TCRP
REPORT 101

TRANSIT
COOPERATIVE
RESEARCH
PROGRAM

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Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services

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TCRP REPORT 101

Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services

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Research Sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration in Cooperation with the Transit Development Corporation

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WASHINGTON, D.C.
2004
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TRANSIT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

The nation's growth and the need to meet mobility, environmental, and energy objectives place demands on public transit systems. Current systems, some of which are old and in need of upgrading, must expand service area, increase service frequency, and improve efficiency to serve these demands. Research is necessary to solve operating problems, to adapt appropriate new technologies from other industries, and to introduce innovations into the transit industry. The Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) serves as one of the principal means by which the transit industry can develop innovative near-term solutions to meet demands placed on it.

The need for TCRP was originally identified in *TRB Special Report 213—Research for Public Transit: New Directions,* published in 1987 and based on a study sponsored by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration—now the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). A report by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), *Transportation 2000*, also recognized the need for local, problem-solving research. TCRP, modeled after the longstanding and successful National Cooperative Highway Research Program, undertakes research and other technical activities in response to the needs of transit service providers. The scope of TCRP includes a variety of transit research fields including planning, service configuration, equipment, facilities, operations, human resources, maintenance, policy, and administrative practices.

TCRP was established under FTA sponsorship in July 1992. Proposed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, TCRP was authorized as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). On May 13, 1992, a memorandum agreement outlining TCRP operating procedures was executed by the three cooperating organizations: FTA, The National Academies, acting through the Transportation Research Board (TRB); and the Transit Development Corporation, Inc. (TDC), a nonprofit educational and research organization established by APTA. TDC is responsible for forming the independent governing board, designated as the TCRP Oversight and Project Selection (TOPS) Committee.

Research problem statements for TCRP are solicited periodically but may be submitted to TRB by anyone at any time. It is the responsibility of the TOPS Committee to formulate the research program by identifying the highest priority projects. As part of the evaluation, the TOPS Committee defines funding levels and expected products.

Once selected, each project is assigned to an expert panel, appointed by the Transportation Research Board. The panels prepare project statements (requests for proposals), select contractors, and provide technical guidance and counsel throughout the life of the project. The process for developing research problem statements and selecting research agencies has been used by TRB in managing cooperative research programs since 1962. As in other TRB activities, TCRP project panels serve voluntarily without compensation.

Because research cannot have the desired impact if products fail to reach the intended audience, special emphasis is placed on disseminating TCRP results to the intended end users of the research: transit agencies, service providers, and suppliers. TRB provides a series of research reports, syntheses of transit practice, and other supporting material developed by TCRP research. APTA will arrange for workshops, training aids, field visits, and other activities to ensure that results are implemented by urban and rural transit industry practitioners.

The TCRP provides a forum where transit agencies can cooperatively address common operational problems. The TCRP results support and complement other ongoing transit research and training programs.

TCRP REPORT 101

Project B-24 FY'01
ISSN 1073-4872
ISBN 0-309-08797-X
Library of Congress Control Number 2004107820

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Price $36.00

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The members of the technical advisory panel selected to monitor this project and to review this report were chosen for recognized scholarly competence and with due consideration for the balance of disciplines appropriate to the project. The opinions and conclusions expressed or implied are those of the research agency that performed the research, and while they have been accepted as appropriate by the technical panel, they are not necessarily those of the Transportation Research Board, the National Research Council, the Transit Development Corporation, or the Federal Transit Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Each report is reviewed and accepted for publication by the technical panel according to procedures established and monitored by the Transportation Research Board Executive Committee and the Governing Board of the National Research Council.

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Published reports of the

TRANSIT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

are available from:

Transportation Research Board
Business Office
500 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

and can be ordered through the Internet at
http://www.national-academies.org/trb/bookstore

Printed in the United States of America

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AUTHOR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The research that produced this report was performed under TCRP Project B-24 by Westat, with the assistance of Nelson Development, Ltd.; Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc.; and Mobilitat, Inc. Jon E. Burkhardt, Senior Study Director at Westat, was this project's Principal Investigator. Mr. Burkhardt of Westat, Charles Nelson of Nelson Development, and David Koffman and Gail Murray of Nelson\Nygaard were the key authors of this report. They were assisted in this project by Cindy Johnson of Mobilitat; Adam T. McGavock of Westat; Thomas Brennan, Paul Lutey, Michele King, and Joey Goldman of Nelson\Nygaard; and Anton Yachmenev of Nelson Development (formerly Creative Action, Inc.).

We would like to thank many people for substantial contributions to this project. Our TCRP Project Officer, Gwen Chisholm-Smith, directed the Project Panel's efforts on the project. We are grateful for the assistance provided to us by the members of our Project Panel. We appreciate the time and insights given to us by the many state officials and rural transportation operators who worked with us in our interviews.

FOREWORD

By Gwen Chisholm-Smith
Staff Officer
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TCRP Report 101: Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services examines strategies and practices used to coordinate rural transportation services and identifies model processes used for local coordination efforts in rural communities. This report includes a stand-alone executive summary that provides information, instructions, and lessons learned from rural communities that have implemented coordinated transportation services. This information may be used by local communities, state agencies, and tribal governments in planning and implementing coordinated community transportation services in rural areas.

Coordinated transportation services are evolving as rural communities around the country strive to address more effectively the mobility and access needs of rural residents. These efforts typically involve a number of stakeholders, including human service organizations, public transportation providers, tribal governments, school districts, and special districts. Many states have also recognized the benefits of coordinating the various programs and thereby supporting greater mobility in rural communities.

Coordinated transportation services, developed through community-based planning efforts, typically use resources more effectively and efficiently and offer improvements in mobility. But even though coordinated transportation systems have been demonstrated as effective, they have not been universally adopted in areas where they are potentially appropriate. Obstacles to adopting a coordinated approach may include inadequate information about procedures for organizing cooperative efforts at the state level, a lack of comprehensive procedures for local organization and planning, beliefs by some persons that a combination of federal or state regulations or organizational policies prohibit cooperation, and reluctance on the part of potential coordination partners to devote time and resources to planning and implementation.

This report identifies ways to improve ongoing coordination efforts and documents the critical factors that help determine success or failure in establishing sustainable rural public transportation services. Special attention is given to successful strategies used to obtain the necessary ongoing operational funding for the transportation services.

Westat, in association with Nelson Development, Ltd.; Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc.; and Mobilitat, Inc., prepared this report for TCRP Project B-24. The project's primary objective was to develop a document that would inform local communities, state agencies, and tribal governments in areas related to planning and implementing coordinated community transportation services in rural communities. To achieve the project's objective, the research team performed a litera-

ture review, conducted a comprehensive survey, performed interviews, and conducted case studies.

This report includes information on who needs to be involved in coordinated transportation, how coordination works, and coordination's benefits. The Toolkit also provides information, instructions, and examples of lessons learned from actual implementation experiences.

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TOOLKIT INTRODUCTION

Toolkit Introduction

BACKGROUND

Mobility issues can be particularly challenging in rural America, which has 80 percent of the nation's land, 20 percent of the nation's population, and communities that vary widely—economically, geographically, and demographically. Nearly 40 percent of rural residents live in counties with no public transit service. Many small communities have no taxi service; in recent years, intercity and interstate bus, train, and air service to rural areas has greatly diminished. Across the United States, transportation dollars spent per capita in rural areas are a fraction of the same dollars spent per capita in urban and suburban areas. Thus, most rural residents have fewer transportation options than their urban or suburban counterparts.

Many rural residents face the challenges of long trips to get to needed employment, commercial, medical, or governmental destinations. Some rural residents have special transportation needs; because of advanced age, lack of income, or disabilities, they can encounter real difficulties in providing their own transportation.

In the face of significant transportation needs and severely limited resources, a key challenge for rural communities is to use existing resources as effectively as possible. Transportation coordination strategies help address this cost-effectiveness mission. Many rural communities do receive some small amounts of transportation funding, from Federal, state, and local governments and private charitable groups, to provide trips in their localities. For the most part, these services address the needs of individuals who have disabilities or are elderly; to some extent, trips for members of the general public are also provided. Consequently, there has been a proliferation of small organizations that provide transportation, often with inadequate capital

and operating funds, each owning a few vehicles that can be used only for their agency's own designated clients and purposes. In such communities, coordination strategies such as pooling vehicles and combining administrative operations could provide significantly better transportation service for everyone. In fact, many rural communities are now seen as some of the best available examples of successful coordinated transportation systems. The *Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services* is intended to be a user-friendly resource for successfully building and maintaining sustainable, cost-effective transportation services in rural communities.

The Toolkit is intended to be useful to the widest possible audience, from persons never previously involved in coordinated transportation services to those who have been working in the field for many years.

THE ROADMAP FOR THIS TOOLKIT

This Toolkit gives transportation system planners, operators, and funders information on how to coordinate transportation services in rural communities. That information, summarized here, is presented in the following major sections of this Toolkit:

- ✦ Introduction to basic coordination concepts,
- ✦ Information needed for implementing new coordination efforts,
- ✦ Information needed for fine-tuning existing coordination efforts,
- ✦ Case studies of successful state and local coordination efforts, and
- ✦ Appendices of detailed information.

This chapter is intended for all readers, both those looking for an overall introduction to coordination concepts and others looking to brush up on some fundamental issues. Other sections are keyed to specific audiences (see Table 1). The first two sections of this Toolkit—information needed for implementing new coordination efforts and information needed for fine-tuning coordination efforts—are intended for readers who may be new to coordinated transportation operations. Section III is focused on information needed for improving already coordinated transportation operations. Section IV should be of interest to everyone.

Table 1:
PRIMARY AUDIENCES FOR SECTIONS OF THIS TOOLKIT

Sections of this Toolkit	*Detailed Contents*	*Primary Audience for this Section*
Toolkit Introduction	Overview of this document	All readers
Section I: BASIC COORDINATION CONCEPTS	Basic concepts; details concerning benefits, costs, and barriers	Persons not yet actively engaged in coordination
Section II: IMPLEMENTING NEW COORDINATION EFFORTS	Building blocks for new systems; frequently asked questions	Persons not yet actively engaged in coordination
Section III: IMPROVING CURRENT TECHNIQUES FOR COORDINATION	Strategic approaches; some pitfalls; detailed coordination issues	Persons now involved in coordinated systems
Section IV: CASEBOOK OF STATE AND LOCAL COORDINATION MODELS	Successful state and local coordination models	All readers
Bibliography, Abbreviations, Glossary, Contacts		All readers
Appendices:	A: Stakeholder Interview Guide B: Survey of County Transportation Services C: Sample Transportation System Survey Forms D: Identifying Best Practice Systems E: Coordination Workshop Facilitation Guides F. Detailed Operating Cost Categories for Coordinated Transportation Systems G. Example of Various Interagency Agreements to Enhance Coordination H. Sample Transportation Coordination Plan Report I: Example of State Legislation Creating Statewide Coordinating Council	All readers

Newcomers to coordination issues should find inspirations in the many possible paths to success, and "coordination experts" should find insights in these state and local case studies that will enable them to obtain even greater levels of performance in their own communities. Persons really interested in how and why coordination works eventually will want to read all parts of this Toolkit.

We see the Toolkit as a tree, with the trunk representing the fundamental understandings involving coordination, the branches representing required components and conditions, and the leaves representing the fine details. Note that different kinds of trees thrive in different environments. The detailed elements (leaves) of each tree often determine how people view the entire structure; the flow of information and resources from the tree's roots to the leaves and back again determines the overall strength and health of the living organism.

The point here is that you, as an interested observer, have a variety of elements to examine, and you can do this in your own sequence of interest. You could start with basic definitions, then move on to the more detailed components and conditions, and finish with the finest details. Alternatively, you could proceed directly to the details, returning to the other elements for a more complete understanding of the fundamental framework. The choice is up to you, this Toolkit's user.

WHAT IS COORDINATION, ANYWAY?

Coordination is **a technique for better resource management,** in which improved organization strategies are applied to achieve greater cost-effectiveness in service delivery. Coordination is about **shared power,** which means **shared responsibility, shared management,** and **shared funding**.

Coordination of transportation services is best seen as **a process** in which two or more organizations (who may not have worked together previously) interact to jointly accomplish their transportation objectives. Coordination is like many other political processes in that it involves power and control over resources, and coordination can be subject to the usual kinds of political problems and pressures, such as competing personalities and changing environments.

Coordination can be used to improve transportation system performance by eliminating duplicative efforts and improving the efficiency of transportation operations. Coordinating transportation means doing better (obtaining more results, like trips) with your existing resources. It requires working together with persons from different agencies and backgrounds. Coordination has been said to be "the best way to stretch scare resources and improve mobility for everyone."

Adopting the broadest possible perspective is a key element of successful efforts. Effective coordination will require a focus on not just a few agencies or client types, but on your entire community and maybe even on multiple communities.

WHAT ARE COORDINATION'S KEY BENEFITS?

By addressing inefficiencies in the current use of transportation resources, coordination can **lower the costs of providing services**. Most communities apply these cost savings to increase the numbers of trips served, thus **increasing overall service effectiveness**. The combination of increased efficiency and increased effectiveness can create great improvements in unit costs, such as costs per trip, per mile, or per hour. Benefits commonly observed from coordinated transportation services include

- ✦ Lowered trip costs for travelers and for human services agencies;
- ✦ Extended service hours, services to new areas or new communities and to more people;
- ✦ More trips made by persons needing transportation;
- ✦ Services more responsive to schedules, points of origin, and destinations of customers;
- ✦ Greater emphasis on safety and customer service;
- ✦ More door-to-door service; and
- ✦ More flexible payment and service options.

HOW DO THE BENEFITS OF COORDINATION COME ABOUT?

The most powerful coordination strategies for **reducing inefficiencies** are reducing the number of drivers and the total driver wages paid, reducing the number of vehicles and other capital costs, and reducing administrative staff and administrative labor costs. The most powerful coordination strategies for **increasing service effectiveness** include extending service hours and boundaries, offering services that are more responsive to customer needs, and offering higher quality and safer services, all of which will attract more riders.

THE COSTS OF COORDINATION

Coordination certainly has its costs. Coordinated transportation services may be more expensive, more difficult, and more time-consuming to achieve than most interested stakeholders initially expect. While coordination will most likely increase overall cost-effectiveness or reduce unit costs (for example, costs per trip), coordination may not necessarily free transportation funds for other activities. Some agencies have hoped to see money returned to them—this has seldom happened because any cost savings realized are usually devoted to addressing the many unmet travel needs found in most rural (and urban) communities. Also, coordination agreements can unravel over time, so that constant work is necessary to ensure that all parties keep working together. Coordination depends on mutual trust, respect, and goodwill among all parties involved, so long-standing coordination arrangements can be jeopardized if antagonistic or self-serving individuals become involved in transportation activities.

WHEN IS COORDINATION EFFECTIVE?

Coordination needs to be seen as one of several possible management or problem-solving tools; it will not solve all transportation problems in all communities. **Coordination has its most substantial impact where transportation efficiency can be improved**. In communities where persons who need transportation are not being served but existing

services are already highly efficient, coordination by itself is seldom an effective strategy: in these cases, **additional resources are needed**.

WHAT ABOUT BARRIERS TO COORDINATING?

Some local transportation operators have claimed that they would like to coordinate their service with those of other providers, but that they are "not allowed," "prohibited," or otherwise unable to do what it makes sense to them to do by "barriers" in the legislation or regulations of programs through which they receive funding. But many other local operators (see Section IV of this Toolkit) have succeeded in coordinating the transportation resources of various programs by working through the same administrative, personal, and institutional obstacles which other operators have found more difficult to surmount.

Much of the funding for specialized transportation services originates with Federal programs aimed at specific client groups and needs. This means that recipients of such funds need to pay close attention to the specific objectives and regulations of these programs. While this can be a complex process, it is certainly not an impossible one. There definitely are "challenges" regarding coordination, but it would not be accurate to say that there are barriers that cannot be surmounted.

SUMMARY

Coordinated transportation services offer many benefits to many rural communities, but the coordination process takes real work. Many of the challenges faced will involve ways to forge cooperation among individuals who are not used to working with each other. Successfully addressing these challenges can create transportation services that serve more persons at lower unit costs. This Toolkit shows how to make coordination succeed for you.

BASIC COORDINATION CONCEPTS

Section I

Coordination has been promoted as a means of improving the delivery of transportation services since the late 1960s. Many rural communities have benefited from increased coordination among the transportation services sponsored by various programs.

Coordinating agencies, the riders of the services, and the localities all can receive measurable benefits, including additional funding, more cost-effective operations, and the benefits received from increased mobility.

Section I includes basic information necessary to understanding coordination issues. It addresses the fundamental issue of “Why coordinate?" This section begins with basic coordination concepts, including definitions, an historical perspective about coordinated transportation services, an overview of the agencies often involved in coordinated transportation systems, and an examination of the kinds of problems that coordination addresses.

The second chapter in this section provides more details about the benefits, costs, and barriers involved in coordination. This information lays the groundwork for understanding the basic elements of coordination, which can then be applied by following the steps outlined in Section II.

BASIC COORDINATION CONCEPTS

Chapter 1

SOME DEFINITIONS

Coordination is a strategy for managing resources. It is applied within community political environments. Fundamentally, coordination is about shared power among organizations that are working together to achieve common goals. Typically, the necessary precursors to shared power are shared respect and shared objectives. After these preconditions are met, sharing the key components of power—responsibility, management, and funding—is possible.

Coordination focuses on management, resources, cost-effectiveness, broad perspectives, multiple stakeholders, cooperation, and action. Skills required to succeed at coordination include knowledge, communications, dedication, perseverance, understanding, cooperation, curiosity, creativity, and energy.

Coordination can be used to address problematic transportation situations, such as duplication of effort and opportunities for improving transportation resource efficiency. Coordinating transportation means doing better (obtaining more results, like trips) with existing resources by working together with persons from different agencies and backgrounds. According to Ohio's Department of Transportation, "Coordination is the best way to stretch scarce resources and improve mobility for everyone." (ODOT, 1997).

Coordination of transportation systems is thus **a process** in which two or more organizations interact to jointly accomplish their transportation objectives. Coordination is like many other political processes in that it involves power and control over resources and can be subject to the

Coordination is

. . . a strategy for managing resources.

. . . about shared power, responsibility, management, and funding

. . . a process involving power and control over resources.

usual kinds of political problems and pressures, such as competing personalities and changing environments.

Coordination—the sharing of the transportation resources, responsibilities, and activities of various agencies with each other for the overall benefit of their community

This report is defining coordination as the sharing of the transportation resources, responsibilities, and activities of various agencies with each other for the overall benefit of the community. (Even after many years, this "pooling of resources" definition of coordination is not necessarily accepted within every community—in some communities, mass transit operators and human service agencies still perceive coordination from narrow self-centered perspectives.) The broad perspective is a key element: effective coordination will require a focus on the entire community, or maybe even on multiple communities.

The earliest study to focus on coordination of transportation services defined it in three phases: (1) cooperation, (2) coordination, and (3) consolidation (Revis et al., 1976). The definitions of these three levels of service integration are as follows:

- **Cooperation:** Working together in some loose association, perhaps focusing primarily on information sharing, in which all agencies retain their separate identities and authorities, including control over the vehicles which they own.
- **Coordination:** Joint decisions and actions of a group of agencies with formal arrangements to provide for the management of the resources of a distinct system.
- **Consolidation:** Vesting all operational authority in one agency that then provides services according to purchase of service agreements or other contractual relationships.

More recent work has shown that these three levels of service integration are not necessarily part of the same continuum: each can be an end result by itself. Experience has shown that each of the phases mentioned above can be considered as a self-contained stage or a different level of service integration. Cooperation is necessary for both coordination and consolidation, but coordinated systems do not necessarily change to become consolidated systems. In fact, coordination is usually the end product—consolidation is rare. Consolidation is certainly one of the possible outcomes of efforts to work more closely together, but consolidation can be threatening to many agencies (whose political view may be one of "taking away" their vehicles, their funds, and their program control). But consolidation sometimes offers the potential for providing the greatest monetary benefits.

Whatever level of integration is ultimately achieved, the process of working together entails **joint efforts** to convert perspectives of narrow self-interest into broader communitywide interests and actions. Individuals who may not be used to talking or working with each other will need to develop levels of trust, respect, confidence, and shared responsibilities. A willingness to be open-minded about changing long-standing operating procedures will be required. The results can include the blending of travel purposes, client types, travel modes, funding sources, vehicle types, and the needs of different political jurisdictions, as well as philosophies and perspectives. The results can be quite beneficial, as described below.

. . .working together entails **joint efforts** to convert narrow perspectives . . . into broader community-wide interests and actions

THE EVOLUTION OF EFFORTS TO COORDINATE SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Understanding the history of coordination helps to understand some of the issues people now face when they attempt to implement coordinated transportation services.

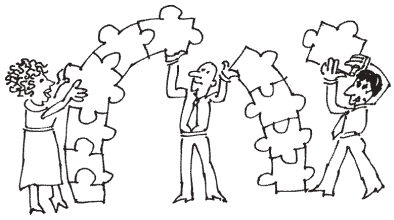
To meet national objectives for both human service and transportation programs—whether they focus on education, job training, welfare reform, elderly nutrition, health and medical care, other services, or simply transportation—the programs' intended recipients must have access to those services. But the intended recipients of such programs are often individuals with limited access and mobility.

lack of transportation could be a key barrier to receiving important human services

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, human service program officials recognized that many of their intended clients lacked adequate transportation and that lack of transportation could be a key barrier to receiving important human services. When human service agencies realized that many of their clients had no means of accessing needed services that were available to them, many agencies started their own transportation systems. Transportation services for persons with special transportation needs multiplied. Agency-sponsored vans often offered transportation services only to their own clienteles, but they frequently served destinations or riders similar to (or the same as) the destinations or riders of other agencies, with each agency owning, operating, and maintaining separate vehicles. But these services didn't address all of the transportation needs, the costs of the trips increased,

*One of the most talked about mechanisms for improving specialized transportation services was **coordination**.*

and the resources needed to provide the transportation services became more constrained. Funding agencies became concerned with how to reduce duplicative efforts and make existing transportation services more efficient and effective. A closer look at these specialized transportation systems showed that many of them operated without regard to certain principles of economic efficiency, but that real increases in cost-effectiveness could be achieved if certain steps were taken to analyze, understand, and improve services. One of the most talked about mechanisms for improving specialized transportation services was **coordination**.



In the field of public mass transportation, coordination began to take on a new meaning with the advent, in 1970, of the special service requirements for elderly and "handicapped persons" under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964. Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the 1990s resulted in another source of transportation for persons with special travel needs. The ADA requires public transportation agencies to provide complementary paratransit services to transport certain persons with disabilities. (Eligibility for the complementary paratransit services mandated by the ADA is limited to persons who are unable to use accessible vehicles operated on fixed routes. The ADA is a civil rights law with the goal of preventing and remediating discrimination against persons with disabilities; like other civil rights laws, it does not provide funding for these goals.)

Coordination became an important management strategy when we found that agencies dealing with human service transportation needs were doing so in a "silo" or "stovepipe" fashion: dollars and rules came down from above in a narrow and constrained manner, and the perspective was one of a closed system from the top to the bottom. The trip needs of one agency's clients could be served, but often at considerable expense and with some service quality problems. Many agencies had similar client travel needs, but they fiercely guarded the rights and interests of their own clients against "competing" interests and the prerogatives of their own "turf" from "outsiders."

Many rural communities have evidenced real leadership in combining the travel resources of human service agencies and also opening such services to members of the general public. Despite these successes, transportation services in some of these same rural communities have been unable to cross township, county, or state boundaries to coordinate transportation services with neighboring communities.

The recognition that many agencies have real interests in improving the cost-effectiveness of human services transportation has led to an effort to build bridges between particular agency interests and mandates. Coordinating transportation services is one powerful way of building these bridges. As previously noted, coordination helps solve difficult problems and has real measurable benefits. But it isn't always easy to achieve, and it won't solve all problems.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED IN COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES?

In many communities in the United States, a variety of public and private agencies and organizations provide or purchase transportation services for persons who are somehow disadvantaged in their ability to obtain transportation. Persons eligible for these programs are usually those with functional impairments (who are often also older), disabilities, low incomes, and otherwise without access to private automobiles. They and their representatives need to be included in any transportation planning process, as do the agencies serving them. These agencies and organizations often include

Riders and their representatives need to be included in any transportation planning process, as do the agencies serving them

- ✦ Public transportation providers, which are required by ADA to provide complementary paratransit services to transport persons with certified disabilities wherever the public transit agency provides fixed-route transportation (public transit providers sometimes also offer special services for the elderly and persons with disabilities which preceded ADA);
- ✦ Departments of human and social services, which arrange Medicaid transportation as well as transportation for low-income persons;
- ✦ Departments of health and mental health, which provide medical trips;
- ✦ Area agencies on aging, which transport clients to senior centers and other service destinations;

- ✦ Vocational and/or developmental disabilities departments, which often transport clients to sheltered workshops for employment and training and to jobs in the community;
- ✦ Departments of employment, which are responsible for implementing U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)-funded programs, such as those serving individuals who are moving from welfare to work;
- ✦ Departments of education, which transport many students and provide specialized transportation for vocational rehabilitation students; and
- ✦ Many different private nonprofit organizations, such as the Red Cross and faith-based organizations, which provide transportation to a variety of persons for different purposes. (Burkhardt, 2000)

Each of these agencies and organizations may receive funding for transportation services from one or more sources, including Federal, state, and local programs and nonprofit programs. Such funds are often accompanied by specific objectives for serving limited clienteles and by specific rules and operating requirements. Operating separately, such services often demonstrate the economic and service problems noted below. Operating in a coordinated fashion, these agencies can often achieve greater levels of transportation services for their own clients and others as well.

PROBLEMS THAT COORDINATION ADDRESSES

In communities without coordination efforts, the following kinds of inefficiencies and problems are often observed (Burkhardt et al., 1990):

- ✦ A multiplicity of operators, each with its own mission, equipment, eligibility requirements, funding sources, and institutional objectives, often resulting in significant duplication of expenditures and service efforts, as well as gaps in needed services;

- ✦ The absence of a formal mechanism for cooperation or communication among these operators;
- ✦ A total level of service well below the total level of need—often, substantial unmet transportation needs among populations with growing numbers and proportions of older persons;
- ✦ Excess travel by transportation providers with underutilized vehicles;
- ✦ Significant variations in services available during particular times of day or days of the week and to specific groups of persons, and duplicative services in some neighborhoods but substantial gaps where no service is available in other areas;
- ✦ Substantial variations in service quality, including safety standards, from provider to provider;
- ✦ A lack of reliable information—for consumers, planners, and service operators—describing the services being provided and their costs;
- ✦ The absence of an overall compendium of services available or the funds being used to provide them; and
- ✦ The absence of a reliable mechanism to quantify overall service needs and create a comprehensive plan to address these problems.

. . . coordination has its most substantial impact in communities where transportation efficiency can be improved . . .

Coordination has been shown to be capable of resolving such problems and improving specialized transportation services.

Coordination will not solve all transportation problems in all communities. It needs to be seen as one of several possible management or problem-solving tools. In order to determine if coordination can improve the transportation services in a particular locality, transportation planners must first gather data about the potential population to receive transportation services and the current transportation providers. The next step is to analyze the effectiveness and efficiency of current services in meeting the service population's needs.

Coordination may be an effective action strategy in communities where there is substantial unused vehicle time; substantial unused vehicle capacity; or a lack of economies of scale in planning, administration,

operations, purchasing, or maintenance. Unless these conditions are present, strategies other than coordination are better suited to improve transportation services. Thus, coordination has its most substantial impact in communities where transportation efficiency can be improved. In communities where persons who need services are not being served but where there is little room for efficiency improvements, coordination by itself will not be an effective strategy; in these cases, additional resources are needed. Rural communities must carefully assess their own circumstances with respect to these conditions; only then will the most appropriate strategy become apparent.

GOALS FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

A number of efforts to coordinate transportation services have not shown success because they failed to specify what they were trying to achieve by coordinating. Setting specific goals becomes a crucial initial step in the coordination process.

On an overall (for example, statewide) basis, the kinds of goals set by Oregon's State Agency Transportation Coordination Project are worth noting. They include

- ✦ Doing more with limited existing resources,
- ✦ Utilizing transportation investments more efficiently,
- ✦ Enhancing mobility within and between communities,
- ✦ Increasing access to jobs and job training,
- ✦ Preserving individual independence, and
- ✦ Enhancing the quality of life.

On a local basis, coordination objectives can be even more specific. As noted in *TCRP Report 91: Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services*, they might include

- ✦ Generating new revenues,
- ✦ Reducing the costs of providing trips,

- ✦ Increasing efficiency and productivity of transportation services, and
- ✦ Increasing mobility within the community.

HOW COORDINATION WORKS

The fundamental goals of coordinated transportation systems are to increase the numbers of people served and the numbers of rides provided with existing resources. Coordination achieves these goals through better resource management.

The fundamental goals . . . are to increase the numbers of people served and the numbers of rides provided . . .

The first set of resource management objectives, targeted on greater efficiencies, focuses on reducing duplication and fragmentation in operating, administering, planning, and funding transportation services. Specific strategies for achieving these objectives include reducing the following:

- ✦ Operating and administrative salaries,
- ✦ Capital costs on vehicles and other equipment, and
- ✦ Other operating costs (maintenance, insurance, etc.).

The second set of resource management objectives, targeted on more productive services, focuses on improving the acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, affordability, and availability of transportation services within the community. Specific strategies for achieving these objectives include increasing the following:

- ✦ Days and hours of service,
- ✦ Service areas,
- ✦ The different kinds of persons and trip purposes served,
- ✦ The accessibility of vehicles in the fleet for persons with special needs,
- ✦ The kinds and amounts of public information concerning services, and
- ✦ The kinds and amounts of funding available to help pay the costs of specific trips.

Additional information on how coordination works is found in the next chapter in the section on coordination's benefits.

SUMMARY

This introduction to fundamental coordination concepts has focused on these areas:

- ✦ Coordination is a technique for managing limited resources and focuses on shared power arrangements among partners,
- ✦ Coordinated transportation services evolved as a means of meeting the transportation needs of special needs populations more effectively and efficiently than is possible with single-client transportation services,
- ✦ A very broad range of transportation operators, consumers, and policymakers needs to be involved in coordinated transportation efforts within a locality,
- ✦ Coordination addresses problems created by inefficient services that operate without overall direction,
- ✦ Key goals for coordinated transportation services include more productive and more cost-effective services, and
- ✦ Coordinated transportation works by reducing the costs of providing transportation and expanding services.

The following chapter presents details concerning coordination's benefits and costs. The issue of barriers to coordination is also discussed.

COORDINATION DETAILS: BENEFITS, COSTS, AND BARRIERS

Chapter 2

Coordination really is more complex than its basic "let's work together" message. Successful coordination depends on a full understanding and appreciation of the details concerning what can or cannot reasonably be expected to happen as a result of coordination activities. Valid expectations are particularly critical in the areas of coordination's benefits and costs, as well as the often misunderstood concept of "barriers to coordination."

THE OVERALL BENEFITS AND COSTS OF COORDINATION

Coordination is one of a number of management strategies for improving the performance of various individual transportation services . . .

Coordination is one of a number of management strategies for improving the performance of various individual transportation services, as well as the overall mobility within a community. It wrings inefficiencies out of the disparate operations and service patterns that often result from a multiplicity of providers. Overlapping, duplicative, and inefficient services can be combined for more efficient service delivery. As a result, coordinated services may achieve economies of scale not available to smaller providers. Coordinated services often also provide higher quality services. Greater efficiency helps to stretch the limited (and often insufficient) funding and personnel resources of coordinating agencies.

Coordination can lead to significant reductions in per-trip operating costs for transportation providers. Many communities use these savings to expand services to persons or areas not previously served. Persons

with special transportation needs often benefit from the greater amount of transportation and higher quality services when transportation providers coordinate their operations.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF COORDINATION?

Coordination has a wide range of potential benefits. Detailed benefits realized in various rural communities are described in Chapter 8. The three major potential benefit categories can be described as follows:

- Coordinated transportation services often have access to **more funds** and thus are better able to achieve economies of scale. They also have **more sources of funds** and other resources, thus creating organizations that are more stable because they are not highly dependent on only one funding source.
- **Higher quality and more cost-effective services** can result from more centralized control and management of resources.
- Coordinated services can offer **more visible transportation services for consumers** and less confusion about how to access services.

Some of the most important specific benefits can include

- Filling service gaps in a community by offering transportation to additional individuals and geographic areas within existing budgets;
- Providing trips to consumers at lower costs;
- Providing more trips for community members, thus enhancing their quality of life and providing economic benefits to their communities;
- Reducing total vehicle travel within a community, thus enhancing air quality and making other positive environmental contributions; and
- Generating cost savings to some participating agencies in special forms of coordinated transportation service.

The largest and most frequent economic benefits of coordinating human service transportation and regular fixed-route transit services (Burkhardt et al., 2003) are listed below. These benefits are generally applicable to other coordination examples as well. The largest and most frequent economic benefits are the following:

- Additional funding—more total funding and a greater number of funding sources;
- Increased efficiency—reduced cost per vehicle hour or per mile;
- Increased productivity—more trips per month or passengers per vehicle hour;
- Enhanced mobility—increased access to jobs or health care, or more trips provided to passengers at a lower cost per trip; and
- Additional economic benefits—increased levels of economic development in the community or employment benefits for those persons associated with the transportation service.

How Do the Benefits of Coordinating Transportation Services Occur?

How are the potential benefits actually realized? These are the ways in which the benefits of coordination usually come about:

- **A more cost-effective use of resources** is created through productivity increases, economies of scale, eliminating waste caused by duplicated efforts, and more centralized planning and management of resources.
- **Greater productivities and efficiencies** can be used to fill service gaps in a community by offering services to additional individuals and geographic areas within existing budgets. These also result in more trips for community members, thus enhancing their quality of life and generating economic benefits for the entire community, and generating cost savings to some participating agencies in some forms of coordinated transportation services.

The most powerful coordination strategies for generating economic benefits are reducing inefficiencies and increasing service effectiveness.

- **A more centralized management of existing resources** can result in greater visibility for transportation services and an enhanced appreciation of their value, reduced consumer confusion about how to access services, clearer lines of authority, and more professional (more comfortable, reliable, and safe) transportation services.

The most powerful coordination strategies for generating economic benefits by **reducing inefficiencies** are reducing the number of drivers and the total driver wages paid, reducing capital costs, and reducing administrative labor costs.

The most powerful coordination strategies for generating economic benefits by **increasing service effectiveness** include extending service hours and boundaries, offering services that are more responsive to customer needs, and offering higher quality and safer services.

Within rural communities, the most significant results of coordination are probably the following factors:

- **Provider/program cost savings:** There are two kinds of reduced costs per trip: those associated with decreased resource inputs (costs) and those associated with increasing service outputs (trips). The first type of cost reduction, the cost to provide trips, is created by increased efficiencies from vehicle sharing, use of volunteers, lower fuel cost, lower insurance cost, economies of scale, or similar coordination measures. From the point of view of a human service agency that participates in a coordination arrangement, the same benefit could be in the form of reduced cost to purchase a trip compared to a non-coordinated arrangement. The second type of cost reduction on a per-trip basis comes from the increase in the number of trips consumed, or the productivity of the services.
- **User cost savings:** These savings result from trips made by target populations at lower costs than would otherwise be the case.
- **Mobility increases:** These result from additional trips provided to target populations that would not otherwise be made. The value of these additional trips depends on the type of trip—for example, the ability to obtain needed services, obtain medical care, or hold down a job.

- ✦ **Service quality:** This results from trips that are safer, more reliable, or more convenient because of coordinated arrangements for driver training, maintenance, access to advanced technology, and so forth.

An overall list of the possible benefits of coordination is shown in Tables 2 through 5 (Burkhardt et al., 2003). Not all of these benefits occur in all communities, and not all consequences of coordination lead to reduced costs or outcomes that are universally considered desirable.

Table 2 shows the desired or expected changes to transportation system characteristics (the inputs to transportation services) that may come about as a result of coordination. Coordinated operations can actually lower some of the fundamental transportation system inputs, such as numbers of drivers, vehicles, and transportation providers. Duplication of services is reduced in this way.

Table 3 shows the desired or expected changes to transportation system performance measures (the results of transportation services) that may come about as a result of coordination. Both efficiency measures (for example, cost per mile) and effectiveness measures (such as passenger trips per vehicle mile) should show improvements as a result of coordination.

Table 4 shows coordination's desired or expected changes to users' assessments of basic transportation system attributes such as accessibility or affordability. Users should rate all of these system attributes higher after coordination is implemented.

Table 5 shows the desired or expected changes to users' overall transportation system service assessments that may come about as a result of coordination. Coordinated transportation services should result in greater accessibility throughout the community, providing greater mobility and independence for residents, and leading to decreased isolation.

Tables 2 through 5 can be used in the initial stages of planning coordinated transportation services. These tables can be used as checklists for possible coordination goals within a specific community.

Tables 2 through 5 can be used as checklists for possible coordination goals within a specific community.

Table 2:
POTENTIAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS: SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS (INPUTS)

Factor	*Desired or Expected Change*
System Characteristics (Inputs)	
Number of transportation providers	Lower
Number of agencies purchasing transportation	Higher
Number of vehicles	Lower
Number of drivers	Lower
Part-time/full-time driver ratio	Lower
Average hourly driver wage	Higher
Total driver wages	Lower
Level and quality of driver training	Higher
Hours when service is provided each day	Expanded
Days when service is provided each week	Expanded
Vehicle hours of service	May be lower
Vehicle miles of service	May be lower
Total service area	Expanded
Number of persons who can get services	Expanded
Joint purchasing	More frequent
Joint dispatching of agency-owned vehicles	More frequent
Centralized oversight and management	More frequent
Level of route duplication	Lower
Number of funding sources	Higher
Total transportation funding	Higher
One central community information source	More frequent
Segregated client types	Less frequent
Limited trip purposes	Less frequent
Community-wide transportation perspective	More frequent
Time spent in meetings	Higher
Level of planning processes	Higher

Table 3:
POTENTIAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Factor	*Desired or Expected Change*
Performance Measures	
Number of passenger trips	Higher
Number of passenger trips per service area population	Higher
Passenger trips per vehicle mile	Higher
Passenger trips per vehicle hour	Higher
Number of driver hours per passenger trip	Lower
Number of admin staff hours per passenger trip	Lower
Cost per vehicle hour	Lower
Cost per vehicle mile	Lower
Cost per passenger trip	Lower
Community benefits:	
Economic activity	Higher
Economic growth	Higher
Nursing home admissions per 1,000 population	Lower

Table 4:
POTENTIAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS: SERVICE ATTRIBUTE ASSESSMENTS

Factor	*Desired or Expected Change*
Service Attribute Assessments	
Acceptability	Greater
Accessibility	Greater
Adaptability	Greater
Affordability	Greater
Availability	Greater

Table 5:
POTENTIAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS: USERS' OVERALL SERVICE ASSESSMENTS

Factor	*Desired or Expected Change*
Users' Overall Service Assessments	
Alternative travel options	Greater
Ratings of transportation services	More Positive
Outcomes	
Independence	Increased
Security	Increased
Mobility	Increased
Isolation	Decreased

Program/Provider Cost Savings

Table 6 shows details of the provider/program cost savings categories. This table takes the fundamental operating components of a transportation service and estimates for each component how coordination might affect system costs. For example, drivers' salaries are the largest single expense of any transportation service. If coordination results in a lower number of paid drivers, this would reduce overall costs. But coordination might result in more professional, better-trained drivers who drive more hours: these factors would tend to increase costs. Some coordination plans could result in fewer volunteer drivers; if this happens, driver wages would probably increase.

If some of these efficiency-related impacts cannot be achieved, coordination may not be worth the effort it requires.

These efficiency-related provider/program cost savings are really the heart of coordination, the part that sets coordination apart from other service improvements. The other kinds of benefits (user cost savings, mobility benefits, and service quality improvements) are those generated by most transportation services. If some of these efficiency-related impacts cannot be achieved, coordination may not be worth the effort it requires.

Table 6:
HOW TO GENERATE PROVIDER/PROGRAM COST SAVINGS

Cost Category	*Typical Percent of Total System Cost*	*Probable Effect of Coordination*	*Possible Change in this Category's Percent Cost*
Drivers' salaries	35	Reduces total number of drivers	-20
		Drivers drive more hours, are more skilled, and earn higher wages	+10 to 25
		Less input from volunteer drivers	+10 to 20
Administrative salaries	15	Frees agency heads from transportation hours	-10
		Requires hiring a professional transportation director	+20?
Dispatcher and bookkeeper salaries	6	Reduces total number of dispatchers and bookkeepers needed	-25
Gasoline, oil, and tires	16	Joint purchasing reduces prices; coordinated system may receive special tax advantages	-15
Capital expenses	12	Reduces total need for vehicles, radios, and computers	-25
Insurance	4.5	Standardizes rates for service but changes rate class to a higher risk level	+25
Maintenance	8	Eliminates duplication and underutilization of space, tools, and personnel	-25
Other costs	3.5	Saves on rent and office equipment	-25

The Economic Benefits of Mobility

Transportation's mission has been succinctly expressed as follows: "Transportation is necessary to support overall economic growth and activity in the national economy, but it also is expected to serve other goals of the community, support the desires of those who use its services, and do all this with the least expenditure of scarce resources" (Fuller, 2000). These other goals that transportation is expected to address include an extremely wide range, such as "facilitate welfare reform, narrow regional wealth or opportunity disparities, manage growth, and help produce more livable cities or neighborhoods," accomplishing these as it "provides employment, facilitates changed land uses, links businesses and employees, broadens distribution, enhances recreation, and in short is called upon to put in place the agenda of every political body" (Fuller, 2000).

Coordination's typical service improvements make significant increases to the mobility of transportation system users. Typical service improvements that result from coordination include the following:

We need to recognize that some service limitations may still exist, even with coordination.

- ✦ Lowered trip costs for travelers and for human services agencies;
- ✦ Extended service hours;
- ✦ Services to new areas or new communities and to more people;
- ✦ More trips made by persons needing transportation;
- ✦ Services more responsive to schedules, points of origin, and destinations of customers;
- ✦ Greater emphasis on safety and customer service;
- ✦ More door-to-door service; and
- ✦ More flexible payment and service options.

We need to recognize that some service limitations may still exist, even with coordination. Customers may have to preschedule their trips 24 hours or more in advance, and they may have to register with the service provider before being eligible to request trips. Some coordinated systems do not offer trips to all persons but only to those who meet certain qualifications, even though that approach runs contrary to most understandings about coordination.

When such service improvements occur, mobility increases and substantial benefits result. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reports that the major benefits from transit investments include mobility benefits, efficiency benefits, economic development benefits, and economic productivity benefits. Overall, the ratio of benefits to public costs is said to range between 4:1 and 5:1 (APTA, 1998). A study found that rural public transportation services provide large economic benefits for their communities (Burkhardt, Hedrick, and McGavock, 1998), demonstrating that **personal transportation services are a good investment for rural communities**. The kinds of benefits that rural transit systems generate for their communities include the following:

The American Public Transportation Association reports that the major benefits from transit investments include mobility benefits, efficiency benefits, economic development benefits, and economic productivity benefits.

- ✦ With access to jobs, workers get better jobs and there is reduced unemployment;
- ✦ Riders become (and stay) more independent with better access to health care, welfare, and shopping;
- ✦ Riders can shop where costs are lower;
- ✦ Riders save on their travel costs when using transit;
- ✦ Local businesses increase their level of activity, more money is spent locally, and new businesses and visitors are attracted to the community; and
- ✦ Communities benefit by the best use of their unique environments.

Added to such benefits are the wages paid to transit employees, the costs of goods and services the transit system purchases locally, and the multiplier effects of wages and system purchases in the local economy. Achieving these goals can create returns on investment of greater than 3:1 for rural communities, as shown by both national and local analyses.

HOW TO USE COORDINATION'S BENEFITS

The **uses** of the benefits of coordination are highly significant. Some communities will choose to apply coordination's benefits in one way, while others will opt for different strategies. If there are cost savings on a unit cost basis (which is possible but does not always occur)—that is, cost per trip, per mile, or per hour—the savings from these greater

efficiencies can be used to **serve more passengers**. This is basically the approach used by the vast majority of communities simply because the transportation service in most communities serves only a fraction of the total travel needed. The most frequent use of these coordination benefits is the **expansion of service** to previously unserved portions of the community, to previously unserved client types, or to previously unserved hours and days.

The transportation service in most communities serves only a fraction of the total travel needed.

To be sure, it is possible that some agencies will actually save money through coordination. Since these cases are rare, they are notable. To a large extent, monetary savings have been the result of the use of programs such as transit passes to serve Medicaid clients needing frequent trips. Transit passes cost only a fraction of comparable paratransit trips; the Medicaid program saves money, the transit agency receives more revenue (at essentially zero cost increases), and the Medicaid clients receive additional mobility. Lee County, North Carolina, (CTAA, 1994) and Sweetwater County, Wyoming, (Burkhardt, 2000) are examples of cases where all participating agencies paid less on a per-trip basis after coordination, and some actually paid less in total for their trips after services were coordinated (but some agencies simply purchased more trips for the same or even increased levels of expenditure).

THE COSTS OF COORDINATION

Coordination . . . may be initially more expensive, more difficult, and more time consuming to achieve than most interested stakeholders expect.

Coordination has its costs. It may be initially more expensive, more difficult, and more time consuming to achieve than most interested stakeholders expect. Coordination may increase overall cost effectiveness or reduce unit costs (for example, costs per trip), but may not necessarily make transportation dollars available for other activities. While some agencies have hoped to see money returned to them, this has seldom happened because any cost savings realized are most often devoted to addressing the many unmet travel needs found in most rural (and urban) communities. Also, coordination agreements can unravel over time, so that constant attention is necessary to ensure that all parties keep working together. Coordination depends on mutual trust, respect, and goodwill among all parties involved, so long-standing coordination arrangements can be jeopardized if antagonistic or self-serving individuals become involved in transportation activities.

FACTORS THAT INHIBIT COORDINATION

An oft-heard complaint from local transportation operators is that they would like to coordinate their services with those of other providers, but they are "prohibited," or otherwise unable to do what makes sense to them by "barriers" in the legislation or regulations of programs through which they receive funding. On the other hand, many local operators have succeeded in coordinating the transportation resources of various Federal and state-funded programs. They have done so by working through the same administrative, interpersonal, and institutional obstacles that other operators have found more difficult to surmount.

Obstacles that have troubled some individuals and operations have not been barriers to others.

In short, this means that obstacles for some operations have not been barriers for others operations. Why is this? It is apparently due to the nature of coordination, part of which involves stepping out into the unknown territories of other persons' interests and jurisdictions. This is an obvious challenge. To be successful, coordination also requires many other traits. Among these are a substantial amount of knowledge about possible approaches to coordination, a willingness to learn new information, and the flexibility and confidence to work cooperatively along paths that are only defined as one proceeds along the journey. The case studies in this Toolkit should provide the information and inspiration needed to implement successful coordinated rural transportation systems.

Much work has been devoted to investigating the issue of barriers to coordinated transportation. Because some persons have succeeded in implementing coordinated systems, it is now clear that many coordination efforts have been slowed or halted by **perceived** rather than actual barriers. Certainly, coordination requires lots of effort. But it may be more accurate to say that, while there are hindrances or challenges, there are seldom actual barriers that cannot be overcome no matter what.

It is now clear that many coordination efforts have been slowed or halted by **perceived** rather than actual barriers.

During hearings in 1975, the U.S. Senate became concerned about the lack of coordination of human service transportation and commissioned a review by the General Accounting Office (GAO) which resulted in a detailed 1977 report to the Comptroller General of the United States, ***Hindrances to Coordinating Transportation of People Participating in Federally Funded Grant Programs*** (GAO, 1977). In this review, the

GAO identified 114 Federal programs that provided transportation. (In a new report, GAO identified 62 Federal programs—most of which are administered by the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, Education, and Transportation—that fund transportation services for the transportation-disadvantaged [GAO, 2003]). The 1977 report could not identify any specific legislative or regulatory restrictions on coordination, but it did point out a number of "hindrances." **Many of the hindrances were inherent in the categorical nature of Federal grant programs**. Problems in coordinating transportation services for multiple client groups often stem from the incompatibilities or perceived incompatibilities in program purposes or services for the members of these different client groups. After some substantial efforts in investigating this issue of barriers, it is clear that many operators are responding to perceived rather than actual barriers. Issues that have been described as hindrances in the past include the following:

- ✦ Problems in dealing with the various requirements of a large variety of Federal funding programs;
- ✦ Not being certain that coordination is allowed or authorized;
- ✦ Problems with accountability, cost allocation, paperwork, and reporting;
- ✦ Funding issues including matching requirements for Federal funds, funding cycles, and lack of sufficient funding;
- ✦ Perceived incompatibility of goals, needs, or client eligibility;
- ✦ Expectations of no significant benefits from coordinated operations;
- ✦ Regulatory requirements (such as prohibitions on crossing local or state boundaries); and
- ✦ Lack of concerted Federal effort to encourage or require coordination (GAO, 1977; HEW, 1976).

All of these hindrances or challenges have been *addressed and resolved* in one community or another.

In addition, some agencies and individuals are not familiar with the concept of "fully allocated resource costs" of transportation services. Another hindrance has been the inability of others to address issues of service quality. **All of these hindrances or challenges have been *addressed and resolved* in one community or another.**

REQUIREMENTS OF FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

Many Federal programs offer funds that could be used for coordinated transportation services in rural communities. Some persons view this fact as a problem; in reality, having multiple funding sources is probably a real strength. The popularity of various Federal programs waxes and wanes over time, particularly within Congress, where funding decisions are made. Still, having to work with a variety of rules and regulations from different funding sources certainly adds a level of complexity to coordination tasks.

Having to work with a variety of rules and regulations from different funding sources certainly adds a level of complexity to coordination tasks.

No Overall Coordination Restrictions

There has been a misperception that categorical funding "does not permit" the sharing of resources among client groups of different types. Both the U.S. Departments of Transportation (DOT) and Health and Human Services (HHS) have issued instructions that are **clear on such issues**: as long as there is excess capacity and service is not being denied to the primary client group, it is indeed possible to use vehicles and other resources to serve a variety of client types, and it is possible to have clients from different sponsoring agencies riding on vehicles at the same time. If there are misperceptions about the possibilities of resource sharing, these misperceptions should be relatively easy to resolve with appropriate detailed information.

Restrictions within Specific Programs

There have been concerns about specific Federal programs concerning legislation or regulations that make coordination much more difficult than necessary (or that provide support to the views of those individuals not ordinarily inclined to share resources and responsibilities). Most of these issues have been successfully dealt with by the individual agencies or the efforts of the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. There are still some issues that need further work; chief among these are those relating to coordination with the Head Start and Medicare programs (both of which are being addressed but need further work before coordination obstacles are removed).

Head Start provides daily transportation to over 582,000 children across the country, many of whom receive transportation from coordinated transportation systems

Head Start—The Head Start program accounts for a substantial part of human service transportation nationwide. According to a 2000 survey conducted by *School Transportation News*, Head Start provides daily transportation to over 582,000 children across the country. Many of these children receive transportation from coordinated transportation systems, using either transit vehicles or agency vans. For many coordinated systems, such as the one found in Iowa, Head Start transportation is a substantial part of the system. The Iowa Office of Public Transit estimates that between 20 and 25 percent of the trips in their statewide coordinated system are provided to Head Start clients. If these trips were lost, the consequences to their coordinated systems could be serious.

The Coordinating Council has been working with Head Start to ensure that rural transportation systems will continue to be able to transport Head Start children. A key issue is the issue of the types of vehicles that are allowed to be used for transporting Head Start children.

All Head Start trips will have to be provided with school buses or allowable alternative vehicles starting in 2006.

Unless there is progress on manufacturing alternative vehicles or modifying the Head Start regulations, all Head Start trips will have to be provided with school buses starting in 2006. Since no transit system or human service agency uses school buses, they will no longer be able to provide Head Start trips. Current Head Start regulations (45 CFR 1310.12) state that "Effective January 18, 2006, each agency providing transportation services must ensure that children enrolled in its programs are transported in school buses or allowable alternative vehicles. . . ." Most transit agencies assume that "allowable alternative vehicles" include vans, buses, and other transit vehicles. That assumption is incorrect.

The Head Start regulations clearly define an allowable alternative vehicle as "a vehicle designed for carrying eleven or more people, including the driver, that meets all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards applicable to school buses, except 49 CFR 571.108 and 571.131." What are the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards applicable to school buses? The Code of Federal Regulations Section 571 lists well over 100 very specific regulations and parameters for school buses. These regulations and parameters go into extremely minute detail in specifying nearly every component of a school bus, such as window size, door size, door location, emergency exit handle location, minimum tensile body joint strength, and rollover thresholds. For example, Section 571.222.S.5.1.2, "Seat back height and surface area," states that:

Each school bus passenger seat shall be equipped with a seat back that, in the front projected view, has a front surface area above the horizontal plane that passes through the seating reference point, and below the horizontal plane 508 millimeters above the seating reference point, of not less than 90 percent of the seat bench width in millimeters multiplied by 508.

Transit vehicles may not be able to meet such standards for seat back size or the equally specific standards for window size. Is there any possibility that these transit vehicles will comply with the rear door regulations that specify door size down to the millimeter? Is it possible that a transit agency will cut apart the body of one of its buses in order to test the body joints? At the moment, it does not appear possible for any vehicle to meet these standards, other than a school bus (which was designed to meet these standards). So unless rural transit and human service agencies switch their fleets to school buses, their Head Start contracts could expire in January 2006.

Head Start sponsored a demonstration program of alternative vehicles in North Carolina.

Head Start sponsored a demonstration program of alternative vehicles in North Carolina. These vehicles may provide an option to permit continued coordination between public transportation operators and the Head Start program. Clearly, this is an outstanding issue of some importance.

Medicare—The Medicare program, administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services of HHS is one of the key health care programs in this country. This program has two distinct components: hospital insurance (known as "Part A") and supplemental medical insurance ("Part B"). Both programs provide insurance protection for covered services for persons age 65 or older, certain persons with disabilities, and individuals with chronic renal disease who elect this coverage. Transportation costs are allowable expenses under Medicare Part B, but serious restrictions apply. By statute and regulation, Medicare will provide reimbursement only for transportation services provided by ambulances. Furthermore, the use of an ambulance is limited to very severe medical situations such as a life-threatening emergency or a bed-ridden patient. These restrictions unnecessarily increase transportation costs and limit access to necessary health care.

Previous research has questioned the "emergency" nature of some Medicare transportation now being provided.

Previous research has questioned the "emergency" nature of some Medicare transportation now being provided. This is particularly true for regularly scheduled dialysis trips for end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients. ESRD Medicare patients are especially likely to have a critical

need for transportation support to access life-extending dialysis treatments. Such transportation problems are particularly severe in rural areas, which often lack local dialysis facilities and may lack long-distance transportation options to urban dialysis treatment centers. Medicare patients seeking dialysis transportation via ambulance must present a written order from their doctor stating that any other form of transportation would be harmful to their health. Of course, in some parts of the country, there may be no means of transportation except by ambulance. Since missing dialysis treatments can lead to serious medical problems, including death, it seems that some doctors are doing whatever it takes to get their patients to dialysis, even if this entails bending some regulatory definitions of what entails an emergency.

Research indicates that there are many nonemergency Medicare patients arriving at hospitals via ambulance.

Research indicates that there are many nonemergency Medicare patients arriving at hospitals via ambulance. With Medicare ambulance transportation costs approaching 2 billion dollars annually, Medicare's insistence on ambulance transportation—instead of, for example, rural public transportation systems—appears to be creating unnecessarily high costs. Research is now under way to examine the potential benefits to the Medicare program of changes to their legislation that would permit travel by services other than ambulances.

PROBLEMS WITH ACCOUNTABILITY, COST ALLOCATION, PAPERWORK, AND REPORTING

Rural transportation providers need detailed information to overcome the following kinds of potential coordination obstacles:

The burdens imposed by differing regulations and procedures can be quite expensive for local transportation operators.

- ✦ Program-by-program variations in eligibility for services;
- ✦ Billing, accounting, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements;
- ✦ Funding issues, including differing matching ratios and funding cycles; and
- ✦ Service regulations (such as prohibitions on crossing local or state boundaries).

While not constituting "barriers" that are impossible to surmount, the burdens imposed by differing regulations and procedures can be quite

expensive for local transportation operators. Recently completed case studies showed that overall administrative accounting and reporting burdens can be extremely expensive: 24 percent of all administrative costs of the Pee Dee RTA in South Carolina are devoted to accounting and reporting; administrative costs account for 58 percent of the total cost of Medicaid transportation provided by the Community Transit service in York, Pennsylvania.

Most of the commonly identified obstacles or barriers to coordination have specific strategies to overcome them. For example, problems of billing and accounting, which used to consume vast amounts of administrative staff resources for large coordinated transportation services (like OATS in Missouri) are now handled with relative ease because of the installation of computerized accounting systems (like that used by Jefferson Area United Transportation System [JAUNT] in Virginia) which allow detailed reporting to a wide variety of funding sources. The issue of cost allocation can be resolved by working through cost sharing arrangements in which all parties agree to certain specific formulas for sharing.

Most of the commonly identified obstacles or barriers to coordination have specific strategies to overcome them.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES TO COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION

In Chapter 8, local transportation providers describe the operational challenges they have faced when trying to coordinate services in their localities. These challenges were the following:

- Funding,
- Interpersonal relationships,
- Political support and power sharing,
- Lack of knowledge, and
- Understanding coordination.

Excluding funding, these topics can be addressed through greater understanding of coordination, including its likely benefits, costs, challenges, and successes in similar communities. All of these topics are covered in depth in this Toolkit.

SUMMARY

The major potential benefits of coordinating transportation services are access to more funds and more funding sources, higher quality and more cost-effective services, and more visible transportation services for consumers. Reducing inefficiencies (by reducing cost inputs) and increasing service effectiveness (by expanding available services) are the two key coordination strategies.

The major institutional barrier to coordination is the need to work with people from different agencies and having different perspectives.

It is important to recognize that **successful coordination will take real work**. Part of that work will involve dealing with persons who are unfamiliar with the missions, objectives, terminology, rules, and regulations of agencies other than their own. Other persons may not be used to cooperation as an operating procedure. Serious coordination efforts constitute a new way of doing business, outside of the traditional programmatic boundaries of service delivery. Generally, these "bumps in the road" are worth handling and eliminating because of the substantial benefits that coordination can provide.

The major institutional barrier to coordination lies at the very heart of coordination: the need to work with people from different agencies and having different perspectives. The key strategy to ensure that this obstacle does not become an insurmountable barrier is **education**—to obtain detailed knowledge about the programs, objectives, regulations, and operating procedures of persons representing other agencies. Another major strategy would be **flexibility**—one agency agreeing to accept some variations to its usual procedures to accommodate the operations of a coordinated service. The idea that funding programs for specific client groups "do not permit coordination with other programs" is **not correct;** while each program may have unique administrative and reporting requirements, **there are no prohibitions to coordination in Federal legislation**.

IMPLEMENTING NEW COORDINATION EFFORTS

Section II

This part of the Toolkit can be considered the "I think I'm interested in coordination, how do I do it?" section. Here we are talking about (1) what steps need to be taken in what order to establish successful coordinated transportation services and (2) what issues are commonly encountered in establishing such services.

This section begins with "building blocks" for coordinated transportation. The implementation steps are presented in enough detail to provide the information you need to proceed but with enough flexibility to explicitly recognize the large variety of local circumstances which exist in rural communities. (Perhaps more so in rural America than anywhere else, the concept that "one size fits all" is truly inappropriate.)

The second chapter in this section provides answers to some frequently asked questions about coordination, including issues such as funding and potential partners.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT NEW COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Chapter 3

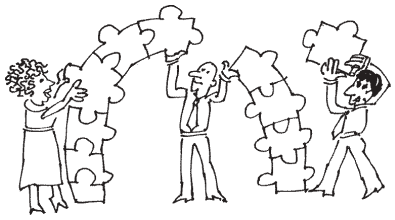
INTRODUCTION

Coordinating transportation services takes careful, deliberate, proactive planning. In the planning process, local officials with a stake in successful transportation services come together to determine how the community's needs can best be met and how the skills and resources available to them can best be used to this purpose. The process should be managed by a steering committee or task force of interested parties that defines roles and responsibilities among the agencies and other parties involved.

The process works best with defined stages where roles and responsibilities among the agencies and other parties involved in the planning are defined.

Coordination of transportation services begins because an individual or small group thinks that there must be a better way to provide transportation services in their community. Typical goals are to transport more people, save money, attract more funding, build stronger local support, eliminate duplication of services, and achieve greater operating efficiencies, among others. There are many good reasons to coordinate.

Coordination requires that people and agencies, sometimes having diverse interests, understand trade-offs, make compromises, and work together to achieve a common vision. For transportation coordination to be successful, focus, consensus, and direction are critical. **Focus** means defining the problem(s) that will be addressed. **Consensus** means agreeing on the basis and framework for moving forward. **Direction** means the setting of goals and objectives that will guide the development of overall strategies and completion of a detailed service plan and form the basis for measuring progress in implementing a plan.



IMPLEMENTATION STEPS FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION

The first question usually asked is, what should we do or how do we get started? The planning process to establish coordination has a number of well-defined steps that have been described in several transportation coordination handbooks. But the coordination literature is not the only place where applicable planning processes have been described. The welfare reform movement provided new opportunities for stakeholders in local areas to address transportation issues. As in coordinating transportation generally, the need to implement new welfare programs focused on getting people to jobs. Job training, in turn, brought transportation into focus and required that local agencies work together in new and different ways. This chapter presents seven implementation steps and a discussion of how to carry them out. (Other sources have recommended different numbers of steps, but the actual content of these steps varies very little. For example, see the 11-step outline for implementing strategies to reduce run-off-road collisions [NCHRP, 2003].)

The recommended implementation steps are

- **Step #1—Initiate the Improvement Process**—Form a task force or steering committee and decide to move forward.
- **Step #2—Analyze Existing Conditions**—Understand issues, needs, and circumstances; define local conditions.
- **Step #3—Establish Focus, Consensus, and Direction**—Agree on the problem, develop a consensus, and set a direction.
- **Step #4—Design Alternative Courses of Action**—Develop alternative coordination strategies.
- **Step #5—Assess Alternative Options**—Evaluate the alternatives and select the coordination option to implement.
- **Step #6—Implement the Preferred Choice**—Formulate action plans and implement coordinated transportation services.
- **Step #7—Evaluate and Improve the System(s) Implemented—**Review and evaluate progress.

Whenever a need to engage in new ventures presents itself, planning is critical. In each of the implementation steps that follow, a checklist of

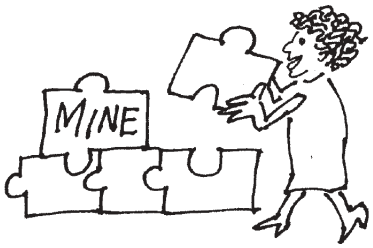
important activities is provided, followed by a brief discussion of each of the activities. Remember that you may have to move back and forth among the implementation steps as you move forward. Resources are cited in the appendices that accompany the individual implementation steps and at the end of this ***Toolkit*** so that you can find the detailed guidance you need to move through the implementation steps and complete each of the checklist activities. Many of the resources are available online.

The improvement process starts with a decision that coordinated transportation may offer better services than exist at present.

Implementation Step #1—Initiate the Improvement Process

Form a task force or steering committee and decide to move forward

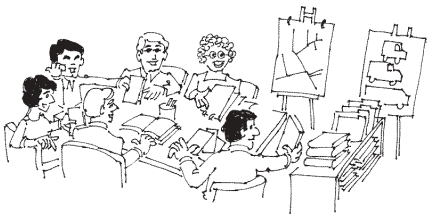
Checklist of Important Activities



The improvement process starts with a decision that coordinated transportation may offer better services than exist at present. What can be considered "better" depends on the state of transportation services locally and what kinds of improvements are thought to be necessary. To get started

- ✦ Organize a core group of interested parties;
- ✦ Discuss problems and issues with present transportation services;
- ✦ Identify stakeholders;
- ✦ Organize a task force or steering committee and create a preliminary vision and road map.

Organize a Core Group of Interested Parties



The motivation to coordinate may be locally generated, or it may result from mandates or encouragement from the state. Organizing a formal

committee early is not necessary; in fact, it could be detrimental if some key people are not invited to participate.

The core group should be fluid and flexible, inviting new people to join the discussion as it proceeds.

Discuss Problems and Issues with Present Transportation Services

The core group should be fluid and flexible, inviting new people to join the discussion as it proceeds. At this point, it is easier to talk about problems than solutions. Out of these early discussions come the beginnings of agreement, differences, consensus, and the resolve to move forward. As discussions move forward, the group will begin to get ideas for change and for organizing and delivering transportation services differently. Care must be taken not to let ideas solidify too early, but an important outcome of these discussions should be a preliminary road map of what coordinated transportation services may be and what can be accomplished. This will provide the structure for future actions. Care must be taken, at this stage and later, not to let this early vision and road map restrict the final outcome. Its purpose is to set some early focus and direction as a guide to moving forward.

Identify Stakeholders

Stakeholders are agency executives, local public officials, community leaders, and advocates who have something to gain or lose if change occurs. In the case of coordination, they are likely to have a strong interest in how coordination is achieved. Stakeholders typically include the following:

- Social service agencies that provide service to and advocate for particular segments of the population;
- Transportation providers in a position to help people and agencies meet travel needs; and
- Elected officials (local, state, and Federal) in a position to offer program and financial assistance.

Social service agencies may include the full range of organizations that provide social services to target populations in the communities that are the focus of transportation service improvements. Consider the

following agencies: children and family (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF]), rehabilitation services, Head Start, Community Action, older adult or senior citizen services, health and medical services, persons with developmental disabilities, and agencies that advocate for specific target population groups. *Transportation providers* may include public transportation agencies, community and county transportation services, social service agency transportation programs, private transportation operators such as taxi companies, local charter bus operators, and transportation coordinating agencies that already exist. *Elected officials* may include transportation planning agencies and area agencies on aging. *Other groups* may include advocates for the transportation of disadvantaged persons, nonprofit organizations, local civic and service organizations, and leaders from the business community. *Customers* should be at the table early.

Stakeholders should never forget that it is the customers of the coordinated transportation services that matter most.

Local collaboration, communication, and decisionmaking are essential for coordination to succeed. These groups must work effectively together for coordination to succeed. Stakeholders need to understand and respect each other's interests and views. Further, stakeholders should never forget that it is the customers of the coordinated transportation services that matter most.

Organize a Task Force or Steering Committee and Create a Preliminary Vision and Road Map

An organizational structure is essential to early progress and eventual success. A task force or steering committee, a group of manageable size, is essential to direct and oversee the planning process. The group needs to decide who should be involved and then set agendas and timetables. Leadership is equally important. Throughout the process, leadership needs to focus on being inclusive. A good way to focus roles and responsibilities for moving forward is to develop a memorandum of understanding that each participating organization or agency can execute. This provides a common statement by which all interested parties state their commitment and interest.

If a group is working together for the first time, especially without a lead agency or unit of local government, a memorandum of understanding can be executed as a joint agreement among all participants. If new participants join, they may be added by amendment.

To whom does this memorandum go? Is it shared with all parties or does it go to a central "authority"?

Interest in planning for coordinated transportation services is likely to vary among participants. Some will have a strong interest from the beginning. For instance, a strong interest and need for involvement will exist for the agencies most likely to be working together to coordinate transportation services. Others may be skeptical. Some may not be interested at all. The level of interest will likely be related to perceptions about benefits, expected difficulties, and prior experience with coordination attempts. Some agencies with funding and monitoring responsibilities may participate from the outset, while others that do not decide early to participate should be kept informed of progress and implementation progress. Local officials who may have a variety of responsibilities also need to be kept informed.

Transportation coordination should focus effectively on matching specific customer needs with the best available and cost-effective transportation alternative in the community.

The market for transportation services is complex. People need and desire different means of transportation for different trips. A single mode, such as fixed-route bus service, may not be all that is needed for people with limited mobility to meet their travel needs. Rather, a family of transportation services should be available within a coordinated transportation service setting. Such an environment would be more responsive to the travel needs of customers. Transportation coordination, then, should focus effectively on matching specific customer needs with the best available and cost-effective transportation alternative in the community.

All participants in the early discussions should recognize that people and agencies with diverse interests are coming together to begin building coordinated transportation services. They should be guided by the following:

- ✦ Consider and express views about transportation needs and services openly, but nonjudgmentally;
- ✦ Think creatively and do not let past issues or present constraints inhibit the exploration of possible changes in the delivery of transportation services;
- ✦ Develop an understanding of transportation needs and resources in the community that transportation coordination can address; and
- ✦ Work together to establish a vision of success, a mission, goals and objectives, and a plan for action to coordinate transportation services.

Implementation Step #2—Analyze Existing Conditions

Understand issues, needs, and circumstances; define local conditions

Checklist of Important Activities

Coordinating travel services requires an understanding of community resources and travel needs. It is important to establish a common base of information and knowledge about transportation in the community. To this end, a number of initiatives should be taken. They are to

- ✦ Interview stakeholders personally;
- ✦ Complete telephone, mail, or Internet surveys;
- ✦ Hold regular task force meetings;
- ✦ Conduct facilitated workshops; and
- ✦ Report to key participants and the community.

Each of these activities contributes to the understanding of transportation issues, problems, needs, and resources in the community. Each also offers opportunities for an increasingly broader group of interested parties to join the coordination discussion.

Coordinating travel services requires an understanding of community resources and travel needs.

Interview Stakeholders Personally

It is important to elicit the views of key stakeholders with an interest and/or role to play in the outcome of the planning. Interviews are best conducted in person, either at a central location or at a stakeholder's office. Confidentiality is very important to enable stakeholders to freely share their views of issues and problems. Stakeholders should be assured of confidentiality at the beginning of their interview, including an assurance that if quotes are used in any reporting, the quotes will not be attributed in a way that they be identified to a specific person. This helps to build trust in the interview process. Following these interviews, it is wise to report back, in written form, to the steering committee or

group that is organizing and managing coordination efforts, so that they can begin to review the results of the interviews. See Appendix A.

Complete Telephone, Mail, or Internet Surveys

Surveys should focus on understanding unmet needs, assembling information on existing transportation programs to be included in coordination, vehicles and other physical resources available, levels and sources of funding available, and interest in participating in coordination efforts. Physical resources include the vehicles, other equipment, and technology that existing agencies have in place for their separate services. Financial resources mean the sources of funding from local, state, Federal, agency, and private sources that are available to support the operating and capital expenses of a coordinated transportation system.

To effectively plan for and implement coordinated transportation services, it is necessary to understand the resources, both physical and financial, that the participating agencies will have available.

To effectively plan for and implement coordinated transportation services, it is necessary to understand the resources, both physical and financial, that the participating agencies will have available.

The survey may be conducted by the steering committee directly, a consultant, a local university, or a participating agency willing to take responsibility and assign staff to the effort. Information should be gathered on the use of vehicle resources in delivering transportation services. This information should include data on passenger levels, vehicle miles and hours of service provided, service reliability, vehicle reliability, and safety. Information on driver training programs and maintenance programs is helpful to have at this early stage.

The survey should also focus on community travel needs that are being met and those that are not. For change to occur, it is necessary to identify and understand local perceptions of the need for transportation services and changes in those services. Needs should be addressed

comprehensively and should take advantage of existing studies that may have been completed, including the following elements:

- ✦ Assessing the needs expressed by transportation service providers and social service agencies;
- ✦ Assessing the travel needs reported by clients of social service agency clients and residents;
- ✦ Assessing the needs expressed by local officials, community leaders, and other key stakeholders; and
- ✦ Reviewing assessments of transportation needs that may have been completed by local or state planning and funding agencies, or other local organizations such as United Way or the American Automobile Association.

Finally, the survey may give an early indication of the kind of coordination activities that participating organizations may want to explore. See Appendices B, C, and D.

A successful survey with an optimal response will provide a statement of the markets for transportation services, the extent to which these markets represent agency services or general travel needs, the size and character of the markets, and the area that transportation services need to encompass. What should result is a focus on areas of unmet needs and areas where existing transportation services may overlap or duplicate one another. Finally, the desire for and character of coordination begins to emerge.

Hold regular task force meetings

Hold Regular Task Force Meetings

The task force organized in Implementation Step #1 should be meeting on a regular basis, providing organization and direction, at this point, to the collection and review of information on transportation issues, problems, needs, and resources, and a broader interest in coordination in the community. Depending on how quickly the group wants or needs to move forward or the tasks that are being undertaken, regular may mean weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly.

At this point, in order to keep the process moving, a regular meeting calendar should exist.

Associated with this building block activity, the task force has several important responsibilities. First, the group is responsible for developing the interview guide that will be used for the personal interviews with key stakeholders. Secondly, the group will develop the content for the survey.

Workshops are best facilitated by a neutral person who does not have a vested interest in the results.

Conduct Facilitated Workshops

During this building block phase, it is important to share the results of the personal interviews and surveys of transportation resources and needs with a group broader than the task force. This represents the first opportunity to invite other interested parties into the development process. At this point, the workshop can be used to fill in gaps in the information, such as unmet needs or physical and financial resources that were overlooked or not reported. Workshops are best facilitated by a neutral person who does not have a vested interest in the results. See Appendix E.

Report to Key Participants and the Community

It is important for key members of the broader community to be kept informed of progress in developing coordinated transportation. Reporting to the community can take the form of letters to individuals; newsletters; small group meetings with key community leaders, advocates, elected officials, and/or customers; or open community meetings. Each method employed should be undertaken with a clear idea of what the objective and outcome are. Failing to report to the broader community may result in misunderstandings about the project. Reporting too often, or without clear objectives and outcomes, is not good either. Usually, quarterly reporting is a good norm. Additional special reporting would be appropriate as key milestones are reached or key actions are taken.

The larger the service area, the more agencies and stakeholders involved, and the larger the base of customers to be served, the more complex the coordination planning process is likely to be.

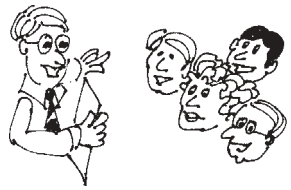
Implementation Step #3—Establish Focus, Consensus, and Direction

Agree on the problem, develop consensus, and set a direction

Checklist of Important Activities

The activities in Implementation Steps #1 and #2 have focused on organizing to develop and implement coordinated transportation services and to gather the information required for this. The following activities should be completed to put Implementation Step #3 in place:

- ✦ Conduct brainstorming sessions to
  - – Discuss and refine the problem, needs, and issues.
  - – Agree on the problem, needs, and issues.
- ✦ Hold a series of workshops to
  - – Solidify consensus on problems, needs, issues, and the need to move forward with coordination.
  - – Set direction for putting the remaining Implementation Steps in place.



The activities cited above—discussing, refining, and agreeing on problems and reaching consensus and setting direction—are completed through a series of brainstorming and workshop sessions. The organizing task force still has responsibility for organizing and managing the work that is being undertaken, but all interested parties now have the opportunity to participate in the brainstorming and workshops. A neutral facilitator should facilitate them. This is advisable so that all participants have the opportunity to fully share their views and do not feel inhibited.

The facilitator should be someone who can earn the trust and confidence of the group and who is not connected with the effort to coordinate transportation. It is more important that the facilitator know how to plan, organize, and conduct such sessions and workshops. There may be someone available who is with an uninvolved agency or a state-level agency or at a local college or university.

Conduct Brainstorming Sessions

Brainstorming sessions are held to discuss and refine the problem, needs, and issues that the community faces. Key information and insight have already been collected through stakeholder interviews and surveys. Developing strategic direction involves taking an open and unbiased look at the information that exists, the problems and needs, and existing transportation services, to uncover and develop options for improving them. Strategic thinking starts with an investigation of the strengths and weaknesses of the "internal environment" within which transportation services are provided. An easy way to think about the internal environment is to view it as the environment over which the participants have some control, such as which organizational structure to establish, how to coordinate, what kind of service to deliver, what kinds of vehicles to buy, and what technology to invest in.

Completing a strategic analysis requires an incremental approach that first focuses on understanding individual views and then uses these views to bring people together in some organized forum to begin to reach consensus about what the problems and issues are.

Strategic thinking includes looking honestly at the external environment that influences how local decisions about transportation services are made. What are the opportunities that may be available and the threats that may exist for improving transportation services? An easy way to think about the external environment is to view it as the environment over which the participants have no control. It is the part of the environment that they must accept and deal with at a given point in time. Examples include funding programs defined at the Federal or state level; levels of funding that may be available by some predetermined formula or decision process at the Federal or state level; mandated program requirements such as rules and regulations for specific program implementation; and eligibility criteria for funding. Depending on the condition or circumstances in the external environment, opportunities and threats emerge as external actions are taken.

An example of an opportunity would be the chance to build relationships and improve and remake transportation services that developed as a result of welfare reform legislation and program implementation that began in the late 1990s. An example of a threat would be the budget crisis that states encountered between 2001 and 2003.

Completing a strategic analysis requires an incremental approach that first focuses on understanding individual views and then uses these views to bring people together in some organized forum to begin to reach consensus about what the problems and issues are. The individual

views were gathered during Implementation Step #2 activities with the completion of personal interviews of stakeholders.

The next step is to bring stakeholders together to share the results of the personal interviews; to discuss issues, problems, and potential solutions; and to reach a consensus on how to proceed. This step is crucial to the continued, incremental development of a plan for coordination and its implementation. Starting with a creative, brainstorming approach is generally recommended. Brainstorming is founded on the premise that all ideas are good. Do not try to decide what should be done or not done. Enable and empower all participants to express their ideas in an open, nonjudgmental way and to feel comfortable in doing so. Decisions about priorities and specific actions come later. The brainstorming works best on neutral ground, such as a library or church not associated with any of the task force members. Typically, a full day is required. Alternatively, 2 half-days may be substituted. See Appendix E.

Brainstorming is founded on the premise that all ideas are good.

The strategic thinking or brainstorming workshop will provide the following:

- A good expression of what is working and what is not working in the community with regard to transportation services,
- The important transportation needs that should be addressed,
- The role that coordination could take in reorganizing transportation services, and
- Priorities for action.

Hold Workshops

The next step is to bring key stakeholders together again to do the following:

- Review brainstorming results,
- Create a vision of success,
- Establish a mission, and
- Define goals and objectives.

What is a vision? Simply put, a vision is what coordinated transportation will look like if the strategies that are developed are implemented successfully. A mission expresses concisely what an organization will do to coordinate transportation services and who will benefit. Goals represent the general areas of coordination development upon which attention will focus. Objectives state the specific actions to which commitments are made and the outcomes that are expected within a given period of time.

A mission expresses concisely what an organization will do to coordinate transportation services and who will benefit.

During these workshops, it is important to get a sense of what the most important problems, needs, issues, options, and actions may be. This can easily be accomplished at the end of the brainstorming sessions and/or workshops by having participants vote using some means such as a flip chart organized by the facilitator. A simple and nonthreatening way for people to express their priorities is through the use of colored dots. Each participant is given a fixed number of dots and asked to use them to indicate the issues about which they feel most strongly.

With mission, vision, goals, and objectives established, attention can focus on developing alternative approaches that can be taken, making a choice, and developing and implementing the plan for coordinated transportation services. With the completion of Implementation Step #3, the task force has the road map and priorities to begin developing alternative courses of action that will result in the selection of a specific plan of action resulting in implementation of coordinated transportation services. See Appendix E.

Implementation Step #4—Design Alternative Courses of Action

Develop alternative coordination strategies

Checklist of Important Activities

In completing Implementation Step #4, the objective is to evaluate alternative approaches to improve transportation services through better coordination. By this time, the task force and the broader group of participants involved should have a clear idea of problems, needs, potential solutions, and priorities. This is the place where alternative

approaches are presented. The advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to addressing needs and solving problems can be considered and evaluated before a decision on a specific approach is made. Coordination of transportation services can be organized formally or informally and with highly centralized or widely dispersed service delivery.

Alternative courses of action need to be addressed in the following areas:

- Interagency relationships, roles, and responsibilities;
- Organizational structure, management, and staffing;
- Service development, delivery, and pricing options;
- Maintenance, storage, fueling, and sharing of vehicles;
- Financial resources—operating and capital—and associated budgets; and
- Human resources—staffing and training.

For each alternative course of action, the following should be prepared:

- A description of the course of action, the tasks, and activities that coordination could or should involve;
- An indication of who is responsible for taking and completing action;
- The identity of the roles and responsibilities of all participants in the action;
- A list of and a discussion of the potential benefits and possible problems that may need to be overcome;
- Information on the level of activity required and the estimated costs and the likely sources of revenues (agency and program sources);
- A determination of the potential sources of funding to cover expected costs; and
- A description of how the course of action fulfills the mission, vision, goals, and objectives.

Coordinated transportation services can be organized in a variety of ways, depending on strategic direction, the vision and mission, and the

goals and objectives that have been established. The specific strategy depends on the level of transportation needs that are being included in the coordination effort, the size and character of the market that will be served, special needs that may exist among customers to be served, the number and size of the agencies that plan to coordinate together, and the local institutional environment.

Interagency Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities

Relationships, roles, and responsibilities can be broad or narrow; they can be formal or informal. It depends on the breadth, complexity, and variety of functions that could or should be coordinated and the number of agencies involved and committed to the effort. For example, if one agency is simply going to store and fuel its vehicle at another agency's facility, a letter agreement may be sufficient. If a number of agencies are going to organize the delivery of transportation services in a significantly different way, with some continuing to operate vehicles while others cease operations, formal contracts are probably required.

A key consideration in deciding on organizational structure and management is whether or not a lead organization exists that has the capability and willingness to expand and change its role and responsibility in delivering transportation services.

Organizational Structure, Management, and Staffing

A key consideration in deciding on organizational structure and management is whether or not a lead organization exists that has the capability and willingness to expand and change its role and responsibility in delivering transportation services. Such an agency could be a public body providing services to the general public. But, it could just as easily be a social service agency with a long history and depth of experience in providing transportation services.

Agencies may want to stop providing transportation services and contract those transportation services instead. Alternatively, some agencies may simply want to work with others to make some of their excess service capacity available to help other agencies meet their needs.

If a lead organization does not exist, but the participating agencies wish to merge or consolidate some or all functions of a number of agencies,

then a new organization may be necessary. Or one of the agencies may need to accept responsibility for organizing that development through a contract with an outside for-profit or not-for-profit organization. Such an agency could simply be the broker that would coordinate the delivery of services among provider agencies delivering transportation services and agencies purchasing transportation services. Coordinated transportation services can be organized through a regional transportation authority, a unit of local government, a social service agency, or a newly created organization. Methods for delivering coordinated transportation services include cooperation, brokerage, consolidation, and mobility management.

Coordinated transportation services can be organized through a regional transportation authority, a unit of local government, a social service agency, or a newly created organization.

Numerous organizational, management, and staffing decisions will need to be considered:

- How will agreements and understandings among the agencies and units of government be formalized? By contract? By MoU? By letter agreement? (Several typical kinds of agreements are presented in Appendix G.)
- Who will have legal contracting authority? What kinds of operating and funding contracts will be required with local, state, and Federal entities?
- How will coordination be organized and governed? Will governance take place through an appointed board, and with whose appointing authority? Who will have lead responsibility for organization and management? What kind of organizational structure should be used or created?
- What kind of management structure is best?
- Who will staff the coordinating organization?
- Who will own or contribute vehicles and other assets?
- How will service delivery and maintenance be organized and managed?
- What funding sources will be coordinated—existing and new?
- Who will be responsible for community outreach, education, marketing, and public relations?

Service Development, Delivery, and Pricing Options

Service development options are driven by a number of factors: the size, land development character, and population density of the area within which service will be provided; the inclusion or exclusion of services available to the general public; special needs of customers such as disability status; the particular needs of participating agencies and access to programs and centers that provide client services; the days and times of day that their clients require transportation; and the stability or instability in client travel needs from day to day and week to week.

