Transit Data Standards
Informing Federal Policy and ITS Requirements

Background
As the transportation sector evolves with the integration of information technology, organizations face decisions that will expose them to new technologies, relationships and risks. Accompanying a rise in transit-related web and mobile applications, a set of competing data standards from both public and private organizations have emerged.

Objective
The purpose of this research is to understand the forces that move the transit industry towards the widespread adoption of a data standard. This project will review and assess the development and evolution of transit data standards including:

- the General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS)
- the Service Interface for Real Time Information (SIRI), a real-time standard maintained by the European Committee for Standardization (CEN); and
- Transit Communications Interface Profiles (TCIP), an all-encompassing federal standard for transit systems maintained by the American Public Transit Association (APTA).

Methodology
The research will be conducted through three major components: (1) a literature review for both (a) standards setting in general and (b) the state of transit data standards; (2) a comparative sector analysis which will consider transit data standards in the context of the information technology and transportation sectors; and (3) a series of interviews with industry professionals to include (a) transit agency staff, (b) transit industry vendors and developers, and (c) standards bodies.

Expected Findings
The expected outcome of this research is an analysis of federal stances on standards policy as well as an assessment of current and future trends in this sector—both technical and institutional. Results will inform federal transit policy and action in standards-setting and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) requirements, identifying the potential catalysts that will increase the effectiveness of federal and agency-level programs.