

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and
Individuals with Disabilities

Program Overview
Federal Fiscal Year 2026 Apportionment



Contents

I. Introduction	3
II. Authority for the Program	3
III. Program Goals and Objectives	3
IV. Eligible Applicants	3
V. Eligible Activities	4
VI. Funding Sources	5
VII. Planning and Coordination Requirements	6
VIII. Project Selection	6
IX. Grievance or Protest Procedures	7
X. Award Requirements	7
XI. Application and Grant Award Notification Timeline	9
Form 424 – Application for Federal Assistance Instructions	10
Appendix A – Census Urbanized Area	11
Appendix B – Minimum Selection Criteria	12

I. Introduction

The Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) is responsible for administering the Section 5310 Program of the Federal Transit Administration in the urbanized area of the region. This program is intended to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funding for programs to serve the special needs of these transit-dependent populations.

II. Authority for the Program

The Governor of South Carolina has designated the BCDCOG as the direct recipient of these Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the purpose of administering of the 5310 program in the urbanized area in accordance with federal laws, statutes, and regulations.

III. Program Goals and Objectives

To improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities, BCDCOG manages the use of Section 5310 funds within the Census designated urbanized area (Appendix A). The goal is to remove barriers to transportation services and expand transportation mobility options for the target population. BCDCOG will assist by facilitating the distribution of 5310 funds to organizations and programs that meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. BCDCOG also contributes to improving mobility for seniors and those with disabilities through a Mobility Management program that helps with identification of transportation service options. Lastly, BCDCOG utilizes a public process for inclusion of disadvantaged groups as detailed in the BCDCOG's Title VI and Limited English Proficiency plans.

To remove barriers and expand mobility options to seniors and people with disabilities, BCDCOG will both adhere to and make sure that the organizations and programs that receive federal funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5310 program follow the *2040 South Carolina Multimodal Transportation Plan*, the *2022 BCDCOG Regional Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan*, and the *CHATS 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*. BCDCOG will ensure that 5310 funds will help address the gaps in service identified in the local *2022 BCDCOG Regional Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan*, minimize duplication of services to similar populations, and maximize available resources to provide transit services at the highest possible level to target populations.

IV. Eligible Applicants

BCDCOG recognizes that eligible subrecipients for eligible Section 5310 activities include a State or local governmental authority, a private non-profit

organization, or an operator of public transportation. In addition, private operators of public transportation and taxi companies are eligible subrecipients if they provide documented shared-ride surface transportation services.

V. Eligible Activities

Funds for the Section 5310 program are available for capital and operating expenses that support public transportation projects that meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Examples of eligible project activities are shown in the following table:

<i>CAPITAL (80% Federal Funding / 20% Local)</i>	<i>OPERATING (50% Federal Funding / 50% Local)</i>
- Rolling stock and related activities - Passenger facilities - Support facilities and equipment for Section 5310-funded vehicles - Lease of equipment when lease is more cost effective than purchase - Acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement - Support for mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation - Capital activities (e.g., acquisition of rolling stock and related activities, acquisition of services, etc.) to support ADA-complementary paratransit service may qualify toward the 55 percent requirement, so long as the service is provided by an eligible recipient/subrecipient as defined in section 5, above, and is included in the coordinated plan.	- Implement facilities or services that exceed the ADA minimum requirements - Improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by individuals with disabilities on ADA-complementary paratransit service - Provide alternatives to public transportation that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities with transportation

More details regarding eligible activities can be found by reviewing Circular FTA C 9070.1H which is located at:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2024-10/C9070.1H-Circular-11-01-2024.pdf>

VI. Funding Sources

Federal Share

Section 5310 funds may be used to finance capital and operating expenses. The federal share of eligible capital costs shall be in an amount equal to eighty (80) percent of the net cost of the activity. The federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed fifty (50) percent of the net operating costs of the activity. Recipients may use up to ten (10) percent of their apportionment to support program administrative costs including administration, planning, and technical assistance.

Local Share/Matching Funds

The local share of eligible capital costs shall be not less than twenty (20) percent of the net cost of the activity, and the local share for eligible operating costs shall be not less than fifty (50) percent of the net operating costs. The local share may be provided from an undistributed cash surplus, a replacement or depreciation cash fund or reserve, a service agreement with a State or local service agency or private social service organization, or new capital. Some examples of these sources of local match include: State or local appropriations; dedicated tax revenues; private donations; revenue from service contracts; toll revenue credits; and net income generated from advertising and concessions. Non-cash share such as donations, volunteered services, or in-kind contributions is eligible to be counted toward the local match as long as the value of each is documented and supported, represents a capital cost which would otherwise be eligible under the program, and is included in the net project costs in the project budget. More details regarding the local match can be located by reviewing Circular FTA C 9070.1H.