Specific service delivery options could include traditional fixed route; door-to-door (also known as paratransit or demand responsive); flexible routing; paid or volunteer drivers; shared riding; and voucher or user-side subsidies, among others. In most rural counties, the delivery of service in areas where customers are far apart is a significant challenge particularly because the length of travel to reach destinations is long. Consequently, travel ties up vehicle capacity for a long period of time, and the cost per passenger can be very high. A flexible coordinated travel service could mitigate these high costs.

Service delivery may occur through a single agency where all services are consolidated or through a decentralized, but centrally managed, environment with a number of service providers.

The role of technology service development and delivery is important. In a coordinated setting, an appropriate investment in technology can help with a number of tasks that are important to making coordination work effectively:

- Scheduling passenger trips;
- Handling rides that occur on a regular basis;
- Integrating recurring rides with rides that vary daily and those that occur infrequently;
- Assigning passenger trips to the transportation vehicles available within the coordinated system;
- Tracking rides and service use across multiple agencies with different eligibility, billing, and reporting requirements; and
- Tracking activity and performance for monitoring and reporting purposes, both within the coordinated transportation system and within the community at large.

Service delivery may occur through a single agency where all services are consolidated or through a decentralized, but centrally managed,

environment with a number of service providers. The larger the service area, the larger the number of service providers and variety of service delivery methods that may be necessary.

Consistent operating policies and procedures across participating agencies are needed—advance reservations, trip cancellations, assignment of trips to participating providers, no shows, and so on.

Maintenance, Storage, Fueling, and Sharing of Vehicles

Vehicle maintenance can be accomplished through a variety of means. Larger transportation services typically have their own maintenance capability. Small agencies often contract with private garages, sometimes a local gas station. Local units of government may have a maintenance capacity that they are willing to make available. Vehicle storage can vary similarly. Also, vehicle fueling through a local unit of government or through a transportation provider with a fueling capability can offer cost savings. Regardless of the complexity of the coordination effort, these options are available.

Vehicles can be shared among agencies on days and at times that the agency owning the vehicles does not need them. Vehicle sharing can also be a program focus with some of the vehicles in an available fleet. For example, vehicles can be provided to local communities for their direct use in providing mobility for their residents. The local community typically provides drivers and other expenses associated with using the vehicle. Volunteer drivers can play a valuable role in this type of service delivery approach.

Financial Resources

Financial resources represent the funding that is available to cover operating expenses. In a coordinated setting, these are the resources that are pooled or contributed by the participating agencies. Key sources of funds include fares from passengers; contract revenues from agencies and others; grants from Federal, state, and local governments and private foundations or businesses; advertising; and investments. (Few rural transportation systems receive revenues from investments; not many systems receive significant advertising

revenues.) Chapter 4 contains detailed information on sources of grant revenues; information on the other sources is included in the *Comprehensive Financial Management Guidelines for Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Providers* (Burkhardt et al., 1992).

Operating Expenses

In a coordinated setting, tracking and reporting is required so that participating agencies and funding agencies pay their fair share of the coordinated transportation service costs and no more or no less.

Many times, local agencies that provide transportation services as part of their program service delivery mission do not accurately track transportation-related expenses or accurately attribute those expenses to specific program sources if not required to do so. In a coordinated setting, tracking and reporting is required so that participating agencies and funding agencies pay their fair share of the coordinated transportation service costs and no more or no less. This is important to maintaining confidence, trust, and satisfaction with the new coordinated system. Basic operating expense categories are vehicle operations, purchased services, maintenance, and administration. Detailed operating cost categories are shown in Appendix G.

Capital Resources and Development—Existing and Future

Capital equipment needs result from a review of the size of the market to be served and the capital equipment that will be available from the participating agencies. If additional capital equipment will be required, look at other resources in the community. Other agencies or private providers may participate by providing contract transportation services. Whatever the case, sufficient equipment is required to meet anticipated needs. If additional equipment is needed, then prepare an estimate of the number and type of vehicles, their costs, likely sources, whether or not a competitive procurement would be necessary, and the potential sources of funding available through agencies participating in the coordinated transportation system. Other capital needs, such as facilities and technology, should be reviewed as well. The result of this review of capital resources should be a statement of capital development needs and resources required if a particular option is selected. This statement should be shared with participants and potential funding sources.

Human Resources—Staffing and Training

Estimate the staffing requirements of each option, taking account of existing staffing from participating agencies and gaps in staffing that need to be filled. Look at management, administrative, operating, maintenance, and support areas.

Training is important. Review the driver training that has been conducted by participating agencies, gaps in training, training required for new hires, and how required training could be conducted initially and on an ongoing basis. Look for training capability at neighboring transportation systems and within state-level agencies. Training should include vehicle operations, accessibility features, customer service, and customer sensitivity.

Training is important and should include vehicle operations, accessibility features, customer service, and customer sensitivity.

The task force will need to consider the kinds of organizational, management, and staffing alternatives identified on page 57.

Implementation Step #5—Assess Alternative Options

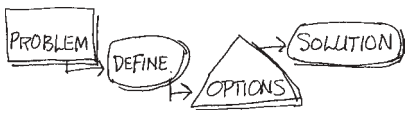
Evaluate the alternatives and select the coordination option to implement

Checklist of Important Activities

In assessing options, stay focused on the benefits of coordination. The benefits you are trying to achieve should be expressed in the mission, vision, and goals that you have already established. Assessment activities should include the following:

The benefits you are trying to achieve should be expressed in the mission, vision, and goals that you have already established.

- ✦ Assess options against mission, vision, and goals;
- ✦ Look at strengths and weaknesses of those options;
- ✦ Assess options for organizational and operational reasonableness; and
- ✦ Be realistic; make sure you can get started.



Assess Options Against Mission, Vision, and Goals

First and foremost, options should be assessed against the mission, vision of success, and goals that were established earlier in putting Implementation Step #3 in place.

Look at Strengths and Weaknesses of Those Options

Compare key service, operating, and performance characteristics of each option such as:

- Operating expenses and their categories, revenues, and the sources of revenues (from participating agencies and outside sources);
- Service area to be included—square miles, population, development character, and distribution of existing and potential passengers across the area;
- Facilities that will be available;
- Vehicle fleet size, variety, accessibility features, compliance with program requirements, accumulated mileage and condition, replacement timing, and cost;
- Organizational, management, and staffing requirements;
- Expected level of services to be provided—days and hours of service availability, vehicle miles, and hours of service;
- Organizations and agencies participating or not participating and the implications for customer demand, service levels, costs, and revenues;
- Technology requirements related to availability; and
- Performance measures for comparison, which should include cost-effectiveness (passengers carried per mile and hour of service, operating cost per passenger carried), and cost efficiency (operating cost per vehicle mile and hours operated).

Assess Options for Organizational and Operational Reasonableness

How complex is the organizational structure needed relative to the structure(s) in place today? Do the participating agencies have the will, commitment, and drive to make the organizational changes required by the option? Does community and political support exist to help with key decisions and commitments?

Be Realistic; Make Sure You Can Get Started

When beginning to coordinate transportation services, perhaps your most important objective should be ensuring that some coordination activities get started when the planning is done. If that means starting a bit more modestly than originally envisioned, that's okay. Do not try to do too much too soon. Start simply; add complexity later if some of the key participants are not ready. Or be prepared to leave a few participants behind as you begin, recognizing that they can join later. You are not forming a club with only one chance to join. Some people and agencies may simply not be ready to take the plunge. It will be easier in the future to build on success than to revisit failure and have to start all over again. You have come too far to risk losing a strong opportunity to succeed.

Perhaps your most important objective should be ensuring that some coordination activities get started when the planning is done.

The outcome of the assessment of options is a recommended coordination plan. Appendix H presents a summary of the kind of information that should be included in such a plan.

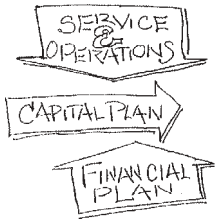
Implementation Step #6—Develop and Implement the Preferred Choice

Formulate action plans and implement coordinated transportation services

Checklist of Important Activities

- Outline your broad strategy.
- Review and update memoranda of understanding.

- ✦ Prepare action plans in key areas.
- ✦ Establish a timetable with key milestones.
- ✦ Communicate your strategy and plan.
- ✦ Implement, implement, implement.
- ✦ Address organization, management, service delivery, and budgets.



These are the core areas of implementation. Be sure to prepare a timeline for implementation and set milestones for completion of activities and events.

For change to occur and to be achieved successfully, the assessment of options must result in a local organization taking responsibility for leadership and organizing the discussion and debate that should result in improved local transportation services. Such a body is critical for the successful development of plans and actions to implement those plans.

Outline Your Broad Strategy

Prepare a concise statement of this strategy to help keep everyone focused.

Based on the assessment completed in Implementation Step #5, you know the strategy or approach that you will be taking to coordinate transportation services. Prepare a concise statement of this strategy to help keep everyone focused as you move through the details of the coordination plan and forward with implementation. Together with your mission and vision, the statement of strategy tells everyone where you are heading and can be used to keep progress on track.

Once the broad strategy is complete, a service plan is necessary. The service plan represents a written report of specifically how a coordinated transportation system will be organized and implemented. When preparing the service plan, keep in mind the following:

- – The need for public and agency transportation services, their magnitude, and character;
- – The role of the various agencies in organizing, managing, and operating transportation services;
- – The appropriateness of and support for using local public and agency funds to help support services;

- The appropriate roles within the transportation service area for meeting current and unmet travel needs;
- The merits of using some available state and Federal funding to establish, enhance, improve, or expand coordinated transportation services;
- The benefits of pooling available transportation services and existing resources (see Chapter 2); and
- Perceptions about the effectiveness and efficiency of current transportation services and the improvements that are expected.

Also, address the policy, regulatory, and institutional environment, including the following:

- Agreements and relationships among organizations, agencies, and companies providing transportation services.
- State and Federal laws, statutes, regulations, and rules pertaining to public and agency transportation services.
- State and Federal sources of funding for organizing, managing, operating, and capital development for public and agency transportation services, and associated eligibility and reporting requirements.
- Statutory provisions that address options for organizing the management and delivery of coordinated transportation services.

As the final plan for coordinated transportation services is being prepared, existing memoranda of understanding should be reviewed for currency of roles and responsibilities.

Review and Update Memoranda of Understanding

The original memoranda of understanding were executed to formalize roles and responsibilities for determining how coordinated transportation services would be developed and the potential roles that various participants could play in the coordinated setting. At this time, as the final plan for coordinated transportation services is being prepared, existing memoranda of understanding should be reviewed for currency of roles and responsibilities. Any changes should be incorporated into the formal documents that are necessary for coordination to move forward. Depending on the breadth and complexity of the coordinated system that will be implemented, these changes would be incorporated into formal contracts, revised MoU, or simple letter agreements. (See Appendix G.)

Prepare Action Plans in Key Areas

Action plans to implement coordinated transportation services include organizational structure and management; service development, delivery, and pricing; capital facilities and equipment; annual and projected operating budgets; and marketing and public relations programs. Action plans in the following areas should be included:

- Creating an organizational structure.
- Entering into contracts for services and funding.
- Providing necessary staffing.
- Setting policy and procedures.
- Formalizing interagency relationships.
- Designing functional areas of implementation:
    - Service development, delivery, and pricing.
    - Capital facilities and equipment.
    - Operating budget—1-year and 5-year projections.
    - 5-year capital budget for replacement, rehabilitation, technology updates, and expansion.
    - Public education and marketing.
    - Program performance review and reporting.

The resulting coordination plan should be organized to present the following:

- The vision of success, mission, and goals and objectives for coordination of transportation services.
- The rationale and focus of transportation service coordination.
- The nature and size of the market for coordinated transportation service.
- The recommended organizational structure through which coordinated transportation services will be organized and the

manner in which these services will be managed, administered, and staffed.

- The manner in which transportation services will be developed and delivered, including prices for services.
- The recommended structure for expenses, revenues, and sources of funds for operating budgets.
- The recommended structure for capital facilities, equipment, and technology that are expected and supporting budgets for each.
- The focus of the marketing and public relations program required for coordination of transportation services.
- The program performance, review, and reporting system used to monitor the provision of coordinated transportation services and to report to coordination partners and the community. See Appendix F for a sample report format.

Establish a Timetable with Key Milestones

Let people know when coordinated transportation services will begin, making sure that the start date is achievable.

A timetable that shows clearly what actions are being implemented should be established. Highlight key milestones that will be achieved as implementation occurs.

First and foremost, let people know when coordinated transportation services will begin, making sure that the start date is achievable. Do not set a start date that is too ambitious. Allow enough time especially if formal contracts must be prepared, negotiated, and executed. These contracts would include those among participating agencies; units of local, state, or Federal government; and entities that will provide contract management or transportation services.

Communicate Your Strategy and Plan

Regular communication, as we have pointed out before, is important so that stakeholders know what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. This communication should include milestones that have been achieved and any issues that remain to be resolved.

Implement, Implement, Implement

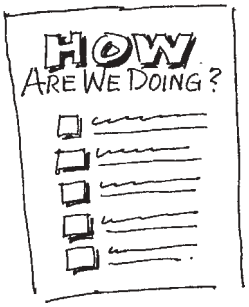
The coordination plan that you prepare should be action oriented. In other words, it should focus on getting things done. Thus, we are talking about action plans. Each action plan should contain

- A description of what will be implemented,
- A date when it will be completed,
- Who has responsibility for each element of implementation of a each action plan,
- What the expected cost will be, and
- Who has overall responsibility for completion and payment.

Implementation Step #7—Evaluate and Improve the System(s) Implemented

Review and evaluate progress

Checklist of Important Activities



- ✦ Don't wait too long to review how coordinated transportation services are doing.
- ✦ Decide what is important to review.
- ✦ Gather your information and review it carefully.
- ✦ Take corrective actions where required.
- ✦ Integrate interested, new coordination partners.
- ✦ Communicate, communicate, and communicate.

Don't Wait Too Long to Review How You Are Doing

Measure and review your progress against your mission, vision, goals, and objectives to assess results in all areas—number, type, and other

trip characteristics; operating revenues and expenses; customer satisfaction (complaints); on-time operations; and interagency relations. Levels of activity and performance measures are reviewed monthly, with a more detailed review performed on a quarterly basis.

Prepare monthly, quarterly, and annual reports so that interested stakeholders can keep informed about the performance of coordination efforts. Focus reports on the operating budget (revenues and expenses), operating characteristics (miles and hours of service), service characteristics (passengers carried, types of trips, customer concerns), and service and financial effectiveness and efficiency (passengers per mile and hour; cost per trip, hour, and mile; length of trips). This data can be compared over time to judge trends and changes in order to recognize when corrective actions should be taken. The data can also be used for "peer" review, to measure the local system against systems of similar size and character across the country.

Use your quarterly and annual reports as a basis for developing and releasing a "report to the community."

Use your quarterly and annual reports as a basis for developing and releasing a "report to the community."

Use your quarterly and annual reports as a basis for developing and releasing a "report to the community." This keeps key stakeholders and the public informed and helps to build and maintain support for transportation efforts.

Decide What Is Important to Review

Decide what activities you will review and how often as you are completing the plan for coordinated transportation services. This will help you establish what data needs to be collected and how frequently. Try to include as much of the data used for review and evaluation into routine data collection activities that occur on a daily basis by developing electronic reporting systems that can be integrated easily to provide the data necessary for reporting.

Gather Your Information and Review It Carefully

In gathering information regularly, review it for accuracy. It is easy to take corrective action if problems are discovered early enough. To the extent that you can, make data gathering part of your daily operating routine. Also, build your database on a regular basis, so when you are ready to review and evaluate, the database is ready. You do not want to

be faced with a week of database work when you are ready for your reviews.

Take Corrective Actions Where Required

Correct problems early. Don't wait for a formal review.

Correct problems early. Don't wait for a formal review. Define the problem. Understand the cause. Review your options. Take decisive action. Then, start dealing with the next problem.

Periodic reviews often reveal less obvious problems or point to areas where performance may be okay, but could be better. The review, when judged against goals and objectives, can provide insight into the need to shift attention from areas where progress is good to areas where additional work is needed. For example, a review of customer comments may reveal that they are quite satisfied with the general safety of travel, but that riders with disabilities are not comfortable with the way that drivers are securing their wheelchairs in vehicles.

Integrate Interested, New Coordination Partners

Understand that problems will arise and should be dealt with without undue delay.

It is possible that not all the organizations and agencies that were interested in coordination stayed with the development process through to completion. As a consequence, check with such parties on a regular basis to ensure that they have the opportunity to join or rejoin the coordinated transportation system as soon as they are ready. Seek them out directly. Be proactive in reporting to them the successes and failures as you move forward. Don't worry about the negatives. They will be there. The important thing is to recognize negative factors and impact and to be prepared to deal with them proactively and constructively. Understand that problems will arise and should be dealt with without undue delay.

Communicate, Communicate, and Communicate

Tell your story on a regular basis, monthly, quarterly, and annually. Communicate your results in a variety of ways. Publish a quarterly

newsletter. Prepare press releases and meet with the media. Prepare articles for publication and keep in touch with local media people to publish or report on the article.

SUMMARY

To implement coordinated transportation services in your community, follow this sequence of steps:

- **Step #1—Initiate the Improvement Process**—Form a task force or steering committee and decide to move forward.
- **Step #2—Analyze Existing Conditions**—Understand issues, needs, and circumstances; define local conditions.
- **Step #3—Establish Focus, Consensus, and Direction**—Agree on the problem, develop a consensus, and set a direction.
- **Step #4—Design Alternative Courses of Action**—Develop alternative coordination strategies.
- **Step #5—Assess Alternative Options**—Evaluate the alternatives and select the coordination option to implement.
- **Step #6—Implement the Preferred Choice**—Formulate action plans and implement coordinated transportation services.
- **Step #7—Evaluate and Improve the System(s) Implemented—**Review and evaluate progress.

Remember that coordination is an ongoing process and that a number of these steps may have to be revisited again and again to consolidate coordination agreements and benefits.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COORDINATION EFFORTS

Chapter 4

Some questions about coordination seem to come up again and again, particularly when starting efforts to coordinate transportation services. Some of these questions deal with common operational challenges, while others could fall under the heading of "coordination mythology"—ideas or concerns that may have little basis in fact or experience.

Some questions about coordination seem to come up again and again, particularly when starting efforts to coordinate transportation services.

These issues are discussed in this chapter:

- Will coordination save me money?
- What are the important Federal funding sources for rural transportation?
- What funding sources am I missing?
- Which legislative barriers do I need to watch out for?
- Where can I get planning funds?
- What if we tried coordination before and never got anywhere? Should we try again?
- Some agencies are willing to participate, but others are not. What should we do?
- Whom should we involve in our initial efforts?
- With all the work on coordinated transportation systems in rural areas for many years, why isn't coordination easier?

- ✦ Will coordination require that I give up my vehicles? Control over my funding for transportation? The welfare of my clients?
- ✦ Why have some coordinated transportation systems failed to succeed or survive?
- ✦ What are the fundamental components of successful coordination?

We know there are many more questions. For answers to other questions, first contact your state department of transportation or state department of human resources. You could also contact the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regarding the programs that they administer. Some of the other programs that should be of interest to you are administered by the Federal Departments of Agriculture, Education, Labor, or other agencies. You should also contact the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. National and state professional associations in transportation and human services can also provide extremely valuable information. See the appendices for a list of key contacts. The bibliography lists key references on coordinated transportation.

WILL COORDINATION SAVE ME MONEY?

It's your choice—how will you apply the greater cost effectiveness that coordination offers?

It depends on how you look at it. Coordination often succeeds at reducing the cost per trip, but many agencies use these savings to transport many more people, so money seldom goes back into the kitty. **It's your choice**—how will you apply the greater cost effectiveness that coordination offers?

What are your objectives? If a primary objective is to reduce total expenses for transportation, coordination can combine the services of several agencies to focus on transporting the same group of passengers from participating agencies through more effectively and efficiently organized and operated service. For example, if you can place one of your clients on another agency's vehicle that has empty seats, the cost of that trip will probably be less than if you had to provide that trip yourself. Between your two agencies, you may be able to divide the trips geographically or by time of day to reduce overall mileage or hours of operation. Therefore, you should be able to provide the same level of service as measured by trips provided, and the service should be achieved with reduced resources. (But several factors could cause

expenses to increase: e.g., if the fleet of available vehicles is old, you may get caught with unexpected increases in maintenance and repair costs.) Be careful when you are evaluating whether or not coordination has saved you money. See also the discussion "How to Use Coordination's Benefits on page 31.

If your objective is to use coordination to serve more people and provide more trips with the resources available, then you'll probably spend as much money through coordination as before. However, if you are successful in providing service to more people with the same resources available, your cost per passenger will be lower. It is possible that your cost per mile or hour of service will be lower as well, but your total community transportation expenditures probably won't decline. In fact, they may be higher if new partners join the coordinated system as it moves forward.

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WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR RURAL TRANSPORTATION?

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of U.S. DOT has several programs that support rural public transportation services. They are

- **Section 5311—Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program**, a formula program to enhance the use of public transportation systems in small urban and rural areas of the country. Funds are available for operating and capital expenses. The program guidelines can be found in FTA Circular 9040.1E at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/circ9040_1E.
- **Section 5310—The Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program**, a formula program to improve mobility for the elderly and persons with disabilities in rural and urban areas. Funds are used principally for the purchase of vehicles and other capital equipment. The program guidelines can be found in FTA Circular 9070.1E at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/9070.1E.
- **Section 5309 Capital Program: Bus and Bus-Related Facilities**, a discretionary program to assist in financing capital projects that will benefit the country's public transportation

systems. These funds are sometimes available if Section 5311 funds are insufficient, depending on funding allocations within your state. The program guidelines can be found in FTA Circular 9300.1A which can be found at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/9300.1A.

- **Section 3037—Job Access and Reverse Commute Program**, a competitive grant program to help improve mobility and economic opportunity for welfare recipients and other low-income people through the provision of new or expanded transportation service targeted to suburban employment opportunities. The program guidelines can be found in 67 Federal Register (April 8, 2002) at www.fta.dot.gov/library/legal/federalregister/2002/fr4802a.html.
- **Flexible Funds (TEA-21),** funds authorized under the Federal highway program that may be used for either transit or highway projects.

The FTA has published the *Federal Transit Administration Guide for Rural Programs* for 2003. This report contains summary program information for each of the above programs. The guide is available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/program/rural/. With the focus on welfare-to-work (WtW) and the recognition that transportation is so important to the success of welfare reform programs, guidance has been developed on the use of interdepartmental program funds for transportation. The *DOT/HHS/Department of Labor (DOL) Guidance on Use of TANF, WtW, and Job Access Fund for Transportation* is available at www.fta.dot.gov/wtw/uoft.html.

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) administers several programs that are vital sources of funds for coordinated transportation systems in rural areas. The Administration on Aging's (AoA's) Title III Grants for State and Community Programs on Aging, and the Medicaid program under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are two of the most important. Other programs were listed in Chapter 3.

- AoA's **Title III Program, Grants for State and Community Programs on Aging**, provides funding to State and Area Agencies on Aging to develop and implement comprehensive and coordinated systems to provide services to older adults. This title authorizes supportive services programs directed toward improving the lives of older persons. In local areas, these

supportive services are funded through established Area Agencies on Aging. Transportation is one of the supportive services that may be provided with Title III funding. With $68 million in transportation expenses in FY 1999, this program has often served to initiate transportation services in rural areas without any other form of public or specialized human service transportation operations. AoA-sponsored transportation services are used primarily to access meal sites and health care. For older rural Americans, long distances traveled to specialized medical services (such as dialysis and chemotherapy) remain a significant unmet need. Information on the Title III program may be found at http://www.aoa.gov/about/legbudg/oaa/laymans_guide/laymans_guide.asp#TitleIII.

- CMS administers the **Medicaid** program, which is authorized by Title XIX of the Social Security Act. It pays for medical and health-related services for certain vulnerable and needy individuals and families with low incomes and limited resources. Federal Medicaid funds will probably spend about $1 billion for nonemergency transportation services in coming years; Medicaid has often been a major funding source for many rural transportation operations. CMS funding typically provides reimbursements to individuals after travel is completed. **It is vital to understand that primary decisions about Medicaid-funded transportation services reside at the state, not the Federal level.** It is not an exaggeration to say that Medicaid nonemergency transportation services operate more like 50 separate programs than like one program. You must understand your own state's regulations regarding nonemergency Medicaid transportation services in order to use Medicaid as a funding source for rural transportation programs. For a summary of the Medicaid nonemergency transportation program, visit the Community Transportation Association of America website at http://www.ctaa.org/data/medtoolkit.pdf. Go to page 86 of the Toolkit report. This report also contains information on Medicaid nonemergency transportation programs in each state.

- Another HHS program that provides significant resources for transportation services is **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**. The TANF Program provides assistance and

work opportunities to needy families by granting states the Federal funds and wide flexibility to develop and implement their own welfare programs. Each state must submit a plan to the Secretary of HHS that outlines how it intends to implement the TANF program in all political subdivisions of the state that provide cash aid to needy families with (or expecting) children and provides parents with job preparation, work, and support services. Transportation is one of the support services that states can provide to families participating in the TANF program. A brochure that presents a guide prepared by OFA on the programs and services that may be supported with TANF funding is available at http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/funds2.pdf. As is the case with Medicaid programs, each State is responsible for implementing TANF programs consistent with an approved plan. Links to State Human Service Administrators can be found at the following link, http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/hs_dir2.htm.

- **Head Start** is a program administered by HHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Head Start and Early Head Start are comprehensive child development programs which serve children from birth to age 5, with the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families. Grants are awarded by the ACF Regional Offices and the Head Start Bureau's American Indian—Alaska Native and Migrant and Seasonal Program Branches directly to local public agencies, private organizations, Indian Tribes, and school systems for the purpose of operating Head Start programs at the community level. Head Start funds can be used to provide transportation services to and from program centers, purchase vehicles, and provide technical assistance. Most Head Start programs provide some kind of transportation services for their clients. Further information is available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/about/index.htm.

Funding sources other than those listed above are also crucial for rural transportation operations, but the listed programs provide the majority of Federal funds that benefit travelers living in rural areas. A more complete listing of Federal programs that can be used to fund coordinated rural transportation services can be found in GAO's recent "Transportation of Disadvantaged Populations" report on such

programs (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2003) or CTAA's *Building Mobility Partnerships* (2000).

WHAT FUNDING SOURCES AM I MISSING?

Develop an understanding of the funding programs for transportation or human services that potential coordination partners are already using for transportation services. These program funds may not be explicitly designed for transportation services. Rather, transportation can be one among several support services or permitted services that can be provided with program resources. For example, a transit-dependent individual may also be the client of a social service agency. Coordination can allow the transit operator to tap into funds from the social service agency in order to serve their mutual client—funds that the transit operator could not receive directly. By looking for a mutual benefit among businesses and among providers of education, health care, child care, and social services, transit agencies may expand their funding sources.

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Look to programs that include state and Federal funding programs for services for older adults; people with developmental, physical, or other disabilities; and people in low-income circumstances. Potential coordination partners usually have a good understanding of their own program funds and whether or not transportation is an eligible expense. It is always good to ask the question about use of their program funding for transportation. It may be that they have chosen not to use funding for transportation even though it is an eligible expense. Such use could well be the price for their participation in a coordinated system. Nothing is free. Finally, we all run the risk of missing new program opportunities. Develop a network that knows of your interest in finding new funding for transportation services. The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) has prepared a comprehensive catalog of Federal programs that provide or permit the use of funding for rural transportation services. This catalog has information on many of the programs that should interest you and can be found at http://www.ctaa.org/ct/infostation2003/fed_invest_guide.pdf.

Don't forget about non-Federal funding sources. **States** often have special programs that can be used for coordinated rural transportation programs. A good list of programs is found in AASHTO's Survey of State Involvement in Public Transportation (AASHTO, 2000). You may even find that interesting programs in other states (for example, Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and others) can inspire you

to create new funding options in your own state. **County and municipal governments** are a key source of funds for many transit systems. A transit system is a public service, and the communities receiving the service are often willing to assist with a large portion of the cost, particularly when the service provides access to jobs, local merchants, and other public services. Contact your local government(s) for more information. The **private sources** that you should consider contacting for local funding include The United Way and local private foundations in your community which would support public transportation. Your local Chamber of Commerce can probably direct you to such foundations. Local businesses may be a source of grant revenue to a transit system which serves their employees and customers.

WHICH LEGISLATIVE BARRIERS DO I NEED TO WATCH OUT FOR?

"Barriers? What barriers?"

. . . while there are hindrances or challenges, seldom are there actual barriers that cannot be overcome no matter what.

Although it sounds a bit flippant, that's a direct quote from a rural transportation provider. There are challenges, obstacles, hindrances, headaches, and maybe even heartaches along the road to coordination, but barriers—in the sense that "I am not permitted to coordinate"—have not been found. Many coordination efforts have been slowed or halted by **perceived** rather than actual barriers. Certainly, coordination requires lots of effort. But it may be more accurate to say that while there are hindrances or challenges, seldom are there actual barriers that cannot be overcome no matter what.

Many local operators have succeeded in coordinating the transportation resources of various Federal- and state-funded programs. They have done so by working through the same administrative, personal, and institutional obstacles other operators have found more difficult to surmount. This means that **the obstacles that have troubled some individuals and operations have not been barriers to others.**

A real challenge is that state or Federal programs are typically authorized and funded to provide specific services to specific groups of people for specific needs. This means you need to work hard to understand the guidelines for each program. They are usually subject to interpretation. Federal officials responsible for program implementation

and review have generally taken the position that funding from different Federal programs, across departmental lines, can be mixed so that coordinated transportation services can be delivered. Each program still has its own reporting requirements that must be respected. Local agency officials have taken the position, at times, that funds from a specific program can be used only to support services for that program. It is worth questioning that argument and seeking an informed judgment from state supporters of coordinated transportation services and from relevant Federal agencies.

. . . most rural coordinated transportation services have found ways to surmount these issues . . .

These are some of the challenges that others have faced and that you may need to be prepared to face. It's important to note that some of these challenges have very rarely occurred and that most rural coordinated transportation services have found ways to surmount these issues, which include

- ✦ Categorical funding, which restricts flexibility in coordination;
- ✦ Turfism, where agencies jealously protect their own resources;
- ✦ Lack of information, especially about coordination and its potential benefits;
- ✦ Public perceptions that may include outdated perspectives regarding rural public transportation;
- ✦ School bus vehicle specifications, which limit how school children can be transported, and state laws that prohibit mingling adults with school children on school buses;
- ✦ City taxi ordinances that restrict shared rides among unrelated parties;
- ✦ Prohibitions on crossing jurisdictional boundaries;
- ✦ Differing regulations about fares, farebox return, and revenue-sharing;
- ✦ Differing mandates for performance measures;
- ✦ Labor rules and mandated protections for union versus nonunion drivers;
- ✦ Legislation requiring competitive bidding or awards to low bidders;

- ✦ Driver exams and drug testing; and
- ✦ Insurance regulations that discourage sharing of vehicles and clients.

Consult representatives of those systems interviewed for this ***Toolkit*** (listed at the end of this report) for creative "barrier-busting" techniques that others have successfully employed.

WHERE CAN I GET PLANNING FUNDS?

. . . finding funds for planning coordinated transportation services may be one of the first challenges you face.

Planning funds for all the activities involved in developing and maintaining coordinated rural transportation systems are in short supply. Some states—such as North and South Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey, and Connecticut—pay large portions of the costs of planning studies (sometimes called transit development plans) that help establish coordinated transportation services. But finding funds for planning coordinated transportation services may be one of the first challenges you face.

Some planning funds for developing rural public transportation services are available from the FTA through its Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). The RTAP program funds technical assistance activities nationally through the CTAA. The RTAP program is provided by the American Public Works Association under contract to CTAA. You may learn more about the RTAP program at http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/rtap/index.asp. CTAA also hosts the Rural Passenger Transportation Technical Assistance Program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. You may link to http://www.ctaa.org/techassist/usda/projects/rpttap_brochure.asp to learn more about this program.

The FTA's RTAP program also provides technical assistance funding to each state. The 5311 program is administered in each state by a state agency, typically an office within the state department of transportation. States are the direct grantees of Section 5310 and 5311 program funds. The FTA guide available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/program/rural/ has rural program contacts in each state. State staff can inform you of the specific RTAP in your state and how it may be helpful in providing funding or services for planning rural transportation services.

WHAT IF WE TRIED COORDINATION BEFORE AND NEVER GOT ANYWHERE? SHOULD WE TRY AGAIN?

By all means, **YES!** Try again. Coordination must be an ongoing effort. Times can change. Many changes can alter the responses of potential partners who were previously unreceptive. A new manager or board of directors can change the direction of an organization. Economic circumstances may dictate trying approaches to providing service that are different from the status quo. New legislation may encourage or mandate coordination.

Take time to review with your emerging core group of participants why the group believes that coordination efforts in the past did not succeed. Be as honest and objective as you can. Do your best to dispel the argument that "We tried that before and it did not work." Look at similarities, differences, and changes in each participating agency; old participants no longer involved or interested; and new participants who were not involved before. Re-examine local conditions and circumstances, important motivating influences, leadership or lack thereof, the needs of participating agencies, the local political landscape, and any other factors that you suspect may be of influence in your community.

Do your best to dispel the argument that "We tried that before and it did not work."

SOME AGENCIES ARE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE, BUT OTHERS ARE NOT. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Create three lists of agencies: those that have expressed a desire to participate; those that have declined to participate; and those in the middle. Welcome to the club. In any community contemplating the coordination of transportation services, three lists will emerge. Start with the agencies that are willing to participate. These agencies represent your best opportunity to be successful. Agencies that have declined to participate may have done so for a number of reasons. Be careful not to expend too much time and energy on trying to convince them to participate. It is important, though, to let them know that they are welcome to join the process at any time. But, start with your "A" list and go to work.

WHOM SHOULD WE INVOLVE IN OUR INITIAL EFFORTS?

Start with a core group of participants who want coordination to work. In the early stages, it is important to be open and inclusive in inviting potential participants into the discussions. Consequently, you want to invite agencies that provide transportation services, agencies that need transportation services, local public officials, state agency staff who may be helpful, local community and business leaders who are interested, people who advocate for services, and people receiving transportation services. (For further suggestions, see Chapters 3 and 6, and Appendix A.) Remember that in the early stages it is not necessary to please or satisfy everyone. It is important to seek and receive the views of all those who are involved. As the process moves forward, the direction of coordination will start to take shape. Some will like what they see more than others. This will represent the start of the process where some become committed to making coordination work, while others may decide that coordination is not for them right now.

WITH ALL THE WORK ON COORDINATED RURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS FOR MANY YEARS, WHY ISN'T COORDINATION EASIER?

By its nature, coordination involves stepping out into the unknown territories of other persons' interests and jurisdictions. This is an obvious challenge. It requires courage to take a deep gulp and go ahead. To be successful, it also requires many other traits. Among these are a substantial amount of knowledge about possible approaches to coordination, a willingness to learn new information, and the flexibility to work cooperatively along paths that are only defined as one proceeds along the journey. Informed, cooperative, and energetic individuals are simply not available everywhere.

Rural communities can differ widely, so what works in one area may not necessarily work in another.

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Rural communities can differ widely, so what works in one area may not necessarily work in another. States do have different programs and

administrative procedures for some Federal programs; therefore, certain forms of coordination may be much easier for communities in one state than they are for communities in another state. Differing levels of resources are available for planning and operations from state to state.

Despite many challenges, the overwhelming message is that **many persons have succeeded in establishing and maintaining coordinated transportation services in rural communities**. Take heart in this message: success is possible, although it's seldom easy.

WILL COORDINATION REQUIRE THAT I GIVE UP MY VEHICLES? CONTROL OVER MY FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION? THE WELFARE OF MY CLIENTS?

Coordination requires you to **share** authority, responsibility, and resources (including funding), not to give them up. There are many administrative options for coordination, and many of them involve the partners keeping ownership of vehicles, control over funding, and an active involvement in the welfare of specific client groups. Indeed, this maintenance of authority, responsibility, and resources could be considered to be one of the hallmarks of coordination.

Coordination requires you to **share** authority, responsibility, and resources (including funding), not to give them up.

On the other hand, consolidation of resources is a different approach to maximizing cost-effectiveness. Consolidation often means that only one agency owns vehicles and controls costs. Even in a consolidated operation, agencies that contract for services with the unified transportation provider would ideally remain in a strong and vital advisory position regarding overall service policies, and they should certainly remain as energetic advocates for the needs and welfare of their own clients. Consolidation will be an effective management strategy in some rural communities, but it may diminish the direct involvement of some agencies in operating decisions regarding transportation services.

WHY HAVE SOME COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS FAILED TO SUCCEED OR SURVIVE?

There have been four key reasons that coordinated transportation systems have not prospered or have even ceased to operate:

- ✦ Not fully understanding local politics.
- ✦ Not treating coordinated transportation like a business.
- ✦ Not developing a strong institutional foundation.
- ✦ Allowing partners to develop unrealistic expectations.

Not fully understanding local politics. Coordinated transportation services often command many more resources than non-coordinated operations. They become a new force within the community and may become the target of envy and hostility if there are other local stakeholders—for example, politicians or other transportation providers—who are not firmly committed to the coordinated operations. As noted in the ***Economic Benefits of Coordinating . . .*** report (Burkhardt, Koffman, Murray, 2003), "Political individuals and organizations with vested interests in "the status quo" will often view expanded transportation services as a threat to their own power or influence and may, therefore, take steps to derail both personal and organizational capital invested in the coordinated transportation system."

Not treating coordinated transportation like a business. Like other business operations, successful transportation services require a balance between income and expenses. Many coordinated transportation operations serve individuals who have quite limited incomes; a natural tendency of the operators of these systems is to ask the riders to pay very little of the actual costs of their trips. This is fine **as long as someone is paying the full costs of the trips**. Sometimes an agency will say to the transportation provider, "My clients really need rides, but I can only pay you X amount of money." But X amount of money usually runs out well before the end of the year, and then the transportation provider faces the difficult issue of whether to deny trips to people who really need them or to subsidize the agency that has insufficient funds to serve its own clients. The way to deal with this problem is to make sure that it does not come up in the beginning, and **tying payments for trips directly to the costs of those trips** eliminates this problem.

Not developing a strong institutional foundation. Many coordinated transportation systems are created through the efforts of dynamic and creative individuals. Sometimes these persons even qualify for the title of "charismatic leader." But sometimes these persons leave their position for other interests or other communities. If the coordination process depends too heavily on the efforts of such persons, it may founder if they are no longer available. Similarly, a new stakeholder who is not committed to cooperation, or even antagonistic to coordination, can upset carefully constructed partnerships. The way to avoid such situations is to develop formal institutional arrangements that may include Memoranda of Understanding or other legal documents, so that the coordination process has a strong and permanent enough foundation to survive the loss or addition of particular individuals.

Allowing partners to develop unrealistic expectations. Partners in the coordination process need to have an extremely clear idea of what to expect. Cost issues can be among the most troublesome: non-coordinated operators may have a poor idea of their actual transportation costs and may be shocked to find that their actual cost per trip is much higher than they had previously thought. Some agencies have entered into coordination agreements with the idea that money would be returned to them; as explained in Chapter 2, this is possible but seldom occurs. Concerted efforts to develop a full understanding of coordination, early in the coordination process, turn out to be quite worthwhile in the long run.

Other issues that may come up in some communities include the inability of some partners to make long-term funding commitments, shifting agency priorities (which may leave less emphasis on transportation issues), and the inability to generate local community or governmental support. When facing any of these issues, it is crucial to recognize the fluid nature of coordination processes: they require constant attention and the continued support of key stakeholders.

WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL COORDINATION?

Close attention to a small number of fundamental coordination concepts will increase the probability of successful and sustainable coordinated transportation services. The most significant of these concepts are

- **The partnership approach: shared power, shared funding, shared responsibility.** A key piece of the partnership approach is cost sharing—the idea that all partners agree to at least some responsibility for all the costs that coordinated transportation involves—often through some sort of formal agreement.
- **Community-wide focus and community-wide support.** Transportation services that focus services narrowly on some client groups but not others or some parts of the community and not others are not liable to generate community-wide support. Services to the entire community are best able to generate community-wide support, meaning that transportation services should focus on universal design and universal access (in other words, open door transportation, service for everyone).
- **Resource management and quality control.** What makes coordination different from other management strategies is some concept of broad oversight of all transportation resources within the community. Added to this is the idea that trips are not just provided; they are to be provided in a cost-effective manner that is consistent with the needs and desires of the riders.
- **Maximizing productivity: ride sharing.** Vehicles need to be operated with as many passengers on them as possible at all times. Some sort of coordinated trip assignment or joint dispatching will probably be needed to ensure that all kinds of passengers are on the vehicles at the same time, thus eliminating duplication of routes and services.
- **Business focus: full cost recovery.** As previously noted, coordinated transportation services need to be operated in a business-like fashion. All costs of service need to be accounted for and paid: in a coordinated system, all of the partners will share in making the payments.
- **Coordinated service scheduling with non-transportation providers.** While this approach is still relatively rare, it offers great benefits, particularly for rural communities. It means that not only do transportation providers communicate and coordinate with each other, but that human service agencies, doctors, hospitals, and other service organizations work jointly with the transportation services to create a highly integrated scheduling of services for clients, thus creating the most cost-effective overall allocation of resources within the entire community.

There are other important success concepts that apply to all transportation services, not just those that have coordinated operations:

- **A customer orientation** that is truly responsive to the travel needs and desires of the intended riders (and not merely focused on operating vehicles);
- Offering **a broad service spectrum** within a community that ranges from mass transportation services to specialized services to emergency services, and offering a similarly broad range of prices based on service quality and responsiveness;
- **The intelligent use of volunteers** to provide transportation for the kinds of trips that could not be otherwise served in a cost-effective manner;
- Data that **document the mobility benefits** achieved by the transportation services which are supported by the community;
- **Targeted marketing** to discrete rider and stakeholder subgroups to ensure that each market niche is fully cognizant of individual and community benefits of the transportation services; and
- **Travel training** for the intended riders of the transportation services.

Systems that focus on the concepts described in this section are much more likely to succeed in their attempts to provide efficient, effective, and sustainable services that generate a broad base of community support.

SUMMARY

This chapter has presented answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about coordination:

- Will coordination save me money?
- What are the important funding sources for rural transportation?
- What funding sources am I missing?
- Which legislative barriers do I need to watch out for?

- ✦ Where can I get planning funds?
- ✦ What if we tried coordination before and never got anywhere? Should we try again?
- ✦ Some agencies are willing to participate, but others are not. What should we do?
- ✦ Whom should we involve in our initial efforts?
- ✦ With all the work on coordinated transportation systems in rural areas for many years, why isn't coordination easier?
- ✦ Will coordination require that I give up my vehicles? Control over my funding for transportation? The welfare of my clients?
- ✦ Why have some coordinated transportation systems failed to succeed or survive?
- ✦ What are the fundamental components of successful coordination?

Answers to other questions may be found in other chapters in this Toolkit. If you can't find the answers here, go to your U.S. DOT or U.S. HHS contacts, your state program contacts, professional associations, or the published references listed in this Toolkit. It's likely that someone will have found the answers to the questions that you have about coordinated transportation services.

TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING CURRENT COORDINATION EFFORTS

Section III

This is the "fine-tuning and repair kit" component of the Toolkit, the part that provides information on how to maintain and repair coordinated transportation services. Materials provided here will help persons involved in coordination to gain a bit more performance or to "save the day" when events are not working out as planned. It explicitly recognizes that coordination is a process that can move backward as well as forward and describes strategies and tactics to use to institutionalize, to the extent possible, hard-won achievements.

The following kinds of information are included:

- ✦ Strategic approaches to coordination (which to promote, which to avoid);
- ✦ Beneficial coordination approaches (how to maximize results); and
- ✦ Detailed coordination issues, such as ADA transportation requirements, consensus building techniques, and needs assessments.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO COORDINATION

Chapter 5

Coordination has been approached in many ways in many communities. This chapter discusses some of the most successful ways to approach coordinated transportation services.

HIGH-IMPACT COORDINATION STRATEGIES FOR TRANSPORTATION OPERATORS

Attempts to coordinate transportation services are more likely to succeed when specific coordination objectives are identified and appropriate strategies are employed. Certain strategies are often associated with transportation operations that generate large economic benefits from coordinated operations. These strategies include

- Tapping currently unused sources of funding, including using new funds to expand services and to provide and upgrade existing services;
- Decreasing the direct costs of providing transportation;
- Increasing the productivity and utilization of vehicles on the road;
- Achieving the benefits (and avoiding the disbenefits) of economies of scale;

Attempts to coordinate transportation services are more likely to succeed when specific coordination objectives are identified and appropriate strategies are employed.

- ✦ Capturing the opportunities available from multiple providers and multiple modes of travel; and
- ✦ Instituting transportation services in areas lacking such services.

These strategies appear to be much more effective in generating economic benefits than strategies addressing the following issues:

- ✦ Who is the lead agency (e.g., a public transit authority, a human service agency, a nonoperating brokerage, or a planning agency);
- ✦ Which services are emphasized (e.g., ADA paratransit services, welfare-to-work [WtW] trips, agency trips, general public trips, Medicaid trips, or others); and
- ✦ What particular coordination technique is used (coordination, consolidation, or brokerage, for example).

Strategies to Adopt

Case studies have been used to generate information about high-impact transportation coordination strategies (Burkhardt et al., 2003). Strategies that can generate large economic benefits for public transit operators and human service agencies involved in coordinated transportation systems (and their communities, too) are summarized below.

- ✦ **The transit authority contracts to provide trips to Medicaid or other human service agency clients.** In many communities, Medicaid agencies have not made full use of fixed-route transit services, opting for more costly paratransit services instead. As shown in numerous cases, moving only a small proportion of Medicaid clients to fixed-route transit service saves the Medicaid agency very large sums of money, substantially increases revenues of the transit authority at no additional operating cost, and provides mobility benefits for Medicaid clients. Public transit providers can also coordinate with local school districts to transport students for regular classes or for special purposes or special events. WtW programs will also benefit from coordination with transit providers. These can be considered to be key business expansion strategies.

- **Human service providers provide ADA paratransit services under contracts to transit authorities.** In a number of communities, human service agencies have been providing paratransit services for a longer period of time than have transit agencies. Typically operating as private nonprofit organizations, the human service agencies often have cost structures that are less expensive than those of the transit agencies and can thus create significant savings for the transit agencies in providing the ADA-mandated services. (Using volunteers for drivers or other staff positions is one important way that human service agencies can generate large cost reductions.) For transit operators, contracting with human service transportation providers can be considered to be a key **cost reduction** strategy.

- **Transit authorities and/or human service providers offer incentives to paratransit riders to use fixed-route transit services.** Paratransit trips are often substantially more expensive than fixed-route trips. By offering incentives, including travel training, to frequent paratransit users, some of those paratransit riders will switch their regular travel mode to the fixed-route service. This strategy has real **cost reduction** benefits for agencies that operate paratransit programs, fixed-route transit operators, human service agencies who sponsor trips for particular clients, and the riders themselves.

Paratransit trips are often substantially more expensive than fixed-route trips.

- **Human service agencies coordinate or consolidate their separate transportation services and functions to create a general public transportation system.** Sometimes referred to as the "classic" coordination example, human service agencies band together to form a "critical mass" of service that can qualify for general public funding and offer real travel options throughout the entire community. This is a key **productivity enhancement** strategy that can be referred to as a **synthesis** or **synergy** strategy. It is often combined with cost reduction, service enhancement, and mobility enhancement strategies.

- **Transportation providers institute a communitywide coordinated dispatching operation so that all vehicles in use can accommodate all types of passengers at all times.** Often entitled "ridesharing," this technique ensures the most cost-effective application of driver and vehicle resources. Judiciously applied, it can eliminate the typical precoordination situation of

overlapping and inefficient routes and schedules. In particular, the benefits of providing trips for ADA paratransit clients at the same time and on the same vehicle as other travelers creates much lower per trip costs, thus generating real savings for public transit operators. This is a key **productivity enhancement** strategy.

- **Travel services are expanded to more residents of the community through a variety of low-cost strategies.** Some of the largest dollar savings evidenced in the case studies of coordinated systems are those generated by the effective use of volunteers. Volunteers are most cost effectively used when specific trips have special requirements, such as the need for hands-on or escorted services; when providing the trip would tie up a vehicle and a driver for a relatively long time; or in other circumstances where ridesharing would be difficult to implement. This is a key **service expansion** strategy that strongly relates to some cost reduction strategies.

Some of the largest dollar savings evidenced in the case studies of coordinated systems are those generated by the effective use of volunteers.

Key coordination strategies are shown in Table 7. Many communities will apply multiple coordination strategies.

Strategies to Avoid

Just as there are transportation coordination strategies to embrace, there are also significant transportation service strategies to avoid. These are also shown in Table 7 and summarized below. Most characterize situations of little or no coordination; most of them are almost begging to be coordinated.

- **Vehicles and drivers used to serve only one client or trip type:** agencies provide trips for only their own clients; agencies provide trips only to certain destinations (e.g., medical facilities) and not to other needed destinations.
- **Multiple dispatch facilities and other administrative operations:** each agency uses dispatch personnel dedicated to only the needs of that particular agency; multiple agencies in the same community invest in independently operated geographic information systems (GISs) and automatic vehicle locator (AVL) systems.

Table 7:
STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO COORDINATION

General category	*Specific strategy*	*Examples*
Strategies to adopt		
	Business expansion	Transit authority contracts to provide Medicaid or other human service agency trips
	Cost reduction	Transit authority contracts with human service agencies to provide ADA paratransit services
	Synthesis/synergy	Human service agencies coordinate/consolidate to create general public transportation system
	Productivity enhancement	Transportation provides coordinated dispatching and promotes ridesharing among cooperating agencies
	Cost reduction	Use of volunteers Shift of paratransit riders to fixed-route services
Strategies to avoid		
	Limited focus	Only one type of passenger/client on the vehicles
	Administrative duplication	Underutilized vehicles, dispatch/administrative/ ITS or GIS facilities
	Productivity problems	Significant unused vehicle capacity
	Service duplication	Duplication of routes and services
	Cost problems	Unusually high per trip costs

- **The existence of significant unutilized vehicle capacity; routes being run with less than full passenger capacity:** vehicles idle during large portions of the day.
- **Low productivities (passengers per hour, passengers per mile):** performance statistics significantly below other operations of a similar nature in similar communities.
- **Duplication of routes and services:** vehicles of different agencies running the same routes, perhaps even at the same times of day (this is especially a problem when there are also areas lacking any service at all in a given community).
- **Unusually high per trip costs:** per trip costs significantly higher than other operations of a similar nature in similar communities.

If any of these conditions are present in a locality, their presence should be taken as a clue that the coordination of human service transportation and public transit services may bring real benefits.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM SUCCESSFUL COORDINATION EFFORTS

Often, coordination efforts have been successful not only because groups share the same agenda or goals but also because they could identify some common points on which to work.

Although the combinations of events, resources, interested parties, and the dynamics of their interaction differed among communities studied (see Chapter 8), it is possible to see underlying commonalities within these different communities and situations. Often, coordination efforts have been successful not only because groups share the same agenda or goals but also because they could identify some common points on which to work. A social service provider worked with a local transit provider because they were spending too much time on transportation services. A tribal government worked with a county government because both groups wanted to set up vanpools to a particular work site. Success is much more likely if benefits can be clearly defined for all involved.

In most cases, the overall objectives were to provide more cost-effective transportation and to obtain funding from a wider range of sources than had been previously tapped. The coordination efforts that successfully met these objectives possessed the following common factors:

- **Real leadership and energy** from political, human service, or transportation stakeholders. See Chapter 6 and Appendix A.
- **A sound planning process,** as described in Chapter 3, that includes
  - Goals and objectives, including community mobility needs; see Tables 2 through 5 and Appendices A, B, and C;
  - A strategic plan to address the goals and objectives; see Chapter 6;
  - An operational plan, including budgets; see Chapter 6 and Appendix F;
  - A detailed implementation structure; see Chapter 6 and Appendix G; and
  - A commitment to replan and reconfigure services based on a thorough evaluation of results achieved in relation to goals and objectives (see Chapter 3).
- **Sound technical support,** including
  - Planning and replanning based on results; see Chapter 3 and Appendix H;
  - Uniform performance and cost definitions and reporting; see Chapter 6 and Appendix F;
  - Sharing technical resources across agencies (data, resources, planning capabilities); and
  - Use of information technology and other tools; see Chapter 6.
- **Effective participation** of all applicable community agencies and local leaders in the planning process. See Chapter 6 and Appendices A, B, and E.
- **Demonstrated coordination benefits** in financial and service terms (as described in this chapter), including full cost and performance information.
- **Modifications to services and financial participation patterns.** See Chapter 3.

In most cases, the overall objectives were to provide more cost-effective transportation and to obtain funding from a wider range of sources than had been previously tapped.

Strategies for successful coordination should differ from place to place depending on local goals and objectives, local human service programs, the availability and type of local transportation services, the political environment, the current status of coordination and coordination planning and many other factors.

Although other local coordination efforts could succeed without addressing all of these factors, the chances of success improve greatly when most or all of these factors have been covered. The statewide strategies for coordination differ appreciably from community coordination strategies, but some of the local success factors are also key to success at the state level. Many of the cases demonstrate that using multiple concurrent coordination strategies is more effective than only one. Actual strategies for successful coordination should differ from place to place depending on local goals and objectives, local human service programs, the availability and type of local transportation services, the political environment, the current status of coordination and coordination planning, and many other factors.

Recommendations for successful coordination include the following:

- ✦ Involve all significant stakeholders in-depth and from the beginning;
- ✦ Clearly identify the needs and concerns of all parties;
- ✦ Focus on improved data collection and reporting to let all parties understand the full cost and service implications of their transportation decisions and understand for themselves the benefits of coordination; and
- ✦ Focus on the benefits that should be achieved: expanded service, lower unit costs, and better service quality.

Applying these strategies will lead to coordinated activities of a large number of different agencies that provide or sponsor transportation services.

SUMMARY

We still need more coordinated transportation services in rural communities. There is still too much duplication, too little cost-effectiveness, and, overall, too little service in many localities. We would see more coordinated transportation services in rural areas if the planners, operators, and overseers of such systems had both more knowledge and a common understanding of these factors: what benefits

to expect from coordination, what to expect as one goes through the coordination process, what actions to take, what procedures to follow, and whom to contact and when.

Coordination strategies to adopt include

- ✦ The transit authority contracts to provide trips to Medicaid or other human service agency clients.
- ✦ Human service providers provide ADA paratransit services under contracts to transit authorities.
- ✦ Transit authorities and/or human service providers offer incentives to paratransit riders to use fixed-route transit services.
- ✦ Human service agencies coordinate or consolidate their separate transportation services and functions to create a general public transportation system.
- ✦ Transportation providers institute a communitywide coordinated dispatching operation so that all vehicles in use can accommodate all types of passengers at all times.
- ✦ Travel services are expanded to more residents of the community through various low-cost strategies.

Transportation situations to avoid include

- ✦ Vehicles and drivers used to serve only one client or trip type.
- ✦ Multiple dispatch facilities and other administrative operations.
- ✦ The existence of significant unutilized vehicle capacity; routes being run with less than full passenger capacity; vehicles idle during large portions of the day.
- ✦ Low productivities (passengers per hour, passengers per mile).
- ✦ Duplication of routes and services.
- ✦ Unusually high per trip costs.

Applying the strategies addressed in this chapter will make coordination much more readily achievable.

TOOLS FOR ADDRESSING DETAILED COORDINATION ISSUES

Chapter 6

This chapter provides information on a variety of specific topic areas that are expected to be vital in the continued success of coordinated transportation systems. For ease in accessing this information, the topics are presented in alphabetical order (not in order of importance).

The topics included in this chapter are

- Accounting and financial management;
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504, and coordinated rural transportation services;
- Budgeting;
- Consensus building and setting goals and objectives;
- Involving stakeholders;
- Marketing and public information;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Needs assessment;
- Organization of the planning process;
- Organizational framework for coordination;
- Strategic direction—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
- Technology;
- Vehicle fleet status and evaluation; and
- Volunteers.

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Description

Careful accounting is a requirement.

Any organization that uses public funds has an obligation to keep good accounts of how those funds are spent. Careful accounting is also needed for planning and budgeting, to satisfy reporting requirements of funders and government agencies, and for audit purposes.

Relevance to Coordination

An organization that provides coordinated services has special requirements for accounting and financial management. It needs to be able to determine how much to charge participating agencies for their share of coordinated service and to justify those charges. Agencies that purchase funding from or contribute funding to services need to be able to fairly and realistically assess what it would cost them to provide the same services on their own. Good accounts are needed as input for monitoring and evaluation.

Methods

Financial management tools for coordination include detailed cost accounting, budgeting, cost allocation models and formulas, and negotiated or regulated rates.

Cost Accounting: Detailed and accurate tracking of all expenditures is needed to support reporting, budgeting, cost allocation, and rate setting functions. Funding agencies typically have minimum requirements for accounting categories to which each expenditure needs to be assigned. These expense categories include salaries, fringe benefits, purchased services, fuel, other supplies, rent, and utilities. In addition, a useful accounting system will be able to separate costs within each expense category according to function and/or project. In an organization that provides only transportation, typical functions include at least administration, vehicle operations, and maintenance. In multipurpose agencies, transportation will be one group of functions among others. Projects might be specific services provided for participating agencies.

Budgeting: A useful budget will include expected total expenditures within each expense category and function or project. Funders usually require a budget to obtain funds. When agencies coordinate through interagency agreements, participating agencies may need to work together on their budgets taking into account expected payments and income among the agencies. In any coordination arrangement, good budgeting is essential in order for participating agencies to know what to expect, to anticipate problems, and to provide guidance to ensure that the coordinated service continues to meet their needs. Budget tracking should be an integral part of the accounting system so that participating agencies can receive regular reports of actual expenses compared to the budget throughout the year.

In any coordination arrangement, good budgeting is essential.

Cost Allocation: When agencies coordinate they have to agree on how to share costs. The information provided by a good accounting and budgeting system is essential to the process of cost allocation. Other kinds of recordkeeping, such as passenger counting and tracking vehicle mileage, are also useful. In sharing costs, it is important to recognize that all costs need to be shared, even costs such as agency administration and "overhead."

One way to allocate costs is by means of a *cost allocation model*. Such a model distributes costs among projects or specific services when these costs cannot be separately tracked. For example, if it is possible to directly track how many hours per week each driver spends on each type of service provided, a cost allocation model may not be needed for driver labor. More commonly, driver hours and many other things cannot be separated and tracked so easily, so a cost allocation model is needed that distributes the cost by specifying how each category of cost should be allocated. For example, the cost of driver labor might be divided among services according to the number of vehicle hours used for each service, while the cost of maintenance might be divided according to the number of vehicle miles for each service. If there is a substantial cost for fare processing (for example in a system that uses taxi vouchers), that cost might be divided according to the number of passengers sponsored by each participating agency.

Cost Allocation Model—distributes costs among projects or specific services.

If clients of several participating agencies (or residents of several jurisdictions) ride on vehicles at the same time, vehicle miles and hours for each service type can be easily separated. This will require some *method to divide vehicle hours or miles among participating agencies*. Such a method can use a statistical estimating procedure or detailed recordkeeping.

Cost Sharing Formula—costs are shared by means of negotiation.

In many cases, costs are shared by means of a negotiated *cost sharing formula*. For example, a city and county may share the cost of a bus route that passes through both jurisdictions based on the number of passengers that board the bus in each jurisdiction. In other cases, cost might be shared based on the population of the areas served.

Negotiated or Regulated Rates—the rate for each participating agency may be set through contract negotiation or bidding.

Participating agencies may be charged *negotiated or regulated rates*. For example, in many states, Medicaid pays an established rate per trip and per mile. In other cases, the rate for each participating agency may be set through contract negotiation or bidding.

Considerations

Accounting, budgeting, and cost-sharing requirements are strongly influenced by state regulations that govern coordinated programs, recipients of public transportation funding, and purchase of service by human service agencies. While these requirements may seem burdensome, any effective coordination program will gain credibility from good accounting, budgeting, and cost allocation.

Examples

Detailed Cost Allocation Model—a process to divide vehicle time using detailed records.

Lane Transit District in Eugene, Oregon, is an agency that uses a *detailed cost allocation model* for its coordinated paratransit service. A process to divide vehicle time using detailed records of the exact time that each passenger gets on and off a vehicle has been developed by People for People for its coordinated service in eastern Washington state. An example of rates set by contract is provided by Dodger Area Rapid Transit System in Fort Dodge, Iowa. In Florida, county transportation coordinators file a rate structure as part of their transportation disadvantaged service plans. The rates must be based on a cost allocation plan or bid process.

Resources

Burkhardt, Hamby, MacDorman, and McCollom, *Comprehensive Financial Management Guidelines for Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Providers*, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Multi-State Technical Assistance Program, September 1992.

Case Studies of People for People and DARTS in TCRP Report 91, *Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services*, 2003.

Establishing Cost Sharing Agreements, in Lyons and vanderWilden, *Innovative State And Local Planning For Coordinated Transportation,* February 2002 at http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/islptc/establish.html.

Florida rate setting guidelines in *Coordinated Transportation Contracting Instructions,* Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, July 2002, at http://www11.myflorida.com/ctd/.

Koffman, D. Appropriate Cost-Sharing for Paratransit, in *Transportation Research Record 1463*, Transportation Research Board, Washington DC, 1994.

ADA, SECTION 504, AND COORDINATED RURAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Description

The ADA established requirements for public transportation services.

This section provides a broad overview of the requirements of the ADA as they pertain to coordinated rural public transportation and how coordination may help organizations meet their ADA obligations. **It is not a definitive guide to the ADA and should not be taken as legally authoritative.** The sources listed in the Resources section should be consulted for authoritative guidance.

The ADA established requirements for accessibility by people with disabilities to all types of public and private services and facilities. The act contained provisions specifically pertaining to public transportation services provided by public entities (Title II) and private entities (Title III). The act directed the Department of Transportation (DOT) to issue regulations for those provisions. These regulations define requirements for

- ✦ Accessible vehicles and facilities in public transportation;
- ✦ Providing paratransit service to complement fixed-route transit service for people who cannot use the fixed-route services due to a disability; and
- ✦ How services are to be provided, such as ensuring operability of wheelchair lifts and calling out stops for visually impaired passengers.

Within DOT, the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) Office of Civil Rights has lead responsibility for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the transit accessibility provisions of the ADA.

The requirements of the ADA generally superseded requirements established under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 defined requirements for accessibility by recipients of Federal assistance. Under the ADA rules, a recipient of DOT funds complies with its Section 504 obligations by complying with its ADA obligations.

Relevance to Coordination

Any coordination arrangement for providing public transportation needs to comply with the ADA regulations issued by the DOT. The various partners in a coordination arrangement may have differing obligations under the ADA. The coordination arrangement needs to take these differences into account and ensure that the obligations of each partner are met.

Any coordination arrangement for providing public transportation needs to comply with ADA regulations.

Coordination generally involves agreements or contracts among organizations. ADA explicitly provides that an organization that provides services under contract to another organization "stands in the shoes" of that organization for purposes of compliance (49 CFR Sec. 37.23). For example, if a public entity contracts with a private organization (nonprofit or for-profit) to provide service, the public entity has to ensure that the private organization is meeting all requirements that apply to the public entity. This does not mean that each private entity under contract to a transit agency has to meet *all* of the transit agency's ADA requirements. For example, one contractor might provide ADA paratransit service only for ambulatory passengers, while another contractor provides paratransit for wheelchair users.

Coordination involves agreements or contracts among organizations.

In the case of coordinated rural public transportation, the key provisions of the ADA will mostly be those that apply to public entities, including

- ✦ Public agencies can buy only accessible vehicles for fixed-route services (Sec. 37.71).
- ✦ Public agencies operating local, fixed-route service need to provide paratransit service for people who cannot use the fixed-route system due to a disability. The paratransit system must meet detailed requirements for comparability to the fixed-route system (Sec. 37.121).
- ✦ For demand-responsive services, public agencies can purchase only accessible vehicles, unless service is equivalent for people with disabilities and others (Sec. 37.77).

The regulations provide a precise definition of "equivalent" service in terms of response time, fares, area of service, hours and days of service, restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose, availability of information and reservations capability, and capacity constraints.

The coordinated system needs to ensure that each participating entity can meet its ADA obligations.

Some partners to a coordination agreement may be subject to other rules. For example

- A nonprofit human service agency that operates (or contracts with another organization to operate) transportation to bring clients to its programs is not operating public transportation at all. As a result, most of the DOT regulations would not apply to it, although other ADA regulations about nondiscrimination would apply.
- In rural coordination arrangements it is not unusual for a nonprofit human service agency to operate the public transportation system for an area with financial support from local governments. In this case, all the ADA requirements pertaining to public transportation provided by public entities would apply to the public transportation, but, in most cases, not to clearly separate client transportation provided by the same agency.
- A private company that operates rural service as a profit-making business, or with only incidental public support, is required to purchase only accessible vehicles, except for vehicles below certain size limits, unless service is equivalent for people with disabilities and others (Sec. 37.103).

The coordinated system needs to ensure that each participating entity can meet its ADA obligations. In some cases, especially where the coordinated service is operated by a public agency, or where coordination results in a public transportation system that did not previously exist, the coordinated system will have ADA requirements of its own.

Methods

Depending on an organization's obligations, ADA compliance can be achieved by means of providing ADA paratransit, purchasing ADA accessible vehicles, or tailoring services in such a way that ADA obligations are reduced. Coordination provides opportunities to share the work of meeting ADA obligations. For example, one agency may operate demand-responsive service that meets the paratransit obligations of another agency or at least reduces the demand for the other agency's paratransit service. Vehicle sharing can reduce the need for individual agencies to own sufficient accessible vehicles to meet the equivalent service standard for demand-responsive transportation. In

many rural services, various types of flexible transit service are used in place of traditional fixed-route service. This kind of service can reduce the demand for ADA paratransit, provide a cost-efficient way of providing ADA paratransit, or completely eliminate the requirement for paratransit by serving all passengers with the same vehicles.

Examples

Case studies in Chapter 8 provide examples of coordinated approaches to ADA compliance.

In Roseau County, Minnesota, the Committee on Aging operates Roseau County Transit with Federal, state, and county funding. Since this is a public system, a fixed-route service would need to have ADA paratransit. Instead, Roseau County Transit consists of flexible route service that will deviate off the route and also dial-a-ride service with 24-hour advance scheduling. In compliance with rules for demand-responsive services, the two vehicles used for these services are both wheelchair accessible.

Holmes County Transportation Coordination in Millersburg, Ohio, coordinates service for 27 agencies with 130 vehicles. Sharing vehicles has reduced the need for numerous agencies to operate their own wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Mat-Su Community Transit in Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska, is a private, nonprofit corporation that operates a coordinated transportation system in partnership with multiple governmental, nonprofit, and human service agencies. The transit system provides local fixed-route service to the general public that has to meet ADA paratransit requirements. The need for paratransit is reduced by allowing vehicles to deviate up to three quarters of a mile off the route. In addition, Mat-Su Transit provides specific services for a variety of nonprofit agencies such as the United Way, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Mat-Su Recovery Center. These services would not trigger additional paratransit requirements.

Resources

Access Board web site provides convenient access to regulations concerning transit vehicles at http://www.access-board.gov/.

Community Transportation Association of America, *Making a Transit Service Accessible*, Technical Assistance Brief No. 9. Available at http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/rtap/pubs/ta/accssble.asp.

Impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act on Transit Operations, TCRP Legal Research Digest Number 19, 2003.

U.S. Department of Transportation, Code Of Federal Regulations, Title 49—Transportation, Parts 27, 37, and 38 (implementing regulations for the American with Disabilities Act, cited as 49 CFR 27, 49 CFR 37, and 49 CFR 38), Revised as of October 1, 1996. Available at http://www.fta.dot.gov/ada/ along with recent FTA supplementary guidance.

BUDGETING

Description

A budget is a forecast of future revenues and of the costs of the resources necessary to produce these revenues. It can be considered a plan of action for the coming months and years and can be a useful tool in determining the direction of the organization as well as monitoring and controlling its results.

Used properly, budgets accomplish three major functions:

- ✦ Planning,
- ✦ Coordination, and
- ✦ Control.

The first main benefit from preparing a budget is that it forces management to sit down and formally **plan** what they want and expect to happen in the future. Various alternatives can be considered during the budgeting process, including curtailing or eliminating certain services, extending profitable services, adding new services, raising or lowering the rates being charged, and decreasing certain expenses.

Various alternatives can be considered during the budgeting process . . .

The second main benefit of budgeting is **coordination**. By pulling all the information together in one place during the budgeting process, all the individuals involved obtain a better understanding of the overall operation and the interrelations between functions. For example, if it is determined during the budget process that additional services will be provided and the vehicles will be on the road more often, then the person in charge of repairing the vehicles will need to be aware of the decision because more repairs may be necessary and the repairs may need to be made immediately.

By pulling all the information together . . . individuals . . . obtain a better understanding of the overall operation . . .

The third benefit of budgeting is that it enhances the ability of management to **control** operations. By comparing the actual operating results to the budget, management can determine areas which are not performing as expected and determine whether any corrective action needs to be taken.

The following steps need to be considered prior to undertaking the budgeting process:

- ✦ Determine the organization's goals and objectives (they will guide the direction of the budget),
- ✦ Get significant people involved in the budget process (funders, suppliers, and consumers), and
- ✦ Determine the time frame for the budget. (A budget can be prepared for any period of time desired. Typically, budgets are prepared once a year for the upcoming year. The yearly budget is broken down into 12 monthly budgets. This allows management to compare the actual results to the budgeted results on a monthly basis. In addition to the yearly budget, many transportation operators also prepare a three- or five-year master plan. This master plan is not prepared with as much detail as the yearly budget and shows the general direction that management wants the company to head.)

After analyzing the impacts of the organization's goals and objectives, you will have a solid foundation on which to prepare the budget. The next step is to analyze each program to **forecast the revenues and direct expenses** related to that program. Some of the variables to consider in this step are historical revenues and expenses, as well as trends in these historical amounts, the effect of the organization's goals and objectives, external factors (e.g., the economy, the demographics of the geographic area), and seasonal trends.

Next, you need to prepare **operating and capital budgets**. ***Detailed discussions of operating and capital budgets follow this section.*** Capital budgets are like operating budgets. They are financial plans, based on the goals and objectives of the transportation organization, which support both present and future service activities. Unlike operating budgets, capital budgets are concerned with financial investments or expenditures in physical assets such as vehicles, equipment, and infrastructure. Because physical assets are considered to have life expectancies extending beyond the normal time frames of operating budgets (one fiscal year), they are treated differently in the budgeting as well as in the accounting process.

Operating budgets consider items such as labor; administrative costs; services; and materials such as fuel, tires, small parts, office supplies, etc. Each of these items is generally bought, paid for, and consumed in a relatively short time frame. They are treated in the context of financial accounting as operating expenditures. Capital budgets are concerned with expenditures of funds for items or projects which have repeat use

over relatively long periods of time. The fact that no capital item or project has an indefinite life also means that plans for improvement and/or replacement must be established.

The first page of every budget should list the major assumptions used in the preparation of the budget. This accomplishes two goals. First, when anyone reviews the budget, that person can start by reviewing the major assumptions and decide immediately whether they agree. The second goal accomplished by starting the budget with the assumptions is that it forces the people reviewing the budget to decide which assumptions need to be changed instead of just changing the amounts in the budget. By explicitly listing the assumptions on the first page of the budget, reviewers are forced to examine the budget and its interrelationships in more detail instead of making arbitrary changes to the budget.

The items that you would want to include in the assumptions listing can be separated into four general categories: (1) changes to revenue producing operations, (2) method of calculating forecasted revenue, (3) changes to expenses, and (4) method of calculating forecasted expenses.

Basically, the assumptions spell out the thought process that was used to arrive at the budgeted amounts. The best format for the assumptions is to list them in the same order that the item they are explaining appears in the budget. Usually revenues would go first, followed by expenses in the same order in which they appear in the budget.

Operating Budgets

Description

Any organization that uses public and other funds needs to develop an annual operating budget. Such an annual budget represents the organization's financial plan for delivering its transportation services, the various expenses that it expects to incur in the delivery of those services, and the sources and amounts of revenues that will be provided to cover budgeted expenses. The budget represents the base against which actual revenues and expenses will be reviewed and analyzed to financially manage the delivery of transportation services and report performance to participating organizations.

Relevance to Coordination

In a coordinated setting, operating budgets are the financial tool by which each participating organization formalizes its commitment to provide funding in exchange for transportation services that it is budgeted to receive. Each organization makes a commitment to provide a stated amount of funding in support of the coordination budget, in expectation of receiving a specific level of transportation service in return.

Methods

The revenue, or income, side of the annual operating budget presents the sources from which an organization expects to receive its income. For a public or non-profit using some public funds, the sources of revenues should include the following broad categories:

1. Passenger fares and donations
2. Local funding—public, other
3. State public funds by program source
4. Federal funds by program source
5. Service contract funds (detailed by participating organization service contract)

6. Advertising
7. Contributed services
8. Other revenue sources

The revenue categories should be set up so that revenues received from each participating coordination organization can be tracked and reported.

Operating expense side of the budget presents the expenses that the organization expects to incur. Expenses are typically categorized in two ways. First, by functional area, such as

1. Operations, including contracted transportation service
2. Maintenance, both vehicle and non-vehicle
3. General administration
4. Other, including marketing and planning

Second, by type of expense, such as

1. Labor and fringe benefits
2. Services
3. Materials and supplies
4. Utilities
5. Casualty and liability
6. Taxes
7. Purchased transportation
8. Leases and rentals
9. Miscellaneous expenses

The expense budget should be supported by a cost allocation plan so that the cost of service delivery for each participating organization can be reported to the organization as the justification for invoicing and payment for coordination services delivered to each organization. See Chapter 6—Accounting and Financial Management—for a discussion of cost allocation.

These are the broad categories of revenues and expenses for rural programs that are reported for the National Transit Database (NTD). While the NTD does not require detailed reporting of operating expenses, a detailed tracking of expenses is necessary for effective financial management of transportation service delivery. The database structure has revenue and expense detail within these categories. It is typically advisable to combine the functional and type of expense budgets together so that the type of expense by function can be tracked.

Considerations

The revenue and expense detail that is placed in the operating budget should be determined by the grant or project management requirements for each organization participating in the coordination system. The budget should recognize and anticipate the reporting requirements with which each participating organization must comply. Since state departments of transportation administer the 5311 Non-Urbanized (Rural) Area Formula Program, local communities implementing coordinated transportation services should consult with state officials concerning operating budget requirements. The requirements of other programs should be integrated as well.

Examples

Good examples of operating budget revenue and expense categories can be found in the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) Coordination Handbook, ODOT's Rural Transit Program budget forms, and in a Transit Provider Survey conducted by the Montana Department of Transportation, all linked below. Also, you may consult the Federal Transit Administration's National Transit Database (NTD) to see the revenue and expense breakdown that is reported. For Year 2001 revenues reported by urban transit systems, go to the NTD at http://www.ntdprogram.com/ntd/NTDData.nsf/2001+TOC/Table-1/$File/T01_32.pdf. For Year 2001 expenses, go to the NTD at http://www.ntdprogram.com/ntd/NTDData.nsf/2001+TOC/Table11/$File/T11_32.pdf to see expenses reported by functional area. For Year 2000 reported by object class, expenses, go to the NTD at http://www.ntdprogram.com/ntd/NTDData.nsf/2000+TOC/Table12/$File/t12_32.pdf. The NTD tables are updated annually. Consequently, consult the NTD website to find current information. The NTD website may be found at http://www.ntdprogram.com/ntd/NTDData.nsf/2001+TOC/Table12/$File/T12_32.pdf.

Resources

A Guide for Implementing Coordinating Transportation Systems, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

Burkhardt, Hamby, MacDorman, and McCollom, *Comprehensive Financial Management Guidelines for Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Providers*, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Multi-State Technical Assistance Program, September 1992.

Financial Management for Transit: A Handbook, Final Report, April 1985, Prepared by the Institute for Urban Transportation, Indiana University, 825 East Eighth Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47405 at http://ntl.bts.gov/card_view.cfm?docid=8829 and http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/money/FMT/FMT.HTM.

Montana Department of Transportation, *Montana Statewide Transit Survey*. Available at http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/departments/transportation_planning/transit_programs/pdf/needs_study/appendixc.pdf.

Ohio Department of Transportation, Rural Transit Program, Budget Forms, at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/downloads/04budform.xls.

Web site for the National Transit Database, http://www.ntdprogram.com/NTD/ntdhome.nsf?OpenDatabase.

Capital Programs and Budgets

Description

Preparation of a capital program and budget provides an organization's statement of its anticipated capital needs over a multi-year period. The period is typically 3 to 5 years. The capital program would include purchase of vehicles for expansion and replacement, vehicle-related capital items such as fareboxes, radios and electronic communication capabilities, computer hardware and software, other information technology needs, and fixed facilities such as administrative offices and vehicle maintenance and storage facilities and associated equipment.

Relevance to Coordination

In a coordinated setting, capital programs and budgets are an important planning tool for understanding current capital facility and equipment assets that are available and anticipating the future capital facility and equipment needs, the associated costs, expected sources of funds, and the timing of those needs. States require local organizations receiving Federal Transit Administration 5311 Rural Transit Program funding to complete an Operating and Capital Program (See the link below).

Methods

Statement of need and inventory and assessment of capital equipment and facilities: In organizing to implement coordinated transportation services, it is necessary to know what capital assets are available and what capital assets will need to be acquired to support initial start-up and ongoing service delivery. Start with the capital assets that are already available through participating organizations. Also, look at the capital assets potential contractors that may provide some of the transportation service. Establish criteria for the replacement of vehicles and other equipment. Guidelines can usually be found at state departments of transportation through their administration of the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5311 Rural Assistance Program. Apply the criteria to complete an assessment of the condition, reliability, safety, and suitability of vehicles. It is especially important to assess vehicles for their fit with the types of services that will be provided and the types of customers who will be served.

Capital assets required: Lists of capital assets should include vehicles by size, accessibility characteristics, and other equipment; information technology hardware and software; office facilities and equipment; maintenance and storage facilities and equipment.

Replacement schedule by year: From the inventory and assessment completed, prepare vehicle and equipment replacement schedule, by vehicle and by year, for the next 5 years. In the maintenance portion of the operating budget, it is advisable to anticipate major maintenance and rehabilitation expenses that may be incurred, such as engine and transmission replacements.

Capital expenses and sources of funding: The cost of acquiring capital equipment must be estimated by type of vehicle to be acquired, allowing for a 2 to 3 percent increase in cost per year in the replacement schedule.

Considerations

In rural areas, it is likely that local governments, especially county governments, and participating organizations may be able to contribute the use of facilities or a portion of space in a facility, particularly for maintenance and storage of vehicles. In assessing capital needs and understanding the financial constraints that are present, care should be taken to look for opportunities for contributed services and equipment that may substitute for capital purchases. Donated vehicles are an area of particular opportunity.

For rural programs in particular, some state departments of transportation provide state contracting that local organizations may use for vehicle and other equipment purchases. This enables local organizations to complete purchases based on competitive bid processes without the need for a complicated, competitive bid process of their own.

Examples

See the Florida Department of Transportation's vehicle purchase program link below. This site provides a quick overview of different vehicles that may be part of a vehicle fleet.

Resources

*Comprehensive Financial Management Guidelines for Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Providers***,** Jon E. Burkhardt, et. al., prepared by Ecosometrics, Incorporated for the Multi-State Technical Assistance Program of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Inc., September 1992.

Financial Management for Transit: A Handbook, Final Report, April 1985, Prepared by the Institute for Urban Transportation, Indiana University, 825 East Eighth Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47405 at http://ntl.bts.gov/card_view.cfm?docid=8829 and http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/money/FMT/FMT.HTM.

Florida Department of Transportation, Public Transit Office, *Florida Vehicle Procurement Program,* at the University of South Florida, Center for Urban Transportation Research web site, at http://www.cutr.usf.edu/research/fvpp/fvpp2.htm.

Ohio Department of Transportation, *Rural Transit Program Four Year Capital and Operating Plan,* Instructions, Forms, and Sample, http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/downloads/05C&OPLNLTR.doc.

CONSENSUS BUILDING AND SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Description

For transportation coordination to succeed, agreement among key participants is required. Consensus building means that the agencies participating in developing a coordinated transportation system agree on what needs to be done, how it should be done, and who will have responsibility for what. This includes establishing a common vision for coordinated transportation services. Setting goals and objectives means establishing a measurable basis for judging progress in planning and implementing coordinated transportation services.

Consensus building—agencies participating in a coordinated transportation system agree on what needs to be done, how it should be done, and who will have responsibility for what.

Relevance to Coordination

Coordination is all about bringing people with common and diverse interests together to create a structure where the delivery of transportation services will be achieved very differently. The earlier the areas of agreement and disagreement can be defined, the more smoothly and predictably the development of coordinated transportation services can be accomplished.

Methods

Building consensus requires open, honest, and creative thinking and expression of ideas. To build consensus, it is necessary to have all of the key stakeholders involved. The key stakeholders can be determined by the task force that is managing transportation coordination development. Inclusion at this early stage is critical. Consensus is built by the following activities:

Building consensus requires open, honest, and creative thinking and expression of ideas.

- *Personal interviews* afford each stakeholder the opportunity to speak confidentially about issues, concerns, and expectations. Such an interview is best conducted in person, not over the telephone, and can be conducted at a central location or at the convenience of the stakeholder. Not only does the interview provide the opportunity for the stakeholder to express views, the interviewer is able to inform the stakeholder of progress to date and key areas of activity.

"All ideas are good."

- *Workshops* bring key stakeholders together to understand the issues, concerns, and expectations that have been expressed individually. Workshops provide the setting for key stakeholders to work together to define common areas of interest and areas of disagreement and to establish an agreed-upon vision for moving forward. Brainstorming is a good technique for doing this. Brainstorming provides a setting where participants are open and nonjudgmental in expressing ideas. Brainstorming is an interactive technique that relies on participants' teamwork to identify opportunities and solve problems. Participants can include transportation providers, social service agencies, community leaders, and consumers. The process is highly supportive, task oriented, and interactive. Early in the process, judgments are not made on the merits of a proposal or thought. "All ideas are good." This permits a full expression of issues and opportunities; then, realistic, actionable solutions are expressed. An effective, nonthreatening way for participants to express the importance that they place on issues or concerns is by voting. Typically, all ideas are expressed on flipchart sheets and then posted on the walls. An effective way to accomplish voting is to ask participants to take a set number of colored dots and place them beside the ideas that they feel are most important. This provides an excellent way to empower the group to set priorities—it prevents one or several individuals from dominating the process and empowers those who typically do not express their views, especially in the face of counter-arguments.

Setting goals and objectives establishes the measurable direction that an organization or endeavor such as coordination will take. A *goal* is defined as a longer-term organizational target or direction of development. It is a statement of what an organization wants to accomplish over time, typically over the next several years. A goal represents an area of endeavor necessary to achieving a vision and fulfilling a mission. An *objective* is a measurable outcome that must be achieved in attaining a goal. Objectives should be stated annually so that outcomes can be measured and progress toward fulfilling goals and achieving the vision for coordinated transportation services can be reviewed. Each goal should have two to five objectives that represent the measurable actions that will achieve the goal. Setting goals and objectives can be completed in a workshop setting or by a smaller group and then presented to a larger group. The key consideration here is working in a group that is not too large and unwieldy. Also important is

the willingness of the larger group to empower the smaller group to take the lead. Typically, strategic direction has been established. This means that the strengths and weaknesses of existing transportation services have been expressed and that opportunities for and threats to coordinating services have been explored. With consensus reached on focus and direction, vision, and mission, goals and objectives for developing coordinated transportation services then can be developed.

Examples

On a statewide basis, the goals set by Oregon's State Agency Transportation Coordination Project are worth noting. They include

- Doing more with limited existing resources,
- Utilizing transportation investments more efficiently,
- Enhancing mobility within and between communities,
- Increasing access to jobs and jobs training,
- Preserving individual independence, and
- Enhancing the quality of life.

On a local basis, coordination objectives can be even more specific. As noted in *TCRP Report 91: Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services*, they might include

- Generating new revenues,
- Reducing the costs of providing trips,
- Increasing efficiency and productivity of transportation services, and
- Increasing mobility within the community.

