Exclusive Right-of-Way — A right-of-way that is fully grade separated or access controlled and is used exclusively by transit.

## F

Fare — Payment in the form of coins, bills, tickets, tokens and various electronic media (such as Smart Cards) collected for transit rides.

Fare Box — A device that accepts the coins, bills, tickets and tokens given by passengers as payment for rides.

Farebox Recovery Ratio — A measure of the proportion of transit operating expenses covered by passenger fares. It is calculated by dividing a transit operator's fare box revenue by its total operating expenses.

Synonyms: *Fare Recovery Ratio*

Farebox Revenue — The value of cash, tickets and pass receipts given by passengers as payment for public transit rides.

Fare Collection System — The method by which fares are collected and accounted for in a public transportation system.

Fare Elasticity — The extent to which ridership responds to fare increases or decreases.

Fare Structure — The system set up to determine how much is to be paid by various passengers using the system at any given time.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA, formerly UMTA, Urban Mass Transit Administration) — A part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) which administers the federal program of financial assistance to public transit.

Feeder Bus See "Bus, Feeder."

Feeder Service — Service that picks up and delivers passengers to a regional mode at a rail station, express bus stop, transit center, terminal, Park-and-Ride, or other transfer facility.

Fiscal Year (FY) - The yearly accounting period for the Loudoun County and State of Virginia government which begins July 1 and ends on the following June 30. The fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends (e.g., FY 2004 is from May 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004).

Fixed Cost — An indirect cost that remains relatively constant irrespective of the level of operational activity.

Fixed Guideway Modernization - See "Rail Modernization."

Fixed-Guideway System — A system of vehicles that can operate only on its own guideway constructed for that purpose (e.g., rapid rail, light rail). Federal usage in funding legislation also includes exclusive right-of-way bus operations, trolley buses, and ferryboats as "fixed-guideway" transit.

Fixed Route — Transit service provided on a repetitive, fixed-schedule basis along a specific route, with vehicles stopping to pick up passengers at and deliver passengers to specific locations.

Flexible Funds - Those federal funds which can be used for highway, transit or other transportation projects, as decided by regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and state governments. Examples of such funds are the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) fund.

Formula Funds - Funds distributed or apportioned to qualifying recipients on the basis of formulas described in law; e.g., funds in the Section 18 program for Small Urban and Rural Transit Assistance, which are distributed to each state based on the state's percentage of national rural population. See also "Section 9."

Frequency — The amount of time scheduled between consecutive buses or trains on a given route segment; in other words, how often the bus or train comes (also known as Headway).

Fringe Parking - An area for parking usually located outside the Central Business District (CBD) and most often used by suburban residents who work or shop downtown.

Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) — An agreement executed by the federal government with a public transit operator that assures the operator of the federal government's intention to fully fund the federal share of a New Starts project.

## G

Garage — The place where revenue vehicles are stored and maintained and from where they are dispatched and recovered for the delivery of scheduled service.

Synonyms: *Barn, Base, Depot, District, Division, O/M Facility (ops/maint), Yard*

Grade Separated — A crossing of two forms of transportation paths (e.g., light rail tracks and a highway) at different levels to permit unconstrained operation.

## H

Headway — The scheduled time interval between any two revenue vehicles operating in the same direction on a route. Headways may be LOAD driven, that is, developed on the basis of demand and loading standards or, POLICY based, i.e., dictated by policy decisions such as service every 30 minutes during the peak periods and every 60 minutes during the base period.

Synonyms: *Frequency, Schedule, Vehicle Spacing*

Heavy Rail — An electric railway with capacity for a "heavy volume" of traffic, and characterized by exclusive rights-of-way, high speed and rapid acceleration. Heavy rail is different from commuter rail and light rail. Metrorail is heavy rail.

Synonyms: *Subway, elevated railway, rapid transit*

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) — Vehicles that can carry more than two persons. Examples of high occupancy vehicles are a bus, vanpool and carpool. These vehicles sometimes have exclusive traffic lanes called "HOV lanes," "busways," "transitways" or "commuter lanes."