Funding Available

FTA 5310 program funds are available for Federal Fiscal Year 2026 and this application process allocates the Federal Fiscal Year 2026 apportionment. Projects will be selected for funding through a competitive selection process. Recipients of these funds should consider long-term efforts and identify potential funding sources for sustaining the project beyond the grant period.

Section 5310 funding availability for the Charleston-North Charleston Urbanized Area:

Urbanized Funding Available for FFY 2026

Section 5310 Program Full Apportionment - \$930,271

VII. Planning and Coordination Requirements

To be eligible for funding, the FAST Act requires that projects funded through the 5310 Program *“must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan”*. The locally developed 2022 BCDCOG *Regional Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan*: 1) identified the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes; 2) provided strategies for meeting those local needs; and 3) identified potential projects that correspond to each strategy.

The applicant must ensure the project is consistent with human coordination efforts across the region. Additionally, applicants are expected to coordinate with other private, public, and non-profit and human services transportation providers. All awarded projects are required to be derived from their region’s coordinated transportation plan.

Applicants are also strongly encouraged to review the required “Certifications and Assurances” before beginning any work on their application. The “Certifications and Assurances” contain various requirements that must be met in order for an organization’s application to be approved. Therefore, by submitting an application, organizations are agreeing to abide by these requirements and are assuring that they are able to sign the “Certifications and Assurances” if their application is awarded funding.

VIII. Project Selection

Potential grant applicants should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the criteria in Appendix B. The selection process will be based on a scoring system

that weighs each application against how well it adheres to the selection criteria. Questions regarding the selection process or selection criteria should be directed to BCDCOG well before the posted application deadline. **Please note, an application from a potential sub-recipient who does not meet the eligibility requirements, or an application for a project that does not meet the eligible activities requirement will not be scored.**

The project selection process will commence with a call for applications through a public announcement. Applications that are received will be reviewed to assess their responsiveness. Responsiveness refers to an application's completeness, timeliness, and assemblage of all required elements.

BCDCOG staff will review the applications for project eligibility and will score and rank projects for inclusion into the program of projects (POP). Each project will be ranked against the selection criteria (Appendix B) and scored up to a maximum of 100. A recommendation will then be given to the BCDCOG Board of Directors who will vote on the recommended program of projects. This process is consistent with the FTA-approved Program Management Plan (PMP) that outlines the policies and procedures for program administration.

Although each applicant may apply for funding for more than one project, it is possible an award could be made for one proposed activity and not another. Furthermore, because of limited funds, project(s) may not be fully funded up to the dollar amount requested by the applicant.

IX. Grievance or Protest Procedures

The aggrieved agency shall submit a notice of complaint to the BCDCOG in writing, within ten (10) business days of notification of a funding decision.

The BCDCOG shall review the complaint and make a decision, in writing, within ten (10) business days. Copies of all documents relating to material facts of the complaint shall be forwarded to SCDOT within ten (10) business days of the resolution for filing.

If the aggrieved agency is not satisfied with the BCDCOG's decision at the local level, the agency shall file a direct appeal to the FTA Regional Office, in writing, within ten (10) business days of receiving the BCDCOG's decision. Violations of Federal law or regulation will be handled by the complaint process stated within that law or regulation. Violations of State or local law or regulations will be under the jurisdiction of State or local authorities.

X. Award Requirements

Applicants selected for funding under the 5310 Program will enter into a contractual agreement with the BCDCOG.

Certifications and Assurances

Each applicant who receives an award will need to sign FTA's "Certifications and Assurances" for the specific funding programs for which its organization is applying **within twenty-one (21) business days of receiving notification of award**. An authorizing resolution between the governing body and BCDCOG is also required.

The "Certifications and Assurances" are based on federal and state requirements, and may not be altered in any way. Therefore, these documents shall be submitted by the applicant as originally signed in hardcopy only. In addition and where noted, the "Certifications and Assurances" must be signed and dated by the local attorney and the applicant's agency's authorized official. Organizations unable to complete these certifications and assurances will not receive funding and should not apply for funding.