Resources

A Guide for Implementing Coordinating Transportation Systems, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

Burkhardt, J.E., Koffman, D., and Murray, G. *Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services*, *TCRP Report 91*, prepared for the Transportation Research Board by Westat, March 2003. Available at http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_91.pdf.

Creative Action, Inc., *Coordinating Transportation Services: Local Collaboration and Decision-Making: A "How-To" Manual for Planning and Implementation, Project Action*, Washington DC. Available at http://projectaction.easter-seals.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_doclibe_coordandoutreach.

Planning Guidelines for Coordinating State and Local Specialized Transportation Services at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/guide.

The Coordination Challenge, State Agency Transportation Coordination Project, Public Transit Division, Oregon Department of Transportation, June 2000. Available at http://www.odot.state.or.us/pubtrans/documents/CoordBook.pdf.

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

Involving stakeholders is the process undertaken to solicit the opinion and participation of these community resources in the coordination process.

Description

Public involvement is a multifaceted coordination tool. While public meetings and surveys provide opportunities for the community to respond to issues and often provide useful planning input, every community has a key group of organizations and individuals that have a "stake" in any transportation coordination process. Typically, these stakeholders include elected officials, employment and business interests, representatives of social service agencies and medical service providers, community activists, transportation users, and transit planners. Involving stakeholders is the process undertaken to solicit the opinion and participation of these community resources in the coordination process.

Relevance to Coordination

Stakeholder involvement is critical because it allows the facilitator(s) of the coordination effort to

- ✦ Establish realistic goals for coordination;
- ✦ Understand potential community resources, support, and sensitivities;
- ✦ Build on local successes; and
- ✦ Identify a coordination solution built on consensus.

Although many types of transportation coordination are plausible, from informal vehicle-sharing to transit system integration and consolidation, coordination inherently means that various entities must work successfully with one another.

Methods

Transportation coordination stakeholders may include any number of individuals or organizations, depending on the community and reason for coordination. For example, in a large rural county, coordination stakeholders may include regional social service agencies, the state DOT, and political leaders from each jurisdiction. In a small community with a particular transportation coordination issue, medical providers,

local social services, transit users, and the transit operator may be the most appropriate stakeholders.

Identifying Stakeholders: Organizations and individuals who could be stakeholders in your community, depending on the focus of the transportation coordination effort, are provided in the list below. The list is not exhaustive, but can be used as a resource to help you identify who might be appropriate to contact in your community. In addition, representatives of these organizations or stakeholder groups may be able to direct you to others who should be considered stakeholders as part of a transportation coordination effort:

- Amtrak
- Administration on Aging
- Center for Independent Living
- Chamber of Commerce
- Church/Religious Organizations
- Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee
- City Manager
- Convention and Visitors' Bureau
- County Commissioners
- Department of Public Works
- Disability Workshop
- Greyhound
- Homeowners Associations
- Human Services Agency
- Large Employers
- Local Transit Operators
- Mayor
- Paratransit Provider
- Planning Department
- Real Estate Developers
- Recreation Department
- Regional Transit Operators
- Senior Centers
- Senior Residential Facilities
- Shuttle Operators
- State DOT
- Superintendent of Schools
- Taxicab Providers
- Transit Users
- Welfare-to-Work Agency
- Youth Activities Centers

Soliciting Input and Participation from Stakeholders: Stakeholders can play many different roles in a transportation coordination effort. It may be appropriate for some stakeholders to take a more active role than others. To maximize the value of stakeholders as part of the coordination process, they must take some "ownership" in the process

by being responsible for key tasks such as distributing surveys to their constituencies, collecting data for the project from their organization, meeting with peer agencies to solicit their involvement, and providing updates to their constituencies.

Several strategies can be employed to involve stakeholders in a transportation coordination process. These strategies function as stand-alone methods for stakeholder participation, or they can be used in combination with one another as part of a more comprehensive stakeholder involvement process. Examples of stakeholder involvement efforts include the following:

- **Establishment of a Coordination Oversight Committee.** Effective coordination requires stakeholders' involvement early in the coordination process. The person(s) facilitating the transportation coordination effort can identify a group of stakeholders to work together to guide the process, establish goals, and make decisions about how transportation services should be coordinated. Typically, such a committee would have between 5 and 15 representatives, depending on the size of the community and the complexity of the coordination effort.
- **Conduct of Focus Groups with Stakeholders.** Bringing groups of stakeholders together allows coordination facilitators to gain input at critical stages of the coordination process. A focus group of stakeholders can identify major transportation challenges in the community, develop service goals and operating parameters, and discuss marketing needs and resources. A facilitated focus group can be effective because it allows for synergism and brings together a representative group of individuals to address a wide range of topics, providing insight into community priorities.
- **Conduct of Stakeholder Interviews.** Stakeholder interviews allow individuals to speak candidly about concerns and coordination priorities. Interviewees can be assured that their responses will be kept confidential and reported anonymously, thus encouraging them to expose personal sensitivities and biases. Such interviews also provide a personalized setting that can encourage comfort with the process and an informal sense of familiarity with the person facilitating the coordination effort. Stakeholder interviews can be valuable in combination with other involvement strategies.

- **Preparation and Administration of a Stakeholder Survey.** When numerous stakeholders are identified for controversial projects where a significant number of responses may be needed to substantiate coordination findings, a telephone or mail-out survey may be appropriate.

Considerations

Who Has the Power to Make Decisions? Although stakeholder consensus may suggest strong support for a particular program or issue, without sufficient political backing, this support can stall. A coordination oversight committee should include policy-level representation so the committee's recommendations can be reviewed internally to determine whether they are politically feasible and implementable.

Are All Organizations, Geographic Locations, and Population Groups Represented? Many organizations and individuals may have a direct or indirect connection to transportation issues. The stakeholder process should be dynamic, allowing new stakeholders to be added as they are identified. As new issues and potential controversies are identified—as well as potential resources such as new funding sources or existing coordination efforts—additional stakeholders should be encouraged to join the process.

Has the Public Been Kept Informed of the Process? Once a stakeholder has provided input in the transportation coordination process, he or she probably will want to be updated about progress. Depending on the community, standing citizen committees and advisory groups should be kept informed of major milestones in the stakeholder process and given the opportunity to lend support to stakeholder views or comment if stakeholder views seem to be unrepresentative of community consensus. Updates from stakeholder surveys, focus groups, and committee meetings can be shared at open houses, citizen advisory group meetings, via newsletters, and on web sites.

Examples

The consolidation effort in Butte County, California, (see Chapter 8) provides an example of using two stakeholder strategies to involve a diversity of interests. Representatives from Butte County, its cities and towns, social service providers, and its transit agencies convened as part

of a coordination advisory committee that oversaw a consultant's technical work. Individual interviews were held with all of these and other stakeholders to provide them an opportunity to speak about their priorities outside of the committee setting. In addition, regular focus meetings were held with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee and the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee.

On a statewide level, Ohio's Statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force (see Chapter 7) provides a good example of multiple statewide agencies coming together. The standing task force established in 1996 includes representatives of the DOT, Human Services, Aging, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Development, Mental Health, and Education, as well as the Bureau of Employment Services, Drug Addiction Services, Rehabilitation Services Commission, Head Start, and the Governor's Council on People with Disabilities.

Resources

Planning Case Studies, *Access to Jobs*. Washington, DC: Federal Transit Administration Office of Planning, September 2001. http://www.fta.dot.gov/wtw/casestudies/.

Public Involvement in Transportation: Best Practices, New Approaches, *TR News*. Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board. May-June 2002, No. 220. http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/trnews/trnews220.pdf.

Transit Consolidation Study Summary Report. Chico, CA: Butte County Association of Governments. Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, January 2001. http://www.bcag.org/cctssumweb.pdf.

Marketing—providing information to stakeholders and members of the public about the services that are planned or may be available to them.

MARKETING AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Description

Marketing is about providing information to stakeholders and members of the public about the services that are planned or may be available to them. Transportation marketing is primarily about providing good information to assure users that they have made the right decision to ride. Another important emphasis of transportation marketing is to attract new riders.

Relevance to Coordination

In relation to transportation coordination, marketing and public information play various roles, from building public support for a coordination effort to attracting riders to the coordinated service. Depending on the level of coordination and the extent of the services being provided, coordination can provide several marketing-related benefits. Examples of marketing-related coordination benefits include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A unifying theme and image for public information (e.g., shared vehicle design and bus stops);
- A one-stop shop for informational resources about transit services (e.g., a single informational brochure, web site, or customer service number);
- A shared advertising campaign (e.g., joint marketing efforts, newspaper advertisements, and radio spots); and
- The identification of resources that may have the greatest benefit for the coordinated transportation programs.

Methods

Marketing for coordinated transportation services is a large and complex topic. Although it involves basic marketing strategies, it requires that they be applied to a number of different providers who may or may not have the resources to oversee the greater marketing effort. Following are recommended steps for developing a marketing strategy or a plan.

Identify the Audience: It is essential to identify the audience for coordinated transportation marketing and public information. Different audiences may be appropriate during the transportation coordination planning process and once the process is completed (and a coordinated service is provided). Some examples of different audiences and the marketing/public information issues that arise follow:

- **Political Leaders/Decision-Makers.** What information needs to be presented to policymakers to gain support for a coordinated transportation effort? How can their support be marketed to their constituents? Elements to emphasize may include "better service for the community, maintaining local decision-making on important issues, and no increase in costs: transportation cost savings so funds can be used for other purposes."
- **Schools, Employers, Medical Facilities, and Social Service Agencies.** What types of resources are available for these entities? Can they become partners in the coordination process/coordinated service? How do we inform their clients and employees? Elements to emphasize may include "easier to coordinate transportation services for your clients" and "transportation services have better focus on regional needs."
- **Transportation/Transit Users.** Which subgroups are the focus (e.g., seniors, youth, those with disabilities, rural residents)? How should the coordinated system be marketed? Is the focus to build ridership on the coordinated service or to improve the rider experience? Elements to emphasize may include "easier to ride the bus and make connections, better access to information, and one-stop shop for transportation needs and customer support ('the buck stops here')."
- **General Public.** Will marketing efforts be needed in order to solicit public comment about the coordination effort? Will a public referendum be required? How will information about the coordination process be shared? Elements to emphasize may include "better alternative for the community, cost savings or no tax increase, and easier for people who use transit to travel in the community."

Conduct a Marketing Resource Assessment: Before marketing a coordinated transportation service, it is important to evaluate the pre-coordination marketing organization and public information efforts. Such an assessment is a useful tool to identify work already underway

or successful, including minor efforts that could be folded into a coordinated effort. Elements to review include the following:

- **Current Marketing.** Review the current marketing staff at the various agencies, organizational structure, resources, and products. Evaluate the public information tools that are working successfully, as well as those that are unsuccessful, and determine which might serve as a model for the coordinated information tools.
- **Transportation Markets.** Identify all of the markets currently using transportation services and those likely to continue under a coordinated framework. Verify the specific public information tools that are required to meet all of the current needs.
- **Responsibilities.** Who is currently responsible for marketing? Who could provide assistance? Look at current job responsibilities and agency responsibilities to determine who might be the "right" marketing resources under a coordinated service and where responsibilities may need to be shifted.
- **Marketing Coordination.** Review opportunities for joint marketing with regional transit agencies, social service organizations, and business groups.

A **marketing plan** is a tool to identify marketing needs, prioritize those needs, and develop strategies to implement priorities.

Develop a Coordinated Transportation Service Marketing Plan: A marketing plan is a tool to identify marketing needs, prioritize those needs, and develop strategies to implement priorities. A general marketing plan framework, described below, can be applied to a coordinated transportation service.

- **Challenges for Transit Marketing.** Identify marketing problems and opportunities.
  - **Marketing Expectations.** Identify each agency's expectation for marketing and any current objectives and performance measures in place. Different agencies may have different marketing objectives (e.g., "attract new riders" versus "reduce customer service interaction with current users") that may be in conflict when considered as part of a coordinated marketing plan.
  - **Agency Responsibilities and Oversight.** Determine the process for each agency to get marketing plans approved.

For example, staff may be able to simply approve a plan at one agency while another agency may require board- or other policy-level approval. These differences could result in delays to the implementation schedule and might affect the plan itself if different boards have different opinions. Similarly, if one agency does not approve of the plan, the overall coordination schedule may be affected.

It is also important to identify who has the power to make decisions once the marketing plan is implemented. For example, will it be necessary for a multiagency committee to approve every graphic, all text changes, each phone number, and so forth?

- **Agency Identity.** Determine how the individual agencies' images will or will not be affected and how the agencies can keep their own identities overall while still coordinating.

- **Costs for Marketing.** Determine how the costs for marketing will be divided among the various participating agencies. While some agencies previously may have had robust marketing efforts, other agencies may have had minimal efforts and may not be willing to step up contributions to marketing. Developing a marketing budget is only one element of implementing the coordinated marketing plan.

- **Current Users.** Current users can be taken by surprise when the system with which they are familiar is transformed into a coordinated service. Contact current users about how the coordination effort will benefit them (assuming it will) or why it is necessary to make the coordination changes.

- **Marketing Goals.** Develop goals and objectives for marketing and public information for coordinated transit services. These may reflect any adopted coordination goals. All participating agencies must agree on these goals and objectives.

- **Target Markets.** Based on stakeholder interviews and the assessment of opportunities, identify the target markets. They should be selected and prioritized to meet the goals and objectives (e.g., senior citizens, tourists, children/youth, and social service transportation users). Considering each agency, prior to coordination, may serve very different markets, it may

be necessary to prioritize both short-term and long-term markets to address all needs.

- **Marketing Actions.** Detail the marketing activities required to meet the coordinated transportation service objectives. These might include community open houses, a unified web site, the development of a coordinated marketing brochure, etc.
- **Organization and Responsibility.** Identify which individuals and which agencies will be responsible for implementing the marketing actions for a coordinated service.

Considerations

When Is Public Support Needed? There are three key stages when marketing is essential and public support is advantageous. First, transit and transportation providers beginning the process of coordinating their services will need public support as they undertake the coordination effort. Many current users and stakeholders will have strong opinions, and it will be useful to gather information from them and to provide useful information about the process and milestones to them.

Second, once implementation of the coordinated service is underway, there may be some growing pains while the coordinating agencies and providers adjust their services to meet the new objectives of the coordination effort. Providing comprehensive information and good customer service will help reduce user disenchantment and keep political leaders satisfied with the coordination effort.

Finally, once the services are fully coordinated, maintaining good contact with users, agencies, and the public is important to ensure community visibility and to establish a positive identity for the coordinated services.

The advantage of marketing coordination is the potential to provide more information with fewer resources.

How Much Should Be Budgeted for Marketing? Some agencies have no funds dedicated to marketing and public information. Others may set aside 5 percent or more of their budget for marketing and outreach. A rule of thumb often mentioned by transit providers is that marketing and public information resources should represent at least 2 percent of total expenses. As an initial marketing "push" as part of the coordination process, marketing costs in the first year can be much higher than in subsequent years. All agencies working together to coordinate their services must determine how much they can afford to dedicate to marketing.

The advantage of marketing coordination is the potential to provide more information with fewer resources because the various agencies are working to reduce duplicative efforts. In addition, smaller agencies that were previously unable to develop informational materials or provide certain marketing resources benefit from the experience of and collaborative process with larger coordinating agencies.

Examples

Merced County, California, (see Chapter 8) provides an example of a consolidated system under which several different transit providers now contribute to the operation of a single system. What were once several transit system names, logos, and identities is now a single system with one county map and brochure and a uniform logo.

Southern Illinois's RIDES system, in its efforts to build partnerships, marketed to social service agencies, creating a brochure to encourage them to join the coordinated service rather than manage their own. RIDES also advertised through brochures, television, radio, and newspaper advertisements to overcome misconceptions that the service was for seniors only.

In Kern County, California, a single brochure developed in 1997 by the regional transit system was marketed to users of the county system, but included local contacts and service area information for the various independent operators.

Resources

A Handbook: Integrating Market Research into Transit Management, TCRP Report 37. Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board (Northwest Research Group, Inc.), 1998.

American Marketing Association Web site http://www.marketingpower.com.

The Bus: Merced County Transit Web site http://www.mercedrides.com/Transit_Info/thebus.htm.

Transit Marketing and Fare Structure. Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board, 1985.

Transit Marketing. Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board Commission on Sociotechnical Systems, 1976.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Description

Transit operators routinely monitor performance measures in order to determine how well riders are being served, how efficiently service is being provided, and whether improvements are needed. Key types of data that operators collect to monitor the service include

See Accounting and Financial Management heading in this toolkit for cost components.

- Operating costs—all expenses incurred to operate the system, such as drivers' wages, fuel, maintenance, administration, and marketing;
- Vehicle service hours—the hours the vehicle is available to carry fare-paying passengers;
- Vehicle service miles—the number of miles the vehicle travels during a vehicle service hour;
- Ridership—the number of passengers on each route or route segment during a vehicle service hour;
- Adherence to schedule—the percentage of time the vehicle is on time to pick up passengers; and
- Farebox ratio—the percentage contributed by the fares to the total operating cost.

Such data are used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. This is accomplished by comparing the results of the data collection with the goals or standards set by the agency. For example, the agency will want to know how cost-effective the service is by comparing the ratio of the farebox revenues to the cost of providing the service. Another example is using data on ridership to decide whether additional buses are needed to relieve overcrowding or whether the service should be rerouted to capture more riders.

Relevance to Coordination

When several agencies join together to provide a new service or to coordinate existing services, the expectations may vary according to each agency's purpose. The data that a transit agency normally collects to monitor and evaluate performance may need to be supplemented or negotiated to meet the goals of the coordinated project. For example,

the most important data to a social service agency may be trip length to ensure that its clients using dial-a-ride are not on the bus too long. On the other hand, the transit operator will want to know the cost-effectiveness of the trip by monitoring the number of people riding the bus at the same time. Although these two measures are not mutually exclusive, the two agencies may need to negotiate a common understanding of how the two measures will be interpreted to conclude whether or not the coordinated service is successful. All stakeholders in a project need to agree on the measures used and how these measures support the overall goals of the project.

All stakeholders in a project need to agree on the measures used and how these measures support the overall goals of the project.

Service monitoring is also key for determining whether the participating agencies are achieving the benefits that were expected from coordination. Once the performance measures have been agreed on, a system must be set up to track the performance and compare it to the goals or standards set by the project's stakeholders. This means that the transit operator will need to collect information and share it with the stakeholders to compare the performance measures to the goals and to determine if corrective actions are needed where performance falls short.

Stakeholders should all have a clear understanding of the definition of each measurement used to evaluate the project's goals. In the case of the performance measures used by the transit industry, operators may need to clarify how vehicle hours and passenger trips are measured. Stakeholders from other industries will need to understand how driver breaks, deadheading, and pickup and dropoff times are considered. Without such explanations, stakeholders may misinterpret the data, creating suspicion about their transit partners instead of trust. Similarly, transit operators may need education in the culture and acronyms of partner agencies in order to understand the evaluation mechanisms they use.

Stakeholders should have a clear understanding of the project's goals.

Methods

Quantification: Table 8 (Burkhardt et al., 2003) outlines potential coordinated transportation benefits that stakeholders may consider as project goals when setting up their monitoring and evaluation program. For example, stakeholders may set a goal to lower the total number of transportation providers and increase the number of agencies purchasing transportation. Most of the goals (see "Desired or Expected Change" in Table 8) can be measured quantitatively—that is by counting whether the number of transportation providers is lower, whether the hours of service have been expanded, whether the number of funding sources is higher, or what the number is of passenger trips per vehicle mile.

Table 8:
POTENTIAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Factor	*Desired or Expected Change*
SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS (INPUTS)	
Number of transportation providers	Lower
Number of agencies purchasing transportation	Higher
Number of vehicles	Lower
Number of drivers	Lower
Part-time/full-time driver ratio	Lower
Average hourly driver wage	Higher
Total driver wages	Lower
Level and quality of driver training	Higher
Hours when service is provided each day	Expanded
Days when service is provided each week	Expanded
Vehicle hours of service	May be lower
Vehicle miles of service	May be lower
Total service area	Expanded
Number of persons who can get services	Expanded
Joint purchasing	More frequent
Joint dispatching of agency-owned vehicles	More frequent
Centralized oversight and management	More frequent
Level of route duplication	Lower
Number of funding sources	Higher
Total transportation funding	Higher
One central community information source	More frequent
Segregated client types	Less frequent
Limited trip purposes	Less frequent
Community-wide transportation perspective	More frequent
Time spent in meetings	Higher
Level of planning processes	Higher

Table 8: (continued)
POTENTIAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Factor	*Desired or Expected Change*
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	
Number of passenger trips	Higher
Number of passenger trips per service area population	Higher
Passenger trips per vehicle mile	Higher
Passenger trips per vehicle hour	Higher
Number of driver hours per passenger trip	Lower
Number of admin staff hours per passenger trip	Lower
Cost per vehicle hour	Lower
Cost per vehicle mile	Lower
Cost per passenger trip	Lower
Community benefits:	
Economic activity	Higher
Economic growth	Higher
Nursing home admissions per 1,000 population	Lower
SERVICE ATTRIBUTE ASSESSMENTS	
Acceptability	Greater
Accessibility	Greater
Adaptability	Greater
Affordability	Greater
Availability	Greater
USERS' OVERALL SERVICE ASSESSMENTS	
Alternative travel options	Greater
Ratings of transportation services	More Positive
Outcomes:	
Independence	Increased
Security	Increased
Mobility	Increased
Isolation	Decreased

There are many ways to evaluate how service can be affected.

Extrapolation of data: Some of the measurements will need to be extrapolated from other quantifiable data. "Level and quality of driver training," for instance, can be derived from other data, such as the number of drivers who pass state tests after training, fewer customer complaints about drivers, and a reduction in accidents. However, care must be taken to ensure that the extrapolation is valid and credible. Simply attributing higher economic activity to a new transit service in an area would be too much of a stretch to be believable without some other supporting data, for example. In this case, before and after customer counts, surveys of customers and businesses in the area, business sales and income records, and records of tax revenues might be other ways to measure how bus service affected economic activity.

Surveys: Surveys are a good evaluation tool to measure achievement in areas that cannot be easily quantified. However, a disadvantage is the need to create a new instrument over and above the evaluation measurements used during the general course of business. Another disadvantage is the cost of distribution, collection, and tabulation of surveys. Yet, other than relying on word-of-mouth or the number of customer complaints, a survey is the best way to measure users' satisfaction and overall assessment of the service. Surveys of businesses could also be used to determine, albeit subjectively, whether a new transit service increased economic activity in an area.

For this type of analysis, a useful reference may be "TCRP Report 34: Assessment of the Economic Impacts of Rural Public Transportation."

Documentation: To monitor and evaluate the success of the project may require creativity in developing satisfactory performance measures. For example, to determine whether there is more frequent "centralized oversight and management" or a higher "level of planning process" may require initiating new reports that document efforts. This documentation can consist of reports summarizing data for the stakeholders or board of directors, minutes of meetings, and products, such as a strategic plan.

Considerations

For a detailed discussion of these characteristics, consult "TCRP Report 88: A Guidebook for Developing a Transit Performance-Measurement System"

Those involved in a coordinated project should agree, before the project gets implemented, how they will measure and evaluate the project's success and decide whether or not it should be continued. After implementation, the evaluation methodology can be re-visited to determine whether the information is forthcoming and whether the methodology should be modified. In selecting the evaluation tools, stakeholders should keep in mind the following key characteristics of an effective performance measurement system:

- ✦ Stakeholder acceptance,
- ✦ Linkage to agency and community goals,
- ✦ Clarity,
- ✦ Reliability and credibility,
- ✦ Variety of measures,
- ✦ Number of measures,
- ✦ Level of detail,
- ✦ Flexibility,
- ✦ Realism of goals and targets,
- ✦ Timeliness, and
- ✦ Integration into agency decision-making.

Examples

Examples of the types of monitoring transit agencies have conducted for evaluation purposes are mentioned in the following case studies in Chapter 8: (1) Huron County Transit in Ohio and Matanuska-Susitna Community Transit in Alaska have **quantified** a significant increase in the number of trips due to coordination; (2) the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency **extrapolates** the benefits of driver training by citing a significant reduction in insurance premiums; and RIDES in Southern Illinois **extrapolates** the economic benefit of transit to the community by **quantifying** the wages of former welfare recipients; (3)Bay METRO in Michigan and UCATS in Ohio have conducted customer satisfaction **surveys**, which identified successful coordination projects; and (4) Ride Connection in Oregon **documents** its coordination in a consolidated capital application for vehicles.

Resources

Burkhardt, Hedrick, and McGavock, *Assessment of the Economic Impacts of Rural Public Transportation*, *TCRP Report 34*, 1998. http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_34.pdf.

Burkhardt, Koffman, and Murray, *Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services, TCRP Report 91*, 2003.

Cambridge Systematics, *Measuring and Valuing Transit Benefits and Disbenefits, TCRP Report 20*, 1996. http://www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf/web/TCRP_Reports.

Kittelson & Associates, *A Guidebook for Developing a Transit Performance-Measurement System, TCRP Report 88*, 2003. http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_report_88/intro.pdf.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Description

Assessing needs includes gathering necessary information to determine (1) the transportation resources available in the community, (2) the needs for transportation, (3) what deficiencies exist when comparing needs and resources, (4) which existing deficiencies need to be addressed, and (5) what kinds of changes may address those deficiencies. This information may include the extent and types of trips needing to be served, as well as organizational or management needs, such as reducing confusion and duplication or improving client access.

Relevance to Coordination

To plan for and implement coordinated transportation services effectively, it is necessary to know the resources, both physical and financial, that the participating agencies will have available for the delivery of coordinated transportation services. In the case of physical resources, it is necessary to know vehicle size, configuration, accessibility features, age, mileage, condition, original cost, sources of funds for purchase, and so forth. In the case of financial resources, it is necessary to know whether funds are available for operating or capital purposes or both, the amount of funding available, matching share requirements, reporting requirements, limitations on uses of specific funds, and other relevant limitations (if any).

Identify the physical and financial resources available.

Convincing organizations to coordinate their services requires determining what needs or issues the coordination arrangement will respond to. These needs may include trips that cannot currently be served, reducing confusion on the part of clients, eliminating wasteful duplication of administrative effort, making more efficient use of vehicles, or increasing access to funding. Given that coordination generally involves some loss of control on the part of participating agencies, it is important to determine whether or not real needs can be addressed by the coordination arrangement. Learning in detail about these needs is crucial to creating meaningful and lasting coordination. Needs assessment itself is often a coordinated activity.

Identifying **real needs** is crucial to creating meaningful and lasting coordination.

Methods

Relevant needs assessment methods include stakeholder interviews; facilitated group meetings or interviews; surveys of providers, users, and the general public; analysis of data using statistical analysis tools, maps, and geographic information systems; and demand estimation.

Use structured interviews (as provided in Appendix A) to determine what topics need to be explored.

Stakeholder Interviews: The needs assessment process for coordination often begins with interviewing key stakeholders and leaders. One guidebook suggests that a comprehensive process will typically involve 15 to 30 such people who can help and further suggests that such interviews are best conducted face to face. Depending on the circumstances, key stakeholders may include individuals and groups that advocate for older adults, people with disabilities, and people living in poverty; public transportation operators; local government, schools, and colleges; members of the business community such as large employers; charitable organizations and religious institutions; and labor union representatives. A good technique to use is structured interviews that follow a written outline, ensuring that all key topics are covered. Developing a written interview guide also provides an opportunity to review, with a preliminary group of people, what topics need to be explored.

Facilitated Meetings: Group interviews and public meetings also provide a good way to explore needs. Although some participants may express themselves more openly in private, the group setting allows for more creativity. Formal facilitation by a neutral party can help in reaching a consensus about what coordination needs exist. A related idea is the focus group, which is appropriate where attitudes and priorities of the general public or system users need to be explored.

Provider Surveys: Written surveys of transportation providers can be useful where there are large numbers of potential participants in coordination. Provider surveys typically aim to include as many potential participants in a coordination scheme as possible. Typical information produced by this type of survey includes numbers and types of vehicles, numbers and types of clients carried or trips made, areas served, and perceived needs. In rural areas with fewer potential partners, similar information may be collected through other means. Information on physical resources should include the vehicles, other equipment, and technology that existing agencies have in place for their

separate services. Financial resources mean the sources of funding from local, state, Federal, and private sources that are available to support the operating and capital expenses of the coordinated transportation system.

Public or Rider Surveys: Surveys of the larger public, transit riders, or human service agency clients can provide quantitative evidence of needs. If this information is to be convincing and useful, however, these surveys need to be conducted using sound statistical methods, random sampling, and the largest possible sample sizes. In rural areas, the most cost-effective method of conducting such surveys is often by distributing surveys on board vehicles. If client lists are available, mailing and telephone surveying can be even more cost-effective and can allow for more flexibility in the types and numbers of questions that can be asked.

Surveys need to be conducted using sound statistical methods

Data Analysis: Needs information is most valuable if it can be quantified and displayed in forms that are immediately understood, dramatic, and useful for planning solutions. Typical sources of data include the U.S. Census; population projections and analysis by metropolitan planning agencies; client and case lists from human and social service agencies; and records of actual transportation provided (e.g., the locations most commonly served by demand-responsive transportation providers). One particularly effectively tool for displaying and analyzing data is a Geographic Information System (GIS). A GIS is a computer program that allows a wide variety of information to be displayed on maps and analyzed on the basis of location (e.g., transit routes and client files can be analyzed together to determine how well the transit routes serve a particular set of clients). GIS tools are not always within the reach of small, nonprofit agencies, but most counties, transit systems, and cities now have staff with GIS skills.

Demand Estimation: If a new or improved coordinated transportation service is being proposed, one way to measure the "need" for such a service is to estimate the number of people who would use it, known in planning terms as the "demand for the service." Rural demand estimation is an imprecise art, given that the large data sets and elaborate models used for metropolitan area planning commonly are not available or appropriate. However, simple, shortcut methods that can be applied with a hand calculator or spreadsheet and commonly available data have been developed and are documented in published reports.

For more information, see the list of Resources below

Examples

Case studies in Chapter 8 illustrate examples of several types of needs assessment:

- The Transportation Network in Wasco County, Oregon, resulted from a countywide social service needs assessment study, which included **stakeholder interviews**.
- **Provider surveys** were employed in developing Ride Solution in Western Indiana.
- **Surveys of the public** were distributed by the Erie County Health Department in Ohio to document the need for coordination between Huron County Transit and transit in Sandusky County.
- The Chief Executive Officer of RIDES in Southern Illinois **facilitated meetings** to promote coordination among agencies.

Resources

Burkhardt, Hamby, MacDorman, and McCollom, *Comprehensive Financial Management Guidelines for Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Providers*, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Multi-State Technical Assistance Program, September 1992.

Case Studies of People for People and DARTS in *TCRP Report 91*, *Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services*, 2003.

Creative Action, Inc., *Coordinating Transportation Services: Local Collaboration and Decision-Making: A "How-to" Manual for Planning and Implementation*, Project Action, Washington DC. Available at http://projectaction.easterseals.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_doclibe_coordandoutreach

Establishing Cost Sharing Agreements, in Lyons and vanderWilden, *Innovative State And Local Planning For Coordinated Transportation,* February 2002 at http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/islptc/establish.html.

Florida Rate Setting Guidelines in *Coordinated Transportation Contracting Instructions,* Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, July 2002, at http://www11.myflorida.com/ctd/.

Koffman, D. "Appropriate Cost-Sharing for Paratransit," in *Transportation Research Record 1463*, Transportation Research Board, Washington DC, 1994.

Koffman, D., and Lewis, D. "Forecasting Demand for Paratransit Required by the Americans with Disabilities Act," in *Transportation Research Record 1571*, Transportation Research Board, Washington DC, 1997.

Multisystems, Inc. et al., *Using Geographic Information Systems for Welfare to Work Transportation Planning and Service Delivery*, *TCRP Report 60*, 2000 Transportation Research Board, Washington DC. Available at http://www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf/web/TCRP_Reports.

SG Associates et al., *Workbook for Estimating Demand for Rural Passenger Transportation*, *TCRP Report 3*, 1995 Transportation Research Board, Washington DC. Available at http://www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf/web/TCRP_Reports.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Description

Coordination begins with planning. Coordinating transportation services takes careful, deliberate, proactive planning. Such planning requires thoroughness, comprehensiveness, and including representatives of the agencies setting out to coordinate or to modify how coordination has been taking place. How this planning takes place is important. The process needs to be managed by a steering committee or task force of interested parties. Further, the process works best with defined stages where roles and responsibilities among the agencies and other parties involved in the planning are defined. Planning is the process by which local officials with a stake in successful transportation services come together to determine how the community's needs can best be met and how the skills and resources available to them can best be used to this purpose.

Methods

The planning process has several well-defined steps or stages, which have been described variously in several transportation coordination handbooks. The coordination literature is not the only place where applicable planning processes have been described. The welfare reform movement provided new opportunities for stakeholders in local areas to come together in different ways to address transportation issues and find solutions. As in coordinating transportation generally, the need to implement new welfare programs focused on getting people to jobs and job training brought transportation into focus and required that local agencies work together in new and different ways. In summary, though, the steps can be described as follows:

- Organization—Form a task force or steering committee and decide to move forward.
- Existing Conditions—Understand issues, needs, and circumstances and defining local conditions.
- Focus, Consensus, and Direction—Agree on the problem, develop consensus, and set direction.
- Alternatives—Develop and evaluate alternative coordination strategies.

- ✦ Action Plans—Formulate action plans and implement coordinated transportation services.
- ✦ Monitoring and Review—Review and evaluate progress.

Whenever a need to engage in new ventures or a need to change scope or direction in an endeavor presents itself, planning is the key to execution.

Organization: An organizational structure is essential to early progress and eventual success. A task force or steering committee, a group of manageable size, must be organized to oversee and direct the planning process. The group needs to decide who should be involved and set an agenda and timetable. Leadership is equally important. Someone needs to be in charge. In the early stages, leadership needs to focus on being inclusive rather than directive.

Existing Conditions: Existing conditions include the views of key stakeholders (those who have a serious interest and/or role to play in the outcome of the planning); surveys to gauge interest in participating in coordination efforts, understand unmet needs, and assemble information on transportation programs to be included in coordination; vehicles and other physical resources available; and levels and sources of funding available.

Focus, Consensus, and Direction: Focus defines the problem(s) that will be addressed. Consensus is the process of agreeing on the basis and framework for moving forward. Direction is the setting of goals and objectives that will guide the development of overall strategies and completion of a detailed service plan and form the basis for measuring progress in implementing a plan.

Alternatives: Alternatives are developed so that the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to addressing needs and solving problems can be considered and evaluated before a decision on a specific approach is made. Key elements in coordination alternatives include the coordination approach to be taken, organizational and administrative options, service delivery choices, responsibility for functional activities, and budgeting and financial management.

Action Plans: Action plans include organizational structure and management; service development, delivery, and pricing; capital facilities and equipment; annual and projected operating budget; and marketing and public relations program.

Monitoring and Review: Progress is measured and reviewed against objectives to assess results in all areas—number, type, and other trip characteristics; revenues and expenses; customer satisfaction (complaints); and inter-agency relations. Levels of activity and performance measures are reviewed. Monthly and quarterly reviews are conducted, with a more detailed review performed quarterly.

Considerations

Agencies with funding and monitoring responsibilities should be kept informed of progress and implementation relative to an established timeline for implementation.

There are likely to be various levels of interest in the process of planning for coordinated transportation services. First, a strong interest and need for involvement exists for the agencies that will be coordinating services. Other local officials who may have various responsibilities need to be kept informed periodically. Agencies that have not yet decided to participate in the coordination of transportation services need to be kept informed of progress. Agencies with funding and monitoring responsibilities should be kept informed of progress and implementation relative to an established timeline for implementation.

Examples

In Mahoning County, Ohio, the process to develop coordination services included development of a written service plan. The plan represents the written statement of the consensus decisions that were reached on action plans, key steps, and milestones. Further, the planning document was used by the county commissioners as the basis for official action that endorsed moving forward by using the plan as the basis for future action, including the local regional transit authority (RTA) being the lead agency in moving forward.

Resources

A Guide for Implementing Coordinating Transportation Systems, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

Creative Action, Inc., *Coordinating Transportation Services: Local Collaboration and Decision-Making: A "How-to" Manual for Planning and Implementation*, Project Action, Washington DC. Available at http://projectaction.easter-seals.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_doclibe_coordandoutreach

Planning Guidelines for Coordinating State and Local Specialized Transportation Services at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/guide

The planning process in *TCRP Report 64: Guidebook for Developing Welfare-to-Work Transportation Services*.

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR COORDINATION

Description

Agencies involved in a coordinated effort must alter the interests of their institutional and governance structure to take into account the interests of the other agencies involved. In order to do so, agencies need a way to guide the coordinated system so that it continues to reflect the common interests of the participants. Planning Guidelines for Coordinating State and Local Specialized Transportation Services defines Cooperation, Coordination, and Consolidation as points along a continuum of organizational working relationships. The governance structure chosen for a particular community would depend on where along this continuum the participating agencies are in their coordination efforts.

Agencies involved in a coordinated effort must take into account the interests of the other agencies involved

Cooperation: Working together in some loose association, perhaps focusing primarily on information sharing, in which all agencies retain their separate identities and authorities, including control over the vehicles they own.

Coordination: Joint decisions and actions of a group of agencies with formal arrangements to provide for the management of the resources of a distinct system.

Consolidation: Vesting all operational authority in one agency that then provides services according to purchase of service agreements or other contractual relationships.

Methods

The organizational structures listed here vary in the involvement required by individual agencies. Although other organizational variations undoubtedly exist; this discussion provides an overview of the options available to increase coordination. In order to avoid misunderstandings, the parties to the agreement should confirm their involvement by a memorandum of understanding or other such formal document.

Inter-agency agreements: Two or more agencies agree to share resources. One example could be an agreement to share transfer revenues among operators in order to create a seamless transportation system from the rider's perspective. Another example might be a purchase-of-service contract between a social service agency and a transit operator. These agreements would not involve changes in the governing structure of the participating agencies. However, the contract can provide a clear guide for governance between the two agencies, because it lays out responsibilities. Inter-agency agreements are closest to cooperation on the continuum of relationships described above.

Consortium or Coordinating Council: Staff responsibilities for a project are shared so that no one agency needs to carry the entire burden. The lead agency role and specific tasks can be rotated among the members. For example, a group of agencies might get together to develop and implement a joint marketing program. The internal governance of each agency would remain unchanged. A formal agreement or memorandum of understanding may be written to outline the purpose of the consortium and the responsibilities of each participant. A consortium is an example of coordination on the continuum of working relationships.

Brokerage: Agencies pool funding to contract with an outside vendor or with one of the member agencies to perform functions on behalf of all participating agencies. For example, social service providers may pay one of the participating members to handle the scheduling and dispatching for all their vehicles. Each agency would give control of certain of its functions to the brokerage, while retaining internal control of its overall organization. An agreement signed by each member agency would set out the terms and funding for the brokerage. A brokerage is an example of coordination moving toward partial consolidation on the continuum of working relationships.

Joint Powers Authority (JPA): Agencies join together to form an organization to provide certain transportation services. Each agency has a representative on a new governing board. The governing boards of the existing agencies may continue to oversee other functions of their agencies, but they transfer the responsibility for specific transportation services to the JPA. For example, transit operators may form a JPA with a separate board to provide ADA services but may retain their existing boards to govern the individual fixed-route systems. Or cities may form a JPA in order to give up their individual transit systems for a subregional system, while maintaining all other responsibilities of a

See Appendices for model Joint Powers Agreements.

city. A JPA is an example of consolidation on the continuum of working relationships.

Considerations

Agencies will need to consider several issues and their effects.

Before entering into an agreement, agencies will need to consider several issues and how they affect their own governance structures. The most obvious issue is how to share the funding of the project. For example, should agencies split costs based on population, actual number of riders, mileage of the bus within each jurisdiction, employment sites that benefit from out-of-jurisdiction labor force, or some formula that combines various factors? The same types of issues arise in decision-making—should voting be based on population, percentage of contributed funding, equality among independent jurisdictions, or simple consensus? Other considerations may include restrictions on spending the agency's money for services outside its service area; potential diminishing of local identity; effects on the agency's ability to carry out its other services; differences in labor contracts, rules, and salaries; differences in types and ages of populations served; ability to involve the right participants in the agreement; and support within the community for change. A key issue is whether the leadership exists from a person or a group with the necessary commitment to tackle these thorny problems.

Examples

Case studies in Chapter 8 showcase examples of the types of governance models:

- Mason County, Washington, illustrates **inter-agency agreements** between a transit operator and school district;
- Butte County, California, transit operators turned down consolidation in favor of a loose **consortium** to coordinate fares, marketing, transfers, and schedule consistency;
- Greene Coordinated Agency Transportation System (CATS) in Ohio is a transportation **broker** for 51 participating agencies; and
- Merced County Transit, California, is a consolidated system adopted by a **JPA** between the county and six cities.

Resources

A Guide for Implementing Coordinating Transportation Systems, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

Planning Guidelines for Coordinating State and Local Specialized Transportation Services at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/guide

STRATEGIC DIRECTION—STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Description

Coordinating transportation services represents strategic change.

Strategic direction involves getting away from the details of a problem or issue and taking a fresh look at the environment within which the problem or issue exists. It requires (1) careful thinking about what is to be accomplished and (2) an open process to develop a more complete and in-depth understanding of problem and issues and how to move forward in solving problems and dealing with issues. A decision to coordinate or consider coordinating transportation services represents strategic change (i.e., organizing and delivering transportation services in a significantly different way).

Relevance to Coordination

The desire to coordinate transportation services typically follows from a key person or small group of people deciding that the current way of providing transportation services is not working well. Opportunities are perceived to be present for agencies to work together to improve and/or expand transportation services to agency clients. This may also be seen as an opportunity to introduce or expand services to the general public as well.

Methods

Methods include stakeholder interviews, facilitated workshops, steering committees, working groups, and task forces. Developing strategic direction involves taking an open and unbiased look at existing transportation services in an attempt to discover options for improving them.

Strategic thinking starts with an investigation of strengths and weaknesses.

Strategic thinking starts with an investigation of the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of the internal environment within which transportation services are provided. An easy way to think about the "internal environment" is to view it as the environment over which the participants have some control, such as what kind of service to deliver, how to coordinate, and what kinds of vehicles to buy.

It also includes looking honestly at the external environment that influences how local decisions about transportation services are made. In other words, what are the **opportunities** that may be available and the **threats** that may exist to improving transportation services? An easy way to think about the "external environment" is to view it as the environment over which the participants have little or no control. It is the part of the environment they must accept and deal with at a given point in time. Examples would include funding programs defined at the Federal or state level, levels of funding that may be available by some pre-determined formula, and rules and regulations for program implementation. Depending on what is happening in the external environment, opportunities and threats emerge as external actions are taken. Good examples are the opportunities for building relationships and improving and re-making transportation services that presented themselves as a result of welfare reform legislation and program implementation that began in the late 1990s.

The first step is typically to conduct stakeholder interviews. These are personal interviews best conducted in person, at either a central location or at a stakeholder's office. Confidentiality is very important to enable stakeholders to share their views of issues and problems freely. Personal interviews enable stakeholders to make sure that their views are included in the discussion. Following completion of these interviews, it is wise to report back, in written form, to the steering committee or group that is organizing and managing coordination efforts, so that they can begin to review the results of the interviews.

Confidentiality is very important in obtaining frank responses.

The next step, which is crucial to the continued, incremental development of a plan for coordination and its implementation, is to bring key stakeholders together to discuss issues and problems, potential solutions, and an agreement on how to proceed. Generally, starting with a creative, brainstorming approach is recommended because brainstorming is founded on the premise that all ideas are good. The objective is to enable all participants to express their ideas and to feel comfortable in doing so; decisions about priorities and specific actions come later. The brainstorming works best in a workshop format, on neutral ground. Typically, a full day is required.

Bring key stakeholders together.

Considerations

Consensus results from an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. However, participants must recognize that reaching consensus includes divergent opinions and conflicting views and that this situation is okay. With a properly facilitated discussion (in

a workshop setting), the differences and disagreements will be expressed. Some consensus will be established, but some issues may have to be left to be resolved another day. In addition to reaching consensus, a focus on strategic direction will also provide a list of issues or concerns about which consensus cannot be reached. Maintaining the neutrality of discussions at this point is important. The focus should be on enabling and encouraging participants to express their views. One or several strong advocates for a particular direction at this time may polarize thought and positions and make progress more difficult.

Examples

In Portage County, Ohio, workshops with the board of trustees of the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority were conducted. An early focus on strategic direction, including an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, resulted in a consensus that the transit authority needed to seek voter support for a sales tax so that an acceptable level of public transportation services could be offered. In Youngstown, Ohio, a series of workshops and facilitated steering committee meetings resulted in the development and adoption by county commissioners of a service plan for countywide coordination of transportation services. Development of consensus on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats resulted in consensus that coordinated transportation services should be implemented under the umbrella of the Mahoning County Commissioners, with the Western Reserve Transit Authority being the lead agency in implementing coordinated transportation services.

Resources

A Guide for Implementing Coordinating Transportation Systems, 1997, Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Public Transportation. Available at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/default.htm.

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TECHNOLOGY

Description

Some technologies offer real promise to rural and small urban transportation operators.

New technology is a "hot topic" in transportation circles. Some technologies offer real promise to rural and small urban transportation operators. Scheduling, vehicle location, fare payment, billing, maintenance, and passenger information functions all could be aided by one or more forms of technology.

The technologies that most often will yield significant benefits to rural transportation agencies are as follows:

- ✦ Fleet Management, including
  - – Communications systems,
  - – Geographic information systems (GIS),
  - – Automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems, and
  - – Operations software;
- ✦ Systems Management, including
  - – Financial management and accounting software;
- ✦ Traveler Information, including
  - – Pre-trip information systems,
  - – In-terminal/wayside information systems,
  - – In-vehicle information systems,
  - – Multimodal traveler information systems,
  - – Electronic fare payment, and
  - – Other technologies, such as automated service coordination.

The following technologies most often yield the most significant benefits:

- ✦ **Communications systems and services**, particularly those that provide real-time communication between vehicle operators and

dispatchers, can improve operational efficiency. Further, there can be an improvement in driver performance as a result of improved and available information on travel conditions and other factors.

- AVL systems can
  - Improve operational efficiency,
  - Improve quality of service,
  - Improve use of resources,
  - Improve service effectiveness, and
  - Provide better modal integration.
- **Operations software**, which includes automated scheduling and dispatching systems, can
  - Improve operational efficiency;
  - Increase the number of vehicle trips;
  - Improve the use of resources;
  - Improve operational effectiveness;
  - Increase ridership;
  - Provide better modal, transit agency, and service integration;
  - Increase mobility for transit customers;
  - More readily accept service modifications; and
  - Create better working conditions for transit agency personnel.
- **Automated service coordination,** which involves the integration and coordination of transportation services offered by multiple providers, can improve operational efficiency and effectiveness; provide better modal, transit operator, and service integration; and increase ridership.
- **Systems management:** Computer-aided accounting programs are particularly applicable to reporting to the multiple funding sources, which are often stitched together by entrepreneurial rural transit operators to obtain sufficient funds to make the entire operation viable. Possibilities for intelligent transit

management at both the state and local levels will be greatly enhanced by software that can describe current performance in depth and compare it with previous operations of the same system and current operations of other systems. With this added level of detail, system managers can make better operational decisions, and state program managers can better decide how to distribute their funds and technical assistance. The computer technology to make this happen is available now, but is not in widespread application.

The effectiveness of any technology is directly related to the type of transit service to which it is being applied.

It is important to remember that the effectiveness of any technology is directly related to the type of transit service to which it is being applied. In rural transit settings, often several types of service must be considered. For example, technologies that work best in a system that has deviated routes may not provide the same operational and customer-related improvements as those that work in a traditional fixed-route environment.

Another issue is the degree to which "off-the-shelf" technology can be directly applied to rural and small urban transportation services. Some rural systems are considering the use of technologies originally developed for large urban transit environments. Most of these technologies have not, until very recently, handled the specific requirements of paratransit. Most would not be able to handle the particular requirements of rural and small urban transit without considerable customization, which can be very costly.

Table 9 shows a few examples of how new technologies could provide substantial assistance to coordinated rural transportation systems.

Table 9:
POTENTIAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TECHNOLOGIES AND PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY

New technologies	*What they do*	*Expected results*
electronic payments	faster and more accurate billing; allows cost-sharing options	additional system revenue; more riders
automatic vehicle locators	pinpoints equipment; assists in schedule adherence; adds to safety in remote areas	greater vehicle utilization; lower capital costs
automated dispatching and routing	optimizes trip assignments	greater vehicle utilization; lower capital costs
automated accounting and billing	provides greater service details; speeds processing	speeds system cash flow; increases accountability and credibility
swipe card technology	eliminates need for cash or paper verification of rides	Speeds boarding process, allowing better schedule adherence; better validation of rides

Relevance to Coordination

To be relevant to coordinated transportation operations, a technology should

- ✦ Increase the number of trips taken on the system,
- ✦ Lower the system's operating costs, or
- ✦ Increase the system's revenues.

The best technologies for coordinated rural transportation services are those that **benefit people and communities by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of transportation services.** Seen in this light, technology is recognized as **only one of several important tools** for serving the needs of riders and achieving positive results.

Technologies that offer the following kinds of **service innovations** are worth considering:

- ✦ Creating service types that are more responsive to individual travel needs by providing "just-in-time" notice of impending vehicle arrival at the rider's home or other location;
- ✦ Designing different payment and cost-sharing options such as
  - – electronic payment;
  - – cost-sharing with merchants, doctors, and agencies;
  - – third party payment options; and
  - – barter arrangements and volunteer banking;
- ✦ Using advanced vehicle designs (e.g., low-floor vehicles);
- ✦ Implementing advanced scheduling, routing, and dispatching procedures (to schedule and re-route vehicles dynamically); and
- ✦ Enhancing communications between headquarters and drivers and between the system and its riders.

Technologies that could **enhance management coordination** include a communitywide travel information data center (including weather data, GIS, and address matching) to serve protective and emergency services as well as transit.

Considerations

Not all technologies can now return sufficient productivity and efficiency increases to justify the effort and expenses now involved in their application. Coordinated rural transportation services should assess the individual components of their services to see which components could be made more efficient or effective by the application of specific technologies and then assess which technologies might provide the necessary assistance.

Regarding the financing of advanced technologies for rural transit operations, some of the key questions are

- ✦ What does it cost to implement (**ALL COSTS**, including capital acquisition, training, operations, and maintenance)?

- ✦ Who pays what portion of the cost? In particular, what portion is paid by the rural transportation system?
- ✦ Who benefits from its implementation? The transportation system? Who else?

These components must be weighed against the effectiveness side of the equation, which is to say, what do these technologies do to make rural public transit operations more productive, more revenue-producing, more effective, and more efficient?

The concept of **sharing the costs of advanced technologies** will be one of the most cost-effective strategies available for rural transit operators. One obvious place to start is in the "command central" operation that would connect the system to its vehicles. As locations in Maryland, Michigan, and Minnesota have conclusively demonstrated, sharing the central office functions of radio communications and dispatching with non-transit functions such as Emergency Medical Services, police, fire, rescue, and highway maintenance can be a huge benefit to all parties. If each of these parties had to establish its own GIS, set up its own radio communications, purchase its own dispatching equipment, and train its own operators, the costs to one particular community would be huge. This is exactly what is happening in many communities, even within the narrower province of specialized and human services transportation. Rural communities need **coordinated transportation services**, not just transit, not just paratransit, not just taxis, not just police cars, and so on. The daunting costs of new technologies might become a potent force to encourage the coordination of services that has sometimes been slow to actually occur.

A wide variety of stakeholders need to be involved in cost-sharing. Obvious parties include all levels of government, technology companies, system operators, and transit system users.

Examples

Some technologies have assisted in making real improvements for rural and small urban transportation systems. Examples include

Rural Nevada: Division of Aging Services (DAS) provided a grant to the Northern Nevada Transit Coalition (NNTC) to develop and implement the use of magnetic swipe cards in several transit operations that serve senior citizens (see *Use of Magnetic Swipe Cards in Transportation in Rural Nevada,* 2003). The primary goal was for NNTC transit operations

to eliminate the need for DAS-eligible clients to sign a paper for a bus ride while still being able to provide verification that the passenger did indeed board the transit vehicle.

This project will purchase and install debit card technology into approximately 50 buses for passengers throughout rural Nevada who are elderly or have disabilities. The technology will (1) allow clients to not have to carry cash in order to make donations, (2) provide better computerized validation of their rides, (3) result in less chance of missing cash, and (4) increase ease of agency reporting.

Passengers are issued personal rider ID cards with the local system logo and their name printed on the card. Encoded data (containing passenger name, ID number, and region code) are stored in three "tracks" or fields on the magnetic strip on the back of the card. Because the cards are encoded with each client's name and personal ID number, the cards are not transferable.

Each of the project sites has portable (handheld) magnetic card readers for each vehicle or route. As the passengers board the vehicle, they swipe their cards in the reader. Their name appears on the screen of the card reader (visible by the driver and the passenger) to verify ID. The data from the card are then stored in the memory of the reader along with the time.

When the day's trips are complete, each card reader is connected to a system computer. The recorded data on the card reader is then uploaded onto the synchronization utility to be matched with the trip. Once the information is imported into the synchronization utility, the client IDs and time stamps are automatically matched with scheduled trip tickets in the SQL Server database. The user can also delete invalid records such as duplicate or accidental swipes. The matched trip tickets are then automatically updated with the actual "On Board" time stamps recorded by the card reader.

Most of the process is handled automatically by the software and is actually very easy for the person at each step of the process. The passengers swipe their cards, the driver verifies the information, and the dispatcher (or office staff) connects the card readers to transfer the data into the system. The entire day's trips for each card reader can be synchronized with the scheduling database in less than a minute or two (depending on the number of trips and unmatched tickets).

Sweetwater, Wyoming: Sweetwater County Transit Authority (STAR), in cooperation with local human service and coordinating agencies, installed a semi-automated dispatching system to assist with the operation of their para-transit service. The dispatching system uses color-coded computer-based maps to identify origins and destinations and route the particular bus. STAR has chosen to disable the fully-automated driver notification features and route the buses via voice instructions. This enables the dispatcher to override the computer system according to the demands of a given situation. For example, if there is a trip request at the edge of a designated zone, the computer will only send a vehicle from that zone to make the pickup, whereas the dispatcher will notice that there is a vehicle in another zone several miles closer to the trip request and dispatch the nearest vehicle.

The dispatching system also allows STAR to track demographic and trip information for every passenger trip and to compile statistics and reports without additional data collection. STAR can, for example, track the number of low-income riders or welfare trips for a given month. This allows STAR to create a detailed analysis of the clientele and to tailor service to meet the needs of this clientele.

With the scheduling efficiency provided by the semi-automated dispatching system, in addition to the planning capabilities offered by the demographic tracking system, STAR has been able to increase productivity without additional vehicles or personnel. According to the former director of the Sweetwater Transit Authority, STAR saw a 400-percent increase in the number of rides provided since the inception of the automated system.

Arrowhead, Minnesota: The Arrowhead region of Minnesota is a rural area that covers 18,000 square miles in the northeastern area of the state. It is characterized by a sparse population and brutal winter weather that lasts from October until August. Rural public transportation in the Arrowhead region involves 3- and 4-hour trips, without radio contact for nearly all of the journey. Major snowstorms could create serious safety concerns among transit officials.

Since October of 1997, the ARCTIC (Advanced Rural Transit Information and Coordination) system has coordinated communication between transit vehicles and the central dispatch facility. Automatic vehicle locator (AVL) systems allow the central facility to track the exact location of transit vehicles. In addition, the automated scheduling system handles reservations and routing for the region's fixed-route, paratransit, and subscription services. The ARCTIC system increases

the safety of drivers and passengers dramatically, because there is constant communication between the vehicle and dispatching center and the location of the vehicle can be tracked. Second, the ARCTIC system permits more passengers to ride the rural transportation services because the reservations can be made in real time. Potential passengers can make their trip decisions based on the immediate weather conditions and then call the dispatching center to find the exact location of the nearest vehicle. Although this will not provide thousands of new riders overnight, it will contribute to the long-term growth of rural paratransit in the Arrowhead region of Minnesota.

The key to the success of the ARCTIC system is the sharing of the technology and resources among state and local agencies. This sharing spreads the cost among the participating groups (i.e., snow plows, state patrol cars, state DOT maintenance vehicles, transit buses, and volunteer-driven vehicles). In addition, sharing creates benefits across the board, which offset the total cost.

Cape Cod, Massachusetts: Cape Cod Transit, acting in conjunction with Bridgewater State College, received an FTA intelligent transportation system (ITS) demonstration grant to implement a computer-aided dispatching (CAD) system, an AVL system, and a SmartCard and mobile data terminal (MDT) system. When the system is completed, all of the hardware and software systems will be connected via a LAN.

Montgomery County, Maryland: (Although not generally thought of as a rural area, Montgomery County has received Section 5311 funds, and their technology ideas should be extremely relevant for at least some rural areas.) The Montgomery County Department of Transportation is implementing a CAD system and AVL system on its buses, along with several ATIS applications. These ITS applications will be part of the county's Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS), which will be one of the most advanced transportation systems in the United States when completed.

The GPS-based AVL system also includes a trunking radio system and on board computers for each vehicle. The AVL system relays vehicle location data to the control center, where they will then be relayed to information centers and kiosks and to the Public Works web site, where potential riders can find the location of the nearest bus. The AVL system will be linked to the CAD system, which will provide for dynamic routing and scheduling of vehicles. The AVL system will also link with the county's traffic signal control system (located in the same office) which will allow certain buses to receive signal priority at traffic

lights. MCDOT officials believe that schedule adherence will be dramatically improved with the introduction of the AVL and CAD systems, which will then lead to increased ridership. It is still too early to estimate actual benefits.

The key to obtaining the funding for the ATMS system in Montgomery County was the integration of transit with traffic applications. The system was presented as a package deal, designed to manage traffic and transit simultaneously with the ultimate goal of moving people.

Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged: The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged was created in 1989 for the purpose of coordinating special needs transportation in the State of Florida. The Commission serves or advocates for an estimated 5.4 million transportation-disadvantaged Floridians.

The Commission recently received a $200,000 FTA Rural ITS demonstration grant for a project involving multi-county and multi-agency coordination through a CAD system. The Commission selected three systems in rural counties, Flagler, St. John, and Putnam, to participate in this demonstration of electronically coordinated transit service for job training, employment, medical services, rehabilitation, and other special needs. The Commission will also be contracting with Florida A&M University for technical assistance.

Unique features of this project include coordination among agencies that already employ advanced public transit technologies. Putnam County, for example, already uses a GPS-based AVL system for its vehicles. This means that the Commission will have to ensure that the CAD system that is implemented is compatible with the existing systems in the three counties.

Resources

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Kihl, M., Crum, M., and Shinn, D. *Linking Real Time and Location in Scheduling Demand-Responsive Transit*, prepared by Iowa State University for the Iowa Department of Transportation, 1996.

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Use of Magnetic Swipe Cards in Transportation in Rural Nevada, prepared by Mobilitat, Inc. and Gardatek for the Nevada Division of Aging Services, Nevada Department of Transportation, and the Northern Nevada Transit Coalition, 2003.

Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, *Advanced Public Transportation Systems Deployment in the United States*, prepared for FTA's Office of Mobility Innovation, August 1996, Report No. FHWA-JPO-96-0032.

VEHICLE FLEET STATUS AND EVALUATION

Description

Its fleet of vehicles will be the most significant and important capital asset that a coordinated transportation system will have. It is important to periodically review the status of all vehicles in the coordinated system's fleet. This review achieves several objectives, including assessment of the suitability and condition of vehicles that are available, the need for and timing of vehicle replacement on a scheduled basis, and preparation of a capital program and budget. Such a review also helps in assessing which vehicles in a fleet are most appropriate for the services that are provided, gaps in the fleet, and the need for new types of vehicles not currently in the fleet.

Relevance to Coordination

In a coordinated setting, maintaining accurate and timely information on vehicle fleets is important in order for all coordination participants to be confident about the reliability and safety of the coordinated services being provided. Further, especially when setting up a coordinated system, complete and accurate information on all vehicles available for service delivery in relation to service requirements is necessary. Completion of a vehicle fleet inventory is an easy way to get potential coordination participants working together to begin addressing coordination opportunities and issues in their community.

In a coordinated setting, maintaining accurate and timely information on vehicle fleets is important.

Methods

To complete a statement of the status and assessment of vehicles available for coordinated transportation services, create a common form that all participating organizations and other transportation services providers will complete. The form should include the following information for each vehicle:

1. Organization contact information: name, mailing address, phone, fax, contact person, and email address; and
2. General fleet characteristics: breakdown of vehicles by size range, seated passenger capacity, and wheelchair capacity.

For each vehicle, collect the following information: manufacturer, model, year; purchase price; sources of funding (local, state, federal);

odometer reading and date of reading; type of vehicle (automobile, van, light transit, transit); physical length of vehicle; seating capacity-seated and wheelchair; rating of operating condition (excellent, good, fair, poor); year of scheduled replacement; and other features (two-way radio, farebox, IT features, etc.).

Considerations

Conducting a vehicle fleet inventory can be completed as a stand-alone project or it can be incorporated into a broader survey of organization transportation services and capabilities.

Conducting a vehicle fleet inventory can be completed as a stand-alone project or it can be incorporated into a broader survey of organization transportation services and capabilities. The inventory and evaluation provides important information for coordination partners on the size, characteristics, and condition of vehicles available. Broader considerations include knowledge of the use characteristics of the vehicles (days and times of use), the availability of vehicles for sharing among organizations, and opportunities for sale and re-use of older vehicles in lighter duty circumstances and in support of volunteer or small community programs. Some vehicles may no longer be suitable for all-day, daily, high-mileage use, but may still be serviceable for occasional, evening, or weekend use.

Examples

The Council on Aging and Human Services (COAST) in Colfax, Washington, manages its vehicle fleet so that organizations and communities are able to borrow or lease vehicles from COAST. As vehicles are replaced, they are made available for lending or leasing (See Chapter 8, page 320).

Resources

Community Transportation Association of America, Rural Transit Assistance Program, *Vehicle Procurement*, revised 2001, at http://www.ctaa.org/data/rtap_vehicleproc.pdf.

Florida Department of Transportation, Public Transit Office, Florida *Vehicle Procurement Program*, at the University of South Florida, Center for Urban Transportation Research web site, at http://www.cutr.usf.edu/research/fvpp/fvpp2.htm.

Ohio Department of Transportation, *ODOT Vehicle Catalog and Selection Guide,* 1997. See also ODOT's Term Contract Program at http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans/Term_Contracts/2002_03_term_cont.htm.

VOLUNTEERS

Description

Volunteers donate time to organizations or individuals on an informal but regular basis. Many rural communities depend on volunteers to provide trips to persons with special transportation needs or to fulfill other critical roles in coordinated transportation operations. Coordinated rural transportation systems have used volunteers in many roles: as drivers, driver recruiters, driver trainers or supervisors, driver recognition leaders, dispatchers, program marketers, or transportation escorts.

Volunteers can be especially effective in providing highly personalized levels of care for persons who require "arm-in-arm" assistance in and out of buildings. Some volunteers may even escort individuals through extensive batteries of medical tests or provide other kinds of unusually personalized help. Such assistance is generally not available from paid transportation service drivers or from anyone else except highly trained and highly paid personal assistants or nursing staff. If such services were available from paid staff, the costs would probably be so high that few individuals needing such services could pay for them.

Relevance to Coordination

Volunteers can save money for transportation agencies and can provide services that would not otherwise be available. Because they are seldom used by public transit agencies, non-transit agencies participating in coordinated transportation services can make volunteers available for the overall benefit of rural communities.

Volunteers can save money for transportation agencies and can provide services that would not otherwise be available.

Clearly, individuals whose travel needs may be poorly served by traditional transit and paratransit operations still need to travel. In such situations, using volunteer drivers has many benefits:

- ✦ Costs of providing trips are reduced, allowing an emphasis on trips that are difficult to serve (such as long-distance trips).
- ✦ Individuals looking for ways to help their community make contributions to the well-being of others, but they can do so to fit their own schedules and work levels.
- ✦ Persons who might otherwise not be able to travel for specific trips (such as persons with disabilities or who are elderly) enjoy

the benefits of access to a wide variety of life-maintenance and life-enriching activities without the worry of intruding on the goodwill of their families, friends, and neighbors.

- ✦ Volunteers usually offer a more personalized service than is available through other travel modes.

Methods

Finding and maintaining a well-trained, enthusiastic core of volunteers are important keys to success. In some communities (for example, Bedford, Virginia), rural transportation providers believe that volunteers are most easily found in small group settings where individuals have obvious common self-interests. Small communities with binding ties can be found in neighborhoods, other geographic communities, faith-based organizations, and within some foundation, service, medical, and governmental groups.

Volunteer recognition and support efforts are crucial to maintaining good volunteer workers.

Recruiting, training, and maintaining loyal volunteers are subjects that have received much attention. (For example, see CTAA, 2001; Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation et al., 2003; Burkhardt, 1999.) Careful attention must be given to these specific issues. For example, because volunteers are not working for pay (although many do get reimbursement for their expenses), volunteer recognition and support efforts are crucial to maintaining good volunteer workers.

Considerations

The Beverly Foundation (2003) has found several key lessons from their efforts in volunteer transportation:

- ✦ Volunteers worry about their potential liability.
- ✦ Insurance for volunteer transportation does not have to be expensive or difficult to obtain.
- ✦ Volunteer involvement can make it unnecessary to purchase vehicles or hire staff.
- ✦ When riders recruit their own volunteer drivers, they can also schedule their own rides.
- ✦ Volunteer friends are often willing to drive when someone asks them.

- ✦ Various reimbursement options can make it easier to recruit volunteer drivers.
- ✦ Volunteer involvement can make it possible for a transportation service to meet special needs of travelers at an affordable cost.
- ✦ Volunteer driver services are seen as "user friendly" because many drivers are from those groups of people needing rides.

Funding and other resources need to be scaled to specific plans for volunteer involvement, local conditions, the size of the geographic area to be covered, the institutional complexity of the service area, the transportation options available, and the level of travel demands. Developing a coalition of partners and agencies committed to serving special transportation needs may take some time, and public transit agencies initially may not recognize the benefits offered by volunteer driver programs for services outside of traditional transit networks.

Developing a coalition of partners and agencies committed to serving special transportation needs may take some time.

Examples

Many transportation services have successfully used volunteers (Beverly Foundation, 2001). Some of the larger and more successful efforts include those in Riverside County, California, and Portland, Oregon. Both of these services are discussed in depth in Chapter 8; key details are summarized here.

The **Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project (TRIP)** complements public transportation services in Riverside County, California, by reimbursing volunteers to transport individuals where no transit service exists or when the individual is too frail to use other transportation. Older persons are the primary clientele. By using volunteers, a needed service is provided at a small fraction of what it would cost using more conventional methods.

As a program of last resort, TRIP supplements rather than competes with public transportation. In fact, TRIP insists that its clients be unable to use public transportation before they are accepted into the program. Therefore, TRIP expands the availability of transportation, increases the number of trips overall, and fills gaps where there is no public transportation service.

TRIP is a program of the nonprofit Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities. In FY2000-2001, TRIP's annual transportation expenses were $350,157. With this budget, TRIP served 537 people by providing 48,350 one-way trips at a

cost of $7.24 a trip. These trips were provided by more than 1,000 volunteer drivers, who were reimbursed at a rate of 28 cents a mile for use of their personal vehicles. If the public transportation providers were to take over the TRIP program with paid drivers and publicly owned vehicles, the costs would be at least five times higher. (In fact, public transit costs would be even greater if the value of a personalized escort service were included.)

Persons using TRIP must begin and end their round trip in Riverside County, which is located in Southern California about 60 miles west of Los Angeles. The county includes several cities, the largest of which is Riverside, with a population of 255,000. Much of the 7,200 square miles constituting Riverside County consists of sparsely populated rural areas. For this reason, the average one-way trip provided by TRIP is 22.6 miles. Nearly a third of the county's 1.5 million residents live in unincorporated areas, and almost 13 percent are 65 years of age or older.

TRIP is not advertised. Instead, individuals are referred to TRIP by its 130 nonprofit and governmental partners, such as the Department of Social Services, the Office on Aging, visiting nurses, the Multipurpose Senior Services Program, and Care Teams (which consist of the District Attorney's office, police, licensing agencies, adult day care programs, and the Better Business Bureau).

TRIP pays Senior HelpLink to screen potential applicants to determine eligibility by questions such as whether the caller is unable to drive, needs assistance getting in and out of a vehicle, or has no family members to provide a ride. About one-third of the applicants are denied eligibility, because the committee determines that the individual can use other transportation options, such as Dial-a-Ride. TRIP is considered a service of last resort.

The constituency of TRIP is considered "at risk."

The constituency of TRIP is considered "at risk." Typically, a client is in the program for no more than 3 years. This is because persons accepted into the program are generally unable to live independently longer than 3 more years or because they have died within that time-frame. The attrition rate is estimated at 85 percent in 3 years. Because one of the funding sources of TRIP, the Older Americans Act, prohibits income qualifications, eligible riders do not have to be low income, although most are.

The philosophy behind TRIP is that people must take responsibility for the outcomes in their lives. Therefore, riders are asked to recruit their

own drivers. TRIP staff coaches them in how to approach friends and neighbors and how to assure them that they are not asking for charity, because they can reimburse the driver. One of the problems of elderly people is isolation, which leads to giving up. Finding a driver encourages people to get to know their neighbors and reduces the feeling of dependency and victimization.

One of the problems of elderly people is isolation, which leads to giving up.

Although 85 percent of TRIP clients are successful in recruiting a driver, TRIP staff has begun a volunteer driver corps to help the remaining 15 percent. The concept is to partner with existing organizations to recruit reserve drivers from within those organizations.

Ride Connection is a nonprofit community service organization that offers transportation assistance to persons with disabilities and seniors without alternative transportation. Ride Connection serves a three-county area, including Washington, Multnomah, and Clackamas Counties in Oregon. The service area is both urban and rural, because it incorporates Portland and surrounding suburban communities, but also stretches beyond the urban growth area to serve the rural portions of the three counties. The organization prides itself on an ongoing commitment to identifying transportation needs and filling them.

Ride Connection has grown to include a network of 32 separate partner agencies and holds 22 separate contracts with its participating providers. The service has more than 330 volunteers providing 236,000 rides annually. An estimated 8,800 residents of the three-county area benefit from participating agency trips each year. Eligibility for the service is self-declared. Ride Connection has an annual operating budget of approximately $4.6 million. More than two-thirds of these funds go to more than 30 provider organizations. Ride Connection's internal budget is just over $1 million, which funds 15 staff members and several support programs.

Ride Connection has a planning staff that provides coordinated planning services that benefit participating agencies throughout the three-county area. Ride Connection planners work to identify service gaps and opportunities around community-based transportation. They also act as policy planners and advocates helping to forward transportation policies that support the mobility needs of its clientele.

Ride Connection believes strongly that volunteer workers can provide the highest level of service available. They recognize that volunteers do require compensation in the form of recognition, quality treatment and training, and appreciation.

Ride Connection treats its relationships with network providers as a collaborative and supportive one, believing that cooperation in problem solving leads to longer term solutions than simple enforcement of its existing contracts. Ride Connection has a very strong commitment to training its volunteers. The organization believes that volunteers can provide an equal or higher level of service as paid employees if they receive the proper training and are recognized for quality work.

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SUMMARY

This chapter has provided information on specific topic areas expected to be vital to the continued success of coordinated transportation systems:

- ✦ Accounting and financial management;
- ✦ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 504, and coordinated rural transportation services;
- ✦ Budgeting;
- ✦ Consensus building and setting goals and objectives;
- ✦ Involving stakeholders;
- ✦ Marketing and public information;
- ✦ Monitoring and evaluation;
- ✦ Needs assessment;
- ✦ Organization of the planning process;
- ✦ Organizational framework for coordination;
- ✦ Strategic direction—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
- ✦ Technology;
- ✦ Vehicle fleet status and evaluation; and
- ✦ Volunteers.

The information provided here should allow systems to fine-tune their operations to create more effective and efficient coordinated rural transportation operations.

CASEBOOK OF STATE AND LOCAL COORDINATION MODELS

Section IV

This fourth component of the Toolkit includes a "casebook" of case studies of successful state and local models of coordinated transportation efforts.

This section begins with information gained from a survey of the coordination efforts in all 50 states. Elements of successful state coordination efforts are examined, as are common problems and solutions.

The second chapter in this section provides an in-depth look at 29 specific local communities, including those of Native American examples. Benefits of coordinating transportation in rural communities, challenges and opportunities, and recommendations for success are presented from interviews with the directors of local coordinated transportation services. Detailed information is provided on each case, including service types, areas and persons served, ridership and expenses, major funding sources used, and coordinating agencies.

MODEL PROCESSES FOR STATEWIDE COORDINATION

Chapter 7

All states were contacted to assess the level of coordination for their state and to ask about important coordination-related issues facing their state. Information was received from every state and several responded with a great deal of information on coordinated transportation services in their state. This chapter describes coordination activities on a national basis, based on the information gathered, followed by an in-depth examination of the coordination efforts of 10 states.

THE NATIONAL COORDINATION PICTURE

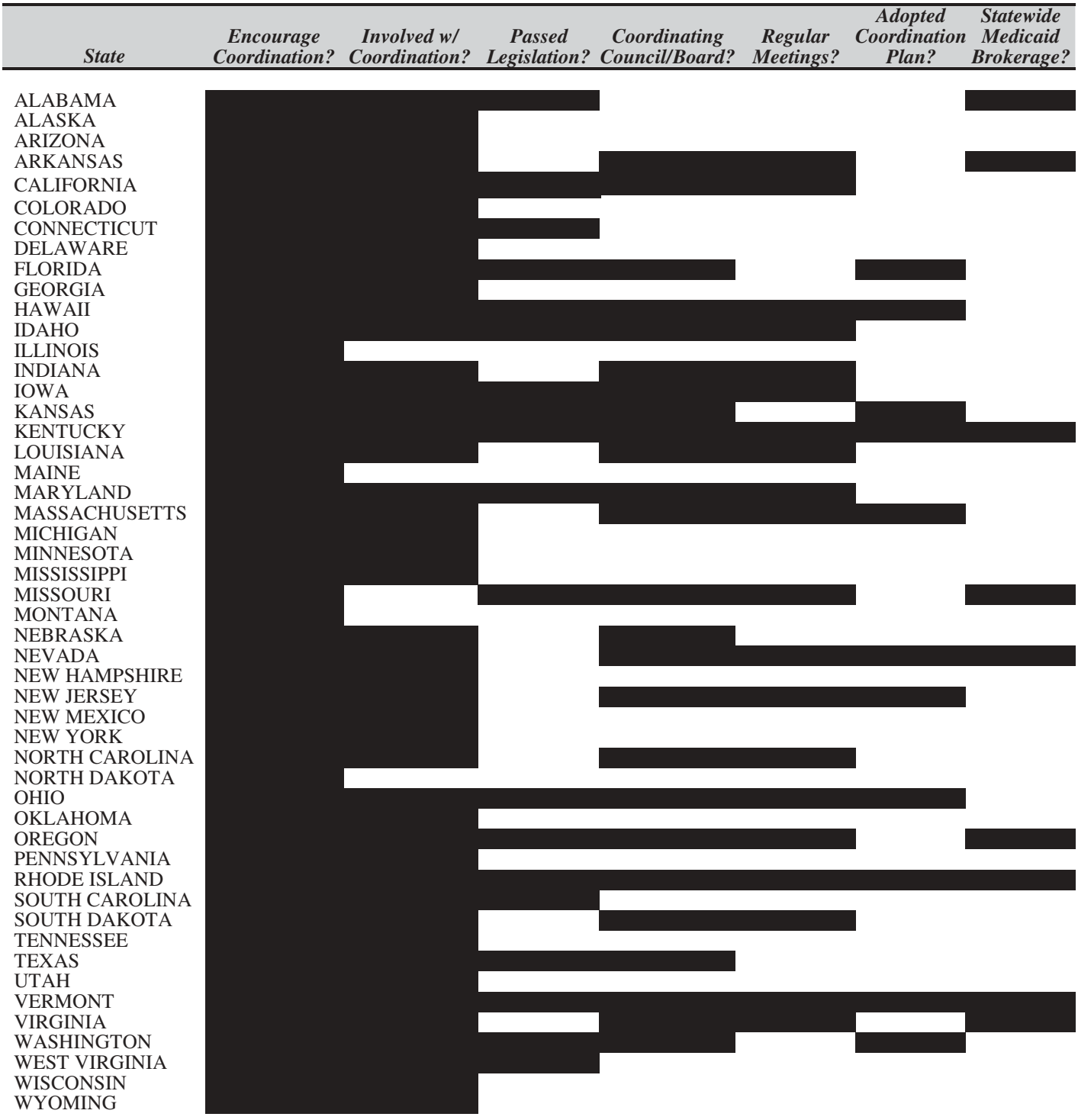
All of the state coordination contacts (100 percent) reported that their state encouraged coordination. (See Table 10.) Ninety percent of the respondents reported that their state was involved with coordination. Both of these numbers are encouraging, as they show that most states are at least aware of the potential benefits to be realized from coordination. Even more encouraging is the fact that nearly one-half of the states (46 percent) have a coordinating body in place.

Table 10 reports that all States encouraged coordination.

. . . the establishment of a coordinating body is a major step in the process.

Although only 38 percent of the states have passed legislation requiring coordination, 57 percent of those with coordinating bodies have passed such legislation. Just over one-fifth of all states (22 percent) have adopted a coordination plan, while 43 percent of those with coordinating bodies have done so. Although there is no guarantee that the appointment of a coordinating body will lead to future coordination successes, it is clear that the establishment of a coordinating body is a major step in the process.

Table 10:
STATE COORDINATION ACTIVITIES



State	Encourage Coordination?	Involved w/ Coordination?	Passed Legislation?	Coordinating Council/Board?	Regular Meetings?	Adopted Coordination Plan?	Statewide Medicaid Brokerage?
ALABAMA	■	■	■				■
ALASKA	■	■					
ARIZONA	■	■					
ARKANSAS	■	■		■	■		■
CALIFORNIA	■	■	■	■	■		
COLORADO	■	■					
CONNECTICUT	■	■	■				
DELAWARE	■	■					
FLORIDA	■	■	■	■		■	
GEORGIA	■	■					
HAWAII	■	■	■	■	■	■	
IDAHO	■	■	■	■	■		
ILLINOIS	■						
INDIANA	■	■		■	■		
IOWA	■	■	■	■	■		
KANSAS	■	■	■	■		■	
KENTUCKY	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
LOUISIANA	■	■		■	■		
MAINE	■						
MARYLAND	■	■	■	■	■		
MASSACHUSETTS	■	■		■	■	■	
MICHIGAN	■	■					
MINNESOTA	■	■					
MISSISSIPPI	■	■					
MISSOURI	■		■	■	■		■
MONTANA	■						
NEBRASKA	■	■		■			
NEVADA	■	■		■	■	■	■
NEW HAMPSHIRE	■	■					
NEW JERSEY	■	■		■	■	■	
NEW MEXICO	■	■					
NEW YORK	■	■					
NORTH CAROLINA	■	■		■	■		
NORTH DAKOTA	■						
OHIO	■	■	■	■	■	■	
OKLAHOMA	■	■					
OREGON	■	■	■	■	■		■
PENNSYLVANIA	■	■					
RHODE ISLAND	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
SOUTH CAROLINA	■	■	■				
SOUTH DAKOTA	■	■		■	■		
TENNESSEE	■	■					
TEXAS	■	■	■	■			
UTAH	■	■					
VERMONT	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
VIRGINIA	■	■		■	■		■
WASHINGTON	■	■	■	■		■	
WEST VIRGINIA	■	■	■				
WISCONSIN	■	■					
WYOMING	■	■					
% Responding Yes	100%	90%	38%	46%	40%	22%	18%

Every state responded to the research team's questionnaire

Table 10 shows state coordination activities for all 50 states. The table shows that most states encourage coordination and are actively involved in some aspect of the process. Kentucky, Rhode Island, and Vermont are notable for being involved in all aspects of coordination.

Coordination activities have been implemented in various ways across the various states. Three main techniques are by legislation, by executive order, or through less formal agreements, committees, or working groups. Table 11 shows the primary coordination mechanism for various states and the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. As shown in the table, interagency agreements and other informal arrangements are the most frequent institutional tools for coordination, followed closely by coordination legislation; executive orders are relatively rare.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL COORDINATION EFFORTS

Several common elements of success emerged from examining the results of the national survey and the practices of the most successful states. These ideas/actions/items have proven to be effective and essential components of the coordination process and could be applied to coordination efforts in other states.

Several common elements . . . have proven to be essential components of the coordination process . . .

Table 11:
HOW COORDINATION ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED

Source of Authority for Coordination	*States or Agencies Using this Technique*
Legislation	Arkansas California Florida Idaho Iowa Kansas Maine Missouri Pennsylvania South Carolina Texas Virginia
Executive Order	Alabama Louisiana Maryland North Carolina
Interagency agreement/committee/Working Group	US DOT / US DHHS Georgia Kentucky Massachusetts Michigan Minnesota Mississippi Montana Nebraska Nevada New Hampshire New Mexico North Dakota Ohio Oregon Tennessee Utah

Specific Support for Coordination

The first category of successful strategies needs to be that of **general and specific support for coordination**. Key items in this list would include

- Coordination encouragement or requirements in legislation or regulation, such as in
  - State laws in many states including Florida, North Carolina, Washington, Iowa, California, Pennsylvania, and others, totaling 38 percent of all 50 states. (A good example of such legislation is shown in Appendix I.)
  - Executive orders.
- Interagency coordinating councils or boards within 46 percent of the states.
- Instructions and encouragement from state agencies supporting the coordination of the transportation activities of their grantees.

The establishment of regional meetings to discuss specific coordination plans within states (such as the regional coordination meetings spearheaded by FTA in 1998, 1999, and 2002).

Quality Control Standards, Oversight, and Monitoring

Florida's Committee for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) sets the standard for quality control with clearly defined standards across the board, thorough reporting, and extensive oversight and monitoring. Their Quality Assurance Program is especially important because they contract with private agencies for over 43 million trips annually. Florida uses local coordinating board meetings to monitor their Community Transportation Coordinators' (CTCs') financial performance and payments to subcontractors. Florida conducts annual reviews of local CTCs in order to refine policies and standards. The state also administers an ombudsman program, which provides a repository for customer complaints and a forum for grievance procedures. In addition, Florida contracts with an accounting firm to monitor nonpayment issues and to conduct audits of the rates billed to the CTD and to conduct financial reviews of the CTD itself.

Technical Assistance

Florida provides technical assistance at a level that is unmatched by any other state.

Nearly every state involved with coordination provides technical assistance to local officials and transit operators. Florida provides technical assistance at a level unmatched by any other state. In addition to driver safety training and CPR, Florida provides first aid training, driver sensitivity training, and passenger assistance training. For coordination officials, Florida provides management training, planning guidelines, contract management guidelines, quality assurance reviews, operational reviews, financial evaluations, employee drug testing programs, and assistance with Federal guidelines.

Establish Guiding Principles Early in Process

"Organizations serving persons with special transportation needs share responsibility for ensuring that their customers can access services."

The State of Washington has established a comprehensive, easily understood set of guiding principles for its coordination effort. These principles set a uniform standard of quality and service for the statewide transportation network, and the standard was established in the legislative process and written into the legislation. All subsequent coordination activities and decisions have been governed by these principles. The first principle is simply stated but carries a great deal of weight. It states that "Organizations serving persons with special transportation needs share responsibility for ensuring that their customers can access services." This guiding principle sets the tone for the entire coordination effort in Washington State by putting the needs of the client above any operational issues. Officials can point to it anytime there is a "turf" dispute or whenever there is an argument over responsibility.

Extensive Local Planning Process

Several states support an extensive local planning process.

