

# FDOT/FTA Section 5310 Application Scorecard Reference Guide

Updated September 2022

Project risk assessments must be completed prior to the District considering the project for award. Please see guidance for conducting a risk assessment within the resources tab in the program application.

Upon receipt of grant applications for review, the Lead District Reviewer will complete the required items in the 'Data Entry' sheet of the provided Section 5310 Scorecard 2023 Excel Workbook. Information must be retrieved from the indicated tabs in each grant application being scored. The data reported in the application is then used to assign relative, weighted scores among the pool of applicants. The scorecard workbook is made up of the following tabs:

- **Scorecard Trad - Agency Name:** The content of this tab should be provided to each reviewer for every project being scored.
- **Scorecard Non-Trad- Agency Name:** The content of this tab should be provided to each reviewer for every project being scored.
- **Benchmarks:** The tab contains the previous year's Section 5310 Performance Measures for each sub-recipient in the state for which data was available.
- **Data Entry:** Identifies each applicant, the District Lead Review should enter application project data into the green outlined fields. This tab provides quantitative score outputs for each project in the red column, please do not attempt to edit the formula in the red column.
- **Reviewer Scores:** This tab allows for the entry of all scores and is optional for District use.
- **Ranking:** This tab contains formulas that rank projects based on the scores entered in the 'Reviewers Score' tab.

The final decision to award any applicant is at the discretion of the District. Quantified scores and ranks are developed to enable further analysis and may be used to drive project prioritization or simply serve as a record of the reason for decision-making. Each District should conduct a Pre-Review Meeting that will discuss any reviewer questions and provide all reviewers with guidance and direction for grading and completing the review.

## 1. Agency Type Distinction

Each District has the option to score applicants against a group of peer agency types or compare performance metrics across all applicants. If the District elects to review projects on a peer-to-peer basis, the agencies should be divided by governmental entity vs. private non-profits in the Section 5310 Scorecard Excel Workbook. There is no score associated with this criterion, only an opportunity to compare an agency's performance metrics against similar agencies.

Districts may elect to prioritize private non-profit projects over governmental entities. Government entities typically have larger scale transportation programs than private nonprofit organizations, resulting in disproportionate performance metrics that can skew the scoring and project ranking process if both applicant types are grouped together.

Government entities are defined by the agency being operated by a municipal organization such as a County or City. Private non-profits are defined as agencies that maintains a 501c3.

## 2. Project Type

In this step, the District will determine whether the project is considered a traditional or non-traditional project based on the definitions outlined in the FTA Section 5310 Circular and summarized below. Undertaking this step will allow the District to ensure that it meets the 55 percent floor required for traditional projects. Making the distinction between project types does not prioritize one project type over the other, this simply allows the project to be measured against projects in the same category. Additionally, there is a 55 percent (traditional) / 45 percent (non-traditional) split required for each Program of Projects submitted to FTA.

### *Traditional Section 5310 Projects*

Traditional public transportation capital projects are planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of **seniors and individuals with disabilities** when public transportation is insufficient, unavailable, or inappropriate.

Eligible projects for the required 55 percent of capital projects include:

- The capital cost of contracting for the provision of transit services specialized shared-ride transportation services.
- The purchase of rolling stock:
  - Acquisition of expansion or replacement buses or vans, and related procurement, testing, inspection, and acceptance costs;
  - Vehicle rehabilitation or overhaul;
  - Preventive maintenance;
  - Radios and communication equipment; and
  - Vehicle wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices.
- The acquisition of ADA-complementary paratransit service are eligible capital expenses.
- Passenger facilities related to Section 5310-funded vehicles
  - Purchase and installation of benches, shelters, and other passenger amenities.
- Support facilities and equipment for Section 5310-funded vehicles
  - Extended warranties that do not exceed the industry standard;

- Computer hardware and software;
- Transit-related intelligent transportation systems (ITS);
- Dispatch systems; and
- Fare collection systems.
- 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. Mobility management techniques may enhance transportation access for populations beyond those served by one agency or organization within a community.
  - The promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and low-income individuals;
  - Support for short-term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services;
  - The support of state and local coordination policy bodies and councils;
  - The operation of transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies, and passengers;
  - The provision of coordination services, including employer-oriented transportation management organizations' and human service organizations' customer-oriented travel navigator systems and neighborhood travel coordination activities such as coordinating individualized travel training and trip planning activities for customers;
  - The development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on all travel modes and to manage eligibility requirements and arrangements for customers among supporting programs; and
  - Operational planning for the acquisition of intelligent transportation technologies to help plan and operate coordinated systems inclusive of geographic information systems (GIS) mapping, global positioning system technology, coordinated vehicle scheduling, dispatching and monitoring technologies, as well as technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system, and single smart customer payment systems. (Acquisition of technology is also eligible as a standalone capital expense).