Applicants will be required to provide detailed information quarterly to the BCDCOG on fund usage and performance of the project. These quarterly reports will include financial and program activity updates. Maintenance records, drug testing results, and identifying the gaps in service may be required.

XI. Application and Grant Award Notification Timeline

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>
• July 2, 2026	• Program announcement and application made available on website
• August 7, 2026	• Deadline for submission of applications to the BCDCOG
• September 8, 2026*	• Notification of awards
• Sept 22, 2026*	• Deadline for signed Certifications & Assurances
• TBD	• FTA Grant agreements executed

*Estimated dates – if they change, then the applicants will be notified

Contact Information

If you need clarification on information in this application, please contact the BCDCOG Project Manager at the below information:

Project Manager: Megan Clark
meganc@bcdcog.com
843-529-0400

Standard Form 424 – Application for Federal Assistance

Instructions

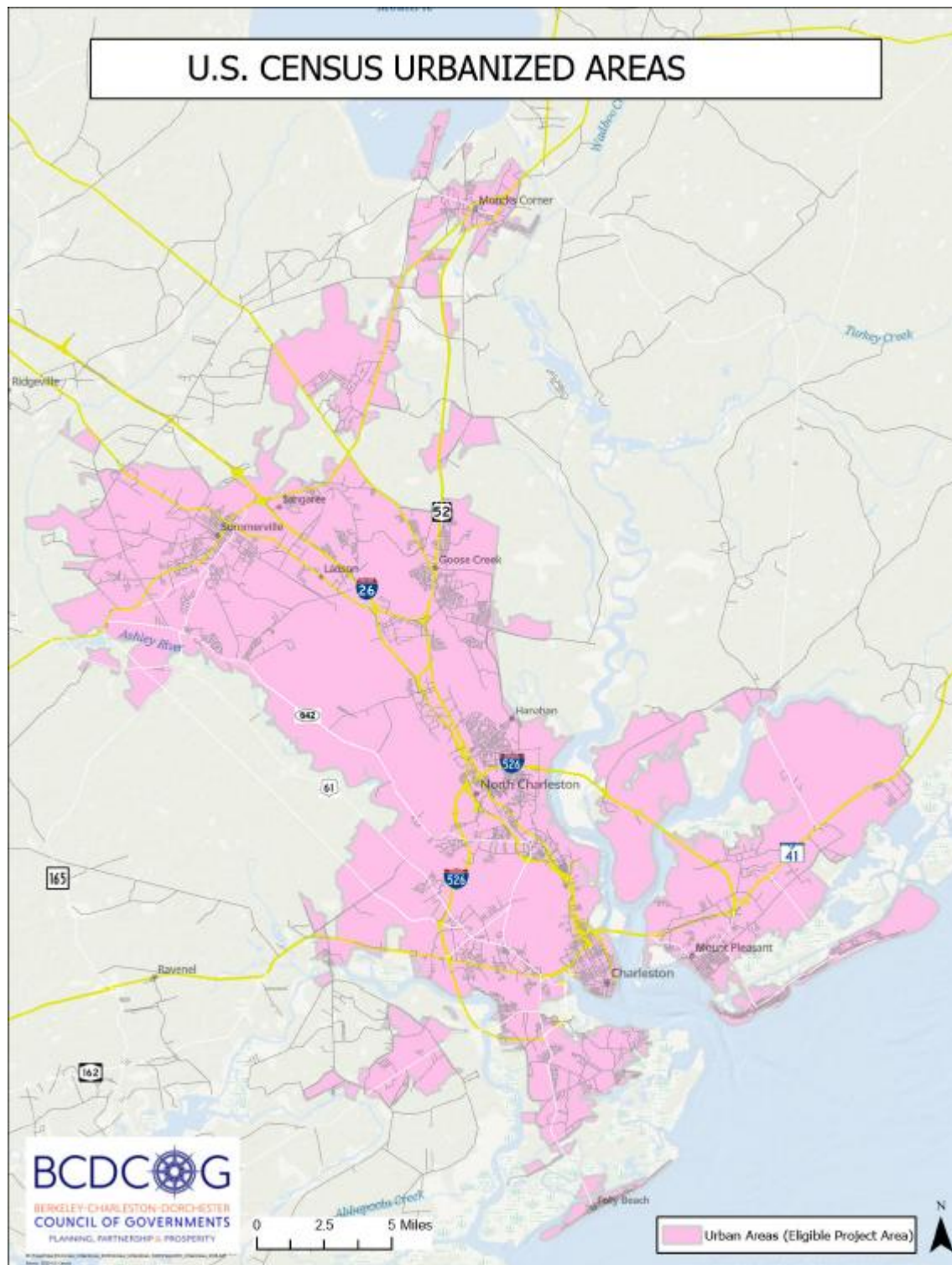
The Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 form may be downloaded at:
<https://www.grants.gov/forms/sf-424-family.html>

- Download the PDF for the "Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)"

Select Type of Submission.