Several states, such as North Carolina, New Jersey, Iowa, and Maryland employ an extensive local planning process as part of their coordination efforts. These include the community transportation service planning process and the transportation advisory boards in North Carolina, the interagency steering committees in New Jersey, the technical advisory committees and policy boards in Iowa, and the local coordinating committees in Maryland.

Comprehensive System

Vermont has built a statewide coordinated transportation system that encompasses all modes of transit, all degrees of urbanization (i.e., rural, urban, and suburban), and all potential trip purposes including Medicaid and Welfare to Work. No other state can point to a transportation system that is so comprehensive and completely integrated from top to bottom. The key factor in the development of this statewide transportation network was the establishment of the Vermont Public Transit Association in 1986. The VPTA is a private nonprofit corporation that serves the purpose of a statewide coordinating body. It provides information to transit providers and policymakers, acts as an advocate for transit, and works to develop and coordinate transit services statewide.

Vermont has built a transportation system that is comprehensive and completely integrated.

State DOT Assistance with "Selling" Coordination

The Iowa DOT is working with the Iowa Department of Health on a series of presentations designed to convey the benefits of coordination to health care providers. The Iowa DOT has also produced a video entitled "Iowa Coordination Pledge" that is available to the transit providers in the state. Iowa coordination officials say that the DOT marketing efforts have been very helpful.

Iowa DOT produced a video promoting coordination.

Input from Nontransit Agencies

Oregon's coordination planning process is unique because it involves several agencies that are seldom considered transit related. The governor has appointed representatives from the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Corrections, and Housing and Community Services to participate in the development of the coordination plan, and their presence has been extremely beneficial. They have created many new partnerships and motivated other representatives to rethink their views of how transit relates to their community. In addition, they have rethought the ways in which transit relates to their agencies and have re-examined their own policies to make them more transit friendly.

Oregon's coordination planning process is unique in including many departments.

Handbooks and Guidebooks

Ohio and Maryland have both experienced a great deal of success with handbooks.

Ohio and Maryland have both experienced a great deal of success with the publication of handbooks and guidebooks. The publications provide technical assistance to local systems and officials on the coordination process and have become very popular. Ohio, for example, has distributed over 1,200 copies of its 1997 publication, "A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services."

Demonstration Projects

Ohio is making a statewide effort to address barriers to coordination.

The Ohio coordination process made extensive use of demonstration projects, especially very early on. The demonstration projects in Richland County served as a test bed for the statewide effort, allowing the testing of ideas for addressing state regulations and policies that were seen as barriers to coordination.

Areas Where Additional Assistance Is Needed

Transportation operators have a keen interest in seeing **Coordination Incentives** come into place.

The major area where additional assistance is needed, even in states that actively encourage coordination, is that of coordination incentives. Although such incentives are now found infrequently at the state level, transportation operators have a keen interest in seeing such incentives come into place, as they most vocally reported in responses to surveys conducted for this project, as well as at the July 1, 1998 meeting of the Advisory Panel to the HHS/U.S. DOT Transportation Planning Workgroup. The kinds of incentives that states have recommended include

- Funding for both coordination planning and operations;
- "Bonus points" that would favor coordinated systems over non-coordinated systems in funding applications;
- Additional funding for the most cost-effective operations;
- Coordination requirements inserted into grant applications; and

- ✦ Investigation of how to implement disincentives to uncoordinated planning and operations (Burkhardt, 1998).

COMMON PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Coordination efforts do not always run smoothly. As can be imagined, when one begins reallocating resources and re-assigning responsibility statewide, individuals and agencies can sometimes feel threatened. Turf battles can result, necessitating substantial amounts of time and hard work. Beyond that, complex problems may affect coordination efforts, such as working with program regulations attached to specific funding sources, be they state or Federal regulations. The following discussion presents some commonly cited problems and solutions found in the course of this study.

Medicaid Funding

Many states (most notably Florida) have experienced problems with Medicaid co-payments and reductions in nonemergency Medicaid transportation funding. (This is now also a serious problem in Colorado and California.) In response to these problems, Florida has created a Medicaid committee in cooperation with the Agency on Health Care Administration. Together, they have developed an action plan and a best practices handbook for nonemergency Medicaid transportation. The action plan was scheduled to be implemented in the year 2002 through a process of joint statewide training, which was also to include an updated Medicaid Transportation Manual.

Nonemergency Medicaid transportation funding has experienced serious reductions in several states.

Vehicle Standards

Washington State and Maryland both cited a lack of vehicle standards as a barrier to coordination. The lack of standards prevents vehicle sharing among agencies and, in some cases, it prevents ride sharing among agency clients. Maryland, in response to this problem, has included state-sanctioned standards for vehicles and drivers in its forthcoming 5-year plan.

The lack of standards prevents vehicle sharing among agencies . . .

Problems with Trip Costs in Coordinated Transportation Systems

Vermont is making more efficient use of funds the state already has.

North Carolina and Vermont reported that their local agencies were experiencing problems with trip costs in coordinated systems. In some cases, human service agencies that once provided transportation "in house" are now purchasing it from a coordinated system. In other cases, the local transit provider had funding problems. In North Carolina, state DOT officials are meeting with providers to discuss ways of lowering insurance and other costs. They also meet with human service agencies and help them calculate the actual costs of providing in house transportation, which is usually much higher than they previously thought. In Vermont, VPTA officials try to steer providers away from searching for new funding and toward making more efficient use of the funds they already have. To that end, Vermont offers its transit providers training in cost allocation and budgeting.

Problems with Synchronizing Funding Timelines

A benefit of coordination is the ability to combine funding sources and to fund projects from multiple sources.

One of the touted benefits of coordination is the ability to combine funding sources and to fund projects from multiple sources. New Jersey and Maryland both pointed to problems with synchronizing the timing of these funding sources to coincide with project schedules. Maryland intends to eventually coordinate all funding through a single source, but is in need of a short-term solution. New Jersey is having serious problems coordinating Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and TANF funding with project timelines, and they are currently working with Federal officials to alleviate these problems.

Lack of Administrative Funds for Coordination

Kansas coordination officials pointed to an almost total lack of administrative funds as a major barrier to coordination. Federal administrative funds are available to human service agencies, but these agencies do not necessarily want to share their administrative personnel (or money) with the coordinated transportation systems. Section 5311 funds are supposed to provide for administrative costs, but some states choose not to spend them in this manner. Kansas coordination officials are working with the state to try to solve these funding problems, but no solution is imminent.

Head Start Vehicles

Iowa coordination officials point out that, starting in 2006, all Head Start clients will have to be transported in school buses. This will cause problems for many statewide coordinated systems, such as in Iowa, where Head Start funds over 25 percent of the coordinated trips. Chapter 2 has a more detailed explanation of this problem.

See Chapter 2 for information about Head Start transportation coordination.

Confidentiality Issues

Clients of coordinated systems in Ohio expressed concern that personal medical information was being shared without safeguards or permission. They also complained about having to provide this information again and again. In addition, transit providers were having problems because human service agencies, citing confidentiality rules, frequently refused to share client information. Overall, confidentiality became a very serious barrier to coordination in Ohio.

Confidentiality had become a very serious barrier to coordination.

In 1994, the Ohio Family and Children First Initiative staff formed a Confidentiality Work Group for the purpose of tackling this issue. Their goal was to provide a method for agencies to share essential client information, while providing privacy safeguards. They developed the Member Agreement for Information Sharing, which allows sharing of client information only for the purpose of improving the quality, availability, efficiency, or coordination of service. The agreement also specifies how the information will not be used and includes conditions of amendment and termination. The member agreement also requires a consent-for-release form from the client or his or her parent or guardian.

STATEWIDE COORDINATION PROFILES

In the responses to the survey of state coordination activities, several states seemed to be highly committed to the coordination process, more so than the average state. Some of these states have been involved with coordination since the early 1980s, while others began their statewide coordination process less than 5 years ago. Some have mature statewide coordinated transportation systems with years of operation, while others

have not yet adopted a coordination plan. These states not only responded to the questionnaire, but they provided additional information such as statewide coordination plans, local coordination handbooks, and various other sources of information. The common theme for all of these efforts is the overall commitment to the idea of coordination, and the comprehensive scope of their vision.

Florida

Florida has long been at the forefront of innovative thinking with regard to public transportation, especially for persons who have disabilities or are elderly. Long before most states had considered the idea of coordinated transportation, Florida was already moving forward with its Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program. The TD program was established in 1979 to provide "efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for persons with disabilities, elderly persons, and at-risk children with no other transportation." TD services are provided through a "coordination of multiple funding sources at the local level" where "limited funds are maximized to provide citizen transportation."

Since 1989, the Independent Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) has administered the Transportation Disadvantaged program. The CTD is the state-level policy board responsible for the overall implementation of TD services. The CTD appoints a local coordinating board for each county, usually contracting with an MPO or other local planning agency. The local coordinating board is responsible for appointing, evaluating, and generally overseeing the community transportation coordinator (CTC) in each county. Local coordinating boards also provide local assistance to the CTCs, identifying needs and providing information, advice, and direction. The CTC is responsible for the actual delivery of transportation services for the disadvantaged residents of a county and may provide TD services directly or contract with local providers through competitive procurement processes.

Funding is provided by the TD trust fund, which receives $24 million per year (this amount has not been increased in 8 years!) and is administered by the TD Commission. The $24 million comes from the Public Transit Block Grant Program, which was established in 1990.

The TD program has succeeded in providing cost-effective service and improving uniform standards of quality for service through its quality assurance program. The program has also improved oversight and accountability for the participating agencies; this is important given that 86 percent of the 51 million annual TD trips are provided by private-sector agencies.

Despite the overwhelming success of the TD program, Florida recognizes that there is still much work to be done. TD officials estimate that over 1.6 million trips were not provided last year because of lack of funding and that this number of unmet trips is growing. Currently, TD officials are working to find ways of meeting those unserved needs, through legislative and other efforts.

In addition to the unmet needs, other difficulties are facing the Florida TD Commission:

- Lack of funding for nonagency-sponsored trips,
- Rising costs of gasoline and insurance,
- Medicaid copay mandates, and
- Reduction in the funding of Medicaid nonemergency transportation.

Florida is taking several steps to address these issues. A Medicaid committee has been established within the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged and is working to eliminate the Medicaid copayment and to maintain Medicaid funding at the current level. The committee also will work with the Agency for Health Care Administration to develop an action plan and a best practices handbook for dealing with nonemergency Medicaid transportation funding issues.

Florida provides extensive technical assistance to the CTC in each county. Florida's TD program provides courses in CPR, first aid, driver safety, passenger assistance, and driver sensitivity. For CTC officials, the TD program provides guidelines for planning, program management training, contract management, quality assurance reviews, operational reviews, financial evaluations, drug testing of employees, and information on Federal guidelines.

Washington

In 1998, statewide special-needs transportation coordination became a reality in Washington with the passage of Chapter 47.06B RCW by the state legislature. The legislation, entitled "Coordinating Special Needs Transportation," provided for the inception of the Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation (PACT), and the formation of the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT). The creation of PACT was intended to "increase efficiency, reduce waste and duplication, enable people to access social and health services, provide a basic level of mobility, and extend and improve transportation services to people with special transportation needs." According to the legislation, PACT employs a statewide approach to coordination that will encourage the development of community-based coordinated transportation systems according to the following guiding principles:

- Organizations serving persons with special transportation needs share responsibility for ensuring that their customers can access services.
- There is a single entry point for consumers.
- Consideration is given to transportation costs and providers' input when decisions are made with respect to siting of facilities or program policy implementation.
- Open-market competition is allowed.
- Vehicle sharing is allowed.
- There should be maximum sharing of operating facilities and administrative services.
- Trip sponsors and service providers agree on a process for allocating costs and billing for shared use of vehicles.
- There are minimum standards for safety, driver training, maintenance, vehicles, and technology, in order to remove barriers that may prevent sharing vehicles or serving the mix of clients.
- Systems are user-friendly and easy to access, regardless of funding structures, eligibility, contracting, and service delivery.
- There is continuous improvement of systems through sharing of technology, best practices, and research.
- Performance goals and an evaluation process are established that lead to continuous system improvement.

The entire list of guiding principles has been included because they can apply to systems at any level of coordination: statewide, regional, or countywide. These principles are at the core of the ACCT coordination effort because they establish a uniform standard of quality and service that applies to all systems in the state.

The ACCT is charged with implementing and managing PACT. The ACCT consists of nine voting members and eight nonvoting, legislative members. The voting members include a representative from the governor's office, two paratransit users, one representative from the Washington Association of Pupil Transportation, one from the Washington State Transit Association, and one from either the Community Transportation Association of the Northwest or the Community Action Council Association. The eight nonvoting members consist of four members of the state House of Representatives and four state Senators. The state Secretary of Transportation serves as the chair. The ACCT is responsible for local planning guidelines, state policy guidelines, facilitating the sharing of information among counties, mediating disputes, developing guidelines for performance measures, developing criteria for monitoring and reporting, providing technical assistance, and reporting to the state legislature.

The primary task of the ACCT is selecting a lead agency for each community. The lead agency coordinates with public and private transportation providers, private and non-profit transportation brokers, local governments, and transit users. It operates according to the guidelines of PACT discussed above, and may

operate as a provider, a broker, or both. The ACCT may require a local government to convene a local transportation-planning forum as a condition for receiving transportation funds. These local community forums are intended to get the local stakeholders involved with the selection of a lead agency, as well as with clarifying roles, identifying functional and geographical boundaries, developing performance measures, and raising any new issues. Neighboring counties are encouraged to combine local planning forums in order to increase intracounty coordination.

PACT receives funding from several Federal and state sources, which it then distributes to the lead agencies via the ACCT. Recently, PACT received a $1.7 million Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grant and secured $4 million in state and Federal funds. In addition, PACT receives funding from the general fund and property taxes.

In addition to funding, the ACCT provides several types of technical assistance to counties participating in the coordinated system. ACCT officials offer information on the different approaches to coordination, as well as various strategies for effective communication. They also provide strategic insight on building coalitions and creating alliances. When asked if there was any needed technical assistance that they did not provide, ACCT officials expressed the need for successful examples of coordination approaches.

ACCT officials pointed out several difficult issues they are facing in their coordination efforts. The most pressing issue is coming up with the necessary funding to support the coordination efforts. This also involves managing the various categorical funding streams and the regulations that are attached to the funding. In addition, ACCT mentioned problems with differences in vehicle standards, leading to problems with vehicle sharing among agencies. They have also experienced difficulty with getting all involved agencies to participate.

North Carolina

The State of North Carolina has long been involved with coordinated transportation efforts. In 1978, Governor Jim Hunt signed an executive order that mandated coordination of human service transportation in the State of North Carolina. In doing so, he placed North Carolina at the forefront of coordination efforts nationwide and took an important step toward improving the safety, reliability, and cost-effectiveness of transit and paratransit services throughout his state.

The primary purpose of these coordinated systems is to provide high-quality, reliable, and cost-effective human service transportation to core agencies. Core agencies that use human service transportation in North Carolina include county social service departments (for Title IX, Work First, and Medicaid recipients); county, private, and nonprofit programs for the aging; mental health programs; sheltered/vocational workshops; and county health departments.

The coordination process begins with a Community Transportation Services Plan or CTSP. The CTSP examines the transportation needs and resources and looks at trends and performance measures over a 5-year period. Each county in North Carolina is required to produce a CTSP every 5 years, and the work is usually completed by contracted outside consultants chosen by the state. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) also assigns an NCDOT employee to assist each county with producing its CTSP and working with an assigned consultant. The NCDOT will sometimes award the contracts to bidders in regional blocks, so that there is a coordinated, regional perspective among the plans for neighboring counties.

The transportation advisory board is an important factor in the process of completing a CTSP. A county's transportation advisory board consists of representatives from transportation providers, human service agencies, transit users, and county government. The board oversees the CTSP process, manages public meetings, and ultimately approves or rejects the final product. Once the CTSP has been approved, the transportation advisory board will oversee the implementation of the plan.

Currently 55 human service transportation systems in North Carolina are operating under three types of service arrangements:

- **Coordinated systems**—Two or more service agencies working together through a lead agency to maximize resources and efficiency;
- **Consolidated systems that provide their own services**—Single transportation programs that use their own vehicles and drivers to provide service to various agencies (In most cases, the agencies handle eligibility and screening); and
- **Consolidated systems contracting for transportation services**—Single transportation programs that purchase transportation services and contracts for operations with private transportation companies.

For FY 99, coordinated human service agencies in North Carolina spent $8.5 million to provide 623,974 passenger trips and 3.5 million revenue miles of service. At just over $10 per trip, the cost-effectiveness was more than reasonable for a statewide system covering so many rural areas.

Despite many successes and accomplishments, some problems currently face the coordination efforts in North Carolina. The primary problem is finding an appropriate funding source for coordinated human service transit. The funding for transit has always come from the state highway fund, which makes it difficult to obtain necessary increases in funding. Transit funding is a very small part of the state highway fund, and any increased human service transit needs are sometimes overlooked or regarded as a very low priority by managers. To address this problem, officials from NCDOT and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services are meeting to discuss other potential sources for funding.

Another problem is the rising cost of operating coordinated systems. Many human service agencies that previously provided transportation services to their clients are complaining that the cost of participating in the coordinated system is too high. Most of these agencies were unaware of what they had previously been spending in terms of lost person-hours, vehicle maintenance, and fuel costs.

Some agencies are also being forced to pay higher insurance costs. NCDOT officials are meeting with transit systems to discuss ways of lowering insurance and other operating costs.

Many local systems are complaining about discrepancies between Federal and state regulations that make it difficult to achieve coordination-based efficiency benefits, such as vehicle sharing, pooling funds, and combining trips. Again, NCDOT officials are meeting with local systems, working to find ways to minimize requirements and to consolidate as much as possible to eliminate red tape and other difficulties.

Finally, there has been a very high turnover rate among local system directors who are frustrated with the problems discussed above. NCDOT is working with the Institute for Transportation Research (ITRE) to develop a system accreditation program for directors. The agency is also increasing administrative salaries in an effort to retain its best transit personnel.

New Jersey

In New Jersey, coordination efforts began in 1997 to meet the mobility needs of the participants in the Work First New Jersey program. Each New Jersey county was required to establish an interagency transportation steering committee to develop a community transportation plan. These committees brought together representatives from human service agencies, transit agencies, planning departments, employment services, and non-profit organizations. Each local transportation plan contains four parts:

- An introduction to the planning process and a review of local demographic data,
- An inventory of local transportation resources,
- An examination of any gaps in the provision of local transportation services, and
- Locally oriented strategies for transporting Work First clients, low-income individuals, and other transit-dependent persons.

The planning process proved to be very successful, and it encouraged the various participants to move away from traditional transit and agency transportation models and toward coordinated community transportation services. Many innovative strategies were presented, including the use of feeder services to connect rural and suburban areas with fixed-route services, expanded dial-a-ride services, the use of brokerages, and improved marketing and outreach efforts.

As of 2000, all 21 counties in New Jersey had completed their plans and submitted them to the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the New Jersey Department of Human Services. This made every county in the state eligible for JARC grants from FTA, Welfare-to-Work grants from the Department of Labor, grants from the NJDOT Transportation Innovation Fund, and Work First New Jersey grants. Since 1999, transit systems in New Jersey have received over $8 million in JARC grants, $4 million from the Transportation Innovation Fund, and $6 million in Work First grants. Representatives from several state agencies (including the Departments of Transportation, Human Services, Labor, and Employment and Training) are working with counties in New Jersey to help them implement their community transportation plans. The county-based steering committees are also beginning the process of updating the community transportation plans.

In terms of financing, the State of New Jersey provides outstanding support to its transit systems via the Casino Revenue Fund, created in 1982 through a ballot amendment to the New Jersey constitution. The fund is used to provide additional or expanded services and benefits to senior citizens or persons with disabilities. In 1999, the fund collected $330 million, which was used to fund programs such as Lifeline Credit, property tax reduction, Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD), Community and Residential Care, home-delivered meals, and transportation assistance.

For the most recent fiscal year, transportation assistance received approximately 7.5 percent of the Casino Revenue Fund, which amounted to $23 million. Eighty-five percent of this money was split among the 21 counties in New Jersey to fund coordinated, countywide paratransit systems and feeder services. Between 8 and 10 percent was spent on improving the accessibility of New Jersey's bus and rail systems, and the remaining amount was spent on program administration. In 1997, the Casino Revenue Fund paid for 1,794,669 of the 3,805,176 paratransit trips taken statewide, which amounts to 47 percent. The fund also paid for 406 of the 837 paratransit vehicles in service state wide.

According to NJDOT officials, the most important coordination issues facing the state involve synchronizing funding mechanisms, timelines, and goals. All of the state and Federal agencies must coordinate plans with respect to when a project begins, when it ends, and what it should set out to accomplish. This task has been especially difficult when trying to coordinate the JARC and TANF funding with a project schedule because of delays in JARC funding. NJDOT officials are working with state and Federal officials to try to alleviate future problems. New Jersey DOT officials are also looking for improved Federal guidelines for reporting.

Kansas

In 1992, the Kansas legislature mandated that all recipients of FTA's Section 5310 and Section 5311 funding must be part of a Coordinated Transit District (CTD) by July 1, 1995. CTDs were established for three major purposes:

- Providing transportation services either directly or through a subcontract with eligible agencies,
- Enhancing coordination among the transit providers in each district by controlling Federal and state funding through a contract with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), and
- Monitoring and oversight of transit operations within the district to ensure compliance with all applicable state and Federal regulations.

Seventy-five transit providers are operating in 15 CTDs that coordinate transit service for the 105 counties in the State of Kansas. The system is operated under the guidance of the Kansas Coordinated Transit District Council, a state-level office with representatives from each CTD. Officials from KDOT, the Department of Aging, the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, and the Commission on Disability Concerns also meet regularly to discuss ways of improving coordination, improving the quality of service provided, and maximizing resources.

Kansas is facing several difficult coordination issues. The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services was working toward a statewide Medicaid transportation brokerage last year, but the project was shelved indefinitely. Reductions in funding at the state level led to a redefinition of what constitutes eligible nonemergency Medicaid transportation. The new, more restrictive definition made the statewide brokerage infeasible.

There are difficulties with administrative funding in urban and rural areas. Section 5310 funding, provided for human service agencies in urban areas, does not provide any administrative funding. This restriction creates problems for the administrative personnel at the social service agencies because they are expected to handle administrative tasks relating to the 5310-funded vehicles and service, but receive no compensation. In rural areas, the Section 5311 funding is supposed to be used for administrative expenses, but the state refuses to allocate the funds for that purpose. The state provides minimal administrative funding to each CTD—solely for recordkeeping and reporting. This again puts an administrative burden on personnel at the human service agencies.

The agencies are reluctant to "share" employees when they think that the state is not providing an equitable amount of funding. Agency transportation will always be provided by human service agencies until there is a source of administrative funding for transit agencies. The only administrative funding currently in the CTDs goes to human service agencies, and it is not intended for transportation purposes. KDOT is meeting with the agencies involved, and they are working on solutions, but these problems will take time to address. In the meantime, agencies and transit providers are looking for their own solutions. The transit providers in Kansas have started an email discussion list to share ideas and solutions to these and other problems.

KDOT provides some technical assistance to transit systems and CTDs operating within the state. The statewide drug-testing consortium is probably the most successful program and an excellent example of the benefits afforded through coordination. The state also provides extensive technical assistance for managerial techniques and training. KDOT officials expressed a need for several types of technical assistance. They would like a good set of case studies and examples to demonstrate how to overcome startup costs and difficulties. They would also like a "template" or decision matrix to help systems evaluate whether coordination is the right option for them. Finally, they would like to provide potential participants with sample contracts/agreements for coordination and/or purchase of service.

Vermont

The coordination effort in the State of Vermont has brought about a statewide system that is unmatched in terms of scope and organization. Vermont's coordinated system encompasses all modes of transit, covers urban and rural areas, and even includes a statewide brokerage for nonemergency Medicaid transportation, job training, and welfare-to-work clients.

The statewide system operates under the Vermont Public Transit Authority (VPTA), a private nonprofit corporation established in 1986 for the purpose of encouraging, developing, and providing transportation services to access employment, education, medical, social, recreational, and other services. The VPTA contracts with nine community transportation agencies to act as coordinating bodies and/or transportation providers for their respective service areas. These agencies are the sole recipients for state and Federal transit funding for their service areas. The VPTA also provides resources, information, and other forms of technical assistance to transit agencies across the state, as well as collecting and reporting statewide data.

Community transportation agencies in Vermont can operate as providers, purchasers, brokers, or some combination of the three. These agencies provide (either directly or via contract) general public transit, coordinated human service transportation, complimentary paratransit service for those who are elderly or have disabilities, and nonemergency Medicaid transportation. These agencies may also provide special routes for tourist destinations, Head Start transportation, and special commuter routes.

Coordinated human service transportation in Vermont was instituted with the passage of 24 VSA 5090 Human Service Transit. Of interest is the section that states:

> *The secretary of Human Services shall direct agency programs to purchase client transportation through public transit systems in all instances where public transit services are appropriate to client needs and as cost-efficient as other transportation.*

Since the passage of this legislation, nearly all agency transportation has been provided by the community transportation agencies, which receive all Section 5310 and 5311 funding for their service areas and are responsible for the coordination of service.

The Medicaid/Reach Up program provides nonemergency Medicaid transportation to residents of Vermont via a statewide brokerage operation. Agencies in Vermont deliver coordinated transportation services through nine Medicaid brokers statewide (the same nine community transportation agencies), operating under an agreement with the Office of Vermont Health Access. The objective of the Medicaid/Reach Up program is to provide the most cost-effective, appropriate transportation, based on individual needs, medical circumstances, and available community resources. Any resident who is eligible for a Medicaid trip contacts their local broker and schedules a trip. The brokers choose from volunteer drivers, taxi services, and transit agencies, depending on the specifics of the trip. For FY 2001, the Medicaid/Reach Up program provided over 380,000 one-way passenger trips statewide. Thirty-eight percent of these trips were provided with buses, 19 percent by taxi, and 6 percent with vans, which means that less than 50 percent of the trips were provided via transit. In addition to Medicaid transportation, the Medicaid/Reach Up program provides welfare-to-work transportation, transportation to job training, and transportation for other medical purposes.

The coordination effort in Vermont is facing several important issues. Some of their transit providers are having difficulty managing their financial resources and maintaining their level of operations. The state wants these providers to focus less on obtaining additional funding and more on maximizing their existing resources. To this end, the state is offering technical assistance in cost allocation and budgeting and training in grant application writing. It is also implementing an electronic application and billing form to relieve some of the paperwork burden. In the past, transit providers in Vermont were given state grant funds with little oversight. In recent years, the state has required a higher standard of accountability and reporting, and

many systems are having difficulty meeting this standard. Some of these systems simply do not have the professional management skills required. Although the state is trying to train and assist the providers with the reporting process (as mentioned above), the assistance has created a significant demand on the time and resources of state personnel.

The state is considering reorganizing some of the transit region boundaries and may combine some of the systems in order to reduce overhead expenses and gain greater efficiency with professional management. A more serious problem concerns turf issues created by geographical boundaries and interagency disputes. Public transportation in Vermont grew out of local community action agencies, and these agencies had developed their own service areas. When the transit regions were established in 1986, changes were mandated for everyone involved, and this gave birth to the turf disputes that remain to this day. State officials are concerned that this situation is preventing the state from reaching a higher level of coordination and that riders cannot move freely between transit regions. At this time, the state is still looking for solutions.

Iowa

The State of Iowa has been involved with transit coordination since 1976, when the General Assembly mandated in Chapter 601J of the Iowa Code that all public funds for transit must be spent in accordance with the state transit plan. The state transit plan, known as "TransPlan 76," was released the same year, and contained provisions for the establishment of multicounty regional transportation systems that covered the entire state. The planning agency for each region received state funds for the preparation of regional transit development plans and could then apply for state and Federal transit assistance funding. Chapter 601J was amended in 1984 to require that any entity spending public funding on transportation must coordinate with the designated urban or regional transit system in that area. This essentially established a statewide coordinated system consisting of 16 regional systems.

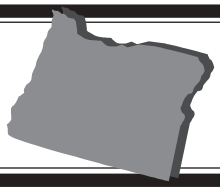
In 1991, Iowa responded to the new ISTEA regulations by extending the scope of its coordination efforts. The state's 16 regional transit authorities and 8 small urban providers became the direct recipients of Section 16 (5310) funding, which allowed them to combine funding for those who are elderly or have disabilities with the small urban transit and general public transit funding. Local officials representing the cities and counties were allowed to choose whether to remain in their current transit region, join with another region, or partner with other counties to form a new Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA).

Currently, 18 regional transit authorities provide service to the State of Iowa. Each authority establishes a transit planning process, which culminates with the review and approval of a regional transportation plan every 5 years. The plans include long-term and short-term strategies for the development of a coordinated, intermodal transportation system. The plans also include an evaluation of the facilities and vehicles available for service, a 20-year forecast of the facilities and service needs, an examination of funding needs for the next 20 years, and a collection of strategies for meeting those needs. Each region has established a technical advisory committee and a policy board to assist and guide the planning process. The technical advisory committee consists of citizens living in the service area who have expertise in the fields of engineering and planning. The policy board comprises local elected officials from the region and has final approval over all transportation plans and projects in the region. State representatives attend all planning and policy meetings to help coordinate the statewide planning efforts.

The state DOT is also providing assistance with "selling" the idea of coordination to health care providers and human service agencies. State DOT personnel are working with the Iowa Department of Health on a series of presentations intended to raise awareness among health care agencies and educate them on the benefits of coordination. DOT personnel have also produced a video, "Iowa Coordination Pledge," which is being distributed by CTAA to interested parties in the state.

The major problem facing Iowa's coordination efforts involves the Head Start program. Iowa officials are concerned about a Head Start regulation that will require Head Start children to be transported exclusively in school buses starting in 2005. Some of the Head Start agencies are already pulling out of the coordinated system and making alternate plans for 2005. Others are expected to follow. Given that Head Start trips account for 20 to 25 percent of the total coordinated trips provided in the state, this would be a tremendous blow to coordinated transportation in Iowa and could jeopardize the economic viability of the entire coordinated system.

Oregon



In 1996, the State of Oregon recognized that efforts to provide special needs transportation were insufficient to meet existing and projected demand. According to the director of the Oregon Department of Human Services

> About a third of Oregon citizens have limited mobility because of age, disability, or income. And in 20 of our 36 counties, volunteer and human service agencies provide the only mobility options available. The population served by these smaller groups is growing. We're not getting ahead of the problem…our job is to try to find a way to reach these people with better service—especially the ones who have the greatest difficulty with mobility.

Improved statewide coordination was seen as a way to increase productivity and service without requiring additional resources. As part of his Oregon Strategy for Social Support, Governor Jim Kitzhaber requested representatives from agencies that provide or purchase transportation to participate in a transportation coordination working group charged with developing strategies for coordinating transportation resources in Oregon. The group produced a report, "The Coordination Challenge," in June 2000, which detailed their recommended strategies for coordination, the benefits of coordination, potential barriers to coordination, and strategies to overcome those barriers.

Oregon is now in the next phase of the coordination process—developing the state coordination plan. The governor has appointed representatives from several key agencies to participate in the development of the coordination plan, including Human Services, Veterans, Education, Corrections, Employment, and Housing and Community Services. The inclusion of representatives from agencies not generally associated with specialized transportation, such as veterans and housing, is intentional. In fact, the chairman of the state Agency Transportation Project is from the Department of Housing and Community Services. The chairman believes that the location of housing has a profound effect on how people use transportation and that his agency should work in partnership with transportation agencies when it comes to locating facilities for persons who are elderly or have disabilities. As such, he has a strong interest in the coordination effort. In addition, it may have been a wise choice to select a chairman who had no background in public or specialized transportation, to avoid any questions of bias or favoritism.

In a recent interview printed in a state coordination newsletter, members of the state Agency Transportation Project outlined several of their goals and ideas that constitute their vision for the state coordination plan. They included

- Seamless interface system—one phone number for trips anywhere in the state;
- Efficient and inexpensive service;
- Improved intercity service;
- Pooling resources among providers;
- Coordination of nonprofit agencies, dial-a-ride, local transit systems, and pupil transportation systems;
- Improved performance monitoring; and
- Flexibility with the solutions.

The state coordination plan was scheduled for completion during 2002 and then for approval by the state legislature.

There are several current examples of coordinated systems in Oregon. Two Medicaid transportation brokerages operate in the state—Tri Met covers the Portland area and Sunset Empire Transit covers

Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook Counties. Tri Met contracts with Paratransit Services, Inc., to operate their brokerage, which has been a great success. The number of trips provided has increased, while actual costs have been cut by 15 percent.

The presence of the Medicaid program has also improved the overall quality of private transportation services in the region by raising awareness and encouraging the purchase of accessible vehicles. Sunset Empire Transit operates their brokerage directly and was the first rural Medicaid brokerage in Oregon. They have managed to integrate their services with services provided by Columbia County Public Transit and Tillamook Transit District. The director of Sunset Empire won an innovation award from the Oregon Public Transit Association for her efforts in planning the system. Several other Medicaid brokerages are scheduled to begin operations soon. In September, a brokerage serving Jackson, Josephine, Coos, Curry, and Douglas Counties will begin service, and a brokerage serving Wasco, Hood River, Sherman, Gilliam, and Wheeler Counties is planned for 2004. Eventually, the Oregon Department of Human Services intends for the entire state to be covered by Medicaid brokerages.

In addition to the Medicaid brokerages, four coordination demonstration projects, covering eight counties, began in June 2002. The demonstration projects will examine strategies for improving coordination among schools, employers, public and private human service agencies, and transit operators. These strategies include centralized dispatching, coordination of fleets, sharing of resources, and joint planning efforts.

Oregon sees the coordination effort as a significant opportunity to improve all aspects of human service transportation in the state. Implementing an effective statewide coordinated transportation system is not a simple process. Oregon has taken many important steps toward this goal and appears to be ready to reach its objectives. The state has established a solid foundation for the coordination effort, which provides needed support to regional and local coordination efforts. In the coming years, as the coordination effort extends to cover the entire state, the benefits should become readily apparent to all involved.

Ohio

Although there have been coordination activities in Ohio as far back as 1988, the statewide coordination effort began at an FTA-sponsored workshop in Chicago in 1996. Several Federal agencies made presentations on the benefits of coordinated transportation, after which the attendees were guided through the process of setting up an action plan for coordination efforts in their own states. In attendance from Ohio were representatives from the Department of Transportation, Department of Human Services, Department of Aging, and the Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD). These four agencies, along with representatives from the Governor's Family and Children Initiative, formed the statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force in July 1996. Since then, the task force has added representatives from the Ohio Department of Development, the Ohio Department of Mental Health, the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, the Ohio Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, the Ohio Head Start program, and the Governor's Council on People with Disabilities.

The task force has been very active in developing and refining the statewide Coordination Action Plan. One of its major accomplishments was the publication of "A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services" in 1997, created in response to the overwhelming number of requests for technical assistance. Over 1,200 copies of the handbook (essentially a "how to" guide for anyone interested in coordination) have been distributed since it was first published.

Another important accomplishment was establishing the Ohio Coordination Program (OCP) in 1996. The OCP was established to fund demonstration projects for coordination at the county level. The first demonstration project in Richland County (1996) was very successful and was followed by six other grantees that year. Coordination projects in other counties followed in rapid succession. In 1997, projects included Harrison, Delaware, Carroll, Logan, Mahoning, and Seneca counties. Projects in 1998 included Greene, Huron, Mercer, Muskingum, and Sandusky counties. Projects in 1999 included Clark, Hardin, Highland, Morrow, and Union counties. For 2000, projects included Adams, Licking, and Shelby counties. In 2001, the projects included Fairfield, Coshocton, Holmes, and Vinton counties. To date, 34 counties have received funds from the OCP. In each of the projects, a grantee was designated for each county, and the funds were used to expand the availability of transit service, reduce duplication, and make better use of existing resources. Counties with no transportation service received priority in funding.

More recently, the task force has achieved two significant successes in their coordination efforts. First, the Department of Education revised its safety rules governing the use of school buses. The revisions allow for the use of school buses in transporting Ohio Works First participants. Across the country, very few school authorities allow school buses to be used for other forms of transportation. The inclusion of the Department of Education in the task force was a key factor in this accomplishment. Another recent coordination success occurred when the state Rehabilitation Services Commission provided funding to the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) in the amount of $250,000. This marks the first time in history that another state agency has given (not a grant or a loan) funding to ODOT. It may be the first example nationwide as well. The funds are intended to support coordinated transportation and come as a direct result of the state Coordination Task Force's efforts.

Ohio provides outstanding technical assistance to counties that either are looking to coordinate or looking to improve their current coordinated system. ODOT provides two very useful publications, "A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services" and "A Guide for Implementing Coordinated Transportation Systems." Both publications are well organized and easy to understand, and both provide exhaustive amounts of information on any coordination-related issue. ODOT staff members are also responsive to any questions or issues that arise from their counties.

Ohio coordination officials mentioned a few coordination-related difficulties that they are working to overcome. Confidentiality requirements have created some problems with transporting certain agency

clients in brokerage systems. These concerns are being addressed with a member agreement and consent release forms that will control exactly how client information is used. There are also specific problems with ridesharing on vehicles belonging to MRDD. It is looking into a waiver for the regulations that are causing the problem. Some counties are having difficulty with the proper interpretation of Federal rules and/or limitations. The state is addressing this through increased educational efforts, both from project coordinators and ODOT staff. There are also the usual turf problems, but these seem to be less prevalent than those found in other states.

Maryland

The statewide coordination effort in Maryland began officially in 1997, with Executive Order 01.01.1997.06. The executive order, enacted by Governor Parris Glendening in response to a growing senior population and the Americans with Disabilities Act, established an independent Maryland state Coordinating Committee for Human Service Transportation. The executive order outlined the membership of the coordinating committee as including representatives from the Departments of Transportation, Human Resources, Aging, and Health and Mental Hygiene; a representative from the Governor's Office on Individuals with Disabilities; and additional members as recommended by the Governor. The primary responsibilities of the coordinating committee include the following:

- Examining the transportation needs of those who are elderly or people in need of transportation because of disabilities or for employment, medical visits, training, senior activities, education, or other special programs;
- Coordinating Maryland's human service transportation by working with appropriate Federal, state, and local agencies and with transportation providers, clients, and customers;
- Devising a 5-year plan to provide cost-effective, affordable, high-capacity, high-quality, easily understood, safe, and accessible human service transportation;
- Serving as a clearinghouse for transportation coordination issues throughout the state, identifying important local and statewide issues, identifying cost saving measures, inventorying resources, and investigating the need for standards for vehicles and drivers.

The coordinating committee has met monthly since its inception. One of its first major accomplishments was the hosting of 10 regional Transportation Coordination Forums from February through April 1998. The forums discussed the need for coordination and began the process of identifying needs and resources. One major benefit realized from the forums was the formation of several regional coordinating committees. These regional committees continued to identify needs and resources in their region and to serve an important role in the planning process. Overall, state officials report that support for the regional planning efforts has been extremely successful.

Another of the coordinating committee's major accomplishments was the development of the "Maryland Transportation Coordination Manual" (MTA, 1998). The Manual provides a collection of strategies and objectives for local and regional coordination efforts and has been distributed to transit agencies and human service providers across the state. The coordinating committee has also been successful in obtaining funding from the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program and combining JARC funds with TANF funds to support numerous projects across the state.

The most important accomplishment of the coordinating committee will be the completion of the "Five-Year Human Services Transportation Plan," which was endorsed in draft form by state agencies in 2002. The 5-year plan will address all of the major coordination issues facing the state, as well as addressing many of the specific issues raised by the regional coordinating bodies.

Several current issues concerning the coordination effort in Maryland are being addressed by the coordinating committee. The first issue is the desire for a seamless, integrated, easy-to-use system. To reach this objective, Maryland has made a Smart Card system available to all providers in the state, both urban and rural.

Another issue concerns problems with trying to coordinate funding from several state agencies. Some providers are reporting problems with the timing of the funding and with conflicting regulations. The state is looking into several solutions, including the use of the regional coordinating bodies to review and coordinate the grant process. The long-term solution will be to coordinate all funding through one state agency.

The most serious barrier to the coordination effort is the difference in standards (in terms of driver training and qualifications, insurance, accessibility, vehicle maintenance and upkeep, and vehicle standards) among the various agencies participating in coordinated systems. These differences in standards could prohibit one agency's clients from riding in another agency's vans or prevent one agency's driver from operating another agency's vehicles. To address this problem, the coordinating committee has included state-sanctioned standards for driver training, driver qualifications, and all vehicle standards, in the "Five-Year Human Services Transportation Plan."

When asked if any type of technical assistance was needed in Maryland, state officials pointed to two improvements that they would like to see. The first is an easy reference point for learning about coordination efforts in other states. The second is greater leadership on coordination issues at the Federal level, possibly through the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility.

SUMMARY

This chapter provided 10 examples of states that are making or have made substantial progress in their statewide coordination efforts. Each example provides insight into the specific techniques and ideas that (along with considerable hard work) helped to make their plans a reality. These techniques can be used when state agencies or personnel are building or fixing their own coordinated systems.

State agencies have successfully encouraged and supported coordinated transportation services by

- Offering specific support for coordination, including
  - Encouraging or requiring coordination in legislation or regulation or Executive orders,
  - Establishing interagency coordinating councils or boards,
  - Creating a statewide coordinated transportation plan,
  - Funding local coordinated transportation plans,
  - Providing instructions and encouragement from state agencies supporting the coordination of the transportation activities of their grantees, and
  - Conducting regional meetings to discuss coordination and specific coordination plans within the state;
- Providing quality control standards, oversight, and monitoring;
- Providing technical assistance;
- Establishing guiding principles for coordination;
- Supporting extensive local planning efforts;
- Supporting comprehensive services, including all modes of transit, all degrees of urbanization, and all potential trip purposes;
- Providing state DOT assistance with "selling" coordination;
- Obtaining input from nontransit agencies;
- Providing handbooks and guidebooks; and
- Funding, supporting, and evaluating demonstration projects.

Some of the elements mentioned above, such as quality control standards, technical assistance, and local planning processes, are neither innovative nor groundbreaking. However, they do indicate important areas of emphasis that may not be obvious to a coordination neophyte. The use of handbooks, demonstration projects, and guiding principles is nothing new, but their particular applications in this process can be most helpful. Other elements, such as state DOT assistance with selling the idea of coordination and input from nontransit agencies, are unique and innovative and should be of interest to anyone participating in a coordination effort.

The examples of common problems and solutions should be seen as a troubleshooting "repair kit" for a coordinated transportation system. If a community's transportation system is experiencing difficulties with Medicaid funding or confidentiality issues, for example, one could find a potential solution in these sections, or at least be pointed in the right direction. More serious and systematic problems, such as the Head Start vehicles problem or the lack of administrative funding, may require serious consideration at the Federal or state level.

SUCCESSFUL, INSIGHTFUL, COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Chapter 8

METHODOLOGY

Rural transportation operators were contacted to find local-level coordination strategies that have been beneficial in and applicable to a wide variety of rural communities. First, transportation professionals were contacted for recommendations regarding rural transportation systems considered worthy of examination for the coordination lessons they could offer. Next, the research team made telephone and in-person contacts with these systems.

Two key questions addressed in the interviews were

- ✦ What are the significant coordination issues that you are facing?
- ✦ What can be done to address these issues? What service and institutional approaches appear appropriate to these issues?

Operators were asked about their transportation system and services (e.g., operating, service, performance, equipment data, system characteristics, types of services, contracts, and organizational structure). They were also asked about county or service area characteristics (e.g., location and population), the kinds of coordination in place and being achieved, and the kinds of purchase-of-service agreements and provider contracts in place. Operators were also asked about the coordination development process, including how coordination started and who was involved. Questions were asked about the benefits and problems of coordination and about support that the respondents received from the state and other sources, the kinds of

mistakes they made in the coordination process, and how they recovered from those problems. Finally, operators were asked to identify the best advice they could give to others who were interested in starting or improving coordinated services.

Throughout the case studies, several themes emerged. First, coordinating transportation is sometimes a struggle but a worthwhile one. Second, personalities and parochial concerns often play key roles in determining just how much coordination can be accomplished. Third, many benefits can be derived from coordinating transportation services in rural communities, and those who have successfully created coordinated services are eager to share what they have learned from their efforts. Finally, rural transportation providers were extremely eager to share their experiences in a "keys to success" section for operators of rural transportation services in other communities.

BENEFITS OF COORDINATED RURAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

In these case studies of rural communities, many specific benefits of coordinating transportation services were cited. The benefits of coordinating transportation often included one or more of these outcomes:

- ✦ Access to a greater level of funding and to more funding sources;
- ✦ Access to the specialized expertise of a wide variety of transportation providers and human service agencies;
- ✦ Access to state agency expertise and support;
- ✦ Lower trip costs for riders;
- ✦ Lower trip costs for agencies;
- ✦ Transportation services provided in areas formerly without service;
- ✦ Transportation services provided to riders formerly without transportation service (this allows some people to remain independent in their own homes for a longer time than would otherwise have been possible, thus reducing both personal and social costs of unnecessary institutionalization);

- ✦ Transportation services available for a wider variety of trip purposes than in the past;
- ✦ Transportation services available more frequently than in the past;
- ✦ Greater customer satisfaction with transportation services;
- ✦ Agency clients travel with a broader segment of society;
- ✦ An overall increase in the number of trips provided within the community;
- ✦ Reduced vehicle travel—less duplication of services;
- ✦ Greater productivity—more riders per vehicle over the entire service period;
- ✦ Centralization of administration and control;
- ✦ One-stop shopping for customer access to transportation services available in the community;
- ✦ Higher quality transportation services (i.e., more timely, more responsive, and more reliable);
- ✦ Higher quality (i.e., safer) transportation services, resulting from enhanced training programs and more rigorous risk management;
- ✦ Better access to jobs, health care, and shopping;
- ✦ Increased activity for local businesses;
- ✦ Enhanced image, name recognition, and visibility for transportation providers;
- ✦ Enhanced ability of human service agencies to focus on their primary missions, instead of on transportation;
- ✦ Stronger support and funding commitments from local elected officials and key leaders in the social service network;
- ✦ A better match between services and transportation needs; and
- ✦ Broader community support for maintaining and expanding transportation services.

Which of these benefits are achieved in a given community depends strongly on local conditions, including the resources and activities of the transportation providers and other key stakeholders, as well as local political considerations.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Respondents for the case studies often mentioned a wide range of challenges and opportunities regarding coordinating transportation services in rural areas. The many specific responses fall into relatively few categories:

- Funding,
- Interpersonal relationships,
- Political support and power sharing,
- Lack of knowledge about transportation services, and
- Understanding coordination.

Funding

Many respondents would agree with the director who reported that, "By far, the most formidable challenge is securing reliable funding." Most coordinated systems are implemented with at least some notion of making more efficient use of existing resources, but having enough transportation funding remains a problem for many rural communities. Most coordinated systems tap as many funding sources as possible, but this effort requires substantial effort and resources. As one director reported, "the population to be served has grown, but the money has not." Another director considered funding to be "the key barrier to successful coordination and consolidation."

Besides the sufficiency of funds, numerous challenges are related to funding. Receiving funds from state offices, insurance companies, and others in a timely fashion is a common problem. The complexity of billing has been noted as a disincentive for coordination and consolidation. The stability of funding from year to year is also a common concern. Competition from other sources—such as road and bridge projects—for scarce public funding is a common complaint.

Interpersonal Relationships

Many persons involved in coordination would agree with the assessment that "the greatest barrier has been trying to work with uncooperative people." There are various reasons people do not want to cooperate—some fear they will lose funding, others do not want to try something new, some just do not understand the potential benefits of coordination, and some do not want to give up their own vehicles. Over time, as persons who are initially reluctant to coordinate see the success of coordinated system operations, they are more likely to participate in coordination activities. Other systems noted that "interpersonal skills are critical. Front line leadership on a daily basis is required."

Political Support and Power Sharing

"Yes, indeed," said one system's director, "we should have worked more closely with these influential political leaders throughout the coordination process." Agencies and even entire communities were reluctant to give up control of their own resources in any way (even on a shared-responsibility basis). One of the issues complicating consolidation was how operating costs should be shared by the participating jurisdictions. Should cost sharing be based on population? What constitutes an equitable division of operating costs between unincorporated areas and more urbanized areas? Should cost sharing be based on operating costs per mile, passenger trips per mile, or other factors? The answer appears to be "whatever works in your own community." Some communities were successful in convincing the partners in coordination that they could keep their independence but still experience the benefits of coordination. One system noted the importance of generating the need to get early commitments from influential political figures and then to reward them with publicity and recognition.

Lack of Knowledge

In many areas, it could be said truthfully that "public transportation was a new concept to this rural region, and the residents did not know of the benefits public transportation could offer their communities." It is important to recognize that "not everybody understands how transportation services will help the community." Some people had inaccurate, preconceived ideas that the services were only for limited client groups. To educate the residents about public transportation, several systems have written newspaper articles on public transit, made presentations in the community, and advertised through brochures, television, radio, and newspapers.

Understanding Coordination

A final challenge is that many people who get involved in coordination efforts have only a limited knowledge of what it is all about. Coordination is a lot of work, this effort needs to be ongoing, and results may be slow in coming. It is crucial to recognize that coordination must be seen as beneficial to all of the parties who are potential coordination partners.

The need for both a champion and a sparkplug for coordination efforts was also not recognized by many parties as they entered into their initial coordination activities. Coordination support "higher up the chain" was also seen as critical: not all local services thought that they had sufficient support from state agencies. Working within the context of these understandings often leads to much greater success in coordinating local resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

Representatives of the 29 coordinated rural transportation services interviewed had considerable wisdom to share. According to these rural system operators, the factors presented in this section best represent their reasons for success in coordinating transportation services. Many of these factors are presented here in the original words of the system operators who were interviewed; some recommendations have been

edited for additional clarity. Some recommendations are generally applicable to many localities; the applicability of other suggestions may depend on specific conditions or situations.

Although some suggestions apply to many parts of the coordination process, they have been categorized for clarity into four main headings:

- Getting Started,
- Coordinating with Others,
- Developing Plans for Services, and
- Operating and Managing Services.

Getting Started

- **Get started right away, but be patient in the process.** Don't procrastinate in starting the coordination process, but invest time to find out the best way to set up and implement the system so you can provide quality service. It takes time for people to develop trust and confidence in each other and to work together and make compromises.
- **Join forces with agencies that are committed to coordinated transportation and have access to funding.**
- **Know the pros and cons of coordination.** Make these pros and cons clear to potential partners before you get started.
- **Be realistic.** Don't make promises you can't keep.
- **Build trust and a knowledge base among coalition members; this is crucial.** Work diligently to get to know the other agencies and transportation providers in the area early on in the coordination process. Developing a strong base of knowledge among providers allows greater success in working together creatively and effectively.
- **Search for consensus.** As coordination begins, everyone may agree there is a need for transportation, but they may disagree on how to meet that need or what the priorities are. If leaders can be tapped who recognize that consensus on the need for transportation exists, they can direct coordination's efforts to that end when disagreements arise.

- **Work with individuals and agencies committed to the project** and realize it is not always possible to win everyone over.
- **Do not stop when you encounter roadblocks.** For example, if coordination efforts meet policy hurdles at the state level, lobby federally for approval to move forward. Don't be afraid to take issues beyond the local or state level.

Coordinating with Others

- **Cultivate partnerships.** A mutual support system is necessary to succeed.
- **Establish strong relationships with partner agencies** to enhance the client referral process and to improve outreach and education about the service.
- **Establish clear roles and responsibilities among all partners.**
- **Ensure that participating agencies are fully vested in the program.** This ensures that agencies do not attempt to steer riders to the coordinated operations to save on their own operating costs.
- **Secure funding.** Find funding sources with sufficient money to cover initial needs and to expand services once the initial funds are spent.
- **Ensure honest, reliable, and accountable business relationships.** The principles of coordination should spill over into every aspect of business practices.
- **Be flexible; maintain an ability to adapt to changing needs and conditions.**
- **Work closely with the local decision-makers/community organizers and respond to changing markets,** to accommodate the transportation needs of individual jurisdictions.
- **Seek a good mix of local elected officials; ensure you have staffers who can respond to their needs.** The process should be overseen and directed by political leaders who can make the difficult decisions and move the process forward.
- **Establish a transportation advisory committee** consisting of people and agencies with a common goal of meeting the local transit needs regardless of constituency (e.g., persons with disabilities, job seekers, or elderly people).

- **Maintain collaborative relationships with network providers.** Treat relationships with network providers as collaborative and supportive. Cooperation in problem solving leads to longer term solutions than simple enforcement of existing contracts.
- **Remember that coordination efforts breed advocates.** Successful coordination can lead to more local and regional advocates and the identification of more unmet needs. For this reason, coordination efforts can perpetuate a positive cycle in terms of addressing unmet needs, even if they do not lead to actual cost savings.

Developing Plans for Services

- **Identify the needs of the community or communities and all relevant interest groups.**
- **Identify unmet needs;** from there, determine which services will best meet those needs.
- **Tailor your services to the needs of the community.** Programs from other areas cannot necessarily be replicated in a simple fashion. Other programs will have different funding sources to satisfy, different resources in their community, and different geography. Every county and every system is different. What works in one location may not work in another.
- **Offer** the public, the community, and agencies involved in coordination efforts **a set of products and services of true value.**
- **Involve the public.** For example, private vehicles with volunteer drivers are a significant untapped and cost-effective transportation resource in our society. Some community members may feel that good neighbors should provide rides without any reimbursement. By understanding coordinated transportation programs, policymakers and the public will support funding for reimbursement programs, allowing them to grow.
- **Establish systems that are easy to administer.** A key need is a billing and reporting system to handle complex accounting and data. These systems are critical to obtaining and keeping funding and to tracking performance.

- **Approach the coordination process as you would to start a business.** Remember that providing transit service is a business. Develop a business plan up front to guide program growth.
- **Leverage funding. Finding funding is a significant challenge.** By cultivating partnerships, new sources can be discovered and traditional funding sources can be leveraged.
- **Clearly define what services will be provided in contracts and when applicable, clearly demonstrate potential cost savings.**
- **Pay close attention to the bottom line.** Put in place reliable systems for invoicing and tracking revenues and expenditures. If your organization does not have this capability, bring in a CPA or consultant to assist you. Local volunteer expertise may be available at little or no cost.

Operating and Managing Services

- **Listen intently to both customers and providers.** Successful coordination requires a lead agency that is able to moderate an ongoing dialog between people with transportation needs and those people that control the resources to provide transportation.
- **Select a lead coordination agency that can function as a mobility manager.** Broadly scoped agencies are often more willing to use a wider range of community resources (fiscal and human) to address transportation needs and thus make better candidates for lead agencies for coordination efforts. Agencies that have a tendency to use conventional tools and focus on one primary clientele (such as the able-bodied public) often make poorer lead agencies for coordination efforts.
- **Create and deliver safe, personalized, and accessible door-to-door services.** Safe, quality service is its own best advertising.
- **Maximize resources.** Use community resources wisely and avoid redundancy with other transportation providers by setting appropriate eligibility criteria.
- **Mobilize an effective volunteer network.** A volunteer network can be a potent means of saving large amounts of labor costs. Volunteer workers can provide a high level of service. But volunteers do require compensation in the form of recognition, quality treatment, and training and appreciation.

- **Create a strong commitment to training.** Train all staff, including volunteers. Volunteers can provide an equal or higher level of service as paid employees if they receive the proper training and are recognized for quality work.
- **Develop a clear and comprehensive program policy manual.** It is much less work to retain staff than to train new staff.
- I**dentify what state and Federal regulations will affect your volunteer program.** Volunteer driver programs work, but standards are not well developed.
- **Market your service. Referrals help, but many people may believe that service is limited to only specific riders or communities.** Selling the service to the larger community will help ensure the program's success.
- **Establish sound managerial and business systems and procedures.** Collect and carefully monitor fiscal, operating, and client data. Find the right software package that will allow you to track revenues more efficiently, allocate trip costs to specific funding sources more accurately, and improve efficiency, monitoring, and operations.
- **Retain legal expertise and develop formal contracts with participating agencies.** Informality may cause some problems collecting receivables.
- **Recognize and take advantage of opportunities that present themselves with the emergence of new programs and funding sources,** such as welfare reform's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Federal Transit Administration's Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program. New programs can create opportunities to involve new agencies and riders. They can present new transportation services to integrate and coordinate.
- **Document and disseminate institutional knowledge.** Ongoing documentation and dissemination of information during coordination can safeguard against the demise of a program due to the loss of one or two key staff members.
- **Understand and deal effectively with the "P" factors.** When facing roadblocks, discover which of these P factors (personality, power, and politics) you are dealing with and work with or around each of these factors.

CASE STUDIES OF LOCAL COORDINATION EFFORTS

Overview of the Cases

The following pages present 29 case studies of coordinated transportation services in rural communities. For each case, background of the agency, the coordination process, benefits of coordination, problems encountered, and recommendations are presented. The cases are particularly notable for their variety and for the commitment of local stakeholders to fashion workable solutions while addressing the unique needs and resources of specific localities. These cases were chosen because each of them demonstrates valuable lessons in using coordination to achieve more effective and productive rural transportation services.

These cases demonstrate that the concept of "level of coordination" is difficult to measure. As the numbers of agencies, funding sources, and service areas increase, opportunities for coordination benefits increase, but so does the level of administrative complexity. There may not be one generally applicable level of coordination for all rural communities, as these cases demonstrate that successful, cost-effective operations are found at many different levels of coordination and complexity.

The cases presented here generally start with less complex operations. The case studies progress from some more modest coordination attempts to the more ambitious in terms of the complexity of coordination activities. Single-county systems with few funding sources that serve relatively focused groups of passengers and trip purposes in relatively small geographic areas are examined first. The perspective progressively expands to include multicounty, multifunded operations that provide multiple transportation and nontransportation services in rural and urban settings and across state lines. Even with this attempt to present these cases in order of their general overall level of complexity, it is not necessarily accurate to say that a system is more or less coordinated than those near to it in this list of systems.

Case Studies

- Greene County, Ohio: Countywide Public Transit Coordination;
- Buffalo County, Nebraska: Coordination Through Brokerage;
- Huron County, Ohio: Coordination Among Agencies, Transit Systems, and Counties;
- Bay County, Michigan: Transit System Brokerage;
- Northwest Montana: Blackfeet Transit;
- Roseau County, Minnesota: Small-Scale Agency Coordination;
- Ottawa County, Ohio: Growing from Agency to Public Transportation;
- Alger County, Michigan: Coordinated Public Transit Services;
- Holmes County, Ohio: Coordinated Services and Dispatching;
- Union County, Ohio: Contracted Local Services;
- Hubbard County, Minnesota: Public, Agency, and Intercity Services;
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska: Nearing Consolidation;
- Mason County, Washington: Countywide Coordination;
- Butte County, California: Attempting to Consolidate Services;
- Northwestern California: Klamath Trinity Non-Emergency Transportation;
- Wasco County, Oregon: Multistrategy Countywide Coordination;
- Riverside County, California: Volunteer Transportation for Multiple Agencies;
- Washington, Multnomah, and Clackamas Counties, Oregon: Multicounty Coordinated Volunteer Services;
- Fresno County, California: Multiprovider Coordination;
- Kern County, California: Countywide Public Transportation Coordination;

- Western Indiana: Multicounty Public Transit Services;
- Malheur County, Oregon: Coordinated Agency Trips;
- Merced County, California: Consolidated Services;
- Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties, Oregon: Program Coordination Within One Agency;
- South Central Illinois Mass Transit District: Progress Toward Coordination;
- Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah: Navajo Transit System;
- Southern Illinois: Centralized Multicounty Services;
- North Central Minnesota: Regional Public Transit Services; and
- Eastern Washington and North Central Idaho: Multiple Coordination Strategies.

GREENE COUNTY, OHIO: COUNTYWIDE PUBLIC TRANSIT COORDINATION

Program	**Greene Coordinated Agency Transportation System (CATS)**
Sponsoring Organization	Greene County Commissioners, MRDD, DJFS, other social service agencies
City, State	Xenia, OH
Service Type	Demand response
Service Area	Greene County, OH
Service Area Population	147,886
Service Area Size (sq mi)	421
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	54,776
Annual Expenses	$1,074,275
Cost/Trip	$19.61
Major Funding Sources	FTA Section 5311
Coordinating Agencies	Greene County Commissioners, County Board of Mental Retardation and Development Disabilities, Department of Job and Family Services, social service agencies (informal)
Other	Broker for 51 participating agencies

Background: The Greene Coordinated Agency Transportation System (CATS) offers countywide public transportation service. Major funding comes from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) Section 5311 program administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation. Greene CATS has an agreement with Greene County Commissioners to provide Section 5311-funded service. Greene CATS is also, through the Greene County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, the lead agency for coordinating local transportation services. Greene CATS has service contracts with the Greene County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to provide their transportation service. Arrangements between Greene CATS and social service agencies participating in the brokerage system are informal. A private company operates under contract to Greene CATS to provide transportation service for the Section 5311 program. Greene CATS' vehicles are stored and maintained by the county.

Greene County is located in southwest Ohio and is adjacent to the City of Dayton and Montgomery County. In 2000, Greene County had a population of 147,886 with a land area of 421 square miles. The largest communities in the county are Beavercreek (33,626); Fairborn (31,300); and Xenia (24,664). Despite being adjacent to Dayton, Greene County is highly rural in character. Rural land accounts for more than 95 percent of the land area in the county.

Greene CATS operates demand-response service on weekdays, 5:00 a.m. to 11 p.m., Saturdays 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Sundays 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Overall days and hours vary by agency according to specific agency needs. The base fare is $1. A staff of three manages the brokered service. All requests for transportation and brokering are centralized through CATS.

In addition to managing the public transportation service, Greene CATS is the transportation broker for 51 participating agencies. This brokering is achieved without contracts or memoranda of understanding. The 51

agencies have 97 vehicles, representing 86 percent of the social service agency vehicles in the county. Twenty-three agencies operate a transportation service, 34 agencies purchase services, and some do both. Greene CATS simply facilitates connections among agencies with transportation needs and those with available transportation capacity. The agencies work directly among themselves and each uses its own billing rates. All billing and payment for services is handled directly among the agencies at rates that the various agencies have established. The participating agencies discovered that they had more options to purchase trips to satisfy the needs of their clients.

Trips are provided for work, medical, agency appointments, and other purposes. Most of the trips are referred by Greene CATS participating agencies (80%). Five percent are self-referrals and 15 percent are from agencies outside the brokering system.

Greene CATS has helped participating agencies. For example, it has helped a senior center locate funding for dialysis transportation, a local taxi company to obtain a wheelchair accessible vehicle and place it in service, and the local county council on aging to obtain funding for brokered trips.

Coordination Process: Before 1994, the desire to coordinate transportation services was an ongoing discussion for many years, with fits and starts as key players changed. In 1994, through the initiative of the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), a decision was made to conduct a study of the need for coordinated transportation services in the county. The study was supported by a grant from the MPO, which provided technical assistance to key Greene County stakeholders for completion of the study. The study was completed in 1996. In earlier years, when consolidation of services was entertained, turfism emerged as a critical issue that thwarted progress. An important outcome of the 1996 study was the consensus that it is acceptable to be protective of legitimate personal interests.

The study recommended that a brokerage system be established to help participating agencies provide the best transportation they could. When the study was completed, the right people were participating and strong consensus had been achieved. In the words of the CATS director, it “just made sense” to take action. Strong political support, especially from county commissioners, was present at the outset of the needs study and carried over to implementation.

Based on the study’s recommendations, Greene CATS was organized in 1997 as a 501C(3) not-for-profit agency. This structure was created because the participating agencies that saw a need for organizing transportation service delivery were not-for-profit agencies. Greene CATS has a 13-member board, with an executive director, and all members are participating not-for-profit agencies. In January 2001, public transportation service started with funding from the Section 5311 rural transportation program.

Benefits of Coordination and Success: According to the transportation coordinator, the principal benefits of coordination have been the following:

- Access to more funding (Federal, state, and local),
- An expansion in transportation options,
- Better use of vehicle capacity,
- An increase in overall trip making, and
- Enhanced visibility and image resulting from the presence of newer vehicles.

Other benefits include increased productivity and higher quality, more competitive service among three taxi companies, which are stronger transportation providers as a result.

The quality of service delivered by local taxi companies has improved with their purchase of $150,000 to $200,000 in transportation services. A third taxi company has opened in the county, adding additional competition. While no formal criteria have been developed, the rides are distributed on a fair share basis, with satisfactory performance required for a company to maintain its trip level.

Agencies have shared their vehicles with the clients of other agencies, so that service among participating agencies is no longer client only. If agencies need more transportation than they can provide, agencies can purchase transportation from the contract service provider. A peer review system has been put in place to

ensure that agencies do not dump their clients on the transportation system. Contract rates have been established by agencies to discourage dumping. CATS is negotiating with a local hospital to take title to its van and integrate its transportation needs into the coordinated system.

The biggest success to come from coordination efforts is that of 51 participating organizations, not a single agency has left. There have been few disagreements and a high level of trust has been achieved.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: The biggest, or most surprising, problem has been the realization that coordinating has been much harder to achieve than was imagined. Interpersonal skills have been critical. Frontline leadership on a daily basis is required.

Recommendations to Others: The best advice is to offer to the public, the community, and agencies involved in coordination efforts a set of products and services of true value.

BUFFALO COUNTY, NEBRASKA: COORDINATION THROUGH BROKERAGE

Program	**R.Y.D.E. (Reach Your Destination Easily)**
Sponsoring Organization	Buffalo County Community Health Partners Transportation Social Work Group
City, State	Kearney, NE
Service Type	Door-to-door transportation services
Service Area	Buffalo County, NE
Service Area Population	37,477
Service Area Size (sq mi)	968
Data for Year Ending	2002
One-way Trips per Year	81,789 one-way boardings
Annual Expenses	$475,000
Cost/Trip	$475,000/81,789 = $5.81
Major Funding Sources	JARC
Coordinating Agencies	Local university, City of Kearney, Buffalo County, local cab and livery companies, local school districts, Mid-Nebraska Community Action, Inc., hospital
Other	The total agency annual budget is $9.5 million; transportation gets 5 percent, according to 2002 annual report. Transit gets input and resources from Nebraska Department of Roads Transit Division.

Background: Buffalo County, Nebraska is located in south central Nebraska. With a population of 37,477 and 968 square miles, Buffalo County is situated in the heart of Nebraska's farmland. The County's only city is Kearney, which has varied medical or major shopping facilities. With many people traveling to Kearney from outlying areas, transportation was always a problem.

Many different systems of delivering transportation were in place in Buffalo County in 1996, yet many people were still unable to make the necessary connections to life services, such as medical appointments, employment, and shopping. In early 1996, four separate committees in Buffalo County looked into ways of delivering transportation services. Coordination was found to be the lacking factor in having a viable transportation alternative.

Coordination Activities: R.Y.D.E. Transit started operation in Buffalo County on January 3, 2000, after 4 years of research, planning, and hard work by the Buffalo County Community Health Partners Transportation Goal Work Group. The Goal Work Group brought together representatives from more than 20 different agencies in Kearney and from Buffalo County. Agencies represented were as diverse as the local university, the City of Kearney, Buffalo County, employment specialists, health care representatives, local cab and livery companies, representatives from state agencies on transportation and human services, and local school district representatives. The Nebraska Department of Roads Transit Division gave valuable input to the process by providing leadership and resources for this group. This unique planning process made R.Y.D.E Transit a true community effort. From the beginning, the Goal Working Group realized eliminating duplication of planning and coordination resources was the best solution to a rural county's transportation needs.

The Goal Work Group focused on commonalities inherent in community transportation, thereby allowing a greater breadth of partnership to develop. R.Y.D.E. Transit serves Kearney and Buffalo County with on-demand public transportation and represents the first brokered transit system to operate in Nebraska. The idea is based on the utilization of existing community resources to meet the need of public transportation in rural areas. Mid-Nebraska Community Action, Inc. (MNCA), the local community action agency, took the lead in the effort by offering office space, salaries, and executive direction for the transit operation.

R.Y.D.E. Transit began operation by assuming the responsibilities of a vehicle owned and operated by the local hospital, Good Samaritan Health Systems, the "Health Express." R.Y.D.E. operates this vehicle through a contract with the hospital. This vehicle was underutilized in its role of connecting people with mobility limitations to health care. Immediately, the ridership of the vehicle grew from an average of 5 boardings a day to more than 15 boardings a day within the first 2 weeks of operation. R.Y.D.E. then assumed the operational duties of the two existing public transit vehicles in Kearney, operated by MNCA.

These three vehicles were brought under one dispatch system to help use resources more effectively. MNCA then allowed R.Y.D.E. to rehabilitate two vehicles to expand the fleet to five. R.Y.D.E. contracted with a local agency that provides transportation services to persons with disabilities. A few months later a contract with a local employment agency was written, allowing R.Y.D.E. to provide transportation for them. This brought the number of vehicles in the system to seven. These vehicles, when not in use for the contracts, are used to provide public transportation for Kearney and Buffalo County.

The Buffalo County Community Health Partners Transportation Goal Work Group and Nebraska Department of Roads Transit Division still provide direction and leadership for R.Y.D.E. Through this collaboration, R.Y.D.E. Transit has been able to be involved with many different projects.

Benefits of Coordination: By bringing these vehicles "under one roof," R.Y.D.E. has been more responsive to customer needs in Buffalo County. R.Y.D.E. eliminated barriers to providing transportation to the public. Original operating hours before R.Y.D.E. took over were 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and were expanded to 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. This has allowed R.Y.D.E. to better serve those community members who need to take public transportation to and from work.

R.Y.D.E. also abolished the waiting and time requirements. Before R.Y.D.E., strict rules existed for scheduling rides 24 hours in advance and for providing intake information, which needed to be recorded before rides were given. R.Y.D.E. has also established operations on holidays to give mobility-limited customers access to health care, employment, and social activities on those days.

Additionally, R.Y.D.E. has expanded transportation access to rural Buffalo County. R.Y.D.E. now has vehicles available to serve residents outside of Kearney 5 days a week. Before R.Y.D.E., established routes served only part of Buffalo County once a week. The expansion of these routes has been offset in part by the contract with the hospital. This has allowed for better service to mobility-limited rides outside of Kearney. R.Y.D.E. further expanded service to rural residents as part of the 2000 Job Access Reverse Commute/Job Access Grant, which was awarded to them in January 2001.

The system has also been granted funds to implement intelligent transportation systems or ITS into rural transit. R.Y.D.E. is using these funds to upgrade the radio dispatch system to include telephone line access for the drivers, giving them safe, secure access to emergency personnel and the dispatch staff in times of emergency. The system is also implementing computer-aided dispatch software to increase the reliability of the system for the customers.

R.Y.D.E. saw rapid growth in ridership in the first year of operations. R.Y.D.E. provided a total of 33,000 rides in 2000. In 1999, public transportation provided 11,000 rides in Buffalo County. During its first month of operation, the system provided 1,000 rides in Kearney and Buffalo County and that number increased to more than 38,000 rides in December 2000. After its first full fiscal year in operation, R.Y.D.E. had provided more than 50,000 public transportation rides in Buffalo County.

HURON COUNTY, OHIO: COORDINATION AMONG AGENCIES, TRANSIT SYSTEMS, AND COUNTIES

Program	**Huron County Transit**
Sponsoring Organization	Huron County Transit Board
City, State	Norwalk, OH
Service Type	Demand response
Service Area	Huron County, OH + some
Service Area Population	56,240
Service Area Size (sq mi)	497
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	14,500
Annual Expenses	$199,142
Cost/Trip	$13.73
Major Funding Sources	Section 5311
Coordinating Agencies	Erie County, Sandusky County, 15 local agencies, 3 Erie County agencies, Sandusky Transit (Huron County Transit has contracts with 10 of those agencies)

Background: In Huron County, the Huron County Transit Board is the Section 5311 rural transportation grant recipient and the direct provider of transportation services. Huron County Transit serves Huron County and contiguous areas representing a service area of more than 497 square miles with a population of 56,240 in 1990. Through coordination with Erie County and a link in a transportation corridor connecting two counties, travel is coordinated with the transportation system in Sandusky County. Huron County Transit provides more than 14,500 passenger trips annually. Current operations include 197,449 vehicle miles and 10,929 vehicle hours of service.

The Huron County Transit Board provides demand response service from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on weekdays and from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends. The cost is $2 within the county. Transfers are $3 for the U.S. 250 corridor, where a significant concentration of employers are located.

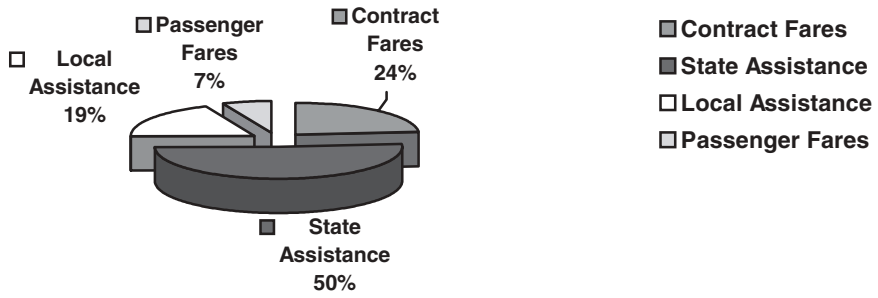
Huron County Transit has eight employees: three are in administrative positions and five are in operations positions. As of 2001, the system had five vehicles. Four vehicles are handicap accessible and will seat 10 riders plus two wheel chairs; the other vehicle seats 11 passengers. Recent operating information is shown in Table 12 and Figure 1.

Table 12:
Operating Statistics for Huron County Transit

*Operating Expenses**		*Operating Funds*		*Performance Measures*	
Total operating costs	$122,314	Federal assistance	0	Operating Recovery Ratio	49%
Total administration costs	$76,828	State assistance	$101,712	Operating Expense/Vehicle Mile	
Total system costs	$199,142	State E&D assistance	0		$0.99
		Local assistance	$37,468	Operating Expense/Trip	$13.49
		Passenger fares	$12,954	Passenger Trips/Vehicle Mile	
		Contract fares	$47,010		$0.08
		Other revenues	0		
		Total revenues	$199,144		

* 2001 estimate

Figure 1:
Huron County Transit Funding Sources



Transportation is coordinated among 15 agencies in Huron County and 3 agencies in Erie County. Huron County Transit and Sandusky Transit have coordinated a scheduled transfer between the two systems through service in the U.S. 250 corridor. Scheduling and dispatching is done by Huron County Transit. The primary coordination takes place between the counties. They are looking into establishing a call system and implementing a computer software program to do scheduling.

Huron County Transit has contracts for service with 10 agencies, including county Departments of Job and Family Services, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD), and Health, as well as the Erie County Senior Center and Sandusky Transit. All vehicles are shared and covered under county insurance. Contracts and memoranda of understanding have been executed with another 19 agencies to provide transportation. Purchase orders for transportation service are accepted from those who do not have contracts. Through this coordination of service, clients from different agencies, supported by various funding sources, are transported on the same vehicle.

The Huron County Transit Board participates with neighboring counties to offer “World Link” service. Passengers transfer to Lorain County transportation service for $3 and are able to travel to Cleveland Hopkins Airport and thus “link to the world.”

Coordination Process: In 1994, several human service agencies recognized there was no transportation available for individuals who were not eligible for county services. The Huron County Health Department, Huron County Job and Family Services, Huron County Senior Center, MRDD Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the vocational school worked together and received a grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) in 1998. The county commissioners were the grantee and the Huron County Senior Center served as the lead agency. During the first 2 years, coordination was only within Huron County.

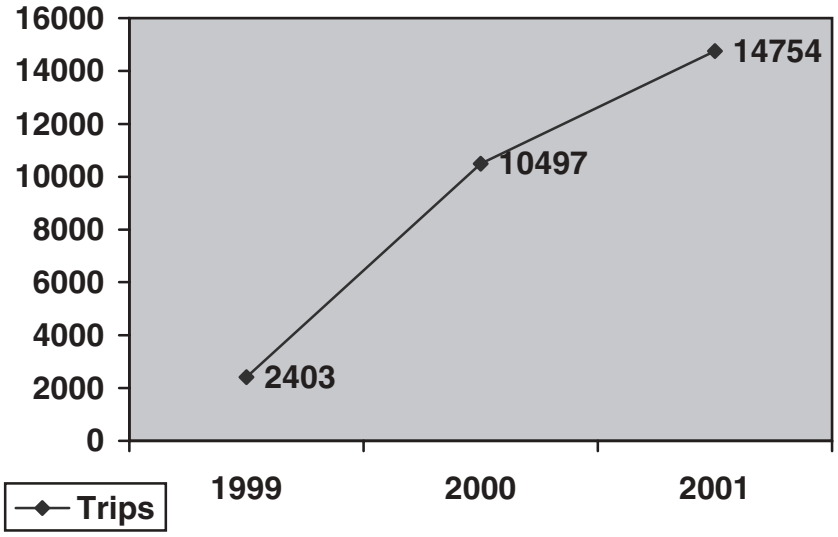
In 2000, intercounty coordination began as a result of the unmet need for transportation to and from employment. Because of a large number of service jobs in Erie County, people needed to travel from Huron to Erie County. Coordination with Erie began. There were not enough vehicles for the new route to connect with Sandusky Transit so additional funding was sought. This effort was supported by the inclusion of transportation questions in a needs assessment being conducted by the Huron County Health Department. The results of the survey indicated a needs assessment for transportation. The result was that a county commissioner supported the establishment of a demonstration project to purchase vehicles.

Next, county commissioners established a county transit board. The board facilitated a decision to submit an application for rural transportation funding from ODOT. Current plans call for pursuit of this grant for 2003. In addition to new rural transportation service, coordination effort will continue to meet the needs that the new rural transportation service cannot meet, such as prioritizing transportation needs of those with nonemergency medical treatment.

Huron County is collaborating with Sandusky County to develop the capability to use Sandusky's computer dispatching and scheduling system with a single call center in Sandusky County. Three or four providers would access the system via an Internet connection, with scheduling done at the call center.

Benefits of Coordination: The biggest success has been coordinating services between the two transit systems that operate in the U.S. 250 corridor. This coordination provides a transfer from Huron County Transit to Sandusky Transit in Erie County. It also provides a link to Lorain County. Other counties are now contacting them and trying to coordinate services. Another success has been providing transportation to and from work, which accounts for 60 percent to 75 percent of the trips. Other benefits of coordinating service are vehicle sharing, which reduces trip duplication and in turn reduces costs. Transportation service to more areas and more trips overall have resulted. The number of trips over the past 2 years has significantly increased (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Huron County Transit's Ridership Increase



Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: From the start, elected officials have been involved, providing letters of support to accompany grant applications for financial support for local matching funds. Continuing support is maintained by inviting them to meetings and sending out a newsletter. Huron Transit has also received a great deal of support from ODOT, including funding, guidance, and advice.

The greatest barrier has been trying to work with uncooperative people. The various reasons that agencies and potential riders do not want to cooperate include fear that they will lose funding, not wanting to try something new, and not wanting to give up their own vehicles.

Recommendations for Others: Huron County Transit staff offered these suggestions:

- ✦ It is good to learn from others, but remember that every county and every system is different. What works in one location may not work everywhere;
- ✦ Identify the unmet needs and determine what will work best for your community;
- ✦ Realize as coordination begins, everyone may agree there is a need for transportation, but may differ on how to meet that need;
- ✦ Be patient, it will take time to work together and make compromises; and
- ✦ Work with individuals and agencies committed to the project and realize it is not always possible to win everyone over.

BAY COUNTY, MICHIGAN: TRANSIT SYSTEM BROKERAGE

Program	**Bay METRO**
Sponsoring Organization	MDOT and Consolidation Transportation Program
City, State	Bay City, MI
Service Type	Demand response, fixed route, curb to curb
Service Area	Bay County, MI
Service Area Population	110,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	477
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	655,546
Annual Expenses	$5,600,000
Cost/Trip	$8.54
Major Funding Sources	Property tax levy
Coordinating Agencies	"Almost all human services agencies in the community" (YMCA, social services, preschools, area agencies on aging, Head Start), recently Arenac County

Background: Bay METRO provides fixed-route and curb-to-curb service throughout Bay County. It has contracts with almost all human service agencies in the community, such as YMCA, Social Services, preschool programs, Area Agency on Aging, and Head Start. The system emerged in the 1970s and, since its beginning, has been responsible for transportation coordination in the community. Every agency that had a vehicle was encouraged to coordinate with Bay METRO. Bay METRO transports persons with disabilities, seniors, children in after school programs and in local programs for at-risk children, and others. The Board of Directors governs the system. The board hires the general manager who manages day-to-day operations.

Bay County, Michigan, has an area of 477 square miles and a population of 110,000 persons. The principal city—Bay City—has a population of just under 40,000; the urbanized area has a population of about 75,000.

Transportation system characteristics are outlined below:

- **Number of vehicles:** 47 buses (6 large, 7 medium, 34 small), 1 trolley, and 12 lift vans;
- **Annual transportation budget:** FY2002 operating budget is $5,600,000;
- **Other services provided in addition to transportation:** none;
- **Number of employees:** 110 full time, 10 part time;
- **Number of passengers:** 655,546 in FY2001;
- **Cost per passenger:** $5,600,000/655,546 = $8.54. This is an average cost; this cost is higher for demand-responsive service and lower for fixed-route service.

Service hours are from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday. Private carriers are contracted for after-hours service. Reimbursement is done using price per trip fare, which is $3.91 per trip from Bay METRO and $1 for each passenger traveling in the urbanized areas. For after-hours carriers, Bay METRO purchases vehicles, maintains them, and trains drivers. Although drivers are responsible for buying liability insurance, Bay METRO has an umbrella insurance policy that covers private carriers.

Contracts are in place with all previously mentioned agencies, as well as with school districts, community action programs, and county commissioners in other counties in order to provide non-stop multi-county transportation for people going to a hospital in another county.

Coordination Process: Coordination efforts started with the MDOT Coordination and Consolidation Transportation Program more than 20 years ago. Now Bay METRO has a property tax levy of 75 cents on every $100,000 net worth. That levy generates $1.6 million a year, 30 percent of that provides Bay METRO's total budget. Bay METRO has just started to coordinate transportation services in neighboring Arenac County with 15,000 people. Arenac County did not have transportation services until Bay METRO provided its services. The request to do so came from Michigan DOT. All operational work is subcontracted, however, Bay METRO is doing scheduling and administration.

Data are not currently available to document the need for coordination because of the long period of time over which coordinated services developed. However, there is strong recognition that there certainly had been an unmet need for the transportation services in the community before.

Bay METRO has strong political support from people of the community. During the last tax levy renewal in August 2000, it had experienced better than expected voting results from the surrounding communities. The transit authority is focused on providing services that are needed by the people. County and city officials work together with Bay METRO to improve services and better coordinate transportation. Local businesses are also very supportive, because Bay METRO transports people to them.

Bay METRO is governed by a board of directors, which has nine members approved by county commissioners. The Specialized Service Committee, which consists of representatives from the participating agencies (about 20 to 50 members), is the driving force behind the transportation coordination. It meets monthly.

To get the service functioning, interlocal agreements with other counties were executed so that some groups of passengers do not have to transfer when crossing county borders. Agreements were developed with school districts, community action programs, all subcontractors, all participating agencies, and county commissioners of other counties. Schedules, bus stops, and transfer points were created in the 1970s.

Benefits of Coordination: All the usual benefits of transportation coordination apply to Bay METRO:

- ✦ Access to more funding;
- ✦ Lower trip costs for riders;
- ✦ Lower trip costs for agencies;
- ✦ Provision of transportation in areas formerly without transportation service;
- ✦ Overall increase in the number of trips provided;
- ✦ Reduced vehicle travel and less duplication of services;
- ✦ Greater productivity, more riders per vehicle;
- ✦ Better access to jobs, health care, and shopping;
- ✦ Increased activity for local businesses, and
- ✦ Enhanced image and visibility for transit.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions:

Problems with coordination:

> "Funding is not a problem for us. We are very forgiving: we say you have to work with us and we will provide you with our service. If you are looking for reasons not to coordinate, there's always something that stops you from doing it. But if you determined to do it, nothing is a problem. Working with a community, you provide services that are needed."

