SECTION 5311 PROGRAM (Rural Public Transportation)
(Formerly Section 18)

Section 5311 of the Federal Transit Act authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to apportion funds to the Governor of each state for public transportation projects in nonurbanized areas. The funds, appropriated annually, are apportioned to each state on a population based formula and may be used for Rural Public Transportation projects. Section 5311 funds are administered by that state's Governor. The Governor of Indiana has designated the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) as the agency responsible for administering this program. The program is administered by the INDOT’s Public Transit Section (PTS).

In 1997 INDOT completed a Needs Assessment Study that showed that approximately 3,271,082 Indiana citizens had access to public transportation. This number included both urban and rural areas that had public transportation, and accounted for 59% of the state’s population. Since that study was done the following rural counties have established public transit systems:

- Clark
- Crawford
- Daviess
- Floyd
- Fulton
- Greene
- Harrison
- Huntington
- Jefferson
- Johnson
- Knox
- Lawrence
- Martin
- Noble
- Ohio
- Orange
- Ripley
- Sullivan
- Switzerland
- Wabash
- Washington

These counties represent approximately 565,819 more rural citizens who now have access to public transportation as of January 1, 2001, and increases the accessibility of public transportation to 70% of the state’s population. The PTS now administers 5311 assistance to 31 rural public transportation systems representing 34 counties/regions and 17 cities. There are 14 counties that have city systems funded from 5307 (urban transit systems).

The Needs Assessment Study also stated that “54 counties had no access to public transportation”. As of January 2001 the number of counties with no access to public transit has been reduced to 36. Of the 36 counties with no public transit, INDOT awarded 8 feasibility study grants for 2001 representing 13 of these unserved counties. Also, INDOT is working with one city administration (Noblesville) to bring service to that area.

Based on funding availability, INDOT’s goal is to increase the accessibility of public transportation to 80% of Indiana’s citizens by 2004.

* The data for this document is based on 1990 census figures.
The counties with a thicker outline are part of a regional transit system.