1. Select Type of Application. "New" means a new assistance award; "Continuation" means an extension for an additional funding/budget period for a project with a projected completion date; "Revision" means any change in the Federal Government's financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation. If a revision applies, enter the appropriate letter.
2. Place the date the application was submitted to BCDCOG.
3. Enter legal name of applicant, name of primary organizational unit which will undertake the assistance activity; employer identification number (EIN); UEI or DUNS number; complete address; and name, telephone number, and email address of the person to contact on matters related to this application.
4. Select the Type of Applicant
5. Select the appropriate letter in the space provided.
6. The Name of the Federal Agency is the Federal Transit Administration.
7. Insert the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance" number and title of the program that applies: 20.513 is the number and Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) is the CFDA Title.
8. For the Funding Opportunity Number place "BCDCOG Announcement"
9. Insert Title – FFY 2026 5310 Urban Funding Opportunity
10. Insert a descriptive Title of the Applicant's Project.
11. Enter the Congressional District for both the Applicant and where the program project will occur.
12. Insert the start and end dates of the project.
13. Provide the estimated amount of funding from each contributor.
14. Select "a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on _____".
15. Answer if the applicant is delinquent on any federal debt and follow the other instructions if the answer is yes.
16. The application must be signed by the authorized representative of the organization.

Appendix A – Census Urbanized Area



Appendix B – Minimum Selection Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	
1. Statement of Need (20 Points)	2. Coordination and Program Outreach (20 Points)
- Describe the unmet transportation need that the proposed project seeks to address. Relate this to the Human Services Coordination Plan. - Describe the specific population this project will serve. As appropriate, add tables, charts, maps, and data to support this project. - Estimate the number of people within the target population the project will serve and briefly describe the rationale for the projection – total number of individuals to be served and average number of one-way trips provided (if applicable) per month. If this is building upon an existing service, provide the current number of passenger trips served. - Will the project also help meet transportation needs outside the targeted population? (Explain how)	- Coordination among agencies is very important, describe how the project will be coordinated with other social service programs, and/or transit providers in the area. This could include: - Share vehicles with other agencies? - Share dispatching or scheduling duties? - Share in maintenance costs? - Coordinate client trips? - Coordinate staff training programs? - Other strategies. - Were private sector providers included in developing the project? If so, how? - In addition to the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, provide ways which will continue to involve key stakeholders on a consistent basis. - Describe how the agency will market the project to the target population and promote public awareness of the program. Will this outreach help with those outside of the targeted population?

3. Implementation Plan (20 Points)	4. Managerial Capability (20 Points)
• Provide a description on how the agency intends to implement the project – describe process. • Explain how the project relates to other services or programs provided by the agency and demonstrate how it can be achieved within the agency's technical ability. • Include a timeline for project implementation. • Provide an operational plan for providing service. Include time tables and route maps (if applicable) showing the service coverage from the project.	• Provide the number of years the applicant has provided services for their targeted clientele (elderly, low-income populations, and/or individuals with disabilities). • Provide information on the number of personnel – existing drivers and administrative staff to support the project. Will the agency hire additional personnel to support the project? • List the training courses and the drivers who have completed these courses. • Describe the agency's vehicle maintenance program (if applicable), addressing the following: ➤ Pre-trip inspections ➤ Preventive maintenance ➤ Routine maintenance ➤ Contingency plan for when equipment is out of service
5. Project Budget and Cost Effectiveness (20 Points)	
• Use "Part III – Project Budget" to provide a budget for the proposed project. Clearly indicate all funding sources, especially the local share for the project. • Provide evidence of financial capability and the stability of the local share (documentation). • Identify reasonable sources for on-going funding – clearly indicate all funding sources if there are more than one (narrative). • Describe the agency's plan for monitoring and evaluating the project (narrative). • Identify performance measures to track the effectiveness of the service in meeting the identified goals (narrative).	