State support:

> "The State has been helpful, for the most part. Again, you just have to work with them, help them and do not embarrass them. They have asked us to manage transportation services in the county to the north of us (Arenac County), they know we have good practices and they trust us."

Additional help:

> "It would be helpful if people knew what they need and what they are ready to contribute. Some agencies do not have a very clear understanding of that they need and what it takes to accomplish it."

People involved with the Bay County System also noted that

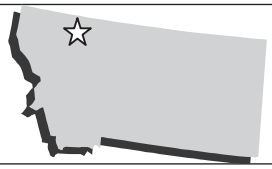
- Coordination is seen as a lot of work, which some people would like to avoid. Transit managers are seen as the worst enemies of change: most of them do not want to be bothered with new ideas.
- Satisfaction with service is high. A recent rider survey indicates this: METRO's service is rated as excellent by 54 percent of its riders.

Another comment is one testimony to Bay METRO's formula for success:

> "We are expected to be everything to everybody and often we are, people have very high expectations for our services. Local groups and agencies have changed the way they do business depending on how we are able to provide the service. They would come to us and say "We need service, how does it work into your schedule?" We often try to tell groups and agencies not to set up any programs before they talk to us. We may not be able to accommodate their transportation needs, however, if we work together we should be able to work something out."

Recommendations for Others: Know the need of the community, and tailor your services accordingly. The services you provide at the moment may not be the services the community wants.

NORTHWEST MONTANA: BLACKFEET TRANSIT



Program	**Blackfeet Transit**
Sponsoring Organization	Blackfeet Reservation
City, State	Browning, MT
Service Type	Dial-a-ride transit service
Service Area	Blackfeet Reservation and City of Browning, including most of Glacier County, which is largely unpopulated and stretches north to Canada.
Service Area Population	1,065 (year 2000)
Service Area Size (sq mi)	2,343
Data for Year Ending	2002
One-way Trips per Year	23,000
Annual Expenses	$155,000 (rough estimate)
Cost/Trip	$7.65 first quarter of 2003; $5.04 second quarter of 2003
Major Funding Sources	FTA 5311 (50%) and self-funded (50%)
Coordinating Agencies	MDT for FTA funding coordination, organizations located in Browning and the Blackfeet Reservation, including Indian Health Services, the community college, community health representatives, nursing homes, and markets.

Background: Blackfeet Transit in Northwest Montana has been providing transportation service since 1978. It is a growing program serving the Blackfeet Reservation and Browning. The Reservation is approximately 1.5 million acres and includes most of Glacier County, which is largely unpopulated and stretches north to the Canadian border. The Blackfeet Tribe consists of 14,700 enrolled members, approximately 9,000 of which live on the reservation. Browning, located just east of Glacier National Park (a popular tourist destination), and within the Blackfeet Indian Reservation at the junction of U.S. Highway 2 and State Highway 89, is the largest city in the county and is the headquarters for the Blackfeet Indian Tribal Government and the hub of tribal activity. Browning's population was 1,065 in 2000, a 9-percent decline from 1990. Approximately 16 percent of the population of the reservation and Browning combined is non-Indian. Other communities in the Blackfeet Reservation include Starr School, Blackfoot, East Glacier, St. Mary, Babb, Kiowa, Boarding School, Seville, and Heart Butte.

Blackfeet Transit provides more than 23,000 one-way, dial-a-ride trips a year to people within Browning and the outlying Blackfeet Reservation area combined. Blackfeet Transit serves anyone in need of a ride within the service area, including persons with disabilities, those going to medical appointments, senior citizens, people transitioning from welfare to work, and students. The program prides itself on being inclusive and available to anyone, regardless of whether they are a tribal member, have special needs, or any other factor. The community has become familiar with Blackfeet Transit primarily through word-of-mouth referrals. A dispatcher is on call for 8 hours, scheduling dial-a-ride service at least a day in advance. Service is available Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. At this time, dial-a-ride is the only type of service being offered; a fixed-route system with bus stops was originally envisioned but later considered to be too expensive and a lower budget priority. The program operates one 7-passenger van, two 12-passenger buses with wheel chair lifts, and one 18-passenger bus also with a wheel chair lift. These vehicles are operated 5 days a week, except for one of the two passenger buses that is used less frequently.

Blackfeet Transit has been growing since its inception in 1978, in terms of ridership and funding levels. As program staff found methods to raise awareness of the availability of transit service, ridership increased. With the increased ridership, Blackfeet Transit was able to secure additional funding and more vehicles. But staff say that resources are still not enough to meet estimated demand. The budget has increased by an estimated $69,000 over the past 14 years. Blackfeet Transit functions completely as a demand-response program, but given the program's growth, different routing and organizational structures are being explored. Expansion to serve the entire 40-mile reservation is also envisioned.

Organization and Funding: The Blackfeet Indian Tribal Government is the public agency that operates Blackfeet Transit. A transportation advisory committee (TAC) assists program staff with management and decision-making. The TAC consists of tribal members and representatives of tribal organizations with a transportation interest or skill, such as the tribal planning department. Five staff people currently operate Blackfeet Transit: one supervisor, one dispatcher, two full-time drivers, and one 9-month driver.

Working with the TAC, the Blackfeet Transit program is mainly self-governed and has seen little need for formal partnerships with outside agencies. The exception to this is the relationship that Blackfeet Transit maintains with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), which enables the tribe to receive Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funds. Section 5311 funds provide one-half of the program's resources, while the other half is provided directly by the tribe. MDT pays for 80 percent of the tribe's vehicles, while 20 percent of vehicle funding comes from the tribe. Blackfeet Transit does not receive any funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The FY2003 operating budget was approximately $155,000.

Coordination at Blackfeet Transit: As mentioned, Blackfeet Transit coordinates with MDT to receive funding and comply with applicable regulations. Yet, the primary focus of Blackfeet Transit coordination is with (Indian and non-Indian) individuals and organizations in the Blackfeet Reservation and Browning. These organizations include, but are not limited to, community health representatives, nursing homes, the program for the deaf and persons with disabilities, the welfare office, Blackfeet Community College, IGA supermarket, the Indian Health Services hospital, the tribal office, shelters, and law enforcement officials. The advisory governing body, or TAC, consists of representatives from tribal organizations, including the above businesses and agencies. TAC members were selected for their transportation expertise, interest in Blackfeet Transit's mission, and/or affiliation with people who have specialized transportation needs.

While Blackfeet Transit actively promotes its service to end users, coordination among agencies predominantly occurs when an organization seeking to assist its constituents approaches Blackfeet Transit, rather than through efforts by Blackfeet Transit to form alliances with organizations. Blackfeet Transit does not formally contract with these organizations. Rather, informal coordination practices are in place with an emphasis on the service delivery and quality. Dial-a-ride service is scheduled by the individual who contacts Blackfeet Transit, as well as by certain organizations, such as senior centers, on behalf of their clients. Blackfeet Transit contracts with a nearby garage because it does not have its own maintenance facility. This is the extent of current outsourcing but as the program grows it may need to work with more contractors or form operational partnerships.

Benefits of Coordination: Increasing demand, ridership, and associated resources are the most substantial successes of coordinated service. By offering service in response to and coordination with the Indian and non-Indian organizations in Browning and the outer areas of the reservation, the number of locations and riders has expanded. More vehicles have been obtained, enabling faster and more frequent service. Blackfeet Transit has been able to achieve these increases through perseverance. Staff have consistently tried a range of promotions to end users to expand awareness and use of public transportation offerings. A related benefit is the community-wide knowledge of Blackfeet Transit's availability. Blackfeet Transit is the only public transit service in the Browning area that individuals and organizations can contact directly or refer people to for rides. Initially, people thought that Blackfeet Transit was just for elderly people, but staff have succeeded in educating people that it is for everyone.

Challenges and Lessons Learned: Having been in operation for almost 26 years now, the core advice that Blackfeet Transit's supervisor would offer other tribal programs is to keep trying different tactics if one does

not work. For example, if ridership is low, then try a different promotional approach. Over time, people will become aware and ride. Now, ridership is growing so fast that the existing management framework is being challenged, and new organizational structures are being explored. As a small program, Blackfeet Transit has found it most efficient for the tribe to operate the program in coordination with the TAC and community it serves, rather than in partnership with another governing body. As the program grows, organizational and operational changes may require new types of coordination.

ROSEAU COUNTY, MINNESOTA: SMALL-SCALE AGENCY COORDINATION

Program	**Roseau County Transit**
Sponsoring Organization	Roseau County Transit
City, State	Roseau, MN
Service Type	Flexible fixed-route service and dial-a-ride service with 24 hours advance scheduling
Service Area	Roseau County, MN
Service Area Population	16,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	1,663
Data for Year Ending	2000
One-way Trips per Year	17,185
Annual Expenses	$123,307
Cost/Trip	$7.18
Major Funding Sources	Federal (Section 5311 rural transportation funding); Minnesota Department of Transportation; Roseau County
Coordinating Agencies	Social Services; County Commissioners; Roseau County Committee on Aging; Occupational Development Center; Focus Corporation; Rehabilitation Service Office; Head Start; a nursing home

Background: Roseau County is a very rural county located in northeastern Minnesota on the Canadian border. Roseau County has a population of 16,000 and a land area of 1,663 square miles. The county has five towns, and each has a population less than 2,500 persons.

Roseau County Transit provides flexible, fixed-route service and dial-a-ride service with 24 hours advance scheduling. The Roseau County Committee on Aging took the initiative to organize transportation service and is the operating agency for delivery of service. A flexible fixed-route bus usually deviates only 1 mile from the route, but it can deviate sometimes several miles. Fixed-route service runs only two times a day: in the morning and in the afternoon.

Roseau County Transit operates two vehicles, both wheelchair accessible with a capacity for 16 passengers and two wheelchairs. Staff includes one full-time manager, a part-time, assistant dispatcher, and nine part-time drivers. Roseau County Transit bills participating agencies $25 per hour for transportation service.

Roseau County Transit's operating budget in the year 2000 was $123,307. In 2000, Roseau County Transit provided 95,179 vehicle miles of transportation service, providing 17,185 rides. Service is available weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Roseau County Transit provides transportation for social services, including the Occupational Development Center, Focus Corporation, Head Start, and a nursing home. Head Start has its own vehicle, but they cannot accommodate all their trips with one vehicle, especially during the day.

Coordination Process: In 1990, the Northwestern Regional Development Commission conducted a survey among residents of Roseau County and found out that there was a strong need for transportation. No coordinated transportation services were available at that time. The Roseau County Committee on Aging decided to step forward and organized an advisory committee to deal with public transportation. The

Advisory Committee included the Occupation Development Center, Social Services, county commissioners, Focus Corporation, and the Rehabilitation Service Office. The Advisory Committee decided that getting a vehicle was most important and subsequently received a vehicle from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) through the Section 5310 Specialized Transportation Program. Being without operating funds, the Roseau County Committee on Aging relied on volunteer labor and organized fundraising campaigns to cover costs. Two years later, Roseau Transit ran out of operating funds and requested emergency funds from MnDOT. The result was that MnDOT worked with Roseau County to establish Section 5311 rural transportation funding. In 1993, the original vehicle was sold to Head Start and a new vehicle was purchased with Section 5311 funding. In 1997, another vehicle was purchased.

In 1999, Roseau County Commissioners decided to cover 35 percent of the operating budget. Before that, Roseau County Transit received fixed allocations from participating cities and the county, which were generally not sufficient. After accounting for farebox revenues, MnDOT provides the remaining 65 percent. This change resulted from an evaluation initiated by the Roseau County Committee on Aging that resulted in the recommendation adopted by the cities and county. The evaluation and recommendation focused on the value of public transportation to the county.

Benefits of Coordination: Roseau County Transit recognizes the following benefits of coordination: access to more funding; filling gaps where there was no service; better access to jobs, health care, and shopping; increased activity to local businesses; and enhanced visibility and image of transit. Their biggest success has been bringing local agencies together to achieve better access to funding.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: The major problem has been the turnover of staff. This is due in part to the nature of volunteer service. Additionally, talking to agencies and bringing them together sometimes is a problem. Roseau County Transit feels it has been successful, but it requires continuing attention.

MnDOT has been supportive in communication with local governments. It took local governments a period of time to recognize the role that transportation plays in a community. MnDOT provides annual assistance with contracts and agreements and provides education and training about new programs and opportunities available.

Greater coordination could be achieved by coordinating with neighboring counties.

Recommendations for Others: “Do not get discouraged. Coordination is really beneficial, especially when you see passengers riding the bus.”

OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO: GROWING FROM AGENCY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Program	**Ottawa County Transit Agency (OCTA)**
Sponsoring Organization	Ottawa County Transit Board
City, State	Port Clinton, OH
Service Type	Curb to curb
Service Area	Ottawa County and trips to Erie, Wood, Sandusky, Huron, Lucas, and Seneca counties
Service Area Population	40,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	253
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	46,000
Annual Expenses	$613,736
Cost/Trip	$21.15
Major Funding Sources	Ottawa County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD), ODOT, FTA, Ottawa County Commissioners, agency contracts, fares
Coordinating Agencies	County MRDD Board, Department of Job and Family Services, Salvation Army, United Way, Goodwill, retirement communities, nursing homes, school, area agencies on aging, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation
Other	Annual trips are those within the county.

Background: Ottawa County, located on the northern border of Ohio and southern border of Lake Erie, covers 253 square miles. Ottawa County has a population of approximately 40,000 residents. It is described as having a "small town feel," but it is also "home to a vast network of businesses, industries, and institutions that are leading the world in technology, development and investment." Despite many public highways, rail service, nearby airports, and even water transportation, public transportation services have only been available since 2000.

The Ottawa County Transit Agency (OCTA) provides curb-to-curb transportation service within the county and to six nearby counties (Erie, Wood, Sandusky, Huron, Lucas, and Seneca). OCTA is governed by the Ottawa County Transit Board and coordinates transportation efforts among the County MRDD Board, Department of Job and Family Services, Salvation Army, United Way, retirement communities, nursing homes, schools, Goodwill, area agencies on aging, and Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation.

OCTA is funded through the Ottawa County Board of MRDD, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Ottawa County Commissioners, agency contracts, and passenger fares.

Coordination Process: The need for public transportation had been discussed for 25 years, but it was not until 1992, when the Ottawa County Board of MRDD had the idea to extend their existing service to the public, that coordination began. At that time, MRDD was really the only agency that provided countywide transportation services. Other agencies transported clients in their own cars when transportation was needed. In 1994, MRDD decided to investigate grants and funding opportunities to develop a coordinated

system. In 1996, 16 agencies agreed that they needed and wanted a coordinated service. Following a grant proposal to the ODOT, Ottawa County was awarded a state coordination grant of $46,000 for 1997. MRDD was the lead agency and served as the governing board. There was also an advisory board made up of the regional planning director, an advocate for those with disabilities, an employee of Job and Family Services, and community members.

The coordination grant was used to bring key agencies together to determine how transportation service would be coordinated. Representatives from counties already coordinating service were brought in for advice and guidance. MRDD played a key role as the lead agency because they were the only county agency with a sizable transportation service. To get agencies interested, free transportation service was provided until the third month when a fee structure was implemented. During the first several months, problems were worked out as they arose. The number of trips has grown from 30 trips during the first month to the current 3,000 trips per month.

Initially, service was only available to agencies. Securing participation was relatively easy because most agencies needed transportation, but did not provide it themselves. There were few issues associated with giving up their own vehicles or drivers to join in the coordination effort. In fact, agency staffs recognized that they would be freed from transporting clients themselves and have more time to tend to their primary responsibilities.

OCTA has a contract with Job and Family Services to provide transportation to all of their clients for employment and Medicaid trips. OCTA provides bus service for sheltered workshop employees and local schools. Seven daily routes cover the county and provide nearly 46,000 passenger trips each year. OCTA also has memoranda of understanding with several other agencies. In addition to providing transportation with their own vehicles, OCTA also has a provider contract with a local cab company. This is a benefit to OCTA because they can offer more rides, and it is also a benefit to the cab company, which had difficulty maintaining business year round.

As the system grew, OCTA began thinking about offering transportation to the general public. The philosophy of MRDD in Ottawa County is to start and grow programs in the community and help those programs become independent. Becoming a county transit board was naturally the next step. In 1999, OCTA began providing service to individuals in need of transportation. In 1999, it also received $50,000 from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission to support development of coordinated services for its clients. In January 2000, OCTA became a public transportation system. To inform the public of the service, OCTA advertised in newspapers, placed rider guides throughout the community, and mailed letters.

Benefits of Coordination: The biggest success in coordinating is providing good service that was not previously available. OCTA also has gained access to additional funding. OCTA has acquired 12 vehicles through state and Federal funds that supported 90 percent of the cost. MRDD has benefited because they still pay the same amount for transportation as they always have, but now the service is expanded service. Other agencies can now offer transportation to clients, and their employees are freed from driving clients in their own cars.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: ODOT has provided support through their expertise, guidance, and a manual on transit coordination. Their support has been very helpful.

There were not many problems with coordination. Agencies were eager to have a transportation service. Most of the problems are related to funding. As agencies face budget cuts, they try to reduce costs by paying less for transportation. This represents a potential cost increase to OCTA. Another example of problems with funding is that those who are eligible for free rides through Job and Family Services do not take time to fill out paper work and instead just pay the passenger fare. Consequently, the reimbursement rate of $11 per trip is lost.

Recommendations for Others: OCTA's best advice would be to work with at least one agency that is well funded and tax supported.

ALGER COUNTY, MICHIGAN: COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES

Program	**Alger County Transit Authority (Altran)**
Sponsoring Organization	Transit authority
City, State	Munising, MI
Service Type	Demand response and some deviated fixed-route service
Service Area	Alger County
Service Area Population	Less than 10,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	913
Data for Year Ending	2000
One-way Trips per Year	90,000
Annual Expenses	$714,000
Cost/Trip	$7.93
Major Funding Sources	Federal and state funds, contracts with Family Independence Agency, Michigan Works, school districts, Meals on Wheels, Headstart, etc.
Coordinating Agencies	Family Independence Agency; Michigan Works; three of the four school districts in the county; summer schools; youth programs; Meals on Wheels; parks and recreation programs; mental health services; nursing homes; Head Start; churches (for Sunday worship services)
Other	Three times a day, Altran provides trips to a neighboring county where the regional hospital and the University are located. The hospital pays Altran $15 for each patient that Altran transports.

Background: Alger County is located in the Upper Peninsula, in northern Michigan. The county population is under 10,000. The county is 913 square miles in size.

The Alger County Transit Authority (Altran) serves Alger County, including the City of Munising. Munising is the county seat. Altran is located in Munising and provides demand response and some deviated fixed-route service. As a transit authority, Altran is governed by a board of directors.

Altran provides countywide service, Monday through Friday, between 5:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and on Saturdays, between 6:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Altran's operating budget was $714,000 in the year 2000. Operating 304,774 vehicle miles with a staff of 8 full-time and 14 part-time employees, Altran provided 90,000 passenger trips. Older adults account for 60 percent of Altran's riders. Altran operates 13 medium duty vehicles, 11 of which are wheelchair accessible. Vehicles can accommodate between 18 and 25 passengers.

Altran has agreements with several agencies. These agencies include the Family Independence Agency (the agency through which financial assistance programs for low-income families are provided), Michigan Works (the state program implementing Welfare to Work), three of the four school districts in the county, summer schools, youth programs, Meals on Wheels, parks and recreation programs, mental health services, nursing homes, and Head Start.

Three times a day, Altran provides trips to a neighboring county where the regional hospital and the university are located. The hospital pays Altran $15 for each patient that Altran transports. Informal agreements are in place with churches to provide transportation for Sunday worship services. Altran also

provides transportation to support recreational programs and hiking and backpacking programs (people park their cars, hike to a certain location, and use Altran for the transportation back to the cars).

Except for the school districts, Altran is the only agency in the county that has vehicles for transportation service. Other agencies receive their transportation service from Altran. Altran is responsible for all trip reservations, vehicle scheduling, and dispatching. In addition to maintaining its own vehicles, Altran provides maintenance for county law enforcement vehicles.

Coordination Development Process: Countywide public transportation services were initiated in January 1982. The Alger/Marquette Community Action Board was the third-party operator of transportation services for Alger County until March 1990. Altran was created in March 1990 under Michigan Act 196 as a transit authority to provide the countywide public transportation services. Establishing Altran to provide coordinated transportation services was initiated by several community organizations and agencies. Since 1990, Altran has experienced ridership growth of about 8 percent a year and recently finished building a new operations facility. The current Altran general manager has been the key person behind the development of transportation service in Alger County since its initiation in 1982. Altran, since 1990, has developed into a mature public transportation organization with high levels of customer service and professional operations.

Before 1991, Alger County had a much smaller transit system than now. Coordination made a great impact on ridership level and overall operating performance and quality. Since Altran is organized as a transit authority, no approval from the county or state had to be secured. The Board of Directors decided to coordinate with certain agencies, and the Transit Authority executed that decision. Because Altran mostly provides demand response service throughout the county, no schedules needed to be developed and printed. Advertisement was done by trading with the local radio station ("We put their logo on our buses, they did advertise our services") and by participating in different fairs and big public events.

Since 1997, transit providers in 15 counties in the Upper Peninsula of northern Michigan have been coordinating transportation services among themselves. Because all providers have been organized as transit authorities under state statutes, they have the independent authority to act, thus they do not need approval from county officials.

Benefits of Coordination: By coordinating transportation services, Altran has experienced better access to funding, lower costs to riders, less duplication of service, better vehicle use, fewer gaps in service, ability to meet more travel needs, and better image and visibility in the community. Altran also attributes its 8-percent annual growth in ridership to effective coordination.

Over the last 10 years, the biggest success in coordination has been full community support. Altran provides a valuable service to the community. By coordinating transportation services, they have been able to increase the level of services provided. This has been beneficial for Altran, the community, and participating agencies. Altran has the trust and confidence of the community.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: The major problem that still exists is the lack of funding. Altran lacks the financial resources to take advantage of available technology. Most helpful in this area would be computerized scheduling software and a geographic information system (GIS) to improve operating efficiencies.

In addition, some state regulations hamper the delivery of transportation services. An example is limitations on the ability of Altran to provide service that crosses county boundaries. For the past 10 years, Altran did not receive much help from the state. It was said that the state needs to do more planning and coordination programs especially in rural communities like Alger County.

Altran enjoys strong support from community leaders and local elected officials.

Recommendations for Others: To be successful in coordination of transportation, the transportation service provider needs to be involved in the community as much as possible. It is also important to learn how to listen. By listening, you find out what customers want. As a result, transportation services are better suited to meet the needs of customers, and unnecessary service is avoided.

HOLMES COUNTY, OHIO: COORDINATED SERVICES AND DISPATCHING

Program	**Holmes County Transportation Coordination (HCTC)**
Sponsoring Organization	Holmes County Commissioners
City, State	Millersburg, OH
Service Type	Curb-to-curb service to senior citizens, developmentally disabled students, residents with medical appointments outside of the county
Service Area	Holmes County; some travel outside of the county
Service Area Population	38,943
Service Area Size (sq mi)	423
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	16,000
Annual Expenses	$220,000
Cost/Trip	$13.75
Major Funding Sources	Coordinating agencies must participate financially.
Coordinating Agencies	27 agencies, including a senior center, three school districts, the Department of Job and Family Services, Every Woman's House, Juvenile Court, County Home, Red Cross
Other	HCTC began operations in April 2000. Transportation coordination was initiated as a result of planning required to prepare for new financial assistance and support service programs implemented in response to welfare reform.

Background: Holmes County Transportation Coordination (HCTC), which began operations in April 2000, provides coordinated transportation services in Holmes County. HCTC works in partnership with member agencies to provide transportation for eligible Holmes County residents. HCTC provides curb-to-curb service to senior citizens, developmentally disabled students, schools, and residents with medical appointments outside of the County. County Commissioners have key decision-making authority: the Operations Director, who is managing day-to-day operations at HCTC, reports directly to them.

HCTC has eleven vans, two of which are wheelchair accessible. HCTC operates with a budget of $220,000 and a staff of nine employees, three of whom are full time. The base fare for transportation service is $3 per trip within the county. For travel outside the county, the fare is $6 for trips up to 40 miles from the point of pickup with a $30 flat rate after that. In 2001, HCTC carried 16,000 passengers.

HCTC is providing coordinated transportation service with 27 agencies, including a senior center, three school districts, the Department of Job and Family Services, Every Women's' House, juvenile court, adult court, county home, and Red Cross. The participating agencies have 130 vehicles in service. HCTC takes all of the trip reservations and completes the vehicle scheduling. HCTC contacts each agency to assign their specific trips. Residents, participating agencies, and agency clients make trip requests. Trips are being coordinated to reduce duplication and increase service levels. School district contracts are in place with the County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and two school districts for transportation of developmentally disabled students. These students require transportation to schools that offer special needs classes. Typically, a student is picked up by a school district bus within his or her district. HCTC meets the school bus, and HCTC transports the student to the special needs school.

Holmes County is coordinating intercounty transportation service for medical trips with Morrow County. For 2 days of each month, HCTC provides trips for the residents of Holmes and Morrow Counties to hospitals in Cleveland while Morrow County Transit provides residents of both counties trips to Columbus hospitals. A single telephone number has been established for people to call to schedule pickup. Holmes and Morrow Counties are not contiguous; they are separated by Knox County. Several locations within Knox County are used for HCTC and Morrow County vehicles to meet to transfer passengers for the Cleveland and Columbus trips. The transfer locations are at interstate interchanges along Interstate 71. This service is provided using a pool of volunteer drivers. The result has been lower cost for passengers, reduced vehicle miles, and higher ridership.

Coordination Process: Transportation coordination was initiated as a result of planning required to prepare for new financial assistance and support service programs implemented in response to welfare reform. In Ohio, each county was required to execute a partnership agreement with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. A countywide needs study was completed. Transportation emerged as the biggest concern of county residents. As a result, a transportation committee that included representatives from most social service agencies in the county was formed. The committee currently has 12 members.

To begin coordinated transportation service, agreements were executed between 23 participating agencies and the Holmes County Commissioners. Before this initiative, coordination of transportation services among the agencies did not exist.

Benefits of Coordination: The benefits of coordination have been broad. Coordination has reduced the need for wheelchair accessible vehicles. Rather than many agencies having such vehicles, vehicles are shared, resulting in higher vehicle use. HCTC has been able to effectively use technology, such as a two-way radio system, that dramatically reduced the need to use cell telephones for communication.

The biggest success is that by coordinating efforts, one central telephone number has been established with one scheduling office. The result has been a dramatic reduction in duplication of service.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: Funding has been a roadblock to participation for some agencies. Coordinating agencies must participate financially. Some agencies have difficulty recognizing the need and agreeing to do this. As a rural county, hiring qualified drivers is difficult at times.

Recommendations for Others: Focus on good communication among agencies. Additionally, make available a 24-hour telephone consumer line.

UNION COUNTY, OHIO: CONTRACTED LOCAL SERVICES

Program	**UCATS**
Sponsoring Organization	Department of Job and Family Services
City, State	Marysville, OH
Service Type	Demand response; door-to-door service to clients of participating agencies (for medical appointments, groceries, etc.)
Service Area	Union County, OH
Service Area Population	40,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	460
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	17,000
Annual Expenses	$280,000
Cost/Trip	$16.47
Major Funding Sources	Contracts (93%), grants (5%), fees and donations (2%)
Coordinating Agencies	33 local agencies
Other	In-county trips cost $1.79 ($1.83 to contractors, $2 tokens to noncontractors), Out-of-county trips are $20 for less than 1.5 hour wait and $40 for dropoff and pickup. Service area is 437 square miles in Union County and some areas in four surrounding counties. Trips out of county are primarily for medical appointments

Background: UCATS provides demand response, door-to-door service to clients of its participating agencies to transport them to medical appointments, grocery stores, malls, work, and social and recreational activities. There are no fixed routes or transfers. UCATS works with 33 agencies. It has formal contracts with some agencies, and others have signed memoranda of understanding. The transportation coordinator reports to the director of Job and Family Services that serves as the lead agency for a transportation coordination project funded by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Union County, located in west central Ohio, covers 437 square miles. The county has approximately 40,000 residents, with about one-quarter of the residents living in the city of Marysville. Union County is the third fastest growing county in Ohio and is home to both farmland and industry. UCATS provides transportation to approximately 17,000 passengers per year within the county and to four surrounding counties. Most trips outside of the county are to medical appointments in Columbus and Cleveland.

UCATS operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and occasionally will provide service outside of those hours with contracted agencies. The cost is $1.79 per mile and, for county agencies that have a contract, the cost is $1.83 because of a 4 cents surcharge. For agencies who do not have a transportation budget or have clients who do not use transportation services frequently, tokens for $2 for a one-way trip may be purchased. Agencies then give tokens to their clients as needed. Trips outside of the county cost $20 if the driver does not have to wait for more than 1.5 hours. If a passenger is dropped off and picked up, the cost is $40. Eligibility for service is determined by the agencies.

The annual budget for UCATS is $280,000. Estimates based on the quarter ending December 31, 2001, indicate contracts bring in 93 percent of their income, grants 5 percent, and the remaining 2 percent comes

from fees and donations. UCATS has seven employees. All of their vehicles are 13-passenger minivans or high-top vans.

UCATS' mission is "to promote coordination of transportation resources among county agencies and on a limited basis provide transportation to county residents." UCATS fulfills its mission by

- ✦ Linking individuals needing transportation with transportation resources in the community,
- ✦ Assisting agencies in locating transportation resources for their clients,
- ✦ Providing overflow transportation for participating agencies,
- ✦ Helping to prevent duplication of effort by coordinating trips for participating agencies,
- ✦ Helping to negotiate the purchase of service contracts among agencies, and
- ✦ Seeking out additional sources of funding to improve transportation services in the county.

Coordination Process: In 1997, centralized transportation service did not exist in Union County. Although many agencies recognized there was a need, Job and Family Services initiated and coordinated the efforts. The Health Department and Adult Basic Learning and Education (ABLE) were very involved and helped organize efforts. A transportation study was conducted by the ODOT to determine eligibility for Section 5311 funding and to recommend ways services could be coordinated. One option was to create a brokerage or clearinghouse, and the other was to set up a separate service to meet the needs of the smaller agencies. Because they did not have any vehicles or drivers, the brokerage option was eliminated. The decision was made that a transportation service to meet participating agency needs would be established. As a result of the study and local decisions, transportation coordination grant funding was received from ODOT. It was awarded in 1999. Matching funds came from Union County. Elected officials have been supportive.

An advisory board made up of members representing agencies, the local government, and local businesses was created. The advisory board meets quarterly and has authority to make changes. There is also a partner board that meets twice a year and is made up of county residents, agency personnel, and representatives from area businesses. Although this board does not have authority to make changes, they can make recommendations for change. This board contributes through discussions of issues and development of ideas. As an example, UCATS was concerned about how to advertise because the service is not open to the general public. The board did not want people to get the idea that anyone could use the service, but it wanted to make those who qualify aware. The board appointed a committee to explore this topic and it reported back with several ideas, including making presentations at meetings held for the local agencies, distributing information in agency offices, and advertising in the newspaper.

The Job and Family Services agency took the first step toward coordination of services by using some of the grant money to hire a transportation coordinator. The transportation coordinator started the coordination process by following the advice offered in using an ODOT coordination handbook. Advisory board members visited other systems that were in areas similar to Union County. This was helpful because it enabled the members of the advisory board to see what was possible.

Next, an implementation plan was developed. Meetings were held with directors of the local agencies to develop relationships and identify their needs. Most of these agencies were already providing transportation so they were somewhat skeptical about joining UCATS. Other agency concerns included not wanting clients of other agencies using their vehicles, the cost of coordinated service, and losing their existing funding. However, it was discovered that most of the agencies did not have the time or money for preventive vehicle maintenance. They also needed training for their drivers. Transportation coordination funding was used to set up a package deal with a local garage to provide preventive maintenance (oil changes, detailing, etc.) for the vehicles and to pay for driver training. To build trust and enlist participation, these benefits to agencies were offered in exchange for joining UCATS. This approach proved to be effective.

Other relationships have developed as UCATS has identified needs and found creative ways to meet those needs. The Veterans Administration (VA) was not interested initially in contracting services because they had sufficient funding. However, the funds from the VA only cover costs for transportation to VA appointments. By contracting with UCATS, the VA can now offer veterans transportation to several destinations. In 2000, a contract was executed with the county hospital. UCATS agreed to provide

transportation in exchange for one of the hospital's vehicles and drivers. The hospital was concerned that patients would not receive good service, so conducting satisfaction surveys became a requirement of the contract. The survey indicated the passengers were pleased with the service.

Now that agencies' needs are being met, UCATS is looking to expand service by providing transportation to local industries (Honda, Scotts, and Goodyear) particularly on second and third shifts, where these employers need employees.

Benefits of Coordination: Coordinating services has provided several benefits. The cost of trips is reduced because there are now more people on the same vehicle, eliminating duplication. Agencies that previously did not provide transportation can now benefit from UCATS. An example is the Adult Basic Learning and Education program where there are now more people who can take advantage of this program because they have transportation. By consolidating trips that were occurring across agencies, UCATS now provides more trips overall. UCATS does not have much data because each agency was keeping its own records.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: Although the coordinated system was starting as a new system, UCATS has been very successful. ODOT was extremely supportive. ODOT provided very useful literature and training. Funding was more than adequate to get coordinated transportation service started. County commissioners have been strong supporters. The biggest success was getting agencies to cooperate. Agencies that did not want to participate initially were won over after seeing the service in action. This was accomplished through meeting the needs of agencies and being patient. There are still some "turf" issues, but not nearly as many as earlier. It is recognized that it will take time to deal with these concerns.

Recommendations for Others: UCATS staff offered the following advice:

- **Don't be in a rush.** Invest time to find out the best way to set up and implement the system so you can provide quality service.
- **Secure funding.** Find funding sources so there is enough money to cover needs and to expand once grant money is spent.
- **Personality, Power, and Politics.** When facing roadblocks, discover which of these "P" factors you are dealing with and work with or around each of these factors.

HUBBARD COUNTY, MINNESOTA: PUBLIC, AGENCY, AND INTERCITY SERVICES

Program	**Hubbard County Heartland Express (HE)**
Sponsoring Organization	Hubbard County Government
City, State	Park Rapids, MN
Service Type	Curb-to-curb service for all residents, bus routes, dial-a-car, and city bus services
Service Area	Hubbard County, MN
Service Area Population	18,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	1,000
Data for Year Ending	2000
One-way Trips per Year	17,344
Annual Expenses	$179,373
Cost/Trip	$10.34
Major Funding Sources	County government
Coordinating Agencies	Park Rapids Schools, the Development Achievement Center, Greyhound, social service and transportation agencies in neighboring counties

Background: Hubbard County, located in the northern central part of Minnesota, is a rural county with population of 18,000 and land area of 1,000 square miles.

Hubbard County Heartland Express (HE) provides curb-to-curb transportation service for all residents of Hubbard County. Service includes general bus routes that can deviate up to 4 miles, dial-a-car, and city bus services. HE coordinates transportation services with agencies, including Park Rapids Schools, the Development Achievement Center, and social service and transportation agencies in neighboring counties. Dial-a-car is a service provided by volunteer drivers that have agreements with HE. Volunteer drivers are reimbursed at a rate of 36.5 cents per mile. Transportation service is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Because Hubbard County does not have a Greyhound bus service, HE coordinates with Greyhound service that is available in a neighboring county. Passengers are transported to the Greyhound station and back 5 days a week, Monday through Friday.

HE is administered by the county government. HE works with an advisory committee that consists of representatives of participating agencies. Decision authority rests with the county and participating municipalities.

HE operates three vehicles and had an operating budget for 2000 of $179,373. HE operated 65,877 miles of bus service providing 14,582 trips. Through its dial-a-car service, HE provided 108,306 miles of service and transported 2,762 people. HE coordinates trip reservations and vehicle scheduling for participating agencies. HE shares the vehicle wash bay in its new transit garage with other transportation agencies that have agreements with HE.

Coordination Process: Transportation coordination began with the initiative of the current coordinator. As a social service agency director, the coordinator worked with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to secure a grant to start countywide transportation service. Coordination started with a medical assistance transportation program in 1989. In 1991, the Development Achievement Center joined. From 1997 to 1998, Park Rapids helped HE establish transportation service in the city. HE has developed service

agreements with the county Department of Human Service, the Development Achievement Center, and other participating agencies.

County commissioners and elected officials in Park Rapids have been strong supporters of the coordinated transportation system. The coordinator also communicates regularly with state representatives to build and maintain support.

As the service grew, HE started to place ads in the newspapers; local banks were helpful by inserting ads into bank statements. The operations director made many presentations in places where potential riders were located.

Benefits of Coordination: The benefits of coordination have been broad. They include access to more funding, lower costs to riders, less duplication of service, better vehicle utilization, fewer gaps in service, ability to meet more travel needs, and better image and visibility in the community. Customer surveys are used to evaluate satisfaction with services. The cost of trips, level of ridership, types of riders, and age groups are monitored.

According to the coordinator, "Our biggest success is the ability to work together with those who provide transportation services and understand each other." But the coordinator thinks that they are still in progress of accomplishing better working relationships and that they need and can do better.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: The biggest problem is the time required to manage and deliver transportation service because the coordinator still serves as an agency director, managing other agency programs as well. The coordinator said that she just does not have enough time to cover all aspects of coordination. Funding is a continuing concern, especially the potential of state budget cuts. HE has a desire to expand its services, but needs funding to support the purchase of an additional vehicle and the hiring of a driver.

Providing access to employment for people with limited mobility is difficult because of the cost of providing daily transportation. It is much easier to provide the less frequent trips for shopping and medical appointments. Reliance on private vehicles for work trips is essential.

Technical assistance from MnDOT has been helpful to HE. They were particularly helpful in developing the coordination service model that has been established. MnDOT requires that counties address coordination of services as part of their grant award process. While coordination is not mandated, MnDOT encourages it. HE has found that coordinating transportation service helps support its annual request for funding.

Recommendations for Others: According to the coordinator, "do not try to write up a concrete scenario or plan. It may not work. It is better to get an idea and put it out there. See how the public reacts to it, see how it works."

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH, ALASKA: NEARING CONSOLIDATION

Program	**Matanuska-Susitna Community Transit (MASCOT also known as Mat-Su Transit)**
Sponsoring Organization	Matanuska-Susitna Community Transit, a private, nonprofit corporation
City, State	Wasilla, Alaska
Service Type	Fixed-route and paratransit
Service Area	Matanuska-Susitna Borough, primarily in the Mat-Su Valley
Service Area Population	59,847
Service Area Size (sq mi)	24,000
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	45,224
Annual Expenses	$600,000
Cost/Trip	$13.27
Major Funding Sources	15 funding sources, including 40 percent Federal funds and contributions from local nonprofits
Coordinating Agencies	90 agencies, including nonprofit agencies (e.g., United Way, Boys and Girls Club), government agencies (e.g., Medicaid, local schools), and human service agencies (e.g., Mat-Su Recovery Center)
Other Information	Most nonprofits that were previously providing their own transportation services are now consolidated under MASCOT. About ¼ of the riders are seniors over the age of 60 and just under ⅛ are youth under 18. Approximately 80 percent of the total ridership is on the fixed-route system.

Background: Established on March 3, 1999, as a private, nonprofit corporation, MASCOT (Matanuska-Susitna Community Transit), also known as Mat-Su Transit, operates both fixed-route and paratransit service in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. MASCOT is open to the general public and is coordinated with a number of nonprofit, government, and human service agencies throughout the borough to provide more specific transit services.

Located approximately 40 miles north of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough is one of the fastest growing communities in Alaska, gaining more than 20,000 new residents between 1990 and 2000. The majority of people live in the southern part of the borough, just north of the Anchorage metropolitan area, known as the Mat-Su Valley. The valley has two small towns, Palmer and Wasilla, each with a current population of roughly 5,000 residents. The Mat-Su Valley is largely residential, with approximately 80 percent of the workers commuting south to Anchorage for their jobs.

MASCOT operates both local and commuter fixed-route service on seven separate lines and will provide route deviation service of up to ¾ mile off the route. Fixed-route service is operated with five 20-passenger lift-equipped cutaway vans. Additional service is provided to the Boys and Girls Club with a used school bus. Paratransit service is provided with one wheelchair-equipped vehicle to individuals who cannot use the fixed-route service. Fares on MASCOT are $2 each way and $5 for an all-day pass. If the bus deviates, the fare can range from $4 to $5. A monthly pass is available for $85. One-way service to Eagle River (with connections to the Anchorage People Mover) costs $2.50 and a joint MASCOT/People Mover monthly pass costs $99.95.

In addition to the fixed-route and paratransit services, MASCOT has a contract with Alaska Valley Cab to provide trips to Medicaid clients for medical appointments. Alaska Valley Cab bills MASCOT directly for these trips. MASCOT also provides a number of transportation services for nonprofit agencies throughout the borough, both on a regular and semiregular basis. Examples of nonprofit agencies that receive regular service include the United Way of Mat-Su, the Boys and Girls Club and the Mat-Su Recovery Center. As needed, service is also provided throughout the year for programs such as for the Juvenile Detention Center and local schools.

MASCOT's current transportation budget (calendar year 2001) was approximately $600,000. Total ridership on the system in the same year was 45,224. Staff estimates the cost per trip on MASCOT at $13.27 per trip. About one-quarter of the riders on MASCOT are seniors over the age of 60, and just over one-third are youth under 18. Approximately 80 percent of total ridership was on the fixed-route system. Because of the extreme winters in Alaska, ridership on MASCOT tends to be higher in the winter months, though ridership is strong throughout the year. Staff reports that 20 percent of the total rides on MASCOT were coordinated services (i.e., contracts with government, nonprofit organizations, or services provided for Medicaid clients on Alaska Valley Cab).

MASCOT has one program director, an operations manager, and an administrative assistant who is also responsible for dispatch. In addition, there are eight full-time drivers and three stand-by drivers. A board of directors consisting of nine members oversees the agency. The board consists of members throughout the Mat-Su Valley, including private business owners, local government officials, and chambers of commerce leaders.

Consolidation Efforts: While consolidation in the Borough is not 100 percent seamless, a number of nonprofit agencies and other organizations depend on MASCOT to transport their clients or customers. Before MASCOT, social service agencies and nonprofit organizations were providing their own transportation services to their clients and customers, and there was no formal public transportation. Because of these factors, a study called Project "Getting There" was the first effort to address these issues and discuss the possibility of transit consolidation in the Borough. The study, sponsored by the United Way of Mat-Su, was conceived in 1995 and began the following year with funding from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Rural Passenger Transportation Technical Assistance Program, which is administered by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA).

The process for Project "Getting There" began with the formation of a 12-member steering committee. The committee consisted of business members, local and state government officials, and representatives from other community organizations such as senior centers and chambers of commerce. Several of these members currently serve on MASCOT's Board of Directors. The first task for the committee was to participate in a 2-day strategic planning workshop, designed to establish a framework for the study. Out of that workshop, the committee developed a project mission statement, vision statement, project values and a detailed list of strategies and goals. The goals were ultimately developed to help guide the CTAA, ADOT&PF, and the Steering Committee in the planning and development that was the next process in the study.

The study continued by taking a detailed look at the communities in the borough and by conducting a survey of existing transit services. The survey revealed through an inventory of all transportation programs and resources in the borough that approximately $750,000 was being expended for transportation services with a total fleet of 77 vehicles. It was determined that these services were not accommodating a latent demand for more than 77,000 trips annually.

The study finally concluded that no one strategy could adequately address the diverse transit needs in the Borough. Two components were identified: a commuter service between the Mat-Su Valley and downtown Anchorage, and a "checkpoint" service within the Palmer-Wasilla corridor. The checkpoint service was intended to provide service to both the general public and the agency client needs by offering unscheduled rides at specific checkpoints, as well as demand response service rides over a larger area.

MASCOT service began in 1998 as a pilot program with a refurbished vehicle from the Alaska Mental Health Trust. Full service began in August 1999 with the delivery of five new vehicles. The service is currently

overseen by a board of directors and operated by a private contractor. MASCOT staff currently occupy a small office space in the Wasilla Area Senior Center, but have recently obtained a grant for improved offices. Revenues for operations come from about 15 different sources, 40 percent of which is from the Federal Government. Other sources of revenue include passenger fares, advertising, and contributions from local nonprofit agencies, such as the United Way (that purchases around $50,000 worth of tickets annually), the Boys and Girls Club, and Mat-Su Services. Up until recently, there were no formal contracts or memoranda of understanding (MOU), but a recent Mental Health Trust grant required an MOU. The program director would like to keep the agreements informal and flexible because so much of their funding sources come from nonprofit agencies that also rely on many different funding sources. Resources for advertising have been limited to radio and newspaper ads. MASCOT has largely relied on word of mouth. The operations manager maintains a useful web site that includes schedules, fare information, advertising rates, and basic information on the board and staff.

Benefits of Consolidation: According to the program director, transit consolidation in the borough has been very successful. Most nonprofit agencies that were providing their own transportation services recognized the benefits of a consolidated transit system, and in fact were instrumental in making it happen. Only a few agencies still provide private transportation services for their clients. Since inception, ridership on MASCOT has increased dramatically. While the first month of service (August 1999) attracted only 125 passengers, ridership skyrocketed to 2,332 in August 2000, and continues to grow. In January 2002, MASCOT carried nearly 6,000 passengers.

Consolidation in the borough has been successful for many reasons. First of all, as the study pointed out, there was a latent demand for transit for the general public. In addition, the Mat-Su Valley's population has continued to grow. And most importantly, there was strong support from a number of key nonprofit and social service agencies to pursue consolidation and the willingness to help fund the service. Other benefits to consolidating the service include

- ✦ Ability to access more funding;
- ✦ Less duplication by nonprofit and other agencies;
- ✦ Improved access to jobs, shopping, and health care;
- ✦ Increased activity to local malls and businesses;
- ✦ Ability to provide more trips overall; and
- ✦ Improved image of transit due to MASCOT's success.

Efforts to evaluate and improve the service are currently underway. Staff is developing a passenger survey that will provide them useful feedback on their services. Additionally, the program director has been involved in discussing the benefits of transit consolidation with businesses and other groups in the community. Sometime in the future she would like to formalize a process to receive complaints and comments regarding the service, but currently relies on word of mouth from drivers and other sources. In general, they would like to stabilize and improve their current services before becoming too concerned with expansion.

Successes and Challenges: MASCOT's program director feels that their efforts to contract with Alaska Valley Cab to provide trips for Medicaid clients was one of their greatest successes. She is also proud of the fact that they are able to provide free trips to seniors in the Mat-Su Valley. Another key success for MASCOT has been the service they provide for school kids to and from the Boys and Girls Club.

One of the most pressing challenges for MASCOT is securing a steady funding source. As pointed out earlier, funding for MASCOT comes from approximately 15 different sources. Another minor issue is that at least one senior center is still providing their own transit services and has not fully embraced the concept of consolidation. To help spread the word regarding the benefits of consolidation, the program director would like to improve education efforts for both non-profit agencies and private businesses.

Keys to Success: According to the program director, ADOT&PF has been extremely helpful in ensuring MASCOT's success. ADOT&PF has not only suggested ways to improve the service, but they also sponsor the annual Alaska State Transit Conference, which provides training, workshops, and roundtables on transit operation and administration. Along with ADOT&PF, the FTA and the CTAA were also extremely helpful in conducting the Project "Getting There" study and kicking off the service.

The future looks bright for MASCOT as it prepares for the delivery of five new vehicles and improved commuter service in the main corridors. The program director would like to streamline the current fixed-route operation by providing fewer route deviations and expanding the paratransit service. Another priority for the agency is to examine the possibility of providing trips into Anchorage for nonemergency medical appointments. As with most other transit services, however, future expansion requires a secure source of funding. Considering the initial and continued support for the consolidated service, however, the program director hopes to continue working with the local community to meet the ever-growing demand.

MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON: COUNTYWIDE COORDINATION

Program	**Mason County Transportation Authority (Mason Transit)**
Sponsoring Organization	Mason County Coordinated Transportation Coalition
City, State	Shelton, WA
Service Type	Dial-a-ride, fixed route, commuter services, school/transit bus
Service Area	Mason County, WA
Service Area Population	40,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	700
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	300,000
Annual Expenses	$1,200,000
Cost/Trip	$4
Major Funding Sources	Local sales tax, contracts, Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT)
Coordinating Agencies	Mason County's Coordinated Transportation Coalition

Overview: The Mason County Transportation Authority (Mason Transit) provides public transportation in Mason County, Washington—a county covering an area of 700 square miles with a population of about 40,000. The county is quite rural and has only one city, Shelton, home to approximately 8,000 residents. Much of the remaining population is scattered to the north and east of Shelton and around the many bays that penetrate the county from Puget Sound. The transit authority was voted into existence in 1992 and began providing general public dial-a-ride service shortly after. Mason Transit now provides fixed-route, dial-a-ride, and commuter services. Ridership on the system has grown from 60,000 trips during its first year to more than 300,000 in 2001.

Mason Transit is a publicly funded transit agency with 30 vehicles and a $1.2 million annual operating budget. It contracts out all of its services to outside providers. Mason Transit receives both Federal and state operating funds, but is funded in large part by a local sales tax. Mason County is one of only a few rural counties in Washington that have passed a replacement sales tax to compensate for revenue lost after the passage of Initiative 695. I-695 eliminated the state motor vehicle excise tax, which generated approximately 40 percent of the operating revenue for Washington transit agencies such as Mason. In 2000, Mason Transit started to receive funding from the state Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) for its school/transit bus program.

History of Coordination in Mason County: Since its inception, Mason Transit has been coordinating with other social service providers in the county. Even before the ACCT was formed, Mason County had its own Coordinated Transportation Coalition. The coalition is still very active and currently has 66 members, including approximately 15 that provide transportation services. The transit authority subcontracts trips to social service providers, including a large transportation service for people who are disabled called Exceptional Foresters, Inc. (EFI). Mason County is home to one of the largest populations of people who are disabled in the state of Washington, due in large part to a large sheltered workshop located in Shelton. EFI is the primary transportation provider for citizens who are disabled attending the workshop. Mason Transit contracts with EFI to provide general public demand response trips when they have available space. Mason Transit dispatchers can track EFI vehicles and contact their drivers when an EFI vehicle is in the range of a desired general public pickup.

One of the more exciting outcomes of Mason Transit's long-standing commitment to using community resources is a program developed to coordinate school district and public transit resources. Mason Transit received a 1997 demonstration grant of $69,410 from the ACCT for a 1-year demonstration project. The four primary objectives of the project were

- Build a transportation coalition with local agencies to establish community consensus relative to rational expectations and achievable goals,
- Identify transportation deficiencies,
- Develop coordination and collaboration addressing identified deficiencies in the transportation system, and
- Increase transportation opportunities.

Even before Mason Transit received the ACCT grant, community activist groups had been meeting to discuss methods for providing afternoon transportation for students in the Shelton School District. Citizen groups had approached the transit agency about providing this service, but the agency's resources and vehicles were already spread thin because of a significant commute hour demand. In fact, Mason Transit was already cutting service to rural areas in order to provide additional vehicles for the afternoon commuter. With the impetus of the ACCT grant and several vocal community activists, Mason Transit and the Shelton School District developed a coordination plan to address these two major service gaps: (1) insufficient service to rural areas of the county and (2) no transportation for students to attend extracurricular activities.

In spring 2000, Mason Transit contracted with the Shelton School and North Mason School Districts to use the bus after school (around 5 p.m.) to provide local public transportation. This demonstration program combined the transportation of middle and high school students needing a ride home from after school programs with those of the general public. Mason Transit paid the school district $19.86 per hour and an additional 85 cents per mile to provide service on three rural routes using the district's yellow bus vehicles. The school district also contributed funds to pay for students traveling to and from after-school activities. Overall, the cost per mile of service is very comparable to what Mason Transit pays its contractor to operate its own coaches. Two of the initial routes were deviated fixed routes, and a third operated as a zone route. The zone route allowed Mason Transit to remove a demand response vehicle they regularly deployed to serve the zone area and use it elsewhere. The contract with the school district also eliminated the need for Mason Transit to purchase new vehicles.

More than 1,200 Mason County residents work at the Puget Sound Navel Shipyard located in Kitsap County to the north. About 35 percent of the service deployed by Mason Transit goes to meeting the commute needs of these and other residents working in neighboring counties. This means that in the late afternoon, when after school activities are getting out, Mason Transit's own buses are being used to pick up commuters. The shared service on the school buses allows Mason Transit to provide service to previously unserved areas.

Mason Transit is also exploring the use of school buses to transport special needs students out of the county. These buses currently deadhead empty to and from the dropoff site. The transit agency would like to use them for public transportation during the periods when the buses are empty. There has been significant interest from school districts and transit providers in neighboring counties.

Although the school/transit bus demonstration program ended in June 2001, Mason Transit was able to continue funding for two of the three routes serving the Shelton School District. North Mason District is very interested in reinstating the third route, and Mason Transit expects that funding will be available to revive service on that route later this year. A third school district in the county, Pioneer, is also very interested in the program.

Mason Transit also runs a worker/driver program for employees of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. The program trains workers at the site to drive transit vehicles; the vehicles are then loaned to employees to operate and ride. The Navy pays approximately $100 per employee per month for the service. In turn, Mason Transit loans two 35-foot coaches to employees of the Naval Shipyard. Loads on both vehicles are very high, and there is often only standing room available.

Benefits of the Coordination Project: The following is a summary of key benefits of coordination efforts in Mason County, including the school/transit bus program:

- Provides rides for school children attending after school programs and allows many children who were previously unable to attend after school activities to attend them.
- Fills gaps in Mason Transit's rural service during the afternoon commute when commuter services use all available vehicles.
- Creates a much larger pool of certified transit drivers in the area. School bus drivers operating the shared routes are required to participate in Mason Transit's driver training program. This is an important benefit because it can be difficult to find certified drivers in a rural area like Mason County.
- Provides additional revenue to school district bus programs. The program provides additional operating revenue for a poorly funded school district transportation program.
- Creates additional wage earning hours for school bus drivers. A third school district in the county is pushing to enter a similar contract with Mason Transit, in part to generate revenue for driver wages.
- Provides cheap fuel prices for Mason Transit. The transit authority shares a fueling station with the school district, allowing them to buy fuel at bulk rates.
- Generated community interest in the transit system and acted as an educational process. After some initial confusion about the school/transit bus program, its success has become a point of pride for citizens of Shelton and surrounding areas.

Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned from Coordination Efforts: Mason Transit and the participating school districts have faced a number of challenges in the course of the school/transit bus coordination project. A highly committed board of directors at Mason Transit has helped to ensure the project's success. Mason Transit's executive director noted that members of the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the ACCT also played key roles in overcoming various obstacles. A key factor in determining the potential success of school bus/public transit coordination is whether planned strategies benefit both parties. Mason County attributes its success in part to the mutual benefit from coordination to both the transit authority and the school district.

Mason Transit's executive director cautioned that although local school districts were excited to work with the transit authority, state school administrators were harder to work with. For example, the Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction attempted to invoke rules on charters and nonpupil transportation to stop the coordination efforts. He issued an edict that no member of the general public was to be allowed on a school bus with school children. After some review, it was determined that these rules were not applicable, and efforts were allowed to continue. Mason Transit's Executive Director believes that once school bus and public transit providers come to the table, there is much common ground for them to work from.

The following list outlines a number of obstacles and challenges faced by Mason Transit in coordinating general public transportation services with the local school district and other regional providers.

- **School buses do not have programmable headsigns and all carry school logos.** Magnetic signs announcing Mason Transit were placed over the school district signs when the bus was being used for public transportation.
- **Safety and stop lighting are different on school buses than on public transit vehicles.** The transit agency agreed not to use the school bus safety equipment to stop on rural roads. Rather, buses are required to move off the road for pickups and dropoffs.
- **Fare collection on school buses is problematic.** Mason Transit is a fare free system. Over the last year, the transit agencies board has been looking into implementing fares for fixed-route and demand response trips. Were it to implement a per-trip fare, this could cause significant problems on the shared vehicle routes because the school district is not interested in installing fareboxes or asking drivers to collect fares.
- **Communication systems are not compatible.** Communications are an issue that is yet to be resolved. Mason Transit is not able to communicate with drivers on school bus vehicles because of configurations of the different radio systems. The two systems are currently working together to resolve this issue.

- I**ncreases in administrative costs.** Administrative demands of the school/transit bus program have required Mason Transit to hire additional administrative staff. Initially demands came from stakeholder and policy group meetings; now with the program's success, the dissemination of information has become very demanding on staff time.
- **School buses are not lift equipped.** Because the larger vehicles on the school/transit routes are not lift equipped, the district has a smaller lift equipped school bus on stand-by to pick up any wheelchair passengers.
- **Concerns about the safety of school children riding with the general public.** Mason Transit and the Shelton School District had to overcome the Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction's edict that no member of the general public share a school vehicle with school age children. A legal review by the state showed that there was no Washington law that clearly prohibited such sharing of vehicles.
- **Public confusion over identify of buses.** There was a lot of confusion and curiosity when the school buses with magnetic Mason Transit logos first rolled out. In fact, Mason Transit's executive director claims that this was probably their best advertising because people were calling in constantly to see what was going on. The success of the program has now become a real source of pride for this relatively poor rural community.
- **Small financial contributions by the school districts.** Mason Transit currently pays the majority of the costs for the school/transit services even though a greater percentage of the ridership is school children. The school districts realize that they will have to find a way to pay a higher percentage of the cost to make the service more sustainable.
- **Lack of stable funding to keep the program running and to expand.** Mason Transit faces the challenge of keeping a very popular program running with limited financial support. In the face of pressure by the public and school districts to expand the program, Mason Transit is being forced to make difficult decisions about how much service its budget can support. For example, Pioneer School District wants to join the program, in part to provide additional revenue to pay drivers who are currently being paid to sit around, but it does not have the funding to contribute to additional service.
- **Compatibility of drug and alcohol testing requirements.** The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) sets drug and alcohol testing rules for school bus drivers, whereas the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) sets these rules for transit drivers. Upon examination, FTA determined that the rules were not really different and agreed that the school bus drivers tested under FHWA rules could also be transit drivers.
- **Labor or union issues raised by school bus drivers performing public transportation services.** Mason Transit administration faced no significant objection from the regular drivers because (1) all service is contracted out; (2) the contract drivers are not unionized; and (3) the service constituted supplementary, not replacement, work.

BUTTE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: ATTEMPTING TO CONSOLIDATE SERVICES

Program	**Butte County, CA**
Sponsoring Organization	Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG)
City, State	Chico, CA
Service Type	Fixed route, paratransit, and/or senior dial-a-ride
Service Area	Butte County, CA
Service Area Population	203,171
Service Area Size (sq mi)	1,400
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	2,000,000
Annual Expenses	$4,094,405
Cost/Trip	$2.05
Major Funding Sources	Diverse sources among the seven coordinated transportation providers
Coordinating Agencies	Chico Area Transit (CATS), Oroville Area Transit, Butte County Transit (rural), Chico Clipper, Paradise Express, Oroville Express, Gridley Golden Feather Flyer

Background: In fall 1999, representatives from Butte County, along with its cities, towns, and transit agencies began a process to explore opportunities for consolidating all or some of the seven transit services operating within the county. An earlier study had recommended fare coordination, but had identified consolidation as a strategy for overall cost savings. While the eventual outcome of the process suggested that high levels of coordination were preferred to consolidation, a committee of transit staff representatives and political leaders from the various jurisdictions met frequently over a 1½ year period to discuss the range of logistical alternatives related to consolidation. The Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) spearheaded the effort, with the cooperation of the county and local jurisdictions. Representatives from the state of California were not asked to participate and did not provide assistance in the transit coordination and consolidation process.

Within the nearly 1,400 square mile service area are three fixed-route transit providers. They are Chico Area Transit (CATS), the urban system operating within the largest city, the local route operated by the City of Oroville (Oroville Area Transit), and the Butte County Transit rural service that connects key population centers while supplementing local service within Paradise, Chico, and Oroville. Four other services in Butte County—the Chico Clipper, Paradise Express, Oroville Express, and the Gridley Golden Feather Flyer—are ADA complementary paratransit and/or senior dial-a-ride systems, each operated by its local jurisdiction.

Butte County's transit systems collectively carry nearly 2 million passengers per year. With a combined total operating cost of $4,094,405 (FY2001), the seven systems provide nearly 110,000 annual hours of service using 48 vehicles. The largest system, CATS, has 16 coaches (with the largest seating up to 50 passengers), while Gridley, the smallest operator, has one six-passenger van. The cost per passenger varies widely across the systems, from about $2 on the larger Chico fixed-route system to approximately $10 on the three largest paratransit services.

Coordination Activities: Although the primary impetus for considering consolidation was cost savings and improved service quality, some coordination efforts were already in place. For example, the Butte County

Transit administrator's services were already being purchased by two cities, so she was responsible for administering four of the county's transit services: the Butte County system, the fixed-route and dial-a-ride systems in Oroville, and local Paradise services. (The two Chico systems and the small Gridley system are being administered by their respective city staffs.) All transit services were contracted and, with the exception of Gridley, all were provided by ATC/Vancom.

Having one administrator and one contractor has facilitated coordinating timed transfers between systems. Nevertheless, each system continues to have significant variation in services:

- On weekdays, service hours begin as early as 5:30 a.m. on Butte County Transit and as late as 8:00 a.m. on the Gridley Golden Feather Flyer. Weekday service runs until 6:00 p.m. on Oroville Express and Paradise Express; service is provided until 10:00 p.m. on the Chico Clipper;
- While all services in Butte County operate Monday through Friday, not all operate on weekends. OATS does not operate weekends. Neither CATS nor the Gridley Golden Feather Flyer operates on Sunday;
- Significant variation exists in fleet type and fueling;
- Each system has a distinct fare instrument and set of fare policies; and
- Each system conducts it own marketing, and has its own set of customer service procedures.

Over the study period, numerous technical reports were developed and meetings facilitated. The study group identified how they would structure a consolidated system, including identifying the organizational model (a joint powers authority), who would become the administrative agency (BCAG), and who would be represented on the policy board.

Benefits of Coordination: In the opinion of city staffers and political leaders who participated in the consolidation study process, the outcome was mixed. Although there was agreement on the many benefits of consolidation, policymakers in Chico were reluctant to surrender oversight power to a board with a high proportion of elected officials from rural areas and smaller communities. Furthermore, the city would have seen its own financial contributions to transit increase through consolidation because it pays a lower contractor rate in its more densely populated service area.

In addition to the study advisory group, project milestones were presented to and discussed with the county's social service transit advisory committee. This group included persons with disabilities and representatives from social service agencies. Overall, members were enthusiastic about the customer-orientation they perceived would result from a coordinated or consolidated transit system in Butte County.

In the short-term, it is unlikely that the systems will consolidate. Nevertheless, representatives of the participating jurisdictions indicate that through service and fare coordination, they intend to achieve the numerous qualitative benefits of consolidation they had discussed throughout the study process. As a result, the new focus within Butte County is on coordination.

The consolidation evaluation determined that Butte County's transit systems overall would achieve almost $140,000 in annual administrative cost savings if the administrative function for all systems were transferred to the BCAG. Today, BCAG staff administers four of the systems and is soon expected to begin administering the Chico services. This has been the greatest success to result from the consolidation study. ATC/Vancom is the contract provider for the systems administered by BCAG.

While some transfer and pass agreements are currently in place, Butte County's transit providers have indicated their interest in expanding these agreements and moving forward with other shared service improvements, including the reduction of service duplication, schedule simplification and consistency, improved transfer coordination, and coordinated marketing.

Challenges and Opportunities: One of the issues complicating consolidation was how operating costs should be shared by the participating jurisdictions. Cost sharing within Butte County is currently based on population. For example, Butte County pays a significant portion of the operating costs for Chico's CATS system because much of the CATS service area is beyond the city boundaries, in unincorporated areas considered part of the urbanized area. Likewise, cost-sharing agreements are in place for the rural Butte

County Transit routes, assigning a proportion of operating costs to each of the incorporated cites and towns where service is provided. In the short-term, these existing cost-sharing agreements remain in place.

Aside from agreements with cities and towns to pay operating costs for Butte County Transit, the system also receives funds from the local regional center to operate specific general public commute routes that are intended to serve its physically and developmentally disabled clients. Operating costs, in excess of fare revenues, are fully funded by the regional center. Because the regional center has a number of clients who depend on the various fixed-route and dial-a-ride systems within the county, they also purchase transit passes from the providers for their clients.

California State University in Chico also coordinates with and pays for local and intercity transit services for its faculty, students, and staff. The university and its associated students organization provide annual payments. In return, university identification cards afford cardholders no-fare access to buses.

Lessons Learned: One of the most significant shortcomings of the transit consolidation effort was the lack of support by certain influential political leaders, particularly those representing Chico. Early in the consolidation evaluation process, an effort was made to include—as part of the oversight committee—both rural and urban representatives from the County Board of Supervisors. Although this was accomplished, the consolidation plan was not presented to a large body of countywide policymakers until a series of final recommendations was endorsed by the oversight committee (which included two policymakers along with a much larger group of county and city staff representatives).

It was at this point that prospects for consolidation were derailed by dissenting political leaders. Although they commended many of the potential benefits of coordinating transit services, they were particularly concerned about giving up local control. In hindsight, consolidation advocates concede that they should have worked more closely with these influential political leaders throughout the process and offer this as a suggestion to other communities considering transit consolidation.

NORTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA: KLAMATH TRINITY NON-EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

Program	**Klamath Trinity Non-Emergency Transportation Program (K/T NeT)**
Sponsoring Organization	K/T NeT in partnership with Community Benefits of St. Joseph's Health Systems in Humboldt County
City, State	Willow Creek, CA
Service Type	Fixed-route transit service, dial-a-ride nonemergency medical transportation to be added
Service Area	Communities in Humboldt County where service is planned for: Orleans, Weitchpec, Pecwan, Willow Creek, Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation. All are not yet served yet because the program was recently started in January 2003. The focus of this case study is the service to and from the Hoopa Reservation.
Service Area Population	2,633 Indian people reside and 403 non-Indian people reside on the Hoopa Reservation.
Service Area Size (sq mi)	3,594
Data for Year Ending	Program started in 2003. Quantitative data are for first quarter of 2003, while qualitative data includes development period before launch
One-way Trips per Year	No data yet
Annual Expenses	No data yet
Cost/Trip	No data yet
Major Funding Sources	FTA 5310, Humboldt County Social Services, National Presbyterian Committee for Self-Development of People, Humboldt Area Foundation.
Coordinating Agencies	St. Joseph's Health Systems

Background: Klamath Trinity Non-Emergency Transportation (K/T NeT), under development since 1999, launched its operations in January 2003. K/T NeT is a nonprofit organization established to provide connections to preexisting transit service and rides to unserved and underserved areas for the tribal and general populations in Humboldt County. Humboldt County, located in northwest California, encompasses 2.3 million acres, which are 80 percent forestlands, protected redwoods, and recreational areas. The main growth areas in Humboldt are the cities of Eureka and Arcata, which together have more than one-third of the county's population.

K/T NeT provides or plans to provide service to five communities in Humboldt County: Orleans, Weitchpec, Pecwan, and Willow Creek to Arcata. Since its recent operations were launched, K/T NeT has primarily served the tribal residents of the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation (or Hoopa). Service was also initiated, although was soon cut back because of funding shortages, to two communities north of Hoopa: Weitchpec, where Karuk tribal members reside, and Orleans, where there is a community of Yurok tribal members. Once additional funding is found, K/T NeT hopes to resume service to these communities.

The Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation is approximately 30 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean along the Trinity River Valley, approximately 12 miles north of the community of Willow Creek on State Highway 96. The area is approximately 8 miles by 2 miles at the western edge of the Klamath Mountains, with a range of

elevation from flat to very steep areas. Access to the area is through State Highway 299, which runs east and west between Arcata and Redding, California. The 2000 census indicated that there are 2,633 Indian people residing on the reservation and 403 non-Indian people residing on the reservation.

K/T NeT makes a special effort to meet the needs of the economically disadvantaged population to get to and from work, training, shopping, childcare, healthcare, and other services. The Hoopas represent an isolated pocket of extremely high unemployment. Transportation to employment has been a core problem, one which K/T NeT hopes to change. The nearest job market is more than 120 miles roundtrip in the Eureka and Arcata area.

In addition to fixed-route service, K/T NeT was also formed to provide a specialized nonemergency medical paratransit service for people who are elderly or have mental or physical impairments. K/T NeT currently operates one 14-passenger bus and has ordered a second bus that will meet medical paratransit needs 24 hours a day. K/T NeT operates its fixed-route system 5 days a week and provides dial-a-ride service to people with special needs on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Organization and Funding: Community benefits of St. Joseph's Health Systems in Humboldt County partners with K/T NeT by referring riders and sharing office space in the Willow Creek Resource Center. K/T NeT has five employees who include the executive director, an accountant, a lead driver, an evening driver, and an on-call driver. Signmaking and miscellaneous building services are contracted out to a Hoopa nonprofit called the Tribal Civilian Community Corps (TCCC). Governance occurs in conjunction with a board of directors and a membership committee. K/T NeT is a membership-driven organization, and members have the same voting power as the Board of Directors.

The National Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) awarded a $30,000 grant for staffing to K/T NeT to show its support for the establishment of "a feeder transportation system linking California communities within a 50-mile radius of Willow Creek." Other funding sources and agreements include the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for provision of FTA 5310 funds; a $40,000 grant from Humboldt County Social Services for insurance, an office, and bus equipment; $8,500 from St. Joseph's along with donated office space; $6,000 from the Humboldt Area Foundation for the first K/T NeT business plan in 1999; and $2,000 from the Senior Citizens of Humboldt County. K/T NeT is also seeking funding from Federal Transportation Administration's (FTA's) 5311 program, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), as well as subsidies from Hoopa and other tribal communities within the service area. Tribal and BIA funds were not available for this first operating year and need to be programmed into each organization's budgeting process if the organizations decide to fund K/T NeT. The Hoopa tribe has indicated that they are considering programming funds for K/T NeT.

Routes and Services: The K/T NeT bus schedule has been designed to coordinate with the Humboldt Transit Authority's (HTA) bus service running to and from Willow Creek and the Arcata transit station. Once fully implemented, K/T NeT will serve five communities in Humboldt County and act as a connector between county buses and other transit providers, (primarily Greyhound, HTA, and Redwood Transit System) throughout the region. For example, a K/T NeT bus will connect people from communities on the northeastern side of Willow Creek to the HTA bus that commutes between Willow Creek and the coastal region.

K/T NeT service transports tribal and nontribal youth, elderly people, and others to medical appointments, employment, job training, social services, postsecondary education, and recreational and shopping trips. K/T NeT operates its fixed-route service 5 days a week. Three runs a day are made to the Hoopa Reservation covering a total of 78 miles each day. One of the core Hoopa trips is between Willow Creek and the Kiamaw Medical Center to transport tribal and nontribal people to the Hoopa's main medical center and social services office. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, fixed-route service is provided to other locations such as the community of Hawkins Bar. A second 7-passenger bus has been ordered that will enable K/T NeT to provide 12-hour advance notice nonemergency medical dial-a-ride service. K/T NeT is also seeking a van with a wheelchair lift and some smaller vehicles that would make it easier to reach reservation residents and others who live in mountainous areas.

Coordination and Development Process: There is significant informal coordination between K/T NeT and the Hoopa Tribe, now and over the past 4 years of program development. However, there is a substantial degree of autonomy between the tribe and non-tribal organizations such as K/T NeT. The Hoopa tribal government is experiencing dramatic changes because of the tribe's designation as a self-governance demonstration tribe in 1988. As such, Hoopa has moved from being one of the most regulated tribes controlled by the U.S. Government to a position of freedom from regulation unprecedented among Indian tribes.

K/T NeT and the Hoopa tribe have worked to together to design service that targets the appropriate locations and people within the reservation. K/T NeT has informal arrangements with tribal organizations, such as medical and social service offices, to provide rides to their clients and establish bus stops. As mentioned, the tribe is exploring providing a subsidy to K/T NeT for service to the reservation. K/T NeT anticipates that this subsidy will become part of the Hoopa annual budgeting process, but at this time no formal funding agreement or subsidy is in place.

Early on, a member of the Hoopa tribe was a board member and instrumental in the program development process, writing the K/T NeT bylaws and serving as the economic development director. He remains involved with K/T NeT in an advisory capacity. Other tribal members from tribal agencies (planning, transportation, and social services) participate in the advisory committee, but at this time prefer to keep their involvement informal and not serve as board members.

During its initial development period, K/T NeT worked hard to coordinate planning with tribal and nontribal communities to understand the need and desire for transportation service. Surveys and focus groups were conducted with each tribal community. K/T NeT identified a strong need for transportation services, and a business development plan was developed in response. This plan is currently being implemented. K/T NeT obtains tribal and other clients through word of mouth and formal advertising, including fliers, television announcements, press releases, and articles in local newspapers.

K/T NeT has also worked closely with members of the Yurok and Karuk tribes in Orleans and Weitchpec, although service to these communities has been postponed until more resources are available. There is ongoing operational coordination between K/T NeT and the Hoopa Tribal Civilian Conservation Corps, or TCCC, for help with signs and miscellaneous building projects. K/T NeT also recently hired a driver from the Hoopa tribe.

In addition to tribal coordination efforts, K/T NeT also has relationships with organizations in Humboldt County, such as the Humboldt County Elderly and Disabled Office, that refer clients. There is coordination with the Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA), which enables K/T NeT riders to travel on to the coast from the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation and the Willow Creek Family Center. While there are no formal contracts, HTA has seen the need for K/T NeT's service in the tribal and other unserved areas. HTA has helped K/T NeT at every stage of program development, including giving it a bus. Similarly, the Redwood Transit System (RTS) in Arcata informally provides rides to customers from the K/T NeT service area. K/T NeT also serves and coordinates with nontribal communities and destinations surrounding the Hoopa Reservation, such as Ray's Food Place and Margaret's House of Beauty.

On a more formal level, K/T NeT has agreements with Caltrans relating to its 5310 funding and with its partner, Community Benefits of St. Joseph's Health Systems in Humboldt County, for office space and related administrative resources.

Need for Coordination and Lessons Learned: According to the K/T NeT executive director, coordination is needed to achieve every aspect of the program, including funding and delivery of service to those in need. Additional and more formal coordination is being pursued with tribes to obtain funding subsidies, and perhaps in-kind assistance, that will enable continued service to the Hoopa Reservation, planned and resumed service to Orleans and Weitchpec, and service to additional underserved parts of Humboldt County.

K/T NeT's development and launch resulted from significant coordination and cooperation among stakeholders and community organizations. The tribal element of this coordination has been mostly informal

but it has been very effective in designing and initiating service to Hoopa members. The role of coordination, particularly the need for formal agreements and subsidies versus informal support and cooperation, is likely to become more critical as K/T NeT matures and seeks to expand. At this time, one of the key needs related to tribal coordination and faced by K/T NeT surrounds funding. Tribal subsidies for transit service are being considered and are needed for K/T NeT's continued operation in Hoopa. Already, service to the tribal communities of Orleans and Weitchpec has been cancelled because of funding issues.

WASCO COUNTY, OREGON: MULTISTRATEGY COUNTYWIDE COORDINATION

Program	**Mid-Columbia Council of Governments (MCCOG)/The Link**
Sponsoring Organization	Transportation Network
City, State	The Dalles, OR
Service Type	Demand response
Service Area	Wasco County, OR
Service Area Population	22,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	"Several thousand square miles"
Data for Year Ending	2000
One-way Trips per Year	20,621
Annual Expenses	$225,800
Cost/Trip	$10.95
Major Funding Sources	STF (state cigarette tax revenue), FTA (primarily Section 5311), fare revenue, Wasco County, The Dalles, Mid-Columbia Senior Center, Greyhound, Oregon DOT
Coordinating Agencies	Senior centers, hospital
Other	Wamic Senior Bus (a door-to-door demand response subcontractor) open to everyone, but primarily for seniors and persons with disabilities, donation only

Background: The lead transportation agency for Wasco County is the Mid-Columbia Council of Governments Transportation Network. The Transportation Network operates its own local demand responsive service in The Dalles and coordinates resources to ensure service area available throughout Wasco County. Wasco County covers several thousand square miles and has a total population of approximately 22,000 people. The largest urbanized area in the county is The Dalles with a population of approximately 11,765. The Dalles is located on the northern border of the county along the Columbia River and Interstate 84. The next largest towns in the county all have populations under 1,000.

History of Coordination in Wasco County: In 1994, Wasco County commissioned a countywide social service needs assessment study. The study, completed by a research group from the University of Oregon, identified senior and disabled transportation services as a major gap in services in the county. At that time, the County Department of Senior and Disabled Services handled the small allocation of Special Transportation Formula (STF) funds (state cigarette tax revenues) received by Wasco County. Transportation services were highly segmented: the hospital provided medical trips, the senior center provided senior transportation services, and two rural senior programs provided trips in rural parts of the county.

As a result of the needs assessment, the County Board of Commissioners appointed a Special Transportation Committee to address the need for better senior and disabled transportation. At the same time, the Mid-Columbia Council of Governments (MCCOG) was appointed as the lead agency in developing a coordinated transportation network. Initial efforts by the committee were spearheaded by one county commissioner who was very interested in the process and pushed for extensive public and stakeholder

outreach. The committee's first action was to ask stakeholders what they wanted out of the process. Several stakeholder meetings were held, including one to which every conceivable stakeholder was invited. After input was collected from the larger stakeholder group, MCCOG staff met with interested parties one-on-one. These meetings served as the basis for developing cooperative relationships and the eventual development of the Transportation Network.

Stakeholders such as senior centers, the hospital, and a local workshop for those with disabilities responded positively to the outreach, especially to the prospect of developing a coordinated body to improve funding opportunities. One of the first programs implemented was a joint fuel purchasing program. This program provided significant cost savings to local providers by having the county buy fuel at bulk rates. Shortly thereafter, the local senior center and the hospital turned their vehicles over to the MCCOG to provide local services, which now operates under the name, The Link. The MCCOG then developed service contracts with two senior groups—Wamic Seniors and Mosier Valley Seniors—to provide rural services in the south and west county.

Funding: The Transportation Network has been able to diversify its funding greatly over the last few years. Table 13 shows a breakdown of the Transportation Network's FY2000-2001 operating budget of $225,802.

The Link's major operational funding sources are state Special Transportation Formula funds and the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) operating funds for small urban and rural areas (primarily FTA's Section 5311 program). Fare revenue is the Transportation Network's third largest source of revenue, equaling $42,000 in FY2000-2001. The Link also receives funding from Wasco County, The Dalles, and the Mid-Columbia Senior Center and through an agreement with Greyhound.

Table 13:
OPERATING FUNDS FOR THE LINK (FY2000-2001)

Funding Source	*Amount*	*Allocation*
Special Transportation Formula	$51,842	General operations
FTA operating funds for small cities	$50,000	Operations
Oregon Department of Transportation	$32,860	Elderly and disabled transportation operations
Special Transportation Grant (discretionary funds from STF)	$17,000	General operations
Wasco County, The Dalles, Mid-Columbia Senior Center	$20,000	General operations
Greyhound	$12,000	General operations
Fare revenues	$42,000	General operations
Donations	$100	General operations
TOTAL	**$225,802**	

Services Provided:

The Mid-Columbia Council of Governments Transportation Network provides public transportation services within the City of The Dalles (The Link) and subcontracts countywide services to two volunteer operators, Seniors of Mosier Valley and Wamic Senior Bus. The Transportation Network also subcontracts some services to the Columbia Gorge Center, a disabled workshop located in The Dalles. In FY1999-2000, the Transportation Network provided 20,500 rides with an operating budget of approximately $225,800. This is equal to a cost per ride of $10.95, which is considered to be a low per trip cost for general public demand-responsive service.

The Transportation Network owns and maintains most service vehicles in the county. They operate a coordinated vehicle replacement program through which they leverage Federal capital funds for new vehicles and pass on older vehicles to volunteer providers throughout the county. The MCCOG retains ownership of these vehicles and handles all maintenance. The MCCOG has also coordinated with the county to develop a consolidated fuel purchasing program, allowing providers of all types to purchase fuel at lower costs.

The Transportation Network staff includes six paid employees and three volunteers. Four of its paid employees are drivers (three full time and one part time). The three volunteers are all drivers who work approximately 4 to 5 hours per week. Volunteer drivers staff a total of 9 percent of the 145 weekly service hours provided by The Link. With a FY2000-2001 operating cost of $225,800, The Link operates at a cost per hour of approximately $30. This means it saves nearly $20,000 per year through volunteer operator labor. Table 14 shows the number of driver hours and the percentage of paid and volunteer hours required to staff current vehicle operations.

Table 14:
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK DRIVER HOURS

Type of Driver	*Number of Drivers*	*Number of Hours (Per Week)*	*Percent of Total Hours*
Full-time employee	3	112.5	78%
Part-time employee	1	19.5	13%
Part-time volunteer	1	5	3%
Part-time volunteer	2	8	6%
TOTAL	**7**	**145**	**100%**

The Link has five lift-equipped vehicles with a maximum vehicle pullout of four vehicles. The Link has had difficulty keeping up with increasing demand over the last several years despite high productivities. The service carries approximately six riders per revenue hour, very high for a demand-response system.

Elderly and Disabled Transportation Services—The Transportation Network also works with the Mosier Senior Center to provide elderly and disabled transportation services to residents in the Mosier Valley west of The Dalles. Volunteers from the center run a single non-ADA-compliant van, which is owned in part by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Mosier Senior Center. The van provides regularly scheduled trips to The Dalles each Friday and trips to Hood River on the first and third Tuesday of each month. The service does provide other medical and emergency trips on demand, although this generally accounts for just a few additional trips per week.

Wamic Senior Bus is a volunteer-based system that provides service in the southern part of Wasco County through a subcontract with the Transportation Network. Wamic Senior Bus operates two vehicles, a 15-passenger van and a 7-passenger van. They recently upgraded to ADA-compliant vehicles through a vehicle-sharing program that allows the Transportation Network to pass on older vehicles when it receives new equipment.

Wamic Senior Bus provides door-to-door demand-response service in the Wamic area, which includes the rural communities of Pine Grove, Maupin, Shaniko and Antelope. Weekly trips are also provided to The Dalles. The service operates on a donation only basis and is funded by Oregon Special Transportation Formula funds. The service is provided primarily for seniors and disabled residents of the area, but is also open to anyone who wishes to use it. Estimated ridership on the service is approximately 150 passengers per month.

The Columbia Gorge Center operates two vehicles for sheltered workshops in Wasco County. They also subcontract with the Transportation Network, providing trips primarily to sheltered workshop participants. MCCOG owns both of the lift-equipped vehicles operated by the Columbia Gorge Center.

Intercity and Local Transportation Services—MCCOG is also working with several Washington and Oregon counties stretching along the Columbia River Gorge from Portland and Vancouver to east of The Dalles. This bistate committee was originally formed to address (1) the lack of intercity transportation service along the Washington side of the Gorge and (2) the lack of transportation between the two states. The committee is charged with developing coordinated strategies for improving intercity and local transportation services along this natural corridor. Greyhound, which has been an active member of the committee, has a history of coordination with public transportation providers in the Gorge. MCCOG Transportation Network handles ticket sales for Greyhound and shares a terminal where connections can be made from The Link to the seven Greyhound coaches that serve The Dalles each day. Other committee members include charter bus services, Amtrak, and several county and local transit providers. The committee will address both long-haul medical and general public transportation needs, as well as cross-border transportation issues.

Coordinated Dispatching—The Transportation Network operates a coordinated dispatch center from its office in The Dalles. It dispatches rides to both The Link and its partner agencies. It is also in the process of significantly expanding its dispatch capabilities; it is setting up a five-county Medicaid brokerage. MCCOG has received a $50,000 grant from ODOT to start a Medicaid transportation brokerage in a five-county area: Wasco, Hood River, Sherman, Wheeler, and Gilliam Counties. The Oregon Department of Human Services has matched the $50,000 grant to provide startup assistance for the brokerage. The Oregon Medical Assistance Program (OMAP) brokerage would be modeled on the existing Tri-Met Medicaid Brokerage in the Portland area, which was started 6 years ago and has grown exponentially over its short lifespan.