High Speed Rail - See "Rail, High Speed."

HOV Lane — A traffic lane in a street or highway reserved for high occupancy vehicles, which may include two person vehicles in some applications.

**HOT Lane** – A traffic lane in a street or highway on which vehicles with less than the criteria number of occupants is charged a toll, and vehicles at or above the criteria number of occupants is charged no toll or a reduced toll.

## I

**Incident** – Traffic or passenger accident that includes collisions with other vehicles, pedestrians or a fixed object, and passenger accidents while boarding, on-board, or disembarking the transit vehicle.

**Interlining** — Interlining is used in two ways: Interlining allows the use of the same revenue vehicle and/or operator on more than one route without going back to the garage. Interlining is often considered as a means to minimize vehicle requirements as well as a method to provide transfer enhancement for passengers. For interlining to be feasible, two (or more) routes must share a common terminus or be reasonably proximate to each other (see DEADHEAD).

Synonyms: *Through Routes, Interlock Routes, Interlocking*

**Intermodal** - Those issues or activities which involve or affect more than one mode of transportation, including transportation connections, choices, cooperation and coordination of various modes. Also known as "multimodal."

**Intermodal Facility** — A building or site specifically designed to accommodate the meeting of two or more transit modes of travel.

## J

**Joint Development** - Ventures undertaken by the public and private sectors for development of land around transit stations or stops.

## K

**Kiss and Ride** — A place where commuters are driven and left at a station to board a public transportation vehicle.

## L

**Layover** — Layover time serves two major functions: recovery time for the schedule to ensure on-time departure for the next trip and, in some systems, operator rest or break time between trips. Layover time is often determined by labor agreement, requiring "off-duty" time after a certain amount of driving time.

Synonyms: *Recovery*

**Layover Time** - Time built into a schedule between arrival at the end of a route and the departure for the return trip, used for the recovery of delays and preparation for the return trip.

**Light Rail Transit (LRT)** — An electric railway with a “light volume” traffic capacity compared with heavy rail.

Synonyms: *Streetcar, trolley car and tramway*

Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) — Modern-day term for a streetcar type of transit vehicle, e.g., tram or trolley car.

Limited Service — Higher speed train or bus service where designated vehicles stop only at transfer points or major activity centers, usually about every 1/2 mile. Limited stop service is usually provided on major trunk lines operating during a certain part of the day or in a specified area in addition to local service that makes all stops. As opposed to express service, there is not usually a significant stretch of non-stop operation.

Linked Passenger Trips — A linked passenger trip is a trip from origin to destination on the transit system. Even if a passenger must make several transfers during a one way journey, the trip is counted as one linked trip on the system. Unlinked passenger trips count each boarding as a separate trip regardless of transfers.

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) - An alternative fuel; a natural gas cooled to below its boiling point of -260 degrees Fahrenheit so that it becomes a liquid; stored in a vacuum bottle-type container at very low temperatures and under moderate pressure. LNG vapor is lighter than air.

Load Factor — The ratio of passengers actually carried versus the total passenger seating capacity of a vehicle. A load factor of greater than 1.0 indicates that there are standees on that vehicle.

Local Service — A type of operation that involves frequent stops and consequent low speeds, the purpose of which is to deliver and pick up transit passengers as close to their destinations or origins as possible.

## M

Managers of Mobility - Transit systems which expand their role to include services and approaches beyond traditional public transportation to include ridesharing, high occupancy vehicle programs, public education on transit's benefits and integration of land use, air quality and transportation decisions; the phrase was developed as part of the industry's Transit 2000 policy effort undertaken in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Mass Transit - See "Public Transportation."

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Maximum Load Point — The location(s) along a route where the vehicle passenger load is the greatest. The maximum load point(s) generally differ by direction and may also be unique to each of the daily operating periods. Long or complex routes may have multiple maximum load points.

