



OFFICE OF PUBLIC
TRANSIT

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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SCDOT OFFICE OF PUBLIC TRANSIT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key transportation strategies identified in the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT's) Strategic Plan focus on asset management while developing multimodal options for all residents and visitors, including public transportation. SCDOT's Office of Public Transit (OPT), in coordination with the Federal Transit Administration and local and regional partners throughout the state, plans programs, and administers the statewide delivery of rural and urban general public transit services and transit services for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Pursuant to SC Code of Law, Sections 57-3-40 and 57-3-210, the OPT is required to develop and submit the annual Office of Public Transit Report to the General Assembly. Included within the Report is an analysis of (1) annual accomplishments and progress, (2) a funding plan and (3) a five-year transit plan.

SECTION 1: ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Public transit is a core component of South Carolina's multimodal transportation network. Most counties in SC have public transit service in at least a portion of their county, which translates into over 12 million passenger trips statewide annually. Establishing, financing, and sustaining effective, statewide, publicly-operated transit service in urban and rural areas continues to be a major challenge, while at the same time one of our biggest accomplishments.

Below are a few highlights from 2019:

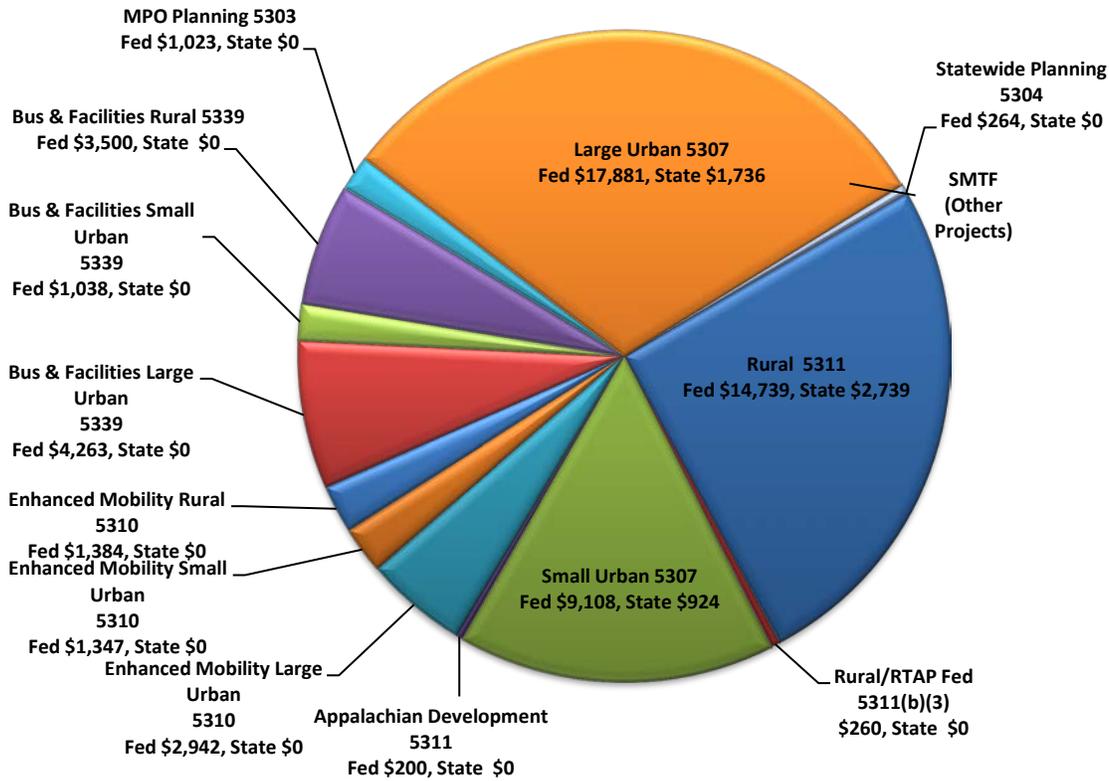
- The South Carolina Office of the State Auditor conducted an annual review of the Office of Public Transit to ensure that OPT was sufficiently and appropriately performing its auditing and compliance responsibilities as required by state statute. The Office of the State Auditor found **no exceptions or findings** as a result of this review. OPT also completed on-site reviews of six public transit agencies, providing opportunity for sub-recipient agencies to receive technical assistance, while ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations. These triennial reviews also assess the financial, managerial and technical capacities of the agencies.
- SCDOT has continued the success of the **Statewide Transit Vehicle Replacement Program**. Through innovative financing methods, OPT is maximizing the use of this program with a capital asset replacement plan that will significantly reduce the number of current SCDOT-titled public transit vehicles past their useful life. Since inception of this initiative the percentage of transit vehicles operating past their useful life has continued to decrease, resulting in the lowest figure to-date at **26 percent in 2019**. This figure also represents a continued reduction from the initial 77 percent of transit vehicles operating past their useful life in 2014, **demonstrating the success** of the statewide transit asset management program.