Benefits of Coordination: The MCCOG Transportation Network's executive director recognizes several key benefits of coordination in Wasco County. The following list highlights some of those key rewards of coordination:

- There has been a tremendous increase in the number of annual rides provided throughout the county, primarily to elderly and disabled citizens. Many of the Transportation Network's clients were previously mobility impaired.
- The coordinated network makes it possible to provide service to the majority of this very rural county and to ensure that clients can move throughout the county, not just within their own region.
- The use of volunteer services has enabled the Transportation Network to provide cost-effective service.
- MCCOG's ability to purchase vehicles and capital equipment through government contracts is a benefit to smaller providers such as senior centers and the sheltered workshop. This has allowed providers to operate lift-equipped vehicles in rural areas where such vehicles were not previously available.
- A higher quality level for all transportation services has been achieved through the development of coordinated policies, particularly better risk management policy development.
- The Transportation Network is able to ensure that passengers throughout the county receive safer transportation services.

Challenges and Opportunities in Coordinating Services: The following is a list of important lessons learned by MCCOG as its coordination program has developed:

- **Accept the fact that funding will always be a challenge,** but realize that there are creative ways to make it work. MCCOG's success in improving services has created significant demand growth. This presents a constant challenge in ensuring that sufficient operating funds are available to support the demand for service. The Transportation Network's executive director cited the lack of adequate and stable funding as the primary hurdle to surmount in providing coordinated transportation in rural areas.
- **Ask stakeholders what they really need.** Talk to every stakeholder up front and ask them the simple questions: "What problems are you having?" and "How can we help?" In setting up a coordinated countywide network, MCCOG took painstaking efforts to ensure that it reached out to every stakeholder group and really listened to their needs. It doesn't need to stop here, however, it is important to keep an ongoing dialog with stakeholder groups.
- **Ensure buy-in by elected officials.** Make sure that elected officials are involved and "buy-in" to the process of developing coordinated transportation services. The executive director of the MCCOG Transportation Network cited one example of how they achieved this goal: After they purchased their first new vehicle, they shot a photo with the vehicle and all the elected officials for the newspaper.
- **Find a champion early on.** MCCOG benefited greatly from having a highly supportive county commissioner on its board from the very beginning. Make sure that you have an active and influential champion outside your organization and let them be your spokesperson whenever possible.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION FOR MULTIPLE AGENCIES

Program	**Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project (TRIP)**
Sponsoring Organization	Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities
City, State	Riverside, CA
Service Type	Volunteer driver reimbursement program that uses a case management model, which includes referral, monitoring, and control.
Service Area	Persons using TRIP must begin and end their round trip in Riverside County; no restriction on crossing jurisdictional boundaries; trips are restricted to 50 miles one way
Service Area Population	1,500,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	7,200
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	48,350
Annual Expenses	$350,157
Cost/Trip	$7.24
Major Funding Sources	Measure A (Riverside County's half-cent transportation tax); Office on Aging's Title III funds; the City of Blythe's allocation of state Local Transportation Funds; SunLine Transit; small donations; and Chapter XXII Senior Low Vision Program funds
Coordinating Agencies	Partnership to Preserve Independent Living (a nonprofit agency); 130 nonprofit and government partners; an 11-member Board of Directors oversees the program
Other	Older persons are the primary clientele. TRIP defines itself as a social assistance program with an escort and transportation component. A key feature is the education and counseling provided by staff and through other educational programs.

Background: The Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project (TRIP) complements public transportation services in Riverside County, California, by reimbursing volunteers to transport individuals where no transit service exists or when the individual is too frail to use other transportation. Older persons are the primary clientele. By using volunteers, a needed service is provided at a small fraction of what it would cost using more conventional methods.

TRIP is a program of the nonprofit Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities. In FY2000-2001, TRIP's annual transportation expenses were $350,157. With this budget, TRIP served 537 people by providing 48,350 one-way trips at a cost of $7.24 a trip. These trips were provided by more than 1,000 volunteer drivers, who are reimbursed at a rate of 28 cents a mile for use of their personal vehicles.

Persons using TRIP must begin and end their round trip in Riverside County, which is located in Southern California about 60 miles west of Los Angeles. The county includes several cities, the largest of which is

Riverside, with a population of 255,000. Much of the 7,200 square miles comprising Riverside County consists of sparsely populated rural areas. For this reason, the average one-way trip provided by TRIP is 22.6 miles. Nearly a third of the county's 1.5 million residents live in unincorporated areas, and almost 13% are 65 years of age or older.

Program Evolution and Structure—The concept of a volunteer driver reimbursement program grew out of focus groups in the eastern part of the county. In 1993, the Riverside County Transportation Commission voted to provide funding for senior transportation to the Senior and Disabled Citizens' Coalition, an existing nonprofit organization, which is now called the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities. An 11-member Board of Directors oversees the program.

Initially, there was not a clear understanding of how widespread the problem was of inadequate or inaccessible transportation. Consequently, no screening criteria existed, and the resources were soon overwhelmed. Now, TRIP uses a case management model, which includes referral, monitoring, and control.

TRIP is not advertised. Instead, individuals are referred to TRIP by its 130 nonprofit and governmental partners, such as the Department of Social Services; the Office on Aging; visiting nurses; the Multipurpose Senior Services Program, and Care Teams that consist of the District Attorney's office, police, licensing agencies, adult day care programs, and the Better Business Bureau.

TRIP is staffed by the executive director of the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living, an administrative coordinator, and a clerical assistant, who together spend 63 hours a week on TRIP functions. TRIP contracts with an accountant and with Senior HelpLink, operated by the County Office on Aging, to supplement staffing.

TRIP pays $41,000 a year to Senior HelpLink to screen potential applicants. This amount funds 1.5 full-time equivalent employees, who determine eligibility by questions such as whether the caller is unable to drive, needs assistance getting in and out of a vehicle, or has no family members to provide a ride. Potentially eligible callers are then sent an application, which is subsequently reviewed by an eligibility review committee. About one-third of the applicants are denied eligibility because the committee determines that the individual can use other transportation options, such as Dial-a-Ride. TRIP is considered a service of last resort.

Senior HelpLink receives about 17,000 transportation-related calls a year. Of those, 187 new clients were enrolled in TRIP in FY2001-02. The rest were counseled on community resources available for specific problems and given information on other transportation options. Therefore, TRIP is only one part of a much larger network aimed at keeping seniors healthy and independent.

In fact, TRIP is not considered a transportation program, but rather a social assistance program with an escort and transportation component. A key feature is the education and counseling provided by the staff. The Partnership also offers other educational programs:

- **Vital Connections,** a web portal visited about 1,000 times a month. Vital Connections offers links to news sources and topics, such as health and nutrition, gardening, and home repair.
- **Health Education Video Program,** featuring two dozen videos available for staff training, events, and broadcast on public access television. In addition, the National Association of the Deaf is distributing one of the videos nationally. Videos cover such topics as how to access community services, exercises for persons in wheelchairs, Tai Chi exercises, elder abuse, harmful medicine interactions, prevention of falls, how to maintain good mental health, and care of Alzheimer's patients at home.
- **Meeting the Challenges Quarterly,** a publication with a readership of 35,000. Self-help articles are aimed not only at seniors but also to a wider readership. For example, an article might assist children of the elderly in helping their parents. The magazine is distributed widely to educate the public and key stakeholders, such as the County Board of Supervisors, to build support. Adult Protective Services distributes it through their in-home support services.

Characteristics of Trips and Riders—The constituency of TRIP is considered "at risk." Typically, a client is in the program for no more than 3 years. This is because persons accepted into the program are generally

unable to live independently longer than 3 more years or because they have died within that time-frame. The attrition rate is estimated at 85 percent in 3 years. Because one of the funding sources of TRIP, the Older Americans Act, prohibits income qualifications, eligible riders do not have to be low income, although most are. The following is a profile of TRIP riders:

- 70 percent are female,
- 70 percent are 70 years or above,
- 27 percent are 80 years or above, and
- 100 percent have one or more health-related problems.

Because services needed by these riders are not confined to Riverside County, the Riverside Transportation Commission decided from the outset that there would be no restriction on crossing jurisdictional boundaries. For example, some trips cross into Arizona. Although the trips can go out of the county, the round trip must begin and end in Riverside County. Trips are restricted to 50 miles one way with a monthly maximum of 300 miles. (Residents of Blythe, which borders Arizona, are allotted 460 miles because of the great distances they must travel.) Riders turn in their monthly odometer mileage and are paid 28 cents per mile, which they use to reimburse their drivers. A rider can have multiple drivers in a month for different trips.

Although trip purposes may vary month to month, trip data from January 2002 are reported to be fairly typical. During that month, medical trips accounted for 29 percent of total travel, shopping trips for 27 percent, dining for 14 percent, and personal errands for 10 percent, with a variety of other trip purposes accounting for less than 20 percent of the overall total.

In a 2001 survey of 149 riders, 94 percent reported that, before enrollment in TRIP, they had not been able to travel for medical purposes when necessary, and 93 percent said that they had been unable to get needed groceries. Before TRIP was available to them, 13 percent said they never left their residence, and 49 percent said they could travel only one to two times a month. After enrolling in TRIP, 96 percent reported an increase in their ability to travel. (TRIP's data indicate that participants take an average of 7.5 trips per month.) Riders had a 100-percent satisfaction rate with the way they had been treated by TRIP staff.

Volunteer Drivers—The philosophy behind TRIP is that people must take responsibility for the outcomes in their lives. Therefore, riders are asked to recruit their own drivers. TRIP staff coaches them in how to approach friends and neighbors and how to assure them that they are not asking for charity because they can reimburse the driver.

One of the problems of elderly people is isolation, which leads to giving up. Finding a driver encourages people to get to know their neighbors and reduces the feeling of dependency and victimization.

The driving record of a new volunteer driver is checked through the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Drivers can have no violations in the past 3 years. Out-of-state drivers are turned down until they register with the DMV. Drivers must also have automobile insurance. TRIP then adds the driver to its own policy for a cost of 50 cents per year per volunteer driver, which covers any liability. Because drivers often help their frail or disabled riders out of the house and into the vehicles, TRIP's liability insurance also covers falls. In addition, the riders must sign a waiver, releasing TRIP from liability.

When TRIP started, riders were required to find their own drivers without TRIP's assistance. Fearful that liability claims could be filed against the agency and the county, over time the Board of Directors and Riverside County staff reconsidered. First, they were reassured by the experience of the national Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP), which insures its volunteer drivers. Second, they discovered that their own insurance underwriter would write the coverage for 50 cents per year per driver in conjunction with the $1 million liability policy TRIP carries. Since then, TRIP has learned that other organizations have received contradictory answers from their insurance carriers, denying coverage of volunteer activities. While the issue does not seem to be settled within the insurance industry, TRIP is willing to risk the uncertainty based on its own continuing coverage of volunteer drivers.

Although 85 percent of TRIP clients are successful in recruiting a driver, TRIP staff has begun a volunteer driver corps to help the remaining 15 percent. The concept is to partner with existing organizations to recruit

reserve drivers from within those organizations. When an organization has developed a pool of at least six reserve drivers, TRIP performs a DMV check, adds them to its insurance, gives them an identification card and lapel pin, and refers riders to the organization as needed. TRIP's executive director has targeted 22 organizations for the Volunteer Driver Corps. Besides free publicity, the organizations will be included in TRIP's grant proposals. Although the program is just getting underway, three organizations have already signed up, including the Family Services Association at the Wellness Center.

Benefits of Coordination: TRIP's staff reported the following benefits of coordination:

- **Expands available transportation.** As a program of last resort, TRIP supplements rather than competes with public transportation. In fact, TRIP insists that its clients be unable to use public transportation before they are accepted into the program. Therefore, TRIP expands the availability of transportation, increases the number of trips overall, and fills gaps where there is no public transportation service.
- **Access to more diverse funding.** TRIP receives funds from Measure A, which is Riverside County's half-cent transportation tax and has received some transportation money from SunLine Transit, the public fixed-route and dial-a-ride operator in the Coachella Valley. In addition, TRIP's budget is funded by the Office on Aging's Title III funds; Blythe's allocation of state Local Transportation Funds; small donations; and Chapter XXII Senior Low Vision Program funds from the Community Access Center. It also receives about $6,000 from the Office on Aging in in-kind contributions for office space and utilities, mail and copying services, and information management. Therefore, through coordination with diverse types of agencies, TRIP's modest budget of $350,157 taps into other sources unavailable to a typical transit provider.
- **Lower cost of trips for agencies and the public.** If the public transportation providers were to take over the TRIP program with paid drivers and publicly owned vehicles, the costs would be at least five times higher. From 1997 to 1998, four demand responsive programs in Riverside County operated by various cities had an average operating cost of $1.72 per mile. This cost, multiplied by the average 22.6 miles per trip for TRIP clients in 2000-2001, equals a cost of $38.87 per trip if done by one of the city programs. Instead, TRIP's cost per trip was $7.24. This is a savings to the operators and the public of $1,529,208 (the difference between 48,350 annual trips times $38.87 versus the same number of trips times $7.24). (In fact, the savings would be even greater if the 2000-2001 public transportation costs were used and if the value of a personalized escort service were included.)
- **Reduced staff time.** In addition to quantifiable costs, there is a benefit to other social service agencies for the counseling and support TRIP staff provides to clients. This service not only reduces the amount of staff time other agencies would need to spend, but also may defer or prevent costs of health care and institutionalization. TRIP also aids public transit marketing efforts by teaching seniors how to access public transportation.
- **Avoided capital costs.** Because TRIP relies on privately owned automobiles, there is no costly fleet of vehicles to purchase, maintain, store, and replace. In this way, the program maximizes existing community resources.
- **Reduced vehicle travel.** TRIP is in the process of extracting data on trip chaining by its clients. When the data are available, an additional economic benefit to both transit operators and riders can be calculated. For example, a rider returning from a medical appointment may stop at the grocery store with his or her volunteer driver on the way home. Generally, this would be two trips by dial-a-ride, costing the rider two fares. Thus, the mileage for public agencies, and the attendant costs, could be substantially higher than the TRIP program's annual mileage because of dial-a-ride's typical single purpose trips. In this example, the added trip to the grocery store by the rider and driver together in the same trip also reduces overall vehicle travel.

Challenges and Opportunities:

Funding—Funding is the most significant problem faced by volunteer driver programs, according to the executive director. Few foundation grants are available for ridesharing programs. It would be counter-productive to siphon transit dollars from government sources. Yet no other significant government funding categories are designated for ridesharing programs such as TRIP. TRIP is working with the California Senior Legislature to persuade the State Legislature to earmark funds for a demonstration project. Through a

demonstration project, TRIP hopes to create awareness of such ridesharing reimbursement programs as a cost-effective way of expanding elderly transportation.

Reporting—TRIP tracks its clients, trips, mileage, and expenses by funding source for three subdivisions of Riverside County: West County, Coachella Valley, and Blythe and Palo Verde Valley. This complex cost allocation will become even more complicated now that the Office on Aging is requiring the program to perform a further breakdown by U.S. Census Bureau tracts. In response, TRIP is developing stand-alone software which will provide management capabilities that include monitoring, control, and reporting. Called Trip Trak, the software can be customized for adaptation by other programs nationally. The software will be the product of a pro bono partnership with a programming firm, an accounting firm, and a technical support firm. TRIP will offer it to others for a small annual lease fee.

Non-aligned Missions—Public transit operators see their mission as transporting people, whereas TRIP defines itself as a social assistance program with a transportation component. This difference in the definition of mission has recently caused the ties to be severed between SunLine Transit and TRIP. The two agencies have disagreed over program eligibility rules, service area, and types of trips.

Lessons Learned: TRIP has been chosen as an exceptional program model in a national study by the Beverly Foundation, which is currently using the model as the basis of a demonstration project in Pasadena, California. In addition, several communities have adapted the model for wider use in their own cities. These include

- "Out and About Vista," Vista, California;
- "Enabling Transportation," Mesa Senior Center, Arizona; and
- Scottsdale, Arizona.

TRIP's executive director has the following advice for those interested in adapting the TRIP model:

- **Cultivate partnerships.** A mutual support system is necessary to succeed.
- **Develop screening techniques.** Use resources wisely and avoid redundancy with other transportation providers by setting appropriate eligibility criteria.
- **Tailor programs to your own community.** TRIP cannot simply be replicated. Other programs will have different funding sources to satisfy, different resources in their community, and different geography.
- **Establish systems that are easy to administer.** Using its 8 years of experience, TRIP has developed a billing and reporting system to handle its complex accounting and data. These systems are critical to obtaining and keeping funding and to tracking performance.
- **Leverage funding.** Finding funding is a significant challenge. By cultivating partnerships, new sources can be discovered and traditional sources can be leveraged.
- **Educate the public.** Private vehicles with volunteer drivers are a significant untapped and cost-effective transportation resource in our society. However, the initial reaction by some community members that good neighbors provide rides without any reimbursement had to be overcome. By understanding programs such as TRIP, policymakers and the public will support funding for reimbursement programs, allowing them to grow.

WASHINGTON, MULTNOMAH, AND CLACKAMAS COUNTIES, OREGON: MULTICOUNTY COORDINATED VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Program	**Ride Connection**
Sponsoring Organization	Tri-Met
City, State	Portland, OR
Service Type	Senior and disabled transportation
Service Area	Washington, Multnomah, and Clackamas Counties, OR
Service Area Population	1,444,219
Service Area Size (sq mi)	3,027
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	236,000
Annual Expenses	$4,600,000
Cost/Trip	$19.49
Major Funding Sources	FTA Section 5311, Tri-Met, STF (state cigarette tax revenue), Federal Jobs Access, private foundation grants
Coordinating Agencies	32 agencies and senior centers
Other	Used by approximately 8,800 people

Background: Ride Connection is a nonprofit community service organization that offers transportation assistance to persons with disabilities and seniors without alternative transportation. Ride Connection serves a three-county area, including Washington, Multnomah, and Clackamas Counties. The service area is both urban and rural, because it incorporates Portland and surrounding suburban communities, but also stretches beyond the urban growth area to serve the rural portions of the three counties. The organization prides itself on an ongoing commitment to identifying transportation needs and filling them.

Ride Connection has grown to include a network of more than 30 agencies and senior centers and more than 330 volunteers providing 236,000 rides annually. An estimated 8,800 residents of the three-county area benefit from participating agency trips each year. Eligibility for the service is self-declared. Ride Connection has an annual operating budget of approximately $4.6 million. More than two-thirds of these funds go to more than 30 provider organizations. Ride Connection's internal budget is just over $1 million, which funds 15 staff members and a number of support programs.

Ride Connection has developed partnerships with 32 separate partner agencies and holds 22 separate contracts with its participating providers. These groups include

- Adult and senior centers,
- Mental health clinics,
- Health care providers,
- Community centers,
- Health and rehabilitation centers,
- Independent living resource centers,

- Denominational community organizations,
- YMCA,
- Private taxi services,
- Private transportation providers, and
- Other community organizations.

The single largest partner is the Clackamas County Transportation Consortium, which include 11 separate organizations. Among these organizations are adult and senior centers, mental health clinics, community centers and other transportation services.

History of Coordination: In 1986, Tri-Met, the tricounty regional public transportation provider in the Portland area, formed the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Elderly and Disabled Transportation to evaluate the needs of elderly and disabled residents. The Committee represented a highly inclusive cross-section of the special needs rider population and a number of key providers. The Committee found that there were already a large number of agencies providing special needs transportation, but that many had little expertise and had been forced to start programs to meet client needs. The Committee determined that there was significant opportunity for coordination among existing senior, disabled, and social service providers and hired a consultant to design a coordinated provision system.

Ride Connection (originally called Volunteer Transportation) was formed in May 1988 on the recommendation of the Citizen's Committee on Elderly and Disabled Transportation with the collaboration of Tri-Met. The committee's vision to provide better alternative transportation service for frail elderly citizens and persons with disabilities reflected a recognized need among the community. The organization prides itself on an ongoing commitment to identifying transportation needs and filling them. The organization has a five-part mission statement that describes its objectives as

- Serving those persons without viable transportation alternatives, giving priority to elderly people and persons with disabilities;
- Coordinating transportation services in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties and coordinating systemwide training and safety programs;
- Developing and securing financial, volunteer, and equipment resources for Ride Connection's network;
- Developing and maintaining provider programs;
- Acting as a liaison among funding organizations and community agencies.

Ride Connection is strongly dedicated to using and supporting volunteer provider services. The executive director came to the organization from a member provider through a personal initiative to coordinate volunteer training. She believes strongly, as does the organization, that volunteer drivers and staff provide equally, if not more, reliable service as paid employees. In her more than 10 years working with volunteer providers, she has witnessed very few performance failures because of employee status. Ride Connection has a consolidated training program designed to allow all provider drivers and dispatchers to receive the same level of training. The executive director believes that this is a key element of the program's success.

Another aspect of the coordinated services provided by Ride Connection is a consolidated capital application process. This program was developed early in the coordination process to help small providers leverage Federal capital funds for vehicle replacement. Ride Connection now owns all the vehicles used by its 70+ contract providers. One of the clauses in the agency contracts is that they keep the vehicles in use full time. Ride Connection has been loosely responsible for seeing that member agencies properly maintain its vehicles, but has had problems with upkeep by some providers. The organization recently received a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation to develop a preventative maintenance program. The program will still allow participating agencies to handle vehicle maintenance, but will require that they comply with much stricter standards.

Several of Ride Connection's contract providers are very small agencies or organizations that operate one or two vehicles using volunteer services. Many of these agencies face a significant challenge finding an

insurance company willing to provide coverage to volunteer-operated vehicles. To decrease insurance costs and ease the burden of finding providers, Ride Connection has developed an insurance pool program that allows small providers to purchase insurance through them.

Ride Connection also has a planning staff that provides coordinated planning services that benefit participating agencies throughout the three-county area. Ride Connection planners work to identify service gaps and opportunities around community-based transportation. They also act as policy planners and advocates helping to forward transportation policies that support the mobility needs of its clientele.

Funding: Ride Connection has built a diverse funding base over the last 10 years and has grown steadily, with a FY2000-2001 operating budget of $4.6 million. The organization receives Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funds for services provided in rural Washington County. Tri-Met provides funding from its General Fund and the State of Oregon contributes Special Transportation Formula Funds (cigarette tax) designated for elderly and disabled transportation provision. Ride Connection recently received its first Federal Jobs Access grant funding allowing it to transport its first general public riders. It has also been very successful in soliciting private foundation grants. Ride Connection receives funding from a Meyer Memorial Trust Grant, an Oregon Community Transportation Grant, and a number of other small private grants.

Reasons for Success: Ride Connection attributes the success of its programs to a simple set of values:

- **Recognize, nurture, and appreciate volunteers.** Ride Connection believes strongly that volunteer workers can provide the highest level of service available. But it should be recognized that volunteers do require compensation in the form of recognition, quality treatment and training, and appreciation.
- **Maintaining collaborative relationships with network providers.** Although Ride Connection is at times required to act in an enforcement role, it treats its relationships with network providers as a collaborative and supportive one. Ride Connection believes that cooperation in problem solving leads to longer term solutions than simple enforcement of its existing contracts.
- **Delivering safe, personalized, and accessible door-to-door services.** Ride Connection operates under the belief that safe, quality service is its best advertising. All Ride Connection services are fully accessible.
- **Ensuring honest, reliable, and accountable business relationships.** Ride Connection believes that the principles of coordination should spill over into every aspect of its business practices.
- **Strong commitment to training.** Ride Connection has a very strong commitment to training its volunteers. The organization believes that volunteers can provide an equal or higher level of service as paid employees if they receive the proper training and are recognized for quality work.

Benefits of Coordination: Ride Connection has seen a number of benefits of its coordination efforts in the three-county area it serves:

- Efficiency gained by eliminating the duplication of services;
- Provide access to a number of private and foundation funding sources that are not available to private providers;
- Increased the ability of smaller providers to leverage operating and capital funds;
- More service for frail and elderly citizens in the three-county service area;
- Better quality and safer service for its passengers;
- Greater flexibility in responding to community needs than a public agency or transit provider;
- Ability to provide coordinated services without requiring participating providers to homogenize their services, thereby losing their ability to respond directly to client needs.

Challenges: Like any lead organization in a major coordination effort, Ride Connection has faced some challenges. The following issues were identified by Ride Connection's executive director:

- **Caregivers underestimate the fitness of passengers.** Ride Connection has had problems with caregivers underestimating the fitness of referred passengers. This situation often forces drivers to provide medical assistance for which they are not trained. Ride Connection typically addresses bad referrals by contacting the caregiver directly.

- **Passengers underestimate their personal fitness.** The same problem also occurs when passengers underestimate their personal fitness or do not reveal their true condition because they feel their transportation options are limited.
- **Providers neglecting vehicle maintenance.** Ride Connection has had several issues with providers neglecting vehicle maintenance. Many of these problems occur because member providers cannot afford or are poorly equipped to handle maintenance. Ride Connection is addressing this problem through the development of a preventive vehicle maintenance program.
- **Challenge of playing conflicting roles of contract enforcement and collaborative support network.** Ride Connection staff sometimes feel "schizophrenic" because they are responsible for enforcing contract agreements with member providers and must also act as the primary support network for providers.

FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: MULTIPROVIDER COORDINATION

Program	**Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA)**
Sponsoring Organization	Council of Fresno County Governments (COFCG)
City, State	Fresno, CA
Service Type	CTSA consists of the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency that primarily serves the general public, primarily through a dial-a-ride system and intercity fixed-route service and the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission (FCEOC) that handles group trips through contracts with social service agencies.
Service Area	Rural portion of Fresno County
Service Area Population	County population is 823,900. FCRTA serves the nonmetropolitan area, excluding the cities of Fresno and Clovis, or about 39 percent of the county's population.
Service Area Size (sq mi)	6,005
Data for Year Ending	FY2002
One-way Trips per Year	448,902
Annual Expenses	$3,082,527
Cost/Trip	FCRTA's cost per passenger was $6.87; FCEOC's cost per passenger was $6.06.
Major Funding Sources	Social service agencies; adult day care centers; FCEOC; California's Transportation Development funds, a permanent source of transit funding.
Coordinating Agencies	FCRTA and FCEOC are co-designated as the CTSA for the rural portion of Fresno County.
Other	FCRTA provides a coordinated general public transit service through 20 subsystems to the rural areas of Fresno County, 13 rural incorporated cities and 25 unincorporated communities (outside the Urban Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area).

Background: Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) has been co-designated with the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission (FCEOC) as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for the rural area of Fresno County, California. FCRTA serves the general public, primarily through a dial-a-ride system, while FCEOC handles group trips through contracts with social service agencies.

FCRTA has 55 vehicles covering a service area of 6,005 square miles and operating 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. It administers 20 subsystems, which are operated by contractors or by small cities. It serves the unincorporated areas of the county and cities ranging from 500 to 5,000 in population.

FCEOC has 175 vehicles, used to transport Head Start children to preschool, students with developmental disabilities to sheltered workshops, special education students to school, elderly people to meals programs and to deliver meals to congregate meals programs. FCEOC is the lead agency responsible for overall program administration, including liaison with social service agencies, data collection, development and implementation of the operations program and budget, and execution of service contracts. FCRTA is the claimant and administrator of state funds for rural CTSA operations.

Expenditures for the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency were $3,083,527 for FY2000-2001. FCRTA's cost per passenger was $6.87. FCEOC's cost per passenger was $6.06. The cost for meal delivery was 80 cents.

History of Coordination: In 1979, the State Legislature passed Assembly Bill 120, the Social Service Transportation Improvement Act. The goal was to reduce duplication of services, address increasing transportation needs, and better use diminishing resources. AB 120 encouraged transportation coordination and consolidation through the formation of CTSAs. CTSAs are eligible claimants in California for 5 percent of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds to operate their services. TDA funds are a permanent source of transit funding, generated from a tax of one-quarter of 1 percent on all retail sales in each county in California.

COFCG wrote its AB 120 Action Plan, which created the rural CTSAs and the corresponding urban CTSA (the FCEOC and the Fresno Area Express operated by Fresno). A key feature of the Action Plan is the maintenance of effort required by social service agencies. There was a concern that agencies might simply supplant TDA funds for the funds they had been spending out of their own budgets. To ensure that the TDA funds could be used for expansion of services, the plan requires that the 45 percent of the budget, which comes from TDA 4.5 funds, be matched with 45 percent from social service agencies. The remainder meets the state's requirement that 10 percent of rural public transit be funded from the farebox.

Initially, COFCG resisted the mandate from the state to coordinate. They opposed the bill, stating

- "The creation of a consolidated transportation agency would have created another layer of government.
- The Bill would have created an agency similar to a transit district, but without voter approval.
- There was no provision in the Bill that the governing board of the consolidated agency would be composed of elected officials.
- The ability of the consolidated agencies to claim Local Transportation Funds (LTF, a category of TDA funds) would strip the local cities and counties of their right to determine how LTF funds would be spent."

However, when the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) threatened legal action, COFCG wrote and implemented its Action Plan in 1982. A survey of all social service agencies was conducted, and in 1983 the CTSAs began serving five social service agencies operating 11 programs. Now, the urban and rural CTSAs together serve 24 social service agencies, which operate 45 different programs.

Social service agencies, which were reluctant to join the CTSA in the beginning, experienced an insurance crisis in the early 1980s. When insurance costs skyrocketed 300 percent, the social service agencies turned to the CTSA to insure and operate their vehicles. The vehicles then became available for use by other organizations that purchased service from the CTSA. Eventually, the vehicles were sold, and the replacements purchased under Federal Section 5310 funding became the property of the CTSA. Nonetheless, with turnover, there is a continuous need to re-educate managers of social service agencies about the benefits of belonging to the CTSA.

Despite COFCG's early objections, the coordinated plan has been very successful in Fresno County. However, most other counties have not complied with AB 120. FCRTA's manager attributes this situation to the lack of attention Caltrans has given to legislative requirements for a progress report on coordination every 2 years. Without Caltrans' active followup, only 12 of the state's 58 counties have formed CTSAs.

Benefits of Coordination: Formation of the Fresno County Rural Area CTSA has resulted in increased community exposure, improved service reliability, reduced overall costs, and fewer demands for new fixed and dial-a-ride routes. It has accomplished these results by meeting the following objectives:

- centralized administration,
- consolidated funding,
- centralized dispatching,
- centralized maintenance,

- conducting driver training programs, and
- combined purchasing.

The Fresno County CTSAs have consolidated all Older Americans Act funding for transportation and food delivery services in Fresno County. This resulted in the ability to merge a number of routes and eliminate others for a cost savings. Centralized maintenance reduced costs from outside vendors and lowered the operating cost per vehicle. In addition, driver training and risk management efforts contributed to a significant reduction in insurance premiums. The CTSA participates with 180 agencies in an insurance pool through the California Association of Coordinated Transportation.

With the exception of a few agencies that continue to insist on providing their own very limited transportation services, the rural CTSA reports that nearly all nonspecialized social service transportation services in Fresno County are now being coordinated, provided by, or assisted by, at least one of the three CTSAs. Some additional adult care centers are now participating in the CTSA programs, resulting in greater use of CTSA vehicles.

Challenges for Expanded Coordination: Although FCRTA focuses on general public dial-a-ride, it does provide some single trips for clients of social service agencies. However, most nonemergency medical transportation continues to be performed by private operators. The complexity of billing is a disincentive for further consolidation of these trips. Not only is there a significant amount of paperwork required by insurance companies for reimbursement, but FCRTA needs to carry the trip costs for 3 or 4 months before it is paid.

The CTSAs see a need to raise the current maximum of 5 percent of TDA funds that they can receive. The 5 percent maximum was set decades ago. The population to be served has grown, but the money has not. Raising the maximum to 10 percent with a corresponding requirement for matching funds would allow needed expansion. An additional funding problem is the lack of a source for capital funds to build a $1 million maintenance facility and to buy a new vehicle fleet.

Reasons for Success: The FCRTA director reports the following reasons for its coordination successes:

- Commitment by elected officials to implement the AB 120 Action Plan,
- Centralization of key functions,
- Clear roles and responsibilities among the CTSA co-designees,
- Leveraged resources through the requirement to match TDA 4.5 funds, and
- Demonstrated cost savings for social service agencies.

KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: COUNTYWIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION

Program	**Kern Regional Transit**
Sponsoring Organization	Kern County
City, State	Bakersfield, CA
Service Type	Intercity services, several local fixed and dial-a-ride, school trips
Service Area	Kern County, CA
Service Area Population	660,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	8,141
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	556,000
Annual Expenses	$3,800,000
Cost/Trip	$6.88
Major Funding Sources	Federal
Coordinating Agencies	Nonprofit agencies, city-operated transit systems, limited local services, neighbor counties
Other	Service area is larger than Massachusetts or New Jersey

Background: Kern County is California's third largest county. Covering 8,073 square miles, Kern County is larger than several states, including Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Hawaii. The largely rural county's largest city is Bakersfield, with a population of nearly 250,000. The size of the county, development patterns, and the remoteness of some communities are particularly challenging for transit service. Transit-dependent populations are found throughout this county of 660,000 residents.

Transit conditions vary by geographic subregion. Kern County's agricultural west is very different from the desert in the east. Many West Kern transit operators, serving high numbers of Spanish-speaking residents employed in agricultural jobs, must adapt to often unpredictable population fluctuations because of high numbers of seasonal migrant workers. In the central mountain communities, small, dispersed populations reside in difficult to reach areas. And in the East Kern desert, unpopulated expanses separate both small and large communities and settlements.

Within the county, one county-operated transit system, Kern Regional Transit, serves nearly all corners of this large and diverse county, providing intercity services, and several local fixed and dial-a-ride services. The county transit network also includes 10 city transit operators that range from the two-passenger cars used to transport riders in Shafter to the 73-bus Golden Empire Transit (GET) system operating throughout metropolitan Bakersfield.

Kern Regional Transit is the county's primary rural transit service provider and second-largest system after the urban GET system. Kern Regional Transit carried nearly 556,000 passengers in FY2001. The system provides commute trips, medical trips to Bakersfield and Los Angeles County, school trips, and local dial-a-ride services. The system operates 12 fixed routes and local dial-a-ride services in five communities. Each route or dial-a-ride service operates on a unique schedule, but the major services operate weekdays from

about 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Some routes operate earlier and later hours. The system's vehicles traveled more than 2 million revenue miles in 2001 with yearly operating costs at $3.8 million. Systemwide, the 2001 cost per passenger was $6.88.

Coordination Efforts: Although it has not been especially proactive in coordination activities, the system has participated in a combination of consolidation and coordination efforts. For example, Kern Regional Transit works closely with county social services to plan and develop routes to meet an array of special social service needs. Although the county operates almost all of its own services through a single contractor, it also contracts with social services and local transit providers in smaller communities. Several examples illustrate the diversity of coordination in Kern County:

- **Contracting with nonprofit service providers.** For one of its routes, Kern Regional Transit pays a local senior center to operate a senior center-owned bus. The service is available to the general public between the community of Buttonwillow and Bakersfield. Since 1985, the county has had a contract with Pioneer Senior Citizens of Buttonwillow, paying the senior organization an operating fee in addition to annual vehicle depreciation costs.
- **Contracting with city-operated transit systems.** As in many rural communities, the county pays smaller transit operators to provide service to persons living in unincorporated areas just beyond city boundaries. For example, Kern County pays the city of Ridgecrest, a somewhat isolated Mojave Desert community in the northeast corner of the county, to operate dial-a-ride services beyond its boundaries. It also pays for a lifeline fixed-route service from the small town of Randsburg to Ridgecrest. The county has similar arrangements to fund services adjacent to other small communities. The county has formal contracts with each city, which must be approved by the cities and the county.
- **Supplementing limited local service.** For most of the day, Arvin Transit provides service between the farming cities of Arvin and Lamont. The service allows Arvin residents to connect to Kern Regional Transit service in Lamont to travel to Bakersfield. However, Arvin Transit does not operate very early or late evening runs. To allow Arvin residents to connect to Lamont, Kern Regional Transit operates its own early morning and late evening service between the two cities, providing an alternative transit option.
- **Coordinating with neighboring county transit systems.** Kern County Transit buses are scheduled to allow for transfers between transit systems in neighboring counties. In Delano, on the northwest side of Kern County, riders can transfer to Tulare County Transit buses. Kern Regional Transit buses meet the Metrolink trains and provide for connections to AVTA and Santa Clarita Transit in the outlying Los Angeles County cities of Lancaster and Palmdale. In Ridgecrest, riders can transfer to services provided by Inyo and Mono Counties.
- **Consolidating local services.** The Kern Regional Transit system has been in a process of slow consolidation, assuming operation of services that were previously operated by Kern County localities. The ongoing process has continued for many years. Recent movements in consolidation have included the county assuming administrative and operational responsibilities for a local and rural dial-a-ride in Tehachapi previously operated by the city, and the establishment of a county-funded fixed route to replace an intercity service previously operated and paid for jointly by the cities of Wasco and Shafter. Even with the array of coordination efforts, the small communities within the county remain fiercely independent, and many policymakers and transit users are reluctant to see a regional transit system fully operated and administered by Kern County. Communities that continue to operate their own services include Bakersfield, Ridgecrest, Shafter, California City, Wasco, Delano, McFarland, Taft, and Arvin, although Kern Regional Transit provides intercity service to all of these communities.

Regardless of an impasse in consolidation activities, the County Transit system staff and Kern Council of Governments have been the primary motivators. County Transit staff regularly have scheduled meetings with local transit operators to discuss how their operations might be turned over to the county. Coordination is expected to provide benefits through a combination of administrative cost efficiencies (Kern Regional

Transit's administrative and planning staff stay the same size, even though new services are regularly added); operational efficiencies (a toll-free number for dial-a-ride services so several services are handled by a single dispatcher); and a better product for the customer. There is an assumption—not always correct—that Kern Regional Transit performs more efficiently and effectively than some of the local transit systems. No transfer arrangements currently exist between Kern Regional Transit and the local providers. For systems that have consolidated, performance goals have not necessarily been met, but the county has been able to get a better handle on the operations of those services.

Some earlier coordination efforts were unsuccessful. A regional coordinated fare and transfer system was implemented and discontinued within 1 year. The system for sharing fares and obtaining transfers was deemed inequitable by some jurisdictions that were losing thousands of dollars each month in fare revenues. Likewise, some efforts on the part of Kern Regional Transit to assume the operation of local services in certain jurisdictions have been met with resistance when the smaller jurisdictions were reluctant to give up local control.

The many coordination examples are, in many respects, piecemeal efforts to include the most vocal communities and address the interests of the county's political leaders. The county believes it has a responsibility to provide regional rural transit services, many of which are developed in response to findings of unmet needs hearings. Unmet transit needs hearings are held throughout the county. Input at these meetings is reviewed to determine whether the needs expressed are reasonable to meet. Other stakeholders in identifying opportunities for coordination include members of the Transit Operators Group, a countywide committee that meets quarterly to plan and discuss transit issues, including coordination alternatives. In addition, the Kern Council of Governments, which channels certain funds to the county operators and oversees coordination studies, holds regular meetings of its social service technical advisory and transportation committees.

Keys to Success: The Department of Human Services has been key in the introduction of special Welfare-to-Work services and some involvement by other local social service agencies has taken place, particularly for those routes that carry a high number of social service riders.

While the regional transit system administrators are responsible for much of the effort to encourage individual jurisdictions to purchase the county transit services, some of the coordination outcomes have come about when social service agencies or individual cities have approached the county. For example, Pioneer Senior Citizens negotiated with Kern County to operate the service between Buttonwillow and Bakersfield. Nevertheless, all planning and scheduling for Kern Regional Transit services is done by the transit staff and does not necessarily involve the jurisdictions it serves.

Challenges and Opportunities: Political support for coordination is mixed. Many cities are reluctant to give up control of their local transit services because they do not want to give up control of their local TDA funds. Support for transit in the county is not necessarily strong, and some jurisdictions dedicate less money to transit than others. At the countywide level, political leaders are generally supportive of transit for "persons who need it," such as the poor, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities. Recently, the county was notified of a potential loss of Federal transportation funds because it is not meeting air quality standards—primarily due to agricultural particulate matter and airflow from the Los Angeles and San Francisco basins. The result, politically, is a somewhat greater interest in transit, with politicians considering the mode as part of comprehensive strategy to improve air quality. Whether this can be channeled into stronger land use regulations and increased funding for transit is unknown.

Many in Kern County believe that outside help is needed to improve transit coordination in rural areas. Inadequate finances have been a concern for Kern Regional Transit, and the competition for funding from street and roads projects plays a major role in determining how effective a coordinated transit system can be. Another source of useful assistance can be to bring in a consultant. The Kern Council of Governments recently initiated a study to develop a rural regional transit strategy. Part of the focus of the study is to

identify the benefits of a higher degree of coordinated transit services. It is anticipated that high levels of coordinated services, according to a strategic plan, will accomplish what many in the county have sought for years. The study is being overseen by stakeholders representing jurisdictions throughout the county, as well as social services that work with seniors, job seekers, and persons with disabilities. Study outcomes are expected to address a simplified coordinated service plan, provide opportunities for fare and marketing coordination, and determine how rural transit services should be organized and administered in the county.

WESTERN INDIANA: MULTICOUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES

Program	**Ride Solution**
Sponsoring Organization	Four Rivers Resource Service, Inc. (a United Way agency)
City, State	Washington, IN
Service Type	Door-to-door demand response
Service Area	Greene, Sullivan, Daviess, Martin, and Pike Counties, IN (Pike County is not included in data provided in this case study)
Service Area Population	87,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	1,756
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	14,400
Annual Expenses	$529,000
Cost/Trip	$8.65
Major Funding Sources	Each agency is reimbursed per trip by Four Rivers Ride Solution; Section 5311, local matching, fares
Coordinating Agencies	Wabash Valley Human Services, Senior and Family Services, Martin County Council on Aging, Greene County Council on Aging, Area 7 AoA and Disabled
Other	NOTE: Agency is reporting unduplicated passengers per year, not annual trips. Southern Indiana Development Commission receives 5311 funding through Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

Background: Ride Solution is the transportation service provided by the Four Rivers Resource Service, Inc. Four Rivers Resource Services is a United Way agency that has been serving Greene, Sullivan, Daviess, Martin, and Pike Counties in Indiana since 1986. It is a private, nonprofit organization, overseen by a board of volunteers and paid for primarily through state and Federal funds and local support. Four Rivers is the lead agency in Ride Solution, a public transportation system that began in January 2001. The system is available to anyone in the five counties who needs a ride.

Ride Solution provides door-to-door demand response public transportation to the five counties. (Pike County, because it is a recent addition to the system, is not included in the information reported here.) The population of the first four counties is approximately 87,000. Agriculture and mining are the major industries in this rural region. Transit is important because there is very limited access to major highways.

Ride Solution has contracts with Wabash Valley Human Services, Senior and Family Services, Martin County Council on Aging, Greene County Council on Aging, and Area 7 Agency on Aging and Disabled. They also have an interagency agreement with the workshops for disabled residents in each of the four counties. The workshops are divisions of Four Rivers. For each workshop there are corresponding routes. If a disabled rider who lives along Route X needs a ride back to Four Rivers, then the driver for Route X will pick him or her up.

Ride Solution has 11 vehicles and 12 employees, serves as the central dispatch, and schedules the rides. It sends each agency a list of scheduled pickups for the next day. Agencies contract with Ride Solution to

provide vehicles and drivers and to receive transportation services. Each agency is responsible for its budget, maintenance, fuel, and insurance. Ride Solution pays each agency for the number of trips they provide each month. Service is coordinated among eight agencies.

In addition to the drivers directly employed by Ride Solution, it uses 11 drivers who are employed by the contracted agencies. Although these drivers are paid by their agency, they are representatives of Ride Solution. These 21 drivers operate daily 10 vans; 8 of the vans are ADA accessible. Approximately 75 vehicles are available across all the agencies; 45 of those belong to Four Rivers. The fleet has one 18-passenger mini-bus and a few cars. Most of the vehicles are mini vans and full-size vans.

Service operates from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Cost each way is $1 in town, $2 in the county, and $3 county to county. The cost per passenger is $8.65, and 1,200 unduplicated passengers are served each month. The annual transportation budget is $529,000. Ride Solution received $238,200 in Federal funding and received a 50-percent match from local funds. Passenger fares account for about 10 percent of total revenues.

Coordination Development Process: In 1998, a grass roots effort began in Greene County when a local minister asked his congregation about the needs of the community. Transportation was a concern to many of the parishioners. The minister initiated the first meeting of what became The Greene County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Members of the committee represented participating agencies and local businesses. Four Rivers Resource Services is the largest agency involved and became the lead agency. The next step was to locate funding to conduct a feasibility study. Four Rivers received a 2-year grant from the Vocational Rehabilitation Center that was used as seed money to hire a consultant, who in turned assisted Four Rivers in hiring a staff person to conduct the feasibility study. During the feasibility study, surveys were completed by provider agencies to identify their needs and to encourage them to join in the process. When the feasibility study was completed, it served as the basis for an application for FTA Section 5311 funding from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to the Southern Indiana Development Commission (SIDC). SIDC contracted with Four Rivers to be the lead agency. Other agencies contract with Four Rivers. Only a few agencies had a desire and the funds to participate. Since receiving the Section 5311 funding, more agencies have expressed interest in participating, and Ride Solution has expanded into another county.

Benefits of Coordination: Customer satisfaction and enhanced recognition of public transit have been the biggest successes in coordinating services. Ride Solution was able to accomplish this by working hard to meet the needs of its customers while keeping costs to a minimum. Another benefit of coordination is the integration that has occurred. Clients from different agencies are now riding in the same vehicle. Initially this was a concern to some riders, but now it is no longer an issue. Overall, riders are very pleased with the service. This is evidenced in positive feedback through letters, telephone calls, and from the results of a rider survey indicating 96-percent satisfaction. The agencies are now able to offer more rides to more locations as a result of the coordinated efforts. Recognition as contributors to Ride Solution also gives them more publicity.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: Initially, many agencies were reluctant to be involved because they were concerned about maintaining their autonomy. To get these agencies to participate, Ride Solution told these agencies to continue to provide transportation on their own, but asked that they contribute at least one vehicle and one driver and matching funds (amount dependent on agency budget) to become part of Ride Solution. By doing this, agencies were able to keep their independence but also experience the benefits of coordinating. Another problem Ride Solution faced was working with agencies that disagree because they have different missions. They have worked through this problem over time by communicating and negotiating.

Once the system was ready, public education was the next priority. Public transportation was a new concept to this rural region, and residents did not know of the benefits public transportation could offer their communities. Some also had inaccurate, preconceived ideas that the services were only for mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or elderly riders. To educate the residents about public transportation, Ride Solution has written newspaper articles on public transit, made presentations in the community, and advertised.

INDOT has provided state support by sending staff to participate in several transportation advisory committee meetings. INDOT would also like to support Ride Solution through Federal funding, so Ride Solution can reach more people with its existing service and in the future expand its schedule. INDOT would also like to support Ride Solution.

Recommendations for Others:

- ✦ Jump in head first, do not procrastinate.
- ✦ Establish a transportation advisory committee with persons and agencies with the common goal of meeting the local transit needs regardless of constituency (i.e., person with disabilities, job seekers, seniors, or others).

MALHEUR COUNTY, OREGON: COORDINATED AGENCY TRIPS

Program	**Malheur County Transportation Service (MCTS)**
Sponsoring Organization	Malheur Council on Aging and Community Services (MCOA)
City, State	Ontario, OR
Service Type	Demand special needs transportation
Service Area	Malheur County, OR and small portions of Baker County, OR; Washington, Payette, Gem, and Canyon Counties, ID
Service Area Population	Elderly and disabled residents
Service Area Size (sq mi)	12,580
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	32,236
Annual Expenses	$318,000
Cost/Trip	$9.86
Major Funding Sources	Agency contracts, Oregon STF (state cigarette tax revenue), fares, Oregon Medicaid Assistance program
Coordinating Agencies	Oregon Volunteer Services Program, nursing homes, mental health agencies, several assisted-living projects, and Ontario School District for special needs students
Other	Service area is 9,280 square miles in Malheur County, 2,500 sq mi in Baker County and 800 square miles in Idaho

Background: Malheur Council on Aging and Community Services (MCOA) is a nonprofit organization serving Malheur County, Oregon. MCOA provides coordinated transportation services to elderly and disabled residents of Malheur County, as well as small portions of bordering Baker County, Oregon, (Huntington) and the neighboring Idaho counties of Washington, Payette, Gem and Canyon. The agency's senior and disabled transportation service, Malheur County Transportation Service (MCTS), provides an excellent example of successful grassroots coordination in a very rural area. Although MCTS has a contract to serve all 9,280 square miles of Malheur County, its practical service area in Malheur and Baker Counties is approximately 2,500 square miles, plus about 800 square miles across the border in Idaho's Treasure Valley. In addition to special needs transportation, MCOA provides a range of services to seniors and low-income families, including low-income energy assistance, weatherization, a food bank pantry, an emergency shelter for homeless persons, and farm worker housing assistance.

The majority of MCTS trips are for medical, shopping, social, education, employment, or volunteer activities. MCTS uses 10 lift-equipped vehicles, all owned and insured by Malheur County. During FY2000-2001 MCTS carried 32,236 passenger trips, operated more than 11,000 vehicle hours, and covered approximately 110,000 loaded vehicle miles. The council estimates that its operating cost per vehicle hour is $28.62 and that its operating cost per vehicle mile is $1.60. Annual operating costs of the Malheur Transportation System for FY2000-2001 were approximately $318,000.

Program Evolution and Structure: In 1990, Malheur County Board of Commissioners appointed a Special Transportation Board to deal with the issue of rural elderly and disabled transportation. The impetus for the formation of this task force was a countywide needs study that identified senior and disabled transportation as the number one gap in county social services. The original stakeholders represented on the Special

Transportation Board were and continue to be regional social service agencies, the county mental health clinic, privately and publicly owned residential care facilities, the city of Ontario, the county senior citizens centers, and a local taxi company. Around this same time, the County Board of Commissioners encouraged MCOA to apply for state Special Transportation Formula (STF) funds (cigarette tax) for seed money to develop some form of a coordinated special needs transportation network. MCOA applied and received $120,000 in seed money from the state. MCOA also successfully assisted three local senior centers with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) capital grant applications that allowed each to purchase a lift-equipped van.

MCOA used the STF seed money to purchase a 1993 medical minivan that enabled MCOA to transport dialysis patients. MCOA also used these funds to hire a full-time dispatcher. Shortly afterward, the council initiated a 2-week trial coordination effort, bringing together dispatching efforts from both its transportation services and Oregon Volunteer Services Program. The success of this trial led to a permanent merger and spurred MCOA to hire a full-time coordination manager, who had extensive experience working with social service providers throughout the county, was very familiar with elderly and disabled transportation needs, and was well connected in the region. MCOA staff identified this as a key turning point in the evolution of their services. Shortly thereafter, MCOA began negotiating contracts with local agencies to provide transportation services for the agencies' clients. MCOA took over services for several nursing homes, mental health agencies, and assisted-living projects and even developed a contract with the Ontario School District to provide transportation services for special needs students.

The MCOA Board still holds a contract with Malheur County to operate the county's special needs transportation program. The transportation department of MCOA has a supervisor responsible for overseeing dispatch and MCTS's eight drivers. Malheur County owns the majority of vehicles used by MCTS, although MCTS occasionally borrows vehicles from senior centers or other providers. MCOA transports seniors for three privately operated senior centers, all of which have at least one lift-equipped van that they loan to MCOA on an as-needed basis. All participating agencies still belong to the Special Transportation Board, participate in decisions about the dispersal of STF funds, and help to develop regional transportation policy.

The state has been a key player in developing coordinated transportation services in Malheur County. Not only have they provided financial support for the program, Oregon DOT Public Transportation has provided important training for MCOA staff. For example, MCOA staff cited a recent Full Cost Allocation Workshop held by Oregon DOT as a key turning point in helping the organization to develop sound financial management practices.

Funding: MCOA does not receive Federal operating funds. The Council's primary funding source is the revenue it collects from various service contracts. MCOA contracts with a wide range of social service, senior service, and medical organizations. In return for providing transportation services, MCOA requires that any participant organization release 100 percent of its available transportation funds to its program. Among the groups to whom MCOA provides transportation services are Oregon Medicaid Assistance Program, Idaho Medicaid, Ontario School District, mental health agencies, assisted-living projects, and several senior centers. Annual revenue from contracts with participant agencies totaled $193,487 in FY2000-2001. MCOA's second largest funding source is the Oregon STF. In FY2000-2001, the council received $72,232 from the program. (The county receives all state funding and disperses it through the county fiscal office.) The service also carries general public riders who pay cash fares. Farebox revenues for the last fiscal year were just over $7,000.

In FY2000-2001, MCOA received a small Section 5310 Capital Grant (Capital Program for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities) of $21,729. The MCTS staff is now working with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and is optimistic that they will soon be eligible for operating and capital assistance from ITD.

MCOA recently received an Oregon DOT planning grant to evaluate the feasibility of becoming a regional Medicaid brokerage. Although MCOA currently acts informally as the local brokerage for medical and Medicaid trips, the state is pushing the council to begin brokering all Medicaid trips in a three-county area in eastern Oregon. Although MCOA has yet to determine the feasibility of taking on such a role, serving as Medicaid broker would likely increase MCOA's annual revenues for operations and administration and

provide funds for software and hardware upgrades. MCOA has already received its Oregon Medical Assistance Program (OMAP) provider contract number, substantially increasing its per mile reimbursement for Medicaid trips. The Idaho Medicaid program is also in the process of a rate restructuring that could mean increased revenues for Idaho based Medicaid trips.

Type of Coordination—MCOA provides coordinated dispatching for agency-funded transportation. Participant agencies include Community Partnership Team volunteers, Vale and Nyssa Senior Centers, the Ontario School District, the Ontario City Bus, and a number of other agencies and organizations. These individual agencies make referrals to MCOA, and it dispatches the available service. MCOA provides all scheduling and dispatching services and employs eight drivers. MCOA is responsible for all driver hiring, training, and monitoring. Its fleet of 10 lift-equipped vans is owned and insured by Malheur County. MCOA handles all administrative and accounting functions for the service and coordinates (actually prepares) the quarterly and annual reports for Oregon DOT for its participant groups (except Ontario Bus).

Types of Trips—The majority of MCOA provided trips are to physicians, dentists, and therapists in Ontario, Oregon; Payette, Idaho; and Fruitland, Idaho. The council also provides medical trips to Idaho hospitals and physicians in Boise, Meridian, Caldwell, and Nampa. MCOA also has a 5-day per week contract to provide medical and employment trips for developmentally disabled residents from their homes to a workshop in Ontario. Regular service hours are 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. MCTS is available at other hours and for weekend and holiday trips. However, these special services are typically limited to dialysis patients.

Benefits of Coordination: MCOA staff cited numerous benefits from its evolving coordination efforts. The primary benefit to the region and communities is greater access to rides and mobility services for senior and disabled citizens. However, this basic service has improved lives of these citizens in numerous other ways. For example, staff pointed out that its services have allowed many elderly people to remain independent in their homes longer that they would have been able to otherwise. Among the other benefits of MCOA's coordination successes are

- ✦ Ability to provide an important public service not previously available, increasing the level of mobility for elderly and disabled citizens of Malheur County, Baker County, and the Treasure Valley in Idaho.
- ✦ Availability of transportation services to a larger percentage of the elderly and disabled population.
- ✦ Development of an informal, but highly effective referral system for riders. Because MCOA is a community action agency, which provides a variety of social services, drivers are able to refer riders to other programs the agency offers.
- ✦ Better access to operating and capital grant funds available because MCOA is recognized as a well-established transportation provider.
- ✦ Ability to serve riders of all types with better, safer equipment.
- ✦ Economic benefit enjoyed by other agencies that are able to eliminate more expensive transportation programs.
- ✦ Establishment of one central location for riders to contact for all their transportation needs.

Lessons Learned: MCOA has faced a number of challenges over the past 10 years as its transportation program developed. One of the primary challenges for the council was keeping staffing needs and administrative expertise in line with program growth. MCOA entered into the transportation business as a community action agency with no expertise in managing a transportation program. This presented challenges in setting up an efficient dispatching system, developing contracts with participating agencies, dispatching riders, monitoring services, and accounting, billing, and revenue collection. MCOA provided a few key recommendations for agencies new to transportation provision or dispatching:

- ✦ **Approach it exactly like you are starting a business!** Develop a business plan up front to guide program growth.
- ✦ **Pay close attention to the bottom line!** Put in place reliable systems for invoicing and tracking revenues and expenditures. If your organization does not have this capability, bring in a CPA or consultant to assist you.

- **Develop a clear and comprehensive program policy manual.** It is a lot easier to train than retrain.
- **Purchase scheduling and dispatch software that meets your organization's needs.** Finding software that matches your needs can vastly improve efficiency, monitoring, and operations for even small organizations or agencies that are brokering rides.
- **Retain legal expertise and develop formal contracts with participating agencies.** For a number of years, MCOA operated with relatively informal contracts. Although most agencies paid invoices promptly, the informality did cause some problems collecting receivables.
- **Ensure that participating agencies are fully vested in the program.** MCOA has required new agencies to pay an annual fee equivalent to their full operating budget for transportation services. This ensures that agencies do not attempt to pass off riders to MCOA to save on their own operating costs.

MCOA recently contracted a CPA to handle the accounting for the MCTS program. Up until that time, staff had never had a clear picture of program costs and revenues. MCOA staff cites this as a crucial step in ensuring the financial future and success of the MCTS program. The council also hired a consultant with expertise in policy and economic development to help them establish clear policy goals and aid in program administration, a move they cite as invaluable. Another key step in the evolution of the MCTS program came when it purchased Mobilitat's Easy Rides dispatching software, which has improved accounting practices, service monitoring, and overall efficiency significantly.

Reasons for Success: MCOA staff attributes its success to date to a number of fiscal, geographical, and human factors:

- Unwavering support from the County Board of Commissioners and county government in meeting its goal of providing quality transportation services to elderly citizens and people with disabilities.
- A long history of cooperative working relationships between public and social service agencies and organizations in Malheur County. The rural nature of the county and distance from any major metropolitan area has taught agencies and service providers to rely on one another for support.
- The limited funding availability for services in rural eastern Oregon and western Washington has taught MCOA and other providers to be creative and cooperative in developing programs to provide quality services for their clients.
- Staff retention and stability has helped the transportation program develop efficiently. MCOA's current executive director has been with the council longer than its transportation service has been in place.

MERCED COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: CONSOLIDATED SERVICES

Program	**Merced County Transit ("The Bus")**
Sponsoring Organization	Consolidated transit systems of Merced County and six cities, administered by the Merced County Department of Public Works
City, State	Merced, CA
Service Type	Urban and intercity fixed-route, paratransit, and dial-a-ride services
Service Area	Merced County, CA
Service Area Population	210,554
Service Area Size (sq mi)	16,000
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	736,822
Annual Expenses	$5,800,000
Cost/Trip	$4.04 fixed route; $9.98 dial-a-ride
Major Funding Sources	Local AAA, fares
Coordinating Agencies	Merced County and cities of Merced, Los Banos, Atwater, Dos Palos, Gustine, Livingston
Other	Annual trips are 587,946 fixed route, 148,876 dial-a-ride. Annual expenses are said to be "current."

Background: Merced County Transit (MCT), in California's Central Valley, provides a good example of transit system consolidation. MCT was officially created in January 1995 with the consolidation of the former Merced County Regional Transit System (fixed route and paratransit), the Merced City Shuttle (fixed route and paratransit), and a dial-a-ride service in the city of Los Banos. The consolidated system was established with the adoption of a joint powers agreement (JPA) between Merced County and the cities of Merced, Los Banos, Atwater, Dos Palos, Gustine and Livingston. The JPA policy board consists of five representatives from the County Board of Supervisors and one representative from each of the six cities. This is the same board as the local Association of Governments.

The consolidated transit system—locally referred to as "The Bus"—operates local urban fixed routes in the small city of Merced, intercity fixed routes, a general public dial-a-ride in the outlying communities, and ADA-compliant services 6 days per week. The service area of approximately 16,000 square miles includes six incorporated cities, the unincorporated county and 13 townships. MCT has a total of 54 vehicles, 32 of which are in operation at any given time.

The current annual transportation budget is $5.8 million, of which $4.8 million is dedicated to operating costs. The county employs four administrative staff and 10 mechanics, but the service is primarily staffed by the contract operator, with 49 drivers, three road supervisors and four dispatchers. The 2001 cost per passenger for the fixed-route services was $4.04; for dial-a-ride services, the cost was $9.98 per passenger. In 2001, MCT carried 736,822 passengers (587,946 fixed route and 148,876 dial-a-ride).

The consolidated transit system is seamless, serving all key destinations throughout the county. The system operates from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with a couple of routes to the local junior college operating until 11:00 p.m. (through JARC funds). The successful consolidated system currently coordinates with the local area agency on aging (which subsidizes the cost of monthly bus passes for eligible seniors). MCT expects to be

contracted by the University of California, which is building a new campus 8 miles outside of the largest community, Merced, to extend routes and increase frequencies on some routes.

History of Coordination: How consolidation came about is attributed to a discussion at the Annual City-County Dinner in 1992. With state funding cutbacks, the jurisdictions were under pressure to reduce costs. They considered combining police or fire services, but not all communities would agree to cede local control of those services. The discussion turned to transit, based on the outcome of a 1991 fare coordination study. Spearheaded by two city council members from Merced and two county supervisors, the transit consolidation effort enjoyed a high level of political support. All decisionmaking efforts throughout the consolidation process were based on consensus-building and agreement among mayors, council members, and county supervisors.

Local transit unmet needs hearings also played a role in the consolidation of Merced County's transit systems. Public participation countywide had been low. Haphazard coordination among the communities meant solutions to intercity transit needs were complicated to develop, operate, and fund. It was hoped that by consolidating responsibilities under one system, the problems faced by all systems regarding public input, service coordination, and transfers would be solved.

The process of consolidation included many meetings among political leaders, three major public hearings, and extensive staff time in reviewing policies and procedures for a consolidated transit operation. One key to success is the agreed-upon level of service for each entity. Each jurisdiction agreed to a minimum level of service and a corresponding level of state TDA funds to pay for this service. The cost-sharing strategy for local and intercity services is based on the number of service hours. That is, each city has an agreed-upon number of service hours operating in its jurisdiction and is required to pay for those service hours based on the system's hourly cost of operation. The JPA states that there is a base level of service (defined by number of service hours) in each jurisdiction. For this minimum level of service hours, each jurisdiction is required to contribute a guaranteed level of TDA funds. A jurisdiction is entitled to increase this service given two conditions: (1) equipment availability and (2) financial capacity to contribute the additional funds needed to operate this service.

When the transit agencies consolidated, no new administrative agency was created. The Merced County Department of Public Works was assigned responsibility for administering and managing the service as well as vehicle maintenance. The county transportation manager continued his role of managing the service. An assistant position was created, and the transportation coordinator from Merced was transferred from the city to the county. In addition to these two dedicated employees, Merced County Transit "purchases" administrative services from the county for purchasing, finance, and other functions as needed. Additionally, the County Association of Governments assists MCT in posting official meeting notices and other administrative filings.

The MCT director describes the result of the consolidation process as "wholesale change." The director reports that "all schedules were redone, every route was modified, all hours were made to be uniform, and an ADA component was put in place for all services in the county."

Benefits of Consolidation: Transit consolidation is considered successful in Merced County. The primary measure of success was a 40-percent increase in ridership during the first year of operation compared to the level of investment. This enormous growth in ridership is attributed to improved service and scheduling, integrated timed transfers, and eliminating passenger confusion about separate services and different fare structures. Other advantages of the effort include the following:

- **Access to more funding.** The combined political power and size of the consolidated system made it easier to attract funds from the local Air Quality District.
- **Reduced vehicle travel and less duplication.** Although MCT eliminated all duplication, the participating cities and Merced County now have some misgivings. According to the director, if they had to do it all again, they would not have eliminated all of the duplication from the intercity services. Interlining those services would have provided better frequencies along some key corridors and would have reduced the need for many riders coming from the most rural parts of the county to transfer.

- **Lower cost of trips for riders.** No more intersystem transfers and a countywide zonal fare system reduced the travel costs for some riders.
- **More riders per vehicle.** Ridership has increased and the system is considered a success.
- **Better access to jobs, health care, shopping.** The seamless system makes it easier for everyone to travel using transit.
- **Increased activity to local businesses.** Local merchants have enthusiastically supported the consolidated system.
- **Ability to provide more trips overall.** With the combined resources of what had been several transit systems, vehicles can be used more effectively and service levels have increased.
- **Enhanced visibility and/or image of transit.** A new, easy-to-recognize name and logo for the countywide system, as well as a television and radio advertising campaign, have raised awareness of transit in Merced County. Consolidation also brought about a more effective unmet needs process, with higher public turnout and a more informed community.
- **Cost savings for transit provider.** Before consolidating services, administrative costs accounted for about 12 percent of system costs for each of the three transit services. Currently administrative costs represent about 8 percent of MCT's total operating costs.

Challenges and Opportunities: Even with these many advantages, some minor shortcomings persist. While the greatest success of the consolidated system is that all of the agencies in the county are working together cooperatively, some communities on the far west side of the county still have only lifeline transit services. This should change in 2003 when new services are implemented that will complete objectives outlined in the recommended consolidated service plan.

MCT believes the State of California has done very little to encourage transit coordination and consolidation. While the state Department of Transportation (Caltrans) sent representatives to meetings, they provided no special funding or technical assistance to make consolidation a possibility. Funding is the key barrier to successful coordination and consolidation. Another barrier for MCT has been Amtrak. Even though four MCT routes make a total of 70 stops each day at the Amtrak station, the rail provider has refused to allow the transit operator to post a bus stop sign and transit schedules on its property.

Lessons Learned: The director's advice for successful consolidation is to get a good mix of local elected officials together and to have staffers who can respond to their needs. The process should be overseen and directed by political leaders who can make the difficult decisions and move the process forward. He believes that consolidation has worked well in Merced County because he is responsive to each city's individual needs. By working closely with the city managers and responding to changing markets, MCT is able to accommodate the transit needs of the individual cities. Through this ongoing cooperative relationship, the cities have not experienced a "loss of control"—a commonly stated fear about consolidation.

BAKER, UNION, AND WALLOWA COUNTIES, OREGON: PROGRAM COORDINATION WITHIN ONE AGENCY

Program	**Community Connection of Northeast Oregon**
Sponsoring Organization	Community Action Agency, Area Agency on Aging
City, State	LaGrande, OR; satellite offices in Baker and Wallowa counties
Service Type	Dial-a-ride and commuter service between Wallowa and Enterprise
Service Area	Baker, Union, and Wallowa counties
Service Area Population	48,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	8,300
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	52,000
Annual Expenses	$332,800
Cost/Trip	$6.36
Major Funding Sources	Section 5311, STF (state cigarette tax revenue), fees and fares, fundraising and donations, contracts, vehicle rentals, local government contributions, United Way
Coordinating Agencies	LaGrande Taxis
Other	This system has provided transportation since the 1970s. Of the 48,000 riders, 57 percent are ambulatory seniors, 32 percent are persons under age 60, and 11 percent are persons with disabilities.

Background: Community Connection of Northeast Oregon is a community action agency serving the counties of Baker, Union, and Wallowa, which form the northeastern corner of the state. The three counties cover considerable area—more than 8,200 square miles, much of it in national forest lands. The total population of the tricounty region is approximately 48,000. The largest city in the region is La Grande, county seat of Union County, with a population of more than 12,000 residents.

As the region's community action agency, Community Connection serves as the area's central repository for a wide variety of social services. The agency is based in La Grande, but has satellite offices in Baker and Wallowa counties. In addition, Community Connection is the local area agency on aging and is responsible for providing a range of senior services. They operate senior centers, prepare congregate meals, provide in-home care, administer Meals on Wheels, and provide legal aid and tax assistance, among other services. Community Connection is also an Oregon Food Bank Network Regional Coordinating Agency (RCA). As an RCA, they store and distribute emergency food to local food program partners like churches, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters. Community Connection also operates a daycare center for children in grades K to 6 and develops affordable housing.

Community Connection is the only public transportation provider in the region. It operates a fleet of 15 lift-equipped vehicles. Community Connection's transit service is available to the general public and is primarily dial-a-ride, except for commuter service between the towns of Wallowa and Enterprise 5 days a week. Service runs Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Baker and Wallowa counties and until 7 p.m. in Union County. The local taxi operator in La Grande provides service to clients with prepurchased vouchers on the weekends. In Baker City, the agency also provides after-school service, transporting elementary school children to day care centers.

During FY2001, Community Connection provided more than 52,000 trips. Seniors with no disabilities accounted for approximately 57 percent of these trips, persons under age 60 accounted for 32 percent, and disabled individuals made up 11 percent of total trips. Community Connection's total transportation budget for FY2001, including operations, administration, and maintenance was $332,800. Cost per trip equals $6.36, very low for dial-a-ride systems. The executive director attributes this to the high number of volunteer hours they use for drivers. The largest line item was for personnel, which comprised 65 percent of the budget. Revenue comes from a variety of sources including FTA Section 5311 funds, Oregon Special Transportation Formula (STF) (state cigarette tax revenues) funds, fees and fares, fundraising and donations, contracts, vehicle rental revenue, local government contributions, and United Way.

Coordination of Transportation Services: Community Connection has provided transportation since the 1970s, predating the current executive director. The service began small and has grown and evolved along with the agency. Community Connection coordinates public transportation in the three-county area, with scheduling and dispatching occurring from three separate offices, one in each county.

Because Community Connection is the central social service provider in the area, particularly for senior citizens, most of the "coordination" occurs within the agency and takes the form of referrals. To further illustrate how coordination occurs internally, funds from the county can be shifted and split into senior programs or transportation, as Community Connection's needs warrant. Agency staff are fully aware of the services available; therefore, if clients need transportation, staff can either schedule on behalf of the clients or pass on the information. There is also cross-agency referral from other providers in the area, including the Department of Human Services, food banks, and clinics. In small communities, like those in northeastern Oregon, social service organizations know each other, support each other, and work together to deliver assistance to those in need. Sometimes vehicles are shared or rented to fellow agencies. These relationships are informal.

Community Connection also has a fee-for-service contract with the Department of Human Services to provide nonmedical Medicaid trips. In addition, the agency recently negotiated a contract to provide medical trips in Union and Wallowa counties, and in March 2002, began providing medical trips in Baker County. Community Connection uses paid staff and volunteers to transport Medicaid and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients to medical appointments locally and out of the area to cities with comprehensive medical facilities like Walla Walla, Boise, and Portland. In exchange, the agency is paid per ride, usually a per mile rate.

As noted earlier, Community Connection also partners with the school district in Baker City to provide after-school transportation to day care. The after-school transportation provided for schoolchildren is paid for by the school, the parent, or the day care provider, depending on the situation. The executive director was uncertain how the school decides which trips to subsidize or not. The service grew out of the school district identifying a need and knowing that Community Connection is a transportation provider.

Finally, the local taxi operator in La Grande provides service over the weekend. Passengers schedule their own rides through the taxi service. Union County subsidizes these trips through STF dollars. To authenticate eligibility for subsidized trips, passengers must obtain vouchers from selected sites in the area, including Community Connection and City Hall. The taxi operator then submits the vouchers to Community Connection or Union County for reimbursement.

Benefits of Coordination: The following are benefits of rural coordination that Community Connection has identified:

- ✦ Public receives better service, in a more timely fashion, and at an affordable cost.
- ✦ Other social service providers know their clients have a reliable source of transportation. With Community Connection firmly in place, these providers feel less pressure to provide transportation services and can focus resources on their primary care objectives.
- ✦ Providing service gives the sponsoring agency visibility in the community, resulting in improved name recognition and a positive image.
- ✦ Active referrals help to increase outreach about related social services available in the community.

Challenges: Community Connection identified two major challenges to coordination, both related to funding:

- By far, the most formidable challenge is securing reliable funding. Community Connection taps as many funding sources as possible, but this requires substantial effort and resources.
- Receiving funding from Oregon DOT is not timely and results in situations where the agency has to write checks against other accounts to maintain the service. Community Connection has been able to do this without too much difficulty because they have been financially stable and have adequate unrestricted funds. However, this is not a comfortable situation.

Recommendations: Community Connection provided a number of recommendations for rural providers interested in setting up coordinated transportation networks:

- **Be flexible and maintain an ability to adapt to changing needs and conditions.** The executive director cited this as one of their defining qualities and a primary reason for their success as an agency.
- **Establish strong relationships with partner agencies** to enhance the referral process and to improve outreach and education about the service.
- **Share vehicles to maximize their utility.** Establishing strong relationships with partner agencies will facilitate this.
- **Mobilize your volunteer network.** In FY2001, Community Connection benefited from approximately 2,600 hours contributed by volunteer drivers, with a value well over $15,000.
- **Market the service.** Referrals only go so far. Many people still believe that Community Connection's service is only for seniors or persons with disabilities. To raise visibility, the agency has purchased magnetic decals to affix on to their vehicles.

SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT: PROGRESS TOWARD COORDINATION

Program	**South Central Transit**
Sponsoring Organization	South Central Transit Corporation, Marion County
City, State	Centralia, Mt. Vernon, Salem, West Frankfort and New Baden, IL
Service Type	Fixed public transportation, curb-to-curb demand (door-to-door with request)
Service Area	Marion, Jefferson, Clinton, Washington, and Franklin Counties, IL
Service Area Population	171,437
Service Area Size (sq mi)	2,600
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	250,000
Annual Expenses	$2,167,116
Cost/Trip	$9.49
Major Funding Sources	Formed with IDOT grant, became Mass Transit District, now gets direct funding from IDOT and FTA Section 5311
Coordinating Agencies	Businesses and schools, rehabilitation workshops, senior centers meal delivery, DHS and health centers.

Background: South Central Transit (SCT) currently provides public transportation and offers curb-to-curb demand-response service (door-to-door on request) in five counties. SCT offers transportation services to businesses and agencies on a contractual basis. Handicapped accessible transportation is provided for area businesses and schools. A transit board governs SCT.

SCT provides service for the counties of Marion, Jefferson, Clinton, Washington and Franklin in south central Illinois. Service is provided 1 day a week to the smaller communities in these counties. The service area is 2,600 square miles and includes a variety of destinations: shopping malls, medical centers, places of employment, and recreational areas, including sporting events. STC has fixed routes to shopping areas and express routes to sporting events and entertainment (Redbird Express, Six Flags Express, St. Louis Blues Express, St. Louis Rams Express and Muny Express).

SCT currently operates a fleet of 50 vehicles from five locations throughout its service area in Centralia, Mt. Vernon, Salem, West Frankfort and New Baden. Vehicles include mini vans, raised roof vans, and medium-duty and heavy-duty buses ranging from 6- to 29-passenger capacity. Many of the vehicles are wheelchair accessible. The total number of trips in 2001 was 250,000. The number of trips has been growing by up to 15 percent annually in recent years.

Service is available Monday through Friday as follows:

Centralia	5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.	Nashville	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Salem	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	West Frankfort	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Mt. Vernon	5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.	Benton/West City	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Carlyle	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.		

Coordinated transportation services include trips to rehabilitation workshops, senior centers, meal delivery, Department of Human Services (DHS) and health centers. SCT provides training for third part, CDL certification and shares a new maintenance/facility.

SCT's fare structure is complicated because of the size of the service area and the nature of trips that are provided. The base fare for adults is $1 for curb-to-curb service and $2 for door-to-door service. For older adults, the base fare for curb-to-curb service is 50 cents. For door-to-door service, riders pay $1. Service must be scheduled a day ahead, but riders can pay an extra $2 for same-day curb-to-curb service and an extra $3 for same-day door-to-door service. Monthly passes are available for passengers, including school students. The full fare structure is shown in Table 15.

Coordination Process: South Central Transit Corporation was formed in October 1989 by a 5711 grant through Marion County and the Illinois Department of Transportation. The 5711 grant was awarded to Marion County and South Central Transit to provide transportation services to the elderly and handicapped in Marion County and in Brookside Township of Clinton County. Service has grown from a monthly average of 300 trips in 1989 to the present monthly average of 20,000 trips.

In June 1992, Marion County Board voted 15 to 0 to form a transit district. At this time, South Central Transit Corporation ceased to operate, and the South Central Illinois Mass Transit District (also called South Central Transit or SCT) was created. The impacts of the creation of the transit district included the following features:

- ✦ Creation of a governmental entity as a transit district that is responsible for the public transportation needs in the district.
- ✦ Direct funding from the Illinois Department of Transportation rather than through the County Board.
- ✦ As a governmental entity, SCT is entitled to privileges such as reduced liability insurance, no taxes on fuel or properties, and district funding.
- ✦ Ability to establish fixed routes within the district.
- ✦ As a transit district, SCT is eligible for grants and funding from Federal and State Governments.
- ✦ Ability to annex additional counties into the district to provide service in those counties and establish fixed intercity routes.
- ✦ Ability to work directly with legislators to receive more funding (Downstate Transportation Act).
- ✦ Ability to pursue contracts with major industries, social service agencies, businesses, etc.
- ✦ Ability to be solely in the transportation business.

Table 15:

SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT'S FARE STRUCTURE

SCT	***Call 532-8076, 242-0202 or 1-800-660-7433***	***Door-to-Door Service***	***Curb-to-Curb Service***
Seniors	(60 and over)	$1.00	$ .50
Seniors - Mt. Vernon	(60 and over)	$1.00	No charge*
Adults	(17-59)	$2.00	$1.00
Children	(8-17 without adult)	$2.00	$1.00
Children	(8-17 with adult)	$1.00	$ .50
Children	(0-8 with adult)	No charge	No charge
Shopping Shuttle-per stop	(8-59)	N/A	$ .50
Scheduled Transfers	(regardless of age)	$ .50	$ .50
Same Day Service	(regardless of age)	$5.00	$3.00
Child School Pass One-Way	K-8th grade	N/A	$30.00
Child School Pass Round Trip	K-8th grade	N/A	$40.00
Senior Pass (Centralia/Salem)	(60 and over)	N/A	$15.00
Shopping Shuttle Pass	(regardless of age)	N/A	$15.00
Adult Pass	(13-59)	N/A	$30.00

The above fares/passes are only valid with 1- day prior scheduling of <u>all</u> pickups, transfers and returns (with the exception of same day service) and are valid within city limits	* In conjunction with Jefferson County Comp. Services.

NEW SERVICE HOURS	5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Mt. Vernon & Centralia 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Salem 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Nashville & West Frankfort

Scheduled transportation available Monday through Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Mt. Vernon and Centralia, 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Salem. Call for quotes outside of these hours.

Coordination started in 1993. Decisionmaking authority belonged to the Board of Directors, which consists of five members, one from each county. In May 1993, the Jefferson County Board and the SCT Board of Directors voted to annex Jefferson County into the transportation district, and in July 1993 Jefferson County was officially annexed, and SCT assumed the existing Jefferson County Transit. In October 1994, Clinton County was annexed into SCT by resolution of the Clinton County Board and the SCT Board of Directors. Plans for expansion of services and feeder routes linking up with Bi-State Bus in Clinton County were in the works. In 1997, SCT continued working toward annexation of Washington and Bond Counties into the transportation district. An interagency agreement between SCT and Community Transportation Development (CTD) was entered into to allow for the purchase of services between the two organizations to provide an integrated system of transportation services to mutual clients and the public. Because there was no transit service before, to get the system started new bus stops needed to be built, and the new services needed to be marketed. Advertising was done through brochures and public service announcements.

Benefits of Coordination: Access to more funding, lower cost of trips for rider, lower cost of trips for agencies, filling gaps where there was no service, ability to provide more trips overall, reduced vehicle travel, more productivity, better access to jobs, health care, and shopping, increased activity to local businesses and enhanced visibility of transit are all recognized as benefits of coordination of transportation services for SCT. Benefits of coordination were determined quantitatively by the increase in the number of trips (15% annually).

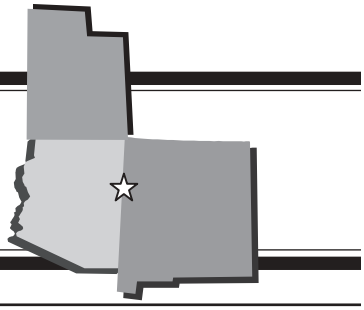
The DHS benefited from the coordination because their staff no longer had to spend time providing transportation and could spend the time meeting their clients' other needs.

Challenges and Problems: Funding and allocation of resources is the greatest concern. The distribution of funds and resources is not proportional. For example, 5310 funding for purchasing vehicles is given to everyone who asks rather then evaluating who has the greatest need. This is a problem because agencies continue to receive vehicles; consequently they are less inclined to coordinate services. Another example is senior agencies that are awarded 5311 funding. Because this funding requires that their service be open to the public, the scheduling and location of services they provide must accommodate the general public, whereas STC service tends to focus primarily on seniors.

Transportation is the number one problem in Illinois, particularly in rural areas. The state has 43 counties without transportation. To address this problem, the state is looking into what can be done to meet this need. Coordination of transportation services is at the top of the list.

Recommendations for Others: Communicate with many agencies and people in the community to reach a diverse group of people and select a transportation committee.

ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, UTAH: NAVAJO TRANSIT SYSTEM



Program	**Navajo Transit System (NTS)**
Sponsoring Organization	Navajo Nation
City, State	Window Rock, AZ
Service Type	Fixed-route transit service
Service Area	NTS serves the Navajo Nation located in the four corners area of the southwestern United States, including the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. NTS provides mobility throughout the reservation primarily with intercity service and also with limited local service. NTS also operates a charter service throughout the United States using a separate fleet.
Service Area Population	Navajo Nation is the largest tribe in the United States, with a population of 180,765 in the year 2000.
Service Area Size (sq mi)	Navajo Nation reservation is approximately 27,000 square miles.
Data for Year Ending	All data from the Short-Range Transit Plan, provides 5-year projections through 2015.
One-way Trips per Year	81,415 (in 2002)
Annual Expenses	$857,400 (total cost for the public transit service operated by Navajo Transit in FY2001, excluding capital and charter service)
Cost/Trip	$10.97 (=cost per passenger, FY01)
Major Funding Sources	FTA 5310 and 5311 (mainly 5311 funding)
Coordinating Agencies	Other Navajo Nation tribal agencies, including Fleet Management, area agency on aging, Indian Health Services, and Community Health Representatives. Coordinate also with the Hopi Reservation and Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah for receipt of FTA 5310 and 5311 funds.

Background: The Navajo Transit System (NTS) serves the Navajo Nation (or Navajo Reservation), which occupies nearly 27,000 square miles in the southwestern United States, including parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. NTS provides transportation throughout the Reservation, primarily through intercity bus service linking distant portions of the Navajo Nation and through limited local service. The Navajo Nation is the largest Native American tribe in the United States, with a population of 180,765 as of 2000. The Navajo Nation is approximately 96 percent Navajo, 3.5 percent white, and 0.5 percent other races. The Reservation also has a large number of visitors every year.

NTS has provided fixed-route transportation since 1980 along a few major corridors on the Reservation. NTS has 15 buses that often travel more than 100 miles to get to developed areas. The primary riders are members of the Navajo tribe, although some rides are provided to members of the Hopi Nation, which is in the center of the Navajo Nation. Service is currently oriented toward the tribal administrative offices and services in Window Rock and Fort Defiance, Arizona, which are not centrally located within the Navajo Nation. These services include health care, employment, education, job training, and government services. Navajo Transit System represents the only means of reaching these services for transit-dependent persons. Although the Navajo Nation has a high unemployment rate (40%), jobs are available in the larger communities of Window Rock, Fort Defiance, Chinle, Kayenta, Tuba City, and Page on the Reservation and in the neighboring communities of Gallup, Flagstaff, and Holbrook. Access to these communities is critical.

Organization and Funding: The NTS is managed by a director who reports to the head of the Navajo Nation Division of General Services. NTS is organized into three sections: (1) Fixed Route System/Section 5311 Program, (2) Charter and Special Operations, and (3) Administration. NTS has approximately 23 staff and over half are drivers in the Section 5311 program division. The Navajo Transit System Short-Range Transit Plan states that NTS has effective practices in the areas of daily operations, cost and revenue tracking, and strategic planning. There is also a high level of participation in state and national transit training programs.