Mean Distance Between Failures (MDBF) - The average distance in miles that a transit vehicle travels before failure of a vital component forces removal of that vehicle from service.

Medium-Size Bus See "Bus, Medium-Size."

Methanol - An alternative fuel; a liquid alcohol fuel with vapor heavier than air; primarily produced from natural gas.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - The organization designated by local elected officials as being responsible for carrying out the urban transportation and other planning processes for an area.

Minibus — A rubber-tired road vehicle designed to carry a small number of passengers (i.e., 12 or less), commonly operated on streets and highways for public transportation service.

Missed Trip — A schedule trip that did not operate for a variety of reasons including operator absence, vehicle failure, dispatch error, traffic, accident or other unforeseen reason.

Mode — A particular form of travel (e.g., bus commuter rail, train, bicycle, walking or automobile).

Mode Split — The proportion of people that use each of the various modes of transportation. Also describes the process of allocating the proportion of people using modes. Frequently used to describe the percentage of people using private automobiles as opposed to the percentage using public transportation.

Model — An analytical tool (often mathematical) used by transportation planners to assist in making forecasts of land use, economic activity, and travel activity.

Monorail - An electric railway in which a rail car or train of cars is suspended from or straddles a guideway formed by a single beam or rail. Most monorails are either heavy rail or automated guideway systems.

Monthly Pass — A prepaid farecard or ticket, valid for unlimited riding within certain designated zones for one-month period.

Multidestination Network — A bus route network that is designed to make it easy to travel by transit between any two points in the service area.

## N

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) - A comprehensive federal law requiring analysis of the environmental impacts of federal actions such as the approval of

grants; also requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for every major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Network — The configuration of streets or transit routes and stops that constitutes the total system.

New Starts — New Start Federal funding granted under Section 3(i) of the Federal Transit Act (formerly known as the Urban Mass Transportation Act). These discretionary funds are made available for construction of a new fixed guideway system or extension of any existing fixed guideway system, based on cost-effectiveness, alternatives analysis results and the degree of local financial commitment.

Nonattainment Area - Any geographic region of the United States that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated as not attaining the federal air quality standards for one or more air pollutants, such as ozone and carbon monoxide.

## O

Off-Peak — Non-rush periods of the day when travel activity is generally lower and less transit service is scheduled.

Operating — Maintaining the ongoing functions of an agency or service. “Operating expenses” include wages, benefits, supplies, and services. “Operating assistance” is used to pay for the costs of providing public transit service.

Operating Assistance - Financial assistance for transit operating expenses (not capital costs); such aid may originate with federal, local or state governments.

Operating Cost/Operating Expense — The total costs to operate and maintain a transit system including labor, fuel, maintenance, wages and salaries, employee benefits, taxes, etc.

Operating Deficit – The sum of all operating expenses minus operating revenues.

Operating Ratio — A measure of transit system expense recovery obtained by dividing total operating revenues by total operating expenses.

Operating Revenue - Receipts derived from or for the operation of transit service, including fare box revenue, revenue from advertising, interest and charter bus service and operating assistance from governments.

Operating Speed — The rate of speed at which a vehicle is safely operated under prevailing traffic and environmental conditions.

Operator — An employee of a transit system who spends his or her working day in the operation of a vehicle, e.g., bus driver, streetcar motorman, trolley coach operator, cablecar gripman, rapid transit train motorman, conductor, etc.

Origin — The location of the beginning of a trip or the zone in which a trip begins. Also known as a “Trip End”.

Origin-Destination Study — A study of the origins and destinations of trips made by vehicles or passengers.

Owl — Service that operates during the late night/early morning hours or all night service, usually between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Synonyms: *Hawk*

## P

Paratransit — Comparable transportation service required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed-route transportation systems.

Park-and-Ride — A parking area for automobile drivers who then board vehicles, shuttles or carpools from these locations.

