

Appendix A

Glossary of Transit Terms

Glossary of Transit Terms

These terms are used throughout the Short Range Transit Plan document and its appendices. These terms are commonly used within the transit industry.

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., CBD, shopping centers, business or industrial parks, recreational facilities (also known as trip generator).

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.

Allocation — An administrative distribution of funds, for example, federal funds among the states; used for funds that do not have legislatively mandated distribution formula.

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 — The morning commute period, about two hours, in which the greatest movement of passengers occurs, generally from home to work; the portion of the morning service period where the greatest level of ridership is experienced and service provided.

Synonyms: *AM Rush, Early Peak, Morning Peak, Morning Rush, Morning Commission, Hour*

AMTRAK (National Railroad Passenger Corporation) — A quasi-public corporation created by the federal Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 to improve and develop intercity passenger rail service throughout the United States. Operates a depot in downtown Sacramento.

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.

APP AR — An abbreviation for “approximate arrival” time point. RT's operating policy permits driver discretion to depart these time points up to three minutes earlier than specific time noted in the schedule.

Appropriation — An act of Congress that permits federal agencies to incur obligations and make

payments for specific purposes.

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.

Authorization — Basic, substantive federal legislation that established or continues the legal operation of federal program agencies, either indefinitely or for a specific period of time.

Automatic Passenger Counts (APC) (predates "smart technology") — A technology installed on transit vehicles that counts the number of boarding and alighting passengers at each stop while also noting the time. Passengers are counted using either pulse beams or step treadles located at each door. Stop location is generally identified through use of either global positioning systems (GPS) or signpost transmitters in combination with vehicle odometers.

Synonyms: *Smart Counters*

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) — A system that senses, at intervals, the monitors 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

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

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

Bus — A rubber-tired road vehicle designed to carry a substantial number of passengers (i.e., 10 or more), commonly operated on streets and highways for public transportation service.

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

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

Synonyms: *Vehicle Hours*

Bus Lane — A lane of roadway intended primarily for use by buses, either all day or during specified periods.

Synonyms: *Transit Priority Lane*

Bus Stop — A curbside place where passengers board or alight transit.

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

Synonyms: *Vehicle Miles*

Bus Shelter — A structure constructed near a bus stop to provide seating and protection from the weather for the convenience of waiting passengers.

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 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.

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

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.

Commuter Rail — Local and regional passenger train service between a central city, its suburbs and/or another central city, operating primarily during commutes hours. Designed to transport passengers from their residences to their job sites. Differs from rail rapid transit in that the passenger cars generally are heavier, the average trip lengths are usually longer, and the operations are carried out over tracks that are part of the railroad system.

Corridor — A broad geographical band that follows a general directional flow or connects major sources of trips. It may contain a number of streets and highways and many transit lines and routes.

Crosstown Route — Non-radial bus service that normally 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.

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.

E

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.

Extra Board — Operators who have no assigned run but are used to cover runs deliberately left open by the scheduling department (extra runs), or runs that are open because of the absence of regularly assigned operators.

F

Fare — Payment in the form of coins, bills, tickets and tokens 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 Box Revenue — Total revenue derived from the payment of passenger fares.

Synonyms: *Passenger Revenue*

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 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.

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

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.

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).

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.

FY (Fiscal Year) — A yearly accounting period designated by the calendar year in which it ends (e.g. FY 2000). The fiscal year for the federal government runs from October 1 to September 30. The fiscal year for both the state of California and RT runs from July 1 to June 30.

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.

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.

HOV — See High Occupancy Vehicle.

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

I

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

Intercity Rail — A long distance passenger rail transportation system between at least two central cities that, in California, traditionally has been provided by AMTRAK either directly or through a local Joint Powers Authority.

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 — Switching from one form of transportation to another.

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

J

Joint Development — Development of land or airspace by a public or private entity at RT property where the RT Board has determined that there is excess property rights and the proposed development will not interfere with the existing or planned transit use of the property.

Joint Powers Authority — A group of representatives from several entities that have agreed to undertake a joint venture. There are two JPAs in the Sacramento region: the Capitol Corridor JPA which administers the Capitol's intercity rail passenger service between Sacramento and San Jose, and the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor JPA, which administers the historic right-of-way between Sacramento and Placerville, a portion of which contains RT light rail service.

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*

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.

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

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.

Measure A — Refers to the 1988 ballot measure that provides 1/3 of 1/2 cent of sales tax revenue for transit in Sacramento County.

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.

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

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

New Starts — Federal funding granted under Section 5309 (B) of the United States Code. These discretionary funds are made available for the construction of new fixed guideway systems or extensions of existing fixed guideway systems.

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

Operating Expense — Monies paid in salaries and wages; settlement of claims, maintenance of equipment and buildings, and rentals of equipment and facilities.

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

Operating Revenue — Revenue derived from passenger fares. See also Farebox Revenue.

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 — Transportation service required by ADA for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed-route transit systems. The service must be comparable to the fixed-route service.

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*

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*

Pick — The selection process by which operators are allowed to select new work assignments, i.e., run or the Extra Board in the next (forthcoming) schedule.

Synonyms: *Bid, Mark-up, Line-up, Shake-up, Sign-up*

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

transportation projects or policies.

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.

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.

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 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.

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

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

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.

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*

S

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) — The regional transportation planning agency covering the greater Sacramento Metropolitan area. SACOG is responsible for reviewing applications and distributing federal and state transportation grants and allocation of certain transportation monies.

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 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. These standards are provided in the Short Range Transit Plan.

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

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*

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.

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 or rail right-of-way and includes a service area within that band that would be accessible to the transit system.

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

Transit Dependent — Someone who must use public transportation for his/her travel.

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

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) — The 1998 law that reauthorizes federal surface transportation programs for six years (FY 1998 to FY 2003). TEA-21 preserves much of the basic programmatic structure of its predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA).

Travel Time — The time allows for an operator to travel between the garage and a remote relief point.

Synonyms: *Relief Time, Travel Allowance*

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*

Total Miles — The total miles includes revenue, deadhead, and yard (maintenance and servicing) miles.

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.

Urban Mass Transportation Administration — See Federal Transit Administration

V

Van — See Minibus.

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.