Navajo Transit System's noncharter operations are primarily funded by the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) 5311 program. NTS also receives vehicles through the 5310 program.

Coordination Efforts: NTS coordinates with tribal agencies on the reservation by providing vehicles or picking up passengers, enabling a variety of specialized transportation services. The NTS currently coordinates with other organizations and internally in the following ways.

- **Vehicle loans and agreements with other organizations in the reservation**—NTS allows Navajo and other Indian-related organizations to use their vehicles, generally for elderly, handicapped, and employment training/access uses. NTS also has agreements to transport clients that require specialized service on NTS buses. Vehicles and rides are based on contractual agreements with Navajo and Indian health, employment, and social service organizations including the following:
  - **Navajo Nation Fleet Management (NNFM)**—NNFM has seven offices across the Navajo Nation to distribute 1,800 four-wheel drive vehicles. NTS vehicles supplement this fleet for clients with special needs.
  - **Navajo Nation Area Agency on Aging**—The agency uses vans to bring clients to meal sites and coordinate with Navajo senior centers throughout the reservation.
  - **Indian Health Services (IHS)**—NTS is one of four contractors that provide emergency medical transportation to IHS and is funded through state Medicaid funding and reimbursements from New Mexico and Utah.
  - **Community Health Representatives (CHRs)**—CHRs use tribal motor pool vehicles for their outreach efforts throughout the reservation, only providing rides for clients in emergencies.
  - **Navajo Nation Workforce Development**—The agency has approximately five vehicles that they rarely use because of lack of time to provide rides. Navajo Transit is exploring ways to provide service to workforce clients via fixed route.
- **Intratribal coordination with the Hopi Reservation**—NTS provides service to the Hopi Nation situated in the center of the Navajo Nation. NTS coordinates with the Hopi Senom Transit System (HSTS), which has been operating two fixed routes and a vanpool (open to the general public) from Flagstaff to Kykotsmovi for approximately 13 years. NTS provides daily bus service through the Hopi area between Tuba City and Window Rock, thereby extending the destinations that the Hopi Nation can reach via transit. In addition to connecting the existing fixed routes, HSTS and NTS are also discussing the possibility of Navajo Transit providing Hopi passengers with rides to Winslow and Leupp/Flagstaff as well.
- **Coordination with states**—NTS works with Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah for receipt of FTA 5311 and 5310 funds, as well as other subsidies through the Older Americans Act and Medicaid.
- **Coordination with nearby community organizations**—NTS has been pursuing coordination regarding service delivery and funding with nontribal, low-income, welfare-to-work, and senior agencies located in surrounding communities and within the reservation. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was recently initiated between NTS and these organizations following discussions that have been underway for a year. The MOU, which has not been implemented yet, was developed to promote additional NTS services to agencies in need and new processes to coordinate with the agencies.

Need for Coordination: NTS is the only transit service available in the large isolated region that the reservation covers. Aside from a few shorter trips, typical travel ranges from 80 miles into Winslow and Homer to 160 miles into Flagstaff. Coordination with both tribal and nontribal organizations and people residing in the Reservation is necessary because other options for meeting transportation needs do not exist.

NTS is facing the following challenges for which they are likely to need additional coordination in the form of funding or other agreements to

- Develop an effective vehicle replacement program;
- Construct a new administrative and bus maintenance facility; and
- Provide access to more parts of the reservation, including service to adjacent border towns for employment and services.

Challenges and Lessons Learned: The Navajo Nation is a very large area and it has been challenging for NTS to coordinate with all of the organizations that either need their services or that NTS needs assistance from, although they are making huge efforts to do so. Beyond the reservation borders, there are numerous organizations to coordinate with as well and it takes resources and processes to pursue opportunities that may stretch beyond NTS's capacity at this time.

One situation that has challenged NTS over the past few years is their attempt to provide better service to Gallop, Arizona. To date, NTS has been driving Navajos to Gallop but not providing rides to the residents of Gallop, who also are in need of transportation service. Funding is being sought to overcome this barrier. Additionally, Indian Health Service and NTS attempted to work out an arrangement to take individuals to the Gallup Indian Health Service Center, but administrative problems over the method of payment kept the arrangement from being a success.

Another area, previously mentioned, is NTS' pursuit of service delivery and funding coordination with nontribal, low-income, welfare-to-work, and senior agencies located in surrounding communities and within the reservation. An MOU has been negotiated with these agencies. However, new coordination has not yet resulted from this MOU. Some of the reasons why enacting change and fostering coordinated transit activities has been a lengthy process are the enormous transit distances that need to be covered, the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation, and the resources required to carry out new services.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS: CENTRALIZED MULTICOUNTY SERVICES

Program	**RIDES Mass Transit**
Sponsoring Organization	N.A.
City, State	Harrisburg, IL
Service Type	Door-to-door, several residential routes
Service Area	Pope, Hardin, Gallatin, Saline, White, Hamilton, Wayne, Edwards, and Wabash Counties, IL
Service Area Population	105,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	3,361
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	224,760
Annual Expenses	$2,286,472
Cost/Trip	$10.17
Major Funding Sources	JARC, JFS, workshops
Coordinating Agencies	70+ agencies (alternative schools, churches, social services, insurance companies, sheltered workshops, etc.)

Background: RIDES is a coordinated transportation system that serves the general public and special populations in Pope, Hardin, Gallatin, Saline, White, Hamilton, Wayne, Edwards, and Wabash counties in southern Illinois. RIDES offers door-to-door service and operates several residential routes. RIDES began 25 years ago and today works with more than 70 agencies, including social services, sheltered workshops, churches, alternative schools, and insurance companies. RIDES Mass Transit District covers 3,361 square miles; 76 percent of this area is rural. The population of the nine counties is just over 105,000. In 2001, the system provided 224,760 trips. RIDES's operating expenses in 2001 were $2,286,472. The vehicle fleet numbers 53. The average trip length is 11 miles one way.

Operating hours are from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. RIDES provides employment service 7 days a week, 24 hours a day in some counties. Service is available for any trip purpose; there are no restrictions. Trips are provided to work, medical facilities, shopping, school, and to after-school, sheltered workshop, and other agency programs.

Fares vary depending on age, qualifying for special programs, and whether travel is within the county. The base fare is $1.50 with a 75-cents fare for riders aged 6 to 11 years of age. Riders under age six ride free. Discount tickets and monthly passes are available. Special service is available at a premium fare of 85 cents per mile. Vehicles may wait at a cost of $10 per hour of wait time.

RIDES has four offices in nine counties and more than 70 employees. It has a full-time trainer who conducts commercial driver licensing (CDL) training. CDL testing is available onsite. Driver sensitivity training, defensive training, and CPR are also available. They have several vehicles ranging from 40-passenger vehicles to modified minivans. RIDES has its own vehicle storage and vehicle maintenance facilities. RIDES does all its own scheduling and dispatching, using CTS software for billing.

Coordination Process: Coordination began in 1976 when the Golden Circle Senior Citizen Center was awarded a 2-year Section 147 Research and Demonstration Project to provide transportation in Pope and

Hardin Counties. In April 1977, RIDES (then standing for Rural Initiative Development of Effective Services) began operations with four 15-passenger vans in Pope and Hardin Counties. Under a purchase of service agreement with Golden Circle Nutrition Programs, RIDES established a route in each county to bring people to nutrition centers and to deliver meals to the homebound.

The current chief executive officer became director in 1976 and began coordinating service. To get the service operational, time was spent talking with people one on one and through informational group meetings. During these interactions, the key objective was to listen to everyone's input, identify unmet transit needs, explain the benefits of coordination, and provide a realistic picture of the amount of time and effort that would be involved. It was relatively easy to get people to attend informational meetings, but when it was time to coordinate services and sign contracts, resistance surfaced. People did not want to give up their buses, and they were afraid the new service would not be as good as the existing service. As time passed and the reluctant agencies and people saw the success of coordinated transportation, they were willing to join in.

RIDES now has several contracts and memoranda of understanding. The Department of Human Services and the Sheltered Workshop were agencies that contracted in the beginning. The success of the system has drawn more people in, and the system has continued to grow and expand. For the first 13 years, the governing authority of the system was the Senior Citizen's Center. This hindered RIDES' ability to provide service to everyone and so, in 1990, RIDES formed the first rural mass transit district in Illinois. The transit board then became the governing authority. The board is made up of a representative from each county, a senior citizens representative, a representative for disabled residents, and a collegiate representative. A county must vote to join the district and then they are registered with the state. The organization has a chief executive officer, chief operations officer, and chief financial officer, supervisors, and drivers.

RIDES' timeline for development of coordinated transportation services was

1977–1978	Awarded Section 147 Research and Development Grant.
1980	RIDES expanded into Gallatin and Saline County, receiving Section 18 Funding
1989	RIDES expanded its services to include White County
1990	RIDES formed the first rural mass transit district in Illinois (RMTD)
1994	RIDES begins providing a limited service in Hamilton County
1997	Wayne and Hamilton Counties joined the district
1998	Edwards and Wabash Counties joined the district
2000	Rides Mass Transit District was presented the Transit System of the Year Award from the Community Transportation Association of America in Fort Lauderdale, FL during EXPO 2000
2001	Shawnee Queen River Taxi began operations as part of the Rides Mass Transit District

Benefits of Coordination: RIDES has experienced many benefits during their two decades of coordinating service. The most obvious benefit is providing transportation that was almost nonexistent. There is now transportation to work, health care, shopping, colleges and universities, and more. The cost of trips is less per rider than it would be without the coordination. The expansion of the service from two counties to nine is evidence of the need for transportation and the effectiveness of the RIDES system. Their biggest success is the benefit it provides to the community. Not only are people able to travel where they need to go, but there is an impact on businesses and the economy.

For example, RIDES has provided service to 450 individuals under the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program from June 1999 to mid-April 2000. More than 270 participants rode to employment, 164 of which are still employed, with 46 still riding the bus to work. These 164 individuals who are still working bring approximately $1 million annually in wages back to spend within the district. Considering the Job Access and Reverse Commute grant, the RIDES payroll, and the payroll of those who have been riding for years, the estimated transit, related, or supported wages are between $2.5 and 3 million. It has been estimated that for every dollar spent on public transportation, a community realizes $4 to $5 in economic return.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: The greatest difficulty was working with agencies that did not want to give up the use of their vehicles. To address this concern, RIDES created a brochure called "Hands Off Transportation." The brochure describes all the things (drivers, training, maintenance, gasoline, insurance) that agencies will not have to spend their time doing if they contract for transportation service instead of providing their own. One other challenge was overcoming the idea that RIDES was just for seniors. Because RIDES was operated by the senior center, the public did not realize RIDES provided service to general public. To overcome this, RIDES advertised through brochures, television, radio and newspaper advertisements, and made presentations. People really became aware of its services when it formed a mass transit district.

RIDES has few problems with turnover. This is attributed to their hiring practices. All drivers are first hired as part-time employees. They do experience some turnover, but those staff members who stay with the job are then moved on to full-time positions. RIDES has not had any difficulty with billing despite the size of the organization. They use a software package that has been very effective.

Recommendations for Others:

- ✦ Identify the needs of the community;
- ✦ Join forces with agencies that are committed and have access to funding;
- ✦ Know the pros and cons of coordination and make those clear to agencies before you get started;
- ✦ Be realistic, don't make promises you can't keep;
- ✦ Don't let people think everything is free, remember providing transit service is a business; and
- ✦ Clearly define what services will be provided in contracts.

NORTH CENTRAL MINNESOTA: REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES

Program	**Arrowhead Transit (AT)**
Sponsoring Organization	Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA)
City, State	Virginia, MN
Service Type	Dial-a-ride, route deviation, route guarantee
Service Area	Atkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis (except city of Duluth) Counties, MN
Service Area Population	322,073
Service Area Size (sq mi)	18,221
Data for Year Ending	2000
One-way Trips per Year	335,300
Annual Expenses	$2,239,283
Cost/Trip	$6.68
Major Funding Sources	JFS, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
Coordinating Agencies	Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) (informal agreement)

Background: Arrowhead Transit (AT) is one of the largest public rural transit program providers in the United States. Operated by Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA), Arrowhead Transit provides coordinated public transit services to the residents of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis (excluding the city of Duluth) Counties. Service operates from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and consists of dial-a-ride, route deviation, and route guarantee services with all vehicles wheelchair accessible to ensure that everyone can ride buses (Annual Transit Report, 2000). Arrowhead Transit is governed by a board of directors consisting of equal representation among people with incomes below poverty, elected officials, and business people.

AT operates throughout the entire seven-county rural service area. Arrowhead operates a fleet of 53 vehicles: 6 large buses, 18 medium buses, and 29 small buses. A core of 60 volunteer drivers is also available to provide transportation service. In 2000, Arrowhead carried 335,300 riders, operating 1,655,239 miles of service, with operating costs of $2,239,283.

Arrowhead coordinates its service with county agencies serving developmentally disabled clients. Some of the multicounty trips provided by Arrowhead serving these agencies are extremely long; some are up to 60 miles one way.

Arrowhead Transit is coordinating services with the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA). Duluth has transfer points where Arrowhead passengers can transfer to DTA buses and vice versa. Also, these transfer points are noted on bus schedules of both transit providers. The transfer fee is 25 cents. The two systems coordinate legislatively; they draw from the same funding and educate and lobby local elected officials for funding together. There is no formal agreement between Arrowhead Transit and DTA.

Coordination Process: Coordination started in the 1970s with a joint effort among several agencies, including the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). MnDOT encouraged agencies to coordinate. Historical data to support the need for services before coordination are not available, but the focus at that time was on improving and expanding transportation opportunities.

Major stakeholders that were and are involved in coordination efforts are AEOA, county commissioners, elected city officials, and MnDOT. Coordination efforts have always had full political support. Development of coordination was driven by logistics and money, not politics.

Benefits of Coordination: AT has experienced many of the usual benefits of coordination, including

- ✦ Access to more funding,
- ✦ Less duplication of services;
- ✦ Fewer service gaps,
- ✦ An overall increase in the number of trips provided,
- ✦ Better access to jobs, health care, and shopping,
- ✦ Higher service productivity, and
- ✦ An enhanced image and visibility for transit.

Rider surveys are conducted every year to measure customer satisfaction.

AT's biggest success occurred last year when a plant burned down in an AT service area. Workers were temporarily moved to a functioning plant in Wisconsin. AT does not have interstate authority, but DTA does. DTA began taking clients from Minnesota to and from work in Wisconsin.

Support, Problems, Barriers, Mistakes, Solutions: Money is always an issue, but AT is not in desperate need for it. Education is the major problem; not everybody understands how transportation services will help the community. MnDOT was very helpful, trying to encourage agencies to coordinate whatever and whenever possible.

Recommendations: "Work at it! If it saves money—coordinate! It gives you more riders and better service."

EASTERN WASHINGTON AND NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: MULTIPLE COORDINATION STRATEGIES

Program	**COAST**
Sponsoring Organizations	Council on Aging & Human Services (COA&HS), WSDOT, Coalition of Regional Transportation Providers
City, State	Colfax, WA
Service Type	Social services, nutrition, transportation and subnursing home care
Service Area	Four Washington and five Idaho counties
Service Area Population	115,000
Service Area Size (sq mi)	23,000
Data for Year Ending	2001
One-way Trips per Year	75,000
Annual Expenses	$700,000
Cost/Trip	$9.33
Major Funding Sources	Property tax from three counties and three of the four largest communities, United Way, WA State Medicaid, Brokerage Rural Mobility, ID Medicaid, veterans, FTA (5311, 5311(f), 5309, 5310 capital, 5310 purchase of service), Job Access and Reverse Commute
Coordinating Agencies	18 different transportation provision and assistance programs. Many are coordinated with one another, and many use other local and regional services and resources.
Other	41,000 of the riders were from Washington; 34,000 were from Idaho

Overview: The Council on Aging & Human Services (COA&HS) is a nonprofit, public benefit, social service agency. Its administrative office is in Colfax, Washington, the county seat for Whitman County, located in rural eastern Washington along the Washington-Idaho border. The largest community in Whitman County is Pullman, with a population of 24,000 that includes 18,000 Washington State University students. The COA&HS provides a broad range of programs, including social services, nutrition, transportation, and subnursing home care.

The transportation program, COAST, delivers specialized public transportation services to the residents who live in four Washington and five Idaho counties—a huge service area, covering 23,000 miles. The population density of the service area is very low, averaging about five persons per square mile. COAST is the primary contractor for every available Washington State, Idaho, and Federal funding source. COAST also receives direct property tax funding from three counties and three of the four largest communities in the service area. COAST holds multiple contracts with individual agencies and programs.

In addition to being a direct service provider, COAST is also a service broker, the operator of a 32-vehicle insurance pool, a vanpool operator, a carpool supporter, a training service provider, the operator of a drug consortium and the operator of a nine-county information, referral and dispatch services center. In addition, COAST serves as a technical assistance and grant writing consultant, a community development agent, a legislative advocate, and a regulatory agency intervention agent. COAST runs three different volunteer transportation programs and contracts with several others.

History of Coordination: COAST has a long history of successful coordination. When COAST's executive director first came to COA&HS in 1983, the small transportation program had one van, one staff person, and a $25,000 per year budget. In 1983, COAST submitted an application for Federal (16(b)2) funds for a new lift-equipped vehicle. At the same time, the county's primary disabled transportation service provider was also applying for capital assistance for a bus. WSDOT decided that a lead agency should be appointed to oversee vehicle purchasing in the area. COAST became the lead agency and this led to the formation of a coalition of regional transportation providers. The original coalition was quite diverse and included representatives from schools, child care centers, public transportation systems, Washington State University, a private airporter service, DSHS, a local community action agency, and other service providers.

Early on, COAST's executive director began pooling the budgets of coalition members to leverage FTA's Section 18 (now Section 5311) operating funds. At the time coalition members had a combined annual operating expenditure of approximately $300,000 compared with COAST's $25,000 budget. The Section 18 funds were then redistributed to the participating agencies based on the percentage of their annual operating budget used to leverage the funds and on need. This initial program was based on the informal goal that no program dollars would be used for any discretionary costs and that FTA general public funds would be used to meet costs that did not fit other specific program requirements.

The Coalition met monthly throughout the first 3 years and quarterly for the next 3 years. During this time, member agencies and providers took turns hosting monthly meetings. At these meetings, the host agency would provide a tour of its facilities and operations and talk about its transportation and program needs and challenges. This created a strong understanding of regional transportation problems among coalition members and was extremely valuable in identifying opportunities to coordinate service, eliminate duplicative service, and fill unmet regional needs. The meetings also helped coordinate other human services as well. By 1990, the Transportation Coalition segued into COAST's lead agency role; however, the group's structure and broader focus was assumed by formation of the Whitman County Human Services Alliance.

Throughout its 20-year history as a transportation provider and broker, COAST has maintained an active and supportive Board of Directors. COAST's Executive Director attributes COAST's success to the dedication of its board to the principle that "they couldn't improve the lives of seniors and their communities unless they worked together to enhance the lives of all rural people." In essence, the Board of Directors has taken a strong support role in allowing its dedicated executive director and staff to move forward on a number of innovative service projects. The following quote from COAST's executive director summarizes the agency's dedication to finding innovative solutions and providing services to the mobility impaired.

> "Many transportation providers, both public and private, would balk at providing many of the direct and indirect services that I will describe. It is easy to describe the numerous roadblocks and cite the reasons why these arrangements would not seem to be in the best interests of the provider. My counter argument is simple. Mobility is the foundation for participation in a free society. How do various population subsets become excluded from the "general public?" For COAST, it is not a question of whether or not we will choose to provide service. The question is whether or not we have the will to find a way to provide the service. Working at the COA&HS is not about saying, "No!" Instead, it is about finding a way, after we have already said, "Yes!" (Johanson, 2000).

During FY2000-2001, COAST provided approximately 75,000 one-way trips (41,000 in Washington and 34,000 in Idaho) and over 710,000 service miles. This includes only services where COAST is the direct provider and does not include trips provided by other Coalition partners in the area. The estimated FY2000-2001 operating budget for coast services was $700,000. The average cost per trip for direct services provided by COAST was $8, although individual trip costs vary significantly based on type and distance. COAST has developed a cost allocation system that allows them to assign trip costs to specific funding sources retroactively. Trips that do not apply to specific funding sources are considered general public and paid for with Section 5311 funds. Among COAST's numerous funding sources are area agency funds, United Way, Washington State Medicaid, Brokerage Rural Mobility, Agency Council on Coordination funds, Idaho Medicaid, veterans, and FTA Sections 5311, 5311(f), 5309, 5310 capital, 5310 purchase of services, and Job Access and Reverse Commute.

Types of Coordination—COAST has 18 different transportation provision and assistance programs. Many of these programs are coordinated with one another, and many use other local and regional service and resources. The following is a brief description of the most relevant services provide by COAST.*

Direct Service Provider and Broker—COAST is a direct service provider in six of the nine counties in its service area. In the three other counties, COAST serves as a pure broker (e.g., secures funding sources, takes trip requests, assigns the trips to subcontractors and reimburses the providers for the assigned trips). COAST's direct services range from regular weekly and biweekly routes linking small communities with area service centers, demand response, and volunteer escort services. COAST serves as the lead agency for a coalition of public, private for profit, and nonprofit mobility providers. For three counties in Washington, COAST is the contracted broker for Washington State's Medicaid Assistance Program. As a Washington MAA Broker, COAST must determine eligibility, ascertain the appropriate level of service, and then assign the lowest cost, most-appropriate service provider. Appropriate services may range from gas vouchers for the client to ground transportation coupled with airfare to a final destination.

Regional Information and Dispatch Center—COAST operates a regional information and dispatch center for the entire service area. Three full-time dispatchers receive trip requests and assign the trips to available service providers including COAST. One of those providers, Link Transportation Systems, has five scheduled trips per day to Spokane, Washington. These trips originate in Moscow, Idaho, and are routed through several communities, including Pullman and Colfax, Washington. COAST dispatchers monitor Link radio traffic and COAST's traffic. In cases of vehicle breakdown or emergency the two agencies support each other with vehicle loans and driver co-utilization. COAST has a unique noncompetition agreement with Link. This arrangement has greatly facilitated funding applications that frequently require approval from area commercial providers. Link operates standard passenger vans that are not ADA accessible. COAST provides the ADA-required accessible vehicles for Link. In December 2001, COAST was one of the first rural systems to purchase and install Mobilitat's Easy Rides dispatching, billing and record keeping software. The software has been customized by Mobilitat so that is the Nation's first comprehensive "full brokerage" software.

Volunteer Escort—One of COAST's volunteer-based programs is a fairly traditional service called Volunteer Escort. COAST recruits, screens, trains, reimburses, and supports a pool of one hundred volunteer drivers who operate their own automobiles. COAST also contracts with other agencies that operate registered volunteer driver pools, allowing them to use COAST's operating guidelines.

Vehicle Loans and Leases—The second type of volunteer service arranged by COAST is a vehicle loan and lease program. Under this program several churches and denominational nursing homes rent lift-equipped vehicles from COAST to serve special weekly needs, such as transporting seniors to Sunday church services. Each participant is required to send its volunteer drivers through a 16-hour CTAA certification process. Vehicle rental costs are then shared among participants on a rotating basis, with one stipulation. Drivers are required to perform 3- to 4-hour shifts and to serve the needs of other participants during the Sunday that they are "on-duty." This program has been operating successfully for more than 5 years.

Community Vehicles—The Community Vehicle Program has similar aspects to the Vehicle Loan Program, but in this instance the full-time operation of the vehicle is turned over to a group of community volunteers. The volunteers operate the vehicle, full time, as a public transportation resource. For 2 years, COAST has been implementing the program in two rural Washington communities. Four other communities are currently interested in starting the program. Grant applications for three new vans may make two older vans available to expand this program.

The basic "agreement" is that the central agency provides a vehicle, technical assistance and insurance, and driver training; the community provides official status for the organizing committee, gas and oil, an operating board, and drivers and fundraisers for vehicle replacement. Maintenance can be shared or either

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* These descriptions are directly adapted from Johanson, 2000.

party's sole responsibility. COAST has added options to the basic model, allowing each community to become a subcontracted service provider for other programs and funding sources. This relationship makes it possible to contract with the community for Medicaid or Section 5310 services. In this way, services can be extended to priority residents of other small communities. The relationship also creates an operating revenue source to supplement donations. Once the program is in place, the vehicle, in theory, can transport groups 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for any legal purpose.

Insurance Pool—The COAST insurance pool started with just one vehicle. COAST now holds the master policy that now has basic coverage of $1.5 million with a $5 million dollar umbrella. Six agencies and 32 vehicles are currently covered by the policy. Each agency pays an average of $900 per year per vehicle and is a "named insured" on the master policy. COAST charges the participating agencies $60 per vehicle, per year, to administer the program. Depending on the prevailing market (hard versus soft) the total amount is one-half to one-third lower than what similar coverage would cost the agencies.

Vehicle Pool—COAST is the lead agency in the service area for vehicle acquisition. COAST assists smaller rural providers in acquiring vehicles to meet their service needs. COAST often competes for new vehicles through the FTA 5310 Program. The agency requesting the vehicle puts up the needed 20 percent match at the time the vehicle is delivered. Instead of getting the new vehicle, the requesting agency gets a well-maintained, serviceable van—one of COAST's used vehicles—because COAST is the only agency in the area that can generate sufficient trips and miles to be competitive to receive the new vehicles. When the title reverts at 100,000 miles, COAST signs the title over to the entity that provided the original match. For 17 years, COAST has been awarded every 5310 grant that it has requested. During the past 2 years, COAST has acquired five new vehicles for three participating agencies.

Training Broker—Most of the transportation providers in COAST's large service area are too small to maintain "in-house" certified training capacity. COAST has two driver trainers on staff who regularly conduct driver training for a wide variety of community agencies with volunteer and paid drivers. COAST provides the training for no charge. Idaho drivers attend with expenses paid by the Community Transit Association of Idaho (CTRI). The driver-training course is the 16-hour, nationally certified course offered through the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA).

School District Contracts—COAST has been successful in getting rural school districts involved in the provision of public transportation. COAST found that most rural transit providers do not have the capacity to contract to provide school district transportation the way providers often do in urban areas. Public law 94-142 required school districts to provide accessible, lift-equipped vehicles for special education students in the late 1970s almost 15 years before passage of the ADA; consequently, most districts have a small bus that is lift equipped.

COAST has been able to negotiate four contracts (three in Washington, one in Idaho) with rural school districts. In return for an hourly fee, the district transports groups of seniors and persons with disabilities to needed services, such as medical, shopping, and nutrition. The districts have each been willing to operate the service all year even though school is not in session in the summer. Trained school district drivers in safe, well-maintained vehicles provide the services. The districts benefits from the revenue and because the riders begin to view the school facilities as community resources instead of youth resources. The Council on Aging & Human Services has located senior meal sites at two of the schools. COAST staff notes that the program has had windfall benefits in terms of community integration. Seniors have become important resources in the schools as aides, day care staff, tutors, and evaluators.

Mail-Passenger Contracts—In rural areas, private contractors make bulk mail deliveries and pickups. For 4 years COAST had a private nonprofit contract with a mail contractor, a Link Transportation Systems. Link also provides airport passenger service and van pool service. Six days a week, a Link van delivers and picks up bulk mail for eight small communities outside Moscow, Idaho. The van goes out with mail in the early morning and then returns mid-morning carrying passengers. The seats are added at the end of the mail run. In the mid-afternoon the passengers ride home and the mail is picked up on the return to Moscow. COAST compensates the riders for half the fare (user subsidy) and pays Link an additional $300 per month to maintain the service (provider subsidy).

Benefits, Challenges and Lessons Learned—After almost 20 years of leading coordinated transportation efforts, COAST has developed a very mature coordination network within its service area. Although still in place, the regional transportation coalition it developed 20 years ago no longer meets in a group setting. Participating agencies have developed a familiarity with one another's resources and efforts that allows them to address area needs and issues in more efficient one-on-one and small group settings.

The following is a list of key lessons that COAST has to share from its 20 years as lead agency on coordination in eastern Washington and western Idaho.

- **Lead agencies for coordination need to be mobility managers.** Transit "properties" often make poor lead agencies for coordination efforts because they have a tendency to use conventional tools and focus on the able-body public as their primary clientele. More broadly scoped social service agencies are often more willing to use a wider range of community resources (fiscal and human) to address transportation needs.
- **Don't be afraid to take issues beyond the local or state level.** COAST's executive director attributes COAST's many successes to the fact that COAST was not willing to stop when it encountered roadblocks. In fact, several of its coordination efforts have met policy hurdles at the state level, forcing them to lobby federally for approval to move forward.
- **Listening to customers and providers alike is a key to success.** Successful coordination requires a lead agency that is able to moderate an ongoing dialog between those with transportation needs and those that control the resources to provide transportation.
- **Building trust and a knowledge base among coalition members is crucial.** COAST and the regional coalition worked diligently to get to know the other agencies and transportation providers in their area early on in their coordination process. Developing a strong base of knowledge among providers has allowed them to work together creatively and effectively for more than 20 years.
- **Collection and monitoring of fiscal, operating, and client data are crucial.** COAST cites the purchase of a software package to handle grant management and accounting as an important step for the agency. This software package allowed COAST to track revenues more efficiently and allocate trip costs to specific funding sources more accurately.
- **Coordination efforts breed advocates.** COAST's executive director has found that successful coordination invariably leads to more local and regional advocates and the identification of more unmet need. He feels that, for this reason, coordination efforts perpetuate a positive cycle in terms of addressing unmet needs, but rarely lead to actual cost savings.
- **Volunteer driver programs work, but standards are not well developed.** COAST's executive director is currently working with the state of Washington to develop better volunteer driver standards. COAST has operated volunteer services for a number of years and is well aware of the many state and Federal regulatory issues that challenge volunteer programs.
- **Transfer of institutional knowledge is important, but often overlooked.** COAST's executive director has been the lead person on coordination efforts in the area for almost 20 years. He now holds 20 years of knowledge about local needs, system operations, and state and Federal policy related to coordination. COAST is beginning to consider the effects of his departure. Although COAST has not yet developed a transition plan, it is an important issue because it will represent the loss of an important resource. Ongoing documentation and dissemination of information during coordination can safeguard against the demise of a program due to the loss of one or two key staff members.

SUMMARY

Coordination works. While sometimes requiring a long and arduous process, coordination has been beneficial to many different kinds of rural communities in many parts of the country. Reducing overlap and duplication increases funding for expanded services to new communities, new users, and new destinations at new hours of the day and days of the week.

Rural communities are extremely diverse, and so are the coordinated transportation systems that they have implemented. Some communities have engaged relatively few partners in their coordination efforts, while other communities have extensive arrangements that cross many of the traditional boundaries of passenger types, service modes, funding sources, and political jurisdictions.

Respondents for the local case studies often mentioned a wide range of challenges and opportunities regarding coordinating transportation services in rural areas:

- Funding,
- Interpersonal relationships,
- Political support and power sharing,
- Lack of knowledge about transportation services, and
- Understanding coordination.

Some individuals who are implementing coordinated services can be daunted by coordination's challenges. They need to know that coordination efforts have been successful elsewhere. This ***Toolkit*** offers examples of successful coordination in a wide variety of locations. Key local level success strategies included the following:

- **Get started right away, but be patient in the process. Invest sufficient time to find out the best way to set up and implement the system to provide quality service.**
- **Work with individuals and agencies that are committed to coordinated transportation and have access to funding.**
- **Be realistic. Don't make promises you can't keep.**
- **Build trust among coalition members; search for consensus.**
- **Know the pros and cons of coordination.**

- **Do not stop when you encounter roadblocks; look for alternatives.**
- **Establish a transportation advisory committee with persons and agencies who share a common goal of meeting local transportation needs for their constituencies.**
- **Get a good mix of local elected officials together; ensure you have staffers who can respond to their needs.**
- **Offer services of real value; listen intently to customers and providers.**
- **Work closely with local decisionmakers to respond to changing markets and new opportunities.**
- **Cultivate partnerships. Establish strong relationships with partner agencies. Establish clear roles and responsibilities among all partners.**
- **Ensure that participating agencies are fully vested in the program.**
- **Secure funding to cover initial needs and to expand services once the initial funds are spent.**
- **Be flexible; maintain an ability to adapt to changing needs and conditions.**
- **Approach coordinated transportation like a business. Watch the bottom line!**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AARP	American Association of Retired Persons
ACCT	Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended
ADLs	activities of daily living
ADOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
AoA	Administration on Aging
APTA	American Public Transit Association
AVL	automatic vehicle locator
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs (U.S. Department of Interior)
CAD	computer-aided dispatching
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CBD	central business district
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDL	commercial driver licensing
CMS	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
COAST	Council on Aging Specialized Transportation
CTAA	Community Transportation Association of America
CTC	community transportation coordinator
CTD	coordinated transit district
DMAS	department of medical assistance
DMV	department of motor vehicles
DOL	U.S. Department of Labor
DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
ESRD	end-stage renal disease
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GAO	U.S. General Accounting Office
GIS	geographic information system
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
IADLs	instrumental activities of daily living
IDOT	Illinois Department of Transportation
IDT	Idaho Transportation Department
INDOT	Indiana Department of Transportation
ITRE	Institute for Transportation Research
ITS	intelligent transportation system
JARC	Job Access and Reverse Commute grant
JPA	Joint Powers Authority
KDOT	Kansas Department of Transportation
LTF	Local Transportation Funds (a category of TD funds)
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
MDT	mobile data terminal Montana Department of Transportation
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
MPO	metropolitan planning organization
MRDD	Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (Board of or Department of)
MSA	metropolitan statistical area
NCDOT	North Carolina Department of Transportation
NJDOT	New Jersey Department of Transportation
NPTS	Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey
ODOT	Ohio Department of Transportation Oregon Department of Transportation
PAAD	Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled
PACT	Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation
PDA	personal digital assistant
PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
RPA	regional planning affiliation
RTA	regional transit authority
RTAP	Rural Transit Assistance Program
RTC	regional transportation commission
STF	Special Transportation Formula funds (includes state cigarette tax revenues)
STP	supplemental transportation program
STS	special transportation system
TAC	transportation advisory committee
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TD	transportation disadvantaged
TDA	Transportation Development Act
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
VA	Veterans Administration
VPTA	Vermont Public Transit Authority
WSDOT	Washington Department of Transportation
W-t-W	welfare-to-work

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

Access
The opportunity to reach a given ***destination*** within a certain time frame or without being impeded by physical, social, or economic barriers.

Access Board
Common name for the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, an independent Federal agency whose mission is to develop guidelines for accessible facilities and services and to provide technical assistance to help public and private entities understand and comply with the ***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).***

Accessibility
The extent to which facilities, including transit vehicles, are barrier-free and can be used by persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users.

Access to Jobs
Federal funding for programs to increase work-related transportation available to low-income individuals, authorized in ***TEA-21***. Nonprofit organizations and municipalities can apply to ***FTA*** for funding.

ADA
See Americans with Disabilities Act.

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service
Demand-responsive service that is operated in addition to ***fixed route*** service to accommodate persons who cannot ride the ***fixed route*** service because their disability prevents it. Under the ***Americans with Disabilities Act***, public entities that operate ***fixed route service*** (excluding ***commuter service***) are required to provide complementary paratransit with service characteristics equivalent to the ***fixed route*** service. The ***ADA*** is very specific in what constitutes equivalent service and what kinds of persons must be provided this service. A plan describing the service, which documents the planning process, must be submitted to the ***Federal Transit Administration*** regional office and updated annually. Many rural operators are not required to provide ***complementary paratransit service*** because they typically do not operate pure ***fixed route*** service.

Administration on Aging (AoA)
The agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that oversees the implementation of the ***OAA***, including senior nutrition programs, senior centers, and supportive services for elders.

Advance Reservation Scheduling
Passengers call ahead and reserve, in advance, a ride for a particular date and time. This is used in ***demand-responsive*** transportation systems. Transit systems may set limits on the minimum and maximum advance reservation times before the requested trip. Advance reservation of trip requests allows the scheduler/dispatcher to identify ridesharing opportunities and assign rides to vehicles for the most efficient service delivery. A drawback to allowing requests far in advance of the desired trip is that ***no-shows*** may be more frequent than with ***real-time scheduling***.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)
The joint Federal-state welfare program until 1996 when welfare reform ended ***AFDC*** and created ***TANF***.

Allocation
An administrative distribution of funds among the states, done for funds that do not have statutory distribution formulas.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
Federal law that requires public facilities, including transportation services, to be fully accessible for persons with disabilities. ***ADA*** also requires the provision of complementary or supplemental paratransit services in areas where ***fixed route*** transit service is operated. Expands definition of eligibility for accessible services to persons with mental disabilities, temporary disabilities, and the conditions related to substance abuse. The Act is an augmentation to, but does not supersede, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability against otherwise qualified individuals in programs receiving Federal assistance.

Apportionment
A term that refers to a statutorily prescribed division or assignment of funds. An ***apportionment*** is based on prescribed formulas in the law and consists of dividing authorized obligation authority for a specific program among the states.

Appropriations Act
Action of a legislative body that makes funds available for expenditure with specific limitations as to amount, purpose, and duration. In most cases, it permits money previously authorized to be obligated and payments to be made.

Note: Items shown in boldface and italics are defined in this glossary.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
The local entity that plans senior services and advocates for the elderly within their communities, administering provisions of the Older Americans Act (see ***OAA***).

Arterial
A class of street serving major traffic movement that is not designated as a ***highway***.

Arterial Route
A bus route that runs on major ***arterial*** streets, out along a straight line and back, often in the form of a ***radial network*** and often connecting with other routes at a transfer point. This route design is used to provide a high frequency of service in a limited geographic area (as opposed to a loop route design). ***Arterial*** routes are recommended for higher density areas.

Attainment Area
An area considered to have air quality that meets or exceeds the ***U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*** health standards used in the Clean Air Act. An area may be an ***attainment area*** for one pollutant and a nonattainment area for others. Nonattainment areas are areas considered not to have met these standards for designated pollutants.

Authorization Act
Basic substantive legislation or that which empowers an agency to implement a particular program and also establishes an upper limit on the amount of funds that can be appropriated for that program.

Block Grant
Categorical funds that are distributed to a recipient without specific spending requirements.

Brokerage
In general, an institutional organization that functions as an interface between transportation providers and users. More specific roles include

- ***Coordination*** of transportation services in a defined area. The transportation broker may centralize vehicle dispatching, recordkeeping, vehicle maintenance, and other functions under contractual arrangements with agencies, municipalities, and other organizations. This type of ***brokerage*** may be appropriate when full ***consolidation*** of services is not the best option.
- A method of matching travelers with a variety of transportation providers and modes through use of central dispatching and administrative facilities. Volunteer drivers are often coordinated by a broker. A ***ridesharing*** broker provides assistance in forming ***carpools*** or ***vanpools*** as well as in identifying transit options.

Budget Authority
Empowerment by Congress that allows Federal agencies to incur obligations to spend or lend money. This empowerment is generally in the form of appropriations. However, for the major ***highway*** program categories, it is in the form of "***contract authority***." ***Budget authority*** permits agencies to obligate all or part of the funds that were previously "authorized." Without ***budget authority***, Federal agencies cannot commit the government to make ***expenditures*** or loans.

Capital Costs
Refers to the costs of long-term assets of a public transit system such as property, buildings, and vehicles. Under ***TEA-21***, ***FTA*** has broadened its definition of ***capital costs*** to include bus overhauls, preventive maintenance, and even a portion of ***ADA*** paratransit expenses.

Carpool
A ***carpool*** is a type of transportation arrangement (usually for commuter trips) in which two or more individuals share a regular trip in an automobile. The driver may be the same for every trip, or may rotate among the riders. ***Carpools*** typically provide ***door-to-door service***, change when a rider's travel needs change, and may be arranged on an informal basis or through a ***rideshare program*** or ***brokerage***.

Central Business District (CBD)
The most intensely commercial sector of a city.

Central Transfer Point
A central meeting place where routes or zonal ***demand-responsive*** buses intersect so that passengers may transfer. Routes are often timed to facilitate transferring. That is, routes with the same ***headways*** are scheduled to arrive at the ***central transfer point*** at the same time and depart once passengers have had time to transfer. When all routes arrive and depart at the same time, the system is called a ***pulse system***. The ***central transfer point*** simplifies transfers when there are many routes (particularly ***radial routes***), several different modes, and/or paratransit zones. A downtown retail area is often an appropriate site for a ***central transfer point***, as it is likely to be a popular ***destination***, a place of traffic congestion and limited parking, and a place where riders are likely to feel safe waiting for the next bus. Strategic placement of the transfer point can attract riders to the system and may provide an opportunity for joint marketing promotions with local merchants.

Charter Service
Transportation service offered to the public on an exclusive basis (either as individuals or as groups). It is provided with a vehicle that is licensed to render ***charter service*** and engaged at a specific price for the trip or period of time, usually on a reservation or contractual basis. Typically ***charter service*** is

contracted on a one-time or limited basis and is used to provide transportation on sight-seeing tours and to recreational ***destinations***, sometimes on an overnight basis. Over-the-road coaches (intercity buses), typically equipped with baggage compartments, comfortable seats, and restrooms, are typically used in ***charter service***. Public transportation operators that receive Federal and other public subsidies may only operate ***charter services*** under limited conditions.

Checkpoint Service
This term is commonly used interchangeably with ***point deviation service.*** Riders are picked up and taken to their own ***destinations*** or to transfer points.

Circulars (FTA)
The Federal Transit Administration publishes and updates ***"Circulars"*** to communicate funding program requirements. Two circulars are of particular interest to rural communities with or considering transportation services. The first is S, a formula program to enhance the use of public transportation systems in small urban and rural areas of the country. Funds are available for operating and capital expenses. The program guidelines can be found in FTA Circular 9040.1E at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/cir9040.1E.

The second is S, a formula program to improve mobility for the elderly and persons with disabilities in rural and urban areas. Funds are used principally for the purchase of vehicles and other capital equipment. The program guidelines can be found in FTA Circular 9070.1E at www.fta.dot.gov/library/policy/9070.1E.

Circulator
A bus that makes frequent trips around a small geographic area with numerous stops around the route. It is typically operated in a downtown area or area attracting tourists, where parking is limited, roads are congested, and ***trip generators*** are spread around the area. It may be operated all day or only at times of peak demand, such as rush hour or lunch time.

Commercial Drivers License (CDL)
The standardized driver's license required of bus and heavy truck drivers in every state. Covers drivers of any vehicle manufactured to seat 15 or more passengers (plus driver) or more than 13 tons gross vehicle weight. The ***CDL*** was mandated by the Federal government in the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986.

Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
A categorical funding program created with the ***ISTEA***. Directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards. ***CMAQ*** funds generally may not be used for projects that result in the construction of new capacity available to single-occupant vehicles ***(SOVs)***.

Connector Service
Service in which a transfer to or from another transit system or mode is the focal point. An example of this is service provided under the Greyhound Rural Connector program: local transit providers operate service that brings people to and from the Greyhound station. This type of ***connector service*** is also known as ***feeder service***. ***Connector service*** may also connect two different transit systems (such as in two adjacent cities). It is often useful in improving service efficiency and effectiveness when important ***destinations***, such as medical centers, are located beyond the transit system's service area.

Consolidation
Restructuring transportation services to serve the same market with fewer service providers (sometimes only one provider).

Contract Authority
A form of ***budget authority*** that permits obligations to be made in advance of appropriations. The Federal-Aid Highway Program operates mostly under ***contract authority*** rules.

Coordination
Coordination is a strategy for managing resources. It is applied within community political environments to achieve greater cost-effectiveness in service delivery. Fundamentally, coordination is about shared power among organizations that are working together to achieve common goals. Typically, the necessary precursors to shared power are shared respect and shared objectives. After these preconditions are met, sharing the key components of power—responsibility, management, and funding—is possible.

Coordination of transportation systems is best seen as a process in which two or more organizations interact to jointly accomplish their transportation objectives. Coordination is like many other political processes in that it involves power and control over resources, and coordination can be subject to the usual kinds of political problems and pressures, such as competing personalities and changing environments.

Curb-to-Curb Service
A service that picks up and delivers passengers at the curb or roadside, as distinguished from ***door-to-door service***. Passenger assistance is generally not rendered other than for actual boarding and alighting. The passengers are responsible for getting themselves from their homes or other buildings to the curb. ***Fixed route*** service is always provided ***curb-to-curb***, while ***demand-responsive service*** may be provided ***curb-to-curb*** or ***door-to-door***. ***Curb-to-curb*** is more efficient for the transit system, but ***door-to-door*** provides a higher level of service.

Demand-Responsive Service
Service activated based on passenger requests. Usually passengers call the scheduler or dispatcher and request rides for

particular dates and times. A trip is scheduled for that passenger, which may be canceled by the passenger. Usually involves ***curb-to-curb*** or ***door-to-door service***. Trips may be scheduled on an advanced reservation basis or in "real-time." Usually smaller vehicles are used to provide ***demand-responsive service***. This type of service usually provides the highest level of service to the passenger but is the most expensive for the transit system to operate in terms of cost per trip. However, in rural areas with relatively high populations of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, ***demand-responsive service*** is sometimes the most appropriate type of service. Sub-options within this service type are discussed in order of least structured to most structured, in terms of routing and scheduling.

- **Pure Demand-Responsive Service**
  - Drivers pick up and drop off passengers at any point in the service area, based on instructions from the dispatcher. In ***pure demand-responsive*** systems, the dispatcher combines immediate requests, advance reservations, and ***subscription service*** for the most efficient use of each driver's time.
- **Zonal Demand-Responsive Service**
  - The service area is divided into zones. Buses pick up and drop off passengers only within the assigned zone. When the drop off is in another zone, the dispatcher chooses a meeting point at the zone boundary for passenger transfer, or a central transfer is used. This system ensures that a bus will always be within each zone when rides are requested.
- **Flexible Routing and Schedules**
  - ***Flexible routing and schedules*** have some characteristics of both ***fixed route*** and ***demand-responsive service***. In areas where demand for travel follows certain patterns routinely, but the demand for these patterns is not high enough to warrant ***fixed route***, service options such as ***checkpoint service***, ***point deviation***, ***route deviation***, ***service routes***, or ***subscription service*** might be the answer. These are all examples of ***flexible routing and schedules***, and each may help the transit system make its ***demand-responsive services*** more efficient while still maintaining much of the flexibility of demand responsiveness.

Destination
A place at which a passenger ultimately disembarks from a transit vehicle; the point at which a trip terminates.

Dial-A-Ride Service
A name that is commonly used for ***demand-responsive service***. It is helpful in marketing the service to the community, as the meaning of "***dial-a-ride***" is more self-evident than "***demand-responsive***" to someone unfamiliar with transportation terms.

Disabled Individual
Any person who by reason of illness, injury, age, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability is unable, without special facilities, to use local transit facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected. This definition is part of the ***Americans with Disabilities Act***.

Door-to-Door Service
A service that picks up passengers at the door of their place of origin and delivers them to the door of their ***destination***. The driver pulls the vehicle off the road if possible and escorts or physically assists the passenger if needed. ***Door-to-door service*** provides a higher level of assistance than ***curb-to-curb*** service and is typically used for passengers with severe physical disabilities.

Elderly and Handicapped (E&H)
Anachronistic designation for special transportation planning and services for persons with special needs; current ***FTA*** terminology is "elderly and persons with disabilities."

Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC)
These areas, so designated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA), are eligible for preferences and flexibility in many Federal ***grant*** programs. ***EZ/ECs*** are chosen competitively based on community poverty characteristics and local strategic planning processes.

Enhancement Activities
Refers to activities related to a particular transportation project that "enhance" or contribute to the existing or proposed project. Examples of such activities include provision of facilities for pedestrians or cyclists, landscaping or other scenic beautification projects, historic preservation, control and removal of outdoor advertising, archeological planning and research, and mitigation of water pollution due to ***highway*** runoff.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
Report that details any adverse economic, social, and environmental effects of a proposed transportation project for which Federal funding is being sought. Adverse effects could include air, water, or noise pollution; destruction or disruption of natural resources; adverse employment effects; injurious displacement of people or businesses; or disruption of desirable community or regional growth.

Expenditures (Outlays)
A term signifying disbursement of funds for repayment of obligations incurred. For example, an electronic transfer of funds, or a check sent to a state ***highway*** or transportation agency for voucher payment, is an ***expenditure or outlay.***

Expressway
A controlled ***access***, divided ***arterial highway*** for through traffic, the intersections of which are usually separated from other roadways by differing grades.

Farebox Revenue
The money collected as payment for rides, which can be in the form of cash, tickets, tokens, transfers, or passes.

Fare Structure
Fare structure is the basis for determining how fares are charged. Common types of structures are distance-based (the longer the trip is, the higher the fare will be), time-based (higher fares for trips made during ***peak hour*** service than during the "***off peak***"), quality-based (***demand-responsive*** trips are typically charged a higher fare than ***fixed route*** trips), or flat fares (the same fare is charged for all trips). In addition to these four methods, a ***fare structure*** may differentiate among passengers based on age, income, or disability (often lower fares are charged for elderly persons, children, Medicaid recipients, and persons with disabilities).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
The agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers Federal-aid ***highway*** programs.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
The agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers Federal-aid ***transit*** programs.

Financial Capacity, Capability
Refers to U.S. Department of Transportation requirement that an adequate financial plan for funding and sustaining transportation improvements be in place prior to programming federally funded projects. Generally refers to the stability and reliability of revenue in meeting proposed costs.

Fiscal Year (FY)
Since FY 1977, the Federal yearly accounting period begins October 1 and ends September 30 of the subsequent calendar year. Prior to FY 1977, the Federal ***fiscal year*** started on July 1 and ended the following June 30. ***Fiscal years*** are denoted by the calendar year in which they end; e.g., FY 1991 began October 1, 1990, and ended September 30, 1991. States and localities often have ***fiscal years*** that are different from the Federal October through September time period.

Fixed Route
Bus service on a prescribed path or route that never varies. The schedule may be fixed or flexible (see ***jitney or shuttle service***). Passengers may be required to wait at designated stops, or ***flag stops*** may be permitted. Usually larger vehicles are used to provide ***fixed route*** service.

Fixed Schedule
Predetermined times at which a vehicle is to arrive at a certain location. The actual bus route may be fixed or flexible. A flexible route combines ***fixed schedule*** stops with ***demand-responsive*** stops (see ***checkpoint***, ***point deviation***, and ***route deviation***).

Flexible Routing and Schedules
Flexible routing and schedules have some characteristics of both ***fixed route*** and ***demand-responsive service***. In areas where demand for travel follows certain patterns routinely, but the demand for these patterns is not high enough to warrant ***fixed route***, service options such as ***checkpoint service***, ***point deviation***, ***route deviation***, ***service routes***, or ***subscription service*** might be the answer. These are all examples of ***flexible routing and schedules***, and each may help the transit system make its ***demand-responsive services*** more efficient while still maintaining much of the flexibility of demand responsiveness.

Flexible route service follows a direction of travel but allows for deviation or rerouting along the way to accommodate specific trip requests. Examples of flexible route systems are ***route deviation*** and ***point deviation***. The schedule may be fixed or flexible.

Fragmentation
A situation stemming from the lack of effective and efficient integration of programs, facilities, and services.

Freeway
A divided ***arterial highway*** designed for the unimpeded flow of large traffic volumes. ***Access*** to a ***freeway*** is rigorously controlled and intersection grade separations are required.

Grant
The award of funds to an entity. Federal funds are typically awarded either as formula (or "block") ***grants***, where a predetermined legislative process establishes the level of funding available to an entity, or discretionary ***grants***, where the funding agency is free to determine how much (if any) funding an entity will be given based on the relative merits of the proposal. Private foundations also give ***grants*** based on much the same criteria.

Group Service
Used most often in ***charter*** or contracted service, a bus trip is provided to a group of passengers who ride between a single origin and ***destination***. The riders have some demographic variable in common and travel together in the same vehicle. This type of service is commonly used by senior centers and other human service agencies that take their clients on field trips and shopping trips as a group.

Guaranteed Ride Home
Refers to programs that encourage employees to ***carpool***, use ***transit***, or bike or walk to work by guaranteeing them a ride home in case they cannot take the same mode home (e.g., if they need to work late or if an emergency occurs).

Head Start
A program of comprehensive services for economically disadvantaged preschool-age children. Services, including transportation, are provided by local ***Head Start*** agencies and are funded by the Administration for Children and Families, part of ***HHS***.

Headway
The length of time at a stop between buses following the same route. If buses operating along Route A arrive at Stop 1 at 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, and 11:00, it is operating on half-hour ***headways*** during the period between 9:00 and 11:00. ***Headways*** are short if the time between them is short and long if the time between them is long. When ***headways*** are short the service is said to be operating at a high frequency, whereas if ***headways*** are long, service is operating at a low frequency. In rural areas, ***headways*** tend to be very long—a week is not uncommon.

High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs)
A term generally applied to vehicles carrying three or more people. ***Freeways***, ***expressways***, and other large volume roads may have lanes designated for ***HOV*** use. ***HOV*** lanes may be designated for use by carpoolers, vanpools, and buses. The term ***HOV*** is also sometimes used to refer to high occupancy vehicle lanes themselves.

Highway
Term applies to roads, streets, and parkways and also includes rights-of-way, bridges, railroad crossings, tunnels, drainage structures, signs, guard rails, and protective structures in connection with ***highways.***

Home-Based Work Trip
A trip to or from home for the purpose of one's employment.

Human Service Agency Transportation
Transportation for clients of a specific agency that is usually limited to a specific trip purpose. Human service agency trips are often provided under contract to a human service agency and may be provided exclusively or rideshared with other human service agencies or general public service.

Infrastructure
A term connoting the physical underpinnings of society at large, including, but not limited to, roads, bridges, transit, waste systems, public housing, sidewalks, utility installations, parks, public buildings, and communications networks.

Interagency Agreement
A legal document that outlines the responsibilities of two or more agencies, such as an interagency coordination agreement.

Intercity Bus Service
Intercity bus service provides long distance service between cities, often as part of a large network of intercity bus operators. Both express and ***local*** bus service may be provided. The Greyhound and Trailways systems are national intercity bus networks.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)
Legislative initiative by the U.S. Congress that restructured funding for transportation programs. ISTEA authorized increased levels of ***highway*** and transportation funding and an enlarged role for regional planning commissions/***MPOs*** in funding decisions. The Act also requires comprehensive regional long-range transportation plans extending to the year 2015 and places an increased emphasis on public participation and transportation alternatives.

Jitney Service
Vehicles travel along a ***fixed route*** with no time schedule, and passengers are picked up anywhere along the route (***flag stops***). Because there are no schedules, ***headways*** are usually 5 to 10 minutes so passengers have only brief waiting periods. Jitney service is often used in the United States to provide ***seasonal, tourist, or park-and-ride service***. ***Jitney service*** is a more common public transportation mode in other countries where private entrepreneurs are often the providers of service.

Land Use
Refers to the manner in which portions of land or the structures on them are used (i.e., commercial, residential, retail, industrial, etc.).

Limitation on Obligations
Any action or inaction by an officer or employee of the United States that limits the amount of Federal assistance that may be obligated during a specified time period. A ***limitation on obligations*** does not affect the scheduled ***apportionment*** or ***allocation*** of funds; it just controls the rate at that these funds may be used.

Local Bus Service
Local bus service is a term used to describe a route along which many stops are made, allowing flexibility in where passengers may board and depart. It is typically used in contrast to express bus, a bus that makes a limited number of stops and is targeted more at long distance riders. ***Local bus service*** is important in rural areas unless ***feeder*** or ***connector service*** is available to bring people to the station.

Local Street
A street intended solely for ***access*** to adjacent properties.

Long Range
In transportation planning, refers to a time span of more than 5 years. The ***Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*** is typically regarded as a short-range program.

Management Systems
Six systems required under ***TEA-21*** to improve identification of problems and opportunities throughout the nation's entire surface transportation network and to evaluate and prioritize alternative strategies, actions, and solutions. The six ***management systems*** include: Pavement Management System (PMS), Bridge Management System (BMS), Highway Safety Management System (HSMS), Congestion Management System (CMS), Public Transit Facilities and Equipment Management System (PTMS), and Intermodal Management System (IMS).

Medicaid
Also known as Medical Assistance, this is a health care program for low-income and other "medically needy" persons. It is jointly funded by state and Federal governments. The ***Medicaid*** program pays for transportation to nonemergency medical appointments if the recipient has no other means of travel to the appointment.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
The organizational entity designated by law with lead responsibility for developing transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas of 50,000 or more in population. ***MPOs*** are established by agreement of the Governor and units of general purpose local government that together represent 75 percent of the affected population of an urbanized area.

Mobility
The ability to move or be moved from place to place.

Mode, Intermodal, Multimodal
Mode refers to a form of transportation, such as automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking. ***Intermodal*** refers to the connections between modes, and ***multimodal*** refers to the availability of transportation options within a system or corridor.

Model
A mathematical or geometric projection of activity and the interactions in the transportation system in an area. This projection must be able to be evaluated according to a given set of criteria that typically include criteria pertaining to land use, economics, social values, and travel patterns.

Network
All component paths in a transportation system.

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)
Federal standards that set allowable concentrations and exposure limits for various pollutants.

National Highway Systems (NHS)
A Federal transportation program authorized by ***ISTEA*** that designates nationally significant Interstate Highways and roads for interstate travel, national defense, intermodal connections, and international commerce. Other eligible activities include bikeways and park-and-ride lots. The ***NHS*** is being developed as the first component of a larger, intermodal ***National Transportation System***.

National Transit Database Reports
Annual reports formerly known as Section 15 reports, based on financial and operating data, required of almost all recipients of transportation funds under ***FTA's*** urban transit program.

National Transit Resource Center
A resource center housed at the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). Provides technical assistance, information, and support to the community transportation industry. Most services and materials are available at no charge.

National Transportation System (NTS)
ISTEA called for the development of a "National Intermodal Transportation System that is economically efficient and environmentally sound, provides the foundation for the Nation to compete in the global economy, and will move people and goods in an energy efficient manner." The ***NTS*** is intended to allow for the development of transportation planning, program management, and investment strategies that will bring about a transportation system that will move people and goods more effectively and efficiently and thereby advance our economic, environmental and social goals.

No-Show
A passenger scheduled for a ***demand-responsive*** trip who does not appear at the designated pick-up point and time and does not cancel the trip in advance. Frequent ***no-shows*** can hurt the efficiency and effectiveness of the service, particularly in rural areas where passengers live in very remote areas that take time to get to and return from.

Obligation Authority
See "Limitation on Obligations."

Obligations
Commitments made by Federal agencies to pay out money (as distinct from the actual payments, which are "outlays"). Generally, ***obligations*** are incurred after the enactment of ***budget***

authority. However, because ***budget authority*** in many ***highway*** programs is in the form of ***contract authority***, obligations in these cases are permitted to be incurred immediately after ***apportionment*** or ***allocation***. The ***obligations*** are for the Federal share of the estimated full cost of each project at the time it is approved, regardless of when the actual payments are made or the expected time of project completion.

Older Americans Act (OAA)
Federal law first passed in 1965. The act established a network of services and programs for older people. This network provides supportive services, including transportation and nutrition services, and works with public and private agencies that serve the needs of older individuals.

Operating Costs
Noncapital costs associated with operating and maintaining a transit system, including labor, fuel, administration, and maintenance.

Origin
A place at which a passenger boards a transit vehicle; the point at which a trip begins. Often this term is used to refer to a passenger's home, even though the home actually becomes the ***destination*** of a return trip.

Paratransit Service
Paratransit is a broad term that may be used to describe any means of shared ride transportation other than ***fixed route*** mass transit services. The term paratransit usually indicates that smaller vehicles (less than 25 passengers) are being used. These services usually serve the needs of persons that standard mass transit services would serve with difficulty or not at all. A ***paratransit service*** is typically advanced reservation, ***demand-responsive service*** provided ***curb-to-curb*** or ***door-to-door. Route deviation*** and ***point deviation*** are also considered paratransit. Paratransit is often more appropriate than ***fixed route*** services in rural areas and in areas with large populations of elderly persons or persons with disabilities. ***Paratransit services*** that are provided to accommodate passengers with disabilities who are unable to use ***fixed route*** service and that meet specific service equivalency tests are called ***ADA complementary paratransit services***.

Peak/Off-Peak
The period during which the maximum amount of travel occurs. This is also the period during which the demand for transportation is usually highest. It may be specified as the morning (a.m.) or afternoon or evening (p.m.) ***peak,*** typically between 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays when commuters are traveling to and from work and school. The actual times vary according to local employer shift times, school hours, and population density. Typically, during the ***peak*** period in urban transit systems, the maximum number of vehicles are placed in service, ***headways*** are shorter, and higher fares are charged than during the ***off-peak*** period. In rural areas where the bulk of the ridership may actually be seniors going to nutrition sites, this concept may not apply.

Penalty
An action that does not allow a recipient to use the full amount of its apportioned funds. Applied to state recipients from federal programs, the action may be a withholding of project approvals or withholding of a percentage of the state's ***apportionment***. The action may be taken when the state does not comply with a required provision of law.

Person-Trip
A trip made by one person from one ***origin*** to one ***destination***.

Point Deviation Service
A type of ***flexible route*** transit service in which ***fixed scheduled*** stops (points) are established but the vehicle may follow any route needed to pick up individuals along the way if the vehicle can make it to the fixed points on schedule. This type of service usually provides ***access*** to a broader geographic area than does ***fixed route service*** but is not as flexible in scheduling options as ***demand-responsive service***. It is appropriate when riders change from day to day, but the same few ***destinations*** are consistently in demand. Also sometimes called ***checkpoint service***.

Privatization
The supplying of traditionally government-supplied goods and services through for-profit business entities. Enhanced public cost efficiency is a primary goal of such actions.

Provider of Transportation (Transportation Provider)
An agency that offers or facilitates (purchases, contracts for, or otherwise obtains) transportation (as opposed to an agency whose role is limited to funding programs).

Public Authority
A Federal, state, county, town, township, Indian tribe, municipal, or other local government or instrumentality with authority to finance, build, operate, or maintain transportation facilities.

Public Participation
The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of transportation plans and improvement programs. The ***Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)*** and subsequent regulations require that state departments of transportation and MPOs proactively seek the involvement of all interested parties, including those traditionally underserved by the current transportation system.

Public Road
Any road or street under the jurisdiction of and maintained by a public authority and open to public traffic.

Pulse System
A type of ***fixed route transit*** system (usually involving a ***radial network***) in which all routes arrive at and depart from the ***central transfer point*** at the same times. This timing facilitates transferring but necessitates a transfer facility where simultaneously all buses can safely drop off passengers and wait, and passengers can easily and safely get to the bus to which they are transferring.

Radial Network
A public transit route service pattern in which most routes converge into and diverge from a ***central transfer point*** or hub, like the spokes of a wheel. ***Arterial*** or ***loop routes*** may be used. If the routes are timed to arrive and depart at the same time, it is called a ***pulse system***.

Real-Time Scheduling
Passengers call and request ***demand-responsive*** trips a short time before the trip is needed, and the dispatcher is responsible for assigning vehicles and drivers to meet passengers' requests. This type of scheduling is most convenient for passengers but most costly for a ***transit*** system to implement as a large fleet of vehicles and drivers is needed to ensure all trip requests are met. This type of scheduling is most frequently used by ***taxi*** services.

Region
An entire metropolitan area, including designated urban and rural subregions.

Regionally Significant
A term that has been defined in Federal transportation planning regulations as "a project . . . that is on a facility which serves regional transportation needs . . . and would normally be included in the modeling of a metropolitan area's transportation network, including, at a minimum, all principal ***arterial highway*** and fixed guideway transit facilities that offer a significant alternative to regional ***highway*** travel."

Rescission
A legislative action to cancel the obligation of unused ***budget authority*** previously provided by Congress before the time when the authority would have otherwise lapsed. ***Rescission*** may be proposed by the Executive Branch but requires legislative action in order to take effect.

Reverse Commute
Commuting against the main directions of traffic. Often refers to travel from the central city to suburbs during peak period commuting times.

Rideshare/Ridematch Program
A rideshare program facilitates the formation of ***carpools*** and ***vanpools***, usually for work trips. A database is maintained of the ride times, origins, ***destinations***, and driver/rider preferences of users and potential users. Persons requesting to join an existing pool or looking for riders are matched by program staff with other appropriate persons. In rural areas, a ***rideshare program*** is often used to coordinate ***Medicaid*** or volunteer transportation.

Ridesharing
Ridesharing is the simultaneous use of a vehicle by two or more persons.

Route Deviation Service
Transit buses travel along a prescribed route at scheduled times and maintain scheduled or unscheduled ***checkpoint*** stops. The vehicle may leave and return to the route to pick up persons who have requested ***demand-responsive*** trips near the route. Passengers may call in advance for ***route deviation*** or may ***access*** the system at predetermined route stops. The limited geographic area within which the vehicle may travel off the route is known as the route deviation corridor. This type of ***flexible routing*** essentially meets ***demand responsive*** service requests with a ***fixed route***. It is often the best option for higher density rural areas where travel patterns are consistent but isolated riders cannot get to the route because they cannot walk the distance needed or they use a wheelchair and there are no sidewalks.

Right of Way (R-O-W)
Priority paths for the construction and operation of ***highways***, light and heavy rail, railroads, etc.

Service Route
Service routes are ***transit*** routes that are tailored to meet the needs of a specific market segment (such as older persons or persons with disabilities) in a community. ***Service routes*** often evolve out of a pattern of ***demand-responsive*** travel within a community. Characteristics of a ***service route*** include stops at high-density residential complexes or group homes, shopping areas, medical facilities, and ***destinations*** specific to the target population such as senior centers or sheltered work sites. Stops are usually positioned near an accessible entrance of a building instead of on the street, and the ride times are typically longer than on a "conventional" ***fixed route*** covering the same general area. ***Service routes*** may be operated instead of, or in conjunction with, a "conventional" route in the same area. Vehicles tend to be smaller and accessible to persons with disabilities, and drivers usually offer a relatively high level of personal assistance. ***Service routes*** are used widely in Europe and are gaining greater popularity in the United States since the passage of the ***Americans with Disabilities Act***.

Shared Ride Taxi
A ***shared ride taxi*** service provides taxi transportation in which more than one passenger is in the vehicle at the same time, usually at a reduced rate for each of the passengers.

Shared ride taxi service is a way of using taxicabs for ***paratransit*** service.

Shuttle Service
Shuttle service refers to ***fixed route*** service that connects only a small number of fixed stops and operates at a high frequency (or short ***headways***). The vehicle follows a repetitive back-and-forth route. This type of service is related to ***circulator*** service but connotes a more linear route structure. A parking shuttle is an example of use that could apply to areas that have a seasonal tourist attraction.

Single-Occupant Vehicle (SOV)
An ***SOV*** is a vehicle used to transport just one person to a ***destination***.

Social Equity, Justice
The provision of affordable, efficient, and accessible transportation services to all people regardless of race, ethnicity, income, gender, or disability. A socially equitable transportation system provides all people with convenient ***access*** to meaningful jobs, services, and recreational opportunities.

State Highway Department
The department, commission, or board of any state responsible for ***highway*** construction, maintenance, and management.

State Implementation Plan (SIP)
Required documents prepared by states and submitted to ***EPA*** for approval. ***SIPs*** identify state actions and programs to implement designated responsibilities under the Clean Air Act.

Subscription Service
When a passenger or group of passengers requests a repetitive ride (such as on a daily or weekly service on an ongoing basis), trips are often scheduled on a subscription or "standing order" basis. The passenger makes a single initial trip request, and the transit system automatically schedules them for their trip(s) each day or week. This type of service is frequently used in transporting human service agency clients to regular agency programs.

Surface Transportation Program
A new categorical funding program created with the ***ISTEA***. Funds may be used for a wide variety of purposes, including roadway construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation; roadway operational improvements; ***capital costs*** for transit projects; ***highway*** and transit safety improvements; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; scenic and historical transportation facilities; and preservation of abandoned transportation corridors.

Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF)
Created by the 1996 welfare reform law, TANF is a program of block ***grants*** to states to help them meet the needs of families with no income or resources. It replaces ***AFDC***, JOBS, Emergency Assistance, and some other preceding Federal welfare programs. Because of TANF-imposed time limits, states are trying to place recipients in jobs as quickly as possible, often using program funds to pay for transportation, childcare, and other barriers to workforce participation.

Taxi
Demand-responsive transportation vehicle offered to individual members of the public on an exclusive basis, in a vehicle licensed to render that service, usually operated by a private for-profit company. Fares are usually charged on a per-mile or per-minute (or both) basis on top of a base fare charged for all trips. Passengers may call the dispatcher to request a trip (***real-time scheduling***) or hail a passing unoccupied taxi.

TEA-21
See ***Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.***

Telecommuting
The substitution, either partially or completely, of the use of computer and telecommunications technologies (e.g., telephones, personal computers, modems, facsimile machines, electronic mail) for transportation to a conventional place of work. Implies either working at home or at a satellite work center that is closer to an employee's home than the conventional place of work.

Title III
An important Title of the ***Older Americans Act*** that authorizes ***expenditures*** for nutrition and transportation programs that serve older persons.

Title IV
An important Title of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that ensures that no person in the United States will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The transportation planning regulations, issued in October 1993, require that metropolitan transportation planning processes be consistent with ***Title IV.***

Transit
Generally refers to passenger service provided to the general public along established routes, with fixed or variable schedules, at published fares. Related terms include public transit, mass transit, public transportation, urban transit, and ***paratransit.***

Transit Dependent
Persons who must rely on public ***transit*** or ***paratransit*** services for most of their transportation. Typically refers to individuals without ***access*** to personal vehicles.

Transportation Control Measures (TCMs)
Local actions to adjust traffic patterns or reduce vehicle use to reduce air pollutant emissions. These may include ***HOV***

lanes, provision of bicycle facilities, ridesharing, telecommuting, etc.

Transportation Disadvantaged
A term used to describe those persons who have little or no ***access*** to meaningful jobs, services, and recreation because a transportation system does not meet their needs. Often refers to those individuals who cannot drive a private automobile because of age, disability, or lack of resources. See also ***"Social Equity, Justice."***

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)
The 1998 Congressional legislation that reauthorized DOT's surface transportation programs is called the ***Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).*** This legislation replaces the 1991 authorizations known as ***ISTEA*** but essentially continues the program changes initiated under ***ISTEA*** (increased levels of ***highway*** and transportation funding, an enlarged role for regional planning commissions/***MPOs*** in funding decisions, and requirements for comprehensive regional long-range transportation plans and for public participation and transportation alternatives).

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
This is a document prepared by states and planning commissions citing projects to be funded under Federal transportation programs for a full-year period. Without ***TIP*** inclusion, a project is ineligible for Federal funding.

Transportation Management Area (TMA)
Defined by ***TEA-21*** as all urbanized areas over 200,000 in population. Within a ***TMA,*** all transportation plans and programs must be based on a continuing and comprehensive planning process carried out by the ***Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)*** in cooperation with states and transit operators. The ***TMA*** boundary affects the responsibility for the selection of transportation projects that receive Federal funds.

Transportation Management Association (TMA)
A voluntary association of public and private agencies and firms joined to cooperatively develop transportation-enhancing programs in a given area. ***TMAs*** are appropriate organizations to better manage transportation demand in congested suburban communities.

Transportation System Management (TSM)
The element of a ***Transportation Improvement Program*** that proposes noncapital-intensive steps toward the improvement of a transportation system, such as refinement of system and traffic management, the use of bus priority or reserved lanes, and parking strategies. It includes actions to reduce vehicle use, facilitate traffic flow, and improve internal transit management.

Travel Time
Customarily calculated as the time it takes to travel from ***"door-to-door."*** Used in transportation planning. In forecasting the demand for ***transit*** service, measures of ***travel time*** include time spent accessing, waiting, and transferring between vehicles, as well as that time spent on board.

Trip Generator
A place that generates a demand for frequent travel is called a ***trip generator. Trip generators*** may be ***origins*** or ***destinations.*** For example, a high-density residential area generates a need for all kinds of trips outside of the residential area into commercial areas; a medical center generates trips for medical purposes; and a downtown area may generate trips for retail, recreational, or personal business purposes.

Trust Funds
Accounts established by law to hold receipts that are collected by the Federal Government and earmarked for specific purposes and programs. These receipts are not available for the general purposes of the Federal Government. The Highway Trust Fund is comprised of receipts from certain ***highway*** user taxes (e.g., excise taxes on motor fuel, rubber, and heavy vehicles) and reserved for use for ***highway*** construction, mass transportation, and related purposes.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
The Federal agency charged with oversight of federal agricultural programs. Among its many other functions, ***USDA*** is the Federal Government's primary agency for rural economic and community development.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Funds a variety of human services transportation through ***AoA***, ***Head Start***, ***Medicaid***, and other programs.

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
The principal direct Federal funding and regulating agency for transportation facilities and programs. Contains ***FHWA*** and ***FTA.***

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
A Federal agency whose responsibilities include development and enforcement of national air quality standards and support of anti-pollution activities by state and local governments.

Urbanized Area (UZA)
An area that contains a city of 50,000 or more population, plus incorporated surrounding areas, and meets set size or density criteria.

User-Side Subsidy
A transportation funding structure in which qualified users (usually economically disadvantaged persons) are able to pur-

chase vouchers for transportation services at a portion of their worth. The users may then use the vouchers to purchase transportation from any participating provider; the vouchers are redeemed by the provider at full value, and the provider is reimbursed by the funding agency for the full value.

Vanpool
An organized ridesharing arrangement in which a number of people travel together on a regular basis in a van. The van may be company owned, individually owned, leased, or owned by a third party. Expenses are shared, and there is usually a regular volunteer driver. In terms of service design, a ***vanpool*** is basically a ***carpool*** that uses a vehicle larger than a car. In rural areas, ***vanpools*** can be an important form of employment transportation where densities are not high enough to justify commuter bus service.

Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)
A standard areawide measure of travel activity. The most conventional ***VMT*** calculation is to multiply average trip length by the total number of trips.

Volunteer Network
A volunteer network matches requests for transportation with a volunteer driver who is typically reimbursed on a per-mile basis for providing the trip. Persons requesting service call the network; the network calls the driver and schedules the trip. Volunteer networks are frequently used in rural areas where resources are scarce, persons needing transportation may live in remote areas, and a sense of community is not uncommon.

Workforce Development Boards
Formerly known as Private Industry Councils (PICs), ***Workforce Development Boards*** are concerned with training and developing workers to meet the needs of local businesses. ***Workforce Development Boards*** are responsible for most local job training programs and related welfare-to-work efforts.

Zone
A defined geographic area. ***Zones*** are used in ***demand-responsive service*** for dispatching purposes and in ***fixed route*** and ***demand-responsive service*** for fare determination. In zonal ***demand-responsive service***, each vehicle travels only within a particular zone. Trips that originate in one ***zone*** and end in another involve a transfer at the ***zone*** boundary or a ***central transfer point***. In a zonal fare structure, the service area is divided into zones, and the fare is determined according to the number of zones traveled (the higher the number of zones, the higher the fare). This is a method of charging a distance-based fare. ***Zones*** can assume a number of different forms depending on the route design, including concentric circles, key stops along a route, a grid system, or a hybrid of these.

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Transportation: Environmental justice and social equity: Conference proceedings. (1995). Prepared by the Surface Transportation Policy Project and the Center for Neighborhood Technology for the Federal Transit Administration. http://www.fta.dot.gov/fta/library/policy/envir-just.

CONTACT LIST FOR CASE STUDY SYSTEMS

Altran—Alger County Transit Authority
Rochelle Cotey, Executive Director
P.O. Box 69
Munising, Michigan 49682
Phone: (906) 387-4845
Fax: (906) 387-2963
Email: altranco@jamadots.com

Arrowhead Transit
Jack Larson, Director
702 3rd Avenue South
Virginia, Minnesota 55792
Phone: (800) 862-0175
Fax: (218) 741-5715
Email: jlarson@aeoa.org

Bay METRO Transit
Mike Stoner, General Manager
1510 North Johnson Street
Bay City, Michigan 48708
Phone: (989) 894-2900, Ext. 212
Fax: (989) 894-2621
Email: mstoner@baymetro.com
Web site: http://www.baymetro.com/

Blackfeet Transit
Irene Goss, Blackfeet Transit Supervisor
P.O. Box 866
Browning, Montana 59417
Phone: (406) 338-5604
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Web site: blftran@3rivers.net

Butte County Association of Governments
(Chico, California)
Jon Clark, Executive Director
Phone: (530) 879-2468

Kern Regional Transit, (Bakersfield, California)
Linda Wilbanks, Transportation Planner
Phone: (661) 862-8894

Merced County Transit (The Bus), (Merced, California)
Larry Shankland, Transit Operations Manager
Phone: (209) 385-7601

Community Connection of Northeast Oregon
(Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties, Oregon)
Margaret Davidson, Executive Director
Phone: (541) 963-3186
Web site: mdavidso@orednet.org

Council on Aging and Human Services (COA&HS) "COAST"
(Eastern Washington & Western Idaho)
Karl Johanson, Executive Director
Phone: (509) 334-5510

Far North Transit—Roseau County Transit
Sandy Otto, Manager
114 Center Street
Roseau, Minnesota
Phone: (218) 463-3238
Fax: (218) 463-0001
Email: rccoa@wiktel.com

Fresno County Rural Area Consolidated Transportation Services Agency
Jeff Webster, General Manager
Phone: (559) 233-6789
M.A.S.C.O.T.—Mat-Su Community Transit
(Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska)
Karen Walton, Program Director
Phone: (907) 373-5999
Web site: http://matsutransit.com/

Greene County Coordinated Agency Transportation System (Greene CATS)
Richard Schultze, Executive Director
Mental Retardation Developmentally Disabled Board (MRDD)
601 Ledbetter Rd. Suite A
Xenia, Ohio
Phone (937) 562-6522
Fax: (937) 562-6111
Email: Rschultze@c.greene.oh.us

Holmes County Transportation Coordination
Craig Walkerow, Director
10 South Clay Street, Suite 210
Millersburg, Ohio 44654
Phone: (330) 674-2000
Fax: (330) 674-2230
Email: transportation@valkyrie.net
Web site: http://www.holmescounty.com/gov/transportation_coordination.htm

Hubbard County Hartland Express-Hubbard County
Contact: Linda Bair, Coordinator
301 Court Street
Park Rapids, Minnesota 56470
Phone: (218) 732-2421
Fax: (218) 732-9328
Email: lbair@hubbard.mn.us

Huron County Transit Board
William Djubek, Executive Director
130 Shady Lane, Building B
Norwalk, Ohio 44857
Phone (419) 663-3340
Toll Free: (877) 241-RIDE [7433]
Fax: (419) 663-2939
Email: wdjubek@aol.com

Klamath Trinity Non-Emergency Transportation
Jeannie Tussey, Executive Director
P.O. Box 1147
Willow Creek, California 95573
Phone: (530) 629.1192
Fax: (530) 629.1193

Malheur Council on Aging and Community Services
(Malheur County, Oregon)
Sherri Massongill, Executive Director
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Mason County Transportation Authority
(Mason County, Washington)
Dave O'Connell, General Manager
Phone: (360) 426-9434 x102

Mid-Columbia Council of Governments Transportation Network
(Wasco County, Oregon)
Gail Sackmaster, Executive Director
Phone: (541) 298-5345

Navajo Transit System
Sam Chavez, Arizona DOT
Phone: (602) 712-8956
Email: schavez@dot.state.az.us
Project Action Accessible Traveler's Database
Web site: http://www.projectaction.org.
Navajo Transit System
Web site: http://www.dot.state.az.us
Navajoland
Web site: http://www.navajoland.com

Ottawa County Transportation Agency
Rosan Allen, Transportation Director
1702 W. Lakeshore Dr.
Port Clinton, Ohio 43452
Phone: (419) 732-7433
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Ride Connection
Washington, Multnomah, and Clackamas Counties, Oregon
Elaine Wells, Executive Director
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Phone: (503) 413-8924
Web site: www.rideconnection.org

Ride Solution Public Transit
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101 N.E. 6th St.
Washington, Indiana 47501
Phone: (812) 257-1101
Toll Free: (877) 369-8899
Fax: (812) 257-0119
Email: info@ridesolution.org
Web site: http://www.ridesolution.org

RIDES Mass Transit District
Betty Green, Chief Executive Director
P.O. Box 190
Rosiclare, Illinois 62982
Phone: (618) 285-3342
Fax: (618) 285-3340
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Web site: http://www.ridesmtd.com/pages/index.html

R.Y.D.E.
Jeff Rumery, Transportation Director
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South Central Transit
Tom Ashby, Managing Director
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Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project (TRIP)
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Union County Agency Transportation Service
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Web site: http://www.co.union.oh.us/temp/Human_Services/Transportation/transportation.html

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Appendix A

The purpose of this interview guide is to afford key stakeholders an opportunity to participate in discussion of coordinated issues early in the process. Stakeholders include transportation and nontransportation organizations; public, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations; interest groups and advocates; and business and other community leaders.

The objective is to gain the early insight of these people to help identify opportunities, issues, and problems associated with moving forward to coordinate transportation services.

Feel free to make changes to this instrument to account for conditions that are specific to your own area.

Person Interviewed_____
Date_____
Interviewer_____

Key Stakeholder Personal Interview Guide

Transportation Services and Coordination in (YOUR) County

Thank you for agreeing to our interview today. The (YOUR) County Commissioners and agencies in the county are cooperating in efforts to improve and coordinate transportation services in (YOUR) County. We are talking to key opinion leaders in (YOUR) County about the state of transportation services that are available to help people meet their mobility needs. We also want to talk about the role that coordination may play in improving transportation services.

Please be as open, honest, and frank as you would like to be. *Your answers will be held in strict confidence.* While statements that you make may be reported, you will not be identified as the source.

1. **To begin, please tell me a little about your agency (or community). What is your mission? What types of services do you provide? Who do you provide your services to?**

2. **In what ways are transportation services important to your agency (or community) mission? And the services that you offer? And the people you serve?**

3. **Are there public transportation services in (YOUR) county?**

   3A. (IF YES) **What are your perceptions of (YOUR) Transit Authority's public transportation services in helping (YOUR) County residents meet their travel needs? What are the strengths? What are the weaknesses?**

4. **What are your perceptions of other agency and private transportation services that are available in (YOUR) County? What are the strengths? What are the weaknesses?**

Now let's talk specifically about the coordination of transportation services.

5. **How do you believe that coordination can help in maintaining and improving transportation services in (YOUR) County in the future? What opportunities does it present? What threats does it present? How can the threats be overcome?**

6. **Which agencies or individuals do you believe should be involved in transportation coordination? And how should they be involved?**

7. **In what ways do you believe your agency (or community) can be involved in efforts to coordinate transportation services?**

8. **What kinds of funding or other resources can your agency (or community) bring to coordinated transportation services?**

9. **How should leadership responsibility for transportation coordination be organized? Is there a logical organization or agency that should have this leadership responsibility?**

10. **To wrap up, are there any final observations or insights that you would like to offer for improving transportation services in (YOUR) County?**

SURVEY OF COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Appendix B

The purpose of this survey is to develop basic information on transportation services in the county and, importantly, to measure interest in coordinating transportation services. The survey is broadly focused and includes organizations that provide transportation services and those that do not. It is important to realize that agencies not presently providing transportation services may have unmet needs and, therefore, may have an interest in participating in the coordination of transportation services. Detailed information on transportation operating and capital budgets and facility and equipment inventories, all necessary as a coordination plan is being implemented, is not gathered in this survey but should be gathered elsewhere (for example, see Appendix C).

SURVEY OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND INTEREST IN COORDINATION
Agencies, Communities, Private Companies in (Your) County
Month and Year

The purpose of this *Survey of Transportation Services and Interest in Transportation Coordination* is to develop baseline information about transportation services available in (YOUR) County. This survey is being conducted as part of the (YOUR) County Transportation Coordination Project. It is a key element in our planning for broader coordination efforts next year. Your cooperation and assistance is appreciated. *If you have questions about the survey, please call (Person, at xxx-xxx-xxxx).*

Please complete and return your survey by (Date, or as soon thereafter as possible, to:

Person
(YOUR) County Transportation Steering Committee
Address

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. _____
   Agency, Community, or Company Name
2. _____
   Street Address
3. _____
   City, State, Zip Code
4. _____
   Telephone # Fax #
5. _____
   Name of Agency Director Telephone # if different

6. Please describe your services or enclose a brochure about the services you provide?

_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Which of the following best describes your situation with regard to transportation services? (Please check one).