Pass — A means of transit prepayment, usually a card that carries some identification that is displayed to the driver or conductor in place of paying a cash fare.

Passenger — A person who rides a transportation vehicle, excluding the driver.

Passenger Check — A check (count) made of passengers arriving at, boarding and alighting, leaving from, or passing through one or more points on a route. Checks are conducted by riding (ridecheck) or at specific locations (point check). Passenger checks are conducted in order to obtain information on passenger riding that will assist in determining both appropriate directional headways on a route and the effectiveness of the route alignment. They are also undertaken to meet FTA Section 15 reporting requirements and to calibrate revenue-based ridership models.

Synonyms: *Tally*

Passenger Miles — A measure of service utilization which represents the cumulative sum of the distances ridden by each passenger. It is normally calculated by summation of the passenger load times the distance between individual bus stops. For example, ten passengers riding in a transit vehicle for two miles equals 20 passenger miles.

Passenger Revenue — Fares paid by passenger traveling aboard transit vehicles.

Synonyms: *Farebox Revenue*

Passenger Trips — The number of rides taken by people using a public transportation system in a given time period.

Synonyms: *Ridership*

Peak/Base Ratio — The number of vehicles operated in passenger service during the peak period divided by the number operated during the base period.

Peak Hour/Peak Period — The period with the highest ridership during the entire service day, generally referring to either the peak hour or peak several hours (peak period).  
Synonyms: *Commission Hour*

Program — (1) *verb*, to assign funds to a project; (2) *noun*, a system of funding for implementing transportation projects or policies.

Propane - An alternative fuel; a liquid petroleum gas (LPG) which is stored under moderate pressure and with vapor heavier than air; produced as a by-product of natural gas and oil production.

Public Transit System - An organization that provides transportation services owned, operated, or subsidized by any municipality, county, regional authority, state, or other governmental agency, including those operated or managed by a private management firm under contract to the government agency owner.

Public Transportation - Transportation by bus, rail, or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, which provides to the public general or special service on a regular and continuing basis. Also known as "mass transportation," "mass transit" and "transit."

Pull-In Time — The non-revenue time assigned for the movement of a revenue vehicle from its last scheduled terminus or stop to the garage.  
Synonyms: *Turn-In Time, Deadhead Time, Run-off Time*

Pull-Out Time — The non-revenue time assigned for the movement of a revenue vehicle from the garage to its first scheduled terminus or stop.  
Synonyms: *Deadhead Time, Run-on Time*

## R

Radial Service — Local or express service designed primarily to connect the Central Business District with outlying areas.

Rail, Commuter - Railroad local and regional passenger train operations between a central city, its suburbs and/or another central city. It may be either locomotive-hauled or self-propelled, and is characterized by multi-trip tickets, specific station-to-station fares, railroad employment practices and usually only one or two stations in the central business district. Also known as "suburban rail."

Rail, Heavy - An electric railway with the capacity for a "heavy volume" of traffic and characterized by exclusive rights-of-way, multi-car trains, high speed and rapid acceleration, sophisticated signaling and high platform loading. Also known as "rapid rail," "subway," "elevated (railway)" or "metropolitan railway (metro)."

Rail, High Speed - A rail transportation system with exclusive right-of-way which serves densely traveled corridors at speeds of 124 miles per hour (200 km/h) and greater.

Rail, Light - An electric railway with a "light volume" traffic capacity compared to heavy rail. Light rail may use shared or exclusive rights-of-way, high or low platform loading and multi-car trains or single cars. Also known as "streetcar," "trolley car" and "tramway."

Rapid Rail - See "Rail, Heavy."

Rapid Transit - Rail or motorbus transit service operating completely separate from all modes of transportation on an exclusive right-of-way.

Recovery Time — Recovery time is distinct from layover, although they are usually combined together. Recovery time is a planned time allowance between the arrival time of a just completed trip and the departure time of the next trip in order to allow the route to return to schedule if traffic, loading, or other conditions have made the trip arrive late. Recovery time is considered as reserve running time and typically, the operator will remain on duty during the recovery period.

