

National RTAP GTFS Shapes Lunch & Learn Training

Q&A Summary & Resource Links

August 4, 2026

Q&A Summary

#	Question	Answer
1	Can RTAP provide support for rural/urban transit agencies?	NRTAP is primarily designed to support rural/Tribal transit agencies. You are welcome to reach out and see if we are the right fit.
2	Many people in Key West know Haitian Creole. Is Haitian Creole available?	I couldn't find any planners that currently support, Haitian Creole (Kreyòl ayisyen) as a designated interface or home display language option within Google Maps app settings, though it is fully supported by Google Translate.
3	GTFS is only for fixed route service, correct?	The add on that Joe discussed is to meet Demand Response Services and those have designated reporting for NTD. There are also GTFS Flex for those interested. This is a relatively new format (approved March 2024) and fewer free trip planners have a way to display this demand response service yet, though we have seen some start adopting (such as Transit App) & generally for a fee between the State DOT or agency and this trip planning App.
3	GTFS is only for fixed route service, correct?	Yes, GTFS reporting for NTD is for Fixed Route and Deviated Fixed routes. FTA does not require GTFS Flex currently for NTD reporting. For any specific questions to confirm reporting for Deviated Fixed routes for your agency or agencies in your State or Tribe contact your NTD analyst.

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4	Is GTFS data required for Deviated-Fixed Routes?	For any specific questions to confirm NTD reporting for Deviated Fixed routes for your agency or agencies in your State or Tribe contact your NTD analyst.
5	How should we report a deviated fixed-route route? Right now our GTFS feeds for our two deviated fixed routes only show the fixed-routes with their scheduled (non-on demand zone) stops.	Stops within a zone - only as might be microtransit are not reported. Deviated fixed routes that have regular stops in an area or zone could be designated regular stops in the zone report as GTFS. Contact the NTD Analyst in your specific area to confirm how to report your GTFS. NRTAP's team is happy to review your GTFS once you confirm what you choose to report.
6	If the bus stops at a store, do we need to pull the GTFS into the parking lot to keep the stop closer to the shape file?	If the actual stop location is in the parking lot, then it is best practice to route the shape into the lot. If it is a shop that is close to the main street (less than 50m) then it isn't necessary.
7	Since this requirement is only for Fixed Routes, does that mean this is not required for Deviated Fixed Routes?	See questions 3 & 4.
8	I've found that GPS locations within Google maps are not always accurate. Do you use google earth for more accurate latitude and longitude coordinates?	We have found that depending on the area there is a difference between Google Maps and Google Earth. This comes down to which ones have the newest version of the satellite data. This can be seen by the date at the bottom. I would use whichever source has the most recent.
9	How does GTFS work for a frequency based system that doesn't utilize scheduled time points?	GTFS does require designate stops - while you might pick up at every block you will designate in GTFS safer, perhaps more popular stop locations. GTFS Builder can calculate intermediate times. GTFS does require a start and end time for the entire trip the other stop times will be interpolated or calculated. If you want to explore, as an agency in CA you have

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		excellent resources: hello@calitp.com how best to publish frequency based services as well. You might ask about frequency.txt file.
10	Excellent webinar. Thank you, Al, Marcy, and Joe. This comment is slightly off-topic but I want to emphasize that customers will still want to be able to find an electronic system map on your website. Especially important for new rider orientation. I have noticed some agencies replacing this, relying solely on a journey planning app that pulls in the GTFS feed that customers must download, but even then will not be able to see the big picture.	With shapes creating a transit system map is much easier. Great reminder!
11	Can you please restate the answer for how to report fixed-routes with deviation? As a fixed-route without deviation?	See questions 3 & 4
12	I had followed along with you all's Youtube tutorial but when using Google My Maps, it restricts map layers to ten stops, I didn't understand how to remedy that?	The My Maps method is limited to 10 stops when creating from scratch. This can be remedied by creating multiple layers (and then export the multiple layers) & then updating the shape_id to once single name and GTFS Builder can renumber as one single shape_id. Join us for Thursday office hours.
12	I had followed along with you all's Youtube tutorial but when using Google My Maps, it restricts map layers to ten stops, I didn't understand how to remedy that?	NRTAP Thursday Office Hours https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-Builder/Support
13	As someone who is fairly new to the GTFS process, is it appropriate to map out shapes	Let us know if you have any challenges with ESRI to shapes for validating the routes/trips.