   ____ We offer transportation services.
   ____ We would like to offer transportation services in the future in some way.
   ____ We would like to offer transportation services in the future in some way.

[If you offer no transportation services now, please skip to Question #19.]

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

Questions 8 through 18 deal with transportation service you provide or purchase from someone else.
[If you do not offer transportation service of any kind, please skip to Question #19.]

8. Do you provide transportation service in any of the following ways (check all that apply)?

____ We operate our own vehicles.
____ We contract with someone else who provides transportation service for us.
____ We purchase and provide public transit tickets and passes so our clients can ride public transit buses.
____ Some of our clients reach our services using public transit regular bus service.
____ Some of our clients reach our services using public transit paratransit transportation service.
____ Some of our clients reach our services using other transportation services.
____ We provide no transportation services to our clients.
____ Other (please explain) _____

9. Which of the following describes the type of transportation service you offer (check all that apply):

____ Service that operates door to door and requires a schedule for each day of service
____ Service that operates door to door on a route that is revised periodically as required
____ Service that operates on a route and requires people to meet a vehicle at a fixed location for pickup

10. Please check each of the days of the week that you provide transportation services. On the right, indicate the hours during which service is available to your clients:

Day of the week:	Hours of service availability each day:
____ Monday	_____
____ Tuesday	_____
____ Wednesday	_____
____ Thursday	_____
____ Friday	_____
____ Saturday	_____
____ Sunday	_____
____ Holidays	_____

11. What are the eligibility requirements for people who use your transportation service?

_____
_____

12. What is the geographic area (counties, communities, etc.) that your transportation serves?

_____
_____
_____

13. Do you limit the kinds of trips for which people can use your transportation service?

____ No
____ Yes (Please explain) _____

14. Please describe any special needs that passengers on your transportation service may have.

_____
_____
_____

15. How do you provide vehicles, drivers, and maintenance? (Please check all that apply)

____ We own our own vehicles.
____ We lease our vehicles.

____ We have paid drivers.
____ We have volunteer drivers.

____ We perform our own vehicle maintenance.
____ We contract out for maintenance service.

16. How many vehicles do you have available for your transportation service? _____

How many of these vehicles do you operate in transportation service on an average day? _____

How many of your vehicles are of the following passenger capacities?

____ # of vehicles that are 9 or fewer passengers ____ # that are wheelchair lift-equipped
____ # of vehicles that are 10 to 14 passengers ____ # that are wheelchair lift-equipped
____ # of vehicles that are 5 to 24 passengers ____ # that are wheelchair lift-equipped
____ # of vehicles that are 25 or more passengers ____ # that are wheelchair lift-equipped

How many of your vehicles need to be replaced:

____ Now
____ Within the next year
____ Within the next two years

17. On an average day of transportation service,

How many miles do your vehicles in total operate? _____
How many hours are your vehicles in total in service? _____
How many passengers in total do you transport? _____

18. For your most recent operating year (or 12-month period),

		(Please Circle)
What were your total transportation expenditures?	$_____	Estimate or actual
How many total miles did your vehicles operate?	_____	Estimate or actual
How many total passengers did you transport?	_____	Estimate or actual

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND INTEREST IN COORDINATION

19. Please describe transportation needs, specific to your agency or community, that you feel are not being adequately met. Please be as specific as you can. (Please include any special needs or requirements your clients or passengers may have.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

20. Please describe other transportation needs in (your) County that you feel need to be addressed?

_____
_____
_____
_____

21. Please indicate below areas of your *potential interest* in becoming involved in improving transportation services through better coordination of the services and resources that are available today and can be available in the future (Please check all that may apply):

____ Joining a network of agencies that coordinates transportation services to better meet travel needs
____ Pooling of financial resources you budget for transportation services to better coordinate services
____ Joint use, pooling, or sharing of vehicles among agencies
____ Purchasing of vehicles cooperatively
____ Centralized fueling of vehicles
____ Centralized maintenance services for vehicles
____ Centralized scheduling of your passenger trips with other agency trip scheduling
____ Centralized operation of vehicles for your passenger trips and other agency trips
____ Contracting to purchase transportation service rather than continuing to operate it
____ Contracting to provide transportation service to other agencies needing service

22. Please provide us with other thoughts you have on how you may participate in efforts to improve transportation services in (your) County through coordination of services.

_____
_____
_____
_____

SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SURVEY FORMS

Appendix C

The first survey form was used for a national survey of transportation systems to gather information on paratransit services. It is presented here because it describes areas of inquiry that may be relevant in a local area that is working on coordinating transportation services.

The second survey form goes into transportation services and resources in much greater detail. It should be used with transportation providers who will probably form the nucleus of coordinated transportation operations.

Paratransit Service Coordination Survey
(Your) County Transportation Coordination Steering Committee
Month-Year

We are conducting this survey to help determine the types of roles that transportation coordination can take in improving transportation services in our county. Our objective is to develop a plan for coordinating transportation services in our county. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Please return the completed survey by (Date) to the following address:

Agency name	**If you have any questions, please call:**
Address	**Person's name and position**
Address	**(xxx) xxx-xxxx**

Your system's name: _____
Address: _____
_____
Contact person: _____
Telephone number: _____

1. What types of transportation services does your system provide? (Check all that apply):

   ___ Fixed route
   ___ Rail
   ___ Paratransit service route
   ___ Route or point deviation
   ___ Other (please explain) _____

2. What were the operating expenses for your last operating year for...

   a) all transportation services $_____
   b) paratransit services $_____
   c) dates of operating year _____(month/year to month/year)

3. How many vehicles are in your fleet for use in . . .

   a) fixed route service? _____
   b) demand response service? _____

4. How many wheelchair accessible vehicles are in your fleet for use in...

   a) fixed route service? _____
   b) demand response service? _____

5. In what month and year did your system begin providing paratransit service?

   Month_____ Year_____

6. Which of the following groups are eligible to ride your paratransit service? (check all that apply):

   ___ Certified people with disabilities
   ___ Other people with disabilities
   ___ Older adults
   ___ General public

7. In which of the following areas of service are you currently in compliance with ADA paratransit requirements? (Check all that apply):

   ___ Service area Hours and days of service
   ___ Response time Capacity restraints
   ___ Fares Subscription trips
   ___ Trip purposes

8(a). If you are not in full compliance, have you asked for a waiver because of undue financial burden?

   ___ Yes ___ No

8(b). If yes, what is the status of your request? _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

9. Who certifies your riders for ADA paratransit service eligibility? (Check all that apply):

   ___ Transit staff Social service professionals
   ___ Physicians Self-certification
   ___ Other _____
   (Please enclose a copy of your registration form.)

10(a). Do you directly operate your paratransit service, provide it through purchased transportation contracts, or both?

   ___ Directly operate ___ Purchase ___ Both

10(b). If your agency purchases paratransit service, please list the agencies and the dollar value of these purchase of service contracts:

1)_____
2)_____
3)_____
4)_____
5)_____

11(a). Do other agencies purchase paratransit services from your agency?

___ Yes ___ No

11(b). If yes, please list the agencies and the dollar value of your service contracts:

1)_____
2)_____
3)_____
4)_____
5)_____

12. Does your transportation system have collective bargaining agreements with...

a) Vehicle operators? ___ Yes ___ No
b) Mechanics? ___ Yes ___ No
c) Other personnel? ___ Yes ___ No

13(a). Is your agency currently participating in activities to coordinate transportation services in your area?

___ Yes (go to question #14) ___ No

13(b). If no, have you participated in efforts in the past to coordinate transportation services?

___ Yes ___ No (skip to question #18)

13(c). If yes, what were the results of these past efforts? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

(skip to question #18)

13. With which of the following does your transportation system coordinate? (check all that apply):

___ Other complementary paratransit service providers
___ Human service agencies
___ Local transportation providers
___ Other _____

14. For which of the following reasons has your transportation system coordinated? (check all that apply):

___ Meet ADA paratransit service requirements
___ Improve transportation services to people with disabilities, and others
___ Improve cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency of services
___ Improve use of available resources
___ Reduce costs for participating agencies
___ Increase availability of services
___ Gain access to additional local, state and federal funding sources
___ Other _____

15. Which of the following resources do you share with other local agencies and/or organizations? (check all that apply):

___ Personnel Servicing and fueling of vehicles
___ Maintenance services
___ Scheduling of riders
___ Vehicle storage
___ Scheduling of vehicles
___ Vehicle leasing
___ Vehicle sharing
___ Other _____

17(a). Have transportation services in your local area been consolidated, that is, have transportation resources been merged into a single, centrally-operated system?

___ Yes ___ No

17(b). If yes, how would you describe your consolidated system?

___ Single provider system
___ Brokerage system
___ Other_____

18(a). Has one agency been identified as the lead agency in coordination?

___ Yes ___ No

18(b). If yes, and the lead agency is not your agency, please provide the following information:

System's name: _____
Address: _____
_____

Contact person: _____
Telephone number: _____

19. What are the major barriers to service coordination that your system has encountered?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

20. How have you been able to overcome those barriers?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

21. Is travel training offered for people with disabilities in your community by your system, others or both?

___ Our system
___ Others
___ Both
___ No travel training is offered

22(a). Is sensitivity training offered for transit system personnel in your community by your system, other providers or both?

___ Our system
___ Others
___ Both
___ No sensitivity training is offered

22(b) If sensitivity training is offered in your community, who receives it? (Check all that apply):

___ Transit personnel
___ Personnel of other agencies
___ Other _____

(If travel training is not offered in your community, skip to question #26)

23(a). Does the travel training program in your community target any disability or age group?
___ Yes ___ No

23(b). If yes, please explain _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

24. On which specific skills does the travel training program focus? (Check all that apply):

___ Pedestrian Vehicle
___ Social Navigation
___ Community resources
___ Personal identification
___ Telephone
___ Other _____

25. What materials are used in the travel training program? (Check all that apply):

___ Handbooks
___ Brochures
___ Video tapes
___ Audio tapes
___ Other _____
___ None

26. What additional concerns does your agency have about ADA compliance, service coordination, travel and sensitivity training?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for completing this survey!

[_____] COUNTY COORDINATION STUDY
AGENCY TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

Agency Name _____
Abbreviation or Acronym _____ Date Survey Completed _____
Contact Person _____ Title _____
Mailing Address _____ Telephone (_____)_____
_____ Fax Machine (_____)_____
Street Address (if different) _____

A. AGENCY INFORMATION

This section requests information about your organization and the type of services provided to your clients.

1. Which of the following best describes your agency?

   ____ Private, non-profit ____ Private, for-profit ____ Public ____ Other:_____

2. Which services does your agency provide? (please check all that apply)

____ Adult Day Care	____ Job Placement	____ Senior Center
____ Child Day Care	____ Medicaid	____ Sheltered Employment
____ Chore Services	____ Medical/Dental	____ Supported Employment
____ Congregate Nutrition	____ Mental Health	____ Transportation
____ Counseling	____ Recreational/Social	____ Volunteer Opportunities
____ Education/Training	____ Rehabilitation	____ Welfare/Food Stamps
____ Head Start	____ Religious	____ Other: _____
____ Home-Delivered Meals	____ Residential Care	_____

   Please attach a brochure or description of services you provide to your clients.

3. Does your agency have eligibility requirements for clients? ____ yes ____ no

   If YES, please check all that apply: ____ Age—please specify: _____
   ____ Disability—please specify: _____
   ____ Income—please specify: _____
   ____ Other—please specify: _____

4. What geographic area do you serve? the entire county of: _____
   the entire city of: _____
   ____ other—please specify: _____

5. How many clients (unduplicated) does your agency serve in a year? _____

6. What are your agency program hours? _____ to _____. Days per week: _____
   Do you provide services year round? ____ yes ____ no If NO, what months? _____

7. Do you provide services to clients at more than one location? ____ yes ____ no If YES, please list the towns (other than your mailing address) in which your other sites are located: _____

_____

B. OVERVIEW OF CLIENT TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND AVAILABLE SERVICES

This section examines the variety of ways clients access your agency's programs and the adequacy of available services.

8. How do clients get to your center/site? (please check all that apply)

____ Drive themselves
____ Ride with family or friends
____ Agency operates vehicles
____ Volunteers bring them
____ Staff bring them
____ Taxi
____ Car pool with other clients
____ Public transportation system
____ Consolidated agency transportation system
____ They live in a group home and are transported on the group home's vehicle
____ Another agency transports them—please specify:_____
____ Other—please specify: _____

9. How many of your clients are unable to drive themselves or do not have a car available and thus are dependent upon some sort of transportation assistance? _____

   Is the transportation needed generally available to these clients to the extent that they can have full access to the services your agency provides? ____ yes ____ no

10. How many of your clients must use a wheelchair and need a specially equipped vehicle (such as a lift-equipped van with wheelchair tie-downs)? _____

    Are you able to meet the agency-related transportation needs of your wheelchair-using clients?

    ____ yes ____ no If NO, please indicate to what extent their needs are met.
    _____
    _____
    _____

11. How many of your clients need some other specialized transportation assistance or equipment (such as an escort or infant car seats)? _____ Please describe these needs in detail.
    _____
    _____
    _____

12. To what activities do you provide, purchase, or reimburse for client transportation? (please check all that apply)

____ Adult Day Care
____ Child Day Care
____ Congregate Nutrition
____ Counseling
____ Education/Training
____ Head Start
____ Job Placement
____ Medical/Dental
____ Mental Health
____ Recreational/Social
____ Rehabilitation
____ Religious
____ Senior Center
____ Sheltered Employment
____ Social Services
____ Supported Employment
____ Volunteer Opportunities
____ Other: _____

If your agency provides, purchases, or reimburses for client transportation, please continue on the next page. If you provide no transportation services or assistance, please turn to page 9, Future Transportation Options.

C. AGENCY-OPERATED TRANSPORTATION

If your agency operates its own vehicles to transport clients, please complete this section. If you do not operate vehicles to transport clients, please skip to Section D (page 5).

13. What types of transportation services do you provide? (Please check all that apply)

____ Demand-responsive service: origins, destinations, and schedules vary according to service request; no specific routes or schedules.

____ Subscription service: routes and schedules are tailored to regular riders and are adjusted as riders leave or new riders join the route.

____ Route or Point Deviation service: schedule of major stops is fixed; route varies according to specific requests for service.

____ Fixed route transit: routes, stops, and schedules do not vary; traditional bus service.

____ "Charter"-type service: group transportation for special events.

____ Other — please describe: _____
_____
_____

14. With whom do clients schedule demand-responsive or subscription transportation services?

____ Dispatcher/Scheduler ____ Driver ____ Caseworker ____ Manager
____ Secretary/Receptionist ____ Other —please specify: _____

15. How far in advance must clients request demand-responsive service? _____

16. How does the dispatcher/manager contact drivers?

____ Trip sheets/written directions ____ Pager and call in
____ Mobile radio ____ Car phone
____ Other — please specify: _____

17. Who operates the vehicles? (please check all that apply)

____ Full-time drivers—how many? _____
____ Part-time drivers—how many? _____
____ Volunteer—how many? _____
____ Full-time staff with other primary job functions—how many? _____
What is their primary job function? _____

18. Do your drivers receive any sort of formalized driver training program? ____ yes ____ no
If YES, please describe (include course name, who provides training, length of training, certification, etc): _____
_____
_____

19. Please list all vehicles you now operate. For each, specify vehicle ID number, current mileage, miles driven during the last 12 months, and your assessment of the vehicle's current condition.

20. Please indicate how each of these vehicles is used. Include information on route origins and destinations, trip purpose, one-way trip lengths, usual numbers of riders per day, and hours per day operated.

21. Where are your agency's vehicles maintained?

    ____ at a private garage, repair shop, or dealership
    ____ by a governmental agency—please specify: _____
    ____ in-house—please describe: _____

22. If you provide demand-responsive service, what are the geographic limits of this service?
    _____
    _____

    What are the hours of availability of this service? _____ to _____. Days per week: _____

23. How many **one way** passenger trips did your agency provide during the past fiscal year?
    _____ Is this an estimate? _____ yes _____ no

    Note: a one way passenger trip means each time a person boards and then alights from a vehicle is counted as one trip. Return trips are counted as a second trip.

24. How many vehicle miles of service did your agency provide during the past fiscal year? _____
    Is this an estimate? _____ yes _____ no

25. How many vehicle hours of service did your agency provide during the past fiscal year? _____
    Is this an estimate? _____ yes _____ no

26. Does your agency charge fares or request contributions for transportation? ____ yes ____ no
    If YES, which?
    ____ fare—please specify the amount: _____
    ____ contributions—what is the suggested contribution? _____

27. Do you place restrictions on who is eligible to use your transportation services? ___ yes ___ no

    If YES, please explain: _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

28. Do you currently transport clients of any other agencies or organizations? ____ yes ____ no
If YES, please provide the number of one-way passenger trips provided in the past fiscal year, the billing rate and basis, and the total charge for the past fiscal year for each agency or organization.

Organization Name, Contact Person, Telephone Number	One-Way Passenger Trips	Unit Charge ($ per mile, $ per pass.)	Total Charge for the Past Fiscal Year
example: Sheltered Workshop	*250*	*$1.15 per trip*	*$287.50*

D. REIMBURSEMENT OF STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

29. Does your agency reimburse staff or volunteers to transport clients using personal vehicles? ____ Staff ____ Volunteers ____ Neither—please go to Section E

30. What is your reimbursement rate? $_____ per mile

31. How many miles of client transportation did you reimburse during the past fiscal year? _____

32. What was the total amount spent on staff/volunteer reimbursement for client transportation during the past fiscal year? $_____

33. On the average, how many staff hours per week are spent transporting clients in personal vehicles? _____

34. How many one-way passenger trips were provided in this manner during the past fiscal year? (please estimate if necessary) _____

E. REIMBURSEMENT OF CLIENTS

35. Does your agency reimburse clients for providing their own transportation? ____ yes ____ no
If NO, please go to Section F.

36. What is your client reimbursement rate? $_____ per mile

37. How many miles of self-provided transportation did you reimburse in the last fiscal year? _____

38. What was the total amount spent on client reimbursement during the past fiscal year? $_____

F. PURCHASE OF SERVICE FROM ANOTHER ORGANIZATION

39. Does your agency purchase client transportation from another organization? ____ yes ____ no
If YES, please complete the table below. If NO, please go to Section G.

Name of Organization from which Service is Purchased	Type of Organization (taxi, transit authority, agency, etc.)	Contact Person & Phone Number	Description of Service Purchased	Unit Cost (per mile, hour, or trip?)	Total Cost During Past Fiscal Year	Total One-Way Trips During past F.Y.
Joe's Cab	*taxi*	*Joe Smith (704)888-3333*	*demand-responsive*	*$1.00/mile*	*$5,350*	*800*

40. What was the total amount spent on purchase of transportation services from other operators during the past fiscal year? $_____

G. COSTS TO PROVIDE CLIENT TRANSPORTATION

This section identifies the costs involved in transporting clients or reimbursing for their transportation.

41. What is your fiscal year? _____ to _____ For which year is the data on this survey reported? ____ 94–95 ____ 95–96 (budget) ____ Other—please specify:_____

42. What were your agency's administrative outlays and expenditures during the past fiscal year for transporting clients? Please apportion salaries and other expenses attributable to transportation. For example, if your bookkeeper spends one day per week on transportation tasks, list 20 percent of his/her salary and fringe.

Administrative and Indirect Expenses	Dollar Cost
1. Director's salary	$ _____
2. Director's fringe benefits	$ _____
3. Secretarial salary	$ _____
4. Secretarial fringe	$ _____
5. Bookkeeper's salary	$ _____
6. Bookkeeper's fringe	$ _____
7. Office supplies, materials, rent, telephone, and utilities	$ _____
8. Administrative travel	$ _____
9. Non-vehicle casualty and liability costs	$ _____
10. Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
Administrative Expenses Total	$ _____

43. What were your operating expenditures for transporting clients in the past fiscal year? If full-time staff function as drivers part time, please apportion their salaries accordingly and list under drivers' salaries.

Operating Expenses	Dollar Cost
1. Drivers' salaries	$ _____
2. Drivers' fringe benefits	$ _____
3. Dispatchers' salaries	$ _____
4. Dispatchers' fringe	$ _____
5. Fuel and oil	$ _____
6. Maintenance and repairs	$ _____
7. Tires, parts, materials and supplies	$ _____
8. Titles, fees, and licenses	$ _____
9. Taxes	$ _____
10. Vehicle and equipment leases and rentals	$ _____
11. Vehicle insurance	$ _____
12. Staff and volunteer mileage reimbursements (same as question 32)	$ _____
13. Client reimbursement (same as question 38)	$ _____
14. Purchased transportation (same as question 40)	$ _____
15. Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
Operating Expenses Total	$ _____

44. What was the total of your administrative (question 42) and operating (question 43) expenses for the past fiscal year? $ _____

45. What are the funding sources for the expenses identified in 42 and 43? Please identify the major sources of funds for your agency's transportation services and the amount contributed by each in the past fiscal year. If transportation is funded out of various agency programs, please list those programs and estimate the approximate amount attributable to client transportation in each.

	Assistance Program	Amount of Funding Used for Client Transportation (excluding capital purchases)
Federal/State:	Adult Developmental Activities Program	$ _____
	Community Services Block Grant	$ _____
	Day Care	$ _____
	Head Start	$ _____
	Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)	$ _____
	Mental Health/Mental Retardation	$ _____
	Section 5310	$ _____
	Section 5311	$ _____
	TANF	$ _____
	Title III B	$ _____
	Title XIX (Medicaid)	$ _____
	Title XX (Social Services Block Grant)	$ _____
	Vocational Rehabilitation	$ _____
	Smart Start	$ _____
	JOBS	$ _____
	Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
	Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
	Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
Total Federal/State Funds		$ _____
Local:	City/Town—please specify:_____	$ _____
	County	$ _____
	Another County—please specify	$ _____
	Client Fees	$ _____
	Contracted Service—please specify each major contract:	
	_____	$ _____
	_____	$ _____
	_____	$ _____
	_____	$ _____
	_____	$ _____
	Donations/Contributions	$ _____
	Fares	$ _____
	United Way	$ _____
	Workshop Revenue	$ _____
	Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
	Other—please specify:_____	$ _____
Total Local Funds		$ _____

46. Total Funding for Client Transportation (should be equal to or greater than the amount in question 44): $ _____

H. FUTURE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

47. Are you having any problems with your current method of getting clients to your site or service?
____ yes ____ no If YES, please explain: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

48. Do you feel that additional transportation services, beyond those now available, are needed in order for your clients to have full access to the services your agency provides? ___ yes ___ no
If YES, please describe: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

49. Do you have a waiting list for clients because these individuals have no way to get to your services? ____ yes ____ no If YES, how many? _____

50. Are there geographic areas, in or out of the County, in which you would like to see more client transportation services operated? ____ yes ____ no If YES, which areas/communities?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

51. Are there activities or destinations which need more transportation services? ____ yes ____ no
If YES, what are they and where are they located? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

52. What plans do you have during the next five years to expand (or reduce) agency programs or services? What impacts will these changes have on your client transportation needs?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

53. Is there duplication of transportation services in your service area? ____ yes ____ no
If YES, please describe the agencies involved, and the areas and times when duplication exists.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

54. Would you like to see more coordination of client transportation among the various agencies in the County?____ yes ____ no If YES, please indicate the agencies which you would like to see involved:_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

55. What is the most important thing that could be done to improve transportation services for your clients? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

56. What, if any, are the major obstacles or concerns you think should be addressed in attempting to improve client transportation services? _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

57. If you are receiving funds from either Smart Start or JOBS, please indicate how the funds are being utilized below. _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

58. Please add any comments you may have in the space below

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you very much for your time and thoughtfulness. We greatly appreciate your assistance. The input you provided is very important. Please return the survey to [….]

If you need assistance in completing this survey, please contact [name and phone no.].

IDENTIFYING BEST PRACTICE SYSTEMS

Appendix D

This survey has been used to gather information on best practice transportation services. It is provided here as a sample for local areas that may want to gather information on transportation systems in other areas of the country to help with development of coordinated services.

Feel free to make changes to this instrument to account for conditions that are specific to your own area.

Transportation Systems That Exemplify Best Practices In Coordination

System's Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____

1) Please describe key features of this transportation system's coordination practices.

2) Please list the key agencies that are coordinating. Is there a lead agency? (IF YES: Which agency is the lead agency?

3) What is the development character of the system's service area: urban, suburban, rural, or some combination?

4) What is the total size of the coordinated transportation system?

   Annual operating expenses: _____

   Annual Passengers: _____

   Annual miles of service: _____

   Total vehicle fleet: _____

   Operating period reported: _____

5) Please discuss the importance of collaboration and consensus building in developing coordinated transportation services.

6) Please share with us other key factors or circumstances that have made coordination successful.

7) Please share with us other key factors or circumstances which have made coordination difficult.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE

COORDINATION WORKSHOP FACILITATION GUIDES

Appendix E

This appendix presents three workshop facilitation guides. Together, these guides provide a workshop format for key stakeholders in a local area to gather together and identify issues and opportunities associated with coordination and determine to what extent consensus exists for moving forward with coordination planning and how the coordination planning should be focused.

Three guides are presented:

1. **1st Workshop—**Transportation Coordination Brainstorming Workshop
2. **2nd Workshop—**Strategic Direction
3. **3rd Workshop—**Specific Direction

The first workshop starts with designing an ideal transportation system. Focusing on the ideal enables members of the group to separate themselves from a focus that gets stuck on local problems. The local problems come up, but within a positive, forward-looking context. The outcome is a statement of an ideal transportation system that the local area should strive to reach.

The second workshop focuses on a strategic look at local transportation services, namely what is working and what is not working. The outcome is a vision of what participants would like to see.

The third workshop focuses on developing a mission, goals and objectives, and a plan for moving forward with development of coordinating transportation services. The details of developing a coordination plan would follow. Go to the following link for a Project Action-funded handbook based on this process: http://projectaction.easter-seals.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_doclibe_coordandoutreach.

Agenda
1ST WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION IN (YOUR) COUNTY:
BRAINSTORMING WORKSHOP

Date and Time

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Break into Small Groups (Count off by six)
(Optional Exercise) Thinking Creatively

DESIGN THE IDEAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Who are the customers?
What are their travel needs?
What is the structure of this system?
What kind of organization?
What resources do you need? Where do you get them?
What do you need to know?
How do you manage or operate the system?
Who should provide the leadership?
Who should set policy?

SMALL GROUPS RECONVENE AND SHARE IDEAS. ALL IDEAS ARE POSTED BY SUBJECT AREA.

VOTING—TOP PRIORITY (RED DOTS); 2ND PRIORITY (BLUE DOTS)

NAME [IDENTITY]: WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THIS SYSTEM?

TO WRAP UP, IF YOU COULD TELL (YOUR) COUNTY OFFICIALS ONLY ONE THING, WHAT WOULD THAT BE?

Agenda
2ND WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION IN (YOUR) COUNTY:
Date and Time

1. **Summary of Results from the 1st Workshop**

2. **Strategic Discussion of Transportation Services in (Your) County**

   - **Strengths**
   - **Weaknesses**
   - **Opportunities**
   - **Threats**

3. **Developing a Shared Vision of Success**

4. **What Comes Next?**

5. **Agenda**

3RD WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION IN (YOUR) COUNTY:

Date and Time

1. Where are we? Results of the first two workshops

2. Focus of this workshop—Starting to get specific

- **Mission**
- **Goals and Objectives**
- **Specific plans for action**

3. Where do we want to be by the end of [a specific year]?

4. What Comes Next?

DETAILED OPERATING COST CATEGORIES FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Appendix F

This appendix shows the kinds of details that coordinated transportation services should be reporting regarding their operating costs. Not all partners in a coordinated operation will be used to reporting costs at this level of detail, so some time should be invested in ensuring that all parties involved in operations understand and agree to this level of detail.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM BUDGET WORKSHEET: OPERATING EXPENSES

VEHICLE OPERATIONS	BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
Driver Salaries			
Dispatcher Salaries			
Fringe Benefits			
Fuel & Oil			
Tubes & Tires			
Vehicle Insurance			
Vehicle Lease			
Vehicle Depreciation			
Vehicle license, registration tax			
Vehicle storage facility rental			
Other_____			
Sub Total Vehicle Operations			
PURCHASED SERVICE			
MAINTENANCE			
Mechanic Salaries			
Fringe Benefits			
Maintenance service contract			
Materials & Supplies			
Maintenance facility Rental			
Equipment Rental			
Utilities			
Other_____			
Sub-total Maintenance			
ADMINISTRATION			
Administrator Salary			
Manager Salary			
Secretary Salary			
Bookkeeper Salary			
Other Staff (list) _____			
_____			
Fringe Benefits			
Materials & Supplies			
Telephone			
Office Rental			
Utilities			
Office Equipment Rental			
Other_____			
Sub-total Administration			
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES			

DEFINITIONS FOR EXPENDITURES

VEHICLE OPERATIONS

Driver salaries — Includes all wages paid to drivers for the operation of passenger vehicles or the value of time spent driving.

Dispatcher salaries — Includes all wages paid to individuals responsible for the dispatching of passenger vehicles or the value of time spent dispatching.

Fringe benefits — Includes the cost of fringe benefits for drivers and dispatchers.

Fuel and oil — Includes the cost of gasoline, diesel fuel, engine oil and other lubricants.

Tubes and tires — Includes material for the maintenance of tires and purchase or rental of tires.

Vehicle insurance — Includes the cost of vehicle and transportation related types of insurance including liability and property damage, workmen's compensation, fire and theft.

Vehicle lease — Includes the cost of leasing vehicles used to transport passengers.

Vehicle license — Includes the cost of licensing and/or registration tax on vehicles used to transport registration passengers.

Vehicle storage — Includes the cost of renting a facility to store facility rental passenger vehicles.

Other — Includes the cost of expenses not categorized above. These items must be specified.

PURCHASED SERVICE

— Includes the cost of any portion of service purchased from another operator.

MAINTENANCE

Mechanic salaries — Includes all wages paid to mechanics on staff or the value of their time spent on maintenance.

Fringe benefits — Includes the cost of fringe benefits for mechanics on staff.

Maintenance service — Includes the cost of outside contracts for maintenance of passenger vehicles.

Materials & supplies — Includes the cost of materials and supplies to maintain passenger vehicles and includes any materials and supplies not provided through a maintenance service contract.

Maintenance facility — Includes costs incurred by renting a facility in which vehicles are rental maintained by staff mechanics.

Equipment rental — Includes costs of renting maintenance equipment and includes any equipment rental costs not provided through a maintenance service contract.

Utilities — Includes all utility costs for maintenance facilities. If maintenance facilities are not metered separately, all utility costs should be included in the Administration utilities costs should be included in the Administration utilities costs.

Other — Includes other maintenance expenses not categorized above. These items must be specified.

ADMINISTRATION

Administrator salary — Includes all wages paid t the administrator of the agency for time allotted to the transportation programs or the value of their time spent on transportation-type administrative duties.

Manager salary — Includes all wages paid to the manager of the transportation program for time allotted to the transportation programs or the value of their time spent on transportation management duties.

Secretary salary — Includes all wages paid for secretarial/clerical support for the transportation programs or the value of their time spent on secretarial/clerical duties.

Bookkeeper salary — Includes all wages paid for bookkeeping support for the transportation programs or the value of time spent on bookkeeping duties.

Other staff — Includes all wages paid to other staff not categorized above supporting the transportation program or the value of their time. Other staff must be itemized.

Fringe benefits — Includes the cost of fringe benefits for the staff included in the salary categories listed above.

Materials & supplies — Includes all the cost of office materials and supplies.

Telephone — Includes all telephone rental, purchase and installation costs.

Office rental — Includes the cost of renting office space for the transportation program.

Utilities — Includes all utility costs for the administrative offices or for all facilities if they are not metered separately that are attributed to the space allocated to transportation.

Office equipment — Includes the cost of renting office equipment for the use of the rental transportation program or a proportionate amount.

Other — Includes other administrative costs not categorized above that contribute to the operation of your transportation program. All items must be specified.

EXAMPLES OF VARIOUS INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS TO ENHANCE COORDINATION

Appendix G

These agreements are examples of the kinds of agreement between transportation providers and coordinating agencies. The simpler agreements provide guidelines for working together; the more complex agreements outline details including the rates paid for trips provided by the agencies, responsibilities of the agencies for use of vehicles owned by the coordinated service, training and coordination activities, and standard clauses for insurance, auditing, and other activities.

The following kinds of agreements are shown here:

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING G-2

SAMPLE AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TRANSPORTATION OPERATOR AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS G-4

SAMPLE AGREEMENT FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BETWEEN THE TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND LOCAL BUS SERVICES, INC. G-6

OUTLINE OF MODEL JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT TO COORDINATE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE G-9

DETAILED VERSION OF MODEL JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT G-13

MODEL AGREEMENT FOR COORDINATING A JOINT TICKET PROGRAM G-24

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN [Party One] and [Party Two]

Background:

The [Party One], hereinafter referred to as [ ], and [Party Two], hereinafter referred to as [ ], have many common interest and currently work together in a number of areas, including the provision of transportation services to the citizens/customers in one of the five counties of the [Party One] service area of [state]. We share common interest and both have unique roles and responsibilities. Through this agreement both agencies express their intent to collaborate and coordinate through utilization of data collection, planning strategies, and program design techniques to ensure efficient use of transportation resources and coordinated access to services.

Purpose:

The purpose of this memorandum is to establish a basic framework for collaboration, cooperation and coordination between [Party One] and [Party Two] in the planning and implementation of a pilot Coordinated Transportation System, hereinafter referred to as CTS, Which will enable identification and selection of a system for coordination and delivery of transportation services.

Objectives:

1. To explore methods that will allow for data collection and analysis and develop procedures required for implementation of a coordinated transportation system.
2. To assist the members of the Coordination Consortium in determining the cost feasibility of coordination within their respective service community.
3. To provide mechanisms for the integration of services provided by other community providers to ensure a comprehensive coordinated service delivery system.
4. To maintain the integrity of each human service provider's mission while enhancing specialized support services contributing to that mission.

Methods:

1. To develop efficient routing alternatives, reduce duplication of routes and overlapping of service schedules, and generate necessary resources for successful implementation of the project.
2. To continue collaboration to maintain awareness of needs and revision to project.
3. To share information and resources to support the success of a coordinated service delivery system.
4. To establish a network of transportation providers to monitor and evaluate the success of a coordinated service delivery system.
5. To safeguard the quality of services expected by agency administrators and customers to ensure that needs of customers are kept at the forefront of the project.

6. To evaluate the effectiveness of the coordinated transportation project and report finding to Consortium members and the [state] Department of Transportation.

The undersigned agree to uphold the terms of this agreement for the period of time that the project is being administered. Once an acceptable and cost effective system is identified by consensus agreement among the active participants, each participating organization will be free, subject to the will of its policy board, to elect active participation in the project.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
[PARTY ONE]

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
[PARTY TWO]

SAMPLE AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TRANSPORTATION OPERATOR AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

This Agreement is entered into by and between the Transportation Operator (TO) and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), for the County Department of Human Services (CDHS). This Agreement is for the purpose of meeting the transportation needs of the CDHS's TANF participants and other persons receiving CDHS services through the County Transportation Coordination (CTC) program.

1. **Whereas**, the BCC created the County Transportation Coordination Coalition and the Transportation Coordination Steering Committee to improve transportation services in County through coordination of available transportation services, and
2. Whereas, the BCC has empowered the Transportation Coordination Steering Committee to set policy and oversee the implementation of coordinated transportation services, and
3. Whereas, the Transportation Coordination Steering Committee has adopted a Service Plan for Transportation Coordination, and
4. Whereas, the TO is the lead agency in County for the implementation of coordinated transportation services, and
5. Whereas, the CDHS wishes to meet its transportation needs through the CTC with TO as the lead agency for implementation of these transportation services, and

Responsibilities of the TO

The TO will have the following responsibilities:

a) Ensuring that only persons determined to be eligible by CDHS will receive transportation services paid for by CDHS.
b) Ensuring that transportation providers under contract to TO meet or exceed the service standards established by CDHS.
c) Scheduling all passenger trips in a coordinated manner with the transportation requirements of other participating agencies so that transportation services are shared operated in the most cost-effective and cost-efficient manner.
d) Reporting to CDHS the appropriate information, including but not limited to trips and TANF participants, which CDHS requires for its county, state, and federal reporting requirements.
e) Submitting to CDHS invoices for services provided supported by information CDHS requires to ensure that the services it purchases are for persons eligible under the CDHS/TA agreement.

Responsibilities of CDHS

The CDHS will have the following responsibilities:

a) Establishing the service standards that TO will be required to meet in providing transportation services to CDHS so that CDHS is able to meet its program requirements.

b) Establishing the eligibility of its clients for specific transportation services.
c) Working with TO to determine, on a trip by trip basis, if fixed route service can be used to meet a travel need.
d) Working with TO to see that eligible clients for whom SST service is the best option are registered for SST service.
e) Ensuring that CDHS clients know that they must contact TO to schedule SST service and should contact TA for information they may need to use fixed route service.
f) Providing information to TO on the transportation eligibility status of its clients.
g) Purchasing tickets or passes for CDHS client use of TA fixed route services.

INSERT STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Effective Date for the Start of Transportation Services
Cost of Transportation Services and Budget
Reporting Requirements
Invoicing and Payment
Term of the Agreement
Amendments to the Agreement
Termination of the Agreement

Entered into on this date _____ by and between:

SAMPLE AGREEMENT FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BETWEEN THE TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND LOCAL BUS SERVICES, INC.

THIS AGREEMENT, entered into this _____ day of _____, by and between the Transit Authority (hereafter, "TA"), acting as Lead Agency (hereafter, "LA") for the County Transportation Coordination (hereafter, "MCTC"), under authority granted by and through the County Commissioners (hereafter, "Commissioners"), and Local Bus Services, Inc. (hereafter, "LBS"), a private for-profit corporate entity in the business of providing transportation management and operation services engaged by TA to provide such services for eligible passengers, as determined by the LA acting as Service Provider.

WHEREAS, TA desires to provide transportation services for the County Department of Human Services; and
WHEREAS, TA and the Board of County Commissioners have entered into an agreement for provision of these transportation services by TA; and
WHEREAS, LBS has the management, technical, and operating personnel and equipment useful for operating such paratransit service within [ ] County, [STATE], as directed by and in cooperation with TA; and
WHEREAS, LBS hereby certifies that it has the requisite licenses and certifications of authority under the laws of the State of Ohio to legally operate paratransit service under TA sponsorship;

NOW, THEREFORE, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE COVENANTS AND AGREEMENTS SET FORTH HEREIN, IT IS AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

I. **System Operation.** LBS shall manage and operate transportation services for TA as required by TA herein, within the TA service area. LBS shall provide and conduct the service as specified in TA's Request for Qualifications and Letters of Interest and Request for Proposals (Attachment A hereto) and as described in LBS's Technical Proposal (Attachment B hereto). Further, LBS agrees to procure and manage service on behalf of TA as described in Attachment B.

II. **Compliance.** Funds received by TA and provided to LBS in performance of all services contracted for herein shall be utilized in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations and with all applicable County regulations, policies and procedures and attached appendices, included by reference herein. LBS shall comply with all requirements imposed upon TA by the Federal Government or the State of _____ if funding is received by TA under contract with the Federal government or the State of _____. Where this Agreement conflicts with said laws, regulations, policies and procedures, the latter shall govern. This Agreement is subject to modification by amendments to such applicable laws and regulations. In the event of any non-compliance, TA reserves the right to make use of any and all remedies specified under

this Agreement, and further reserves the right to require from LBS reasonable assurance that its decisions are being followed.

III. **Equipment.** LBS may be required to provide vehicles and equipment for the purpose of operating this paratransit service except as may be otherwise provided herein.

IV. **Duties and Responsibilities of LBS.** LBS shall provide the management, dispatching, technical, and operations services necessary for operating coordinated transportation services, including, but not limited to, the following:

A. Trip reservations, scheduling, and dispatching of paratransit and other services.
B. Operation and maintenance of vehicles.
C. Management and administration of services.
D. Integration with TA fixed route service.
E. Cooperation with TA in developing contracts with other transportation service providers.
F. Cooperation with TA in developing contracts with local agencies purchasing transportation services.
G. Monitoring, evaluation, and periodic reporting of financial, operating, and service performance against established performance criteria.
H. Reporting as required by TA and all agencies receiving transportation services that they need to meet all applicable Federal, State of Ohio, County and other local reporting requirements.
I. Provision and supervision of qualified personnel, including, but not limited to, drivers, dispatchers, schedulers and administrative staff.
J. Maintenance and repair of all LBS-owned and LBS-leased vehicles used in operating service provided through this Agreement.
K. Registration of persons eligible for receiving service.
L. Marketing, education, and community outreach in support of transportation services as directed by and in cooperation with TA.
M. Administrative services required to assure TA that ridership, costs, and fares associated with each passenger is documented, controlled and verifiable as supporting LBS reports to TA.
N. Ensuring that only persons determined to be eligible by TA and participating agencies receive transportation services hereunder for which such agencies are required to pay.
O. Ensuring that transportation providers under contract to TA and LBS meet or exceed applicable service standards established by TA and other participating agencies.
P. Scheduling all passenger trips, determining which transportation provider will transport which clients on a shared-ride basis with other passengers using the service.

All services provided by LBS under this Agreement shall be subject to the control of TA through designated staff and/or agents. LBS shall advise TA and make recommendations;

however, final authority shall rest with TA. LBS shall coordinate and consult with TA before the start of operations, and for training, evaluation, and monitoring. Relevant personnel policies, hiring and firing procedures, and accounting procedures of LBS shall be provided to TA upon request.

V. **Duties and Responsibilities of TA.** TA and other participating agencies shall be responsible for:

A. Establishing service standards that the service contractor shall be required to meet in providing transportation services.

B. Establishing the eligibility of clients for specific transportation services.

C. Working with LBS to determine, on a trip by trip basis, if fixed route service can be used to meet a travel need.

D. Working with LBS to see that eligible clients for whom SST service is the best option are registered for SST service.

E. Ensuring that participating agency clients are aware that they must contact the service contractor to schedule transportation service and contact LBS for information that may be needed to use fixed route service.

F. Providing information to LBS on the transportation eligibility status of its clients.

Standard Terms and Conditions

VI. Insurance.
VII. Audit and Inspection.
VIII. Operating and Fiscal Records.
IX. Required Reports.
X. Conflict of Interest.
XI. Copyrights.
IX. Immigration Control and Reform Act of 1986. Property and Supplies.
X. Confidentiality.
XI. Non-Discrimination.
XIII. Prohibition Against Assignment.
XIII. Contract Modification and Termination.
XIV. Notices.
XIX. Indemnification.
XX. Term of Agreement.
XXI. Compensation.
XXII. Attachments to the Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have heretofore executed this Agreement the date first above written.

OUTLINE OF
MODEL JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT
TO COORDINATE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

JOINT EXERCISE OF POWERS CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT FOR (INSERT NAME OF PROGRAM)

THIS AGREEMENT is entered into this *INSERT DATE* by and between the *LIST NAME OF AGENCY* and *LIST NAME OF AGENCY* (hereinafter referred to as "member agencies").

W I T N E S S E T H

WHEREAS, the member agencies provide public transit services in the Counties of _____; and

WHEREAS
LIST ADDITIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE DECISION TO ENTER INTO THIS AGREEMENT

NOW, THEREFORE, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF THE TERMS, CONDITIONS AND PROMISES IN THIS AGREEMENT, THE MEMBER AGENCIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1. Name and Purpose

a. The name of this Consortium is _____.

b. The purpose of this Agreement is to *LIST PURPOSES*.

Article 2. The Lead Agency

The responsibility to act as the Lead Agency under this Agreement shall rotate between the member agencies beginning with each fiscal year, other than the first fiscal year this Agreement is in effect. This rotation of responsibility shall remain in effect until this Agreement is terminated.

NAME OF AGENCY shall serve as the Lead Agency from the effective date of this Agreement until the end of the *INSERT YEAR* Fiscal Year.

Article 3. Scope of Services.

The Lead Agency shall provide the following services:

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF SCOPE THAT MIGHT BE INCLUDED HERE.

a. Solicit the services of a Project Manager

b. Solicit and oversee the services of legal counsel

c. Oversee the activities of the Project Manager;

d. Prepare a budget for the succeeding fiscal year;

e. Apply for and oversee the administration of all forms of applicable grants or revenues

f. Provide staff support necessary to carry out the Plan

g. Work with the Service Review Committee and the Project Manager to bring issues to the member agencies which require their determination.

h. Account for all funds and report all receipts and disbursements

i. Conduct and file an annual audit

j. Nothing in this agreement shall prohibit the Lead Agency from contracting for the provision of any or all of the services

k. Collect and report service data used to determine costs sharing by the member agencies

Article 4. Project Manager.

The Project Manager shall be responsible for administering the Plan on behalf of the member agencies, under the direction and control of the Service Review Committee. The duties of the Project Manager, which may be changed from time to time, include, but are not limited to, the following:

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF DUTIES THAT MIGHT BE INCLUDED HERE.

a. Prepare an annual budget and financial report

b. Investigate the availability of and apply for grants, funds and other sources of revenue to fund the Plan's activities;

c. Account for all revenues and expenditures;

d. Serve as a liaison between the member agencies and customers, and other local and regional agencies.

e. Notice and record all meetings and activities;

f. Provide customer services;

g. Coordinate the preparation of the annual plan update.

Article 5. Indemnification.

INCLUDE STANDARD INDEMNIFICATION LANGUAGE

Article 6. Compensation.

The expenses to be borne by the agency members for carrying out the Plan shall be determined as follows:

a. The Lead Agency shall be credited for in-kind services provided in the performance of the services identified in Article 1.

b. DESCRIBE COST-SHARING AGREEMENTS

Article 7. Service Review Committee.

a. Purpose. The Service Review Committee shall provide direction to the Lead Agency and the Project Manager.

b. Membership.

c. Required Votes; Approvals.

d. Quorum.

e. Minutes.

f. Budget.

Article 8. Termination/Withdrawal.

a. Individual Member Withdrawal

b. Complete Dissolution.

Article 9. Disposition of Money and Property.

Article 10. Miscellaneous.

a. Term of Agreement.

b. Amendment.

c. Additional Members.

d. Dispute Resolution.

e. Successors.

f. Severability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this AGREEMENT by authorized officials on the dates indicated below:

NAME OF AGENCY

By: _____ General Manager

DATE:

NAME OF AGENCY

By: _____, General Manager

DATE:

DETAILED VERSION OF
MODEL JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT

JOINT EXERCISE OF POWERS
TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT FOR
(INSERT NAME OF PROGRAM)

This Agreement is entered into this INSERT DATE by and between the LIST NAME OF AGENCY and LIST NAME OF AGENCY (hereinafter referred to as "member agencies").

W I T N E S S E T H

WHEREAS, the member agencies provide public transit services in the Counties of INSERT LOCATIONS; and

WHEREAS, the member agencies provide fixed route public transit services, and, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and 49 CFR Part 37 (the Law), are required to provide complementary paratransit service to persons unable to use the fixed route system; and

WHEREAS, the member agencies cooperatively prepared a "Coordinated Paratransit Plan" dated INSERT DATE (the Plan); and

WHEREAS, the Boards of Directors of the member agencies adopted the Plan and update; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration of the United States Department of Transportation has determined that the Plan is in compliance with the Law; and

WHEREAS, the Plan and update contemplated implementation of its provisions through the cooperative efforts of the member agencies; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Section INSERT STATE CODE NUMBER, et. seq., authorizes the member agencies to enter into an agreement for the joint exercise of any power common to them, which includes the power to contract for and or operate paratransit services.

NOW, THEREFORE, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF THE TERMS, CONDITIONS AND PROMISES IN THIS AGREEMENT, THE MEMBER AGENCIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1. Name and Purpose

a. The name of this Consortium is INSERT NAME.

b. The purpose of this Agreement is to develop, implement and administer the ADA paratransit services identified in the Plan.

Article 2. The Lead Agency

The responsibility to act as the Lead Agency under this Agreement shall rotate between the member agencies beginning with each fiscal year, other than the first fiscal year this Agreement is in effect. This rotation of responsibility shall remain in effect until this Agreement is terminated.

NAME OF AGENCY shall serve as the Lead Agency from the effective date of this Agreement until the end of the (INSERT YEAR) Fiscal Year.

Article 3. Scope of Services.

The Lead Agency shall provide the following services:

a. Solicit the services of a Broker and Project Manager to provide the paratransit services required by the Plan, in accordance with applicable federal and/or state laws and regulations affecting the member agencies, and to perform the duties identified in this Agreement. These solicitations shall include, but not be limited to, scope of services, including the solicitation of Service Providers, and insurance coverage and indemnification by the Broker, service providers and Project Manager. The solicitation shall make it clear that the insurance of the Service Provider, Broker and Project Manager shall be primary in any loss. No insurance coverage or self-insurance of the member agencies shall be called upon in the event of an occurrence.

b. Solicit (when appropriate) and oversee the services of legal counsel (in-house or outside counsel as necessary) to file or defend a suit brought by third parties against the member agencies for any activities related to or arising under this Agreement, with the designated counsel taking the role as lead counsel throughout the litigation;

c. Oversee the activities of the Broker and Project Manager;

d. Be responsible for the administration of the terms of this Agreement, including the preparation of a budget for the succeeding fiscal year and submitting it to the member agencies for approval;

e. Apply for and oversee the administration of all forms of applicable grants or revenues to fund the paratransit activities contemplated by the Plan.

f. Provide staff support necessary to carry out the Plan on behalf of all member agencies, but not for any activity that is the sole responsibility of one of the member agencies.

g. Work with the Service Review Committee, the Broker and the Project Manager to bring issues to the member agencies which require their determination.

h. Account for all funds and report all receipts and disbursements under this Agreement in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

i. Conduct and file an annual audit in accordance with Government Code Section INSERT STATE CODE NUMBER, where applicable.

j. Nothing in this agreement shall prohibit the Lead Agency from contracting for the provision of any or all of the services enumerated herein; however, should the Lead Agency choose to contract for any services, ascribed to it by this Agreement, the other member agency shall have the first right to provide the service to be contracted, subject to the concurrence of the Service Review Committee. All contracts and agreements shall be approved by the Service Review Committee;

k. Collect and report paratransit service data used to determine costs sharing by the member agencies to the Service Review Committee and member agencies.

Article 4. Project Manager.

The Project Manager shall be responsible for administering the Plan on behalf of the member agencies, under the direction and control of the Service Review Committee. The duties of the Project Manager, which may be changed from time to time, include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Prepare an annual budget and financial report for review by the Service Review Committee and approved by the governing boards of the member agencies;

b. Investigate the availability of and apply for grants, funds and other sources of revenue to fund the Plan's activities;

c. Account for all revenues and expenditures to the Service Review Committee;

d. Serve as a liaison between the member agencies and customers, and other local and regional agencies.

e. Be responsible for setting, noticing and recording all meetings and activities occurring under this Agreement to insure compliance with applicable federal, state and local requirements;

f. Provide customer services and participate in the resolution of customer concerns;

g. Oversee the activities of the Broker and service providers to insure that the terms and conditions of the service and any contracts are consistent with the requirements of the Plan;

h. Coordinate the preparation of the annual plan update and its submission to all applicable governmental agencies.

Article 5. Broker.

The Broker shall assist in securing the paratransit service anticipated under the Plan for the member agencies and their customers, under the direction and control of the Service Review Committee. The duties of the Broker, which may be changed from time to time, include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Receipt of calls for service, scheduling of trips for and coordinating interzonal paratransit trips not scheduled by participating city programs or a member agency;

b. Issue, account for and collect used trip vouchers, as necessary;

c. Collect trip data from participating city paratransit programs and prepare periodic service reports;

d. Cooperate and provide necessary information for the preparation of an annual audit;

e. Determine and certify ADA eligibility in accordance with established criteria and maintain an eligibility data base;

f. Interface with vendors and service providers to assure consistent and satisfactory levels of service consistent with the Plan;

g. Provide budgeting assistance to the Project Manager and participating city programs;

h. Be a liaison between customers, city program staff, the Project Manager, and the Service Review Committee;

i. Coordinate provider and customer training programs;

j. Provide adequate staff support to carry out the Plan.

Article 6. Indemnification.

Each member agency shall be a named additional insured in the insurance policies of the Project Manager, the Broker and the Service Providers. The Project Manager, Broker and Service Providers shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend each member agency, its elective and appointive Boards, Commissions, Officers, agents and employees, from and against any liability for any damages or claims for damages for personal injury, including death, property damage or any civil rights litigations arising from their or their contractors', subcontractors', agents' or employees' activities related to this Agreement or carrying out the Plan. To the extent the insurance or other resources of the indemnitors are insufficient to protect the member agencies from any liability, the member agencies' liability shall be apportioned between them according to the cost-sharing principles established for the provision of complementary paratransit services by the member agencies in the Plan, and any subsequent updates of the Plan.

Each member agency, when it is the Lead Agency, shall hold harmless and defend the other member agency, its elective and appointive Boards, Commissions, Officers, agents and employees, from and against any liability for any damages or claims for damages for personal injury, including death, or property damage arising from its or its contractors', subcontractors', agents' or employees' activities under this Agreement.

Article 7. Compensation.

The expenses to be borne by the agency members for carrying out the Plan shall be determined as follows:

a. For Fiscal Year INSERT YEAR, the Consortium will receive an operating subsidy of LIST FUNDS. The member agencies are not expected to pay for the service this year.

b. In subsequent fiscal years, when federal, state or local funds available for paratransit services are insufficient to cover the costs for these services under the Plan, then each member agency's share of the unfunded portion of the operating budget shall be as follows:

    1. In the first year that the member agencies are required to pay, the amount paid by each member agency will be based on the estimated costs for the service and shall be apportioned among the member agencies according to the estimated service proportions described in the Plan.

    2. In every succeeding year, each member agency's proportionate share will be based on the actual costs of providing the service in the previous year, as determined by an audit of the prior year's service costs. The audit shall be performed by an independent auditor mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any credit or debit resulting from the audit shall be reflected in each member agency's proportionate share.

c. Each member agency shall promptly pay the Lead Agency its monthly share of the costs of its service, as determined above in subparagraph b. The monthly invoice from the Lead Agency shall be due and payable within 30 days of its receipt.

d. A member agency who fails to meet its financial commitments is responsible for defending and paying any liabilities, costs and judgments which may result from such delinquency, including but not limited to, service failures, lawsuits and loss of any funding from outside sources. If a member agency chooses to pay any obligation of a delinquent member agency, it shall be entitled to full reimbursement plus interest at the legal interest rate established in the State's Code of Civil Procedure section or any successor section.

e. The Lead Agency shall be credited for in-kind services provided in the performance of the services identified in Article 1. The credit shall be applied against the amount required of that member agency for the fiscal year immediately following its turn as Lead Agency. The Lead Agency shall keep records of the hours performed by its employees and/or contractors and other in-kind services provided in the accomplishment of the tasks identified in Article 1. The amount any member agency may charge for these services shall be subject to the following limitations:

1. Staff charges shall be agreed to by the member agencies, based on the salary for the positions involved plus overhead and benefits;

2. Contractor charges shall be agreed to by the member agencies, based on the contract price charged by any contractor determined in accordance with applicable federal and/or state procurement provisions.

3. Other in-kind services shall be agreed to by the member agencies, but must be identified with particularity and the costs associated with them shall be fully described and justified.

f. If it becomes necessary for the Lead Agency to file suit, the member agencies shall pay reasonable attorney's fees and costs associated with any litigation, undertaken on behalf of the member agencies, including prosecution and/or defense. Any monetary losses from an unsuccessful prosecution/defense or unenforceable or an uncollectible judgment, or any monetary judgment in favor of the member agencies (including insurance proceeds or other recovery), shall be borne or distributed in proportion to their respective percentage of the operating budget identified in subparagraph 7.b. Any losses or favorable judgments shall be charged or credited to the operating budget in the year in which the charge or credit is made or received.

g. The fiscal year budget for each fiscal year, other than the first fiscal year this Agreement is in effect, shall be prepared and submitted to the member agencies by the end of February of the prior fiscal year. For the first fiscal year, the budget shall be prepared as soon as practicable after this Agreement has been executed by the

member agencies. An adjustment of each member agency's contribution in any fiscal year shall be made after the audit of the preceding fiscal year and credited or debited in the fiscal year following the year in which the audit occurred.

h. If a member agency requests any service, which is beyond the service provided for in the Plan, it shall be considered a "sole benefit" expense to be borne solely by that member agency, and shall not be included in the calculation of the budgetary obligation of the other member agencies. This "sole benefit" exception also shall include any and all legal costs associated with it. The member agency requesting the "sole benefit" shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the other member agency, its officers, employees and agents from and against any and all liability for damages or claims for damage for personal injury, including death, as well as the claims from property damage which may arise from that service.

Article 8. Service Review Committee.

a. Purpose. The Service Review Committee shall provide direction to the Lead Agency, the Project Manager and the Broker. The Service Review Committee shall also be the arbitrator of disputes between the Project Manager, the Broker and/or service providers.

b. Membership. The Service Review Committee shall consist of the General Manager (or his/her designee) from each member agency. Each General Manger shall designate an alternate staff member, to act as his/her representative on the Service Review Committee in his/her absence. The member agencies shall be advised of the designee within 30 days of the execution of this Agreement.

c. Direction. In accordance with each member agency's practices, each General Manager shall be responsible for reviewing with and obtaining direction from his/her governing board on issues and actions coming before the Service Review Committee.

d. Required Votes; Approvals. Each member of the Service Review Committee shall have one vote. The agreement of both General Managers (in his/her absence, the vote of his/her designee) is required on issues and actions which come before the Service Review Committee. If there are any disagreements between the voting members of the Committee, then the matter shall be referred to the governing bodies of the member agencies for resolution. If the member agencies cannot resolve the matter then it shall be settled as provided in Article 12.

If additional agencies join this Consortium, then each member agency is entitled to one vote on the Committee and a majority of the affirmative votes of the Committee's membership, in attendance at the meeting, is required to carry any motion.

e. Quorum. A quorum consists of two voting members of the Committee, i.e. both General Managers, or both designees in the absence of the General Managers, or one General Manager and one designee in the absence of that member agency's General Manager. If there are more than two member agencies participating in this Consortium, then a quorum is a majority of the authorized voting members from each member agency.

f. Minutes. The minutes of each Committee meeting shall be provided to each Committee member and the governing board of each member agency.

g. Budget. The Service Review Committee shall review and submit the budget for each fiscal year to the governing bodies of the member agencies for approval and adoption.

Article 9. Advisory Committee.

a. Purpose. The Consortium Advisory Committee shall be an Advisory Committee to the Services Review Committee. This committee shall provide advice on planning, policy and other matters, relating to the provision of paratransit services provided under this Agreement.

b. Membership. This Committee shall be comprised of the following voting members:

LIST NUMBER AND TYPES OF PUBLIC MEMBERS
EXAMPLES COULD INCLUDE

- One (1) staff representative from each member agency, selected by the General Manager of that agency;

- One (1) member of each member agency's accessibility committee/task force, selected from and by the members of the committee/task force, or if none, as determined by the governing body of that member agency, subject to the selection criteria set forth below;

- One (1) representative from each county's Paratransit Coordinating Committees (PCCs), selected from and by the members of each committee, subject to the selection criteria set forth below;

- One (1) representative from an existing city-based paratransit program in each county, selected by and from the existing city-based paratransit programs in each county.

The voting member from the accessibility committee/task force and from the PCCs shall be determined according to the following criteria:

1. The voting member must be a certified ADA paratransit consumer. If no one from the group is available who meets this requirement, then,

2. The voting member must be a member who represents individuals who are certified ADA paratransit consumers. If no one from the group is available who meets this requirement, then,

3. The voting member may be any member of the group.

c. Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members. The Project Manager, and the Broker shall be non-voting ex-officio members of the Committee.

d. Required Votes; Approvals. Each Committee member is entitled to one vote, and a majority of the Committee's authorized voting membership present at the meeting is required to carry any recommendation or motion.

e. Quorum. A majority of the voting members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

f. Minutes. The minutes of each Committee meeting shall be provided to each Committee member and to the committees, organizations, or entities of each of the committee representatives.

Article 10. Termination/Withdrawal.

c. Individual Member Withdrawal. A member agency may terminate its participation under this Agreement at any time by providing written notice one year prior to such termination to the other member agencies. The notice of termination may be rescinded upon written notice to the other member agencies any time before the effective date of termination, provided, however, that the other member agencies must approve such rescission.

Each member agency is responsible for its contribution to the funding of the Plan and its obligations under this Agreement during the term of this Agreement. If the member agencies have executed a long-term contract for paratransit services which includes a commitment to claim and expend paratransit financial assistance which a terminated member agency is eligible to claim, the terminated member agency shall be bound by such commitment. A long-term contract for purposes of this Agreement is any agreement or commitment which extends beyond a single fiscal year. The terminated member agency shall not claim, but instead shall assist the Service Review Committee, the Lead Agency and other personnel identified in this Agreement to claim such financial assistance during the term of such contract. If possible, the member agencies will cooperate to arrange an equitable division of the obligations and benefits of any outstanding long-term contracts. A terminated member agency shall continue to provide assurances and perform acts as may be required for any

claim and/or grant application to fund the services for any long-term contracts which continue in existence beyond the date of termination. During the term of any long-term contract, the terminated member agency shall continue to receive coordinated paratransit services within its area in proportion to the financial assistance which is attributable to such terminated member agency. A terminating member agency shall have no financial obligation under this Agreement after the effective date of its termination, except as specified above.

d. Complete Dissolution. If the member agencies have executed a long-term contract for paratransit services which cannot be canceled or divided and which includes a commitment to claim and expend financial assistance for the period of such contract, then this Agreement shall remain in effect during the term of such contract unless reasonable alternate terms can be negotiated with the other party to the long-term contract.

Article 11. Disposition of Money and Property.

Upon the withdrawal of a member agency, any property acquired by the members jointly under this Agreement and any credits or debits shall be determined upon the close of the fiscal year, as provided in Article 7.a and distributed to or collected from the withdrawing agency. To facilitate such distribution, property may be distributed in kind or reduced to cash by sale. Any distribution of cash, including surplus monies, to a member agency in excess of its actual contributions shall be at the recommendation of the agency originally disbursing the funds. If member agencies cannot agree upon the valuation of acquired property or upon their distributive shares, the disagreement shall be referred to a panel of three referees for decision. One referee shall be appointed by the member disputing the valuation or disposition. One referee shall be appointed by the members supporting the valuation or distribution. One referee shall be appointed by the two referees first appointed.

Article 12. Miscellaneous.

a. Term of Agreement. This Agreement shall become effective upon execution by member agencies and shall remain in full force and effect until terminated as provided for in this Agreement.

b. Amendment. This Agreement shall be amended only with the unanimous approval of all member agencies.

c. Additional Members. Additional members may be added to this Consortium and Agreement with the consent of the member agencies and the additional member.

d. Dispute Resolution. If a dispute among the member agencies cannot be resolved by their governing bodies, then a mediator shall be retained by the parties to assist them in resolving the dispute. The mediator shall be selected from a panel of five mediators established by the parties subsequent to the execution of this Agreement. The parties shall strike mediators from the list until only one mediator remains. The

determination of which member agency strikes first shall be determined by a flip of a coin. The costs of the mediator shall be shared equally by the member agencies.

e. Successors. This Agreement shall be binding upon and insure to the benefit of any successors or assigns of the member agencies.

f. Plural. As used in this Agreement any singular term includes the plural.

g. Severability. Should any part, term, portion, or provision of this Agreement be finally decided to be in conflict with any law of the United States or of the State of INSERT STATE, or otherwise be unenforceable or ineffectual, the validity of the remaining parts, terms, portions, or provisions of this Agreement shall be deemed severable and shall not be affected thereby, provided that such remaining parts, terms, portions, or provisions can be construed in substance to constitute the Agreement that the member agency intended to enter into in the first instance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this AGREEMENT by authorized officials on the dates indicated below:

INSERT NAME OF AGENCY

By: INSERT NAME AND TITLE

DATE: INSERT DATE

INSERT NAME OF AGENCY

By: INSERT NAME AND TITLE

DATE: INSERT DATE

MODEL AGREEMENT FOR COORDINATING A JOINT TICKET PROGRAM

AGREEMENT AMONG THE *(List all agencies)* _____
_____

This Agreement is for the period from _____ through _____
By and with the *(List all agencies)*
_____

WITNESSETH

WHEREAS, _____ is a transit district duly created and acting under the laws of the State _____, operating a public transit system in _____ _____ Counties; and _____
_____

(Repeat this WHEREAS for all participating agencies.)

WHEREAS, _____
_____
have determined that a Joint Ticket for use on public transit vehicles will encourage transit use.

WHEREAS, it is the intention of *(List all agencies.)*
_____
to enter into an agreement providing for the sharing of revenues from the joint Ticket Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of these premises, the parties hereto agree as follows:

ARTICLE I DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

(Insert description of Joint Ticket and its valid period of use)

All parties to this agreement shall accept the Joint tickets on their systems subject to the conditions specified in Article VI D herein for the fixed periods specified above.

The Joint tickets shall be priced according to Schedule A (Attached hereto and incorporated by reference.) Any modifications to this pricing schedule must be approved in advance by *(List agencies or committee)*_____

Definitions
(The following are examples that might be included in this section.)

"Fare" shall mean the price charged to transport a patron using transit services provided by parties to this agreement.

"Joint Ticket Committee" shall mean a group comprised of one representative from each party to this agreement, which shall administer the Agreement on behalf of the parties as described herein.

"Local fare credit" shall mean the fare required to ride a transit system in its local service area.

ARTICLE II. JOINT REVENUE REIMBURSEMENTS FOR THE JOINT TICKET FOR WHICH CASH IS RECEIVED DURING THE TERM OF THE TERM OF THE AGREEMENT

A. COMPENSATION FORMULA

1). The pricing of each Joint ticket is based on the following *(insert pricing formula)* _____
_____

2). Bus operators shall be compensated based on the following formula: *(Insert agreed-upon formula for sharing revenues.)*_____
_____

B. ALLOCATION AMONG BUS OPERATORS

Follow–up surveys to adjust the allocation percentages in Schedule B shall conducted in the future a majority vote Joint Ticket committee members. The Committee shall decide who will design and conduct this survey.

ARTICLE III. INFORMATION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All parties agree to make available to one another current and historical information necessary for the monitoring and evaluation of the program. *(List agencies)* _____

shall provide data, and an explanation in writing, of methodologies used for data collection, to any party to this agreement within (30) days of a written request from any other party to this Agreement.

(*List agencies*) _____
agree to report the Joint Ticket Committee existing adult fares, and any fare and pass price changes in advance of their implementation. All fare changes shall be reflected in the revenue distribution in the quarter following the period of the effective increase (decrease).

ARTICLE IV. RECORDS AND AUDITS

This agreement is subject to the examination and audit of the auditor General of the State of _____ for a period of the three (3) years after final payment under this Agreement. The examination and audit shall be confined to those matter connected with the performance of the Agreement, including, but not limited to, the cost of administering the Agreement.

During the term of this Agreement, the parties shall permit an authorized representative of another party, upon reasonable request, access to inspect, audit and make copies of its ridership data and records relating to this Agreement.

ARTICLE V. INDEMNITY

Each party to this Agreement agrees to save harmless each and every other party to this Agreement, their directors, commissioners, officers, agents and employees from liability arising out or in connection with any party's performance under this Agreement; excepting only any party may recover from any other party monies or returned based on a miscalculation of the compensations due under this Agreement.

Each party to this Agreement agrees to defend and indemnify each and every other party to this Agreement, their directors, commissioners, officers, agents and employees against any claim or for any liability arising out of in connection with bodily injury, property damage or personal injury to any third party based on such third party's use of indemnitor's transit operations or the third party's presence on the indemnitor's property, unless such claim arises out of the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the indemnified party or its directors, commissioners, officers, agents, contractors or employees.

The parties may agree to the joint legal; representation and the sharing of all related costs and expenses, including legal fees of outside counsel, for all third party claims or liability imposed upon any party to this Agreement and arising from this Agreement which are not addressed above. The sharing of such costs shall be according to a mutually agreeable formula.

ARTICLE VI. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. FARES

Each participating operator shall be responsible for the setting of fares for, and operation of all it services.

B. MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION

Periodic meetings of the Joint Ticket Committee shall be held to prepare and approve program marketing expenses. These expenses will be shared as described in Article VI, Paragraph J below.

Joint tickets will be distributed at sales both operated by each of the participating agencies.

Each party may inform the public of the policy established in this Agreement by any means it deems appropriate, including but not limited to, graphics, printed material, promotions, and signs.

C. AMENDMENTS

This Agreement may be modified, supplemented, or amended only by a written agreement of all parties hereto in accordance with applicable law.

Additional transit operators may be added as parties to this Agreement under the same terms and conditions as then exist for all current parties to this Agreement.

All amendments to this Agreement are subject to the review and unanimous approval of the Joint Ticket Committee.

D. CONDITIONS OF USE OF JOINT TICKETS

(Examples that might be included in this section)

(*Name of Agency*):_____: Joint tickets shall be valid on all routes except Route # _____ and Route # _____.

(*Name of Agency*):_____ Joint tickets shall be valid as local fare credit on all routes.

E. COOPERATION

In cases where it is imperative that other restrictions not detailed in VI., D. above be placed in usage of the Joint ticket by a particular operator, the Joint Ticket Committee must be notified by that operator 30 days in advance of the imposition of such restrictions. An abbreviated version of the terms and conditions will be printed on available space on the backside of the Joint tickets

Each party will use its best efforts to implement the policy established in the Agreement, and will cooperate with the other parties in resolving and operational problems which may arise from its implementation and operation.

F. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This Agreement is the entire agreement of the parties. Each party represents that in entering into this Agreement it has not relied on any previous representations, inducements or understanding of any kind or nature.

This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to be an original, but such counterparts together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

G. TERM

This Agreement is in effect until (*insert date*)_____, or until terminated as provided in Section H, which occurs sooner.

H. TERMINATION

The parties hereto reserve the right to terminate their participation in this Agreement upon 60 day written notice to all other parties. The written notice notifying other parties must specify the reason for the termination and the date upon which the termination becomes effective.

During the period before the termination date, all parties shall meet to resolve any dispute which may be the cause of said termination, unless all parties agree in writing not to do so.

I. NON-PRECEDENT SETTING

This Agreement is not intended as a precedent for the sharing of revenues after termination of this Agreement, or for other inter-operator pass or ticket programs. Any arrangements concerning the sale, collection of revenues, and payments between the parties concerning Joint tickets after termination of this Agreement, or concerning other inter-operator pass or ticket programs, will be the subject of one or more separate agreements.

J. COSTS

1) Except as provided in Paragraph 2 below, each party shall bear its own internal costs associated with being a participant in this agreement, including, without limitation any reporting or auditing costs.

2) All participants to this agreement shall share the common costs of managing the program. These management costs are divided into three areas, as follows.

a. Clearinghouse costs. The clearinghouse costs for this Agreement consist of the Lead Agency's Customer Service labor costs, Treasury Department labor costs, Accounting Department labor costs, Joint ticket stock costs, and ticket delivery service costs. Estimated dollar figures for the first year's costs are detailed in Schedule C. Clearinghouse costs for the latter two (2) years of this Agreement shall be calculated using the actual wage rates for the year during which these costs were incurred. After the first year of this Agreement, any party to this Agreement may request a renegotiation of the methodology utilized to calculate these clearinghouse costs. The amount of interest earned by the Lead Agency as a result of retaining program revenues shall be computed by the Lead Agency's Treasury Department, and shall be subtracted from these clearinghouse costs before each operator's share is allocated. Clearinghouse costs will be allocated across all program participants in proportion to total revenues received under the Joint Ticket program during the prior distribution period.

b. Marketing costs. The marketing costs for the first year of this agreement are detailed in the Schedule C. The marketing costs of the program for the remaining two (2) years of this agreement shall be set by a majority of the Joint Ticket Committee. These costs shall be shared in the manner described in sub-paragraph a. above.

c. Management costs allocation. One-fourth of the annual costs described in Paragraphs a., and b. will be subtracted from each quarterly bus share reimbursement, and will be allocated among each operator as described in Paragraph a. above.

K. GOVERNING LAW

This Agreement shall be deemed to be made in accordance with the laws of the State of _____.

L. SEVERANCE

If any part of this Agreement is declared invalid by a court of law, such decision will not affect the validity of any remaining portion, which shall remain in full force and effect. Should the severance of any party of the Agreement materially affect any of the rights or obligations of the parties, the parties, the parties will negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement in a manner satisfactory to all parties.

ARTICLE VII. NOTICES

All statements, payments, financial and transfer trip reports, notices or other communications to a party by another shall be deemed given when made in writing and delivered or mailed to such party at their respective addresses as follow: (*List all agencies with address and contact person*) _____
_____

SCHEDULE A

JOINT TICKET PRICES

(*Example*)

PRICE*	AGENCIES' SHARE
$28	
$33	
$37	
$42	
$47	
$52	
$56	
$61	

* Figures calculated using the following formula: *(Insert formula from Article II A (1)*

SCHEDULE B

PERCENT OF JOINT TICKETS
CREDITED TO BUS AGENCY*

(*Example*)

AGENCY	PERCENT
AGENCY NAME	**50%**
AGENCY NAME	**30%**
AGENCY NAME	**20%**

* Based on survey dated _____. These percentages may change based on future surveys, as described in Article II.

SCHEDULE C

JOINT TICKET PROGRAM FY____ COSTS

(*Example*)

TYPE OF COST	ESTIMATES
Clearinghouse Costs Customer Service Treasury Accounting Tickets Federal Express **Subtotal**	
Marketing Costs Brochures Signs **Subtotal**	
Estimated FY _____ Program Costs	

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this AGREEMENT on the day first mentioned above.

_____(*Name of agency*)

By: _____ (*Name of authorized signatory*)

Authorized by (*Name of Agency*)'s Board of Directors

Resolution No. _____

Adopted: _____

_____(*Name of agency*)

By: _____ (*Name of authorized signatory*)

Authorized by (*Name of Agency*)'s Board of Directors

Resolution No. _____

Adopted: _____

_____(*Name of agency*)

By: _____ (*Name of authorized signatory*)

Authorized by (*Name of Agency*)'s Board of Directors

Resolution No. _____

Adopted: _____

SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN REPORT

Appendix H

The coordination plan table of contents that follows shows the structure and content of a planning report that documents the transportation coordination that was completed following completion of the workshops presented in Appendix E. While the general content is descriptive of areas that should be addressed and included, the specific content and organization for a local area can and should differ to be supportive of the coordination that makes sense and fits best with local circumstances and conditions.

The results of the workshops consistent with the guides presented in Appendix D would be presented in Sections C and D of the report.

Plan For

Coordinated Transportation Services

In (YOUR) County

Prepared for the
(YOUR) County Transportation Steering Committee

By

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Plan for Coordinated Transportation Services in (YOUR) County

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EXAMPLE OF STATE LEGISLATION CREATING STATEWIDE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Appendix I

This appendix provides information that should be generally useful in setting up coordination activities at a statewide level. Feel free to make changes to this appendix to better meet the needs and desires in your own state.

[Section / Chapter _____]

COORDINATING SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION

SECTIONS

Finding—Intent
Definitions.
Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation.
Agency council on coordinated transportation—Creation, membership, staff.
Council—Duties (as amended by 1999 c 372).
Local planning forums.
Council—Termination.
Repealer.

Finding—Intent.

(Effective until _____)

The legislature finds that transportation systems for persons with special needs are not operated as efficiently as possible. In some cases, programs established by the legislature to assist persons with special needs can not be accessed due to these inefficiencies and coordination barriers.

It is the intent of the legislature that public transportation agencies, pupil transportation programs, private nonprofit transportation providers, and other public agencies sponsoring programs that require transportation services coordinate those transportation services. Through coordination of transportation services, programs will achieve increased efficiencies and will be able to provide more rides to a greater number of persons with special needs.

Definitions.

(Effective until _____.)

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Persons with special transportation needs" means those persons, including their personal attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.

(2) "Special needs coordinated transportation" is transportation for persons with special transportation needs that is developed through a collaborative community process involving transportation providers; human service programs and agencies; consumers; social, educational, and health service providers; employer and business representatives; employees and employee representatives; and other affected parties.

Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation

(Effective until _____.)

In order to increase efficiency, to reduce waste and duplication, to enable people to access social and health services, to provide a basic level of mobility, and to extend and improve transportation services to people with special transportation needs, the state shall implement the Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation. The program will improve transportation efficiency and effectiveness to maximize the use of community resources so that more people can be served within available funding levels.

The Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation will facilitate a state-wide approach to coordination and will support the development of community-based coordinated transportation systems that exhibit the following characteristics:

(1) Organizations serving persons with special transportation needs share responsibility for ensuring that customers can access services.

(2) There is a single entry process for customers to use to have trips arranged and scheduled, so the customer does not have to contact different locations based on which sponsoring agency or program is paying for the trip.

(3) A process is in place so that when decisions are made by service organizations on facility siting or program policy implementation, the costs of client transportation and the potential effects on the client transportation costs of other agencies or programs are considered Affected agencies are given an opportunity to influence the decision if the potential impact is negative.

(4) Open local market mechanisms give all providers who meet minimum standards an opportunity to participate in the program, and, in addition, allow for cost comparisons so that purchasers can select the least expensive trip most appropriate to the customer's needs.

(5) There is flexibility in using the available vehicles in a community so that the ability to transport people is not restricted by categorical claims to vehicles.

(6) There is maximum sharing of operating facilities and administrative services, to avoid duplication of costly program elements.

(7) Trip sponsors and service providers have agreed on a process for allocating costs and billing when they share use of vehicles.

(8) Minimum standards exist for at least safety, driver training, maintenance, vehicles, and technology to eliminate barriers that may prevent sponsors from using each other's vehicles or serving each other's clients.

(9) The system is user friendly. The fact that the system is supported by a multitude of programs and agencies with different eligibility, contracting, service delivery, payment, and funding structures does not negatively affect the customer's ability to access service.

(10) Support is provided for research, technology improvements, and sharing of best practices from other communities, so that the system can be continually improved.

(11) There are performance goals and an evaluation process that leads to continuous system improvement.

Agency council on coordinated transportation—Creation, membership, staff.

(Effective until _____.)

(1) The agency council on coordinated transportation is created. The council is composed of nine voting members and eight nonvoting, legislative members.

(2) The nine voting members are the superintendent of public instruction or a designee, the secretary of transportation or a designee, the secretary of the department of social and health services or a designee, and six members appointed by the governor as follows:

(a) One representative from the office of the governor;
(b) Two persons who are consumers of special needs transportation services;
(c) One representative from the Washington association of pupil transportation;
(d) One representative from the Washington state transit association; and
(e) One of the following:
  (i) A representative from the community transportation association of the Northwest; or
  (ii) A representative from the community action council association.

(3) The eight nonvoting members are legislators as follows:

(a) Four members from the house of representatives, two from each of the two largest caucuses, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, two who are members of the house transportation policy and budget committee and two who are members of the house appropriations committee; and

(b) Four members from the senate, two from each of the two largest caucuses, appointed by the president of the senate, two members of the transportation committee and two members of the ways and means committee.

(4) Gubernatorial appointees of the council will serve two-year terms. Members may not receive compensation for their service on the council, but will be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing their duties as members as set forth in _____.

(5) The secretary of transportation or a designee shall serve as the chair.

(6) The department of transportation shall provide necessary staff support for the council.

(7) The council may receive gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources that are made from time to time, in trust or otherwise, for the use and benefit of the purposes of the council and spend gifts, grants, or endowments or income from the public or private sources according to their terms, unless the receipt of the gifts, grants, or endowments violates RCW 42.17.710.

Council—Duties (as amended by _____).

(Effective until _____.)

To assure implementation of the Program for Agency Coordination Transportation, the council, in coordination with stakeholders, shall:

(1) Develop guidelines for local planning of coordinated transportation in accordance with this chapter;

(2) Initiate local planning processes by contacting the board of commissioners and county councils in each county and encouraging them to convene local planning forums for the purpose of implementing special needs coordinated transportation programs at the community level;

(3) Work with local community forums to designate a local lead organization that shall cooperate and coordinate with private and nonprofit transportation brokers and providers, local public transportation agencies, local governments, and user groups;

(4) Provide a forum at the state level in which state agencies will discuss and resolve coordination issues and program policy issues that may impact transportation coordination and costs;

(5) Provide guidelines for state agencies to use in creating policies, rules, or procedures to encourage the participation of their constituents in community-based planning and coordination, in accordance with this chapter;

(6) Facilitate state-level discussion and action on problems and barriers identified by the local forums that can only be resolve at either the state or federal level;

(7) Develop and test models for determining the impacts of facility siting and program policy decisions on transportation costs;

(8) Develop methodologies and provide support to local and state agencies in identifying transportation costs;

(9) Develop guidelines for setting performance measures and evaluating performance;

(10) Develop monitoring reporting criteria and processes to assess state and local level of participation with this chapter;

(11) Administer and manage grant funds to develop, test, and facilitate the implementation of coordinated systems;

(12) Develop minimum standards for safety, driver training, and vehicles, and provide models for processes and technology to support coordinated service delivery systems;

(13) Provide a clearinghouse for sharing information about transportation coordination best practices and experiences;

(14) Promote research and development of methods and tools to improve the performance of transportation coordination in the state;

(15) Provide technical assistance and support to communities;

(16) Facilitate, monitor, provide funding as available, and give technical support to local planning processes;

(17) Form, convene, and give staff support to stakeholder work groups as needed to continue work on removing barriers to coordinating transportation.

(18) Advocate for the coordination of transportation for people with special transportation needs at the federal, state, and local levels;

(19) Recommend to the legislature changes in laws to assist coordination of transportation services;

(20) Petition the office of financial management to make whatever changes are deemed necessary to identify transportation costs in all executive agency budgets;

(21) Report to the legislature by December 2000, on council activities including, but not limited to, the progress of community planning processes, what demonstration projects have been undertaken, how coordination affected service levels, and whether these effort produced savings that allowed expansion of services. Reports must be made once every two years thereafter, and other times as the council deems necessary.

Local Planning forums.

(Effective until _____.)

The council may request, and may require as a condition of receiving coordination grants, selected county governments to convene local planning forums and invite participation of all entities, including tribal governments, that serve or transport persons with special transportation needs. Counties are encouraged to coordinate and combine their forums and planning processes with other counties, as they find it appropriate. The local community forums must:

(1) Designate a lead organization to facilitate the community planning process on an ongoing basis;

(2) Identify functional boundaries for the local coordinated transportation system;

(3) Clarify roles and responsibilities of the various participants;

(4) Identify community resources and needs;

(5) Prepare a plan for developing a coordinated transportation system that meets the intent of this chapter, addresses community needs, and efficiently uses community resources to address unmet needs;

(6) Implement the community coordinated transportation plan;

(7) Develop performance measures consistent with council guidelines;

(8) Develop a reporting process consistent with council guidelines;

(9) Raise issues and barriers to the council when resolution is needed at either the state or federal level;

(10) Develop a process for open discussion and input on local policy and facility siting decisions that may have an impact on the special needs transportation costs and service delivery of other programs and agencies in the community.

Council—Termination.

The agency council on coordinated transportation is terminated on _____, as provided in _____.

Abbreviations used without definitions in TRB publications:

AASHO	American Association of State Highway Officials
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
APTA	American Public Transportation Association
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
ASME	American Society of Mechanical Engineers
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
ATA	American Trucking Associations
CTAA	Community Transportation Association of America
CTBSSP	Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
NCHRP	National Cooperative Highway Research Program
NCTRP	National Cooperative Transit Research and Development Program
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
SAE	Society of Automotive Engineers
TCRP	Transit Cooperative Research Program
TRB	Transportation Research Board
U.S.DOT	United States Department of Transportation