- SCDOT continues to **increase efficiency and customer service** while reducing administrative burdens for OPT and local and regional transit agencies through automation of some of our processes. In 2019 OPT completed the first full cycle of the new **Transit Asset Management and Information System (TAMIS)**, which automates and streamlines transit asset management, performance management, and administrative and fiscal management of federal funding contracts and transit subrecipient agreements. The effect is a streamlining of activities that allows OPT and local and regional transit agencies to operate with far greater efficiency and transparency.
- SCDOT continued the **Technical Assistance and Oversight Program** with all public transit agencies in the state to ensure that the scope and associated costs of transit services are commensurate with available and projected revenues. Because of increased technical assistance, we have seen a reduction in findings resulting from annual compliance reviews of local transit agencies. The technical assistance has also resulted in an ongoing “right-sizing” of transit services statewide to better ensure long-term fiscal sustainability, which benefits ridership through increased efficiencies.
- SCDOT continued to facilitate interagency and public-private transportation coordination efforts, with the ultimate goals to enhance economic development efforts, **reduce overall public and human services transportation costs**, and maintain or enhance the delivery of transit services across the state in a fiscally sustainable manner.
- SCDOT continued efforts with local officials in Union County to introduce general public **transit services for the first time**, and worked with local officials in Dillon County to develop **a public-private partnership** for the implementation of employment-focused public transportation services **in support of the county’s economic development efforts**.

SECTION II: FUNDING PLAN

The SCDOT Commission annually reviews and approves the Annual Transit Funding Plan containing both state and federal transit funds. The charts below display the \$6.0 million in state transit funding and \$57.95 million in federal transit funding as approved by the SCDOT Commission. Additional information can be found in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, also known as the STIP. It is referenced in Section III of this report and can also be located at: <https://www.scdot.org/inside/planning-stip.aspx>.

FFY2019 Public Transit Funding Plan
\$57.949 Million Federal/\$6.0 Million State
(Figures below are in thousands)



FISCAL YEAR 2019			
FUNDING PROGRAM	FEDERAL	STATE	TOTAL
Rural	\$14,739	\$2,739	\$17,478
Rural/RTAP	\$260	\$0	\$260
Small Urban 5307	\$9,108	\$924	\$10,032
Appalachian Development	\$200	\$0	\$200
Enhanced Mobility Large Urban	\$2,942	\$0	\$2,942
Enhanced Mobility Small Urban	\$1,347	\$0	\$1,347
Enhanced Mobility Rural	\$1,384	\$0	\$1,384
Bus & Facilities Large Urban	\$4,263	\$0	\$4,263
Bus & Facilities Small Urban	\$1,038	\$0	\$1,038
Bus & Facilities Rural	\$3,500	\$0	\$3,500
MPO Planning	\$1,023	\$0	\$1,023
Large Urban 5307	\$17,881	\$1,736	\$19,617
Statewide Planning	\$264	\$0	\$264
State Mass Transit Program	\$0	\$600	\$600

(Figures above are in thousands)

SECTION III: FIVE-YEAR PLAN

SCDOT recognizes that the SC transportation system is essential to the economic health of our State. SCDOT uses two plans to address transit across the state - the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the 2040 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan (SMTP). These plans are explained below.

The STIP is the state's six-year transportation improvement program for all projects or program areas receiving federal funding. The document is updated every three years and is revised on a continual basis to reflect the latest program and project information. The SCDOT Commission, as well as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), approve the STIP. The STIP is a fiscally-constrained plan based on financial budgets phased over the life of a project. This document is located at: <http://www.scdot.org/inside/stip.aspx>.

The 2040 SMTP is the state's twenty-five year Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan. The SMTP, including the Statewide Transit Plan, is updated every five years with intermittent annual reviews. It focuses on maximizing South Carolina's limited funding resources, maintaining the state's position in the global marketplace, and efficiently moving both people and goods. This plan was developed in conjunction with SCDOT management, staff, and transportation partners and stakeholders. The process included several major components that encompass public transportation, including:

- **10 Regional Transit and Coordination Plan Updates** – transit plans developed for each of the 10 Council of Government regions.
- **Statewide Public Transportation Plan Update** – overall public transportation plan for the state of South Carolina, summarizing existing services, needs and future funding programs.
- **Multimodal Transportation Plan** – overall plan inclusive of all modes of transportation.

The 2040 MTP, located at <http://www.scdot.org/Multimodal>, was approved in December 2014.