Synonyms: *Layover Time*

Revenue — Receipts derived from or for the operation of transit service including farebox revenue, revenue from other commercial sources, and operating assistance from governments. Farebox revenue includes all fare, transfer charges, and zone charges paid by transit passengers.

Revenue Miles — Miles operated by vehicles available for passenger service.

Revenue Passenger — A passenger from whom a fare is collected.

Revenue Vehicle Hour — The measure of scheduled hours of service available to passengers for transport on the routes, equivalent to one transit vehicle traveling in one hour in revenue service, excluding deadhead hours but including recovery/layover time. Calculated for each route.

Revenue Service — When a revenue vehicle is in operation over a route and is available to the public for transport.

Reverse Commute — Movement in a direction opposite to the main flow of travel, such as from the Central City to a suburb during the morning commute hour.

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

Ridership — The number of rides taken by people using a public transportation system in a given time period.

Synonym: *Passenger Trips*

Right-of-Way (ROW, R/W) — The land over which a public road or rail line is built. An exclusive right-of-way is a road, lane, or other right-of-way designated exclusively for a specific purpose or for a particular group of users, such as light rail vehicles or buses.

Road Call — A mechanical failure of a bus in revenue service that causes a delay to service, and which necessitates removing the bus from service until repairs are made.

Road Supervisor — The individual who is responsible for keeping buses or trains on schedule.

Rolling Stock — The vehicles used in a transit system, including buses and rail cars.  
Synonyms: *Fleet*

Route — A specified path taken by a transit vehicle usually designated by a number or a name, along which passengers are picked up or discharged.  
Synonyms: *Line*

Route Miles — The total number of miles included in a fixed route transit system network.

Running Time — The time assigned for the movement of a revenue vehicle over a route, usually done on a [route] segment basis by various time of day.  
Synonyms: *Travel Time*

Rural Provider – An entity that provides transit service outside of urbanized areas.

## S

SAFETEA-LU - The 2005 law that reauthorizes federal surface transportation programs for six years (FY 2004 - 2009) and is the successor to TEA-21.

Schedule — From the transit agency (not the public timetable), a document that, at a minimum, shows the time of each revenue trip through the designated time points. Many properties include additional information such as route descriptions, deadhead times and amounts, interline information, run numbers, block numbers, etc.  
Synonyms: *Headway, Master Schedule, Timetable, Operating Schedule, Recap/Supervisor's Guide*

Scheduling — The planning of vehicle arrivals and departures and the operators for these vehicles to meet consumer demand along specified routes.

Service Area — A geographic area which is provided with transit services. Service area is now defined consistent with ADA requirements.

**Service Hours** – The time from the first scheduled pickup to the last scheduled drop-off; the basis of payment for contracted transit service in Loudoun County.

**Service Span** — The span of hours over which service is operated, e.g., 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. or 24 hr (owl). Service span often varies by weekday, Saturday, or Sunday.  
Synonyms: *Span of Service, Service Day*

**Service Standards** — A benchmark by which service operations performance is evaluated.

**Shuttle** - A public or private vehicle that travels back and forth over a particular route, especially a short route or one that provides connections between transportation systems, employment centers, etc.

**Sightseeing Bus** - See "Bus, Sightseeing."

**Small Bus** - See "Bus, Small."

**Smart Trip Cards** – Fare cards that are prepaid and used to electronically record fare collection on a transit vehicle or at a transit station. May also be used for parking fees at transit parking lots.

**Standard-Size Bus** - See "Bus, Standard-Size."

**Streetcar** - See "Rail, Light."

**Subscription Bus** - See "Bus, Subscription."

**Subsidy** — Funds granted by federal, state or local government.

**Suburban Rail** - See "Rail, Commuter."

**Subway** - See "Rail, Heavy."

## T

**Time Point** — A designated location and time that a bus or LR vehicle can arrive before – but not leave earlier than – the stated time as indicated in the route schedule.