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	in ArcGIS when building maps to distribute to the public?	
14	Will there be a comparable Pathways.txt training/support component be available in the future perhaps?	This would most likely then be a Demand Response service for NTD reporting purposes, and would not require a GTFS feed to be submitted.
14	Will there be a comparable Pathways.txt training/support component be available in the future perhaps?	While pathways is part of static GTFS this mostly applies to urban areas where there is specific routing that occurs within the station itself. NRTAP does not currently have any plans to cover Pathways since it doesn't apply to most rural agencies. As you are from CA, feel free to contact hello@calitp.com to discuss pathways.txt
15	When a deviated route is not set on hours but on a on call basis, how would you show the deviation on the GTFS. In other words we only deviate when someone calls for the service need.	There is a "rider must call for a pick-up" and that might help - while you may also put the "call ###, phone number" in the bus stop name
16	My organization has multiple GTFS feeds. What are the differences between them?	live answered; might need to see the file and then we can answer more accurately
17	I love Marshalltown Municipal Transit's system map. It's tied to the schedule and is interactive. Check it out. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/13ae57751a6e46f6bac09ddfd5acbb35#	Thank you for the comment!
18	Will you send out your presentation with the hyperlinks?	Yes
19	Thank you all!	Glad you joined us!

Resource Links

National RTAP Contact Information/Resources	
National RTAP Website	https://www.nationalrtap.org/
Email National RTAP	info@nationalrtap.org
National RTAP Webinar Recordings	https://www.nationalrtap.org/Training/Webinars
National RTAP Technology Tools	https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/Overview

National RTAP GTFS Resources	
GTFS Builder Welcome page	https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-Builder
GTFS Builder Download/Guidebook	On the welcome page, https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-Builder in the top banner
GTFS Builder Support / Videos	https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-Builder/Support#How-toResources
GTFS Data Quality Webinar	https://youtu.be/2kEidBtpphs
GTFS Shapes Webinar	https://youtu.be/A0yzTqDf3Z0
Creating/Editing Map stops from stops.txt	National RTAP Webinar: Maximizing Your GTFS Data: Virtual Workshop Creating GTFS Shapes https://youtu.be/A0yzTqDf3Z0?si=RsOdSuP7IZBvncD-&t=976

National RTAP GTFS Resources	
GTFS Builder Creating Shapes Step-by- Step Guide	https://irp.cdn-website.com/270961f6/files/uploaded/GTFS%20Shapes%20Step%20by%20Step%20Instructions_final_2016.pdf
New agency needs to map all stops how- to video Identify Stop Coordinates/C omplete Stops Tab	https://youtu.be/7j9-TYxc8ok found on the National RTAP GTFS Builder Support Page
GTFS Builder Support	https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-BUILDER/Support#How-toResources
GTFS Builder Guidebook (in download)	https://nationalrtap.eos-intl.net/N94067/OPAC/Details/Record.aspx?BibCode=548293
GTFS upload (hosting)	https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-BUILDER#UploadGTFS
GTFS Builder Support	Thursdays Office Hours 1-1:30 pm EST link in the banner https://www.nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/GTFS-BUILDER/Support
National RTAP Statewide GTFS Monitor Report	email: support@nationalrtap.org for a State DOT to request the summary monitor report from current weblinks published at NTD

Other Resources/Helpful Links	
FTA GTFS - National Transit Database report for GTFS	https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd

Other Resources/Helpful Links	
National Transit Map (NTM)	https://www.bts.gov/national-transit-map
Google Earth Pro download	https://data.transportation.gov/Public-Transit/General-Transit-Feed-Specification-Weblinks/2u7n-ub22/about_data
Google MyMaps	For mapping stops and shapes needs gmail/Google account) https://www.google.com/maps/d/
GTFS.org (the original spec)	https://gtfs.org/documentation/schedule/reference/
Mobility Data Validator	https://gtfs-validator.mobilitydata.org/
Mecatran Validator	https://gtfsvtor.mecatran.com/utw-test/web/pub/gtfsvtor
N-CATT QA Guide	https://n-catt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/GTFS-Checklist-Final.pdf
GTFS.org Best Practices	https://gtfs.org/documentation/schedule/schedule-best-practices/
NTD report of GTFS	https://data.transportation.gov/Public-Transit/General-Transit-Feed-Specification-Weblinks/2u7n-ub22/about_data
Shapes Best Practices	From NTD Guidance, https://gtfs.org/resources/gtfs-schedule-feature-guides/shapes/

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