### ***Nontraditional Section 5310 Projects***

In addition to the above projects, up to 45 percent of an area's apportionment may be utilized for additional public transportation projects that:

- Exceed the ADA minimum requirements,

- Expansion of paratransit service parameters beyond the three-fourths mile required by the ADA;
- Expansion of current hours of operation for ADA paratransit services that are beyond those provided on the fixed-route services;
- The incremental cost of providing same day service;
- The incremental cost (if any) of making door-to-door service available to all eligible ADA paratransit riders, but not on a case-by-case basis for individual riders in an otherwise curb-to-curb system;
- Enhancement of the level of service by providing escorts or assisting riders through the door of their destination;
- Acquisition of vehicles and equipment designed to accommodate mobility aids that exceed the dimensions and weight ratings established for wheelchairs under the ADA regulations, 49 CFR part 38;
- Installation of additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by the ADA;
- Feeder services. Accessible “feeder” service (transit service that provides access) to commuter rail, commuter bus, intercity rail, and intercity bus stations, for which complementary paratransit service is not required under the ADA.
- Improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by individuals with disabilities on ADA-complementary paratransit service, or
  - Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations. This may include:
    - Building an accessible path to a bus stop that is currently inaccessible, including curbcuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals, or other accessible features;
    - Adding an elevator or ramps, detectable warnings, or other accessibility improvements to a non-key station that are not otherwise required under the ADA;
    - Improving signage or wayfinding technology; or
    - Implementation of other technology improvements that enhance accessibility for people with disabilities including ITS.
  - Travel training: Training programs for individual users on awareness, knowledge, and skills of public and alternative transportation options available in their communities. This includes travel instruction and travel training services.
- Provide alternatives to public transportation that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities with transportation.

- Purchasing vehicles to support accessible taxi, ride-sharing, and/or vanpooling programs.
- Supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.
- Supporting volunteer driver and aide programs.

The activities listed as non-traditional, above, are eligible expenses for all funds available to a recipient under Section 5310. For example, mobility management and ITS projects may be eligible under both categories; the difference to note, for the project to qualify toward the 55 percent requirement, is that the project must meet the definition of a capital project, be specifically geared toward the target population, and carried out by an eligible subrecipient.

### **3. Project Description (40 points)**

The Project Description criterion provides a subjective score based on the reviewer's assessment of the project's merits. Reviewers should assess the entire Project Request tab including Award Request Budget, Geographic Cost Methodology, Project-Related Improvements. The value associated with this criterion is 40 points, application reviewers may score the project between 1-40 points.

Each FDOT District may have different project priorities to account for during the application review process. Department Grant Managers will communicate District priorities to outside reviewers prior to the application review process. Reviewers will assign points subjectively based on the district's priorities at the time. Example priorities may include, but are not limited to replacing vehicles, providing operating funding to applicants, providing preventative maintenance funding, etc.

Tips for reviewers:

The below provides high level guidance that may be considered when determining a score for project descriptions by project types. The below outline is not intended to be inclusive of all projects submitted.

- Vehicle purchases
  - Utilization of vehicles – is the agency utilizing their vehicles in a consistent manner that would allow them to retire the asset in line with FDOT's useful life criteria?
  - Vehicle types – does the vehicle being requested best aid the population that they are serving?
- Mobility Management
  - How well did the applicant communicate their established project progress monitoring process?
- Preventative Maintenance
  - Average age of vehicles in fleet
  - Does the applicant have higher than average preventative maintenance cost?

- Number of road calls or failures
- Operating Assistance
  - Is the project a continuation of a previously implemented project or expanding the number clients they intend to serve?
- Facility Design or Improvements
  - Project Readiness & Implementation: Applicant clearly exhibits project goals that are SMART (Specific. Measurable. Attainable. Relevant. Time-Bound).

## 4. Need Assessment (20 points)

### *Financial Need (1-15 pts.)*

The applicant's Program Budget tab, along with any additional financial documentation such as audit reports and other external reports, will be utilized to determine the final need of applicants. Project applications that adequately justify estimated expenses in the budget narrative should be scored higher.

### *Service Gaps (1-5 pts.)*

As part of the Need Assessment, a Service Gaps score will be applied based on characteristics indicating unmet specialized transportation service demand within the applicant's service area. The service area is inclusive of the geographical area within which the applicant provides service.

The service gaps score will be assigned subjectively based on the reviewer's assessment of the following factors within the project area., as displayed via ArcGIS web map. The map uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), Florida transit systems, and other publicly available data sources, including:

- Population age 65 and older;
- Persons self-identified as living with disabilities;
- Automobile ownership; and
- Access to existing specialized transportation services.

Reviewers will use the map to locate each applicant's area and qualitatively assign an appropriate score based on observed concentrations of populations served, gaps in the existing transportation network, and local knowledge of area needs. The web map will be provided on an annual basis with the finalized grant applications.

The FFY23 Service Gaps Map can be found here: <https://arcg.is/0q8TPm>

The below table reflects the scorecard for the Project Description and Need Assessment.