**Timed Transfer** — A point or location where two or more routes come together at the same time to provide positive transfer connections. A short layover may be provided at the timed transfer point to enhance the connection. Timed transfers have had increasing application as service frequencies have been reduced below 15 to 20 minutes and hub-and-spoke network deployment has grown.  
Synonyms: *Pulse Transfer, Positive Transfer*

Trackless Trolley - See "Bus, Trolley."

Tramway - See "Rail, Light."

Transfer — A slip of paper issued to a passenger that gives him or her the right to change from one transit vehicle to another according to specified limitations.

Transfer Passenger — A passenger who transfers to a line after paying a fare on another line.

Transit - See "Public Transportation."

Transit Bus - See "Bus, Transit."

Transit Center — A fixed location where passengers transfer from one route to another.

Transit Corridor — A broad geographic band that follows a general route alignment such as a roadway of rail right-of-way and includes a service area within that band that would be accessible to the transit system.

Transit Dependent — Someone who must use public transportation for his/her travel.  
Synonym: *Captive Rider*

Transit Node – An area designated per the Loudoun County Revised General Plan as a focal point for transit service and transit-supportive land uses.

Transit Pass - A tax-free employee commute benefit in which an employer subsidizes up to \$60 per month for an employee's transit fares or vanpool charges. This benefit also applies to military and government employees.

Transit Priority — A means by which transit vehicles are given an advantage over other traffic, e.g., preemption of traffic signals or transit priority lanes.

Transit Priority Lane — See Bus Lane.

Transit System - An organization (public or private) providing local or regional multi-occupancy-vehicle passenger service. Organizations that provide service under contract to another agency are generally not counted as separate systems.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - A program of intermodal transportation projects, to be implemented over several years, growing out of the planning process and designed to improve transportation in a community. This program is required as a condition of a locality receiving federal transit and highway grants.

Travel Demand Management (TDM) – Programs and policies to reduce and/or manage the demand for travel by automobile during peak periods. Programs and policies include

those that encourage transit use, carpooling, vanpooling, flexible work hours, and working at or closer to home.

Trip — The one-way operation of a revenue vehicle between two terminal points on a route. Trips are generally noted as inbound, outbound, eastbound, westbound, etc. to identify directionality when being discussed or printed.

Synonyms: *Journey, One-Way Trip*

Trolley Bus See "Bus, Trolley."

Trolley Car See "Rail, Light."

Trolley Coach See "Bus, Trolley."

## U

Unlinked Passenger Trips — The total number of passengers who board public transit vehicles. A passenger is counted each time he/she boards a revenue vehicle even though the boarding may be the result of a transfer from another route to complete the same one-way journey. Where linked or unlinked is not designated, unlinked is assumed.

Synonyms: *Passengers, Passenger Trips*

Unlinked Trip — A trip taken by an individual on one specific mode. A linked trip may involve two or more unlinked trips.

Urbanized Area (UZA) - An U.S. Bureau of Census-designated area of 50,000 or more inhabitants consisting of a central city or two adjacent cities plus surrounding densely settled territory, but excluding the rural portion of cities.

User Side Subsidy – A means of delivering public transit subsidies to the user of services (i.e., deliver tokens to qualified users) who then may select the transit provider to actually provide the service.

## V

Van See "(Bus), Van."

Vanpool - An arrangement in which a group of passengers share the use and cost of a van in traveling to and from pre-arranged destinations together.

Variable Cost — A cost that varies in relation to the level of operational activity.

Vehicle Miles — The number of miles traveled by a vehicle, and are usually calculated by mode.

W

Wheelchair Lift — A device used to raise and lower a platform in a transit vehicle for accessibility by handicapped individuals.

Y

Yard — An area in a system used for maintenance, storing or holding trains.

Z

Zone Fares - A system of fares where a transit system's service area is divided into zones within which specified rates or fares apply.

Sources:

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