General		
POINTS	CATEGORY	SCORE
<b>1. Project Description</b>		
40	Based on review team member assessment of project merit and district project priorities.	
<b>2. Need Assessment</b>		
15	<b>Financial Need:</b> Based on the review of the agency's budget and other factors outlined in scorecard criteria.	
5	<b>Service Gaps:</b> Based on identified supply and demand for transportation service to 5310-eligible populations in the project area (GIS web map).	
60	(SUBTOTAL)	

## 5. Performance Measures - Traditional

Benchmarks for each performance measure will be established using the statewide Section 5310 Program Performance Reports of the previous year by Central Office. The benchmarks will be established on an annual basis in the fall. Central Office will include the performance benchmarks with the finalized Section 5310 grant applications. Applicants' reported performance metrics will be compared to these benchmarks, and scored according to relative placement along the sample distribution:

- **Above** one standard deviation above the mean = 20 points
- **Within** one standard deviation **above** the mean = 15 points
- Mean = 10 points
- **Within** one standard deviation **below** the mean = 5 points
- **Below** one standard deviation below the mean = 1 point
- No data provided = 0 points

The same scoring methodology is applied to each quantitative measure within the traditional project categories, where applicable.

### ***Gaps in Service Filled (0-20 pts.)***

Provision of transportation options that would not otherwise be available for seniors and individuals with disabilities measured in numbers of seniors and people with disabilities afforded mobility they would not have without program support as a result of the traditional Section 5310 project.

### ***Ridership (0-20 pts.)***

Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for individuals with disabilities and seniors on Section 5310–supported vehicles and services as a result of the traditional Section 5310 project.

### ***Project Merits (0-30 pts.)***

Applicants that have not previously provided transportation services will be awarded up to 30 points based on the review committee’s consensus subjective assessment of the project’s merits. Considerations should include the likelihood of whether the proposed project will enable the applicant to achieve performance similar to that of its peers.

The below table reflects the traditional projects scorecard.

TRADITIONAL		
POINTS	CATEGORY	SCORE
<b>1. Project Merits - New Sub-Recipient - Only</b>		
0 - 30	Category only used if the applicant does not current provide transportation services. Agency cannot gain points on performance measures.	
<b>2. Section 5310 Performance Measures</b>		
0 - 20	<b>Gaps in Service Filled:</b> Provision of transportation options that would not otherwise be available for seniors and individuals with disabilities measured in numbers of seniors and people with disabilities afforded mobility they would not have without program support as a result of the traditional Section 5310 project	
0 - 20	<b>Ridership:</b> Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for individuals with disabilities and seniors on Section 5310–supported vehicles and services as a result of the traditional Section 5310 project	
40	(SUBTOTAL)	

## **6. Performance Measures – Nontraditional**

Benchmarks for each performance measure will be established from statewide Section 5310 Program Performance Reports of the previous year. Applicants’ reported performance metrics will be compared to these benchmarks, and scored according to relative placement along the sample distribution:

- **Above** one standard deviation above the mean = 20 points
- **Within** one standard deviation **above** the mean = 15 points



- Mean = 10 points
- **Within** one standard deviation **below** the mean = 5 points
- **Below** one standard deviation below the mean = 1 point
- No data provided = 0 points

The same scoring methodology is applied to each quantitative measure within the non-traditional project categories, where applicable.

Ridership is scored out of 10 points in the same manner as the traditional project performance criteria, described above.

### ***Service/Physical Improvements (0-20 pts.)***

Increases or enhancements related to geographic coverage, service quality, and/or service times that impact availability of transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Additions or changes to physical infrastructure (e.g., transportation facilities, sidewalks, etc.), technology, and vehicles that impact availability of transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Service and physical improvements of different types will be normalized by comparison to benchmark values.

### ***Ridership (0-20 pts.)***

Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for seniors or individuals with disabilities on Section 5310 supported vehicles and services.

### ***Project Merits (0-30 pts.)***

Applicants that have not previously provided transportation services will be awarded up to 30 points based on the review committee's consensus subjective assessment of the project's merits. Considerations should include the likelihood of whether the proposed project will enable the applicant to achieve performance similar to that of its peers.

The below table reflects the nontraditional scorecard.

NONTRADITIONAL		
POINTS	CATEGORY	SCORE
<b>1. Project Merits - New Sub-Recipients Only</b>		
0 - 30	Category only used if the applicant does not current provide transportation services. Agency cannot gain points on performance measures.	
<b>2. Section 5310 Performance Measures</b>		
0 - 20	<b>Service Improvements:</b> Increases or enhancements related to geographic coverage, service quality, and/or service times that impact availability of transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities Service improvements may also be predicated by projects designed to provide <b>Physical Improvements:</b> Additions or changes to physical infrastructure (e.g., transportation facilities, sidewalks, etc.), technology, and vehicles that impact availability of transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities	
0 - 20	<b>Ridership:</b> Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for seniors or individuals with disabilities on Section 5310 supported vehicles and services	
40	(SUBTOTAL)	